FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS' ANXIETY IN READING COMPREHENSION OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PALEMBANG

By:
Widya Karamina[1], Annisa Astrid[2], Rizqy Dwi Amrina[3]

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang[1,2,3]

widiakramina98890@gmail.com[1], annisastrid_uin@radenfatah.ac.id[2],
rizqydwiamrina_uin@radenfatah.ac.id[3]

Abstract: This research aims to determine the level of students' reading anxiety in English, as well as to identify the causes of reading anxiety. The method of this research is quantitative. The subjects of this study were class XI students at high school in Palembang which amounted to 110 students. The researchers adopted the foreign language reading anxiety scale questionnaire, to examine students' reading anxiety levels. Meanwhile, in investigating students' potential reading anxiety factors, the researchers adopted a ready-made questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of this study showed that: the level of reading anxiety which was most experienced by 62% of students is a moderate level, and for the major factor that causes students' reading anxiety is an unfamiliar topic 57.95% of students, the second factor is fear of making mistakes with 53.64%, the third factor is worry about the effect of reading with 53.33%, the fourth factor is unknown vocabulary with 52.27%, and students have chosen the last factor is foreign culture with 52%.

Keywords: reading anxiety, reading comprehension, students' anxiety

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the skills that students must learn and master by students in learning English. Reading not only offers students information but also assists them in improving their other English skills. According to Brassell and Rasinski (2008), reading is the ability to comprehend or make sense of written content. Reading comprehension is a highly complex process involving multiple interactions between the reader and the writer and more than just the reader's response to the text (Klingner et al., 2015). In short, reading also means clearly understanding the information presented in the reading passage.

One of the student's characteristics that affects the learning process is anxiety. According to Bhatti et al. (2016), anxiety is a feeling of fear, worry, and tension; anxiety presents itself as a reaction to certain situations. Anxiety is a person's feeling of anxiety and fear of a condition because they are unsure of something that will happen soon (Ormrod, 2018)

Many studies on anxiety negatively affect the learning process; when students have problems while reading, they tend to panic because they cannot understand the content of the text (Alharbi, 2019). Therefore, foreign language anxiety will affect cognitive and strategic interference, ultimately affecting readers' reading comprehension.

A variety of factors can influence anxiety. Several things can

cause kids to become apprehensive during reading. Ahmad et al. (2013) state two variables generate worry over reading a foreign language. There are textual and personal factors to consider. The first is unknown vocabulary, which, according to Rajab et al. (2012), can limit learner understanding and cause challenges, causing anxiety and panic in students learning new terms when reading English literature. The second component is foreign topics; Kuru Gonen (2007) states that a subject that intrigues readers helps them respond flexibly and suitably to the text. When reading a foreign language, uninteresting topics in the text induce worry. Foreign culture is the third factor. According to Saito et al. (2002), students who study languages from cultures substantially different

from their own have lower levels of comprehension and anxiety.

In addition, several factors affect student anxiety. Two factors related to reading pressure are worry concerning the impact of reading and the dread of making mistakes. The different from the previously mentioned text elements. They may be related to textual factors, but as anxiety factors, they focus on students' personalities and inner feelings (Ahmad et al., 2013). Anxiety is associated with a lack of self-confidence (Muhlis, 2017). We can conclude that the fear of making mistakes can exacerbate reading anxiety through mistakes. The second is concern about the effects of reading, where students' fear of reading a foreign language is reinforced by reading aloud. Therefore, most students admit to being nervous when asked to read texts in a foreign language.

There have been many previous studies regarding students' anxiety in reading. Several researchers have studied teacher strategies for dealing with students who are anxious about reading (Valizadeh, 2021). In addition, this study examines teachers' difficulties in dealing with students who want to learn to read English (Nayernia & Babayan, 2019). In this case, the teacher's skills in developing group dynamics are needed to create a pleasant learning atmosphere. Learning can be fun if it starts with the student's potential, interests, and needs, carrying out interlude activities through various attractions and games when the class atmosphere is more conducive. Therefore, learning strategies must be student-centered, allowing students to express

themselves and actively participate in the learning process.

