

**The Correlation between Reading Self-Efficacy and Reading Comprehension**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this research was to find out the correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension. The research applied correlational study which used quantitative design. The sample was 273 of twelfth grade students of science class at SMAN 5 Bengkulu. The data were collected by using two instruments: (1) the reading self-efficacy questionnaire which was used to measure the students' reading self-efficacy and (2) reading comprehension test which was used to know the students' reading comprehension. The correlation between the two variables was calculated by using Pearson Product Moment in SPSS 15. The result shows that there is a significant correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension. The score of significance level is  $< 0.05$  ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ) which means that H1 was accepted and H0 was rejected. So, it can be inferred that the higher the reading self-efficacy, the higher the reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** Reading Comprehension; Self-Efficacy

**Introduction**

In learning English, there are four skills that should be taught to have competence in English, listening, speaking, reading and writing. The four basic English language skills are divided into two categories, receptive skills and productive skills. Productive knowledge of a word is traditionally defined as what one needs to know about a word in order to use it while speaking or writing (productive channels); receptive knowledge is what one needs to know in order to understand a word while reading or listening (receptive channels), (Crow, 1986).

Reading ability plays a vital role in someone's life. Students should have an input first before they can produce an output of language. So that, a student needs to get lots of target language exposure by listening and reading as much as possible in order to achieve their productive knowledge. It is a cornerstone for success, not just in school but throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success will inevitably be lost (Anderson et al, 1985). Based on the quotation above reading is very important for the students because all of the student's learning activities will involve reading skills, and the success of their study also depends on their ability to read. Moreover, reading becomes one of the skills that tested in national examination in Indonesia.

Self-efficacy can be said as an important possession of a human. Self-efficacy is related to specific situations and tasks, which is not the cases for related concepts like self-esteem, self-confidence and locus of control (Maibach & Murphy cited by Bijl & Baggett, 2001). Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives (Bandura, 1994/1998). In other words, self-efficacy is the beliefs that individuals hold about their abilities. Self-efficacy is not of a general nature, but related to specific situations. Individuals can judge themselves to be very competent in a specific field and less competent in another field (Bijl & Baggett, 2001).

In learning a language, a learner should have much interaction in the target language. By considering the importance of input in learning language, the researcher thought about some things that can make learners understand their reading easily. The reason for including self-efficacy as a variable in this research is that self-efficacy is related to motivation and achievement in academic areas such as language arts, mathematics, and science (Pajares & Valiante, 2002). It is also based on the researchers' experience, self-efficacy is an important possession of a human because it can help us mastering something. For example, the first learner has a high reading ability and many experiences in reading, but

he is not confidence that he can make a good summary of his reading task. The second learner has only an average reading ability and little experience in making summaries, but he is confidence that he can work hard to make a good quality summary of his reading task. On the next day, the first learner told his teacher that he was sick or his book was lost due to the lack of self confidence and encouragement. On the other side, the second learner has a high motivation that pushed him to collect the task.

Many researchers had done the research in this field. One of them is Salehi and Khalaji. Research by Salehi and Khalaji in 2014 was conducted to investigate whether there was any significant relationship between reading self-efficacy beliefs and reading comprehension in Iranian EFL upper-intermediate learners. The subjects were 48 Iranian EFL upper-intermediate learners. The results showed that there was a significant strong positive correlation between reading self-efficacy beliefs and reading comprehension. Another researcher is Hadomi who conducted the research to find out the correlation between the students' reading self-efficacy and final grades in academic reading class of language and art department Satya Wacana Christian University. 43 students were asked to be a participants. The result showed that there was a positive significant correlation between students' reading self efficacy and final grades.

Based on the explanation of the theories and the former research, the researcher decided to do a research on the correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension. This research was intended to find out whether self-efficacy positively or negatively correlates with students' comprehension especially in reading comprehension. The researcher conducted the research at SMAN 5 Bengkulu because this school is one of the best schools in Bengkulu. This school has an 'A' accreditation. Science class was also chosen because they were in a one major and their materials were same.

## Theoretical Framework

Self-efficacy is related to how someone feels for being able to do something. Bandura (1994) stated that self-efficacy beliefs contribute to motivation in several ways: They determine the goals people set for themselves; how much effort they expend; how long they persevere in the face of difficulties; and their resilience to failures. Bandura cited by Schunk (1995) also defines self-efficacy as people's judgement of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance. Reading self-efficacy related to the someones' belief in their reading ability. Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perencevich cited by Ferrara (2005) defines self-efficacy for reading refers to individuals' assessments of how well they think they can accomplish a particular reading task and it is influenced by how well they have performed on similar tasks, including any accompanying feedback and encouragement received. Based on the definition above, the researcher concluded that self-efficacy is the individual's belief on the ability to manage performance and action so that they can predict their ability. Meanwhile, reading self-efficacy is the individuals' belief on his ability to understand a reading.

Self-efficacy comes from several sources. As Bandura (1994) stated that, there are four sources of self-efficacy, those are mastery experience that comes from an individual experiences in achieving a task or goal successfully, physiological and emotional factors that relate to the body's response and the emotional response influence someones' self-efficacy, vicarious experiences that relate to provided social models and verbal persuasion.

