# Relationships Among Reading Anxiety, Reading Self-Efficacy, And Reading Competency In The Junior High School

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A B S T R A C T

The general objective pursued is to describe and to relate the students' reading anxiety, reading self-efficacy to their reading competency in the Junior High School in Singaraja. The design applied is a quantitative research. There were 96 students recruited using cluster quota sampling. The data were gathered using a reading anxiety scale, a reading self-efficacy scale, and an objective reading competency test. The obtained data were analyzed in two phases: descriptively and inferentially. The descriptions consisted of central tendency measures and dispersion. Whereas inferentially, the data were analyzed using pair-wise correlation and multiple correlation technique. The findings show that: 1) the students' reading anxiety on higher-order-items is at high level while reading self-efficacy and reading competency on high-order-items are at the low levels; 2) the relations pair-wisely between the students' reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy, students reading anxiety and reading competency on higher-order-items are negatively and significantly, while the students' reading self-efficacy and reading competency on high-order-items are positively and significantly correlated; and 3) the simultaneous or multiple relationships of the reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy to the students' reading competency is proven to be significant.

## 1. Introduction

Reading competency is a set of attitudes, knowledge, and skills in reading. According to  Ntereke, B.B. & Ramoroka (2017) students have a variety in reading level and difficulty in high-level reading competency. They need high reading competency to attain high-level reading competency. For students, it is difficult to attain high reading's competency. Moreover, students' skill to read may be great and fast, but the matter is not only read fast, understanding what they read efficiently is the matter. By giving simple question after reading, students mostly answer the question from what is stated. Students cannot answer from the question that is not stated in the text they have read. It needs students High Order Thinking skill to understand questions in which the answer is not stated in the text. They need to understand the whole text before answering this kind of questions. Moreover in Indonesia, students' reading competency is still below the average score.

Indonesian students' reading low competency is proven by an international assessment conducted by PISA (Program for International Students Assessment) in 2012, 2015, and 2018 conducted for 15 year old learners. The result of PISA considered, Indonesian reading was still below the average of countries participating in PISA. In  PISA (2012), Indonesian ranking was only on 64 out of 65 countries participants. Indonesian score only reached 396 with the standard score 500 which means Indonesian students is far from the standard score. Then, Indonesian's curriculum is changed to fix such kind of problem. It can be realistic since Indonesian ranking rise to 60th out of 72 countries participating in  PISA (2015) with higher score 397 than before. However, Indonesian students' score had decreased. Indonesian ranking only reached 72th ranking out of 77 countries participants. Indonesian score also reached 371 only which means it was decreased. Indonesian young readers are failed to answer question with question which need high-order thinking.

Variable predictors suspected to maintain students high-order thinking in reading competency are reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy. The first, in maintaining students' high order thinking can be reached by decreasing students' anxiety to English descriptive and recount type texts, specifically in

relation with finding main idea, specific ideas, textual reference, and word meaning. Students with higher levels of reading anxiety received lower grades, meanwhile students with lower anxiety levels received higher grade (Horwitz, *et al.*, 1986). It indicates that students with low levels of reading anxiety direct students to a successful reading in relating to the criterion variable (reading competency). Foreign language reading anxiety refers to the feeling of apprehension and worry when learners have to read in a non-native language  Rajab et al, (2017). Nirmala (2017) found that students have moderate level of reading anxiety. Nirmala (2017) also stated in her research that as students' reading anxiety increase, the students' reading competency will decrease.

The second variable suspected to maintain students high-order thinking in reading is reading self-efficacy. To increase students' high-order thinking can be reached by increasing students' efficacy to English descriptive and recount type texts, specifically in relation with finding main idea, specific ideas, textual reference, and word meaning to criterion variable (reading competency). Self-efficacy is needed by students to perform their knowledge as skill with attitude. But some students' condition affects their performance. A high self-efficacy tends to bring students to achieve high competency in performance. Thus, a low self efficacy tends to bring students to have a low level in reading.

