

The Correlation Between Reading Anxiety and Reading Comprehension in Junior High School Students

Amanda Aprilia Wulandari

Universitas Negeri Surabaya
amandaapriaw@gmail.com

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki hubungan antara kecemasan membaca siswa dan pemahaman membaca mereka. Desain kuantitatif korelasional digunakan untuk menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan dari 38 siswa di salah satu SMP swasta di Gresik. Penelitian ini menggunakan kuesioner yang diadaptasi dari English Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Inventory (EFLRAI) dan tes pemahaman membaca yang diadaptasi dari buku teks siswa. Teknik analisis data dilakukan dengan menggunakan IBM SPSS Statistics 26. Melalui penelitian ini peneliti menemukan bahwa kecemasan membaca siswa sebagian besar berada pada tingkat sedang. Hasilnya juga menunjukkan adanya korelasi negatif dan signifikan yang kuat antara kecemasan membaca dan pemahaman membaca, dengan koefisien Korelasi Pearson Product Moment sebesar -0,755 dan nilai p sebesar 0,000. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa siswa dengan kecemasan membaca yang lebih tinggi cenderung memiliki pemahaman membaca yang lebih rendah, sedangkan siswa dengan kecemasan membaca yang lebih rendah cenderung memiliki pemahaman membaca yang lebih tinggi. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman tentang dampak kecemasan membaca terhadap kemampuan membaca siswa.

Kata Kunci: korelasi, kecemasan membaca, kemampuan membaca

Abstract

This research investigates the relationship between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension. A quantitative correlational design was employed to analyze the data collected from 38 students at one of the private junior high schools in Gresik. The study used a questionnaire adapted from the English Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Inventory (EFLRAI) and a reading comprehension test adapted from students' textbooks. Data analysis techniques were carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics 26. Through this research, the researcher found that the majority of students' reading anxiety was at a medium level. The results also indicated a strong negative and significant correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension, with a Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient of -0.755 and a p-value of 0.000. The findings suggest that students with higher reading anxiety tend to have lower reading comprehension, while those with lower reading anxiety tend to have higher reading comprehension. The study contributes to the understanding of the impact of reading anxiety on students' reading abilities.

Keywords: correlation, reading anxiety, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

There are four things that students need in learning English. There are reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. The most important skill to develop is reading because, without good reading skills, students will find it difficult to learn other skills (Kartika et al., 2023). In addition, according to Snowling & Hulme (2007), the importance of reading is highlighted in several key areas. They were cognitive development, educational achievement, social and economic benefits and mental health. Therefore, it is important for students to have good reading comprehension. There were many definitions of reading comprehension. According to Dewi (2020), reading comprehension is an activity for understanding the

meaning of the text in order to understand what is explained in the text as a whole. Apart from that, this way of determining the essence of a text is also called reading comprehension (Nisak, 2023). According to (Elleman & Oslund (2019), there were key components of reading comprehension. The first component is inference generation. It is the ability to draw conclusions and make connections that extend beyond the explicit information presented in the text. The second component is background knowledge. It refers to the prior knowledge and experiences that readers bring to a text. This component significantly influences comprehension, as a well-developed knowledge base allows readers to better interpret and integrate new information. The third component is vocabulary knowledge. A robust vocabulary

is fundamental to reading comprehension, as it directly impacts a reader's ability to understand texts. Vocabulary development should be a continuous focus throughout education, as it not only aids in decoding words but also enhances the ability to grasp the meanings of phrases and sentences. The next component is comprehension monitoring. It involves self-regulation during reading, where readers assess their understanding and employ strategies to clarify confusion or enhance comprehension. This skill allows readers to recognize when they do not understand something and to take appropriate steps to resolve that confusion, such as rereading or seeking additional information.

