INVESTIGATING SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ANXIETY LEVEL IN ENGLISH EXAMINATION

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Abstract
The preliminary research showed that students at the eleventh grade of State Senior High School 2 Enok had anxiety in the English examination. It can be seen that some of the students were confused in the English examination because the students got anxious. This research aimed to investigate the students' anxiety in English examination at the eleventh grade of State Senior High School 2 Enok. Descriptive research is employed as the design. The population of the research was the students at the eleventh grade of state senior high school 2 Enok. The number of samples was selected by using a technique called simple random sampling. The sample was 30 students. The researchers obtained the data from the questionnaire. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics calculated by SPSS 20.0 program. The findings showed that the majority of students' anxiety at the eleventh grade of State Senior High School 2 Enok was mediocre with 66.67%. Some of them were at a low level with 33.33%. While 0% in a high level. Thus, based on the data obtained it could be concluded that the students still have anxiety in English examination even at the mediocre level.

Keywords: Anxiety, English Examination, Level

INTRODUCTION

An examination cannot be separated from the teaching and learning process in the educational system. When students are about to be evaluated, they experience anxiety and worry (Zulkifli, 2016). As a result, many language learners experience anxiety when taking a test because they believe that a test is scarier and stressful, they are less confident before the English examination. According to Syafrizal and Fadilah (2018), anxiety is a complicated emotional reaction that occurs when a person perceives a given circumstance as hazardous or frightening. It suggests that those with little anxiety can perform well in exams, whilst those with significant anxiety will perform poorly. Thus, it can be concluded that the performance and achievement of the students are influenced by their anxiety (Aydin, Akkas, Turnuk, Baydilli, & Saydam, 2020).

Anxiety refers to physiological feature responses marked by timidity, feelings of inadequacy, and self-blame. According to Karatas, Alci, and Aydin (2013), anxiety is a

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common event that people face in their daily lives. Anxiety is described as "the subjective experience of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry linked with an activation of the autonomic nervous system" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). Furthermore, Zeidner (1998) defined anxiety as the fear of negative consequences, as well as failure on a test, as a result of phenomenological, physiological, and behavioral responses. In line with him, Sarason (1984) defines test anxiety as a set of qualities that are linked to an academic or evaluative circumstance. This is evident that test anxiety has a major impact on students' performance (Karatas et al, 2013). When a student encounters a test or examination in any form or at any level, they experience a sense of concern, anticipation, nervousness, or uneasiness. It believes that anxiety is a form of cognitive reaction characterized by self-doubt, feelings of inadequacy, and self-blame (Sarason, 1984; Onyeizugbo, 2010).

Test anxiety can be thought of as a state or a trait. In a variety of assessment contexts, trait test anxiety refers to a general tendency for people to regard tests as frightening; it is viewed as a generally permanent trait that is not prone to temporal change (Putwain, 2014; Spielberger and Vagg, 1995). Karatas et al (2013) defined it as a subjective emotional state that occurs before or during a specific evaluation and is associated with the act of completing the evaluation, the threat of failing, and anticipated negative repercussions. Following that, anxiety might be defined as someone who is anxious to the point that they are unable to perform at their best.

The major goal of proficiency exams is to determine a test taker's preparation for a communication function in particular (Forewa, 2015). However, because English is a foreign language in Indonesia, most students are nervous about their English exams. Furthermore, the usage of assessment tools such as quizzes, tests, reviews, or observations can be a source of test anxiety (Gursoy and Arman, 2016). In addition, Karatas et al (2013) also noted that test anxiety refers to a subjective emotional state experienced by students' linked to an academic or evaluative circumstance. According to Dordinejad and Ahmadabad (2014), anxiety is a crucial component that determines one's level of accomplishment when learning a foreign language. As a result of this essential function, it is not surprising that some students experience anxiety when taking a test, particularly an English test. The researchers in this study are only interested in the written portion of the English examination. Based on preliminary research, it was found that most of the students could not reach the passing grade score. The problem emerged because they had anxiety so they could not have well performance in the English examination. According to Lucas, Miraflores, and Go (2011), in high-anxiety situations, habitual reactions can