Based on the background above, it is really important to know the relationship between reading anxiety, self-efficacy, and reading competency. The present research is to describe how reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy to their students reading competency in the Junior High School, specifically at *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 1 Sawan* (SMP N 1 Sawan). It is conducted in junior high school, whereas the result of PISA test applied to 15 years old student means in Junior High School. This research is new since it combines the three variables, they are: reading anxiety, reading self-efficacy, and reading competency. This research will be based on 2013 curriculum focusing on descriptive and recount text.

## 2. Methods

The research population was the eighth grade students in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 1 Sawan* in the academic year 2019/2020. There were ten intact classes in the population with 311 students altogether. There were four classes taken with one class as trial out and three classes were sampled in order to exceed to n=30. This was also done to gain normal sample distribution. The sample size consisted of 95 students altogether (Hinkel,*et al.*,1979).

### Research design

The design of this research implemented was that of a descriptive and correlational research. The data were analyzed descriptively and then inferentially by using parametric statistics, namely 1) central tendency measures, 2) measure of dispersion, and 3) multiple relationship among reading anxiety, reading self-efficacy, and reading competency of the eighth grade students at SMP N 1 Sawan (Hinkel,*et al.*,1979)

### Research Variables

The current research investigated two combined predictor variables, namely: reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy, and one criterion variable, namely: reading competency (Hinkel,*et al.*,1979). The first predictor variable was the students' reading anxiety.  reading anxiety was indicated by: 1) Communication Apprehension, that is, a feeling of anxious when answering wrongly in reading descriptive and recount text, 2) Test Anxiety, that is a feeling of worry when tested in reading a descriptive and recount text, and 3) Fear of Negative Evaluation, that is, a feeling of nervous when evaluated negatively in reading a descriptive and recount text (Horwitz, *et al.*, 1986).

The second predictor variable was the students' reading self-efficacy. Reading self-efficacy was indicated by: 1) Mastery Experience, that is, a feeling of confident in reading descriptive and recount text, 2) Vicarious Experience, that is, an experienced feeling in understanding the main idea and specific information in descriptive and recount text, 3) Social Persuasion, that is, a belief in ability to determine the textual reference of a descriptive and recount text, and 4) Emotional Arousal, that is, feeling of excitement to determine the main idea of a descriptive and recount text (Bandura, 1997)

The third variable is a criterion variable, that is, reading competency on the English descriptive and recount texts. Reading competency is a set of attitude, knowledge, and skills (*Buku Panduan Guru Kurikulum 2013, 2013). A*ccording to Latifa (2018) there are four indicators of reading competency, namely: 1) the main idea that is a complete simple sentence which illustrates the general idea of a text, 2)

specific ideas are detailed pieces of information containing in the paragraphs, 3) textual references are pronouns in reference to specific nouns in the descriptive and recount texts, and 4) word meaning are the implicational/psychological word/phrases' meaning.

## Instruments' Validation

An instrument validation is a process of calibrating the instruments for obtaining reliable and valid instruments  Candiasa (2011). The three instruments were validated for the content validity and their reliability. The reading anxiety scale was validated for its contents validity and reliability. The instruments were judged independently by two language education experts. The content validity was measured by using Gregory's technique Candiasa (2011: 25). The analysis result shows that the two expert judges agreed as much as 66.70% or high content validity of the reading anxiety's indicators and descriptors as developed by Horwitz, *et al.* (1986). The two judges agreed as much as 66.70 that the reading anxiety's indicators are: 1) communication apprehension, 2) anxiety test, and 3) fear of negative evaluation. Therefore, the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) could be said as a valid instrument for measuring the students' reading anxiety in SMP N 1 Sawan.

The reading anxiety scale' reliability coefficient is computed to see the consistency among the reading anxiety indicators, descriptors and the items developed. To measure the reading anxiety scale's reliability coefficient, K-21 technique is used Candiasa (2011). The analysis result shows that the reliability coefficient of the reading anxiety's indicators, descriptors, and the items as developed by Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) was highly reliable = 0.830.Therefore, the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale was a reliable instrument for measuring the students' reading anxiety in SMP N 1 Sawan.