Reading can be challenging, especially when the material is unfamiliar, technical, or complicated (Zhou & States, 2017). Low reading performance can raise students' reading anxiety. Mohammadpur & Ghafournia (2015) found that students with low reading performance have a problem processing the ideas of the books, and one of the factors that influence this condition is students' reading anxiety. Anxiety itself is a natural reaction in the form of worry, tension, and lack of self-confidence experienced by every human being (Putu et al., 2021). Meanwhile, reading anxiety is usually defined as feelings of discomfort and stress when reading (Mardianti et al., 2021). According to Zahro & Faruq (2019), foreign language reading anxiety is a complex emotional and mental state that students experience when trying to read and understand texts in a language that is not their native tongue. According to Putu et al. (2021), there were several aspects of reading comprehension that can significantly affect readers' psychological condition and anxiety such as unfamiliar words and cultural background. Students may experience anxiety due to unfamiliar words and cultural references in the text. to comprehend the text effectively. The perceived difficulty of the reading material can also increase anxiety levels. Besides, a lack of vocabulary and prior knowledge can contribute to anxiety. Furthermore, students learning a foreign language may experience anxiety specifically in reading and comprehending texts in that language. This anxiety can arise because there were errors or a lack of understanding about the text, which made students feel afraid. which can significantly impact their reading performance.

In their research, Mardianti et al. (2021) and Syafitri et al. (2022) explained that there were three types of anxiety related to reading activities. There is a top-down reading anxiety type. This type of anxiety occurs when students struggle to identify minor ideas, acquire the gist of the text, or identify the main idea of a specific paragraph. Causes of top-down reading anxiety are difficulty in identifying minor ideas, inability to acquire the gist of the text, difficulty in understanding the overall meaning or main

idea of the text, and difficulty in identifying the main idea. There is also a bottom-up reading anxiety type. This type of anxiety occurs when students struggle to comprehend the definitions of words they think they recognize, encounter a large number of unfamiliar words, or struggle to pronounce unknown words. Causes of bottom-up reading anxiety are difficulty in understanding word meanings, meeting with unknown words, and struggling in pronouncing unknown words. The other type is classroom reading anxiety. This type of anxiety occurs when students become anxious about teacher corrections of pronunciation or translation errors. It is related to the linguistic aspect of English as a foreign language and the need for sufficient vocabulary knowledge. Causes of classroom reading anxiety is teacher corrections of pronunciation errors and translation errors.

Several studies have proven that EFL students in Indonesia have anxiety in reading. Wulandari & Islamy (2022) stated that 73.7% of junior high school students who participated in their research had high reading anxiety. Meanwhile, Rohman (2019) found that 70.8% of senior high school students involved in his research had a medium level of reading anxiety. Putu et al. (2021) also found that the reading anxiety of vocational high school students was at a high level. At the university level, there was research from Risanta, (2021) which showed that 47% of undergraduate students involved had medium reading anxiety. Regarding this matter, there were several research related to the students' reading comprehension, students' reading anxiety, and the correlation between them. Some of these research were conducted on Indonesian students, one example was a study conducted by Astuti & Haris (2018). The study conducted at one of the senior high schools in Karawang investigated the association between high school students' anxiety and their reading comprehension. The findings revealed that there was no substantial link between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension abilities.

In addition, there were also two other studies that were similar to the study. They were researches on the correlation between students' anxiety and reading comprehension in students at one of the vocational high schools in Batam which was conducted by Dewi (2020) and research on this correlation in text recount material at a vocational high school that was conducted Oktaviana et al. (2019). Researchers have explored the relationship between student anxiety and reading comprehension in two separate studies. Dewi's (2020) research on one of the vocational high schools in Batam found no significant correlation between students' study anxiety and their reading comprehension. High level of students' reading anxiety played no role in students' reading comprehension tests. Meanwhile, Oktaviana et al. (2019) found different

results. Students' anxiety and reading comprehension had a positive correlation. The correlation between the two was high. There was also a study of the same field at different levels of education. It was a study on the correlation between students' anxiety levels and their ability to comprehend written material in one of the junior high schools in Bali. This research was conducted by Putu et al. in 2021. Unlike the previous research, (Putu et al., 2021) stated that the correlation between anxiety and reading comprehension is inverse: as one variable (anxiety) increased, the other variable (reading comprehension) decreased. This meant that students who experienced higher levels of anxiety tended to perform worse in reading comprehension tasks compared to students with lower anxiety levels. This suggested that anxiety may be a significant factor in affecting students' ability to understand and process written information effectively.

However, only a few recent research have examined the correlation between students' reading comprehension and students' anxiety in reading. One of these kinds of research was research conducted by Mardianti et al., (2021). The researcher at one of the universities in Malang studied the relationship between reading anxiety and reading comprehension among ESP students. Their findings revealed a substantial, moderate-to-strong negative correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension skills. In other words, as students' anxiety levels increased, their reading comprehension scores decreased. Conversely, as anxiety levels decreased, reading comprehension scores improved. Because there was still not much research on this in junior high school students, the researcher conducted research on the correlation between students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension in junior high school students.

