



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***READING ANXIETY AND READING COMPREHENSION PERFORMANCE  
IN ENGLISH AMONG EFL LEARNERS IN A MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY***

**SHIVA DIALAMI**

**FBMK 2013 33**



**READING ANXIETY AND READING COMPREHENSION  
PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH AMONG EFL LEARNERS IN A  
MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY**

**By**

**SHIVA DIALAMI**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master  
of Arts**

**October 2013**

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## DEDICATION

Dedicated to my loving husband, **Shahram** who has always shown me his endless

love and passed on to me a passion for life

and

my parents, Mohammad Hossein and Fahimeh who have always believed in the

value of education.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment  
of the requirement for the Degree of Masters of Arts

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**SHIVA DIALAMI**

**October 2013**

**Chair: Associate Professor Ain Nadzimah Abdullah, PhD**

**Faculty: Modern Language and Communication**

This study investigated the relationship between reading anxiety and reading comprehension performance according to background variables (i.e., age, gender, discipline, and duration of the programme). The data was collected from 100 international students who enrolled in the Tertiary English Programme (TEP) at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). The participants took the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS), the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and reading comprehension tests as pre-test and post-test. This study adopted a correlational design which employs quantitative approaches. The theoretical framework behind this research is Bernhardt's compensatory model of L2 reading (2000- 2005), which acknowledges the role of affective factors such as anxiety could help to clarify the existing variance in reading performance. Descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, one-way ANOVA, paired sample t-test, and independent sample t-test were employed to analyse the data. The findings revealed that there was a medium level of foreign language (FL) reading anxiety

(RA) among international students. In addition, a significant negative relationship was found between the FL reading anxiety and FL reading comprehension performance scores. Thus, the high anxiety group gained lower scores on the tests than the moderate or low anxiety group and this could be attributed to the role played by debilitating anxiety. The results showed that FL reading anxiety is related to, but distinguished from, general FL anxiety. Also, there was no significant difference in their FL reading anxiety scores and reading comprehension scores among the different age groups. This means that the students' age have no bearing on RA. An insignificant difference was found between the two gender groups in their FLRAS scores. However, gender groups significantly differed in their reading comprehension performance with males performing only slightly better in reading comprehension. In other words, gender does play a significant role in reading comprehension but not in RA. Furthermore, none of the discipline groups (Engineering and non-Engineering) significantly differed from each other in RA and reading comprehension test; therefore, discipline did not play a key role in the participants' level of RA and reading comprehension performance. In addition, significant differences were found in participants' scores in the pre- and post-test administration of reading comprehension test and FLRAS questionnaire. Therefore, duration has an effect on both the levels of RA and reading comprehension performance of the students. Further studies to investigate the influence of reading anxiety should include other EFL learners from other universities to enable the results to be generalized to the general population and thus examine the reading comprehension performance of students in a more controlled context.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sastera

**KEBIMBANGAN TERHADAP MEMBACA DAN KEBIMBANGAN  
TERHADAP PRESTASI KEFAHAMAN MEMBACA DI DALAM BAHASA  
INGGERIS DI KALANGAN PELAJAR-PELAJAR EFL DI UNIVERSITI  
MALAYSIA**

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**Oktober 2013**

**Pengerusi: Professor Madya Ain Nadzimah Abdullah, PhD**

**Fakulti: Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi**

Kajian ini dilaksanakan untuk melihat hubungkait antara kebimbangan terhadap membaca dan kebimbangan terhadap prestasi kefahaman membaca berdasarkan umur, jantina, disiplin dan jangkamasa mempelajari bahasa. Data dikumpulkan daripada 100 orang pelajar antarabangsa yang mengikuti Program Bahasa Inggeris Tertiri (TEP) di Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). Pelajar-pelajar berkenaan mengikuti Skala Kebimbangan Membaca Bahasa Asing (FLRAS), Skala Kebimbangan Kelas Bahasa Asing (FLCAS) dan ujian kefahaman membaca untuk pra ujian dan pasca ujian. Kajian ini menggunakan korelasi di dalam kajian kuantitatif yang melibatkan statistic. Rangka kerja teori di sebalik penyelidikan ini adalah berdasarkan model Bernhardt (2000-2005) yang merupakan pengganti kepada model membaca di dalam bahasa kedua, di mana model ini mengiktiraf peranan factor afektif seperti kebimbangan boleh membantu menjelaskan perbezaan yang ada terhadap pencapaian dalam membaca. yang deskriptif, korelasi Pearson, ANOVA satu hala, sampel pasangan t-test dan sampel bebas t-test untuk menganalisa data. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa tahap kebimbangan dalam pembacaan pelajar-pelajar antarabangsa adalah di tahap medium. Tambahan pula, hubungan negatif yang signifikan ditemui di antara kebimbangan membaca Bahasa Asing dan markah untuk prestasi pemahaman membaca Bahasa Asing. Oleh itu, pelajar-pelajar yang

