

# **A Phenomenon of Anxiety as an Effect of Reading Literacy in English of Indonesia Learners' Context**

**Tiray Febria Zananda**  
**Palembang of University**  
[tirayfebria@gmail.com](mailto:tirayfebria@gmail.com)

**Nia Anggraini**  
**Palembang University**

**Abstract:** Anxiety, an unpleasant state of inner turmoil and apprehension, often accompanied by nervous behavior, has proved that effects on the reading English literacy of Indonesia foreign learners' context. The anxious feeling gives negative attitudes toward reading since each single thing is easy to comprehend by involving emotional. In order to reduce the anxious feeling, reading atmosphere is important to be implemented in order to help the learners' literacy in English increase. It is not only that providing materials that cope the familiar local culture in English language materials help students become aware of how their local cultures enriches their linguistic resources and social practices, thereby making their language learning meaningful.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Foreign language researchers have long been aware that language learning is often associated with an affective factor in which the factors relate to the way of emotional sometimes maintain the brain works. If positive emotional appear, not surprisingly, the aims of learning can be easily reached, but if negative emotional appears such as lack of motivation, lose self-esteem, anxiety, and etc. are the failure of reaching the learning objectives. One of the major concerns among researcher and educators is that anxiety may have negative effects on academic achievement. The influence of negative emotional indicates negative attitudes towards learning also like being passive in learning, feeling pressure, uneasiness, worry, nervousness and apprehension to prepare well for class, negative concept of their own ability before implementing something, being afraid to have bad judgment in which it is assumed a threat of image gets failure in language learning.

Therefore, the issue of anxiety has been recognized as important predictors of foreign language performance. A plenty of experts claim an impact on learning that among anxiety, performance, and its interference in language competence have the possible relationship each other in learning language (Horwitz, Hortwiz, & cope, 1986).

Obviously, it relates to the fact that Marwan's finding in his research (2007) in Pontianak, Indonesia, shows that most learners have experienced a certain degree of anxiety in their FL learning. Factors like lack of confidence, lack of preparation and fear of failing the class have become the primary causes of their anxiety. 2.6 of 3 indicating agree that the most one is lack of preparation. A teacher who has already had well preparation before doing his/her duty does not guarantee to have such a successful teaching and learning covering all the learners' enjoyment during the process; moreover for those who do not.

Nevertheless, previous researches are clearly associated most with the oral performance in the foreign learning classroom. At the first glance, reading seems not to be influenced by anxiety. Indeed, reading seems having least influence on foreign anxiety effects. As the result, a few of researchers have focused on reading anxiety. Indeed reading is essential in learning language. Of the four skills, reading can be regarded as especially important because reading is assumed to be the central means for learning new information (Grabe & Stoller, 2001).

However, most of learners in Indonesia still struggles in facing difficulties reading in English. It is emphasized by (Hamra, 1993) that indicated the ability of Indonesian students to read English texts was very low. In a line with Diem & Novitasari's research (2012) discovered 85% of 45 pupils in Palembang, South Sumatera in Palembang was very poor, 10% poor, 5% average and no pupil was in good or excellent category in the pre-test of reading literacy. In the post-test, however, only 15% was very poor, 70% poor, 10% average, and 5% good. While in the control group's pre-test, 90% was in very poor category and 10% was in poor category. Unfortunately, in the posttest, all of the students (100%) were in very poor category. It indicates that reading literacy in English is still in the low level of English literacy.

Therefore, regarding essential of reading and reading literacy in English is still the major barriers Indonesian learners are facing nowadays, it is imperative to reveal the influencing factors of anxiety in English foreign reading of Indonesia learners context. Hence, this paper figures out such factors that become causes of anxiety in reading literacy in English of Indonesia Learners' Context.

## II. DISCUSSION

As Gygax et al. (2007) states that readers naturally make emotional inferences as they read to make sense of characters and plot in stories. It is because emotions play a role in learning to read in which provides a critical tool in comprehending print because they provide value, meaning, and strategies when problem solving (Eynde et al. 2006).

Regarding the importance of reading, it is essential that students who learn English as their foreign language (hereafter, EFL students) establish good English reading habits because they are very much involved in and greatly benefit from English reading practices. Without the ability to read, therefore, the opportunities for academic and occupational success are limited. However, most Indonesia learners are struggling with reading and do not show the least bit of interest in getting better at it, their academic achievements suffer across it. This condition may be concerned in taking steps to discover if a learning disability is the problem. Nevertheless, if a disability is not at play it could be the student is suffering from reading anxiety.

According to Spielberg (1983), "Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system." It gets emotional plays a big charge in the learners' mind in learning. If the learners express the anxious feeling, they tend not to eager to learn, lose motivation, and underestimate their own ability.

In fact, this feeling influences reading skill in which such a case foreign language reading anxiety gives a negative experience as they read texts written in a second or foreign language. (Saito, Horwitz, and Garza, 1999). From the assume, English foreign learners in Indonesia become not accustomed to reading English text because of the anxious influence.

Three causes are focused as such problematical areas get the learners experience the anxious phenomenon:

1. **The Reading Text**
  - **Uninteresting Topic**

Materials for reading given by class teacher are often not self-selected ones and are limited to topics related to academic genre, topics that not all students can benefit. In other words,

in-class literacy campaign does not always provide or promote interesting reading materials. (Rosita, 2006)

- **The knowledge of reading English text**

The texts contained complex linguistic structures in a reading text or difficult language elements (grammar and vocabulary). It is emphasized by Sulisty and Suharmanto's research (2007) found that EFL Malang are experienced anxiety because of the content and world background knowledge (a score of 57 points); and a score of 90 points at the reading strategies.

