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**AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS CAUSING  
ANXIETY IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AT  
SMP NEGERI 2 BAUBAU**

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**Abstract**

The problem statement of this researcher was whether factors causing anxiety in English Speaking on eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. The objective of the research was to find out the factors causing anxiety in English Speaking on eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. The design of this research was descriptive qualitative. The subjects of the research were seven students of Class VIII.1 at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. The techniques of data collection in this study were observation and interview. Techniques of data analysis used were reduction of data, Presentation of Data, and Verification. The result showed that students experienced English speaking anxiety which consisted of internal factors and external factors. In internal factors, students' anxiety is a lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes. Meanwhile, on external factors, students experience anxiety, namely limited vocabulary and grammatical errors. Based on the result of the research, it was concluded that the most experienced by students is a lack of self-confidence.

Key words: Anxiety, Speaking

**Abstrak**

Rumusan masalah dari penelitian ini adalah faktor-faktor apa yang menyebabkan kecemasan dalam Berbicara Bahasa Inggris pada siswa kelas VIII di SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor penyebab kecemasan dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris pada siswa kelas VIII di SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. Desain penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah tujuh siswa kelas VIII.1 di SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. Teknik pengumpulan data

dalam penelitian ini adalah observasi dan wawancara. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan adalah reduksi data, penyajian data, dan verifikasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa mengalami kecemasan berbicara bahasa Inggris yang terdiri dari faktor internal dan faktor eksternal. Pada faktor internal, kecemasan siswa berupa rasa kurang percaya diri dan takut melakukan kesalahan. Sedangkan pada faktor eksternal siswa mengalami kecemasan yaitu keterbatasan kosa kata dan kesalahan tata bahasa. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian dapat disimpulkan bahwa yang paling banyak dialami siswa adalah rasa kurang percaya diri.

*Kata kunci: Kecemasan, berbicara*

## 1. Introduction

Students from all over the world know that English is an international language. Students need to learn English. In learning English as a foreign language, we know that there are some skills in learning English, which include speaking, reading, listening, and writing. Speaking is the ability to say articulation sounds or words to express and convey thoughts, ideas, and feelings. The purpose of speaking is to communicate. Communication is the sending and receiving of messages or news between two or more people so that the message in question can be understood. Therefore, to convey the message effectively, the speaker must understand what will be conveyed or communicated. Through speaking students can give opinions, and suggestions, and ask questions to someone or listeners verbally.

Further, speaking is a very important skill that must be learned by students, students are asked to practice speaking English in everyday life, especially in class. Learning to speak will help students to get habits and fluency so that they can improve their speaking skills because getting used to speaking will contribute greatly to improving students' ability to speak English. Many students still feel that speaking English is very difficult. This is due to the ability of grammar and vocabulary that students have is still very lacking so students' self-confidence becomes disturbed. The students feel uncomfortable talking because they are afraid of making mistakes in speaking English so their friends will laugh and criticize them. Therefore, one of the problems experienced by many students in speaking English in class is a feeling of anxiety.

found by the writer. According to Carlson and Buskist (1997: 570)[1], anxiety is "an experience of apprehension or doom observed through positive physiological reactions, such as accelerated heart rate, sweaty palms, and tightness in the stomach. While according to Ormrod (2011)[2], anxiety is a feeling of uneasiness and apprehension concerning a situation with an uncertain outcome.

Anxiety is a feeling of fear, anxiety, or hesitation in speaking. In the teaching and learning process, many students experience anxiety when they give opinions, answer questions, and speak in learning English. This can be seen from students when they are asked to speak in front of their fellow students, they are not able to reproduce the true meaning, sound, or intonation in the target language even after practicing constantly and regularly. But when they are in front, everything seems lost. They forget the words they have prepared beforehand. The cause of all this is none other than the feelings of anxiety experienced by students. Ernawati and Fatma (2012)[3] two factors that influence students' anxiety that is internal and external factors.

Lightbown (2003) also discusses speaking anxiety and how it can affect language learning. They argue that anxiety is more likely to depend on special situations and circumstances that can make one feel uncomfortable, for example, an oral presentation in front of a larger group of people. Nevertheless, in these situations, researchers prefer to use the term tension.