To investigate it, this research refers to the following research questions:

1. What is the level of students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension in reading English?
2. Is there any correlation between students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension in junior high school?

Based on those research questions, the objectives of this present research were to:

1. Find out the level of students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension
2. Find out whether the reading anxiety of the students correlates with their reading comprehension

METHODS

This research was quantitative research. Quantitative research gathers a range of numeric data (Ahmad et al., 2013). This would be used by the researcher to investigate

the correlation between the level of students' reading anxiety (high, medium, or low) and their reading comprehension. Since this study focused on the correlation between reading anxiety and comprehension, it utilized a correlation design. A correlation design is a type of descriptive research, distinct from experimental research. (Rohman, 2019).

Participants in this research were students at one of the private junior high schools in Gresik. There were 4 classes in this school. Before carrying out this research, through observations, the researcher found that students there often felt nervous if asked to read or work on questions containing English text in front of the class. During English teaching and learning activities, when teachers and students encounter English texts, teachers often ask students to read them first. However, students often refuse because they feel pessimistic and not confident. Students also lack confidence in their own abilities when asked to do reading comprehension assignments, so they often cheat with their friends. The total population in this school was 113 students. The researcher determined the samples in this school by using the convenience method. Convenience sampling, which is included in non-probability sampling, involves selecting individuals who are readily available and easily accessible, often without a random or representative selection process (Nisak, 2023). This method was chosen because, in this study, junior high school students as participants did not have to have certain special criteria. As long as they are junior high school students studying English at school who have students' reading anxiety, they can be participants in this research. The sample to be used in this study consists of all grade 8 students. The 8th-grade students in this school consist of 48 students. The researcher involved 10 students as trial respondents for the purposes of testing the validity and reliability of the data. Meanwhile, the participants in this research were 38 students. This number of samples had met the number of samples needed in correlation research. Cohen said that the minimum number of samples used in correlation studies is 30 (Nisak, 2023).

The researcher used two instruments to find answers to research questions. To determine students' reading anxiety, the researcher used a questionnaire adapted from the English Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Inventory (EFLRAI) test developed by Zoghi & Alivandivafa (2014). This questionnaire was in the form of a Likert scale. To avoid misunderstandings, the researcher provided an Indonesian version of the instrument to the participants. Another instrument that the researcher used was the reading comprehension test adapted from the task book that they use as a learning resource at school. It was an English task book for grade 8th junior high school students published by CV Starwin. There were 25 multiple

choices that should be done in 90 minutes. This instrument was also in paper-based form. The researcher conducted a reading comprehension test first. This test used a paper-based form. Participants were asked to answer 25 multiple-choice questions. The specified time limit was 1 hour. After 1 hour, the participants' work was collected. Then, the researcher distributed a paper-based questionnaire about reading anxiety. Reading comprehension and reading anxiety tests were performed by participants under the supervision of the researcher.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used IBM SPSS Statistics 26. To classify students' anxiety levels, the researcher calculated the total score for each student first by adding up all the scores that each participant obtained using Microsoft Excel. The researcher also calculated the reading comprehension score for each student, provided that each incorrect answer received a score of 0 and a score of 1 was given for the correct answer. The following was the guideline for determining the student's total reading comprehension score:

$$\text{Total score} = \frac{\text{Total score of the correct answers}}{25} \times 100$$

Then, the researcher analyzed the data using descriptive statistics to answer the first research question. The researcher divided the level of students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension into the low level, medium level, and high level. The following is a formula by Gonen (2007) that the researcher used as a guide in determining the level of students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension.

Table 1. Categorization of the Level

Type	Formula	Score
Low level	Mean-Standard Deviation	Lower than the result
Medium level	Between the score of the low level and high level	
High level	Mean+Standard Deviation	Higher than the result

The categorization of students' reading anxiety and comprehension levels provided the foundation for addressing the second research question. To address this question, the researcher conducted a normality test to determine the appropriate method for analyzing the correlation between reading anxiety and comprehension.

