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The Impact of Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulated Learning Strategies on EFL College Students' Academic Achievement: Links to Gender*

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This study aims to investigate EFL college students' self-efficacy and their use of self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies. It also examines how these two constructs relate to each other, how they influence their academic achievement, and how they identify gender differences. The participants were 196 college students aged between 19 and 28 years, who were studying different majors. They all completed two questionnaires about their self-efficacy and use of SRL strategies in learning EFL. They were also required to take an English language test. The results showed that (1) female students reported higher self-efficacy and more frequent use of SRL strategies than male students to a significant degree, despite the fact that men and women attained similar levels of academic achievement; (2) both gender groups revealed the highest levels of self-efficacy in writing and the lowest levels of self-efficacy in listening; (3) gender influenced the frequency of use of SRL strategies; (4) within both gender groups, statistically significant relationships were identified between self-efficacy and use of SRL strategies; and (5) regardless of gender, self-efficacy was a stronger predictor of academic achievement than the use of SRL strategies; frequent use of particular strategies did not correlate with English language test scores. Pedagogical implications for EFL classroom teachers are suggested.

[self-efficacy/SRL strategies/gender/EFL students/academic achievement]

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I. INTRODUCTION

Self-efficacy is considered to be a subcomponent of self-regulation in that self-regulation comprises of three stages: forethought, performance, and self-reflection. Self-efficacy pertains to the forethought stage that covers the beliefs that precede the endeavor to learn (Wang & Bai, 2017). Self-efficacy beliefs are defined as "people's judgement of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura & Schunk, 1981, p. 31). Students make self-efficacy judgments on particular classroom tasks. Self-efficacy beliefs, therefore, could function as a predictor of their capability to perform academic tasks. They could also influence other learning related variables such as aptitude, behaviors, motivation, and previous accomplishments. Self-efficacious students are shown to employ more cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and be more persistent when confronted with difficulties than their less efficacious counterparts (Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Wang & Bai, 2017; Wang, Hu, Zhang, Chang, & Xu, 2012).

On the other hand, self-regulation echoes learners' efforts to adjust their responses by repressing impulses and substituting them with alternative behaviors that bring about good results. Hence, learners with strict self-regulation appear to be greatly self-efficacious. Assumptions about self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies are suggested: learners actively engage in making meaning, setting goals, and selecting strategies, and are also likely to lead their learning direction. Their strategies are goal-oriented and mediate the correlation between individual and contextual variables and accomplishment. Through the use of SRL strategies, students can improve study habits, keep track of their learning process, and adapt their own strategies on the basis of feedback so that they can enhance their performance (Wang et al., 2012; Wang, Schwab, Fenn, & Chang, 2013b).

SRL strategies and self-efficacy are highly related and help to predict students' academic performance. Thus, the measurement of self-efficacy and SRL strategies is crucial to help teachers understand their students and tailor teaching practices to meet their students' needs in the classroom (Wang & Bai, 2017; Wang et al., 2012). However, little attention has been paid to the influences these two constructs have on learning English as a foreign language (Anam & Stracke, 2016; Wang et al., 2013b: Zimmerman & Cleary, 2006). Therefore, the purpose of this present study is three fold: (a) to investigate EFL college students' self-efficacy and their use of SRL strategies; (b) to examine how these constructs relate to each other, and to students' academic achievement; and (c) to identify the differences between genders in regards to the aforementioned issues.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a coherent predictor of academic accomplishment across different academic disciplines. It influences academic performance in a number of differing ways. Through increasing persistence, self-efficacy also allows students to improve their memory. When performing academic tasks, students who have high self-efficacy are likely to have lower levels of anxiety, be highly interested in given tasks, and make greater efforts to overcome obstacles. On the contrary, students who have low self-efficacy tend to avoid challenging academic tasks, exert less effort, and reveal higher levels of anxiety against obstacles. Moreover, self-efficacy beliefs address matters concerning one's capability and mediate the effect of learners' knowledge, skills, or motivational variables on academic outcomes. Hence, students' confidence in their academic capabilities is a key factor determining academic success (Diseth, 2011; Mills, 2014; Pajares, 1996, 2009).

Investigating the relationships between learners' attributions and self-efficacy and their achievements in ninth-grade Korean EFL learners, Hsieh and Kang (2010) find that self-efficacy and attribution significantly correlate with learners' language achievement. Learners with high self-efficacy attribute their test results to internal and personal factors and are shown to have more confidence in their performance abilities in the EFL classroom. Learners with low self-efficacy, however, attribute their test results to uncontrollable external factors, thus impeding them from having expectations of success in the future. In order to enhance EFL learners' self-efficacy, these authors suggest the use of attribution retraining, which includes specific teacher feedback to approve students' adequate abilities and stress the efforts and perseverance required to fulfill an assigned task successfully. Separately, Mills (2014) proposes appropriate instructional choices, curriculum design, and instructor monitoring of self-efficacy beliefs with adequate self-efficacy measures geared towards specific tasks and domains.

Previous studies have found a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement (Y. Kim, 2009; Nisbet, Tindall, & Arroyo, 2005;). In regard to gender differences, Wang et al. (2013b) report that among a sample of Chinese and German students, females had higher self-efficacy beliefs than males, while males gained significantly higher scores than females in English language tests. Meanwhile, Mills, Pajares, and Herron (2007) examine self-efficacy among intermediate French students in college with a focus on their language achievement in French and their motivation. They note that female students have a higher sense of self-efficacy when learning about French language and culture than male students. They also indicate that confident students are better able to adopt proper strategies to plan and monitor, and fulfill their assigned tasks.