Based on the researcher's preliminary observation at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau, the researcher has found that some of the students had anxiety about speaking English. There are several problems some students have a low vocabulary in the English language, students feel embarrassed to speak in front of the class, students feel difficulty controlling the fears arising from students themselves, and students worry when speaking hearing cannot understand the main idea of conveying. A study done by Musthachim (2013)[4] shows that the anxiety of students speaking English in the classroom is very disturbing to the performance of students in the presentation, especially in learning to speak English.

Referring to the description above, the researcher is interested to investigate causing anxiety in speaking English by conducting the

problems research entitled "An Analysis of Factors Causing Anxiety In Speaking English at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau".

### 1.1. Definition of Speaking

Speaking is the base word of "speak". Speaking is included in productive skills. By speaking, the speaker creates sound to convey meaning using many parts of the body including the lungs, tongue, teeth, and lips. According to Harmer (2001: 28)[5] stated in speaking, the speaker produces words and phrases by involving pitch change, intonation, and stress to convey meaning. Cook (2008: 67)[6] said that language conveys meanings from one person to another through spoken sounds, written letters, or gestures. Gani *et al.* (2015: 19)[7] stated speaking is an ability to orally express opinions, thoughts, facts, and feelings to someone, animals, and even to oneself.

Further, Wael *et al.* (2018: 66)[8] stated speaking can be considered a productive skill of oral communication that involves other people in conveying the information by pronouncing the words. Ahmadi (2017)[9] mentions that when we talk about speaking, we do not just say words through the mouth. This means that speaking is not only about saying words through the mouth but also more than that, such as grammar, fluency, pronunciation, etc.

### 1.2. The Purpose of Speaking

Speaking is one of the skills in English which has some purposes in communication. The purpose of speaking can be classified into some types. Based on this situation, (Thornbury, 2005: 13) classifies speaking into two main purposes namely transactional functions, and interpersonal functions.

#### 1. Transactional Function

The transactional function in speaking is purposed to convey information and it also can be happened when someone asks something to someone else.

#### 2. Interpersonal Function

Interpersonal function in speaking is purposed just to build social relations in communication.

The explanation above obviously gives an understanding that the meaning of the interpersonal function of speaking is more general than the transactional function of speaking.

In addition, speaking is not only viewed as a skill in a language but also there are some purposes or functions in it. It makes speaking very important in human life.

### 1.3. Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety is one of the best-documented psychological phenomena. In general, anxiety appears in the human body as a response to a particular situation. Commonly anxiety can be identified as a feeling of being threatened, apprehension, tension, or worry. Several definitions of anxiety are found by experts.

According to Passer and Smith (2009)[10], anxiety is a situation in which a person feels afraid and tense about something natural in response to the perceived threat. This is a natural feeling when someone feels something that is not comfortable for it. According to Ormrod (2011)[2], anxiety is a person's feeling of worry and restlessness because of the situation because they are not sure what the outcome will be. Someone must feel worried if something happens in their life, anxiety arises when someone doubts the result that will happen in the future. So that, feelings of discomfort, fear, and nervousness arise. Other researchers assume that anxiety can affect language learning, especially in foreign language and second language learners.

There are so many factors that make students lack in speaking one of them is anxiety. Anxiety has become one of the affective factors that influence speaking ability. Anxiety is a feeling of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, or worry. In other words, students feeling hard to speak, they doubt themselves and worry about making mistakes in speaking (Brown H. D., 1994)[11].

Diao Zhiping and Shamala Paramasivan (2013)[12] mention that anxiety is an obvious factor that can hinder students' performance and achievement and decrease their willingness to participate in learning activities. Meaning that the more students feel anxiety the less their contribution learning especially in speaking. Based on concluded above anxiety is the factor that makes students afraid and shy to speak English.

### 1.4. Factors of Students Anxiety

Ernawati and Fatma (2012)[3] two factors that influence students' anxiety that is internal and external factors.

