

## STUDENTS' READING ANXIETY TOWARDS THEIR READING COMPREHENSION PERFORMANCE IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Indrawati<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *The anxiety appeared during the process of reading foreign language texts is called as reading anxiety. However, most of the research focuses on the discussion of listening, speaking, and writing. Little attention has been paid to reading. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill the hidden empty space and explore the role of anxiety in foreign language reading. In this research the writer used the correlation statistical test to describe and measure the degree of relationship between two variables. So, in conducting this research, statistical number to correlate two variable of this research is needed, they are students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension. The main goal of the study is to find out whether or not there is a positive correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension of the third grade students of SMA Negeri 3 Pangkalpinang in the academic year 2016/2017.*

**Keywords:** *reading anxiety, foreign language, learning.*

### A. Background

Language learning is an uphill struggle for most students, a very complex process. Learners' cognitive abilities and their affective factors play important parts in this process.<sup>2</sup> These two points should not be separated from each other, and it has been widely believed that affective factors like anxiety take a great role in determining learners' cognitive abilities and their language learning performance.<sup>3</sup> With the development of foreign language learning research, foreign language anxiety, a key affective factor, has attracted more and more researchers' attention since 1980s. Based on the results of many previous studies, Horwitz etc. claims that foreign language anxiety does affect foreign language learning.<sup>4</sup> Nowadays, researchers pay much of their attention to the specific aspects of language learning anxiety, like learners' anxieties in foreign language reading, writing or

---

<sup>1</sup> Dosen Tadris Bahasa Inggris STAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung

<sup>2</sup> Bacon, S. M. & Finnemann, M. D. A study of the attitudes, motives, and strategies of university foreign language students and their disposition to authentic oral and written input. *Modern Language Journal*, 1990, 74, 459-473.

<sup>3</sup> Ellis, R. *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

<sup>4</sup> Horwitz, E. Horwitz, M. & Cope, J. Foreign language classroom anxiety. *Modern Language Journal*, 1986, 70, 125-132.

listening, and they attempt to distinguish them from the general language anxiety.<sup>5</sup> Some researchers studied language learning anxiety in different countries. They all want to find out some ways of reducing learners' anxiety in language learning.<sup>6</sup>

Anxiety, a very interesting feeling, is a kind of emotion so the issue of anxiety in foreign language learning has always made language educators and researchers concerned about its causes and effects from time to time. A substantial amount of research has been conducted in this area and suggests that anxiety is a crucial factor in second or foreign language acquisition.<sup>7</sup> However, most of the research focuses on the discussion of listening, speaking, and writing. Little attention has been paid to reading. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill the hidden empty space and explore the role of anxiety in foreign language reading.

Students of XII class at SMA Negeri 3 Pangkalpinang gain reading courses for three semesters, starting from the first class to third class. They study reading for recount texts, descriptive texts, etc. In general, students have already got much basic skills in the course of reading. However, from the data obtained, some of students still got unsatisfying scores in reading courses. Based on this preliminary study, the researcher wants to know whether there is a correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension performance. Moreover the results of several studies suggest that there is a relationship between the two of these.

## B. Problems of The Studies

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a relationship between foreign language reading anxiety and reading comprehension performance of Students the first grade of at SMA Negeri 3 Pangkalpinang?

---

<sup>5</sup> Cheng, Y. S. Horwitz, E. k. & Schallert, D. l. Language anxiety: differentiating writing and speaking components. *Language Learning*, 1999, 49, 417-446.

<sup>6</sup> MacIntyre, P. D. Language anxiety: a review of the research for language teachers. *Affect in Foreign Language and Second Language Learning: A Practical Guide to Creating a Low-anxiety Classroom Atmosphere*. Ed. Young, D. J. Boston, McGraw-Hill, 1999, 24-45.

<sup>7</sup> Na, Z. (2007). A study of high school students' English learning anxiety. *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(3), 22-34.

2. Is there any significant difference between the reading comprehension performance of SMA Negeri 3 Pangkalpinang students with high, mid and low levels of language reading anxiety?