It can be stated that the same language problem is caused by language anxiety (Al Faruq, 2019; Zhou, 2017) it can be concluded that from reading anxiety, most students are identified as having feelings of anxiety at an intermediate level.

Based on the research results, there are similarities and differences between previous research and this research. Both focus on teaching students reading anxiety levels and use a quantitative survey research design. The difference is that the previous research did not look into the potential causes of students' reading anxiety, but the current study did.

Finally, based on my previous explanation, the writer was interested in researching to answer the following research question: 1) How was the reading anxiety level of the eleventh-grade Senior High School Students in Palembang? 2) What factors caused the eleventh-grade senior high school students' anxiety in reading comprehension in Palembang?

METHODOLOGY

In this study, researchers are supposed to describe and exhibit conclusions in numerical form, offer data in numerical format, and analyze it using statistics, therefore they utilized a quantitative research approach. Creswell and Creswell (2018) define quantitative research as examining a sample of population opinions based on research survey data and obtaining information through numerical data. This study used a survey design to measure students' anxiety levels and potential influences on

reading. This research used a questionnaire to identify students' reading anxiety and potential factors.

The population in this study was high school students in Palembang. There were three different high schools to be chosen based on the accreditation level. First is SMA Karya Ibu Palembang, accredited A. Second is SMA Mandiri Palembang, accredited B. Third, SMA Pembina Palembang, accredited B. To get generalized results, the place where students are taken as a population cannot be specific, meaning that it cannot be with just one place but more than one (Kern et al., 2016). Therefore, the researcher chose and determined three schools to be the population based on different levels of accreditation to obtain heterogeneous students.

The researcher employed a convenience sampling strategy to choose the sample. According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), A convenience sample is a group of people who are (conveniently) available to the researcher. As a result, the researcher relied solely on the available sample in those schools. Furthermore, in this strategy, the researcher enrolled in the class indicated by the teacher at each school.

Since it was not possible or the researchers had limited access to all students in the school, where the school did not allow taking the total from the population, the researchers followed the wishes of the party in the school. It turned out that the school only allowed and recommended one or two classes to be used as research samples (Locke et al., 2015). The table

below describes the sample of the research:

Table 1
Sample of the Study

No	School	Class	Number of Students	Total
1.	SMA Karya Ibu PLG	XI.IPA1	28	28
2.	SMA Pembina PLG	XI.IPS	26	26
3.	SMA Mandiri PLG	XI.IPA XI.IPS	28 28	56
		Total		**110**

In this research, for collecting data, researchers used a questionnaire. In collecting data, two types of questionnaires about reading anxiety levels and potential factors, researchers used 20 items and 26 items. This questionnaire has been translated into Indonesian to make it easy for students to answer and can be given in 20 to 25 minutes. Students are asked to score their agreement with each statement on a Likert scale of 1-5 by selecting the relevant information: 1 point for severely disagree, 2 points for disagree, 3 points for neutral, 4 points for agree, and 5 points for strongly agree. The researcher entered each foreign language reading anxiety questionnaire item's student responses into Excel. In Table 7, the identification of each answer is based on Likert's scoring. The items with positive wording were identified using a 1 to 5 positive grading scale (1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, three neither agree nor disagree, four agree, five strongly agree). Negative phrasing, on the other hand, was recognized using a 5-point scale (5 for strongly disagree, 4 for disagree, 3 for neither agree nor disagree, 2 for compromise, and 1 for highly agree).

Table 2
The Specification of the FLRAS Questionnaire

Statement	No of Questions	Total Item
Positive	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,15,16,17,19	15
Negative	12,13,14,18,20	5

Furthermore, when examining potential factors for students' reading anxiety as English learners, researchers will use the Ahmad et al. (2013) approach, which contains 26 questions and employs a 5-point Likert scale. This study's questionnaire was separated into five distinct indicators.