1) The internal factor

a) Fear of Mistake

Robby (2010)[13], fear of mistakes becomes one of the main factors of students' reluctance to speak in English in class. Concerning the fear of making mistakes issues. Aftat (2008)[14] adds that this fear is linked to the issue of correction and negative evaluation. As argued by many theorists, fear of mistakes becomes one of the main factors of students' reluctance to speak in English in the classroom (Robby, 2010)[13]. Concerning the fear of making mistake issue, Aftat (2008)[14] adds that this fear is linked to the issue of correction and negative evaluation. Therefore, teachers need to convince their students that making mistakes is not a wrong or bad thing because students can learn from their mistakes. From some of the opinions above, the researcher can conclude that. When students experience fear of making mistakes, it is caused by feelings of students who are negative about things like they make mistakes when learning a language. Their friends will laugh and berate them, so students lose enthusiasm to produce good language and prefer to be silent.

b) Shyness

Shyness is an emotional thing that many students suffer from at some time when they are required to speak in English class. This indicates that shyness could be a source of problems in students' learning activities in the classroom especially in the class of speaking. Therefore, paying attention to this aspect is also quite important to help the students do their best in their speaking performance in class.

c) Lack of Self-Confidence

According to Cubukeu (2007: 133)[15], anxious' students will perform unsuccessfully in their foreign language learning. In another way, those who are good in language class are they with little anxiety. It means lack of self-confidence is one of the important factors needed to be concerned because it is determined to one successful learning. It is commonly understood that students' lack of confidence usually occurs when students realize that their conversation partners have not understood them or when they do not understand other speakers. In this situation, they would rather keep silent while

others do talk showing that the students lack of confidence to communicate.

In the opinion above, the researcher concluded that the problem of lack of confidence in students could result in students becoming easily frightened when told to come forward by the teacher and causing students to just be silent and not dare to produce language. This factor is very dangerous to improve student language performance. Where the teacher must also play an important role in overcoming this problem.

d) Lack of Motivation

Nunan (1999)[16] stated that motivation is important to notice in that it can affect students' reluctance to speak in English. In this sense, motivation is a key consideration in determining the preparedness of learners to communicate. Zua (2008)[17] further adds that motivation is inner energy. She says that no matter what kinds of motivation the learners possess it will enhance their study interest. It has been proven in many studies that students with a strong motivation to succeed can persist in learning and gain better scores than those who have a weaker motivation for success showing that building students' motivation to learn is urgent for every teacher.

The above opinion can be concluded that the lack of motivation of students also influences performance in learning English in students. Where student learning motivation greatly influences student performance in producing language. The weakness of student learning motivation results in the weak language produced by students, while high motivation will cause students to be enthusiastic to learn English more actively, especially speaking in class.

2) The external factor

a) Embarrassment

In learning a second foreign language, embarrassment becomes one of the factors contributing to students' anxiety. The expert above explained that learning to speak a second foreign language entails the possibility of embarrassment (Kessler, 2010: 361)[18]. Thus, embarrassment factors need to be alarmed in learning a language. In the above statement, the researcher concluded that Embarrassment makes students not feel comfortable when speaking in class. This can make the concentration of students disturbed so they cannot produce the correct

language. In the world of education to be able to communicate fluently, students must be confident in any situation.

b) Limited vocabulary

Those sentences showed one's difficulty in regarding vocabulary (Tanveer, 2007: 30)[19]. However limited vocabulary might hinder the process of learning a language. Thus, limited vocabulary should be noted as one of the factors contributing to anxiety.

The researcher concluded that the lack of vocabulary in learning English interfered with the process of speaking English, because a student had no vocabulary, they would have difficulty communicating. Because vocabulary is important to students in learning English. People who do not have a lot of their vocabulary will have difficulty producing language.

c) Grammatical Error

According to Richard (1971:157) a grammatical category is a set of syntactic features that express meanings from the same conceptual domain occur in contrast to each other, and are typically expressed in the same fashion. The change in the perceived role of the first language began with the observation that the number of errors in the second language performance that could be attributed to first language influence was far smaller than had been imagined previously. The statement above can be concluded that the occurrence of a grammatical error in communication can be caused by the habit of using the first language so that when trying to use a second language will result in a person's concentration is low and cause communication performance using a second language becomes stiff. In the world of education, especially in Indonesia, there are often grammatical errors experienced by students where English becomes their second language.