### C. Literature Review

Horwitz et al. officially proposed the concept of foreign language classroom anxiety.<sup>8</sup> According to them, foreign language classroom anxiety means complicated emotions of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors that are closely related to classroom language learning and that may show the uniqueness of the language learning process. They considered that foreign language classroom anxiety appears not only at input process but also at output levels in the process of language learning.

#### *Reading Anxiety in Foreign Language*

When foreign language readers read foreign language texts, they are trying to decode unfamiliar discourse, writing system, and cultural materials, in other words there will be a process of relating what they have already known to new information they get apparently. If encountering problems in processing them, they may get really confused with reading, and experience anxiety. The anxiety appeared during the process of reading foreign language texts is called as reading anxiety.<sup>9</sup> To explore this construct, Saito et al. used the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), measuring language anxiety related to some aspects of foreign language learning, and Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS), eliciting reading anxiety, to have a research on native English speakers of 192 French, 114 Japanese, and 77 Russian students. They found that reading anxiety was related to, but differ from, language anxiety. As a result, concerning reading anxiety, Japanese learners were the most anxious, followed by French and Russian learners.

The learners finding it uneasy to read in their target language had higher reading anxiety than those who felt reading as medium difficult, followed by those

---

<sup>8</sup> Horwitz, E. Horwitz, M. & Cope, J. Foreign language classroom anxiety. *Modern Language Journal*, 1986, 70, 125-132.

<sup>9</sup> Saito, Y., Horwitz, E. K., & Garza, T. J. (1999). Foreign language reading anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(2), 202-218.

who considered it as easy. These results of study put forward the differentiation of reading anxiety and language anxiety, and show that learners' reading anxiety differs from the specific target language and relies on how they recognize the difficulty of the target language. These findings prove the existence and uniqueness of reading anxiety towards reading comprehension performance.

### ***Studies on Reading Anxiety and Foreign Language Reading***

Hsu examined reading anxiety and reading comprehension of some EFL students and found that anxious students seemed to remember less content of the text than less anxious students.<sup>10</sup> As comparison, Sellers also studied the attainable connection of language anxiety to reading comprehension some Spanish university students who studied English. The results confirmed that reading anxiety was connected to, but contrasted from, language anxiety.<sup>11</sup> The students with high reading anxiety and language anxiety might remember less content of the given text.

To sum up, previous researches on anxiety and foreign language learning become serious issue on the discussion of (1) the relationship between language anxiety and the four language skills (i.e., speaking, listening, writing, and reading) anxiety, and (2) their parts in foreign language learning. They put forward that listening, reading and writing anxiety, is closely connected to, but can be differed from, language anxiety. Most of them discovered that there is a negative correlation between language anxiety and performance. Also, language skill anxiety and performance are negatively correlated, meaning that students with higher listening, speaking, writing, and reading anxiety seem to have lower listening, speaking, writing, and reading performance respectively.

Even though most research confirms that students with higher language anxiety are ideal to have lower performance in foreign language learning, they occasionally turn the discussion of language anxiety and foreign language reading around. There are also few studies focusing reading anxiety and foreign language

---

<sup>10</sup> Hsu, Y.C. (2004). *A study on junior college students' reading anxiety in English as a foreign language*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chung Cheng University, Chiayi, Taiwan.

<sup>11</sup> Sellers, V.D. (2000). Anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish as a foreign language. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33(5), 512-521.

reading. Moreover, studies show paradoxical results concerning how language anxiety contrasts with learners' gender and the length of language learning. Few studies only examines whether the two variables relate to reading anxiety.

#### **D. Methodology**

##### ***Participants***

A number of third-year SMA students of SMA Negeri 3 Pangkalpinang studying English as a foreign language participate in the study. All the participants had experienced five years of formal English education in junior and senior/vocational high schools. Therefore, they had mostly similar types of experience in learning English. Moreover, all of the students in this group were taught by the same teachers, used the same textbook, and took the same reading comprehension tests.