Mills et al. (2007) contend that teachers in the FL classroom should try to develop students' self-efficacy beliefs because these self-perceptions can lead to successful academic performance.

In studies with Korean EFL students, Lim and Joe (2014) and J. Park (2017) note that males have higher self-efficacy than females, whereas Kim, Wang, Ahn, and Bong (2015) and M. Lee (2004) indicate that females have higher self-efficacy than males. Kim et al. (2015) suggest that social persuasions and vicarious experience are crucial to improving women's self-efficacy beliefs, whereas mastery experience is crucial to improving men's self-efficacy beliefs. The conflicting results of these previous studies might stem from the subjects' different levels of English proficiency and/or educational backgrounds. For example, the subjects of Kim et al.'s (2015) study include relatively proficient learners; even the low self-efficacy profile group obtained a mean TOEIC score of 744. Thus, the findings need to be understood with a degree of caution. On the other hand, Anyadubalu (2010) explore perceptions of self-efficacy and anxiety among Thai EFL middle school students and find that a significant relationship did not exist between self-efficacy and English language performance. Self-efficacy thus has a significant negative correlation with English language anxiety. The author concludes that general self-efficacy and English language anxiety are a significant set of predictors of English language performance.

Other researchers have investigated EFL students' self-efficacy levels in terms of the four sub-skills of proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). For example, in a study of medical college students in China, Wang et al. (2012) report that speaking has the highest level of self-efficacy whereas listening has the lowest level. In a subsequent study, Wang et al. (2013b) compare self-efficacy beliefs between college students in China and Germany and find that Chinese students show the highest levels of self-efficacy for writing and the lowest levels for listening, whereas German students show the highest levels for speaking and the lowest levels for writing. It should be noted, however, that most participants in Wang et al.'s (2012) study where male (81%) whereas the majority of participants in Wang et al.'s (2013b) study were females: 71% in China and 81% in Germany. Thus, it seems that regardless of gender, Chinese students perceive listening as the most difficult task.

In a sample of 167 Korean college students, Wang, Kim, Bong, and Ahn (2013a) report that among the four sub-skills of English proficiency, listening comprehension was perceived as the most difficult task, with reading comprehension as the easiest. In contrast, H. Lee (2006) examines 198 Korean high school students: half from a general high school and the other half from a vocational high school. The results show that the general high school students had significantly higher levels of English self-efficacy beliefs than the vocational high school students in reading and listening. H. Lee's (2006) study, however, is limited in that all participants were females, hence making it difficult to apply the findings

to co-ed classrooms.

2. Self-Regulated Learning Strategies

Self-regulation refers to one's ability to employ adequate strategies to plan, monitor, and accomplish tasks (Mills, 2014). Students' attempts to regulate their learning usually entail three determinants: their personal processes, their environment, and their behavior. Through using specific strategies, students are able to self-regulate their behavior, their environment, and their covert functioning. Self-regulated learning differs according to academic context, personal efforts to self-regulate, and performance results. Therefore, self-regulated students are expected to realize the effect of their environment, both covertly and behaviorally through acquisition, and to understand how to improve that environment by using multiple strategies (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). In a previous study, Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) measure self-regulated learning strategies in both non-classroom and classroom contexts. They report that the use of such strategies strongly correlated with students' academic achievement. Out of the 14 categories of self-regulated learning strategies, the high achievement group of students exhibited significantly more frequent use than a low achievement group for 13 of these categories. Another finding was that high achievers were shown to seek assistance from adults (usually parents) significantly more often than low achievers.

Other empirical researches on language learning reveal a positive relationship between the use of strategies and language learning performance (Baker & Boonkit, 2004; Schunemann, Sporer, & Brunstein, 2013). Bai, Hu, and Gu (2014) examine writing strategies employed by primary school pupils in Singapore and indicate that systematic differences in strategy use exist between pupils of varying levels of proficiency. Specifically, SRL strategies of planning, text generating, monitoring and evaluating, revising, and resourcing are shown to consistently influence pupils' English language proficiency. Bai et al. (2014) conclude that these writing strategies are strongly conducive to developing pupils' writing skills. In another writing strategy study using Chinese college students as participants, Chen (2011) points out that pre-writing (e.g., planning and organizing) and revising strategies (e.g., self-monitoring, paying attention, and peer-cooperating) have a positive effect on subjects' test scores for essay writing. Furthermore, Wharton (2000) investigates language learning strategy use by bilingual foreign language learners in college, reporting a linear relationship between levels of proficiency and the use of many learning strategies. More proficient FL learners tend to use several strategies more frequently than less proficient FL learners. Moreover, men can be shown to use strategies significantly more often than women.

3. The Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulated Learning Strategies

Students' self-efficacy plays a key role in the process of self-regulation and directly influences their choice and use of strategies (Bandura, 1997; Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). In a study with Norwegian undergraduate students, Diseth (2011) finds a strong relationship between self-efficacy and learning strategies. That is, prior academic performance is shown to be a source of self-efficacy, while self-efficacy itself predicts deep learning strategies. Wang et al.'s (2012) study also indicates that significant relationships can be found between Chinese college students' use of SRL strategies, their self-efficacy beliefs, and their achievement levels in learning English. Similarly, Magogwe and Oliver (2007) explore the relationship between language learning strategies, English proficiency, and self-efficacy beliefs among primary school students in Botswana. The results show that overall, more proficient learners use more language learning strategies than less proficient learners, which supports Wharton's (2000) findings. They also indicate that a significant positive relationship exists between self-efficacy beliefs and the use of language learning strategies. As proficiency levels increase, however, the correlation between self-efficacy beliefs and the use of strategies decreases.

