
READING ANXIETY AND READING COMPREHENSION IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT: There is an indication that language anxiety impairs one's ability to perform a language. Anxiety was one of the factors that affected reading activities since it is up to humans to control their own anxiety in order to improve their reading comprehension. This study aimed to examine the correlation and the contribution of students' reading anxiety to their reading comprehension. This study utilized quantitative research by employing a correlational research design. To collect data for this study, 88 students from one of the senior high schools in Banyuasin, South Sumatra, were chosen utilizing the cluster sampling technique. A reading anxiety questionnaire and a reading comprehension test were instruments to collect the data. The findings revealed that there was no significant correlation between students' reading anxiety and reading comprehension, with the correlation coefficient or R-value (.063) being lower than r-table (0.177). Furthermore, the significant level (sig.2-tailed) was (0.599). It showed that p (0.559) was more than (0.05). There was no contribution between students' reading anxiety and reading comprehension in this study since there was no significant association between reading anxiety and reading comprehension. The study's findings demonstrated that students' reading anxiety had no effect on their ability to comprehend what they read.

Keywords: *reading anxiety, reading comprehension, association*

KECEMASAN MEMBACA DAN PEMAHAMAN MEMBACA SISWA SMA

ABSTRAK: Ada indikasi bahwa kecemasan bahasa mengganggu kemampuan seseorang untuk melakukan bahasa. Kecemasan adalah salah satu faktor yang mempengaruhi kegiatan membaca karena terserah manusia untuk mengendalikan kecemasan mereka sendiri untuk meningkatkan pemahaman bacaan mereka. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui korelasi dan kontribusi kecemasan membaca siswa terhadap pemahaman membaca mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kuantitatif. Dalam penelitian ini, 88 siswa salah satu SMA di Banyuasin, Sumatera Selatan dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik cluster sampling untuk mengumpulkan data. Kuesioner kecemasan membaca dan tes pemahaman membaca merupakan instrumen untuk mengumpulkan data. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa tidak ada korelasi yang signifikan antara kecemasan membaca siswa dan pemahaman membaca, dengan koefisien korelasi atau nilai r (0,063) lebih rendah dari r tabel (0,177). Selanjutnya tingkat signifikannya (sig.2-tailed) adalah (0,599). Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa p (0,559) lebih dari (0,05). Karena tidak ada hubungan yang signifikan dalam penelitian ini, maka tidak ada kontribusi yang dapat diberikan antara kecemasan membaca siswa dan pemahaman membaca. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kecemasan membaca siswa tidak berpengaruh pada kemampuan mereka memahami apa yang mereka baca.

Kata Kunci: *kecemasan membaca, pemahaman membaca, hubungan*

INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential tool for communicating with people all around the world. People all over the world utilize language as a form of oral and written communication to convey their ideas, emotions, and thoughts (Amberg and Vause, 2009). The ability to communicate thoughts and feelings includes the ability to share an opinion and be satisfied or depressed. It is difficult for us to learn new things and engage with others if we do not speak. Many people use English since it was formerly thought to be a universal language. According to Ilyosovna (2020), because English is the most widely spoken language in the world, its importance in the global community cannot be underestimated or dismissed. This clarified the role of English as a worldwide language.

The four skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing were the four things students needed to acquire in order to learn English. In this study, reading comprehension is one of the four skills that was the emphasis. Usadi and Oktavia (2017) contend that reading is an activity that calls for readers to put up effort in order to comprehend what they are reading, with the goal of reading being the generation of knowledge and experience. Reading is the most important skill to develop because it is difficult for children to learn different abilities without it. Furthermore, students who read extensively may gain access to several materials from throughout the world, such as instructional content, knowledge, history, and so on (Clark and Rumbold, 2006). This suggests that reading abilities are crucial in obtaining reading comprehension.

Reading has its own purpose, as stated by Yourtçu (2013), the main purpose of learning to read and understand texts is to recognize words, understand, enrich vocabulary, interpret readings, evaluate readings, develop critical perspectives, transfer reading texts to life, develop thinking skills through reading, critically reading texts or events, see social problems using intellectual structures, and gain the ability to see and solve them. Meanwhile, reading comprehension in Indonesia remained low. In 2015, the Program for International Assessment (PISA) placed Indonesia 64th out of 70 countries worldwide. It means that students in Indonesia still had little interest in reading. In conclusion, students must understand the reading process in order to gain a comprehension of the text. Because reading and comprehension are closely related, it cannot be denied that these two aspects are truly required by students in the reading process in order to gain a comprehension that is consistent with what students read.