cause students who have experienced many threatening situations in the past to perceive future situations as threatening, and situation-specific anxiety is caused by an event or situation such as public speaking, examination or recitation. Aside from that, the language classroom inherently involves regular and periodic evaluations of students' performance and competency, which might be stressful for some students. After seeing and interviewing an English teacher and students, the researchers discovered that if pupils do not pass the test, they are not allowed to go to the following stage. For the people who learn about a foreign language, anxiety may impact their performance in the English examination. Anxiety can be described that someone who has a feeling anxious, so they cannot do something with maximal.

The examination is kind of a tool to measure students' ability, knowledge, and performance that is normally distributed as summative assessment (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). The standardized test includes validity, reliability, administration, and scoring procedures of the test In (Nweze, 2014). It means that in school, examinations are used to assess pupils' abilities, knowledge, and performance. The exam is used to assess students' learning achievement at the end of each semester in the Indonesian educational system. The examination's results can provide information about students' learning achievements, as well as the triumphs and failures of teaching and learning attempts at the school. The final examination is taking place in the classroom. It is created and graded by teachers who design the assessment to the needs of their students in order to collect data on the effectiveness of their instruction. The results of the exams are used by the school to improve teaching and learning activities in particular, as well as to raise the educational quality of the pupils in general. In the Examination for Senior High Schools, English has always been included as a subject to be taken by all students. This is because English is one of the subjects that must be taught at schools (Lauder, 2008). In addition, Spielberger and Vagg (1995) said that when a student begins the exam process, the exam will be viewed as more or less frightening depending on the student. If the exam is perceived as more scary, the students' state anxiety is likely to rise (e.g., worry, apprehension, ruminating thoughts of failure, test irrelevant thoughts). For example, if a student is considered to be test-wise (e.g., demonstrate proficient test-taking skills), they may think the exam situation is less threatening compared to a student who is considered to be less test-wise. The formulation of responses to exam questions (e.g., accessing knowledge from memory) is the final stage of the transactional process model (Lawson, 2006). As implied by Vagg and Spielberger (1995), students who are in high test anxious

consider examinations as a significant threat to which they respond with more intense emotionality and negative worry cognitions compared to students who are low test-anxious. Examining is inextricably linked to the teaching and learning process. Therefore, the more a person perceives a test to be scary, the more uncomfortable and unsure he will feel before the examinations (Fathi, Ashteini & Emamgholivand, 2002). It means, for those who have low anxiety can be performed well in the examination and those who have high anxiety will have poor performance.

Salehi and Marefat (2014) looked at the impact of test anxiety and foreign language anxiety on foreign language test performance. They discovered that both language anxiety and exam anxiety have a debilitating effect on language learning in their quantitative study. The finding also showed that language anxiety and test anxiety are related to each other. It means that the students with high language anxiety tend to have high test anxiety too and vice versa. It indicates that attempting to alleviate one sort of worry would inevitably alleviate the other to some extent. According to the findings, Cakici (2016) discovered a similar result between EFL learners' test anxiety, foreign language anxiety, and language achievement while exploring the correlation between EFL learners' test anxiety, foreign language anxiety, and language achievement. It seeks to investigate the correlation among test anxiety (TA), foreign language anxiety (FLA), and language achievement of university preparatory students learning English as a foreign language. In this quantitative research, the researcher found that there was no relationship between students' TA and language achievement. Another study was conducted by Elaldi (2016) to investigate the foreign language anxiety of students studying English language and literature. In his quantitative research, he focused on finding out foreign language anxiety levels of university students studying English Language and Literature when they were in preparatory class and when they were in fourth grade. Furthermore, it also was aimed to examine whether gender factor was effective on foreign language anxiety of students. He found that the study revealed that language anxiety did not necessarily decline in line with students' foreign language progress from preparatory class to fourth grade. On the contrary, when the students included in the study came to fourth grade, their anxiety level was found slightly higher than their preparatory class anxiety level. Based on the previous studies mentioned, it can be concluded that those studies have differences from this current study. Thus, this current study seeks to fill the gap by looking at the students' anxiety in the English examination at the eleventh grade of State Senior High School 2 Enok.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