The reading self-efficacy scale will be validated by its contents. It will be validated independently by two expert judges in English Language Education, Ganesha University of Education. The content validity is measured by using Gregory's technique  (Candiasa, 2011).
The analysis result shows that the two expert judges agreed as much as 75.00% with high content validity of the Reading Self-Efficacy' indicators and descriptors as developed Bandura (1997). Both judges agreed on the content validity of the Reading Self-Efficacy Scale.

The reading self-efficacy scale's reliability coefficient is computed to see the consistency among the reading anxiety indicators, descriptors and the items developed. To measure the reading anxiety scale's reliability coefficient, K-21 technique is used  (Candiasa, 2011). The analysis result shows that the reliability coefficient of the Reading Self-Efficacy's indicators, descriptors, and the items as developed Bandura (1997) was very highly reliable = 0.836. Therefore, the Reading Self-Efficacy Scale was a reliable instrument for measuring the students' reading self-efficacy in SMP N 1 Sawan.

The reading competency test questionnaire will be validated by its contents. It will be validated independently by two expert judges in English Language Education, Ganesha University of Education. The content validity is measured by using Gregory's technique  (Candiasa, 2011). The analysis result shows that the two expert judges agreed as much as 80.00% with very high content validity of the reading self-efficacy' indicators and descriptors. Both judges agreed on the content validity of the Reading Competency Test.

The reading competency test's reliability coefficient is computed to see the consistency among the reading competency indicators, descriptors and the items developed. To measure the reading competency's reliability coefficient, K-21 technique is used  (Candiasa, 2011). The analysis result shows that the reliability coefficient of the reading competency test's indicators, descriptors, and the items as developed was very highly reliable = 0.839. Therefore, the Reading Competency Test was a reliable instrument for measuring the students' reading competency in SMP N 1 Sawan.

## Instruments' Trial Outs

After the three instruments were validated, they were tried out empirically for readability item difficulty or items facility. Readability was meant to check the students' understanding of the statements and/or questions in the Reading Anxiety Scale, the Reading Self-Efficacy, and the Reading Competency Test. The sample trial out included 32 students in SMP N 1 Sawan.

The students' ability in understanding all statements in the Reading Anxiety Scale was measured by asking them the Yes or No to each statement. All of the 18 items in the Reading Anxiety Scale could be understood by the students in SMP N 1 Sawan.

The students' ability in understanding all statements in the Reading Self-Efficacy Scale was measured by asking them the Yes or No to each statement. All of the 36 items in the Reading Self-efficacy Scale could be understood by the students in SMP N 1 Sawan.

The students' ability in understanding all questions in the Reading Competency Test was measured by asking them the Yes or No to each item. All of the 25 items in the Reading Competency Test could be understood by the students in SMP N 1 Sawan.

To ensure items difficulty or item facility (IF), the reading competency test will be tried out to a sample consisting of 32 students at SMP N 1 Sawan. The resulting 50 items for testing the students' reading competency are reported in the following table. To compute item difficulty or item facility and item discrimination, the following formulas were used  (Candiasa, 2011:108-110).

**Findings**
**Description of the students' reading anxiety, reading self-efficacy, reading competency**

Table 1 below shows the students' anxiety mean 39.60 out of the total of reading anxiety score 72. Categorically, the students' reading anxiety in High-Order-Thinking items are high. Their anxiety in reading descriptive texts about a person, an animal, a movie, a procedure, and recounttexts about person's experiences as well as an accident are high (in the range scores between 34.15 to 58.33). the students' reading anxiety discloses another interesting fact about the the range between the highest-scored and the lowest-scored students on the reading anxiety scale is very wide or equal to 41.00. The highest score on reading anxiety is 49 and the lowest score is 18.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistic of Reading Anxiety

| No | Statistics | Descriptive Values |
|----|-----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Arithmetic Mean | 39.60 |
| 2 | Range | 40.00 |
| 3 | Standard Deviation | 8.95 |
| 4 | Variance | 80.11 |
| 5 | Standard Error | 0.91 |