Table 3
Indicators of Potential Factors from Questionnaire Items

No	Aspect	Indicators	Items
1	Textual Factors	Unknown Vocabulary	1-6
		Unfamiliar Topic	7-10
		Unfamiliar Culture	11-15
2	Personal Factors	Fear of Making Errors	16-20
		Worry about the reading effect	20-26

Fraenkel et al. (2012) define *validity* as the appropriateness, significance, correctness, and consistency of something and the effectiveness of a researcher's influence. As a result, Chen et al. (2017) define *reliability* as the capacity to repeat results over time across instruments and groups of respondents. The researcher used to try out in one class of eleventh-grade students' level to check the validity and reliability of the devices.

The questionnaire used in this research is ready-made. The first validated questionnaire was the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS). The Product Moment Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.94 was utilized to test the validity of FLRAS. It was also demonstrated in a study by (Saito et al., 2002). Previously, the instrument assessed reading anxiety in French, Japanese, and Russian speakers. The FLRAS was designed to assess students' reading anxiety levels in all foreign languages. As a result, FLRAS has a high score invalidity. As a result, the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety questionnaire proved reliable. Meanwhile, The Potential Source of

Foreign Language Reading Anxiety was declared valid. According to Ahmad et al. (2013), the instrument was presented to a jury of two doctors from the Ministry of Instruction, five Language Center teachers, and two doctorate candidates in foreign language instruction.

The reliability value of the questionnaire, on the student's reading anxiety questionnaire, and the potential factor of the internal consistency reliability coefficient were determined by Cronbach's alpha. Researchers used Try Out to find out at SMA Pembina Palembang, which comprised 24 eleventh-grade students. The researcher used Cronbach's Alpha to determine its reliability in this test. The test items are reliable if the Cronbach Alpha value is more significant than 0.60. The result of the reliability of the questionnaire is 0.86,

which is greater than 0.60. This shows that the questionnaire can be used reliably to measure students' reading anxiety and potential factors for high school students in Palembang.

Table 4
Reliability value of FLRAS Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.857	20

Table 5
Reliability value of Potential Factor Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.892	26

After collecting data using a questionnaire, which is then analyzed using descriptive statistics, descriptive statistics aims to describe, summarize, or comprehend a specific data set (Franklin et al., 2017). As a result, the researchers described the percentage of students' reading anxiety score criteria and potential factors of foreign language reading anxiety. In analyzing the data based on Franklin et al.

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(2017), there are six steps of descriptive statistics:

Gather information; the researcher enters data from her FLRA into Excel based on her Liker scoring in this step.

1) Compile the data into a summary. The researchers summarize scores for each sample.

2) The researcher uses SPSS to analyze the data, entering the sample total scores and calculating the mean and standard deviation.

3) Classify the FLRA level. Using the formulas in Table 8, researchers compute the mean and standard deviation obtained with SPSS and classify students' reading anxiety levels.

4) Calculate the sample's reading anxiety level Using the overall score from the FLRA categorization results.

5) Determine the proportion of the sample who suffers from low, medium, and high reading anxiety.

The Likert score is used to determine the score for each identified student response. Positive phrases receive a score between 1 and 5, while negative phrases receive a score between 5 and 1.

Table 6
Likert's scoring

Statement	Scoring				
	S SD	D	N	A	SA
Positive	1	2	3	4	5
Negative		4	3	2	1

The student's anxiety level classification can be established after determining the mean and standard deviation. The formula that determines the classification of a student's level of reading anxiety is as follows.

Table 7
The Formula of Level Reading Anxiety Categories

Range	Level
< 57	Low
Mean - St. Deviation	
57 - 75	Medium
Low < Medium < High	
> 75	High
Mean + St. Deviation	

Researchers assigned a score of 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree) (agree) to the potential variables of students reading anxiety. Positive expressions can be found in questionnaire items. The researchers then calculated the percentages of all five indicators from the potential factors questionnaire. Consider foreign vocabulary, strange themes, unfamiliar culture, fear of making mistakes, and concerns about reading efficacy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Level of Students' Foreign Language Reading Anxiety

To answer the question about the level of students' reading anxiety scores and potential factors. Researchers use the data obtained from respondents to answer the questionnaire about students' reading anxiety and potential factors.

