

THE INFLUENCE OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OBJECTIVE TESTS ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 20-04-2026

Revised : 07-05-2026

Accepted : 15-06-2026

KEYWORDS

Student Perception;
Quality of Objective
Tests;
Learning Outcomes;
Indonesian Language;

ABSTRACT

Quality education always depends on the effectiveness of learning and the accuracy of evaluation. This study aims to empirically test the contribution of students' perceptions of the quality of objective tests to the achievement of their Indonesian language learning outcomes. The approach used is a quantitative non-experimental with an associative/causal Ex Post Facto design. The study population consisted of 60 students of Santa Maria Elementary School, Gianyar. The sampling technique was purposive sampling taken from 60 students of grades 5A and 5B. Data were collected using a closed Likert scale questionnaire for the test quality perception variable (dimensions of construction, substance, and test quality) and an objective test for the learning outcome variable. The results of the prerequisite test showed that the data were normally and linearly distributed ($p = 0.792 > 0.05$). Furthermore, the hypothesis test using Pearson Product Moment correlation produced a correlation coefficient value of $r = 0.949$ with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.01$. These results indicate a very strong and significant positive relationship between students' perceptions of test quality and their learning outcomes. Thus, students' mental representation of evaluation tools is an important factor that determines their academic achievement. The implications of this study emphasize that teachers not only need to pursue the empirical validity of the questions, but also need to ensure that the evaluation instruments are designed in a fair, clear, and ambiguity-free manner to minimize students' external cognitive load.

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INTRODUCTION

Quality education always relies on the effectiveness of the learning process and the accuracy of the evaluation system used. In learning Indonesian language in schools, evaluation is not just a tool to provide grades, but a crucial instrument to measure the achievement of students' language and literature competencies (Ari et al., 2025; Qurtubi et al., 2024). One of the most frequently used forms of instruments by teachers is the objective test (multiple-choice, true-wrong, matchmaking) due to its efficiency in covering a wide scope of the material and the objectivity of its scoring. However, the success of this evaluation is not only determined by the empirical validity of the questions compiled, but also by how students view and interpret the test. Problems that often arise in the field show a disconnect between the value of learning outcomes and students' real understanding (Prasetyo, 2024; Sanusi & Aziez, 2021). Many students view objective tests as just a guessing game versus multiple choice, or conversely, as a psychological burden full of traps (distractions). When students perceive objective tests as an unfair, too complicated, or even too superficial an instrument to measure their language skills, their motivation and seriousness in learning tend to decrease, which ultimately negatively impacts their learning outcomes (Afriliant, 2025; Rianaa, 2024).

The effectiveness of evaluating Indonesian language learning through objective tests is not only determined by the empirical validity of the test items, but is also strongly influenced by students' perceptions of the instrument's quality including clarity of instructions, fairness of questions, and relevance of the material which psychologically shape their mental representation of the test. To date, studies of Indonesian language learning outcomes have tended to focus on external factors such as learning models, while research on objective tests has stagnated in mechanistic quantitative analyses (validity and reliability) without considering the psychometric perspective of the students. A clear research gap is the lack of empirical testing of how extraneous cognitive load resulting from poor test design and students' self-efficacy interact specifically in mediating the relationship between perceived instrument quality and language competency achievement. So far, research on Indonesian language learning outcomes has focused more on external factors such as teacher learning models, classroom facilities, or textbook quality. On the other hand, research on objective tests generally only stagnates on quantitative analysis of question items (validity, reliability, and difficulty) (Arini et al., 2024). The research gap (correlational and conceptual) found is that there is still little attention paid to the psychometric aspects from the subject's point of view, especially how students' "perception" of the quality of the test such as the clarity of the instructions, the level of fairness of the questions, and the relevance of the test material affect their learning outcomes psychologically (Sunaryati et al., 2024).