##### ***Instruments***

*Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS)*. The FLRAS designed by Saito et al.<sup>12</sup> contains 20 items measuring reading anxiety related to foreign language reading. Participants have to choose one selected answer which range to a 5-point Likert scale for each item with 1 pointing to strongly agree, 2 pointing to agree, 3 pointing to neither agree nor disagree, 4 pointing disagree and 5 pointing to strongly disagree.

*Multiple-choice reading comprehension test*. Multiple-choice reading comprehension tests are able to evaluate a reader's reading comprehension efficiently.<sup>13</sup> In the study, two multiple choice reading comprehension tests were administered to the participants in this research. In each test, participants spent 30 minutes reading a dialogue passage of about 300 words extracted from the text book used in the reading classes, and then answering 21 multiple-choice questions based on the reading. The average score of the two tests used as the participant's overall reading

---

<sup>12</sup> Saito, Y., Horwitz, E. K., & Garza, T. J. (1999). Foreign language reading anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(2), 202-218.

<sup>13</sup> Hsu, Y.C. (2004). *A study on junior college students' reading anxiety in English as a foreign language*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chung Cheng University, Chiayi, Taiwan.

comprehension performance in the research. The Pearson product moment was used to analyze the data.

### ***Procedure***

The procedure of this research was as follows:

In the first step, a questionnaire handed to all of the samples (participants) of this research and as many as 33 students were chosen as the sample. The questionnaire contains the questions about participant's name, class, and years of studying English in SMA . Still in this step, this group were given test which is named Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale, adapted from FLCAS. The scale consisted of 33 *Likert*-scale questions indicating the point of *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*. Last but not least, in the last step of the study, the participants were asked to do a reading comprehension test consisting of 30 multiple-choice items based on 3 reading passages. This test was administered to examine the relationship between foreign language reading anxiety and reading comprehension performance. All the tests material given to participants will be tested for their validity and reliability.

## **E. Findings**

### **1. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Reading Anxiety Questionnaire**

The maximum score for questionnaire was 90 if the students answered in scale 5 for all questions, and minimum score was 18 if they answered in scale 1 for all questions. To facilitate the measurement of students' reading anxiety, the raw scores are converted in the standard scores using Likert Scale formula as stated in chapter three. To see the mean score, the writer tried to calculate the mean score of the reading anxiety questionnaire by using the following formula:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{2123}{33} = 64.3333$$

Where: M = the mean.

$\Sigma X$  = the sum of all scores.

N = the total number of subjects.

So, the mean score of students' reading anxiety questionnaire of the third grade students of SMA N 3 Pangkalpinang in academic year 2016/2017 was

63.4286, the maximum score gained by the students was 84.00 and minimum score was 40.00. Then, the standard deviation was 8.09110. The following table determined the descriptive analysis of questionnaire.

**Table 1**  
**Mean, Standard Deviation, Maximum, and Minimum Score of Students' Anxiety Questionnaire**

Mean	64.3333
Median	65.0000
Mode	65.00
Standard Deviation	8.09110
Range	44.00
Minimum	40.00
Maximum	84.00
Sum	2123.00

Furthermore, to know the description of reading anxiety, the writer used central tendency (mean) which described each of aspect of reading anxiety. The result of score of each aspects, percentage and mean were compared to the following table.

The result of the score of each aspects of reading anxiety was described in the following table.

**Table 2**  
**The Total Score of each Variable X (Reading Anxiety)**

No	Aspects	1	2	3	4	5
1	I become anxious when I should read in English outside of this course for homework	0	5	14	1	13
2	I become anxious when I have to read in English out loud in class.	0	7	13	3	10
3	Generally speaking, I become anxious when I have to read English in class.	0	2	14	3	14
4	I become anxious when I have to answer questions orally in class about what I have read in English.	0	9	13	3	6
5	I feel afraid when I have to read	0	5	9	1	18

