

The Correlation Between Self Efficacy and Students' Reading Comprehension

Wirda Jannatul Jannah^{1*}, Melliofatria²

¹University of Pasir Pengaraian, Indonesia, ²Universitas Islam Kuantan Singingi

Correspondence Email : wirdajannatuljannah@upp.ac.id

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Abstract

Reading is a crucial skill that must be mastered in learning English. This study aims to determine the correlation between self-efficacy and students' reading comprehension among sixth-semester students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian. The research employed a correlational design to investigate whether a relationship exists between self-efficacy and reading comprehension. Data were collected through a questionnaire and a multiple-choice test administered to 28 sixth-semester students. The analysis revealed a significant (2-tailed) value of 0.031, which is less than 0.05, indicating a correlation between self-efficacy and reading comprehension, though not a strong one. The results showed that self-efficacy in reading comprehension was generally high, with an average score of 72.86. Based on the questionnaire, 32% (9 students) fell into the very high category, while 68% (19 students) were in the high category. For the reading test results, 9 students (32%) were in the excellent category, 7 students (25%) in the good category, 8 students (29%) in the sufficient category, and 2 students (7%) each in the low and very low categories. From this data, the researchers concluded that students' reading comprehension falls into the good category, with an average score of 71.25. The correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) was 0.408, which, according to the correlation index table, indicates a low correlation.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an active process of seeking meaning, knowledge, and information from printed or written media. Reading can expand a person's insight and understanding and improve their thinking power. Self-efficacy, which refers to belief in one's ability to perform certain actions or tasks, is one of the determining factors for success. On the other hand, self-efficacy has an important influence in determining a person's level of success. Reading self-efficacy is a character's idea of their ability to comprehend reading (2019, p. 4).

Based on the findings of sixth semester English Language Education students at Pasir Pengarian University, researchers found that students experienced many difficulties in reading texts, especially narrative texts. First, students' reading comprehension skills are still low because the vocabulary is still unclear; they find it quite difficult to comprehend reading in full text in English. So the

information contained in the text is not conveyed correctly. Secondly, students lack self-efficacy, lack desire to solve difficult problems, many face doubts before reading texts or articles in English. Thus, students say that they cannot complete the assigned tasks even though they have not completed the reading comprehension.

There are several key factors influencing reading comprehension. First, students often struggle with reading comprehension due to limited vocabulary knowledge, which makes it challenging to fully understand English texts. As a result, the information within the text is not conveyed accurately. Second, a lack of self-efficacy among students contributes to this issue. They tend to hesitate and feel discouraged when faced with difficult problems, experiencing doubt even before attempting to read English texts or articles. Consequently, students frequently claim they cannot complete assigned tasks, even before fully engaging with the reading material

Nature of Reading Comprehension

Understanding English texts can be challenging, yet reading is a cornerstone of learning. To effectively and efficiently extract information from English texts, students need confidence in their reading abilities (Castles et al., 2018, p. 5). In essence, reading is the act of engaging with written content to acquire knowledge and insights. Kasyulita et al. (2020, p. 31) further define reading as a process of constructing meaning from text. This underscores its role in interpreting messages and identifying key information in written materials. Mastering reading skills facilitates a deeper understanding of textual content and the information it conveys. The primary goal of reading instruction is to enhance students' ability to comprehend English texts with greater efficiency and accuracy. By developing this skill, students can expand their knowledge, gain new experiences, broaden their perspectives, and discover insights they may not have encountered before.

Reading is an essential yet paradoxically complex communicative skill. Numerous factors influence reading comprehension. Harjasujana and Yeti, as cited in Nuryati (2017, p. 4), identify several key factors, including prior experiences, language proficiency, cognitive abilities, reading objectives, and emotional aspects such as motivation, interest, attitude, beliefs, and feelings. Additionally, King and Stanley, as referenced in Jannah (2021, pp. 70–80), outline five critical components in the process of reading comprehension: identifying factual information, determining the main idea, understanding vocabulary in context, recognizing references, and drawing conclusions. Mustafa and Bakri (2020, p. 153) define reading comprehension as the ability to read, process, and interpret the meaning of a text. Furthermore, Jannah and Syahropi (2022, p. 123) emphasize that reading and comprehension are inseparable processes. This integrated approach involves engaging with various types of texts—such as articles, journals, and other materials—to foster deeper understanding. Within this system, students are encouraged to think critically, not only focusing on completing tasks but also transforming reading into meaningful comprehension. This process enhances the depth and quality of the knowledge acquired

Indicator of Reading Comprehension.

Successful in reading comprehension, there are several aspects that students must master. According to King and Stanley in Jannah (2021, pp. 79–80), Five elements are described in the processing of reading comprehension. They find factual information, find the main idea, find the meaning of vocabulary in context, identify references and make conclusions

Identifying the Main Idea

The main idea represents the essence of a text. To comprehend a text effectively, readers must identify its central theme or primary message.