Before collecting data, the researcher tested the two instruments first on trial respondents. Then, the researcher checked their validity and reliability. To check the validity of the two instruments used, the researcher confirmed this by using Pearson Product Moment in IBM Statistics 26 Program SPSS. The significance value of each questionnaire question to measure reading anxiety was

below 0.05 and the significance value of the EFLRAI to measure reading comprehension was also below 0.05. Both significance values were below 0.05. According to Hidayati et al. (2023), the Pearson validity test is considered valid if the significance value is less than 0.05. This means that both instruments are valid to be used. Meanwhile, for the reliability test, the researcher also used the Cronbach Alpha test in the IBM Statistics 26 SPSS Program. The reliability value for the reading anxiety questionnaire was 0.959. Meanwhile, the reliability value of the reading comprehension test was 0.970. Both values are above 0.7. Data is said to be reliable if the value is above 0.7 (Cohen et al., 2007). This means that both instruments used are reliable.

Before analyzing the data, the researcher first tested the normality of the data distribution to determine the method that would be used to analyze the data. The following were the results of the data normality test carried out with SPSS.

Table 2. Test of Normality

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
R. Comprehension	.139	38	.062	.924	38	.013
R. Anxiety	.090	38	.200*	.952	38	.106

Based on this table, the normality test result for students' reading anxiety data was 0.2. Meanwhile, the normality test result for students' reading comprehension data was 0.06. According to Mishra et al. (2019), if $p > 0.05$ then the data is called normally distributed. Both values were greater than 0.05. This meant that the data was normally distributed.

Therefore, the researcher used Pearson Correlation Product Moment to analyze the correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension. Below are the results of the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The number of students who participated in answering the questionnaire and reading test given by the researcher was 38 students. The questionnaire and reading test consisted of 25 items. The results of the descriptive statistical analysis are shown in the table below.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Reading Anxiety

Descriptive Statistics			
Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Top-Down Reading Anxiety			
1. It is worrying to me when the ideas expressed	38	3.08	1.302

	in the text are culturally unclear			
2.	I get upset when I lack previous knowledge about the ideas expressed in the text	38	3.29	1.228
3.	When I cannot recognize minor ideas (details) in the text it worrying to me	38	3.42	1.200
4.	I am nervous when I cannot spot the main idea of a certain paragraph	38	3.37	1.282
5.	It bothers me when I cannot express my opinions or feelings about the text	38	3.11	1.226
6.	I am nervous when a certain sentence is long and has a complex structure	38	3.21	1.234
7.	It bothers me when a passive voice is used in a sentence	38	2.79	1.069
Mean		3.16875		
Bottom-Up Reading Anxiety				
8.	I do not feel at ease when the title of the text is unfamiliar to me	38	3.03	1.127
9.	I worry when I cannot get the gist of the text although no new vocabulary items or grammatical points exist in the text	38	3.74	.978
10.	I feel uneasy when I cannot figure out the meanings of unknown words	38	3.13	1.277
11.	It bothers me when I encounter a lot of words whose meanings are unclear	38	3.13	1.298
12.	I get upset when I cannot figure out the meaning of a word that I feel I have seen before	38	3.05	1.293
13.	It bothers me when I feel unable to look up a word in the dictionary	38	3.24	1.125
14.	I get confused when the word that I know has a different meaning in the sentence	38	3.53	1.109
15.	I get upset when I come across idioms that are unfamiliar to me	38	2.95	1.184

16.	It makes me feel uneasy when an unfamiliar is made up of several parts or syllables	38	3.08	1.282
17.	When a certain sentence is grammatically unfamiliar it worries me	38	3.18	1.159
18.	I feel upset when the tense of a certain sentence is unclear to me	38	3.68	.962
19.	I worry when I am unable to recognize different parts of speech such as adjectives, adverbs, or connective words	38	2.97	1.174
20.	I get confused when what I know about a grammatical point does not make any sense	38	3.53	1.109
Mean		3.249231		
Classroom Reading Anxiety				
21.	It bothers me when the instructor calls on me to read out	38	2.71	1.271
22.	It worries me when the instructor calls on me to translate a piece of an English text into our first language	38	3.37	1.172
23.	When the instructor asks me reading comprehension questions it worrying to me	38	2.95	1.293
24.	It upsets me when the instructor chooses uninteresting texts to read in class	38	3.18	1.182
25.	I am nervous when the instructor uses English as a medium of instruction and hardly ever makes use of our first language	38	2.95	1.272
Mean		3.1125		
Valid N (listwise)		38		
Total Mean		3.1868		