Using a sample of Indonesian primary school students studying the English language, Anam and Stracke (2016) examine language learning strategies in relation to self-efficacy beliefs. They report that students who consider themselves to be capable of performing English tasks have a tendency to use cognitive, socio-affective, and metacognitive strategies more often than those who do not. They conclude that self-efficacy beliefs in self-regulated learning relating to strategy use are partly determined by how confident learners feel in using such strategies. In other words, possessing strategic knowledge is not helpful enough if learners do not have a strong sense of self-efficacy.

Likewise, Kim et al. (2015) investigate Korean college students' self-efficacy profiles and relationships with SRL strategies and indicate that students' English proficiency scores significantly vary between medium and high self-efficacy profiles. The use of SRL strategies, however, is not linear across different English proficiency levels, which is inconsistent with the findings of previous studies (Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Wharton, 2000). Kim et al. (2015) conjecture that a progressive increase in the use of SRL strategies might not emerge from low-proficient to high-proficient English language learners. With a sample of academically gifted and regular students of 5th, 8th, and 11th grades, Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1990) report that students' perceptions of mathematics and verbal efficacy were related to their use of SRL strategies. It is unfortunate, however, that the impact of academic efficacy and use of SRL strategies on standardized measures of achievement is not examined in this study. With regard to gender differences in the use of

SRL strategies, these authors observe that females employ record keeping and monitoring, environmental structuring, and goal setting and planning significantly more often than males. It is of importance to note that despite using SRL strategies more often than males, females showed lower self-efficacy.

Wang et al. (2013b) examine self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies with Chinese and German college EFL students. They find that the relationship between the use of SRL strategies and English language test scores is positive for Chinese students, but negative for German students. Furthermore, Chinese students reveal significantly lower levels of self-efficacy beliefs than German students. Wang et al. (2013b) claim that these outcomes could be due to differences in cultural, linguistic, and social contexts. Meanwhile, significantly positive relationships between self-efficacy and the use of SRL strategies, and between self-efficacy and achievement, are identified among the Chinese and German students.

J. Lee (1999) and H. Lee (2006) also report a significant relationship between self-efficacy and the use of SRL strategies, between self-efficacy and achievement, and between the use of SRL strategies and achievement among Korean EFL high school students. They both suggest that self-efficacy beliefs have a stronger effect on academic performance than the use of SRL strategies. In more detail, J. Lee (1999) points out that the strategy of seeking information is the best predictor of English language performance, and suggests that for the sake of educational effectiveness, teachers should promote students' self-efficacy level prior to instructing them to use SRL strategies.

Looking at Malaysian college students majoring in material and mineral engineering, C. Lee (2002) explores their English writing processes and observes that the strategy of seeking information is useful for students who lack prior knowledge and language proficiency. This is consistent with the findings of J. Lee's (1999) study. Furthermore, C. Lee (2002) notes that strategy and self-regulation promote students' self-efficacy in that after instruction, they show more positive responses to negative feedback. In a similar vein, Yusuf (2011) reports the direct effect of self-efficacy and the indirect effect of SRL strategies on academic accomplishment in a study with UKM undergraduate students. In other words, the most significant impact on participants' academic success is found to be self-efficacy, which concurs with the findings of previous studies (H. Lee, 2006; J. Lee, 1999).

In summary, previous studies on the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and the use of SRL strategies have mostly been implemented in relation to language learners' proficiency levels, gender, academic achievement, and particular skills. They have yielded striking findings. Results on gender differences, however, seem to be contrasting. Notably, much of the research on Korean EFL learners has targeted secondary school students. Few studies have attempted to uncover the effects of the two constructs on adult EFL learners

with regard to all four skills (i.e., reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and academic performance. Therefore, it is worth further investigating college EFL students' self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies as factors that might influence academic performance, and analyzing gender differences. This could help provide improved strategies for teachers to help their students become successful learners in co-ed classrooms.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

The participants in this study were comprised of 196 students who were enrolled in two class sections of an elective practical English course, and four class sections of a required college English course at a university located in South Gyeongsang Province. Participants' ages ranged from 19 to 28 and they were majoring in different subjects (e.g., chemistry, nursing, history, political science, and physical therapy, etc.). The majority of the participants were freshmen. In terms of gender, the female participants (n = 114) outnumbered the male participants (n = 82).

2. Data Collection

1) Questionnaires

During the seventh week of the fall semester of 2020, the participants were directed to fill out a Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy (QESE) and a Questionnaire of English Self-Regulated Learning Strategies (QESRLS). Both of these were adapted from prior research findings (Wang et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2013b) and translated into Korean by the researcher. Participants were informed that their responses would not affect their final grade and assured that responses would remain confidential. However, they were required to write down their major, gender, and age (C. Chin, 2008; Wharton, 2000). It took them approximately 10 minutes to complete both of the questionnaires. The QESE consisted of 23 items (see Appendix A). Each item required participants to judge their capabilities to fulfill given English tasks in listening, speaking, reading, and writing contexts. The common factor was labeled as self-efficacy, whereas the four individual factors were labeled as Listening Efficacy (items 1-5), Speaking Efficacy (items 6-12), Reading Efficacy (items 13-17), and Writing Efficacy (items 18-23). The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) was .96. Participants were asked to rate their capabilities on a 7-point

Likert scale from 1 (I cannot do it at all) to 7 (I can do it well).