This section presents data relevant to the first study questions that level students' reading anxiety. It provides participants' responses to the 20-item FLRAS questionnaire. The next step is summarizing the data by totaling each student's value. The mean and standard deviation are calculated using the total score. The following is a recapitulation of students' overall scores:
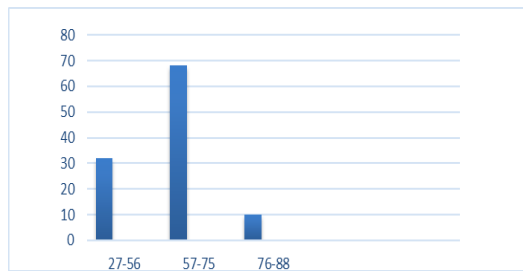
Figure 1. Total Recapitulation Students' Score

It can be deduced from Figure 4.1 that 32 students got total scores between 27-56, 68 students got total scores between 57-75, and 10 students got total scores between 76- 88.

The data were analyzed in SPSS. This stage tries to calculate the mean and standard deviation of the total scores of the students. The findings are shown in the table below:

Table 8
Descriptive Statistic of FLRAS

	N	Category	Frequencies	%	Min	Max	Mean	Std.Deviation
FLRA	110	Low (<57)	32	29%				
		Medium (57-75)	68	62%	27.0	88.0	62.03	12.288
		High (>75)	10	9%				

The descriptive statistics of reading anxiety show 110 participants, with a minimum score of 27.0 and a maximum score of 88.0. The average

foreign language reading anxiety level is 62.03, with a standard deviation of 12.288.

From the questionnaire, each of the three levels of reading anxiety is experienced by a different number of students. According to the FLRAS questionnaire analysis, 32 students with low anxiety scores of 27-56, 68 students between 57-75 at a moderate anxiety level, and 10 students with a high anxiety score > 75 at a high anxiety level.

The next stage was to count students' frequency based on their level using their overall score. According to Table 9, the frequency of student's reading anxiety levels is as follows:

follows.

Table 9
The Frequency with which Students Read Anxiously

Range	Frequency
< 57	32
57-75	68
> 75	10
Total	110

Figure 2. The Percentage of FLRA Result

According to the data above, 32 students received scores lower than 57. This suggests that 32 kids have modest levels of reading anxiety. Meanwhile, 68 students received scores ranging from 57 to 75 in the second medium-level category. This indicates that 68 kids have a moderate level of reading anxiety.

The final type is high level, which includes ten kids with scores greater than 75. This suggests that ten kids have severe reading anxiety.

The final step was to compute the percentage of the outcome FLRA based on the frequency counted. The percentage of total students with reading anxiety can be shown as
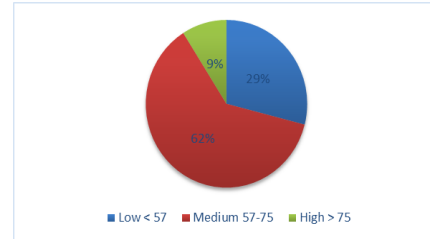
The table above shows the results of students' reading anxiety levels at SMA Mandiri Palembang, SMA Pembina Palembang, and SMA Karya Ibu Palembang. It was discovered that 29% of students have mild levels of reading anxiety. Meanwhile, 62% of students experience moderate reading anxiety, and 9% have severe reading anxiety. It may be stated that most students have average levels of reading anxiety, with the most significant number, 62%.

The Potential Factors of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety

Ahmad et al. (2013) examined the probable determinants of reading anxiety based on students' responses to 26 items in the constructed questionnaire. Table 4.5 shows students' responses to the questionnaire on potential causes of reading anxiety. The information was obtained to determine the frequency of each domain.

Table 10
The result of Percentages of Students' Response

Item	Domain	D & SD	N	A & SA	Rank	Aspects
1-6	Unknown Vocabulary	29.7%	13.48%	52.27%	2	
7-10	Unknown Topic	31.14%	36.82%	57.95%	1	Text Features
11-15	Unfamiliar Culture	32.73%	15.45%	52%	3	
16-20	Fear of Making Errors	24.82%	22.18%	53.64%	1	Personal Factors
21-26	Worry about the reading effect	26.97%	19,85%	53,33%	2	

The questionnaire responses have been tabulated and quantified.