In this study, descriptive research is used. It only employed one variable. Tavakoli (2012) stated that descriptive research is a type of investigation that depicts a phenomenon as it occurs naturally rather than analyzing the effects of the phenomenon or intervention. Descriptive research endeavors to look at individuals, groups, institutions, methods, and materials for describing, comparing, contrasting, classifying, analyzing, interpreting the entities and the events that constitute their various fields of inquiry, and providing detailed descriptions of symptoms or events. It is concerned with existing conditions or relationships, as well as prevalent practices, beliefs, points of view, or attitudes, as well as ongoing processes, felt effects, and emerging trends (Priyono, 2016). So, the researchers employed descriptive research in order to know the students' anxiety in the English examination.

The population of this research was the eleventh grade of State Senior High School 2 Enok. According to Creswell (2012), a population is a group of individuals who share one trait that separates them from other groups. In this research, 120 populations were coming from 4 classes. The researchers used simple random sampling in selecting the sample (Nuardi, 2013). There were 120 students as the population and the researchers took 25% of each class to take the quantitative data, so the total samples were 30 students as suggested by Arikunto (2006). The lottery is employed to take the sample.

The researchers used a questionnaire to collect the data in this research. The instrument used in the study was a test anxiety scale that was developed by Sarason in 1984 and has been used by many researchers. Moreover, in this research, the researchers used 30 statements from Sarason. Sarason (1984) was developed 37 statements but based on the researchers' analysis just 32 statements matched the participants in this research. In this part, the students were asked to indicate how frequently they felt anxious in the given statements by using a 5-Likert scale. To analyze the validity of the questionnaire, the researchers conducted a tryout to 32 items by handing them to 30 students who were not included in the research sample. The researchers used SPSS 20.0 program to analyze the data. The r value to r table at significant level of 5% is 0.312 (d=N-2=28) was compared. The question considered valid if r value of each item is higher than the r table. If the value of r on the analysis of less than r table, it can be concluded that these items were not significantly correlated with the total score (declared invalid) and must be removed or corrected.

The analysis revealed that 30 questions were approved or legitimate while the others were rejected or invalid, and 30 assertions were valid while the others were discarded. Statements 11 and 28 were removed from the list because the scores were less than 0.312. As a result, 30 questionnaire items were utilized to assess students' anxiety during the English exam. The value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.943. It is higher than the standard Cronbach's alpha which is 0.60. Therefore, it can be concluded the questionnaire is reliable, and the level of reliability is very high. In analyzing the data, the researchers used a *descriptive statistic* through SPSS 20.00 version program. The categories percentage of students' anxiety questionnaire from Arikunto, Suhardjono, and Supardi (2007) as follows:

1. 76%-100% categorized as high level
2. 50%-75% categorized as mediocre level
3. 0%-49% categorized as low level

RESULT

In answering the research question, the researchers used the data obtained from the questionnaire.

Table IV.2

The Percentage of Students' Anxiety

No	F	P	Category
1	**0**	**0%**	**High**
2	**20**	**66.67%**	**Mediocre**
3	**10**	**33.33%**	**Low**
Total	**30**	**100%**	

The result of data analysis indicates that most of the students at eleventh grade of State senior high school 2 Enok are in a **mediocre** level of anxiety in the English examination. This data can be traced from the students' responses to 30 items of the questionnaire. The results of data analysis indicate that from 30 students majority (66.67%) students of the eleventh grade at state senior high school 2 Enok was in the mediocre level of Anxiety in English examination. Concurrently, some of them (33.33%) was in the low level of anxiety in English examination and (0 %) of the student categorized into high level. The students' responses are discussed in the following section based on six domains of students' anxiety. The domains include worry, hard to concentrate on their mind, lack of self-confidence, lack of self-esteem, showing emotional reactions, and showing unpleasant physiological reactions for doing activities related to the English examination.

a. Students feel worry in English Examination

The analysis revealed that the respondents are sometimes disposed to worry in English examination. The following is the detail analysis.