The novelty of this research lies in the integration between aspects of cognitive psychology (student perception) with educational evaluation that is specifically contextualized in Indonesian subjects. Indonesian language learning which is full of long texts and discourse analysis requires a high quality of objective tests so that they are not biased. This study no longer sees learning outcomes as *Output* mechanical of the teaching method, but rather as a product that is influenced by the student's mental representation of the evaluation tool itself (Pramudita et al., 2025; Yusron et al., 2024). This research lies in the claim that Indonesian language learning outcomes are not merely mechanical outputs of teaching methods, but rather a cognitive product significantly determined by students' psychological dynamics in interpreting the validity and fairness of the evaluation tools they encounter. Theoretically, this research is supported by several strong conceptual foundations. This relationship between perception and learning outcomes can be explained through *Self-Efficacy Theory* from Albert Bandura, who states that an individual's beliefs and perceptions of the environment or task (in this case, the test instrument) will determine the effort and performance they demonstrate. If students perceive the quality of an objective test to be good, fair, and test their true abilities, *self-efficacy* they will increase. In addition, this research also relies on *Cognitive Load Theory* (Cognitive Load Theory) from John Sweller; poor objective test quality (such as ambiguous question sentences or confusing answer choices) will create *Extraneous cognitive load* (external cognitive load) that interferes with the student's thinking process during the exam. Conversely, students' perception that tests are designed with good quality will align their cognitive capacity to solve problems optimally (Syagif, 2024). Through the integration of these theories, this study aims to empirically examine the extent to which students' perceptions of the quality of objective tests contribute significantly to the achievement of their Indonesian learning outcomes.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a non-experimental type. The design applied is Ex Post Facto which is associative/causal. Researchers do not manipulate or treat variables, but rather investigate events that have occurred naturally (Astuti, 2021; Sihombing et al., 2022). Purposive Sampling Technique is used if you choose two classes intentionally based on special considerations or criteria from the school, therefore the population and research samples are taken from two classes, namely class 5a and 5b of Santa Maria Elementary School, Gianyar Regency. This study aims to measure the extent to which the independent variable (Students' Perception of Objective Test Quality) has a contribution to the Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes Achievement. Data on student perceptions were collected using a closed questionnaire (questionnaire) with a Likert scale. The research instrument has been tested for validity and obtained a very high level of validity and very high reliability. The following is the development of indicators adapted from the theory of educational evaluation:

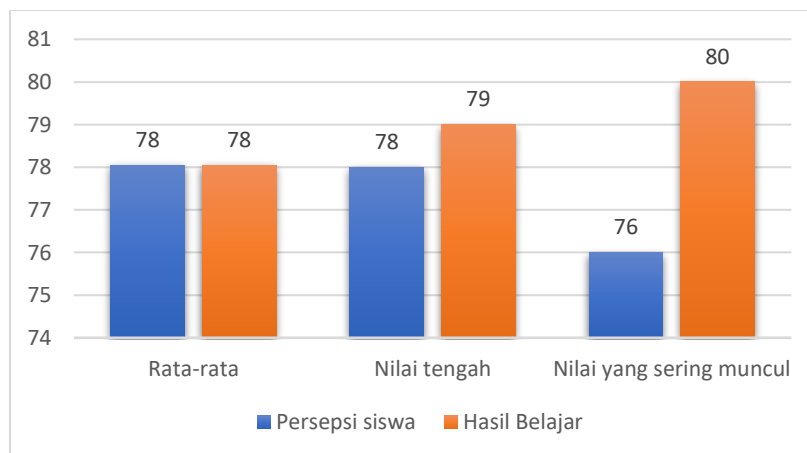
Table 1. Research Instrument Grid

Variable	Dimensions	Indicator
Students' Perceptions of the Quality of Objective Tests (X)	Construction Questions	1. Clarity of instructions for working on the questions. 2. Accuracy of the use of grammar in the question items. 3. The availability of one of the most correct answers.
	Substance/Content	4. Suitability of the questions with the material being taught. 5. Representation of the scope of the material in the test.
	Test quality	6. The level of difficulty of the perceived question. 7. The functionality of the <i>distractor</i> answer choice.
		8. Justice about (not taking sides with certain groups).
Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes (Y)	Cognitive	1. students' Indonesian language learning outcomes

(Ariana, 2021; E. S. Putri & Rinaningsih, 2021)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study discuss the quantitative description of the data, the results of the prerequisite test consisting of normality and linearity test results and the results of the hypothesis test using simple correlation (Hikmah & Saputra, 2023; Laksmi & Dwijayanti, 2023; Mirza et al., 2021). The data from the research results are shown as follows.



(Source: results of questionnaire distribution and Indonesian language learning outcomes at Santa Maria Elementary School, Gianyar, 2026)

Figure 1. Research Results Data

Based on the data above, student perception data on the quality of the objective test was obtained with an average score of 78, a middle score of 78, and a score that often appeared 76, then the achievement score of Indonesian language learning outcomes obtained an average score of 78, a middle score of 79, and a score that often appeared 80.

Table 3. Normality Test Results

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Student perception	.074	60	.200*	.982	60	.518
Learning Outcomes	.097	60	.200*	.969	60	.127

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on table 3, the results of the normality test with the Kolmogorov Smirnov and Shapiro wilk test obtained both data on learning perception data and Indonesian language learning outcomes obtained a significance value of > 0.05 which means that the data is normally distributed.