	lengthy texts in English as homework in future English courses.					
6	I fear not understanding the lengthy texts I will have to read in future English courses.	2	16	9	2	4
7	I become anxious when I am asked to write compositions in English about what I have read in this class.	1	13	12	2	5
8	I would feel anxious while reading English in class.	0	3	7	6	17
9	I am anxious in class when I am the only person answering the question advanced by my teacher in English class.	1	9	12	1	10
10	I start to panic when I know I will be graded in English class.	0	7	15	3	8
11	I feel shy when I read in English on the stage in front of the class.	1	12	7	5	8
12	I am so nervous that I tremble when I am going to attend the English written tests	1	8	8	3	13
13	I get frustrated when I am asked to read with classmates in English in a short period of time.	0	3	10	4	6
14	I worry about the written test in English class.	1	6	10	5	11
15	Going to English reading class makes me more nervous than going to other classes.	1	2	13	4	13
16	I feel anxious while doing reading tasks when there is no teacher to guide me.	0	7	10	5	11
17	I feel anxious because generally in distance education I feel unsure of myself and my abilities	1	3	7	8	14
18	I feel anxious because I am older than the other students in class and I feel unsure of my learning abilities because of that matter	0	1	7	11	14



**Table 3**  
**The Total Score of each Variable X in Percentage (Reading Anxiety)**

No	Aspects	1	2	3	4	5
1	I become anxious when I should read in English outside of this course for homework	0.00 %	15.1 5%	42.4 2%	3.03 %	39.3 9%
2	I become anxious when I have to read in English out loud in class.	0.00 %	21.2 1%	39.3 9%	9.09 %	30.3 0%
3	Generally speaking, I become anxious when I have to read English in class.	0.00 %	6.06 %	42.4 2%	9.09 %	42.4 2%
4	I become anxious when I have to answer questions orally in class about what I have read in English.	0.00 %	21.2 1%	39.3 9%	9.09 %	18.1 8%
5	I feel afraid when I have to read lengthy texts in English as homework in future English courses.	0.00 %	15.1 5%	27.2 7%	3.03 %	54.5 5%
6	I fear not understanding the lengthy texts I will have to read in future English courses.	6.06 %	21.2 1%	27.2 7%	6.06 %	12.1 2%
7	I become anxious when I am asked to write compositions in English about what I have read in this class.	3.03 %	39.3 9%	36.3 6%	6.06 %	15.1 5%
8	I would feel anxious while reading English in class.	0.00 %	21.2 1%	21.2 1%	18.1 8%	51.5 2%
9	I am anxious in class when I am the only person answering the question advanced by my teacher in English class.	3.03 %	27.2 7%	36.3 6%	3.03 %	30.3 0%
10	I start to panic when I know I will be graded in English class.	0.00 %	21.2 1%	45.4 5%	9.09 %	24.2 4%
11	I feel shy when I read in English on the stage in front of the class.	3.03 %	36.3 6%	21.2 1%	15.1 5%	24.2 4%
12	I am so nervous that I tremble when I am going to attend the English written tests	3.03 %	21.2 1%	24.2 4%	9.09 %	39.3 9%
13	I get frustrated when I am asked to read with classmates in English in a short period of time.	0.00 %	9.09 %	30.3 0%	12.1 2%	18.1 8%
14	I worry about the written test in English class.	3.03 %	21.2 1%	30.3 0%	15.1 5%	33.3 3%
15	Going to English reading class makes me more nervous than going to other classes.	3.03 %	6.06 %	39.3 9%	12.1 2%	39.3 9%
16	I feel anxious while doing reading tasks when there is no teacher to guide	0.00 %	21.2 1%	30.3 0%	15.1 5%	33.3 3%

	me.					
17	I feel anxious because generally in distance education I feel unsure of myself and my abilities	3.03 %	9.09 %	21.2 1%	24.2 4%	42.4 2%
18	I feel anxious because I am older than the other students in class and I feel unsure of my learning abilities because of that matter	0.00 %	21.2 1%	21.2 1%	33.3 3%	42.4 2%

Table 4

## Table Criteria of Percentage Interpretation Score by Riduwan

Interval	Criteria
81% - 100%	Very Strong
61% - 80%	Strong
41% - 60%	Strong Enough
21% - 40%	Weak
0% - 20%	Very Weak

“Source; Riduwan, Metode dan Teknik Menyusun Thesis, 2007”