Reading comprehension can be defined as "a holistic process of constructing meaning from written text through the interaction of the knowledge the reader brings to the text, the reader's interpretation of the language that the writer used in constructing the text, and the situation in which the text is read" (Lenz, 2005). Reading comprehension is the application of a skill that evolved for other purposes (listening or oral comprehension) to a new form of input (text) (Kirby, 2007). Perfetti et al.

(2004) maintain that comprehension occurs as the reader builds a mental representation of a text message. It is important to indicate that there are different levels in reading comprehension, and that the levels interact. Kirby (2007) and Perfetti et al. (2004) state that the comprehension processes occur at multiple levels across units of language: word level, (lexical processes), sentence level (syntactic processes), and text level.

There are some kinds of reading. As Harmer cited by Fatimah (2014) divided kinds of reading into two kinds. First is intensive reading, this reading involves the teachers that guide students to read a text in order to achieve an understanding of the text and how the meaning is created. Content study reading and linguistic study reading are also often grouped together and called intensive reading (Broughton et al 1980). Second is extensive reading, this reading activity is the readers read longer texts and it is usually for pleasure and involves global understanding. Survey reading, skimming, and superficial reading are sometimes grouped together and called extensive reading (Broughton et al 1980).

Reading text in English divided into several types. According to Anderson and Anderson cited by Fatimah (2014), text has two categories, those are literary and factual, in which literary texts consist of stories, movie scripts, limericks, fairy tales, plays, novels, song lyrics, mimes, and soap operas. This category has three main text types; those are narrative, poetic, and dramatic. In contrast, factual texts consist of advertisements, announcements, internet web sites, current affairs shows, debates, recipes, reports, and instructions. The main texts that are included in this category are recount, response, explanation, discussion, information report, exposition, and procedure.

### **Method**

The research design used in this research was quantitative research. The applied method of the research was correlational method. The hypotheses for this research were H1: there is a significant correlation between students' reading self-efficacy and their reading comprehension on the twelfth grade students of science class at SMAN 5 Bengkulu and H0: there is no significant correlation between students' reading self-efficacy

and their reading comprehension on the twelfth grade students of science class at SMAN 5 Bengkulu. Then, 273 students in eight classes of science class at SMAN 5 Bengkulu was chosen as a sample in this research.

The instruments of this research were reading self-efficacy questionnaire and reading comprehension test. The questionnaire items were adapted from the previous research by Li and Wang (2010). The researcher changed the format, from a question become a statement. The researcher also added some items in order to suit the questionnaire to the samples' materials. The samples' materials come from curriculum 2013 and the English teacher. The total score of 20 items questionnaire was used to know the students' reading self-efficacy. The reading material was a reading TOEFL test by Longman cited by Sipayung (2015). The right answer of 50 items test was used to know the students' reading comprehension.

Before calculating the correlation, there were two steps that must be accomplished. They were the normality test and the homogeneity test. In calculating the normality of the data, the researcher used Kolmogorov-Smirnov in SPSS 15. The next calculation were the homogeneity test, the researcher used the homogeneity test in SPSS 15. After that, to examine the hypotheses, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment in SPSS 15. At last, the researcher interpreted the correlation by using the interpretation of product moment correlation. The table of the interpretation can be seen below:

**Table 1:** The interpretation of Product Moment Correlation

<b>Coefficient Interval</b>	<b>Degree of Interpretation</b>
0.00 – 0.199	Very low
0.20 – 0.399	Low
0.40 – 0.599	Medium
0.60 – 0.799	Strong
0.80 – 1,000	Very strong

### **Result**

A data was normally distributed if the significance level is  $>0.05$ , whereas if the significance level is  $<0.05$ , the data was not normally distributed. From the result of the normality test, the significance level for

reading self-efficacy questionnaire (X) in this research was  $0.164 > 0.05$  and the significance level for reading comprehension test (Y) in this research was  $0.188 > 0.05$ . Therefore the two data were normally distributed because the significance levels of the reading self-efficacy questionnaire and reading comprehension test were more than 0.05.

Data were homogeneous if the significance level is  $> 0.05$ , whereas if the significance level is  $< 0.05$ , the data was not homogeneous. From the result of the homogeneity test, the significance level for reading self-efficacy questionnaire (X) was  $0.667 > 0.05$  and the significance level for reading comprehension test (Y) was  $0.662 > 0.05$ , therefore the two data were homogeneous because the significance levels of the reading self-efficacy questionnaire and reading comprehension test were more than 0.05.

After knowing the data were normally distributed and homogeneous, the correlation of the two variables was calculated. If the significance level was  $< 0.05$ , the hypothesis H1 was accepted, whereas if the significance level was  $> 0.05$ , the hypothesis H0 was accepted. From the result of the correlation test, the significance level for the correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension was  $0.000 < 0.05$ , so the hypothesis H1 was accepted which means that there is a significant correlation between students' reading self-efficacy and their reading comprehension on the 12th grade students of science class at SMAN 5 Bengkulu. It is inferred that the higher the reading self-efficacy, the higher the reading comprehension. On the other hand, according to the interpretation table and calculation before, the score of the correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension was 0.324 which includes in low coefficient, that is in the interval 0.20 – 0.399.