2. **The reading course**

It is emphasized by Hamra & Satriyana (2010) that almost all the participants in South Sulawesi (84, 61%) stated that the English learning difficulties were due to the lack of teaching facilities, the insufficient knowledge of English grammar, English vocabulary, texts, reading skills, and reading strategies.

3. **The learner' perception towards reading**

It relates to the learners positive belief about reading. In fact, having positive belief does not motivate them to read English for pleasure; rather, it is school assignments that appear to be their biggest motivation. Based on Iftanti's research (2012) conducted in east Java, 95,24 % of the learners believe that English can improve their reading skills, but 68,50% recognized that they read because of the teachers/lectures ask to read:

Obviously, the three facts as the three factors that emerge a phenomenon of anxiety in reading literacy in English of Indonesia learners' context in which such a way, it contrasts to what reading should be:

1. Proficient reading requires the metacognitive processes of evaluating comprehension and regulating difficulties (Snow et al., 1998). Learners who are struggling with the complicated language have little confidence in their ability to succeed in reading and little sense of themselves as readers.
2. Emotions play a role in learning to read in which provides a critical tool in comprehending print because they provide value, meaning, and strategies when problem solving (Eynde et al. 2006).

3. These behaviors may be evident through the course of the reading and will be determined by the nature of the student's reading difficulty as well as the content and context of the reading task. Feelings of competence and self-determination engendered by a reading task likely affects the reader's intrinsic motivation for it (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

### **III. CONCLUSION**

Anxiety, an unpleasant state of inner turmoil and apprehension, often accompanied by nervous behavior, has proved that effects on the reading English literacy of Indonesia foreign learners' context. The anxious feeling gives negative attitudes toward reading since each single thing is easy to comprehend by involving emotional. Having good emotional leads into achieve an expected result, whereas the learners express negative emotional feeling like an anxiety, not surprisingly. The anxious feeling experienced by the learners while reading English texts gets them to be reluctant readers in English. Indeed reading has such a power to master language due to each single knowledge or information or aspects can be found, no wonder, it seems like the most fundamental skill of knowledge. The three causes of reading literacy in English are discovered.

In order to reduce the anxious feeling, reading atmosphere is important to be implemented in order to help the learners' literacy in English increase. As Krashen's state that (2004) states that reading for pleasure alone is potent enough to facilitate the growth of one's language development. Concerning the following ways sound good: first, the text selection should be considered by giving importance to what students feel and expect from the text they are to read. In other words, interesting materials or allowing them to find the appropriate English reading topic aims to meet their needs as the foreign learners and the language users in which it expects to carry them into joy and happiness reading experience and reading habit is directly practiced.

It is not only that providing materials that cope the familiar local culture in English language materials help students become aware of how their local cultures enriches their linguistic resources and social practices, thereby making their language learning meaningful.

### **REFERENCES**

- Ryan R. M. & Deci E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 25: 54–67.
- Diem C. D. & Novitasari R. (2012). Exploring online resources for/with fifth graders to cultivate reading habits and increase English literacy achievement. *Journal of Education Research and Review*, 1(3): 38-47.
- Eynde, P., De Corte, E. & Verschaffel, L. (2006). Accepting emotional complexity”: a socio-constructivist perspective on the role of emotions in the mathematics classroom, *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, 63: 193-207
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F.L. (2001). Reading for academic purpose: Guidelines for ESL/EFL teachers. In: M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 187-203). US: Heinle & Heinle.
- Gygax, P., Tapiero, I. & Carruzzo, E. (2007). Emotion inferences during reading comprehension: What evidence can the self-paced reading paradigm provide? *Discourse Processes*, 44 (1), 33-50
- Hamra, A. (1993). Advancing Child Language Development. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Keguruan*. XVIII (3): 167-171.
- Hamra, A. & Eny S. (2010). Developing a model of teaching reading comprehension. *TEFLIN Journal*, Vol 21(1).
- Horwitz, E. K., Micheal B. Horwitz & Joan Cope. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2).
- Horwitz, E.K., Horwitz, M.B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125-132.
- Iftanti, Erna. (2012). A survey of the English reading habits of EFL students in Indonesia. *TEFLIN Journal*, Vol. 22 (2)
- Krashen, S.D. (2004). *The power of reading* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann and Westport, CONN: Libraries Unlimited.
- Marwan, Ardi. (2007). Investigating students’ foreign language anxiety. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, vo. 3.
- Rosita, E. (2006). Causes of problems in reading comprehension: A case of Indonesian learners. Unpublished paper. Atma Jaya Catholic University

- Saito, Y., Horwitz, E., & Garza, J. (1999). Foreign Language Reading Anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83, 202-218.
- Snow C, Burns S, Griffin P, eds. (1998). Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children. Washington, DC: Natl. Acad. Press
- Spielberger, C. D. (1983). Manual for the State–Trait Anxiety Inventory (Form Y). Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden.
- Sulistyo G.H. & Suharmanto's research. (2007). Archetypal EFL readers: preliminary empirical evidence substantiated from selected discriminating variables. *TEFLIN Journal*, Vol. 18 (1)