The QESRLS consisted of 48 items (see Appendix B). Each item addressed a different SRL strategy often employed to learn English and related to one of the 11 subconstructs: Self-Evaluation (items 1-4), Organizing and Transforming (items 5-12), Rehearsing and Memorizing (items 17-20), Seeking Social Assistance (items 21-23), Persistence (items 24-26), Seeking Opportunity (items 27-33), Taking Records (items 34-35), Goal Setting (items 36-37), Reviewing Records (items 38-39), Use of Native Language (items 40-43), and Interpretative Guessing (items 44-48). The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) was .93. Participants were asked to select one of the four choices: 0 = "I never use it," 1 = "I seldom use it," 2 = "I sometimes use it," and 3 = "I often use it."

2) English Language Test

Kim et al. (2015) have suggested that participants should be tested on their English language proficiency after completing the surveys because self-efficacy beliefs could vary with outcome expectations. Therefore, the researcher conducted the questionnaires (QESE and QESRLS) first and then implemented a 50-item English language test which was a shortened version of TOEIC practice test from *TOEIC Clinic Beginner Reading* (In Pagoda Language Education Center, 2008). The time limit was 50 minutes. The data pool revealed that participants' scores ranged between 9 and 45. With regard to gender differences, male students achieved a mean score of 21.78 whereas female students achieved a mean score of 22.70. *T*-test results showed that there was no significant difference between the two gender groups (t = -.80, p = .42).

3. Data Analysis

First of all, descriptive statistics were computed for all quantitative items within the QESE and QESRLS respectively. Second, male and female students' means and standard deviations referring to all four subscales of QESE were tabulated for comparison between different genders' efficacy across the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. *T*-tests were conducted afterward to investigate the relationship between gender and each subscale. Third, male and female students' means and standard deviations referring to all 11 subconstructs of QESRLS were tabulated for comparison between genders: self-evaluation, organizing and transforming, rehearsing and memorizing, seeking social assistance, persistence, seeking opportunities, taking records, goal-setting, reviewing records, use of native language, interpretive guess. *T*-tests were conducted afterward to investigate the relationship between gender and each subconstruct. Fourth, correlation analyses were implemented between self-efficacy and English language test scores,

between SRL strategies and English language test scores, and between self-efficacy and SRL strategies for both male and female students respectively. Finally, in order to examine whether each gender group's self-efficacy and SRL strategies could predict their English language test scores, multiple regression analyses were conducted.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. EFL Students' Self-Efficacy

As displayed in Table 1, both male and female students obtained the highest means for writing efficacy (M = 4.20, SD = 1.37 vs. M = 4.71, SD = 0.96) followed by reading efficacy (M = 4.13, SD = 1.26 vs. M = 4.52, SD = 0.96), speaking efficacy (M = 3.85, SD = 1.28 vs. M = 4.21, SD = 1.01), and listening efficacy (M = 3.76, SD = 1.03 vs. M = 4.20, SD = 0.93). This finding might be due to the fact that both courses of Practical English and College English in which the participants were enrolled focused on reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar, and did not deal with speaking and listening. After each class, participants were directed to submit a writing assignment that required them to use the grammatical structures that they had learned. In this way, both gender groups had the opportunity to practice their English writing skills every week. Hence, it can be suggested that this frequent writing practice might have helped them enhance their writing efficacy. In contrast, their lack of practice in speaking and listening may have given rise to relatively low self-efficacy levels for those two subscales.

With regard to the relationship between EFL students' self-efficacy and their gender, *t*-test results revealed that female students had significantly higher levels of self-efficacy than male students across all four subscales, which concurs with the results found in previous studies (Kim et al., 2015; M. Lee, 2004; Mills et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2013b): listening efficacy (t = -3.11, $p < .01$); speaking efficacy (t = -2.12, $p < .05$); reading efficacy (t = -2.38, $p < .05$); and writing efficacy (t = -2.89, $p < .01$). The biggest difference between genders was found in listening efficacy, whereas the smallest was in speaking efficacy. In short, listening efficacy distinguished female students from male students the most.

TABLE 1
T-test Results on QESE Subscales

Self-Efficacy	Gender	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Listening	M	114	3.76	1.03	-3.11	.0021**
	F	82	4.20	0.93		
Speaking	M	114	3.85	1.28	-2.12	.0357*
	F	82	4.21	1.01		
Reading	M	114	4.13	1.26	-2.38	.0187*
	F	82	4.52	0.96		
Writing	M	114	4.20	1.37	-2.89	.0044**
	F	82	4.71	0.96		

**$p < .01$, *$p < .05$; M = Males, F = Females

Table 2 indicates that both gender groups' English language test scores and each QESE subscale have a significant positive correlation at $p < .01$, which supports previous studies (Y. Kim, 2009; Mills et al., 2007; Nisbet et al., 2005; Wang et al., 2013b). It was also identified that female students gained higher correlation coefficients than male students in all four QESE subscales. Results for male students indicated that writing efficacy ($r = .47$) had the highest correlation with test scores followed by speaking efficacy ($r = .38$), reading efficacy ($r = .38$), and listening efficacy ($r = .32$). Likewise, results for female students indicated that writing efficacy ($r = .50$) had the highest correlation with test scores followed by speaking efficacy ($r = .48$), reading efficacy ($r = .46$), and listening efficacy ($r = .40$). Interestingly, male students had the same correlation coefficients ($r = .38$) both for speaking efficacy and reading efficacy.

It is important to note that regardless of gender, the correlation between English language test scores and listening efficacy was found to be the lowest. A possible explanation for this outcome could be that the English language test included reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and colloquial expressions and did not examine listening comprehension. Therefore, both male and female students' listening efficacy might have had less influence on their test scores than the other three subscales. Moreover, the correlation analysis of all four subscales showed that the highest difference between genders existed in speaking efficacy ($r = .38$ for males vs. $r = .48$ for females), whereas the lowest difference existed in writing efficacy ($r = .47$ for males vs. $r = .50$ for females).