d) Friends

Friends are also having an important role in learning a language. A friend often makes anxious situations making learners feel nervous and uncomfortable when they speak. Feeling uncomfortable when being stared at by other students while speaking is one of the anxiety sources commonly experienced by language learners. According to Tsilapkides (2009: 39)[20], fear of negative evaluation from peers was a common factor that appeared in language learning. Yet, even if it was a natural sense,

classmates still become factors contributing to student anxiety in the learning process. Researchers concluded that besides friends, they could help train students to speak English. Classmates can also have a negative influence on learning languages. Examples in language classes are when students do presentations in class. Sometimes students feel anxious to start talking because they are afraid that if they make mistakes their friends will laugh at them and make fun of them.

e) Lack of Preparation

Many previous studies stated that preparation becomes one of the major factors that make students anxious Liu (2007: 129) also mentions "preparation", in their top list of how to overcome anxiety, hence, it is obvious that lack of preparation become one of the issues contributing students' anxiety in speaking class. The researcher concluded that the lack of preparation of students in preparing the material when they wanted to do a percentage in the classroom was also a problem factor experienced by most students in producing language. For example when students will do percentages in class. Students will feel anxious to speak in front of a teacher or friend because they do not know the material they will explain.

### 1.5. Speaking Anxiety

In carrying out speaking, students face some difficulties. Most of the students still get difficulties even though they already have a lot of vocabulary and have written them well. The main problem is students afraid of making mistakes. This feeling makes them anxious and nervous when they have to perform in front of the class. Hence, learners who feel anxious about their foreign language learning may find their study less enjoyable than making them can the several definitions of anxiety are mastering their speaking skills. Speaking anxiety is a worrying feeling to speak and perform the language that the learners got in English class. Speaking anxiety is something that has a great impact on one's self-confidence since it often makes one experience failure when not able to speak out and show what one knows. This speaking anxiety makes learners have low confidence to perform in front of other people.

Occhipinti (2009)[21] who conducted the study said that many researchers have supported the idea that communicating in a foreign language class may be a traumatic experience causing

feelings of fear. Furthermore, Aida (1998)[22] claims that speaking in the target language seems the most threatening aspect of foreign language learning and that the lack of oral skills constitutes serious problems for language learners. Although students show the most interest in learning to communicate orally in a foreign language, their anxieties may play debilitating roles. Labov (in Occhipinti, 2009) affirms that speaking in class is experienced by students as “high-risk” and “low-gain”.

## 2. Methods

The design of the research used descriptive qualitative research, which means to describe factors of students’ anxiety in speaking English. The case study in this research provides interviews and observations about factors causing anxiety in English Speaking on eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. The time of this research was in the even semester in the school year of 2021/2022. This research took place at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau at Murhum Street No. 147, Wajo, Murhum District, Baubau City, Southeast Sulawesi. Eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau was the subjects of research and this source of research data. Of 31 students in class VIII.1, the research was only focused on 7 students because from my observation, I found that there were around 7 students who were identified as having anxiety in speaking English.

The researcher used a human instrument to collect data. Qualitative research as a human instrument serves to determine the focus of research, select informants as data sources, assess data quality, analyze data, interpret data, and draw conclusions from their findings (Sugiyono, 2017)[23]. The techniques of data collection used observation and interview.

The techniques of data analysis applied in this research using the Miles and Huberman model (2020). It is understood in conjunction with the qualitative data, which is performed interactively and continues until completion, so the data is already saturated. Data reduction, data presentation, and data verification, sometimes known as the conclusion of verification, are all activities in data analysis.

## 3. Findings and Discussion

### 3.1 Research Findings

#### 1. Description of Location

SMP Negeri 2 Baubau is one of the junior high schools in Baubau. It is located at Murhum Street, No. 147A, Wajo, Kec. Murhum District, Baubau city, southeast Sulawesi Tenggara, dengan kode pos 123456. The school was built on August 06<sup>th</sup>, 1965. The school has 33 classrooms, 1 laboratory, and 1 library. This school has 53 teachers, 863 students, male were 417, and female were 446 students. Eighth-grade students were the subject of this study, especially students in class VIII.1.

