CORRELATION BETWEEN ANXIETY AND READING COMPREHENSION: A STUDY IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

Ni Putu Hana Ratna Dewi[1], I Gde Putu Agus Pramerta[2]
English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar
E-mail: hanaratnadewi6@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out the significant correlation between anxiety and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students in SMPN 2 Mengwi academic year 2020/2021. The research used ex-post facto in form of correlational study. The population of the present study consisted of 337 students and 31 of them were chosen as the samples. They were determined by means of cluster random sampling technique with lottery system. Questionnaire for students' anxiety and multiple choice test for the students reading comprehension were used as the instruments. The researchers analysed the data through normality test, homogeneity test, Pearson product moment, and t-testing. The result showed the Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.044 and it is lower than 0.05 (0.00 < 0.05). The directional hypothesis in the present study indicated that there is a significant correlation between students' anxiety and reading comprehension was accepted. It could be concluded that the data had already proven that students' anxiety was significantly correlated with reading comprehension.

Keywords: correlation, anxiety, reading comprehension

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan yang signifikan antara kecemasan dengan pemahaman membaca siswa kelas VIII SMPN 2 Mengwi tahun ajaran 2020/2021. Penelitian ini menggunakan ex-post facto berupa studi korelasi. Populasi penelitian ini berjumlah 337 siswa dan dipilih 31 orang sebagai sampel. Penentuannya dilakukan dengan teknik cluster random sampling dengan sistem undian. Angket kecemasan siswa dan tes pilihan ganda untuk pemahaman bacaan siswa digunakan sebagai instrumen. Peneliti menganalisis data melalui uji normalitas, uji homogenitas, pearson product moment, dan uji t. Hasilnya menunjukkan Sig. (2-tailed) adalah 0,044 dan lebih rendah dari 0,05 (0,00 < 0,05). Hipotesis terarah dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada hubungan yang signifikan antara kecemasan siswa dan pemahaman membaca. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa bahwa kecemasan siswa berkorelasi signifikan terhadap pemahaman bacaan.

Kata kunci: korelasi, kecemasan, pemahaman membaca

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is of important to have. Having well reading comprehension will be enabling students to assimilate a written work while reading. Reading is not only looking at word but also getting meaning from text to understand what is being read.

If it is seen from the context of Covid-19 pandemic, the teaching and learning process are changing into an online learning. As one of the consequences, students have to understand the given material in a well and autonomously. This is of important because their abilities are tested, especially in the context of reading comprehension.

Reading is a skill that has to be grasped in a language learning. It is in line to Qrqez and Rashid (2017) who state that reading is of crucial skill as its requirement for having interaction between readers and text. It can improve the overall language proficiency. By reading, people can receive information and knowledge. In addition, Meo (2008) state that reading comprehension is a requirement skill and also a challenge for students.

Empirical evidences showed that many students are not fluent in using foreign languages, especially English. To be fluent in a foreign language, students must struggle with that language anytime and anywhere. They rarely use English and they are more likely to use first language to interact with others in their daily activities.

Many students are worried about making mistakes when they try to use English. They may have anxiety reactions that can shift their ability to learn English. In addition, anxiety can affect their reading comprehension. Anxiety is a fact in life (Spielberger, 2013). It has powerful influence. Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999) stated that there are two reasons for being anxious in reading. They are related to unfamiliar words and unfamiliar cultural background.

Furthermore, it is noticeable that the English learning is related to the awareness of one difference. The differences can be in terms of beliefs, attitudes, aptitudes, motivations and affective states of learners. Among them, particularly language anxiety is considered as the affective state of learners. It is utterly hindering achievement in language learning (Gardner, 1985). These kinds of problem could cause students to lack English skills, especially in reading. Moreover, it was found that reading anxiety is positively correlated with features of text and personal factors (Tsai & Lee, 2018).

Further on, it is assumed that students who are anxious will get problems during the process of reading comprehension. Lack of vocabulary and prior knowledge are the things that can influence it. When they are worried about their ability in understanding given text, they will seem to be uncomfortable and unconfident. These things will stimulate the anxiety. In addition, it will condense their concentration. As the consequence, it can influence their performance in reading comprehension.

Then, students are also having different reading skills, in such lessons it is difficult for students who do not have a level of reading skills commensurate with other students in the class, teacher strategies that are not suitable for students, etc. Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999) claimed that levels of anxiety will increase when readers perceive difficulty in reading. It was also found that student's level of anxiety is correlated with writing system, including unknown vocabulary. To support this, Gonen (2007) said that the unfamiliar vocabulary was considered as one of the factors of reading anxiety among Turkish

students who were learning English as a foreign language (Aisyah, 2017). It means that having vocabulary is of important to consider. Moreover, the unknown vocabulary might impede learners' comprehension and the cause's difficulty which is turn into anxiousness (Rajab et al., 2012).