Reading activities rely heavily on psychology. According to Habibian et al. (2015), there is a psychological element that influences reading comprehension. This psychological element is made up of various attitudes, including anxiety, motivation, and self-efficacy. According to the explanation above, anxiousness was one of the influential aspects in reading activities, because humans must be managed by ourselves to grasp better reading comprehension.

Anxiety creates a sense of insecurity in students. According to Cabansag (2013), anxiety is a basic feeling that every human being possesses; this dread encompasses terror and a sense of uncertainty. This can result in negative sentiments, such as someone experiencing anxiety losing feelings of uneasiness, fear, and, at worst, frustration. Furthermore, Ismail (2015) proposed that the majority of anxiety is a representation of something that is inefficient in carrying out all duties. Meanwhile, Jafarigohar (2012) noted that reading has a significant impact on language learners because anxiety in a foreign language has been shown to negatively impact academic skills. This study focused on reading, the most significant of the four language skills, because reading is considered

the major means of learning new knowledge and reading is an important resource in combating learning anxiety. As a result of each reader's unique approach to reading a material, reading anxiety serves as a standard for readers seeking to improve their reading comprehension. In summary, based on some of the facts above, it can be determined that anxiety was an emotion of worry experienced by someone who was going through a tough time. There was also anxiety in reading, which was defined as the sense that someone had when reading, such as discomfort, panic, struggle, or worry. When anxiousness caused students to lose attention and fail to comprehend the meaning of the reading they were assigned. So, the students cannot get or absorb information well.

Other scholars studied similar studies relating to the same debate topic as this research. According to the findings of the first researcher, Indrawati (2016), there was a substantial association between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension. According to the second researcher, Mardianti et al. (2021), there was a negative association between students' reading anxiety and comprehension. According to Farihah (2017), there was a substantial association between reading anxiety and reading comprehension achievement.

On March 14, 2022, a preliminary study conducted by interviewing an English teacher and two eleventh-grade students in one of senior high schools in Banyuasin, South Sumatra revealed that based on the scores and outcomes of students' reading comprehension. There were three levels of reading comprehension among the students, namely low, moderate, and high. According to the findings of the English teacher's interview, the students were in the center and some were at the bottom. According to interviews with two eleventh-grade students, one student experienced anxiety and the other did not experience anxiety when reading English texts to improve reading comprehension. According to the previous description, there is a factor that makes it more difficult for students to improve their reading comprehension, specifically the influence of concerns about making mistakes while reading. Considering the previous explanation, the researchers decided to conduct an entitled "Reading Anxiety and Reading Comprehension in Senior High School Students".

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative research methodology was applied in this study. This study was also classified as non-experimental because it was a correlational study. In this investigation, the samples were chosen using a probability sampling technique combined with a cluster sampling technique. In this study, the researchers selected two science classes and one social class from one of the senior high schools in Banyuasin, South Sumatra, as a sample of 88 students. Questionnaires and reading tests were used as instruments in this study. The two instruments were given offline in the form of paper printouts to all samples. The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to determine whether a significant correlation existed between the two variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Descriptive Statistic of Students' Reading Anxiety

The results of the descriptive analysis showed that 48 was the lowest score and 91 was the highest score, while the mean was 66.06. This table demonstrated that students' impressions of the five questionnaire options varied. More information can be found in the Table 1.

Table 1. The Distribution of Reading Anxiety Questionnaire

Categories	Score Interval	Frequency	Percentage
Low	20-60	35	40%
Medium	61-82	43	49%
High	>83	10	11%
Total		88	100%

There were three levels to choose from: low, medium, and high. According to the questionnaire results, 35 (40%) students obtained a low level of anxiety score of 20 - 60, 43 (49%) students received a medium level of anxiety score of 61 - 82, and 10 students received a high level of anxiety score of >83 (11%).