Table 5

## Mean of Variable X (Reading Anxiety)

No	Aspects	Mean
1	I become anxious when I should read in English outside of this course for homework	3.666667
2	I become anxious when I have to read in English out loud in class.	3.484848
3	Generally speaking, I become anxious when I have to read English in class.	3.878788

4	I become anxious when I have to answer questions orally in class about what I have read in English.	3. 060606
5	I feel afraid when I have to read lengthy texts in English as homework in future English courses.	3. 969697
6	I fear not understanding the lengthy texts I will have to read in future English courses.	2. 69697
7	I become anxious when I am asked to write compositions in English about what I have read in this class.	2. 909091
8	I would feel anxious while reading English in class.	4. 121212
9	I am anxious in class when I am the only person answering the question advanced by my teacher in English class.	3. 30303
0	1 I start to panic when I know I will be graded in English class.	3. 363636
1	1 I feel shy when I read in English on the stage in front of the class.	3. 212121
2	1 I am so nervous that I tremble when I am going to attend the English written tests	3. 575758
3	1 I get frustrated when I am asked to read with classmates in English in a short period of time.	4
4	1 I worry about the written test in English class.	3. 575758
5	1 Going to English reading class makes me more nervous than going to other classes.	3. 787879
6	1 I feel anxious while doing reading tasks when there is no teacher to guide me.	3. 606061
7	1 I feel anxious because generally in distance education I feel unsure of myself and my abilities	3. 939394

8	1	I feel anxious because I am older than the other students in class and I feel unsure of my learning abilities because of that matter	4. 151515
---	---	--	--------------

**Tabel 6**  
**Criteria of mean**

Interval	Criteria
4,01 – 5,00	Very strong
3,01 – 4,00	Strong
2,01 – 3,00	Strong enough
1,01 – 2,00	Weak
0,01 – 1,00	Very weak

Source; *Metode dan Teknik Menyusun Tesis*, 2007

The table above informed the comparison mean and percentage in each aspect of questionnaire. For some aspects the mean and percentage of students' anxiety toward reading is higher than the other aspects.

### **1. Statistical Analysis of the Correlation between Students' Reading Anxiety and Their Reading Comperhension of Argumentative Text**

#### **a. The Result of Students' Reading Comperhension Test**

The instrument which used to obtain the data of students' reading comprehension was an argumentative text test. The test consist of 18 items. Therefore, possible maximum score if the students get right answer to the entire test is 100 and the minimum score is 0 if students' get wrong answer for all questions.

Afterwards, descriptive analysis of the data in table 6 showed that the maximum score gained by the students was 81.00, and the minimum score was 23.8, the mean was 46.0, and the standard deviation was 12.9683.

**Table 7**  
**Mean, Standard Deviation, Maximum, and Minimum score of**  
**Reading Test Comprehension**

Mean	46.0
Median	47.6
Mode	47.61904762
Standard Deviation	12.96836082
Minimum	23.80
Maximum	81.00
Sum	1519.0

Then, the writer summarized the scores on following table to know their categorized in very low, low, enough, good, or very good;

**Table 8**  
**The Frequency and Percentage of Students' Reading**  
**Comprehension Test Result**

Score Interval	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
0 – 20	Very Low	0	0%
21 – 40	Low	11	33.33%
41 – 60	Enough	17	51.52%
61 – 80	Good	4	12.12%
81 – 100	Very Good	1	3.03%
<b>Total</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 9**  
**Students' Reading Comprehension Result**

N O	NAMA	READIN G TEST
1	Ade Erawati	52.4
2	Al Gubran	33.3
3	Anastasya Reza	81.0
4	Annisa Intania	42.9
5	Ardhia P	52.4
6	Ari Fagas	28.6
7	Arpin Wijaya	28.6
8	Aurellia Femilia	38.1
9	Bagas Agusti	42.9
10	Devira H	38.1
11	Edwir Fyanurdin	42.9
12	Eradayana	47.6
13	Faidhol H	61.9
14	Febria M	38.1
15	Hamidah Siffa G	23.8
16	Isma Hafifah	23.8
17	Kumalasari	33.3
18	M. Ad Zayadi	47.6
19	M. Iqbal	47.6
20	Meybi Randa	57.1
21	Mini Julita	47.6