It can be considered that text and students are the factors that influence the reading comprehension process. One of the variables that has an important role here are students' anxiety. This is previously revealed by Salmiah (2017) and Herawati (2017). They conducted research that took anxiety as one of the variables. From their study, it seems that anxiety is relevant to be investigated with different school. Thus, it is necessary to conduct a research on anxiety and reading comprehension and the figure it out for having the significant correlation among the two variables.

THEORETICAL REVIEW
Anxiety

Anxiety is a natural reaction experienced by every human being characterized by feelings of tension, threatened, worried and not confident. Anxiety arises as a response to certain situations. Anxiety is considered a part of everyday life. And anxiety is unusual worry feeling that causes someone want to avoid the anxiety stimulus. When students see situation as threatening, they will feel worry. Their learning ability will be distracted, because they cannot fully concentrate on the task.

Horwitz et al. (1986) state that anxiety is described as feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and nervous system. It becomes emotional dilemma. The feeling of anxiety will happen when they unsure of it. In addition, Halgin and Whitbourne (2007) stated anxiety occurred as an effort to avoid uncomfortable reaction which disquiet people to have ordinary situations. They become anxious when they try to avoid unwanted situations. It shows that anxiety plays crucial role in lives, and specifically in learning.

Foreign Language Reading Anxiety

Many students complain about anxiety when learning a foreign language. It was emphasized that students have experience in learning language and it leads to language anxiety. Therefore, foreign language anxiety have been become a topic of great interested and researched. It is considered as one of the affective factors that influence students in language learning (Hanifa, 2018). As one of the affective factors, anxiety appears in formal language learning contexts, in which it has a great deal in the interaction (Gardner, 1985).

Regarding on foreign language reading anxiety, it is the feeling of worry and apprehension. It happens when students try to read and comprehend text. Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999) define that the anxiety aroused during the process of reading L2 texts is known as reading anxiety. In addition, Basso et al. (2020) defined reading anxiety as unpleasant feeling toward reading which caused by significant dissatisfaction in reading process. To be fluent in a foreign language, students must struggle with that language anytime and anywhere. Many students are worried about making mistakes when they try to learn English. Therefore, anxiety is of crucial to be taken into consideration in reading comprehension.

Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999) stated two reasons for being anxious in reading: the unfamiliar words and unfamiliar cultural background. When students do not

master foreign language writing scripts, they will have difficulty reading and understand of the reading. It is because of the lack of English vocabulary they know. Having lack of vocabulary has been the students' problem. It can create anxiety for them. It provokes foreign language learners in learning. Another thing is cultural differences make them feel uncomfortable if it is not used to these differences. Having not enough cultures in this context might inhibit students' reading comprehension process and cause anxiety as the culture represented in the text is foreign to them (Rajab et al., 2012).

The learning of English has relation to the awareness of individual differences, in terms of beliefs, attitudes, aptitudes, motivations and affective states of learners. Among these variables, particularly language anxiety as an individual difference is an affective state seriously impeding achievement in a foreign language (Gardner, 1985).

Regarding on the notion that is explained, it can be concluded that anxiety is one of the factors that influence students in learning English, especially in reading comprehension.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is related to reading, comprehending and interpreting a particular text or kinds of reading materials. According to Meo (2008), reading comprehension is a required skill for academic success in all areas of the curriculum and a significant challenge for many students. It is a requirement for succeeding students' academic because they can get new words and understanding through reading comprehension. Without having words understanding,

comprehension is impossible to have (Apriliani, Pramerta, & Sawitri, 2021).

In the learning process, students are expected to get main ideas or specific information and general information from their reading comprehension. As it is a complex task, it depends on a range of cognitive and linguistic processes. The complexity can be taken as the product of decoding and linguistic comprehension (Nation, 2019). Moreover, in reading, its purpose is for pleasure and information. Thus, reading for pleasure can be interpreted to reading without a burden. It is only for enjoyment of each individual or hobby. While reading information has something to do with the readers' need.

Purpose of reading comprehension is to improve the students' ability to understand written materials text in English. According to Wallace (1992), there are three purposes of reading: for specific purposes, for general purposes, and for pleasure. In this study, the focus is on reading for general purpose. It provides opportunities to read a wide range of relevant reading material.

There are two studies that relevant to this study and the researcher decides to review those studies as empirical review as follows: The first study is conducted with a title The Correlation between Reading Anxiety and Reading Comprehension of Second Grade Students at The State Islamic Junior High School of Siak Sri Indrapura, a correlation research in 8th grade at The State Islamic Junior High School of Siak Sri Indrapura in the Academic Year of 2017/2018. This research was conducted by Salmiah. The data were gathered through questionnaire and reading comprehension test.

