



**MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND
THEIR LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT**

SKRIPSI

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JULY 2023**



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Presented to

Faculty of Teacher Training and Education

University of Islam Malang

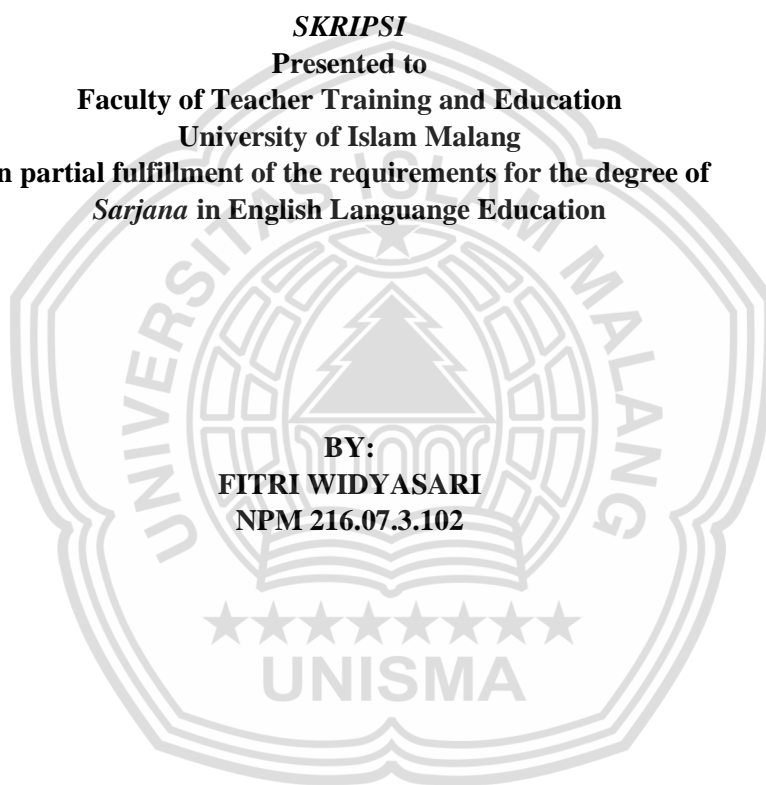
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

***Sarjana* in English Language Education**

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ABSTRACT

Widyasari, Fitri. 2023. *Middle School Students' Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety and Their Language Achievement*. Skripsi, English Education Department Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Islam Malang. Advisor I: Dr. Atik Umamah, S.Pd., M.Pd; Advisor II: Fitri Awaliyatush Sholihah, S.Pd., M.Pd.

Key words: Foreign language anxiety, language achievement, FLCAS

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is one of the obstacles for language learners. The foreign language anxiety is a kind of anxiety traits which focuses on the feeling of fear, worry, and anxious when someone is producing and/or receiving foreign language. There are three types of FLA which have different meaning situation. Communication Apprehension refers to a condition where learners are afraid to interact using foreign language to others. Fear of Negative Evaluation happens when learners avoid the situation where they have to be evaluated, while Test Anxiety happens when learners are facing a foreign language test or exam.

A cross-sectional survey design aims to reveal the middle school students' FLA level and to discover the FLA type that frequently most experienced by the students, meanwhile a correlational design aims to investigate the correlation between the students' FLA level and their language achievement. The sample of the study was 34 students of 8th grade of SMPI Al Umm Malang. The instruments of the study were Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and the documentation of students' English scores. The first and the second research objectives were answered using descriptive statistics and the third research objective was answered using inferential statistics.

The study uncovers the mean scores of the students' FLA was 98.06 which means that students experienced a mild level of FLA. This also indicates that the students weren't severely anxious when they were in English class and they could receive the English learning good enough. The result of the FLA type means scores showing Communication Apprehension = 32.18, Fear of Negative Evaluation = 22.85, and Test Anxiety = 43.03 shows that Test Anxiety is the most frequently FLA type experienced by students.

The correlation between the students' FLA and their language achievement is represented by the result of $r(34) = -.548$, $p < 0.01$ which means that there is a significant relationship between students' FLA and their language achievement in negative direction which represented by the negative sign. It can be concluded that if the students' level of FLA goes up, their language achievement will go down.



The findings of the study suggest the English learners to adapt to a new self-learning technique to make themselves become more comfortable in learning English. Educators could create the learning time becomes more fun by implementing various activities which are able to evoke the students' excitement. A larger scale of sample, a different study level student, and a deeper investigation to the topic are suggested to be conducted by the further researchers.



