



## The Correlation Between Students Reading Anxiety and Their Reading Comprehension at the Eighth Grade of SMPN 3 Bukittinggi

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### ABSTRACT

Theoretically, reading anxiety can affect their reading comprehension. This research is aimed to uncover whether there is a correlation between reading anxiety and their reading comprehension. Empirically, the rationalities of the research are based on the three main rationales. Firstly, The pupils experience anxiety when attempting to understand the English texts, and occasionally they exploit this as a justification to skip class. Second, students believe it is difficult to read in other languages, particularly English. Thirdly, many students become worry about making mistake. The research was a correlation research. The population of research was students of class VIII SMPN 3 Bukittinggi, aeround Five classes, consist of 140 students. The sample for the research was 140 students selected using the total sampling technique. Tests and questionnaires were used to get the data. This research utilized the Pearson Product Moment to examine the data and tested the hypothesis. The results were consulted in a t-table with a significance level of  $\alpha=5\%$ , and the t-test method was applied. Findings from the eighth grade PFS indicated a relationship between students' reading anxiety and comprehension. Strong correlation (0.668) was found for SMPN 3 Bukittinggi. Based on the strong correlation threshold of 0.60-0.799, the researcher determined that  $r_{xy} = 0.668$  with  $N 138$  was statistically significant. It indicates that whereas  $h_0$  was accepted,  $h_a$  was refused. When the research's mean,  $h_0$ , was rejected and  $h_a$  was approved, the Pearson product moment formula was used to compare it to the R-table. The results showed that  $r_{xy} (0.668) > r_{table} (0.167)$ . In summary, the findings indicated a favorable relationship between eighth-grade SMPN 3 Bukittinggi students' reading comprehension and their reading anxiety.

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### INTRODUCTION

Reading is defined by several experts. As stated by Harmer (2007), reading is beneficial for language learning as long as pupils have a reasonable

comprehension of the text. As kids read more, their skills improve. Reading has a beneficial impact on pupils' vocabulary acquisition, spelling proficiency, and writing skills. Nunan (2003) posited that reading is a seamless procession wherein readers integrate tidings via a book leveraging their past understanding to generate meaning. Johnson (2008) defines reading as the act of utilizing written material to construct significance. The two crucial terms in question are "creating" and "meaning". Reading only occurs when meaning is being generated. According to the definition, reading is the act of acquiring information and expanding the reader's understanding through written material.

The objective of both reading and listening is to achieve comprehension. Reading comprehension is the cognitive procession of acquiring, comprehending, and grasping the substance of a written text (Nunan, 1991). Reading comprehension is the cognitive process of collecting necessary information from a given text in the most effective manner feasible. Reading comprehension involves more than simply reading; it requires the reader to understand the meaning of the material, whether it is stated directly or implied (Nasir et al., 2021).

Reading anxiety is a phobia specifically allied with the activity of reading. Huang (2012) defines anxiety as a subjective experience characterized by tension, fear, and concern, which is connected to the autonomic nerve system's increased activity. Additionally, students often experience anxiety when they engage with reading materials provided by lecturers, books, or other sources. Zbornik (1988) said that reading anxiety is a distinct component of overall anxiety that is directed towards the act of reading. The phenomenon will manifest when pupils experience discomfort and bewilderment while engaging in reading tasks, leading to a decline in cognitive function. They will encounter challenges, foster a pessimistic attitude towards themselves, and ultimately diminish their self-confidence.

Based on the preliminary research by doing observation in the eighth grade classes of SMPN 3 Bukittinggi on 27<sup>th</sup> February and 02 & 09 March 2023, the researcher also interviewed some students of SMPN 3 bukittinggi at the eighth grade on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and interviewed the English teacher of eighth grade with the same day. The researcher conducted preliminary research in both classes because these classes are taught by the same teacher. Based on the preliminary research, problems were found related to the students' reading anxiety.

Evidently, pupils have difficulties when engaging in the process of reading. During a reading session, when the teacher instructed the pupils to

read a text, a few of them declined to read the material aloud in front of their peers due to feelings of apprehension and fear of making mistakes, which may potentially result in their friends mocking them. The students at that particular institution, particularly the male students, experienced feelings of anxiety, resulting in a tendency to avoid and decrease their level of engagement in classroom activities. They were apprehensive and hesitant to engage in English language practice due to their concern about making errors. Therefore, they chose to withdraw and adopt a passive stance. Besides that, the students show characteristics of reading anxiety like flushing face, the students sound very small, the heart beat fast, and also the students feeling cold. These problems because of some cases. Lack of vocabulary, lack of reading comprehension, afraid of being tested by the teacher after reading and unfamiliar cultural background have been identified as the main sources of anxiety reading foreign language.

When the learners try to attach meaning to foreign language words written and the students lack of vocabulary and not mastering the in a reading passage, they will feel immediately anxious. At some point in the reading, learners may find that they can decode words and make meaning out of a phrase, but they still cannot make sense of the entire reading passage due to their unfamiliarity with the target language culture. Moreover, Several students skipped the reading portion by requesting permission from the teacher to use the restroom, but they failed to return to the class until it was time to read the material, resulting in their missing the reading section. The syndrome induces anxiety among pupils in the classroom, perhaps impacting their skill in reading.