Based on the table above, most students feel anxious when they were faced with a situation where they have to decode text such as understanding each particular word in

the text, interpreting the meaning of words arranged in such a way, and interpreting unfamiliar words. Meanwhile, the following are the results of the analysis of students' reading comprehension.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Reading Comprehension

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Inference Generation			
Question1	38	.95	.226
Question2	38	.87	.343
Question3	38	1.00	.000
Question4	38	.61	.495
Question5	38	1.00	.000
Question7	38	.76	.431
Question9	38	.47	.506
Question11	38	.68	.471
Question13	38	.79	.413
Question15	38	.66	.481
Question16	38	.76	.431
Question17	38	.55	.504
Mean		0.758333	
Background Knowledge			
Question6	38	.71	.460
Question8	38	.71	.460
Question10	38	.18	.393
Question12	38	.92	.273
Question14	38	.66	.481
Question21	38	.89	.311
Question22	38	.82	.393
Mean		0.698571	
Vocabulary			
Question18	38	.45	.504
Question19	38	.63	.489
Question20	38	.76	.431
Question23	38	.89	.311
Question24	38	.66	.481
Question25	38	.55	.504
Mean		0.656667	
Valid N (listwise)	38		
Total Mean		0.7172	

Based on the table above, most students experience deficiencies in reading ability in the area of vocabulary. Their ability to interpret or understand certain words is still lower than their ability to understand the main content of the text and understand reading according to their prior knowledge.

Table 5. Mean and Std.Deviation of Students' Reading Anxiety

Statistics		
R. Anxiety		
N	Valid	38
	Missing	0
Mean		79.66
Std. Deviation		11.259

Table 6. Mean and Std.Deviation of Students' Reading Comprehension

Statistics		
R. Comprehension		
N	Valid	38
	Missing	0
Mean		71.79
Std. Deviation		10.519

Based on this table and the formula by Gonen (2007) which the researcher explained in Chapter 1, the researcher concluded a guideline score for categorizing students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension levels. The categorization can be seen in the table below.

Table 7. Categorization of Reading Anxiety Level

Score	Level
< 68.401	Low reading anxiety
68.401 until 87.919	Medium reading anxiety
> 87.919	High reading anxiety

Table 8. Categorization of Reading Comprehension Level

Score	Level
< 61.211	Low reading comprehension
61.211 until 82.309	Medium reading comprehension
> 82.309	High reading comprehension

Based on those categorizations, the level of students' reading anxiety and reading comprehension can be shown as follows.

Table 9. Students' Scores and Levels

Participant s	Reading Anxiety Score	Reading Anxiety Level	Reading Comprehension Score	Reading Comprehension Level
Student 1	88	3	60	1
Student 2	89	3	64	2
Student 3	88	3	60	1
Student 4	94	3	56	1
Student 5	71	2	60	1
Student 6	92	3	68	2
Student 7	98	3	56	1
Student 8	95	3	64	2
Student 9	59	1	88	3

Student 10	89	3	56	1
Student 11	87	2	64	2
Student 12	95	3	64	2
Student 13	92	3	56	1
Student 14	57	1	84	3
Student 15	89	3	56	1
Student 16	88	3	60	1
Student 17	61	1	88	3
Student 18	82	2	88	3
Student 19	81	2	76	2
Student 20	67	1	72	2
Student 21	63	1	84	3
Student 22	84	2	72	2
Student 23	79	2	80	2
Student 24	75	2	80	2
Student 25	73	2	80	2
Student 26	76	2	76	2
Student 27	83	2	72	2
Student 28	79	2	72	2
Student 29	58	1	80	2
Student 30	65	1	84	3
Student 31	85	2	84	3
Student 32	83	2	76	2
Student 33	68	1	84	3
Student 34	78	2	76	2
Student 35	76	2	80	2
Student 36	77	2	76	2
Student 37	77	2	68	2
Student 38	86	2	64	2

*1 : Low
2 : Medium
3 : High

Table 10. Students' Reading Anxiety Levels

Level Of Anxiety					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	21.1	21.1	21.1
	2	18	47.4	47.4	68.4
	3	12	31.6	31.6	100.0
Total		38	100.0	100.0	

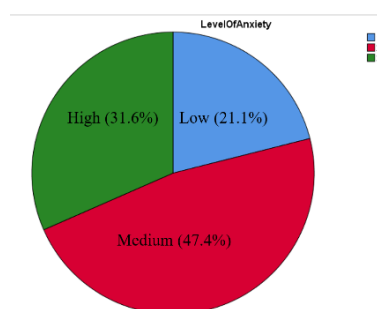
*1 : Low
2 : Medium
3 : High

Based on the table above, 21.1% of students had reading anxiety at a low level. At this level, their reading anxiety test score was lower than 68.401. Among all levels, the number of students who have low reading anxiety was the smallest. The fact that only 8 students fall into this category suggested that the majority of students still face some level of reading anxiety. This means that only a few students disagree or strongly disagree with the statements on the reading anxiety questionnaire.