ABSTRAK

Widyasari, Fitri. 2023. Kecemasan Siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama di Kelas Bahasa Asing dan Prestasi Bahasa Mereka. Skripsi, Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Islam Malang. Pembimbing I. Dr: Atik Umamah, S.Pd., M.Pd; Pembimbing II: Fitri Awaliyatush Sholihah, S.Pd., M.Pd.

Kata Kunci: Kecemasan berbahasa asing, prestasi bahasa, FLCAS

Kecemasan berbahasa asing atau *Foreign Language Anxiety* (FLA) merupakan salah satu hambatan bagi pembelajar bahasa. Kecemasan berbahasa asing merupakan salah satu jenis kecemasan yang berfokus pada perasaan takut, khawatir, dan cemas ketika seseorang memproduksi dan/atau menerima bahasa asing. Ada tiga tipe kecemasan bahasa asing yang memiliki situasi makna yang berbeda. Kekhawatiran Komunikasi (*Communication Apprehension*) mengacu pada kondisi di mana pelajar takut untuk berinteraksi menggunakan bahasa asing kepada orang lain. Ketakutan akan Evaluasi Negatif (*Fear of Negative Evaluation*) terjadi ketika pelajar menghindari situasi di mana mereka harus dievaluasi, sedangkan Kecemasan Ujian (*Test Anxiety*) terjadi ketika pelajar menghadapi tes atau ujian bahasa asing.

Desain survei cross-sectional bertujuan untuk mengungkap tingkat FLA siswa sekolah menengah dan untuk menemukan jenis FLA yang paling sering dialami oleh para siswa, sementara desain korelasional bertujuan untuk menyelidiki korelasi antara tingkat FLA siswa dan prestasi bahasa mereka. Sampel penelitian ini adalah 34 siswa kelas 8 SMPI Al Umm Malang. Instrumen penelitian ini adalah Skala Kecemasan Kelas Bahasa Asing (*Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale/FLCAS*) dan dokumentasi nilai bahasa Inggris siswa. Tujuan penelitian pertama dan kedua dijawab dengan menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan tujuan penelitian ketiga dijawab dengan menggunakan statistik inferensial.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata FLA siswa adalah 98,06 yang berarti bahwa siswa mengalami tingkat FLA yang ringan. Hal ini juga mengindikasikan bahwa para siswa tidak terlalu cemas saat berada di kelas bahasa Inggris dan mereka dapat menerima pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dengan cukup baik. Hasil skor rata-rata tipe FLA yang menunjukkan Communication Apprehension = 32.18, Fear of Negative Evaluation = 22.85, dan Test Anxiety = 43.03 menunjukkan bahwa Test Anxiety merupakan tipe FLA yang paling sering dialami oleh para siswa.

Korelasi antara FLA siswa dengan prestasi bahasa mereka diwakili oleh hasil $r(34) = -.548$, $p < 0.01$ yang berarti ada hubungan yang signifikan antara FLA siswa dengan prestasi bahasa mereka dengan arah negatif yang diwakili oleh

tanda negatif. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa jika tingkat FLA siswa naik, prestasi bahasa mereka akan turun.

Temuan dari penelitian ini menyarankan para pelajar bahasa Inggris untuk beradaptasi dengan teknik belajar mandiri yang baru untuk membuat diri mereka menjadi lebih nyaman dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Para pengajar dapat membuat waktu belajar menjadi lebih menyenangkan dengan menerapkan berbagai kegiatan yang dapat membangkitkan semangat siswa. Skala sampel yang lebih besar, siswa dengan tingkat belajar yang berbeda, dan penyelidikan yang lebih dalam terhadap topik ini disarankan untuk dilakukan oleh peneliti selanjutnya.



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Several related information topics are discussed in this chapter, including research background, research question, research purpose, research significance, research scope and limitations, and definitions of terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Many researchers have carried out an ongoing study of variables that are influenced by the situation in which language learners learn. Foreign language anxieties in the context of school are one variable that is constantly fascinated by researchers. Foreign language anxiety develops when the distinctiveness of the language learning process produces a distinct set of self-perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Because of the disparities between the foreign language and their native tongue, foreign language learners may exhibit this worrying tendency. This statement is supported by what Lauder (2020) found in his study about the use of English in Indonesia. Lauder (2020, p. 611) stated that the grammatical features in Indonesian and English are pretty much different which makes it one of the English learning difficulty factors in Indonesia. The differences in syntax often make Indonesian learners get confused when learning English. The learners then tend to get anxious when overcoming English problems. Many of the learners who easily get the anxiety trait are usually young learners.