According to Table 4.6, the first potential component was in the personal text characteristic of an unfamiliar topic, with 57.95% of students agreeing (26.36% strongly agree and 31.59% agree) that an unfamiliar topic influences their reading anxiety. In the meantime, 36.82% of students chose neither agree nor disagree, while 31.14% disagreed 19.09% disagreed and 12.05% severely disagreed). This response indicates that most students agree that unfamiliarity with the topic in the English text causes their reading discomfort.

The second domain that student have agreed upon that their factor is the fear of making errors. The assertion that worries about making mistakes could increase anxiety in reading English material was agreed with by 53.64% of students, 24.55%

strongly agreed and 29.09% agreed). Meanwhile, 22.18 percent chose neither agree nor disagree, while 31.14 percent disagreed. It suggests that most students felt that fear of making mistakes is a domain many students feel as a potential source of their reading anxiety.

The third domain that generated students' reading anxiety concerns the reading effect with an agreed answer of 53.33%, 32.42% agree and 20.91% strongly agree that they are worried about the reading effect. Meanwhile, 19.85% of those polled agreed on point 3 neither agree nor disagree, whereas 26.97% disapproved, 10.5% strongly disagreed and 16.82% disagreed. This suggests that worrying about the reading effect causes reading anxiety.

Unknown vocabulary is the fourth domain on which 52.27% of

students agree. 52.27% of students agreed, 26.21% strongly agreed, and 26.06 percent agreed). 13.48% chose neither agree nor disagree, while 24.82% disagreed, 13.64% disagreed and 16.06% strongly disagreed. Based on these comments, the fourth domain, students' potential factor, is undiscovered vocabulary. It indicates that unfamiliar terminology causes students to experience reading anxiety.

The unfamiliar culture was the last domain on which 52% of students agreed, 22.73% strongly agreed and 29.27% agreed. Meanwhile, 26.97% of students agreed, while 15.45% disapproved 15.82% disagreed and 16.91% strongly disagreed. These responses indicate that students' reading anxiety is influenced by their lack of familiarity with the cultural text of English.

In summary, the most prevalent

element students chose to cause English reading anxiety is an unfamiliar topic, which received a score of 57.95%. Fear of making mistakes is the second cause impacting students' English reading anxiety, with 53.64% of voters. The third aspect influencing students' English reading anxiety is concern about the reading effect, which 53.33% of students agreed with. Unknown vocabulary is the fourth-factor influencing students' English reading anxiety, with 52.27% of voters. With 52% of votes, the last domain chosen by students is an alien culture.

Based on the study results, it was possible to determine the amount of anxiety and the elements that generate pressure in reading in English. The researcher explains the overall results collected to address the research questions in this study: the level of

students' reading anxiety and the reasons that produce students' reading anxiety in this section. 32 students scored below 57, which means their anxiety level was low; 68 students scored between 57 and 75, which indicated they were at a moderate level of anxiety; and 10 students had scores above 75. This shows that students are at a moderate level of anxiety. As stated by Sellers (2000), the higher the level of reading anxiety students face, the greater the likelihood of students having symptoms of reading anxiety. This suggests that students with moderate levels have a similar comparison between experiencing reading anxiety symptoms and enjoying reading English literature.

Based on the data above, approximately 29% of students exhibit low anxiety levels, implying that students at this level have high self-

confidence. They do not consider reading scary; on the contrary, they enjoy it. Furthermore, 62% of students have moderate anxiety, which means it is neither too high nor too low, and students are concerned when conducting reading exercises in class. Around 9% of students have a high level of anxiety, with excessive fear and lack of confidence in reading as something complex and frightening. They also have trouble controlling and managing their anxiety. Questionnaire data shows that most students are at a moderate level of reading anxiety.