The result of this research found that mostly the level of reading anxiety among students was medium, indicating that the students' reading anxiety was neither extremely high nor extremely low. The percentage of students who had medium reading anxiety was 47.4% which was 18 students. This number was considered large. The number of students at this level reached almost half of the total number of students as participants. It indicated that this problem did not only occur in a few individuals but was a significant concern that affected the majority of students. At this level, their reading anxiety test score was between 68.401 and 87.919. Rohman (2019) in previous research also found that the majority of students' reading anxiety level at one of the vocational schools in Sidoarjo was also at the medium level. Meanwhile, Wulandari & Islamy (2022) found that the majority of students' reading anxiety at one of junior high school in Baubau was at the high level (73.7%).

Meanwhile, the rest of them had a high level of reading anxiety. There were 31.6% which was 12 students. Students were declared to have high reading anxiety if their score was above 87.919. This percentage was also quite large. To make it easier to understand, there was a pie chart.

Figure 1. Students' Reading Anxiety Levels



Meanwhile, the level of students' reading comprehension can be shown as follows.

Table 11. Students' Reading Comprehension Levels

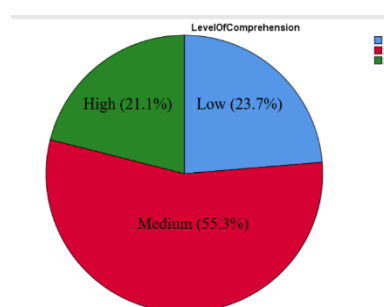
Level Of Comprehension					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	1	9	23.7	23.7	23.7
	2	21	55.3	55.3	78.9
	3	8	21.1	21.1	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0		

Based on the table above, 23.7% of students had low reading comprehension. There were 9 students at this level. At this level, their reading comprehension test score was lower than 61.211. The number of students who have low reading comprehension was greater than students who have high reading comprehension. This indicated that there were still many students who struggled with understanding and interpreting written texts.

In students' reading comprehension, the dominant level was also at the medium level. The percentage of students who had medium reading comprehension was 55.3% (21) students. This number included more than half of the total number of students as participants. The fact that more than half of the students scored between 61.211 and 82.309 on the reading comprehension test indicated that these students were not faring poorly, but they were not excelling either. This proved that in general, reading anxiety and reading comprehension were related. The finding that most students were at the medium level of reading comprehension was significant because it highlighted a common challenge faced by many students. This finding was different from the findings in several previous relevant studies. In their previous research, Wulandari & Islamy (2022) also found that the majority of students' reading comprehension level at one of junior high school in Baubau (81.1%) was at the low level. Rohman (2019) also found that the majority (30) of students at a vocational school in Sidoarjo had reading comprehension that was at the second lowest level. Besides, in their research, Mardianti et al., (2021) stated that the reading comprehension level of ESP students at one of university in Malang was also low.

However, the level that had the smallest number of students was the high level. But, the frequency of students who had high reading comprehension was almost the same as the frequency of students who had low reading comprehension. There were 8 (21.1%) students in this level. Their scores were above 82.309. This group of students exhibited exceptional reading comprehension skills, indicating a thorough understanding of written texts. Their ability to extract detailed information, make inferences, and understand complex ideas suggested that they have developed strong reading strategies and are well-equipped to handle advanced reading materials. To make it easier to understand, there was a pie chart.

Figure 2. Students' Reading Comprehension Levels



Data analysis regarding the correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension is presented in junior high school students using Pearson Correlation Product Moment was conducted. The results of the data analysis can be seen as follows.