The result shows that there is a significant correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension of the

second grade at the State Islamic Junior High School of Siak Sri Indrapura. For questionnaire, the value of Cronbach's Alpha was 0.880 which was higher than 0.60. It could be said that the questionnaire is reliable. Due to 0.88 > 0.80, the level of the reliability was highly reliable. For the test, the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.675 which means that test reliability level was defined as minimally reliable. It is known that reading anxiety is high enough and reading comprehension is less.

The second study was about The Relationship between Students' Anxiety and Their Achievement in Reading Comprehension: a correlation research in 8th grade students of SMPIT An-Nawawi Al-Bantani in the Academic Year of 2017/2018. This research was conducted by Herawati. The data were gained through questionnaire and test reading comprehension. The data were obtained the value of correlation between students' anxiety and their achievement in reading comprehension was -0.407. The strength of correlation is medium correlation. The writer also got N.Sig = 0.002, where significance < 0.05. It means that Ha is accepted and Ho is rejected.

It can be concluded that there is a negative correlation between students' anxiety and their achievement in reading comprehension. It means that students get lower scores of reading comprehension test if they have higher anxiety scores. On the contrary, students get higher scores of reading comprehension test if they have lower anxiety scores. In short, there is a significant correlation between anxiety and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Mengwi.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a correlational study in which the objective is to figure out the significant correlation between variables. Proper research design is needed. Several experts differ on what is meant by research design. Research design stands for pre-planned methods adopted to collect relevant data and techniques used in research. According to Creswell (2008), a research design is a research plan and procedure with data collection process and analysis methods. In addition, according to Kothari (2004), quantitative research is related to quantity or amount. That is, the data that has been collected statically is analysed to obtain findings. In this correlational research, this research wants to know whether two or more variables are related. Correlation is concerned with establishing a correlation between two or more variables in the same population.

The population of this study is the whole of grade eight students of SMP Negeri 2 Mengwi in academic year 2020/2021. The researcher chose one class as the sample. In choosing the sample, the researcher used Cluster Random Sampling which belonged to probability sampling. The researcher chose group that exists in the population at random. The total population of the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Mengwi is 337 students, consisting of 11 classes and researcher only use 1 class as sample. The researcher gave number 1 until 11 in the papers suitable a total of classes and cluster sampling will be done by lottery. The total of students was 31 students.

Data of the students' anxiety were taken from employing questionnaire. It was in the form of the Foreign Language Reading anxiety Scale (FLRAS). It was adopted from Saito et al. (1999) which consisted of 20 items. It is a Likert type questionnaire

which provides the students with five responses option. The questionnaire was in *Bahasa* Indonesia so that the students could understand it well. Reading comprehension test the researchers used the reading comprehension material of descriptive text from students' book and other source which is suitable with their level. The researchers used multiple choice consisting of 20 questions.

The researchers used questionnaire and reading comprehension test. Because it is still in a state of the Covid-19 pandemic, researchers used online research to provide research instruments to the sample of study. During this pandemic, google form and WhatsApp group were used to obtain the data. It is easy for students to access online. The researchers used questionnaire and reading comprehension test. Data analysis in this study was divided into two steps, namely prerequisite and hypothesis testing. In the first step, prerequisite testing consisted of normality and homogeneity tests, and in addition, there were a Pearson product-moment correlation and T-test in hypothesis testing afterwards.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Finding

This study used an ex-post facto research design. The correlation between those variables were figured out based on the research findings. It was also used as the data collection to determine the correlation between the two variables. Furthermore, the data presented showed the results of students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension that were collected by administering the research instruments. The instruments were questionnaire for students' anxiety and multiple choice test for the students reading comprehension.

Furthermore, when the samples' works were scored, the statistical analysis was started to be conducted. In the present study, there were two steps of statistical analysis: pre-requisite analysis and hypothesis testing. They are summarized as follows.

Table 1. The Normality Test with Shapiro-Wilk

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	f	Sig.	Statistic	f	Sig.
Anxiety	.129	1	.200*	.953	1	.185
Reading Comprehension	.137	31	.146	.946	31	.123
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance						

As the table showed above, the result of the distribution data was normal. When the result of data was greater than 0.05 the data assumed to be normal. Based on the table above, it could be seen that probability number (asymptotic significance) of anxiety was 0.185 > 0.05 and for the reading comprehension was 0.123 > 0.05, which means that the data distribution was normal. In conclusion, the data of the research variables have already fulfilled the prerequisite analysis in terms of the normality test.