The elements identified by Ahmad et al., (2013) that contribute to reading anxiety include concern about the repercussion of reading, fear of making mistakes, lack of familiarity with the culture, unfamiliarity with the topic, and unfamiliar terminology. The feature of anxiety in pupils when asked to read aloud is the presence of fear and trembling. This inability to regulate their uncomfortable feelings before and after the reading activity can disrupt both reading comprehension and performance. Thus, The eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Bukittinggi show reading anxiety.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research employs quantitative research method. According to Sugiono (2018) that quantitative research is employed to investigate specific populations or samples using statistical analysis of quantitative data in order to evaluate pre-established hypotheses. This research was included in the type of correlation research because this research is to find correlations between two

research variables or more. Sukmadinata (2009) stated that correlation research is intended to determine the relationship of a variable with other variables.

In this study, the researcher made reference to two variables, specifically variable X and variable Y. Let's define reading anxiety as variable X and reading comprehension as variable Y. The study encompassed the whole population of eighth-grade students attending SMPN 3 Bukittinggi during the Academic Year 2022/2023. The sample size for this study consisted of 140 students. The sampling approach employed in this study is complete sampling. For the purpose of gathering data, the researcher employed a questionnaire and a reading comprehension exam. To evaluate the data, the researcher employed two variables to ascertain the correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study's results showed that among eighth-grade students at SMPN 3 Bukittinggi, there was a 0.668 connection coefficient between reading anxiety and reading comprehension. This indicates a direct affiliation between the level of anxiety experienced while reading and the ability to comprehend the text among eighth-grade students at SMPN 3 Bukittinggi.

The correlation coefficient of 0.60-0.799 is considered strong. The researcher found that the correlation coefficient ( $r_{xy}$ ) was 0.668 with a sample size (N) of 138, and this result was statistically significant. The item was refused and is now approved. In addition, the research discovered that the Pearson product moment formula yielded a correlation coefficient ( $r_{xy}$ ) of 0.668, which was more than the value in the r-table (0.168). As a result,  $H_0$  was rejected, and  $H_a$  was supported. The findings reveal a favorable link between reading anxiety and reading comprehension among eighth-grade students at SMPN 3 Bukittinggi. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) that states that "there is a significant correlation between students reading anxiety and their reading comprehension at the eighth grade of SMPN 3 Bukittinggi" was accepted.

### **Discussion**

This research is about the correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension of eighth grade at SMPN 3 Bukittinggi. It could be suggested that the researcher correlates between students reading anxiety as X variable and reading comprehension as Y variable. The data were collected by using questionnaire and reading test.

This research sought to investigate the link between anxiety experienced while reading and the ability to comprehend text. In light of the findings, it was found that the results of magnitude of both variables was high correlation

because it lies between 0.60-0.799. From the data, the result obtained there are 70% students have bad reading anxiety in English learning so it affects on the students' reading comprehension. In addition, Ahmat et al., (2017) said if the students fail to control their reading anxiety feeling, it will perturb both reading comprehension and performance.

The researcher can conclude that based on the interpretation table, There is a significant association between reading anxiety and reading comprehension, as indicated by a correlation value of 0.668. There was a notable association observed between two factors. As stated by Zbornik (1988). Reading anxiety is a distinct layout of anxiety that is focused on the act of reading. According to the idea, this research demonstrated a link between students' reading anxiety and reading comprehension. Clearly, if the students' reading anxiety is high, so the students' reading comprehension in studying English will low. And if the students' reading anxiety is low, the reading comprehension will also high. In other words, in the eighth grade of SMPN 3 Bukittinggi both of variables have strong correlation each other.

## **CONCLUSION**

The intent of this research was to determine if there exists a substantial association between the level of reading anxiety experienced by eighth-grade students at SMPN 3 Bukittinggi and their reading comprehension abilities. In this study, the researcher examined the relationship between the scores obtained from a questionnaire measuring reading anxiety and the scores obtained from a reading comprehension test administered to students. The research findings indicate a strong correlation (0.688) between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension in the eighth grade at SMPN 3 Bukittinggi. The researcher concluded that the correlation coefficient ( $r_{xy}$ ) of 0.688 between variables, based on a sample size of 138, falls within the range of 0.60-0.799, which is considered a high correlation. This indicates that ( $H_0$ ) was declined and ( $H_a$ ) has been authorized. In addition, the study compared the Pearson product moment formula to the  $r$ -table. The results showed that the score of  $r_{xy}$  (0.688) >  $r_{table}$  (0.167). As indicated by the findings,  $H_a$  was accepted and  $H_0$  was rejected. The results point to a positive relationship between eighth-grade SMPN 3 Bukittinggi students' reading comprehension and their reading anxiety.

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