2. The Result of Students' Reading Comprehension

The descriptive statistics analysis of students' reading comprehension performance revealed that the lowest score was 10 and the highest score was 38, with a mean of 23.27. The students scored differently in the five categories of reading comprehension. The data distribution is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 The Distribution of Reading Anxiety Questionnaire

Score Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
81 - 100	Excellent	0	0%
61 - 80	Good	0	0%
41 - 60	Fair	0	0%
21 - 40	Poor	37	42%
0 - 20	Very Poor	51	58%
Total		88	100%

The results revealed that none of the students (0%) had very good, good, and fair reading comprehension, 37 students (42%) had poor reading comprehension and the last 51 students (58%) had very low reading comprehension.

2. The Correlation between Students' Reading Anxiety and their Reading Comprehension

To address the first research problem, it examined the findings from the reading anxiety questionnaire and reading comprehension on descriptive statistics. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used in this study. As a consequence, there was a significant correlation between two variables (reading anxiety and reading comprehension). Because the correlation coefficient or r - obtained (.063) was lower than the r -table (.177), the two-tailed significance threshold was (.559). It suggested that p (.559) was more than 05. As a result, there was no significant relationship between students' reading anxiety and reading comprehension. As a result, hypotheses (H1) were rejected whereas null hypotheses (H01) were accepted.

This study's interpretation was created based on the results of the data analysis. According to the findings of this study, there is no significant relationship between reading anxiety and reading comprehension. This was based on data acquired from SPSS version 26. According to the Pearson Product Moment Correlations, these two variables (reading anxiety and reading comprehension) did not have a significant association because of 063.177 and the sig value (2-tailed).559 >.05. The study concluded that pupils' reading comprehension success had little to do with reading anxiety.

Other researchers agreed with the study's findings. First, Mardianti et al. (2021) used the same two variables (reading anxiety and reading comprehension) and found the same results, namely, no significant link between reading anxiety and reading comprehension in her study. However, the other two researchers, Farihah (2017) and Indrawati (2016) used the same factors in this study and obtained different results. The conclusions of the data analysis revealed a significant association between reading anxiety and reading comprehension, according to these two researchers.

There were numerous explanations for the elements that did not occur in this study. First, there is a lack of encouragement, inspiration, and support from the kids' environment to read English novels. Motivation, according to Kuntari (2011), is an internal force that propels a person to think in order to achieve achievement. To recap, motivation is a driving force that motivates people to move toward an item. It would be easier to gather more information and knowledge if many students were motivated to read. Additionally, vocabulary served as the foundation for language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Without first learning the vocabulary, it was difficult to reach any level of linguistic proficiency. Lack of vocabulary knowledge poses significant obstacles for its students, preventing them from learning English (Alqahtani, 2015). In summary, a lack of vocabulary might make it difficult to read and comprehend English writings.

Third, poor reading habits impacted students' reading comprehension. This can lead to students developing undesirable habits, such as becoming lethargic; behaviors like this make students increasingly unable to have adequate reading comprehension if practiced on a regular basis. Good readers will have a plethora of knowledge, making it simple for them to respond to a wide range of reading exam questions. A reading habit, according to Aisah et al. (2019), is the activity of consistently searching out reading material that increases comprehension. There is no evidence that reading newspapers, articles, books, or other periodicals harms a student's reading comprehension. According to Iqbal et al. (2015), students with good reading habits will find it easier to answer the reading test even when generic texts are employed. It indicates that if you have good reading habits, you have nothing to lose, and it is really valuable for students.

Students' reading comprehension may be low because they struggle with regulating their reading anxiety. This can be caused by a variety of circumstances, such as a lack of enthusiasm, encouragement, or support from one's surroundings, a lack of vocabulary, and poor reading habits, such as using devices that allow viewing rather than reading.

CONCLUSION

Because there was no significant correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension, regression analysis could not be performed in this study. As a result, the hypothesis (H_{α_1}) was rejected, whereas the null hypothesis (H_{0_1}) was accepted. In conclusion, pupils' reading anxiety had no effect on their reading comprehension. There were low and medium levels of reading anxiety among the pupils in this study. As a result, reading comprehension was unaffected. Besides reading anxiety, a lack of desire, encouragement, and support from the student's environment, a lack of vocabulary, and an unacceptable reading habit were also factors that influenced reading comprehension.

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