TABLE 2
Correlation Coefficients between EFL Students' Self-Efficacy and Their English Language Test Scores

Self-Efficacy	English Language Test Scores	
	Male	Female
Listening	.32**	.40**
Speaking	.38**	.48**
Reading	.38**	.46**
Writing	.47**	.50**

**$p < .01$

2. EFL Students' Use of Self-Regulated Learning Strategies

As displayed in Table 3, male and female students most frequently employed self-evaluation strategies (M = 2.30, SD = 0.60 vs. M = 2.54, SD = 0.45) followed by use of native language strategies (M = 2.12, SD = 0.80 vs. M = 2.45, SD = 0.57). One interpretation for this finding might be that the tactics comprising self-evaluation strategies concerned writing and reading tasks in which both genders had relatively high self-efficacy levels, so they were likely to use these self-evaluation strategies freely. With regard to using native language strategies, both gender groups seemed to strongly rely on Korean translations in order to enhance their understanding and brainstorm their ideas when performing all four tasks: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

On the other hand, both male and female students used seeking opportunity strategies the least frequently (M = 1.02, SD = 0.64 vs. M = 1.16, SD = 0.60). One interpretation for this is that both gender groups lack initiative and the willingness to take advantage of online resources, such as YouTube, Google, and mobile apps. They also failed to challenge themselves to employ creative language use. This finding may also reflect the fact that participants are not regularly exposed to English-speaking environments. In addition, male and female students seldom used seeking social assistance (M = 1.55, SD = 0.68 vs. M = 1.73, SD = 0.60), organizing and transforming (M = 1.42, SD = 0.63 vs. M = 1.65, SD = 0.54), or goal-setting strategies (M = 1.05, SD = 0.91 vs. M = 1.80, SD = 0.92). In other words, when faced with difficulties, both gender groups did not consider their instructors and/or peers as resources to solve them. They did not actively engage in using various micro-skills for reading comprehension and developing vocabulary, and they were not goal-oriented.

T-test results showed that female students used self-evaluation (t = -3.12, $p < .01$), organizing and transforming (t = -2.77, $p < .01$), rehearsing and memorizing (t = -4.97, $p < .01$), persistence (t = -2.71, $p < .01$), taking records (t = -5.58 , $p < .01$), goal-setting (t = -5.65, $p < .01$), reviewing records (t = -4.30, $p < .01$), use of native language (t = -3.17, p

< .01), and interpretive guess strategies (t = -2.03, p < .05) significantly more than male students. The greatest difference was found in goal-setting strategies followed by taking records strategies. Meanwhile, there was no statistically significant difference between genders in regards to the use of seeking social assistance and seeking opportunity strategies.

TABLE 3
T-test Results on SRL Strategies

SRL Strategies	Gender	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
SEV	M	114	2.30	0.60	-3.12	.0022**
	F	82	2.54	0.45		
ORG	M	114	1.42	0.63	-2.77	.0061**
	F	82	1.65	0.54		
REH	M	114	1.71	0.81	-4.97	<.0001**
	F	82	2.24	0.63		
SEK	M	114	1.55	0.68	-1.88	.0619
	F	82	1.73	0.60		
PER	M	114	1.99	0.62	-2.71	.0074**
	F	82	2.21	0.51		
OPP	M	114	1.02	0.64	-1.59	.1145
	F	82	1.16	0.60		
REC	M	114	1.70	0.83	-5.58	<.0001**
	F	82	2.32	0.64		
GOA	M	114	1.05	0.91	-5.65	<.0001**
	F	82	1.80	0.92		
REV	M	114	1.82	0.89	-4.30	<.0001**
	F	82	2.32	0.64		
LAN	M	114	2.12	0.80	-3.17	.0019**
	F	82	2.45	0.57		
GUS	M	114	1.92	0.61	-2.03	.0439*
	F	82	2.09	0.54		

**p < .01, *p < .05; M = Males, F = Females
Note. SRL = self-regulated learning; SEV = self-evaluation; ORG = organizing and transforming; REH = rehearsing and memorizing; SEK = seeking social assistance; PER = persistence; OPP = seeking opportunity; REC = taking records; GOA = goal-setting; REV = reviewing records; LAN = use of native language; GUS = interpretive guess

Table 4 indicates that male students' English language test scores significantly correlated with self-evaluation (r = .26, p < .05), organizing and transforming (r = .33, p < .01), rehearsing and memorizing (r = .27, p < .05), persistence (r = .22, p < .05), seeking opportunity (r = .34, p < .01), taking records (r = .26, p < .05), reviewing records (r = .26, p < .05), and interpretive guess strategies (r = .28, p < .01). However, seeking social assistance, goal-setting, and use of native language strategies did not correlate with their

English language test scores. It is of importance to note that male students' test scores showed the highest correlation with seeking opportunity strategies, which they reported using the least frequently. In contrast, the use of native language strategies did not correlate with English language test scores, although it was the second most frequently used subconstruct.

On the other hand, female students' English language test scores correlated with all subconstructs of QESRLS except seeking social assistance strategies: self-evaluation (r = .30, p < .01), organizing and transforming (r = .34, p < .01), rehearsing and memorizing (r = .28, p < .01), persistence (r = .19, p < .05), seeking opportunity (r = .21, p < .05), taking records (r = .29, p < .01), goal-setting (r = .25, p < .01), reviewing records (r = .32, p < .01), use of native language (r = .26, p < .01), and interpretive guess strategies (r = .28, p < .01). Overall, female students' test scores had the highest correlation with organizing and transforming strategies, which they did not frequently use. Surprisingly, female students' test scores correlated with persistence and seeking opportunity strategies less than male students'. Regardless of gender, seeking social assistance strategies did not correlate with English language test scores. Self-evaluation strategies, which both gender groups reported using the most frequently, were found to correlate more with English language test scores than many of the other subconstructs.