Table 2. Test of Homogeneity

Group	Levene Statistic	Sig. Value	Conclusion

Students' Anxiety & Reading Comprehension	1.821	.166	Homogeneous

Based on the table above, it could be seen that the F value for reading comprehension was 1.821 with a Sig. (p) value of 0.166. Because the Sig. value was greater than the alpha of 0.05 (p > 0.05). The assumption of homogeneity of variance was met. Moreover, it shows that the data were homogeneously distributed. Thus, the data have already fulfilled the homogeneity test as the prerequisite analysis, and the analysis can be continued to the hypothesis testing. It is shown as follows.

Table 3. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test

	Anxiety	Reading Comprehension
Anxiety Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 31	-.375* .038 31
Reading Comprehension Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.375* .038 31	1 31

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table showed the correlation coefficient equalled r = -0.375, which indicated there was correlation between two variables. From the r number (-0.375) the writer could use it to know the strength of correlation between two variables. The number of -0.375 resided between 0.20 – 0.399, that means the strength in low correlation. Based on the table above showed that symbol (* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)). It was clear that there was a negative correlation between anxiety and reading comprehension.

Table 4 Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error or Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Anxiety – Reading Comprehension	7.065	18.676	3.354	-.214	13.915	2.106	31	.044

Table above showed that the significance level of all groups of the data analysed using paired-samples T-test: below 0.05. Moreover, the result showed the Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.044 and it is lower than 0.05 (0.00 < 0.05). The directional hypothesis in the present study indicated that there is a significant correlation between students' anxiety and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade-students of SMP Negeri 2 Mengwi was accepted. It could be concluded that the data had already proven that students' anxiety was significantly correlated with reading comprehension.

Discussion

The purposed of this research was to find the significant correlation between anxiety and reading comprehension of the eighth-

grade-students of SMP Negeri 2 Mengwi. The data was collected by using two instruments: questionnaire and reading comprehension test. The students were asked to fill the items of statement on the questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to know the level of anxiety. The second instrument used was reading comprehension test in the form of multiple-choice test. Because of pandemic, this research was conducted with the use of google form which was providing via WhatsApp group.

Based on the calculation, the researchers found the normality test was 0.185 > 0.05 for anxiety and for the reading comprehension was 0.123 > 0.05, which means that the data distribution was normal. In this study, based on the calculation data of homogeneity the result was 0.166. It means data the homogeneity because 0.166 > 0.05. The result of Person Product Moment was -0.375. It means there was a negative correlation between anxiety and reading comprehension. Moreover, the result showed the Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.044 and it is lower than 0.05 (0.00 < 0.05). The directional hypothesis in the present study indicated that there is a significant correlation between students' anxiety and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade-students of SMP Negeri 2 Mengwi was accepted. It could be concluded that the data had already proven that students' anxiety was significantly correlated with reading comprehension.

Based on the previous study, Salmiah (2017) found that there is a significant correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension of the second grade at the State Islamic Junior High School of Siak Sri Indrapura. Likewise, Herawati (2017) found that there is a negative correlation between students' anxiety and

their achievement in reading comprehension. She meant that students get lower scores of reading comprehension test if they have higher anxiety scores. On the contrary, students get higher scores of reading comprehension test if they have lower anxiety scores. Then, in this study, the result of the data analysis showed that there was a negative and significant correlation between students' anxiety and reading comprehension. It confirms the acceptance for the alternative hypothesis.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION
Conclusion

Based on this research, it was found that there was a negative correlation between anxiety and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Mengwi in academic year 2020/2021. The higher the students' anxiety, the lower their reading comprehension. Moreover, the result showed the Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.044 and it is lower than 0.05 (0.00 < 0.05). The directional hypothesis in the present study indicated that there is a significant correlation between students' anxiety and reading comprehension of the eighth-grade-students of SMP Negeri 2 Mengwi was accepted. It could be concluded that the data had already proven that students' anxiety was significantly correlated with reading comprehension.

Suggestion

It is believed that a comfortable situation can help students to feel relax when the students study in the classroom. Therefore, it also suggested that the teachers have to encourage the students to read the books as frequently as possible, thus it can help them to increase their ability to comprehend reading text. For the current situation because it is still pandemic covid-19

teacher can help students by providing comfortable online learning for students to use. The teachers can give the students such relevant and interesting topics for reading activities. The students are encouraged to build their spirit and interest in reading. Teacher also should help students to build up the students' confidence. Teacher also can design lessons and prepare activities or learning materials that will best address the strategies students can use to effectively overcome their respective language anxiety. The last, the findings are also expected as reference for other researchers to investigate the students' anxiety on the other skills. It is to enrich for practical and theoretical development.

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