mengalami kebimbangan yang tinggi dalam membaca mendapat markah yang rendah berbanding pelajar-pelajar yang mengalami kebimbangan di tahap sederhana atau lemah dan ini berpunca daripada kebolehan mengawal perasaan bimbang. Ini jelas menunjukkan bahawa kebimbangan membaca Bahasa Asing berkaitan tetapi berbeza dengan kebimbangan umum Bahasa Asing. Bukan itu sahaja, tidak ada perbezaan yang signifikan ditunjukkan di dalam markah kebimbangan membaca Bahasa Asing dan markah kefahaman di kalangan umur para pelajar. Ini menunjukkan bahawa umur para pelajar tidak mempengaruhi kebimbangan dalam membaca. Perbezaan yang tidak signifikan ditemui di antara dua jantina; perempuan dan lelaki, dan markah FLRAS mereka. Namun kumpulan jantina ketara berbeza dalam prestasi kefahaman membaca di mana pelajar-pelajar lelaki lebih baik di dalam kefahaman pembacaan mereka. Dengan kata lain, jantina memainkan peranan yang signifikan di dalam kefahaman membaca tetapi bukan di dalam kebimbangan membaca. Malah, tidak ada satu pun kumpulan di dalam bidang (Kejuruteraan dan bukan-Kejuruteraan) berbeza di antara satu sama lain di dalam kebimbangan membaca dan ujian kefahaman membaca; maka, bidang tidak memainkan peranan penting untuk taham kebimbangan membaca dan prestasi kefahaman membaca. Tambahan pula, terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan di markah peserta didapati di dalam pra ujian dan pasca ujian di dalam ujian kefahaman membaca dan FLRAS soal selidik. Maka, jangkamasa memberikan kesan untuk tahap-tahap kebimbangan membaca dan prestasi kefahaman membaca di kalangan pelajar-pelajar. Kajian lanjut akan mengkaji pengaruh kebimbangan membaca termasuklah pelajar-pelajar EFL daripada universiti-universiti lain untuk melihat keputusan-keputusan yang boleh dilihat di kalangan kumpulan lain dan seterusnya mengkaji prestasi kefahaman membaca di kalangan pelajar-pelajar di dalam konteks yang lain.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude and appreciation goes to some individuals who have, in their own special way, helped me to go through the whole process of completing my work; however, without the divine help of God Almighty, it would not have been possible. Thank you, God, the most Beneficent and Merciful, for making my dream a reality and making my journey an easier one. Thanks also go out to the love of my life and the source of my happiness, my dear husband, for giving me the emotional support I needed to be strong enough to finish. Next, I would like to thank my mother, father, and siblings who have been my inspiration and motivation. They have encouraged and supported me throughout my studies, and I am forever grateful to them. In addition to my gratitude for the tremendous support and love that my family has given me, I am also indebted to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ain Nadzimah Abdullah and Prof. Dr. Chan Swee Heng, my supervisory committee, for their guidance, invaluable suggestions, intellectual inspiration, full support and encouragement during the whole process of my Master's study. Without their guidance I would not have been able to finish this project. Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to both the participants who filled in the questionnaires in this study as well as the course instructors who were gracious enough to give me complete access to their classroom. My research would not have been possible without their great kindness.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 3 October 2013 to conduct the final examination of Shiva Dialami on her thesis entitled "Reading Anxiety and Reading Comprehension Performance in English among EFL Learners in a Malaysian University" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Arts.

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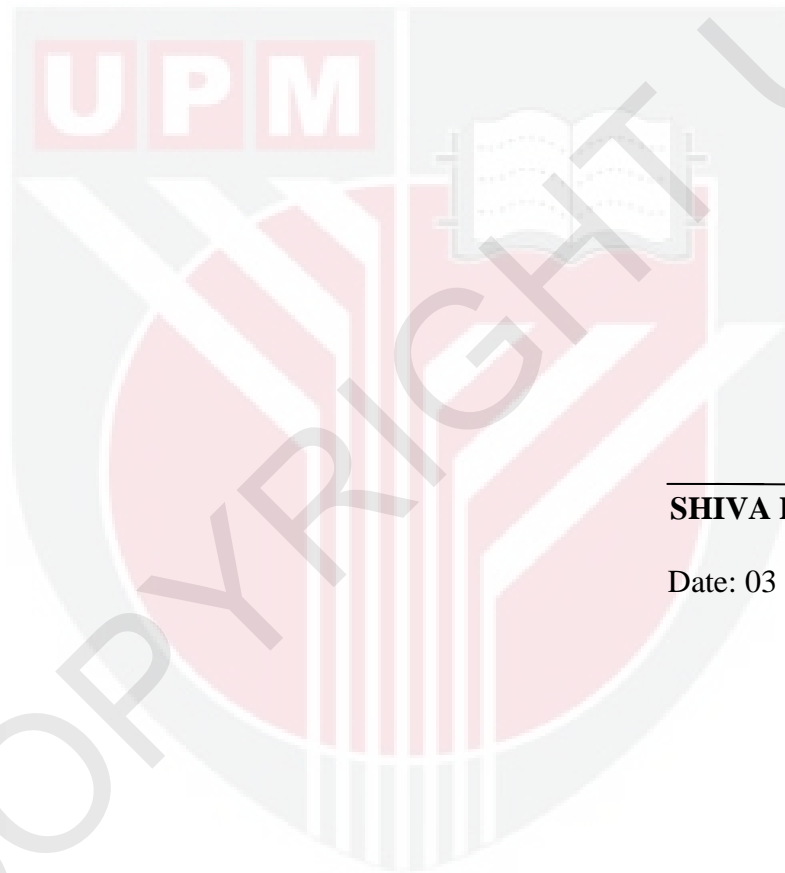
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## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.



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**SHIVA DIALAMI**

Date: 03 October 2013

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