*Source: Data analysis of December 2019, SPSS-X 24 version*

Table 2 below shows the student' reading self-efficacy mean 40.23 out of the total reading self-efficacy score 96.00. Categorically, the students' reading self-efficacy in high-order-thinking items are low. Their reading self-efficacy in reading both the descriptive texts about a person, an animal, a place, a procedure; and recount texts about a personal experiences well as an accident are low (in the range scores between 26.23 to 48.76). The students' range score discloses another interesting fact about the students' reading self efficacy. The students' reading self-efficacy variability is large (variance= 41.43). The standard errors of measurement is less than 1%. It shows that the measurement of the students' reading self-efficacy is 99% true.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistic of Reading Self-Efficacy

| No | Statistics | Descriptive Values |
|----|-----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Arithmetic Mean | 40.23 |
| 2 | Range | 30.00 |
| 3 | Standard Deviation | 6.43 |
| 4 | Variance | 41.43 |
| 5 | Standard Error | 0.66 |

*Source: Data analysis of December 2019, SPSS-X 24 version*

Table 3 shows the students' reading competency mean 29.15 out of the total reading competency score = 100. Categorically, the students' reading competency in high-order-thinking items are low on both the descriptive texts about a person, an animal, a place, a procedure,; and recount texts about a personal experience as well as an accident. The students' range score discloses another interesting fact about the students' reading competency. The range between the highest-scored and the lowest-scored students on the reading competency is equal to 40.00. Therefore, the students' reading competency variability is very large (variance = 93.66).

**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistic of Reading Competency

| No | Statistics | Descriptive Values |
|----|-----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Arithmetic Mean | 29.15 |
| 2 | Range | 40.00 |
| 3 | Standard Deviation | 9.67 |
| 4 | Variance | 93.66 |
| 5 | Standard Error | 0.99 |

*Source: Data analysis of December 2019, SPSS-X 24 version*

**Pair-wise Correlation of Reading Anxiety, Reading Self-efficacy, Reading Competency**

Tables 4 shows the empirical evidences of the relationships among the three variables. Firstly, the students' reading anxiety and their reading self-efficacy in working out high-order-thinking items of both the descriptive and recount texts is negatively and significantly correlated (rxy = -0.77 ;α=0.01). The coefficient index of determination is as much as 59%. Put it simply, variance of the students' reading anxiety is shared in common with their reading self-efficacy in working out high-order-thinking items of both the descriptive and recount texts in SMP N 1 Sawan.

Secondly, the students' reading anxiety and their reading competency in working out high-order-thinking items of both the descriptive and recount texts is negatively and significantly correlated (rxy = -0.87; α=0.01). The coefficient index of determination is as much as 75%. Put it simply, variance of the students' reading anxiety is shared in common with their reading competency in working out high-order-thinking items of both the descriptive and recount texts in SMP N 1 Sawan.

Thirdly, the students' reading self-efficacy and their reading competency in working out high-order-thinking items of both the descriptive and recount texts is positively and significantly correlated (rxy= 0.87; α=0.01). The coefficient index of determination is as much as 75%. Put it simply, variance of the students' reading self-efficacy is shared in common with their reading competency in working out high-order-thinking items of the descriptive and recount texts in SMP N 1 Sawan.