Edwards (2022, February 25) from NBC News stated in a news article that one-third of middle to high school students between 10-19 years old have already suspected of having anxiety even before the *Covid-19* pandemic came. Having difficulties with learning tasks is one of the elements creating the anxiousness mentioned in the news story. Another student's anxiety issue written by Abrams (2022) in American Psychological Association is that school has been facing students' anxiety problems increasing in recent years. Many schools nowadays even provide a counselling teacher for students to cope with their anxieties, depression, and academic stresses.

According to Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 127), the language anxiety is classified into three categories: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is the form of fear that occurs when someone is compelled to speak a foreign language. Test anxiety is a sort of anxiety that occurs in those who are concerned that they will fail to perform a foreign language, particularly in a test circumstance. And fear of negative evaluation is a sort of anxiousness in which people feel scared of how others will judge them poorly and attempt to stay out of such circumstances.

Many studies on the influence of FLA on language success have previously been performed the foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS) as the instrument. The studies mostly found that the students' FLA significantly affects their language achievement in a negative way (Alshahrani, 2016; Aguila and Harjanto, 2016; Bensalem, 2017; Ali and Fei, 2017; Hu et al., 2021; Han et al., 2022). However, there are studies which found that there is no correlation between

the two variables (Razak et al., 2017; Kamil et al., 2021; Almesaar, 2022). Alshahrani (2016) studied Saudi EFL students to identify the association between FLA and English performance. The findings revealed a substantial relationship between language anxiety and English performance. The same results were shown in a study by Bensalem (2017), the thing that makes them different is that Bensalem used students' recent exam results as language achievement. According to the findings of Razak et al. (2017), there is no association between learners' FLA and English achievement. Nonetheless, the study found that students had relatively high anxiety levels when learning English.

The previous studies mentioned above turned out to give some similar suggestions. The suggestions such as to conduct a study with different majors, ages and levels of language proficiency and also exploring more about the differences between genders in coping with FLA and language achievement. The researcher wants to assign the research in accordance with the gaps identified in prior studies based on the ideas made. To this end, this study attempts to examine if there is a correlation within middle school students' foreign language anxiety and their English performance. The novelty of this study is that there are still few studies about FLA and language achievement in Indonesia among middle school students and within a generalized English achievement which it's known that the studies are mostly focused on only one English skill such as speaking.

1.2 Research Problems

The study formulates research questions to fulfill the study's aim, as shown below:

1. What level is foreign language anxiety among middle school learners?
2. What type of foreign language anxiety that mostly experienced by the students?
3. Is there any correlation within student's anxiety levels and their English achievement?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study's objectives are listed below:

1. Assess middle school students' language anxiety levels.
2. Identify the most frequently type of foreign language anxiety experienced by the students.
3. Investigate correlation between anxiety levels and English achievement.

1.4 Hypotheses

After considering the research objectives and the circumstances of this study, the researcher developed the following hypothesis:

- H_1 : Language anxiety significantly correlates with students' English achievement.
- H_0 : Language anxiety doesn't significantly impact English achievement

1.5 Assumption

The assumptions of this study are the participants whether they filled the questionnaire honestly or not, and the reliability of the scores given by the English teacher.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study examines students' FLA levels, identifying the most frequently type of FLA experienced by the students, and examining the correlation between language anxiety and English achievement, focusing on general English achievement rather than specific skills. The limitation of the study is the time and the participant that the researcher uses to conduct this study. The participants are only 34 female students of 8th graders who might be less proficient since their English lessons are still on a basic level. And there are only female students who were available to fill out the questionnaire due to the male students were on another schedule.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the study's findings might be useful for future researchers looking to undertake research on foreign language anxiety among Indonesian middle school pupils and its relationship to language performance. As for practical benefit, the findings of this study may help educators investigate the variables that influence students' language learning and find the best learning strategies to reduce students'

anxiety when studying English as a foreign language. Educators can employ a variety of strategies to make the learning environment more comfortable and pleasurable for students in an attempt to minimize their anxiety level when studying English. The results of the study can also be implemented by future researchers to do research in increasing students' enjoyment of learning English in classroom situations.

1.8 Definition of Used Terms

There are some terms used in this study, which can be seen below:

1. Anxiety is an overwhelming feeling of anxiety and/or fear that something awful might occur.
2. Language anxiety is a fear of bad results while producing a language either written or spoken.
3. Foreign language anxiety involves fear and worry when studying, obtaining, or producing a foreign language.
4. Communication apprehension occurs when someone has to produce a foreign language orally.
5. Fear of negative evaluation is a worry people experience when others judge them poorly and attempt to avoid such situations.
6. Test anxiety occurs when individuals fear failure in performing a foreign language, particularly in a test situation.
7. Language achievement is the result of someone's progress while learning language in academic scope. The study used students' overall scores taken from the daily scores and the exam scores as the language achievement.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this chapter, the researcher describes the study's result and the recommendations made to learners, teachers, and other researchers..