Table 4. Linearity Test Results

ANOVA Table

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Student Perception*Between Learning Outcomes Groups	(Combined)	2590.933	24	107.956	20.323	.000
	Linearity	2502.699	1	2502.699	471.149	.000
	Deviation from Linearity	88.234	23	3.836	.722	.792
	Within Groups	185.917	35	5.312		
Total		2776.850	59			

Based on table 4. Regarding the linearity test between student perception and learning outcomes, a significance value of 0.792>0.05 was obtained, which means that the data is linear.

Table 5. Correlation Test Results

Correlations

		Student perception	Learning Outcomes
Student perception	Pearson Correlation	1	.949**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Learning Outcomes	Pearson Correlation	.949**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on table 5. Regarding the correlation test between student perception and learning outcomes, the person correlation obtained 0.949 at a very high correlation. Based on the results of inferential statistical analysis using simple linear regression, it was found that students' perception of the quality of objective tests has a significant and positive influence on the achievement of Indonesian language learning outcomes. These findings indicate that the better, fairer, and more valid the quality of exam instruments in the eyes of students, the more optimal their academic achievements will be. This causality relationship correlated that objective tests are not just passive measuring devices that record students' abilities mechanically, but rather an environmental stimulus that is actively interpreted by the student's cognitive domain. When students view that the multiple-choice question items presented are designed with a clear, unambiguous, and representative construction of the material that has been studied, they are more likely to face the exam with more mature psychological readiness. Conversely, if the evaluation instrument is perceived as poor such as a confusing or deceptive clue (*Distractor*) that are illogical then the students' focus will be split, which ultimately degrades their original performance when completing the evaluation (Permana & Hendrayana, 2023).

Theoretically, the significance of this influence is very much in line with *Self-Efficacy Theory* developed by Albert Bandura. In this theoretical perspective, an individual's perception of a specific environment or task will control the level of self-confidence (*self-efficacy*) in completing the task. Objective test instruments that are assessed as of quality and have a level of fairness (*fairness*) will stimulate students' self-efficacy, so that they feel able and motivated to do it optimally (García-Martínez et al., 2022; Wardhani et al., 2022; Wijayati et al., 2022). In addition, these findings are also strengthened by *Cognitive Load Theory* (Cognitive Load Theory) initiated by John Sweller. Poor quality of objective tests, such as sentence structures that are too convoluted in Indonesian questions or having multiple-interpretation answer options, will trigger the emergence of *Extraneous cognitive load* (external cognitive load). This extra load takes up the working memory capacity (*Working Memory*) students who should be allocated to analyze the essence of language competence, such as understanding discourse or drawing conclusions from texts (Asma & Dallel, 2020; Princess, 2026). Through students' positive perception of test quality, this external cognitive load can be suppressed to a minimum, so that students' thinking capacity is fully focused on solving problems accurately (Sholihah, 2022; Tri et al., 2026).

The reliability of the findings of this study is also supported by various relevant previous research results. Empirical studies show that students' perceptions of the fairness and clarity of assessments are strongly correlated with their motivation to perform and their learning outcomes in the classroom. When students feel that the evaluation tools used are transparent and valid, anxiety about the exam (*Test Anxiety*) will decrease drastically, which automatically has a positive impact on their increase in academic grades. In the specific context of learning Bahasa Indonesia, previous research also confirms that the characteristics of material that are full of long texts require high psychometric reliability in the objective instruments. Evaluations that are perceived to be biased or simply test superficial memorization have been correlated to reduce students' reading interest and critical ability (Evans et al., 2024; Lopez, 2024). Therefore, the results of this study reaffirm the urgency for subject teachers to not only focus on the preparation of teaching materials, but also to have qualified competence in constructing quality objective tests in order to create a healthy evaluation climate and support the achievement of authentic learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the overall results of data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that students' perception of the quality of objective tests plays a crucial role and makes a significant and positive contribution to the achievement of Indonesian language learning outcomes. Based on the above conclusions, several strategic recommendations can be submitted for stakeholders in the world of education. Furthermore, researchers are advised to expand the range of research variables by integrating other internal factors such as the level of academic anxiety (*test anxiety*) or students' cognitive style, as well as expanding the research population so that the generalization of findings becomes broader and more comprehensive. This study has a limited scope because it only measures one psychological factor (perception of objective tests), while the results of Indonesian language learning in schools in real life are also greatly influenced by other complex variables that are not controlled in this study, such as the condition of the family environment, the intrinsic motivation of students, and the variety of teachers' teaching methods before the evaluation is carried out.

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