TABLE 4
Correlation Coefficients between SRL Strategies and English Language Test Scores

SRL Strategies	English Language Test Scores	
	Male	Female
SEV	.26*	.30**
ORG	.33**	.34**
REH	.27*	.28**
SEK	.10	.00
PER	.22*	.19*
OPP	.34**	.21*
REC	.26*	.29**
GOA	.12	.25**
REV	.26*	.32**
LAN	.09	.26**
GUS	.28**	.28**

**p < .01, *p < .05; M = Males, F = Females
Note. SRL = self-regulated learning; SEV = self-evaluation; ORG = organizing and transforming; REH = rehearsing and memorizing; SEK = seeking social assistance; PER = persistence; OPP = seeking opportunity; REC = taking records; GOA = goal-setting; REV = reviewing records; LAN = use of native language; GUS = interpretive guess

3. The Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulated Learning Strategies

Table 5 shows the correlation coefficients between male students' four subscales of QESE and 11 subconstructs of QESRLS. Listening efficacy showed the highest correlation with interpretive guess strategies (r = .54) followed by organizing and transforming (r = .52) and seeking opportunity strategies (r = .50) at a significance level of p < .01. Speaking efficacy exhibited the highest correlation with reviewing records strategies (r = .53) followed by organizing and transforming (r = .50) and interpretive guess strategies (r = .48) at a significance level of p < .01. Reading efficacy had the highest correlation with organizing and transforming strategies (r = .52) followed by interpretive guess (r = .50) and reviewing records strategies (r = .47) at a significance level of p < .01. Strikingly, writing efficacy correlated with all the subconstructs of SRL strategies. The highest correlation occurred with organizing and transforming strategies (r = .55) followed by reviewing records (r = .53) and interpretive guess strategies (r = .52) at a significance level of p < .01. Overall, organizing and transforming strategies were shown to correlate most significantly with all four subscales of QESE, whereas the use of native language strategies only revealed a significant correlation with writing efficacy.

TABLE 5
Correlation Coefficients between Self-Efficacy and SRL Strategies for Male Students

SRL Strategies	Self-Efficacy			
	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
SEV	.27*	.35**	.37**	.34**
ORG	.52**	.50**	.52**	.55**
REH	.36**	.37**	.36**	.44**
SEK	.33**	.33**	.27*	.28**
PER	.34**	.41**	.43**	.45**
OPP	.50**	.44**	.42**	.43**
REC	.32**	.39**	.35**	.40**
GOA	.32**	.27*	.27*	.24*
REV	.39**	.53**	.47**	.53**
LAN	.17	.19	.17	.25*
GUS	.54**	.48**	.50**	.52**

**p < .01, *p < .05; M = Males, F = Females
Note. SRL = self-regulated learning; SEV = self-evaluation; ORG = organizing and transforming; REH = rehearsing and memorizing; SEK = seeking social assistance; PER = persistence; OPP = seeking opportunity; REC = taking records; GOA = goal-setting; REV = reviewing records; LAN = use of native language; GUS = interpretive guess

As illustrated in Table 6, all four subscales of self-efficacy for female students had a

significant correlation with all the subconstructs of SRL strategies, except seeking social assistance strategies. Listening efficacy revealed the highest correlation with organizing and transforming strategies (r = .48) followed by interpretive guess (r = .40) and seeking opportunity strategies (r = .37) at a significance level of p < .01. Speaking efficacy had the highest correlation with organizing and transforming strategies (r = .49) followed by seeking opportunity (r = .48) and interpretive guess strategies (r = .36) at a significance level of p < .01. Reading efficacy had the highest correlation with organizing and transforming strategies (r = .47) followed by interpretive guess (r = .44) and seeking opportunity strategies (r = .43) at a significance level of p < .01. Unlike the other three subscales of QESE, writing efficacy had the highest correlation with seeking opportunity strategies (r = .46) followed by organizing and transforming (r = .45) and taking records strategies (r = .35) at a significance level of p < .01. Female students' four subscales of QESE correlated with organizing and transforming strategies most significantly, which is consistent with the finding for male students, although male students' corresponding coefficients were higher than female students'.

TABLE 6
Correlation Coefficients between Self-Efficacy and SRL Strategies for Female Students

SRL Strategies	Self-Efficacy			
	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
SEV	.34**	.26**	.26**	.27**
ORG	.48**	.49**	.47**	.45**
REH	.23*	.20*	.24**	.30**
SEK	-.00	.11	.12	.17
PER	.27**	.18*	.21*	.23*
OPP	.37**	.48**	.43**	.46**
REC	.23*	.25**	.34**	.35**
GOA	.26**	.32**	.30**	.33**
REV	.24**	.26**	.34**	.32**
LAN	.23*	.26**	.20*	.26**
GUS	.40**	.36**	.44**	.34**

**p < .01, *p < .05; M = Males, F = Females
Note. SRL = self-regulated learning; SEV = self-evaluation; ORG = organizing and transforming; REH = rehearsing and memorizing; SEK = seeking social assistance; PER = persistence; OPP = seeking opportunity; REC = taking records; GOA = goal-setting; REV = reviewing records; LAN = use of native language; GUS = interpretive guess