Table 12. The Descriptive Statistics of Reading Anxiety and Reading Comprehension

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
R. Anxiety	38	79.66	11.259
R. Comprehension	38	71.79	10.519
Valid N (listwise)	38		

Table 13. Correlation Coefficient

Correlations			
		R. Comprehension	R. Anxiety
R. Comprehension	Pearson Correlation	1	-.755**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	38	38
R. Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	-.755**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	38	38

The table showed that the p-value was 0.000. The p-value is smaller than 0.05 shows a statistically significant correlation (Almquist et al., 2019). Therefore, it can be stated that there was a significant correlation between students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension. Meanwhile, the r value was -0.755. This value indicated that the correlation between students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension was

negative. That meant if students had low reading anxiety, then students had high reading comprehension. If a student's reading anxiety was high, then the student's reading comprehension was low. As the value of variable 1 rises, the value of variable 2 falls (Almquist et al., 2019). From this table, it can also be concluded that the correlation between students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension was strong. According to Almquist et al. (2019), a value of -0.9 to -0.7 indicates a strong correlation. The finding of this research indicated a strong negative significant correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension especially in the vocabulary aspect. Based on table 3, in terms of reading anxiety, students feel most anxious in terms of vocabulary mastery. In terms of reading comprehension, students' most lacking abilities are also in terms of vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, the presence of bottom-up reading anxiety is related to vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension.

The result of this research was in line with the findings of several researches conducted in various educational contexts. For instance, Putu et al. (2021) conducted a study in one of the junior high schools in Bali, which revealed a negative correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension. Similarly, (Mardianti et al., 2021) studied ESP (English for Specific Purposes) students at one of university in Malang and found a significant relationship between reading anxiety and reading comprehension. Additionally, Rohman (2019) investigated students in a vocational school in Sidoarjo and discovered the fact that students who experienced strong reading anxiety tended to have lower reading comprehension scores. Furthermore, Abdulhusan (2019) conducted a study on preparatory schools in Misan, which also highlighted a negative correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension. These researches collectively suggested that reading anxiety can significantly impact students' ability to comprehend reading materials. By understanding the correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension, teachers could develop targeted interventions to support students who experience high levels of reading anxiety.

Regarding technical issues that occurred during the research, the students involved as participants were often considered busy and less able to be conditioned. However, the researcher had anticipated this in advance by administering paper-based tests. This was done because there were concerns that if students were allowed to bring smartphones to class and take tests online, students would take the tests without seriousness and without full concentration. This was because students rushed to complete the test so they could immediately use their smartphones for other things in class, such as playing

games and social media. During the reading anxiety test, there had been several terms that students had not been familiar with, even though the questionnaire had been given in the Indonesian version. So the researcher had needed to explain to them first about some terms that they had not understood. Apart from that, the researcher also needed more time and precision in inputting all student work results into Microsoft Excel and IBM Statistics. The researcher had to do it manually one by one because the test was paper-based.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to determine the correlation between students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension in junior high school. The results showed that the majority of junior high school students who participated in this research had reading anxiety and reading comprehension at the medium level.

Additionally, there was a strong negative and significant correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension. This conclusion was based on Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis proved that the higher the students' reading anxiety, the lower their reading comprehension. The lower the student's reading anxiety, the higher their reading comprehension. This also proved that there was reading anxiety which plays a role in students' reading comprehension. For further research, the researcher suggested conducting more detailed research on what factors influence students' reading anxiety in junior high school so that students, teachers, and parents can find solutions to overcome students' reading anxiety. Additionally, exploring the effectiveness of various reading strategies and materials would be beneficial in developing more tailored and effective support for students with reading difficulties, especially in terms of vocabulary. Therefore, it is hoped that in the future teachers can try out certain strategies with students in class to find out whether they can reduce students' reading anxiety during learning English. If this strategy can reduce students' reading anxiety, then it will also be able to help students improve their reading comprehension. Because, if their reading anxiety is lower, their reading comprehension will also be higher.

REFERENCES

- Abdulhusan, F. R. (2019). Investigating the Relationship between the Anxiety and Reading Comprehension and Its Impact on Preparatory Schools Students 'Performance in Misan. *Journal of Basic Education College*, 15.