2	2	Moudy O	52.4
3	2	Mutiara Z	52.4
4	2	Namira Febiyanti	57.1
5	2	Novitasari	28.6
6	2	Rahma Hanifah	38.1
7	2	Revia Devika P	52.4
8	2	Rofiyanti	52.4
9	2	Ryan Prasetya	61.9
0	3	Sisi Karista	47.6
1	3	Tasya Dafisca	71.4
2	3	Windyarti	47.6
3	3	Zara Syafitri	47.6

From the distribution table 9 the result of students' reading test, it showed that the frequency of student and their score. The data analysis was calculated by using SPSS 17.0

- a. The result of the test showed that there was no student is in very low criteria or 0%. There were 11 students or 33.3% who are in Low criteria. Specifically: there were 2 students got score 23.8, there were 3 got score 28.6, there were 2 got score 33.3, and there were 4 students got score 38.1.
- b. The result test of student in enough criteria there were 17 students or 51.52%. Specifically: there were 3 students got score 42.9, there were 6 students got score 47.6, there were 7 students got score 52.4, and there were 2 student got 57.1.
- c. The result test of student in good criteria there were 3 students or 12.12%. Specifically: there were 2 student got score 61.9, there were 1

student got score 71.4, and there were 1 student got score 81 who is in a very good criteria (3.03%).

## 2. The Correlation between Students' Reading Anxiety and Their Reading Comprehension of Argumentative Text

The main goal of the study is to find out whether or not there is a positive correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension of the third grade students of SMA Negeri 3 Pangkalpinang in the academic year 2016/2017.

To find out the correlation between two variables above, the writer used the Pearson's product moment formula to compute the data. To carry out the statistical analysis, the working hypothesis is changed into the Null Hypothesis to know about the correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension.

To compute the correlation, the writer prepared the computation of two variables by Pearson's Product Moment Formula. There are two variables; Students' reading anxiety as variable X and their reading comprehension as variable Y.

The result of calculation was compared with the critical value in a table of significance level 5% (0.05). If  $r_{xy}$  is higher than  $r_{table}$  the correlation is significant. The result of correlation coefficient between two variables was present in the next page.

## 3. Coefficient Determination

Coefficient determination is the number or index which is used to know how much independent variable (X) contributes dependent variable (Y).

$$KP = r^2 \times 100\% = 0.015^2 \times 100\% = 0.02\%$$

On the basis of data analysis, the independent variable student's reading anxiety (X) had contribution of 0.02% to students' reading comprehension (Y), and the residue is given by other factor.



**Table 10**  
**Correlation Coefficient Pearson Product Moment Analysis between Students' Reading Anxiety and Their Reading Comprehension**

		Questionnaire	Test
Questionnaire	Pearson Correlation	1	-.416*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.016
	N	33	33
Test	Pearson Correlation	-.416*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	
	N	33	33

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

**Table 11**  
**Interpretation Coefficient Correlation Value r**

Interval Coefficient	Correlation Degree
0,00 - 0,199	Very Low
0,20 - 0,399	Low
0,40 - 0,599	Strong Enough
0,60 - 0,799	Strong
0,80 - 1,000	Very Strong

“Source: Riduwan, Metode dan Teknik Menyusun Thesis, 2007”

The table above shown the information about the result of correlation coefficient computation was 0.416 and the critical value in a table at the significant level 5% was 0.032. Since  $r_{xy}$  was higher than  $r_{table}$  the correlation was significance.

Afterward, the analysis above was known that hypothesis there was significant correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading

comprehension of argumentative text at Pangkalpinang was rejected. Then, the correlation result between two variables was also classified into interpretation coefficient correlation value  $r_{xy}$  categories as state in table 11. From the result of  $r_{xy} = 0.315$  was in the interval 0.40 - 0,599. It means that the correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension was in strong enough criteria.