4. The Relationship between Self-Efficacy, Use of SRL Strategies, and Academic Achievement

Results of the two multiple regression analyses were found for both gender groups respectively (See Tables 7 and 8). These examined the effects of self-efficacy and SRL strategies on English language test scores. Hence, the dependent variable was students' English language test scores and the independent variables were self-efficacy and SRL strategies. Self-efficacy was identified to have a significant correlation with English language test scores for both male and female students: $R^2 = 0.19$, F (2, 79) = 9.48, $p < .001$ vs. $R^2 = 0.28$, F (2, 111) = 22.30, $p < .001$. SRL strategies, however, failed to function as a significant predictor of English language test scores. This finding suggests that regardless of gender, self-efficacy is a good predictor of academic achievement, which confirms the observations of previous studies (H. Lee, 2006; J. Lee, 1999; Mills et al., 2007; Yusuf, 2011). Hence, higher self-efficacy learners were shown to be more likely to attain academic success than lower self-efficacy learners.

TABLE 7
Multiple Regression Analysis: Using Self-Efficacy and SRL Strategies To Predict English Language Test Scores for Male Students

Independent Variables	Standardized Coefficient (beta)	*t*	*p*	*F*	*p*	R^2
Self-Efficacy	0.344	2.76	.0072**	9.48	.0002	0.19
SRL Strategies	0.138	1.11	.2688			

*******p* < .01

TABLE 8
Multiple Regression Analysis: Using Self-Efficacy and SRL Strategies To Predict English Language Test Scores for Female Students

Independent Variables	Standardized Coefficient (beta)	*t*	*p*	*F*	*p*	R^2
Self-Efficacy	0.423	4.25	< .0001**	22.30	< .0001	0.28
SRL Strategies	0.161	1.63	.1068			

*******p* < .01

V. CONCLUSION

The results of this study reveal that female students had significantly higher levels of self-efficacy than male students across all four QESE subscales. In addition, male and

female students reported the highest levels of self-efficacy for writing and the lowest levels for listening. It is of importance to note that although female students were more efficacious than male students, there was no significant difference between the two groups in regards to English language test scores. Both gender groups' responses to each subscale of self-efficacy were significantly correlated with their English language test scores, although female students' correlation coefficients were higher than male students'. This outcome demonstrates a strong correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievement in learning EFL regardless of gender.

As for the use of SRL strategies, female students used the subconstructs significantly more often than male students, with the exception of seeking social assistance and seeking opportunity strategies. Male students' use of SRL strategies showed a significant positive relationship with English language test scores, with the exception of seeking social assistance, goal-setting, and use of native language strategies. Likewise, female students' use of SRL strategies showed a significant positive relationship with English language test scores, excluding the use of seeking social assistance strategies. Notably, regardless of gender, the frequency with which SRL strategies were used was not predictive of correlation coefficients for English language test scores.

With regard to the relationship between self-efficacy and the use of SRL strategies, overall, both gender groups' responses to all four self-efficacy subscales exhibited a significant positive correlation with SRL strategies. Gender-specific differences were, however, identified. Male students' use of native language strategies exclusively correlated with writing efficacy whereas female students' use of seeking social assistance strategies did not correlate with any of the four self-efficacy subscales. Finally, regarding the relative effect of self-efficacy and the use of SRL strategies on academic performance when learning EFL, self-efficacy was found to have a direct effect for both gender groups, whereas SRL strategies did not.

The limitations of the present study should be acknowledged to identify areas for future research. Firstly, participants were mostly low-level EFL college students, and thus, caution should be urged in generalizing the results to other mixed-level populations and settings. Future research, therefore, should target students with different proficiency levels and evaluate the relationship between self-efficacy, use of SRL strategies, and achievement within each gender group. Secondly, this study was implemented cross-sectionally and findings were correlational based on students' responses to self-reporting questionnaires. This, however, did not address any causality. Further investigations, therefore, should be designed to clarify the cause-effect relationship. For instance, follow-up interviews or think-aloud protocols should be conducted with participants to collect qualitative data (Anam & Stracke, 2016; Chin & Yook, 2016). Finally, this study employed one English language test to measure outcomes, which was comprised of reading comprehension,

vocabulary, grammar, and colloquial expressions. Future studies should consider administering comprehensive multiple assessments including oral proficiency and listening and writing tasks. Results of such studies would be more convincing and more applicable to EFL classrooms in which students vary largely in their abilities across the four different skills, and in which students need a teacher's attention and encouragement to use self-regulated learning strategies effectively.

VI. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study suggest the following pedagogical implications. We have found that EFL students' self-efficacy strongly influences their academic success, although female students have a stronger sense of self-efficacy than male students. Hence, teachers should pay attention to promoting students' self-efficacy beliefs rather than exclusively focus on assessing their academic performance. For example, teachers should give out positive feedback, compliment students' learning progress, and stress the endeavor and perseverance required to fulfill a given task successfully (Hsieh & Kang, 2010). Both gender groups showed the lowest levels of self-efficacy for listening. As an effective tactic for classroom management, teachers should therefore select authentic texts, conduct schema-building activities prior to listening exercises, and provide listening tasks that include a degree of choices and opportunities for students to personalize content and bring their own background knowledge, thus playing an active role in their own learning. In this way, students would feel a sense of accomplishment and gradually enhance their listening efficacy levels (Nunan, 1999).