- Ahmad, I. S., Al-Shboul, M. M., Rahman, Z. A., Burhan, M., & Basha Madarsha, K. (2013). The potential sources of foreign language reading anxiety in a Jordanian EFL context: A theoretical framework. *English Language Teaching*, 6(11), 89–110. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n11p89>
- Almquist, Y. B., Kvart, S., & Brännström, L. (n.d.). A practical guide to quantitative methods with SPSS.
- Astuti, D. W., & Haris, N. F. (2018). The Relation Between Students' Anxiety and Reading Comprehension. *Proj (Professional J English Educ. 1 (4): 406*. Doi: 10.22460/project.v1i4.p406-412.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., Lecturer, P., Morrison, K., & Lecturer, S. (n.d.). *Research Methods in Education*.
- Dewi, D. S. (2020). the Correlation Between Students' Study Anxiety and Students' Reading Comprehension. *ANGLO-SAXON: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*, 11(1), 81. <https://doi.org/10.33373/as.v11i1.2405>
- Elleman, A. M., & Oslund, E. L. (2019). Reading comprehension research: Implications for practice and policy. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 6(1), 3-11.
- Gonen, K. S. I. (2007). L2 reading anxiety: Exploring the phenomenon. *JALT 2006 Conference Proceedings*, 32(1), 1029–1038.
- Kartika, Y., Ilma, R., Sari, R. K., Islam, U., Raden, N., & Palembang, F. (2023). DIDASCEIN: Journal of English Education September 2023, Vol.4 No.2 Reading Anxiety and Reading Comprehension in Senior High School Students. 4(2), 76–82.
- Mardianti, N., Wijayati, P. H., & Murtadho, N. (2021). The correlation between students' reading anxiety and their reading comprehension in ESP context. *International Journal of Language Education*, 5(2), 15–29. <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v5i2.15440>
- Mishra, P., Pandey, C. M., Singh, U., Gupta, A., Sahu, C., & Keshri, A. (2019). Descriptive statistics and normality tests for statistical data. *Annals of Cardiac Anaesthesia*, 22(1), 67–72. https://doi.org/10.4103/aca.ACA_157_18
- Mohammadpur, B., & Ghafournia, N. (2015). An Elaboration on the Effect of Reading Anxiety on Reading Achievement. 8(7), 206–215. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n7p206>
- Hidayati, R., Kusmanto, A. S., & Kiswanto, A. (2023). Development and construct validation of Indonesian students self-confidence scale using Pearson product moment. *Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction*, 13(3), 94-103.
- Nisak, S. I. (2023). The Correlation Between Students' Reading Attitude and Their Reading Comprehension. 6(1), 4–10.
- Oktaviana, N., Harmayanthi, V. Y., & ... (2019). The Relationship Student Anxiety and Reading Comprehension of Recount Text. *Prosiding ...*, 1–5. <http://jurnal.stkipkusumanegara.ac.id/index.php/semnara2019/article/view/144>
- Putu, N., Dewi, H. R., Gde, I., & Agus Pramerta, P. (2021). Correlation Between Anxiety and Reading Comprehension: a Study in a Secondary School. *Academic Journal on English Studies*, 1(2).
- Risanta, A. A. (2021). The Correlation Between College students' Reading Anxiety and Their Reading Strategies. *RETAIN: Journal of Research in English Language Teaching*, 9(2), 128-135.
- Rohman, F. F. (2023). The Correlation Between Secondary Students' Reading Anxiety and Their Reading Comprehension. *RETAIN: Journal of Research in English Language Teaching*, 11(01), 25-30.
- Snowling, M. J., Hulme, C., & Nation, K. (Eds.). (2022). *The science of reading: A handbook*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Spiro, R. J., Bruce, B. C., & Brewer, W. F. (Eds.). (2017). *Theoretical issues in reading comprehension: Perspectives from cognitive psychology, linguistics, artificial intelligence and education (Vol. 11)*. Routledge.
- Syafitri, N. (2022). Students' Reading Anxiety and Students' Reading Comprehension. *English Education Journal*, 10-17.
- Wulandari, S., & Islamy, F. (2022). Reading Anxiety and Its Effect Towards Reading Comprehension on Grade Eight Students of Smp Negeri 1 Baubau. *English Education Journal*, 124, 119–126. <https://doi.org/10.55340/e2j.v8i2.1080>
- Zahro, A., & Faruq, A. (n.d.). Reading Anxiety in English as a Foreign Language for Undergraduate Students in Indonesia.
- Zoghi, M., & Alivandivafa, M. (2014). EFL Reading Anxiety Inventory (EFLRAI): Factorial Validity and Reliability. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734282913513686>