**Table 4.** Correlation between Reading anxiety, Reading Self-Efficacy, Reading Competency

| | Reading Anxiety | Reading Self-Efficacy | Reading Competency | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Reading Anxiety** | 1.00 | -77 | -0.87 | 0.01 |
| **Reading Self- Efficacy** | -77 | 1.00 | 0.87 | 0.01 |
| **Reading Competency** | -0.87 | 0.87 | 1.00 | |

*Source: Data analysis of December 2019, SPSS-X 24 version*

**Multiple Correlation of Reading Anxiety, Reading Self-efficacy, and Reading Competency**

Table 5 shows the simultaneous or multiple correlation of the reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy to the reading competency of the students is proven to be significant ($R_{yx_1x_2}$ =0.88; α =0.01. In other words, when reading become the students' anxiety and their self-efficacy or confidence to read both the descriptive and recount texts, the students' reading competency in finding the main idea, specific ideas, textual reference, and word meanings are positively and significantly related. In prediction term, the students' reading competency could be accounted for as much as 77% by the students' reading interest and reading self-efficacy (R square =0.778 or Adjusted R square = 0.773).

**Table 5.** Multiple Correlation of Reading Interest, Self-Efficacy and Reading Competency

| R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Significance |
|---|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| 0.882 | 0.778 | 0.773 | 4.60 | 0.01 |

*Source: Data analysis of December 2019, SPSS-X 24 version*

### 3.  Result and Discussion

This study was a multiple correlation research focused on the students' reading anxiety, reading self-efficacy, and reading competency on both the descriptive and recount texts in SMP N 1 Sawan. The research results show three major findings.

First, the students' reading anxiety, reading self-efficacy, and their reading competency on the main ideas, specific ideas, textual references, and word and phrase meanings of both descriptive and recount texts are categorize as at low levels. The students' reading interests are categorized as at a high level because they were very anxious in all the three reading anxiety indicators theorized by (Horwitz, *et al.*, 1986). The students' reading anxiety firstly feared the textual references used in both descriptive and recount texts.  Secondly, they are anxious in determining the main ideas of both descriptive and recount texts. Thirdly, they are apprehended in determining the main ideas and specific ideas of both the descriptive and recount texts due to their communication apprehension. Fourthly, they are less anxious in understanding the meanings of words and phrases in both the descriptive and recount texts.

The students reading self-efficacy was found at the low level. The students' reading self-efficacy are categorized at a low level because they were not very much confident in all the four reading self-efficacy indicators theorized by Bandura (1997).The students' reading self-efficacy is firstly due to their mastery experience in determining the main ideas of both the descriptive and recount texts. Secondly, the students' reading self-efficacy is due to their vicarious experience in determining the specific ideas of both the descriptive and recount texts. Thirdly, the students' reading self-efficacy is due to their social persuasion in discovering relevant textual references both in the descriptive and recount texts. Fourth, the students' reading self-efficacy is due to their emotional arousal in determining suitable word meaning.

The students' reading competency was measured quantitatively and their reading competency lies at a low level. This level of competency in working on high-order-items on both the descriptive and recount texts could be explained as follows. The students' reading competency is firstly due to lack of their ability in determining the main ideas of both the descriptive and recount texts. Secondly, the students' reading competency is due to their ability in determining the specific ideas of both the descriptive and recount texts. Thirdly, the students' reading competency is thirdly due to their ability in discovering relevant   textual references both in the descriptive and recount texts. Fourthly, the students' reading competency is fourthly due to their ability in determining the suitable word/phrase meaning both in the descriptive and recount texts.

Second, the negative interrelation, positive interrelation, and significant interrelations between reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy, anxiety and reading competency, reading self-efficacy and reading competency could be speculated as follows. Previous research show that reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy is related negatively because when the students do have 1) an apprehension in determining the main ideas of descriptive and recount texts, 2) a feeling of anxious in determining the specific ideas of descriptive and recount texts, 3) an anxious in determining the textual references in descriptive and recount texts, 4) an anxious in determining the word meanings in descriptive and recount texts Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) They will have negatively low confident in 1) determining the main ideas of descriptive and recount texts, 2)  determining the specific ideas of descriptive and recount texts, and 3) discovering relevant textual references in descriptive and recount texts (Bandura, 1997).

