

The Correlation between the Writing Ability and Self-esteem
of Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy Students

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Abstract

Writing in EFL has been an essential requirement for Students of Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy because it is used when they are on board. Even though it is compulsory, the writing progress is unsatisfactory. Recent studies widely investigate and find the correlation between affective factors in learning, especially self-esteem, and student's writing improvements. Following the issues, the present study investigated the correlation between Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy students' English writing progress and their self-esteem. The data were collected using two instruments; Test of English Writing (TEW) and Questionnaire of Self-esteem (QSE) which covers three sections of questionnaire; global, situational and task self-esteem. The instruments were distributed to 107 students. Then the data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment. Results of the study revealed that the overall scores of TEW indicated that the level of the student's writing ability was fair; the highest correlation level appeared between situational self-esteem and writing ability and the lowest correlation level appeared between global self-esteem and writing ability, and finally the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability of the students was significantly positive.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Global Self-esteem, Situational Self-esteem, Task Self-esteem, Writing Ability, Correlation, EFL.

Introduction

Jerome B. Dusek (1996) stated that self-esteem is positively correlated to the grades earned in the achievement test given to the students. The results depict students with higher self-esteem achieve better than those with lower self-esteem. Several research quoted in Santrock (2007, p. 147) reported that self-esteem often decreases when students make the transition to higher level of education, for example, adolescent who has just graduated from senior high school and attend freshman year at college will feel the decrease of self-esteem.

Students of Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy or Balai Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Ilmu Pelayaran Surabaya (BP2IP) are slightly different from students of other schools in general because they live daily in dormitory with strict rules, high level of discipline, and vulnerable to punishment. In the context of learning, semi-military environment is often perceived as a factor that could affect students' degree of self-esteem.

BP2IP¹ is a state institution under the Indonesia Ministry of Transportation that provides educational seafaring courses, where English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a compulsory subject matter that students have to take and pass. It is a mandatory course because as merchant ships officer candidates, students are expected to use both written and oral communication in English (IMO, 2000). Thus, International Maritime Organization (IMO) established Maritime English to facilitate the seafaring students and to equip them with communication skills for later use on board.

Maritime English is the international language used by seafarers for ship communication around the world (IMO, 2000). The objective of Maritime English course is that the students are able to use written and oral English. The model course of Maritime English integrates the practice of language items such as grammar, vocabulary and

¹BP2IP has changed its name into Politeknik Pelayaran, Surabaya.

phonology with the language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The skills activities are adapted from authentic maritime situations.

There are two core sections of Maritime English course. The first core section is especially designed for students in elementary proficiency level of English up to lower intermediate language level, while the second core section is especially reserved for students in lower intermediate to upper intermediate. Derived from the illustration of the English language levels (IMO, 2000, p.13) the students of DP-III Program in BP2IP Surabaya, which are high school graduates, have been classified in elementary language level because their ability in using English is basic, everyday needs but without sustained fluency and still found many errors. They also have limited understanding of spoken English which requires a lot repetition and simplification of the language.

The writing task given to the students in the elementary level is mainly about describing the location, role or purpose based on the object being studied, for example the course outline of Core Section 1 (IMO, 2000, p.16) column 4, section 4.4 denotes the competence that teacher should teach to the students is the communication skills such as listening, speaking and writing which enable students to describe the location and purpose of safety equipments on board ship. This inferred that the students in elementary levels are not forced to write a certain genre of writing such as descriptive or expository writing, but they are expected to write a basic informational writing about the location and purpose of safety equipments on board because the writing skill of Maritime English is adapted to the communication skills that related to the authentic maritime situations.

English writing skill is a personal requirement for every seafarer because it is used on board and it has been one of the requirements for seafarer to hold a certificate of competency in seafaring after passing series of test conducted by the Seafarer Board of Examiners. Based on this reason, writing skill in English is necessary for the students of Surabaya Merchant

Marine Academy. Thus to support the improvement of the learning of English writing skill, there should be research conducted related to the students' writing skill in English.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing is seen as a fairly complicated skill. It involves the learner's cognitive and affective aspects. There are still many problems in EFL learning caused from affective aspects. In the writing process, of writing that could not be separated from the cognitive and affective involvement, self-esteem is a small part in the affective domain that has a major influence in the success of writing as Lawrence (2000) insisted that self-esteem construct is recognized today to be a major factor in learning outcomes. Writing is seen as more than a standardized system of communication, but also as an essential tool for learning (Hyland, 2002; Weigle, 2002).

Weigle (2002) also emphasizes that EFL writing concerns the content of the writing, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics as well. Jacobs et al (1981) defines the criteria of a good piece of writing and embraces them to the so called ESL Composition Profile, a holistic scoring rubric widely used up to now.

Based on this situation, the self-esteem degree of BP2IP Surabaya students allegedly plays role in student's EFL writing achievement. This evidence shows that the changing of self-esteem which is experienced by students in school transitions can influence the academic outcomes as well. BP2IP Surabaya students are classified as adolescents who can be at risk suffering low self-esteem; this can be harmful for their ability in EFL writing.