### **The Strategies of Overcoming English Reading Anxiety**

According to the findings of the study, some strategies can be applied by SMA teachers to help their students overcome English reading anxiety. First, SMA teachers should encourage their students to read many kinds of materials about English-speaking countries' cultures. Either intensive or extensive reading is acceptable. Also, more lectures on Western cultures are suggested to be made in order to broaden students' academic horizon. The students may gradually become familiar with Western cultures, which is beneficial to their English reading.

Secondly, the teachers should give their students more positive evaluation whether they do well or don't have good performance in English reading so as to boost their confidence. It is believed that teachers' positive suggestions or praise are quite helpful for their students to become more confident in English reading, especially when they have difficulties. Many students need encouragement to become confident in language learning. Also, teachers should warn students of the possible anxiety they may have in English reading, which may help them alleviate their anxiety, because they may feel less stressful by thinking that it is very natural and common to have reading anxiety.

Thirdly, it is important for English teachers to teach their students some practical reading strategies such as skimming, guessing meanings of new words, inferring the main ideas of English materials and so on. Applying some good reading strategies may help students to read English very efficiently, which may make them feel more confident and less anxious in English reading. Teachers should give students some explicit instructions on how to apply reading strategies appropriately. They should select the reading materials at an appropriate level of difficulty and choose some interesting articles in the training of reading strategies.

Fourthly, English teachers should try to stimulate their students' interest in English reading and teach them the importance of accumulating English linguistic knowledge including some difficult words and grammatical rules. In order to fulfill this purpose, cooperative learning may be advocated. We know that reading comprehension exercises are generally done by one person alone. Under this circumstance, if the person meets some difficulties, he may become anxious. So cooperative learning may help change the situation. In English class, students may fall into some learning groups voluntarily. In each group the members may share their views based on their understanding of the materials. Students may exchange their experiences and feelings after reading some English passages. All this should be done in a relaxing and harmonious atmosphere. It is hoped that the cooperative work will be helpful for students to improve their interest and motivation in reading English, which is also very beneficial to their accumulation of English linguistic knowledge.

In spite of the fact that some important findings have been got in this study, there are still some limitations of the study. Firstly, more subjects are needed in future study. Secondly, the researcher only analyzed the means of the subjects' scores, without considering the relationship between reading anxiety and the subjects' English achievements.

## **F. Conclusions**

1. The findings of the study show that reading anxiety does exist widely in SMA N 3 students' English learning. With the help of questionnaires and interview with some subjects, the researcher has found five causes of the anxiety. They are students' lack of cultural knowledge of English-speaking countries, lack of confidence in reading English, lack of necessary reading skills, lack of English linguistic knowledge and lack of interest in reading English. Some measures may be taken by teachers to deal with their students' reading anxiety.

2. They should try to help their students become more familiar with Western cultures, develop some useful reading skills, boost their confidence and improve their interest in reading English. Only in this way can the students gradually get a sense of success in English reading, which may motivate them to make more efforts and help reduce their reading anxiety. Besides, teachers should spend more time in communicating with students and try to make friends with them, for the harmonious atmosphere may help reduce students' anxiety and increase their learning efficiency in English reading. In all, this study may let people know more about SMAN 3 students' English reading anxiety, which can encourage more scholars to conduct investigations in this field.

### **Suggestions**

From the conclusions above, some suggestions are offered to students' reading anxiety and reading comprehension. The suggestions are actually related with the way to improve students' reading comprehension that should be paid more attention and more serious by the teachers. The suggestions are:

1. The teacher should eliminate the students' anxiety in reading. One of the ways is by practicing extensive reading in which the students are trained to read for pleasure. They can read what they want to read. By exploring students' extensive reading, they would have an anxiety in reading. Because, in order to have reading anxiety, someone should have something which makes him or her attracting with the text being read so that teachers should select the suitable and attractive one to be given to the students in order to build their anxiety. It is aimed to build their consciousness to feel that reading is a need. To build the anxiety in reading, teacher should consider to the factors which may affect students' anxiety in reading, such as gender differences, topic anxiety or characteristics of the text. The factors which are interrelated can be used as the way teachers elaborate and design the techniques in teaching reading. It is needed to build students' anxiety in reading earlier.
2. To teach reading is not merely to make students are able to vocalize every word, sentence or paragraph, but also to make them understand the text

literally and interpretatively. Therefore, teachers should be patient in guiding the students to understand the text and asking them questions related with the text being read continuously. Alternatively, to build students' reading anxiety, teacher should be firstly began by giving games or joke related with the topic that's going to be learned. Hopefully, students will be attracted by the topic then willing to read.