Table IV.3

Students feel worry in English Examination

STATEMENT	OPTION									
	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. I worry while I am taking a test.	3	10,00	5	16,6	12	40.00	8	26.60	2	6,67
12. I feel worried when I study for a test.	2	6,67	4	13,33	7	23,33	11	36,67	6	20,00
20. I worry even when I am prepared well.	1	3,33	6	20,00	8	26,67	7	23,33	8	26,67
21. I worry when I am not prepared well.	11	36,67	7	23,33	7	23,33	4	13,33	1	3,33
5. I feel worried when I learned that I would take a test.	1	3,33	5	16,67	6	20,00	13	43,33	5	16,67

The table shows that more than half of students responded worried to three of the questionnaire statements (1, 20, 21), and tended to don't worry in response to two of the questionnaire statements (5, 12). These data show that most students of secondary school indicate agreement to the idea that in English examination they are: 1 (worry while taking a test), 2 (worry even when they are well prepared), 3 (worry when they are not well prepared). Meanwhile, the data also show most of the students revealed that 1 (they don't worry when they learned that they would take a test) and 2 (they don't worry when they study for a test) Therefore, the table describes that the majority of students feel worried in English examination.

b. Students are hard to concentrate their mind in English examination

The analysis revealed that the respondents are disposed to never hard to concentrate their mind in English examination. The following is the detail analysis.

Table IV.4

Students are hard to concentrate their mind in English examination

STATEMENT	OPTION									
	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4. During the test, I am thinking unrelated things	2	6,67	2	6,67	3	10,00	7	23,33	16	53,33

	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
about the class.										
10. During the test, my emotions affect my performance negatively.	2	6,67	1	3,33	9	30,00	8	26,67	10	33,33
11. During the test, I forget what I know.	4	13,33	4	13,33	9	30,00	12	40,00	1	33,33
13. The more I work, the more confused I get.	2	6,67	3	10,00	5	16,67	9	30,00	11	36,67
17. When I have bad grades, I study less.	3	10,00	1	3,33	3	10,00	7	23,33	8	26,67

The table above shows that most of all students to never hard to concentrate their mind in English examination to five of the questionnaire statements (4, 10, 11, 13, 17). The data show that most students' of secondary school is never hard to concentrate their mind in English examination to the idea that during the test they feel: 1(never thinking unrelated things about the class), 2 (rarely their emotions affect their performance negatively), 3 (never forget what they know), 4 (rarely get more confused when doing more), 5 (never have bad grades, when they study less.). Therefore, the table describes that the majority of students feel never hard to concentrate their mind in English examination.

c. **Students feel lack of self-confidence in English examination**

The analysis revealed that the respondents are disposed to feel lack of self confidence in English examination. The following is the detail analysis.

Table IV.5

Students feel lack of self confidence in English examination

STATEMENT	OPTION									
	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
2. While taking a test, I am thinking that other students are better than I am.	6	20,00	9	30,00	8	26,67	0	0	7	23,33
6. During the test, I think I will fail.	3	10,00	5	16,67	11	36,67	8	26,67	3	10,00
9. After the test, I feel I would do better.	12	40,00	5	16,67	10	33,33	2	6,67	1	3,33
18. I cannot feel confident even if I have good grades.	1	3,33	4	13,33	13	43,33	3	10,00	9	30,00
30. After the test, I feel worried.	5	16,67	4	13,33	8	26,67	9	30,00	4	13,33

The table above shows that most the students feel lack of self-confidence in the English examination to four of questionnaire statements (2, 6, 9, 18) and do not feel lack of self-confidence in the English examination to one of the questionnaire statements (30). These data show that most students' of secondary school feel lack of self-confidence in English examination such as 1 (while taking a test, they are often thinking that other students are better than them), 2 (During the test, they sometimes think they will fail.), 3 (After the test, they always feel they would do better), 4 (they sometimes cannot feel confident even if they have good grades). However, there is one item that shows they do not feel lack of self-confidence in the English examination: 1 (After the test, they never feel worried). Therefore, the table describes that the majority of students feel lack of self-confidence in the English examination.

d. Students feel lack of self-esteem in English examination

The analysis revealed that the respondents are disposed to feel lack of self-esteem in the English examination. The following is the detail analysis.