## **Discussion**

This finding is in line to Hsieh & Kang, 2010 who found that self-efficacy has a powerful influence on learners' effort, tenacity and achievement. Shell and Colvin (1995) also supported that self-efficacy rather than outcome expectance is the best variable to tell high achievers

from average achievers. It is also supported by the previous studies by Li and Wang (2010), Shang (2010), Naseri (2012), and Salehi and Khalaji (2014), the four studies showed that there was a significant correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension.

The significant correlation could be because of the students with high self-efficacy have an encouragement and motivation that push them to understand their academic task. However the task is difficult, the students have a motivation first that they can do it. A motivation and an encouragement play a vital role in achieving something. They help somebody become stronger to avoid the failure. Pajares (2002) mentions that students with high self-efficacy are motivated to do their academic work, set challenging goals for themselves, and try to achieve them. Schunk, cited in Hadomi (2012) also said that students who had high self-efficacy beliefs were persistent when faced with challenges and were more successful in academic achievement. The adapted reading self-efficacy questionnaire also wrote in a phrase "I believe that I can read and understand...". It means the measurement of the reading self-efficacy is in a statement that the students have a trust, a motivation, and an encouragement to finish the challenges in understanding a reading. The researcher also mentioned in the background, the example of the two learners who confidence and no confidence, the first learner has a high reading ability and many experiences in reading, but he is not confidence that he can make a good summary of his reading task. The second learner has only an average reading ability and little experience in making summaries, but he is confidence that he can work hard to make a good quality summary of his reading task. On the next day, the first learner told his teacher that he was sick or his book was lost due to the lack of self confidence and encouragement. On the other side, the second learner has a high motivation that pushed him to collect the task.

By knowing the importance of the reading self-efficacy, it means that the teacher needs to promote the reading self-efficacy in the classroom in order to develop high level of reading self-efficacy. As Salili and Lai's (2003) study noted that the implementation of a variety of

instructional strategies was correlated with higher levels of self-efficacy. Students' self-efficacy may be enhanced if the teachers could engage the students in meaningful reading activities and provide them the feedback about their performance during reading activities. Therefore the four sources of self-efficacy; mastery experiences, psychological and emotional factors, vicarious experience, and verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1994/1998) need to be considered in the combination of reading instructions.

In addition, the correlation coefficient between students' reading self-efficacy and their reading comprehension was low. Since the correlation was positive (0.324), it showed that there is a positive significant correlation on students' reading self-efficacy and their reading comprehension. The low correlation indicates that reading self-efficacy is not the only one factors that give the contribution to the reading comprehension. Schunk (2003) also said that self-efficacy is important but not the only influence on achievement. Other important influences are skills, knowledge, outcome expectations, and perceived value. Therefore the reading self-efficacy cannot be the only one of the promotion in the reading classroom.

In line with this research, there were two researches conducted in Indonesia before. The first research is The Correlation between Students' Reading Self Efficacy and Final Grades in Academic Reading Class (Hadomi, 2012). The result was the two variables have a significant correlation (0.304), but the correlation was categorized in low level. The second research is The Correlation between Self Efficacy and Reading Comprehension of Second Grade Students at Sma N 1 Moro Karimun Regency (Ningsih, 2014), the result was also has a significant correlation (0.374) but the correlation was also in low level. Therefore, this research is similar to the previous researches that were conducted in Indonesia.

Two factors might influence the significant correlation but the correlation was categorized in low level. First, it could be because of the time variations. In collecting the data, the researcher took the English class. The time for English class was varied from one to another class. It

might be the students in the morning have a fresher mind rather than students in the afternoon. Last, it could be due to the students' lack of knowledge on reading self-efficacy. Since the teacher has probably never promoted the reading self-efficacy in the class and it was the first time for the students to hear about the reading self-efficacy.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

Based on the analysis of the data, the correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension was 0.324. It showed that there is a significant correlation between students' reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension. It can be inferred that the higher the reading self-efficacy, the higher the reading comprehension. In addition, the correlation was categorized in low level. It means that reading self-efficacy is not the only factors that influence high reading comprehension.

From this research, the researcher intends to offer some suggestions in teaching and learning reading. The researcher hopes that the suggestions can improve the quality of teaching and learning reading. The suggestions are the teacher should help the students to build their reading self-efficacy by promoting reading self-efficacy in the classroom. The teacher can provide a lot of reading materials and give a feedback to the students during the reading activities to build the two sources of the reading self-efficacy, mastery experience and vicarious experience. For the students, they should build their own reading self-efficacy by paying attention to the importance of the reading self-efficacy, so they would know that they need motivation and encouragement in learning reading. The students should also read a lot of reading materials. In addition for the future researcher who will conduct a further research, the researcher should collect the data at the same time to strengthen the correlation between the reading self-efficacy and the reading comprehension.

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