5.1 Conclusion

The study examines students' FLA levels, identifying the most frequently experienced type of FLA, and analyzing the correlation between language anxiety and English scores. As seen from the research findings, the 8th grader students of SMP Islam Al Umm Malang experience a mild level of anxiety. As Abraham (2020) stated on the Calm Clinic website, a mild level of anxiety is still manageable to be treated. The ones who suffer this level of anxiety are still open to social life. Based on this theory, the students who are on mild level of language anxiety are still able to accept the situation where they have to produce or receive a foreign language, and it can be lessened in various ways such as making the classroom situation becomes more comfortable. Test anxiety became the most frequently FLA type experienced by the students which means that students are mostly feeling anxious when they face a test or exam. However, since their general level of anxiety is mild, it shows that they can still cope with the situation calmly. The least frequently experienced of FLA type was fear of negative evaluation. It could be happened since the students of junior high school get spoken feedback from the teachers not as much as the higher study levels.

The study found a significant negative connection between FLA level and linguistic achievement, with high-level anxiety learners experiencing poor performance, while low-level anxiety learners excelling. This highlights the significant impact of foreign language anxiety (FLA) on students' language achievement.

5.1 Suggestions

Some suggestions are made to give new insight to the students, educators, and further researchers regarding the limitation of the study results.

5.1.1 Students

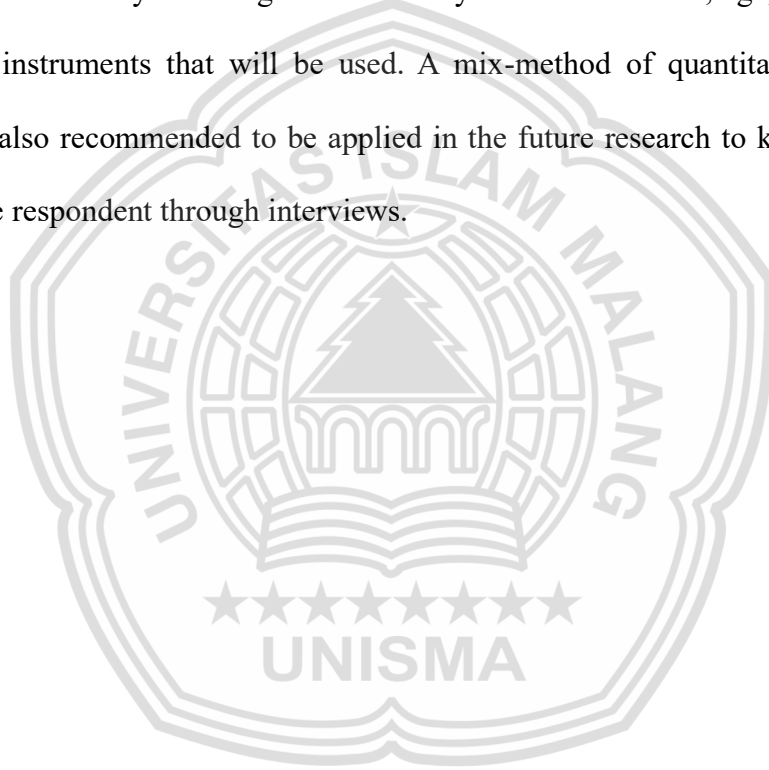
Even though the result of the study showed that the students experience a mild level of anxiety, the researcher suggests the students keep aware of the trait. Since the FLA plays a role in students' academic achievement, the students should look for the best learning technique for themselves to help them overcome foreign language anxiety.

5.1.2 English Educators

The educator should try and look for other teaching techniques as well as learning materials in various ways to help lessen the students' anxiety. The educators' efforts to make a more comfortable learning environment will be a lot of help to the students in learning a foreign language.

5.1.3 Future Researchers

The results of the study are desired to be a little help to future researchers who want to research on similar topics. Nonetheless, the researcher suggests that further research expand the sample scale into a larger one. Further researchers can also dig into a deeper knowledge of the correlation between students' FLA and language achievement by choosing different study levels of students, age, gender, and also the instruments that will be used. A mix-method of quantitative and qualitative is also recommended to be applied in the future research to know the feelings of the respondent through interviews.



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