Table IV.6

Students feel lack of self-esteem in English examination

STATEMENT	OPTION									
	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
3. When I know that I will take a test, I do not feel confident and relaxed.	1	3,33	1	3,33	11	36,67	10	33,33	7	23,33
8. I would learn more if I should not have tests.	1	3,33	4	13,33	10	33,33	7	23,33	8	26,67
14. During the test, I cannot be sure if I will succeed.	2	6,67	5	16,67	9	30,00	6	20,00	8	26,67
16. I feel pressured by time limits during test.	7	23,33	7	23,33	6	20,00	6	20,00	4	13,33
19. Tests affect my performance negatively.	11	36,67	10	33,33	6	20,00	2	6,67	1	3,33

The table above shows that most of students feel lack of self-esteem in English examination to five questionnaire statements (3, 8, 14, 16, 19). The data show that most students' of secondary school feel lack of self-esteem in English examination such as: 1 (sometimes they do not feel confident and relaxed when they know that they will take a test), 2 (sometimes they would learn more if they should not have tests), 3 (sometimes during the test they cannot be sure if I will succeed), 4 (they always feel pressured by time

limits during test), 5 (Tests always affect their performance negatively). Therefore, the table describes that majority students feel lack of self-esteem in English examination.

e. Students show emotional reactions in English examination

The analysis revealed that the respondents are disposed to do not show emotional reactions in English examination. The following is the detail analysis.

Table IV.7

Students show emotional reactions in English examination

STATEMENT	OPTION									
	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
15. Tests bother me a lot.	1	3,33	1	3,33	6	20,00	7	23,33	15	50,00
22. I feel crammed before an exam.	15	50,00	8	26,67	6	20,00	0	0	1	3,33
24. I sometimes feel my heart beating very fast during important exams.	2	6,67	9	30,00	11	36,67	4	13,33	4	13,33
26. I do not enjoy eating before an important test	2	6,67	3	10,00	10	33,33	4	13,33	11	36,67
27. After important tests, I am frequently so tense my stomach gets upset.	0	0	1	3,33	6	20,00	3	10,00	20	66,67

The table above shows that most of the students show emotional reactions in the English examination to two of the questionnaire statements (22, 24) and do not show emotional reactions in English examination to three of the questionnaire statements (15, 26, 27). These data show that most students' of secondary school do not show emotional reactions in English examination such as: 1 (Tests never bother them a lot), 2 (they enjoy eating before an important test), 3 (after important tests, they are never frequently so tense my stomach gets upset). However, there are two items that show the students show emotional reactions in English examination they are: 1 (they always feel crammed before an exam.) and 2 (they sometimes feel their heart beating very fast during important exams). Therefore, the table describes that the majority of students do not show emotional reactions in the English examination.

f. Students show unpleasant physiological reactions in English examination

The analysis revealed that the respondents are disposed to show unpleasant physiological reactions in English examination. The following is the detail analysis.

Table IV.8

Students show unpleasant physiological reactions in English examination

STATEMENT	OPTION									
	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
7. I start feeling very uneasy just before getting a test paper back	6	20,00	3	10,00	11	36,67	7	23,33	3	10,00
23. I seldom feel the need for "cramming" before an exam.	2	6,67	6	20,00	9	30,00	4	13,33	9	30,00
25. I have uneasy, upset feeling before taking a final examination	2	6,67	7	23,33	10	33,33	4	13,33	8	26,67
28. Before an important examination, I find my hands or arms trembling.	1	3,33	4	13,33	7	23,33	4	13,33	14	46,67
29. During a course examination, I frequently get so nervous that I forget facts I really know	3	10,00	4	13,33	14	43,33	6	20,00	4	13,33