Extracting Detailed Information

Readers need to locate specific factual details within the text, which often requires scanning for precise information. Basic types of questions might involve reasons, purposes, outcomes, comparisons, methods, identities, timeframes, and quantities.

Understanding Vocabulary in Context. To navigate unfamiliar words, readers should hone their ability to infer meanings based on the context of phrases or sentences. This skill enhances overall comprehension.

Recognizing References

Understanding references within a text involves identifying pronouns such as she, he, it, this, or those, which substitute for previously mentioned subjects. By grasping the text's main subject, readers can answer related questions more efficiently.

Making Inferences. The ultimate goal of reading is to fully grasp the writer's intended message. Readers achieve this by logically interpreting the text and making well-informed predictions.

Based on the experts' perspectives mentioned earlier, reading comprehension can be understood as the ability to grasp the message conveyed in English reading materials. It is an interactive cognitive process that transforms written symbols into meaningful communication, bridging the writer's intent with the reader's understanding. This process involves analyzing various text elements, including identifying the main idea, extracting details, understanding vocabulary in context, recognizing references, and making inferences. These components serve as key indicators for assessing reading comprehension in this research.

Nature of Self Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their own abilities. According to Tarigan et al. (2022, p. 8), self-efficacy is a psychological factor that significantly impacts a student's success in acquiring skills. This concept shapes an individual's mindset, influencing how effectively they can achieve their goals. In education, numerous learning strategies have been developed to enhance teaching and learning processes. Teachers must design and implement appropriate systems to support students effectively. These approaches are often tailored to assist students in specific areas, such as improving their vocabulary. Bandura (1995, p. 1) identifies four primary sources of self-efficacy that contribute to its development:

Mastery Experience – Gaining confidence through personal achievements.

Vicarious Experience – Learning by observing others succeed.

Verbal Persuasion – Encouragement from others that reinforces belief in one's abilities.

Psychological and Affective States – Managing emotional and physical responses to maintain confidence.

The Source of Self Efficacy

Self-efficacy is shaped by various factors that contribute to its development. According to Bandura in Sukarni (2018, p. 1), there are four key sources of self-efficacy:

1. Mastery Experience

The most influential source of self-efficacy is enactive mastery, which refers to the direct experiences of success or failure. These experiences significantly impact an individual's beliefs about their own abilities.

2. Vicarious Experience

Another important source is vicarious experience, which involves observing others' achievements or setbacks. Through modeling, individuals assess their own abilities by comparing them to the success or failure of others.

3. Verbal Persuasion

Verbal persuasion includes encouragement or discouragement, which can either boost or undermine self-efficacy. Positive reinforcement can strengthen confidence, while negative feedback can diminish it.

4. Psychological and Affective States

Emotions, such as stress, anxiety, and fatigue, also influence self-efficacy. These emotional states can either enhance or hinder an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in a task.

Reading comprehension is an activity that can be influenced by self-efficacy. Solheim (2011, pp. 22–23) states that self-efficacy plays a significant role in reading comprehension, with higher self-efficacy being a strong predictor of reading success. This suggests that individuals possess varying attitudes and goals, and a high level of self-efficacy is the most reliable indicator for achieving proficiency in reading skills. When students have strong self-efficacy, it enhances their ability to understand the context of what they are reading. On the other hand, low self-efficacy may lead to missed opportunities for improving reading comprehension. Students with low self-efficacy are more likely to avoid challenging texts, which hinders their ability to fully grasp the material being read.

METHOD

This study was designed as correlational research. According to J & Samson (2018, p. 20573), correlation studies are quantitative in nature; they measure two or more interrelated variables within the same sample to estimate the relationship between them. In other words, a correlational study involves examining two or more variables within a single group of subjects. As reflected in the topic, the primary objective of this study is to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and students' reading comprehension. Therefore, the study aims to identify a potential connection between these two variables. The study involves two variables: the independent variable, which represents students' self-efficacy (denoted as "X"), and the dependent variable, which refers to reading comprehension (denoted as "Y"). The instruments used for data collection were a questionnaire and a reading test. These instruments were validated for reliability and accuracy.

To address the research questions, the collected data was analyzed and interpreted based on the research design. Numerical data were processed using statistical analysis via the SPSS application to facilitate the calculation of test results. The SPSS software was employed to analyze students' test scores for both variables. The correlation coefficient was calculated to assess the degree and direction of the relationship between self-efficacy and reading comprehension. Given that the data was collected on an interval scale, there is always the possibility that the results may not reveal a significant relationship between the two variables. Thus, the SPSS application was used to compute the progress of students' performance on these variables. The data, being numerical, was subjected to statistical analysis to aid the researchers in calculating the test results efficiently.

FINDINGS

To observe self-efficacy and students' reading comprehension, two instruments were used in this study. The first instrument was a questionnaire, which is a self-report tool where each participant provides their responses. In this case, students were asked to read each item and indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements. According to Sugiyono (2016, p. 142), a questionnaire is a data collection method in which several questions are given in written form for respondents to answer. Data were collected through this written questionnaire administered to students in the sixth semester of the English Study Program. The second instrument used was a reading test. The researcher administered a reading test that included a series of questions related to a provided text. The test aimed to measure students' comprehension levels, and it was structured as a multiple-choice exam with 20 questions designed to assess reading comprehension.