Third, the relations among the two predictor variables (reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy) and the only one criterion variable (reading competency) supports the previous studies. Firstly, (Ghabdian and Ghafournia, 2016) in, they conducted a study entitled The Relationship between Iranian EFL Learners' Self- efficacy Beliefs and Reading Comprehension Ability. This research aimed to find out the significant relation between Iranian EFL learner's self-efficacy beliefs and their reading comprehension achievement. The result indicated a significant relation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension.

Aisyah (2017) conducted a study on student reading anxiety in English language classroom in EFL classroom in a Junior High School in which involving 30 students as participants. This research was found that there is a significant relationship among students' reading anxiety an students reading comprehension.

Rachmajanti & Musthofiyah (2017) conducted research to find out the relationship among treading attitude, reading self-efficacy, and reading comprehension of EFL students. This study used a convenient sampling to draw data from the 208 samples. This study showed that there are significant and positive correlation between reading competency with reading attitude and reading self-efficacy.

Nirmala (2017) also conducted research entitled reading anxiety of eighth grade students in Taman Dewasa Jetis Junior High School. She found that students' anxiety level were in moderate level. She

also found that there was negative correlation between students reading anxiety and reading competence which mean, when students' reading anxiety increased, the students' reading competency will decrease.

Conway (2017) also conducted a study entitled reading comprehension and self-efficacy. This study aimed to investigate whether or not there is a correlation between self-efficacy and students' reading comprehension in high school students. This study found that there is a significant relationship between students' self-efficacy and students' reading competency.

Fitri *et. al.* (2019) conducted a study about the correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension. Correlational and quantitative research model was applied. There are 237 correspondents. The data were collected by using reading self-efficacy questionnaire and reading comprehension test. This study found that there was a positive and significant correlation between students' reading self-efficacy and students' reading comprehension (Fitri *et. al.*, 2019).

Morali (2019) conducted a study which aimed to examine the Turkish Foreign Learners' reading self-efficacy in terms of gender, educational level, Turkish language achievement level, and the number of Turkish book read. This research found that there is no significant difference in Turkish foreign language learners' reading self-efficacy in term of gender. But there were significant differences in reading achievement, educational level, and the number of book read.

The relevant research support this present research which there are a negative correlation between reading anxiety to reading self-efficacy as well as reading competency and there is a positive correlation between reading self-efficacy to reading competency. This present research also found the multiple correlation among the three variables as a novelty of this research.

## 4. Conclusion

The result of this research shows; firstly, the students' reading anxiety is at high level, the students' reading self-efficacy is at low level, and students' reading competency is at low level. Secondly, the relations pair-wisely between the students' reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy, students' reading anxiety and reading competency, the students' reading self-efficacy and reading competency on high-order-items on both the descriptive and recount texts in SMPN 1 Sawan are positively and significantly correlated. Thirdly, the multiple relationships of the reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy to the students' reading competency is proven to be significant. In other words, when students become anxious in reading, students' self-efficacy will be reduced to be low to read both the descriptive and recount texts. It leads the students' reading competency in finding the main idea, specific ideas, textual reference, and word meanings are negatively from reading anxiety to reading self-efficacy, positively from reading self-efficacy to reading competency and they are significantly related.

In order to reduce students' reading anxiety and increase students' reading self-efficacy, it is suggested the following program and techniques.
1) The school and EFL teachers should have a literacy program in reading. Previous researches show that literacy rich environments are the most effective ways to support the development of literacy in reading by sharing book readings.
2) In order to develop literacy culture in a family, a school, and a society, the Indonesia Ministry of Education and Culture initiated 'Gerakan Literasi Nasional(GLN)', national literacy movement since 2016. The so-called GLN was decreed to be implemented in all schools in Indonesia. The EFL teachers and the students should be involved seriously in the program.

In order to be competent on high reading competency on high-order-items, the EFL students should be trained using millennial reading strategy, emphasizing the four skill dimensions, namely, critical thinking skill in reading, creative effort in reading processes, collaborative endeavors in working on high-order-items, and communicative skills in working out the reading indicators.

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