After analyzing the results of data analysis using thematic analysis, the second problem with reading anxiety in English is identifying the factors that result in students' reading anxiety and showing whether there are causes that make students experience anxiety. First, the researcher found

that the most dominant factor was unknown topics, with a percentage of 57.95%; this indicated that unfamiliarity with issues written in English texts contributed to their reading discomfort. According to Muhlis (2017), it is nearly impossible for a learner to read for pleasure and become an adept reader if the content of a text is not appealing to the learner. Therefore, reading English according to the reader's interest will lead to an excellent response to the reading activity.

Fear of making mistakes is the second sub-component of the personal factor idea. As we all know, students who lack self-confidence rarely participate in reading assignments, particularly because reading aloud can elicit a dread of making mistakes. On the other hand, avoiding reading engagement cannot be refuted. This

condition makes students fearful of reading other languages. As a result, students' language competency and reading ability exhibit irregularities when their reading performance drops. This is consistent with Miyanaga (2007), who stated that a lack of reading confidence was identified as a source of anxiety in foreign language reading. Other research into the causes of foreign language anxiety has revealed that fear of making mistakes is one probable source.

The third domain that caused students' reading anxiety concerns the reading effect. Many students fear reading in a foreign language before their peers, primarily when their teacher directs them. They are more concerned with their reading performance in front of the class than with their comprehension of the book. However, when their teacher asked them to explain the idea of the material they read in front of their peers, they would have no idea what to say because their comprehension had been lost. As a result, it may cause children to experience anxiety throughout the reading process, whether during or after reading, distorting students' reading comprehension and performance simultaneously. This has been demonstrated by several studies concerned about the reading effect and is regarded as one of the reasons for foreign language reading anxiety. Zhou (2017) investigated the elements that caused anxiety in foreign language reading and discovered that thinking about the reading effect could be a source of reading fear in a foreign language.

Unknown vocabulary is the fourth category that causes students' reading anxiety. This subfactor is

related to the words students encounter while reading in a foreign language; if the rumors are odd or difficult to grasp, it may automatically impair their comprehension, causing reading anxiety. As a result, it has been discovered that unfamiliar language is regarded as another source of concern in reading. According to Kuru Gonen (2007), unfamiliar vocabulary is another element that worries students when reading foreign language literature.

Unfamiliar culture was the last category that gave students reading anxiety. This sub-factor is concerned with the reading job, which is recognized not only as an interaction between the reader and the author's thinking but also as an interaction between the reader and the cultural knowledge of the text. If the culture of the literature is unknown to the

students, this cultural element frequently disrupts their interpretation of the text. Furthermore, Kuru Gonen (2007) discovered in his study that the text's unknown cultural basis hinders students' understanding of foreign language scripts.

In summary, the most prevalent element selected by students to cause English reading anxiety is an unfamiliar topic, which received a score of 57.95%. Fear of making mistakes is the second cause impacting students' English reading anxiety, with 53,64% of voters. The third aspect influencing students' English reading anxiety is concern about the reading effect, which 53.33% of students agreed with. Unknown vocabulary is the fourth factor influencing students' English reading anxiety, with 52,27% of voters. With 52% of votes, the last domain chosen by students is an alien

culture.

CONCLUSION

Based on study findings and a review of the factors influencing students' reading anxiety in reading comprehension. The researcher concluded that 29% (32 students out of 110) of eleventh-grade students at SMA in Palembang experienced low English reading anxiety, 62% (68 students out of 110) experienced medium English reading anxiety, and 9% (10 students out of 110) experienced high English reading anxiety. It suggests that students with medium reading anxiety have an average of reading anxiety symptoms, such as worry, nervousness, and apprehension.

Based on the frequency of probable anxiety reasons in reading English, it can be stated that an unknown topic is the most common factor experienced by eleventh graders in Palembang, accounting for 57.95% of the time. The second factor they face, with a rate of 53.64%, is the dread of making mistakes. The third factor that causes anxiety in reading is worrying about the effects of reading as much as 53.33%. The fourth domain, with a percentage of 52.27%, is unknown vocabulary. The last domain, with a score of 52%, is foreign culture.

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