Procedure of The Research

The research procedure involved several steps taken by the researcher to carry out the study with sixth-semester students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian. The study included two types of tests: a questionnaire test, designed as a cloze test to measure students' self-efficacy, and a reading comprehension test to assess their reading skills. The research process at the University of Pasir Pengaraian followed these procedures:

1. Conducting a Survey: The researcher began by gathering information and observing issues related to the research topic.
2. Administering the Reading Test: A reading test was given to evaluate the students' reading comprehension abilities.
3. Distributing the Questionnaire: The researcher provided a questionnaire based on expert theories about self-efficacy in reading for the students to complete.
4. Data Analysis: After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the results regarding both students' self-efficacy and their reading comprehension skills.

Technique of Collecting The Data

To address the research questions, the collected data is analyzed and interpreted according to the research design. Numerical data is processed using statistical analysis with the help of the SPSS software, which aids in calculating the test results. The SPSS program is utilized to compute students' scores for both variables. To determine the relationship between self-efficacy and reading comprehension, the correlation coefficient is calculated to show the degree and direction of the relationship between the two variables. Since the data is measured on an interval scale, it is possible that the study may not reveal a significant relationship between the variables, as noted by the researchers.

Tabel 16. The Result of Coefficient Correlation (rxy)

		Correlations	
		Self efficacy	Reading comprehension
Self efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	,408*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,031
	N	28	28
Reading comprehension	Pearson Correlation	,408*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,031	
	N	28	28

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Referring to Table 16, the significance value from the product-moment correlation test between self-efficacy and reading comprehension for students in the sixth semester at the University of Pasir Pengaraian was 0.031, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that there is a relationship between self-efficacy and reading comprehension, though it is not statistically significant. The correlation coefficient between self-efficacy and reading comprehension is 0.08. This suggests that there is a positive correlation between the two variables, meaning that as self-efficacy increases, students' reading skills tend to improve as well. The interpretation of the correlation index is displayed in the table below:

Table 2. The Scale of Level Indexes of Correlation

The score of Product-Moment	Interpretation
0.00-0,20	Very low correlation
0,20-0,40	Low correlation
0,40-0,70	Fair correlation
0,70-0,90	Sufficient correlation
0,90-1,00	High correlation

Based on the rxy correlation results, the researchers concluded that there is a relationship between student self-efficacy and reading comprehension, although it is not statistically significant. The obtained significance value (2-tailed) was 0.031, which is less than 0.05. The correlation coefficient (rxy) was 0.08, which falls within the category of low correlation (0.20–0.0) according to the correlation index table. This indicates that the relationship between student self-efficacy and reading comprehension is low.

DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher found that after administering a self-efficacy questionnaire to sixth-semester students in the English study program at the University of Pasir Pengaraian, the results indicated that students fell into the high self-efficacy category, with an average score of 72.86. In terms of reading comprehension, the students' abilities were categorized as fair, with an average score of 71.25. Among the students, 9 scored very well, 7 received good scores, 8 earned adequate scores, 2 had low scores, and another 2 had very low scores.

Based on the calculation of the correlation coefficient (xy), the researchers found a relationship between self-efficacy and reading comprehension, though it was not statistically significant. The obtained significance value (2-tailed) was 0.031, which is less than 0.05. The correlation coefficient (rxy) was 0.408, which falls into the low correlation category (0.20–0.40) according to the correlation index table. This suggests that the correlation between self-efficacy and reading comprehension is Low.

These results align with expert opinions. First, Benjamin (2019, p. 4) stated that reading self-efficacy reflects a person's belief in their ability to understand a text. Second, Aflerbach et al. (2013, p. 440) noted that effective readers anticipate being challenged by a variety of texts and activities. Third, Solheim (2011, pp. 22–23) emphasized that reading comprehension is influenced by self-efficacy, with higher self-efficacy being a strong indicator of reading success. The study found that students' self-efficacy enhances their reading comprehension, as their confidence in understanding the material is linked to their ability to grasp the reading context effectively.

CONCLUSION

Regarding students' self-efficacy in reading comprehension, the researcher found that students had a high level of self-efficacy, with an average score of 72.86. In terms of reading comprehension, students were categorized as having good abilities, with an average score of 71.25. Specifically, 9 students scored very well, 7 students received good scores, 8 students scored adequately, 2 students had low scores, and another 2 students scored very poorly. In analyzing the relationship between students' self-efficacy and reading comprehension, the researcher found a correlation, but it was not statistically significant. The significance value (2-tailed) was 0.031, which is less than 0.05. The

correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) was 0.08, and according to the correlation index table, this falls into the low correlation category (0.20–0.0). This indicates that the correlation between self-efficacy and reading comprehension is low.

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