#### a. Result of Interview with Students

##### a. Respondent 1

Based on the student’s statements above, it was found that these students experienced anxiety in speaking English, where the source came from low self-confidence, high fear of pronouncing words/sentences that were not appropriate, and little vocabulary mastered. Some of these things resulted in students not liking when speaking English.

##### b. Respondent 2

Based on the student statement above, it was found that these students experienced less anxiety in speaking English. The student is confident, he feels he can speak English if he continues to increase his vocabulary.

##### c. Respondent 3

Based on the students’ statement above, it was found that the student experienced anxiety in speaking English. Low level of self-confidence, high fear of pronouncing words/sentences that are not appropriate, little vocabulary mastered, if because of friends who are not used to speaking English.

##### d. Respondent 4

Based on the students’ statement above, it was found that the student experienced anxiety in speaking English. Writing words/sentences that are different when spoken becomes a carrier of anxiety for these students. However, it can be seen from the answers to other questions that these students do not feel anxious when they have finished discussing their English learning material. So, from this statement, it can be said that the student's anxiety level is in the middle of the anxiety level.

##### e. Respondent 5

Based on the student's statements above, it was found that these students experienced anxiety in speaking English, where the source came from low self-confidence, high fear of pronouncing words/sentences that were not appropriate, and

little vocabulary mastered. Some of these things resulted in students not liking when speaking English.

f. Respondent 6

Based on the student's statements above, it was found that these students experienced anxiety in speaking English, where the source came from low self-confidence, high fear of pronouncing words/sentences that were not appropriate, and little vocabulary mastered. Some of these things resulted in students not liking when speaking English.

g. Respondent 7

Based on the student's statements above, it was found that these students experienced anxiety in speaking English, where the source came from low self-confidence, high fear of pronouncing words/sentences that were not appropriate, and little vocabulary mastered. Some of these things resulted in students not liking when speaking English.

### 3.2. Discussions

This research aims to determine the factors causing anxiety in speaking English on eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. In conducting the research, the researcher did observation in Class VIII.1 and intervened with seven (7) students in Class VIII.1.

In this research, researchers analyzed the anxiety factors experienced by students in speaking English in Class VIII.1 at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau. Krashen (1982) subsequently argued that fear can be a factor that inhibits a student's ability to learn foreign languages and shortens the language-learning process itself. Young (1990) maintains that activities requiring speaking performances are the most anxiety-provoking ones for students. Anxiety, homework difficulties, and skills are often found interfering with data entry, processing, and retrieval, and when anxiety interferes with cognition, anxious students may learn less and may also have difficulty communicating or applying what they have learned. As a result, they may experience more failures, which increases their anxiety.

Based on what the researchers gleaned from the interviews, the researchers identified specific fears that students experienced while learning English, namely internal fears and external fears. It is a lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, and grammatical errors.

#### 1. Internal Factors Students' anxiety when speaking in English Class

Intrinsic anxiety is a problem that affects students' language ability. Internal factors usually include motivation, lack of confidence, fear of making a mistake, and shyness. However, in this study, the researcher found two factors that contributed to students' anxiety when speaking English, namely a lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes

##### a. A lack of Self-confidence

Lack of self-confidence is one of the contributing factors to student anxiety, which focuses on internal factors. One thing about job interviews that contributes greatly to student anxiety is a lack of confidence. Lack of confidence is one of the anxiety factors that many students experience, especially when speaking.

Speaking is a skill that students cannot easily master since English is a foreign language. Lack of confidence is an element to consider. It can affect students' ability to speak, so the teaching will be less effective when English is spoken, so the lack of self-confidence will greatly affect students' ability to speak, so teachers should pay more attention to this problem. Almost all students lack confidence when speaking English.