## REFERENCES

- Arikunto, S. 2009. *Dasar-Dasar Evaluasi Pendidikan*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Brown, D. H. 2001. *Teaching by Principles an Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. (4th Ed.). New York: Longman.
- Bacon, S. M. & Finnemann, M. D. A study of the attitudes, motives, and strategies of university foreign language students and their disposition to authentic oral and written input. *Modern Language Journal*, 1990, 74, 459-473.
- Butler, C. 1985. *Statistics in Linguistics*. New York: Billings Ltd, Worcester.
- Cheng, Y. S. Horwitz, E. k. & Schallert, D. l. *Language anxiety: differentiating writing and speaking components*. *Language Learning*, 1999, 49, 417-446.
- Clark, H. & Eve H. C. 1970. *Psychology and Language: An Introduction to Psycholinguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dornyei, Z. 2003. *Questionnaires in Second Language Research*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Durr, W. K. 1970. *Reading Difficulties: Diagnosis, Correction, and Remediation*. New York: International Reading Association, Inc.
- Harmer, J. 2001. *The Practice of English Language Teaching: (3rd Ed.)*. London: Longman.
- Harmer, J. 2005. *How to teach English*. London: Longman.
- Hatch, E. & Anne L. 1991. *The Research Manual: Design and Statistics for applied linguistics*. Los Angeles: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.
- Hill, S. 2008. *Developing Early Literacy: Assessment and Teaching*. Hongkong: Eleanor Curtain Publishing.
- Hornby, A. S. 1995. *Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mikulecky, B. S. & Linda J. 1998. *Reading Power (2nd Ed.)*. Longman: Addison Wasley Longman Inc.
- Oxford. 2011. *Learners Pocket Dictionary: Fourth Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Peregoy, S. F. & Owe F. B. 2005. *Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL Fifth Edition*. New York: Pearson Education.

- Richard, A. C. 1985. *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*. Washington, D.C: National Academy of Education.
- Richard, J. C. et al. 1992. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. England: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Riduwan. 2007. *Metode dan Teknik Menyusun Tesis*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Saleh, M. 2001. *Penelitian Pengajaran Bahasa*. Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press.
- Setiyadi, B. 2006. *Metode Penelitian Untuk Pengajaran Bahasa Asing: Pendekatan Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu.
- Strang, R. et.al. 1997. *The Improvement of Reading*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Cheng, Y. S. Horwitz, E. k. & Schallert, D. l. *Language anxiety: differentiating writing and speaking components*. *Language Learning*, 1999, 49, 417-446.
- Ellis, R. *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Horwitz, E.K., Horwitz, M.B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125-132.
- Hsu, Y.C. (2004). *A study on junior college students' reading anxiety in English as a foreign language*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chung Cheng University, Chiayi, Taiwan.
- MacIntyre, P. D. *Language anxiety: a review of the research for language teachers*. *Affect in Foreign Language and Second Language Learning: A Practical Guide to Creating a Low-anxiety Classroom Atmosphere*. Ed.
- Young, D. J. Boston, McGraw-Hill, 1999, 24-45.
- Na, Z. (2007). A study of high school students' English learning anxiety. *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(3), 22-34.
- Saito, Y., Horwitz, E. K., & Garza, T. J. (1999). Foreign language reading anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(2), 202-218.
- Sellers, V.D. (2000). Anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish as a foreign language. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33(5), 512-521.
- Young, D.J. (1991). Creating a low-anxiety classroom environment: What does language anxiety research suggest? *The Modern Language Journal*, 75(4), 426-439.