With regard to the use of SRL strategies, male students reported using seeking opportunity strategies the least frequently, in spite of the strong effectiveness of such strategies on their academic performance. Thus, teachers should enable them to actively search for occasions to practice English outside of the classroom. They should also plan lessons that require out of school activities. On the other hand, the use of native language strategies should be implemented with a degree of caution as they are identified to be inefficient. Instead of simply relying on their own preferences, both gender groups need to choose and apply pertinent strategies to help them develop English proficiency. They should also believe in their own capabilities to do so appropriately. Organizing and transforming and self-evaluation strategies should be practiced more frequently when fulfilling English tasks so that students of both genders, especially those with low language levels, will be more likely to expect successful academic outcomes (Anam & Stracke, 2016).

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy

Major: Gender: M/F Age:

* Please use the following scales to answer these questions accordingly. Please choose the number accurately representing your capabilities.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I cannot do it at all.	I cannot do it.	Maybe I cannot do it.	Maybe I can do it.	I basically can do it.	I can do it.	I can do it well.

1. Can you understand English announcements at airports, train stations or bus terminals?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Can you understand English TV programs?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Can you understand English movies without Korean subtitles?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Can you understand English songs?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Can you understand phone numbers spoken in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Can you introduce your university in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Can you tell the directions to your classroom from your home in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Can you answer your instructors' questions in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Can you ask questions to your instructors in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Can you discuss some interesting topics with your classmates in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Can you introduce yourself in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Can you order food at a restaurant in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. While reading English texts, can you guess the meaning of unknown words?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Can you understand the English news on the Internet?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Can you browse English websites and make purchases or hotel reservations online?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Can you find the meaning of new words by using English-English dictionaries?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Can you understand English articles about Korean culture?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Can you release news on the Internet (e.g., facebook, Instagram, twitter, blogs)?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Can you send a text message to your friends in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Can you make new sentences using the words or phrases just learned?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Can you write diaries in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. Can you send e-mails in English?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Can you write English compositions assigned by your instructors?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire of English Self-Regulated Learning Strategies

Major: Gender: M/F Age:

∗Please choose answers from the following study methods according to your actual situation. Please notice that this is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers.

0	1	2	3
I never use it.	I seldom use it.	I use it sometimes.	I often use it.

1. I check my English homework before turning it in.	0	1	2	3
2. When I finish my English composition, I read it again to check whether it should be revised.	0	1	2	3
3. I proofread my English compositions when I complete writing.	0	1	2	3
4. I adjust my reading speed according to the difficulty of the text.	0	1	2	3
5. I write an outline before writing English compositions.	0	1	2	3
6. I summarize the main idea of each paragraph when reading.	0	1	2	3
7. I summarize the most important points of the whole English article after I read it.	0	1	2	3
8. I pay attention to the English language structure during reading.	0	1	2	3
9. I classify new words based on parts of speech in order to memorize them.	0	1	2	3
10. When I listen to English, I pay attention to the stressed words or phrases in order to comprehend the sentence.	0	1	2	3
11. I use the title of an English article to help understand that article.	0	1	2	3
12. I make a chart to summarize the grammatical points learned.	0	1	2	3
13. I memorize English words whose pronunciations are similar.	0	1	2	3
14. I memorize meanings of words by using prefixes and suffixes.	0	1	2	3
15. I pay attention to the beginning and end of each paragraph in my English reading.	0	1	2	3
16. I underline key points during my English reading.	0	1	2	3
17. I recite English texts in the process of studying English.	0	1	2	3
18. I read texts I have learned several times in order to recite them from memory.	0	1	2	3
19. I write new words many times in order to memorize the spellings.	0	1	2	3
20. I read new words repeatedly in order to memorize them.	0	1	2	3
21. I consult instructors when I encounter difficulties in the process of studying English.	0	1	2	3

22. I search related documents when I have difficulties in the process of studying English.	0	1	2	3
23. I ask classmates when I have questions in my English study.	0	1	2	3
24. I keep reading when I encounter difficulties in English reading.	0	1	2	3
25. I read an English article several times if I don't understand it at the first time.	0	1	2	3
26. I listen to tape-recorded English several times if I cannot understand it for the first time.	0	1	2	3
27. I watch English TV programs and/or YouTubes on my initiatives.	0	1	2	3
28. I download an application on my cell phone for strengthening vocabulary.	0	1	2	3
29. I use sentence patterns just learned to make new sentences for practice.	0	1	2	3
30. I send English messages to my friends through Kakao Talk on my initiative.	0	1	2	3
31. I try my best to find opportunities to practice my oral English.	0	1	2	3
32. I try to use various English expressions to express the same meaning.	0	1	2	3
33. I use words just learned to make new sentences on my initiative.	0	1	2	3
34. I write down the mistakes I often make in the process of studying English.	0	1	2	3
35. I take notes in English classes.	0	1	2	3
36. I make a study plan in the process of studying English.	0	1	2	3
37. I set a goal to study English.	0	1	2	3
38. I reread the English texts I have read in class.	0	1	2	3
39. I review my notes of English class before examinations.	0	1	2	3
40. I consider how to say something in English in my mind before saying it out loud.	0	1	2	3
41. When I listen to English, I translate it into Korean to help me understand it.	0	1	2	3
42. I translate what I have read in English into Korean to help me understand it.	0	1	2	3
43. I think about a composition in Korean before writing it in English.	0	1	2	3
44. I guess the meaning of new words by considering the contexts.	0	1	2	3
45. I guess what people mean by reading their expressions and movements when watching an English movie.	0	1	2	3
46. When I come across a new word which doesn't hinder my comprehension, I skip it.	0	1	2	3
47. When somebody speaks English, I guess what he/she will say according to what he/she has said already.	0	1	2	3
48. I use my background knowledge to comprehend English articles.	0	1	2	3

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Tertiary

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