The table above shows that most of the students show unpleasant physiological reactions in the English examination to four of questionnaire statements (7, 23, 25, 29) and do not show unpleasant physiological reactions in the English examination to one of the questionnaire statement (28). These data show that most students' of secondary school show unpleasant physiological reactions in English examination such as: 1 (they sometimes start feeling very uneasy just before getting a test paper is back), 2 (I sometimes seldom feel the need for "cramming" before an exam), 3 (they sometimes have uneasy, upset feeling before taking a final examination), 4 (they sometimes frequently get so nervous that I forget facts I really know during a course examination). However, there is one item that shows they do not show unpleasant physiological reactions in English examination: 1 (Before an important examination, they never find my hands or arms trembling). Therefore, the table describes that the majority show unpleasant physiological reactions in English examination**.**

DISCUSSION

The result of data analysis indicates that most of the students at the eleventh grade of State senior high school 2 Enok is in a mediocre level of anxiety in the English examination. This data can be traced from the students' responses to 30 items of the questionnaire. The results of data analysis indicate that from 30 students majority

(66.67%) students of the eleventh grade at state senior high school 2 Enok was in the mediocre level of Anxiety in English examination. Meanwhile, some of them (33,33%) was in the low level of anxiety in English examination and 0 percent of the student is categorized into high level. It shows to reveal that the majority of the students experienced a mediocre level of anxiety. The students' responses are obtained based on six domains of students' anxiety. Even though they just experienced a mediocre level of anxiety, the teacher must be aware of the students' anxiety level because it can cause physical and psychological problems, motivation, concentration, and achievement negatively, increasing errors, and many more (Aydin, 2013). Based on the data obtained from the first domain the students tend to feel worried in English examination. However, based on the data obtained from the second domain the students tend to feel never hard to concentrate their mind in English examination. Lawson (2006) noted that emotional responses interfere with concentration and attention because of the task that irrelevant thought, and worry cognitions interfere with information processing and the ability to retrieve information from memory. Furthermore, based on the data obtained from the third and fourth domains the students tend to feel lack of self-confidence in the English examination and feel lack of self-esteem in the English examination. Moreover, based on the data obtained from the fifth domain the students tend to do not show emotional reactions in English examination. The result is contrary to Syafrizal and Fadilah (2018) said that anxiety refers to a complex, emotional reaction found in an individual student who interprets a specific situation as dangerous or threatening. Nevertheless, based on the data obtained from the sixth domain the students tend to show unpleasant physiological reactions in English examination. The finding implied that the majority of the students of the secondary school still have anxiety in the English examination.

CONCLUSION

To begin the conclusion, the researchers concluded that the percentage of students' anxiety at the eleventh grade of State Senior High School 2 Enok is 54.51%. it is categorized as "**mediocre**" level. It can be seen from 30 students majority (66.67%) students of the eleventh grade at state senior high school 2 Enok was in the mediocre level of Anxiety in English examination. Meanwhile, some of them (33,33%) was in the low level of anxiety in English examination and 0 percent of the respondent was categorized into high level.

Based on the research result and the discussion, it is known that students' anxiety in the English examination is at the mediocre level. Certainly, they are suggested to increase

their confidence to reduce their anxiety in English examination. The writer wants to suggest the teacher and students at the eleventh grade of state senior high school 2 Enok. For the teacher, English test is not easy for the learners, but the teacher can give the students some suggestions to decrease their anxiety such as the teacher can give motivation to the students that English examination is not scary as same as they think. The students have to learn and reduce their anxiety by sharing and discussing their anxiety with the teacher and their classmates for example. In addition, to reduce anxiety in the English examination the students are suggested to learn before following the examination itself. Further research is expected to investigate the students' anxiety in depth by employing semi-structured interviews in order to obtain the real condition of the students in facing the English examination. Thus, the data about students' anxiety will represent well.

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