The fear of many students is a lack of self-confidence. It can help them improve their speaking skills. When students lack confidence, it can prevent them from speaking well. The reason students fear a lack of confidence is that they don't understand the meaning of what they use when speaking English. Therefore, students need to practice and improve their English skills to become more confident.

According to Cubukcu (2007: 1333), anxious students will not succeed in learning a foreign language. In other ways, they are good in their language classes with less anxiety. This means that the lack of self-confidence is one of the important factors that need to be shown because it is determined for successful learning.

##### b. Fear of Mistake

Fear is one of the contributing factors to student anxiety, which is centered within. During a job interview, this position is also a factor that many students fear or fear when speaking English. It contains factors that make sense as intended, and each factor can be interpreted simply and clearly. Fear of making mistakes is an important intrinsic factor in student anxiety. This shows that

the fear of making mistakes also has a strong impact on students' fear of speaking English.

Fear of making a mistake can lead students to fear that they do not speak English well. Fear of making mistakes is something to watch out for, as fear of making mistakes can make learning difficult for students, especially when speaking English. There are several things that make a person afraid of making mistakes, such as fear of being mocked by friends and reluctance to start doing it because they are unsure of their abilities. Therefore, students must keep motivating themselves to speak up in front or outside of the classroom.

Robby (2010), fear of making a mistake is one of the main factors for students' reluctance to use English in class. Regarding the problem of fear of making mistakes, Aftat (2008) adds that this fear is related to the issue of correction and negative evaluation.

## 2. The External Factors of Students' Anxiety in Speaking English

For this intrinsic factor, the researcher found that student anxiety about speaking English in Class VIII.1 is influenced by two factors, namely limited vocabulary and grammatical errors.

### a. Limited vocabulary

Limited vocabulary is a factor in anxiety that focuses on external factors. There are two questions in a limited vocabulary interview. A limited vocabulary is an external factor that is one of the external anxiety factors in speaking English. Vocabulary limitations hinder the language learning process. A limited vocabulary should therefore be considered as one of the factors causing anxiety.

Many students' anxiety is also due to a limited vocabulary. This can make it difficult for students to speak the language, preventing them from freely exploring their ideas and skills. The reason many students experience this anxiety is that many of them have reported that their vocabulary makes it easy for them to forget because it is rarely used and practiced.

These sentences indicated vocabulary difficulties (Tanveer, 2007: 50). However, the limited nocturnal vocabulary made it difficult to learn the language. Therefore, limited vocabulary should be considered a contributing factor to anxiety.

### b. Grammar Errors

Grammatical errors also contribute to students' anxiety about speaking English, which focuses on external factors. Interviews have shown that grammatical errors are also a cause of anxiety among students when speaking English.

The interview results show that many students are afraid to speak English because they do not understand the correct words according to the rules of the English language. They also said that they often had problems and made mistakes in sentence structure, so their vocabulary was sometimes mixed up.

Based on the data analysis, the final version of the PSCAS questionnaire adopted by Yaikhong & Usaha (2012) was used to conclude that the rotation contains factors that have importance as expected and each factor can be easily interpreted. Grammar errors include external factors that also contribute to students' anxiety when speaking English.

## 4. Conclusions

### 4.1 Conclusion

Based on the finding of data analysis, the researcher gets the conclusion that the students' anxiety in speaking English in class VIII.1 at SMP 2 Baubau came from the students themselves. The researcher observed eighth-grade students and conducted interviews with seven students on eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Baubau as research subjects with existing data analysis techniques with searched students' anxiety experience in speaking English Class which consists of internal factors and external factors. Internal factors included a lack of self-confidence and a fear of making mistakes. There was a lack of vocabulary and grammatical errors among the external factors. Besides the description above, the result of this research was the most experienced by students is a lack of self-confidence.

### 4.2 . Suggestion

Based on the conclusions from the implication above, it can suggest to students that they should speak without anxiety, must, and be able to start getting used to being close to English, they can start by learning basic vocabulary and doing exercises repeatedly to develop their ability in English speaking. In addition, to further research, it is also expected to add other variables related to the reactions of students such as mother tongue,



motivation, and other phenomena, which are then described by qualitative research methods.

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