The strict rule and semi-military environment of BP2IP Surabaya are able to drive the unstable degree of self-esteem in learning among the students as well. Meanwhile, the merchant ships industry as the party that will employ the graduated students of BP2IP Surabaya, has uttered that they require qualified seafarers who comprehend the written and oral communication using English. This has been a strong issue to conduct a research about the correlation between the writing ability and self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students.

Bloom (2000) asserted that self-esteem is a crucial cluster in affective factor which will affect the confidence of students in learning the entire language skills especially writing skill. Students who write in the context of EFL generally encounter problem in concentrate both on the content of the writing and the use of the language (Weigle, 2002), thus writing in EFL is categorized as a fairly complicated skill. Brown (2000) supported Bloom's claim that self-esteem is involved in student's writing and oral performance. The correlation is shown by several studies (Al-Hattab, 2006; Fahim and Rad, 2011).

Coopersmith (1967) defines that self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that individuals hold towards themselves. It can also be seen from one's subjective experience conveyed to others verbally or through an overt expressive behavior. In line with that, Brown (2000) defines that self-esteem refers to the evaluation which individuals make and customarily maintain with regard to themselves, expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval and indicates the extent to which individuals believe themselves to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. Subsequently, Wilding and Palmer (2010) define that self-esteem is having confidence in his own abilities and values, feeling comfortable and accepting his self with all the strengths and weaknesses, while still taking opportunities for self-development.

Brown (2000) through the book *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* has been sifting through self-esteem into three dimensions; global self-esteem, situational self-esteem and task self-esteem. Global self-esteem is general or prevailing assessment one makes of one's own worth over time and across a number of situations, it can be analogized to a statistical mean or median level of overall self-appraisal, global self-esteem for students is intended to the student's self-esteem whenever they are and wherever they are, even when they are outside the campus, the global self-esteem will always be their personal judgment towards themselves which always exist in their daily activity. Situational self-esteem is one's

self-appraisals in particular life situations such as social interaction or on certain relatively defined traits. A person may have different degree of situational self-esteem depending upon the situation or the trait in question, for example, situational self-esteem is the degree of self-esteem while students are learning about Maritime English. Their personal judgment toward themselves while learning the subject matter is their situational self-esteem. Task self-esteem is the self-esteem that relates to particular tasks within specific situations. Task self-esteem refers to one's self-evaluation of a particular aspect of the process, for example on EFL learning, task self-esteem can be exemplified in speaking or writing task.

Self-esteem is also divided into three levels. The first level (is high self-esteem. Parecki (cited in Franken, 2007) proposed that high self-esteem is a pride of oneself in which he becomes aware and accepting of his imperfections while cherishing his inherent strengths and positive qualities. Rosenberg cited in Mruk (2006) depicts that a person with high-self esteem always feels that he is a person of worth with no awe to himself nor expect others to awe him. The second level is moderate self-esteem. People with moderate self-esteem consider themselves valuable, even though in certain situations, they sometimes still feel dissatisfied toward themselves. They have lower negative emotional state as well because they recognize that emotions always play role in people's lives (Jantz, 2010). Lastly, the third level is low self-esteem. Franken (2007) defined that low self-esteem is a highly negative emotional state when individuals believe they are lacking in important skills and abilities that will drive them to feel a persistent sense of hopelessness. Rosenberg (cited in Mruk, 2006) states that a person with low self-esteem rarely feels satisfied and feels lack of respect toward himself, and his behavior implies self-rejection, self-dissatisfaction and self-contempt. Furthermore, according to the self-esteem definition and concept reviewing from the literature, self-esteem can be defined as the self-worth that is obtained from personal judgment of one's self and it is reflected through their verbal communications and attitudes.

Several related studies were conducted in many countries, but they came out with varieties of results. Several researchers claimed that there were no significant correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement (Grodnick, 1996; Joshi and Srivastava, 2009; Naderi, et al, 2009). But other researchers (Tremblay et al, 2000; Hisken, 2011; Rashidi et al, 2011) reported that there were positive correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement. Tremblay, et al. (2000) mentioned that there is a positive correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement of students in Canada. Hisken (2011) supported that there is a positive correlation between self-esteem and student's reading ability in United States of America. Rashidi et al. (2011) also pointed out that self-esteem and student's oral communication in Saudi Arabia is significantly correlated. Grodnick (1996) who investigated the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability of American students claimed that there was non-significant correlation between self-esteem and writing ability. But other studies in non-English-speaking countries pointed out different result from Grodnick (1996). The studies that investigated the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability in Saudi Arabia (Al-Hattab, 2006) and in Iran (Fahim and Rad, 2011) reported significant correlation between self-esteem and writing ability.

The controversial issues about the different results of previous related studies, and the special condition of BP2IP education system, triggered me to investigate the correlation between the student's writing ability and their respective self-esteem and to see the correlation between the writing ability and self-esteem of Surabaya Merchant Marine (BP2IP).

As there are three sections of self-esteems that have been investigated as well, the study also look at the correlation between writing ability and global self-esteem, the correlation between writing ability and situational self-esteem as well as the correlation

between writing ability and task self-esteem. The students' level of writing ability has been critically discussed in detailed as well.

Method

This study selected the samples using purposive sampling. Those that included in the samples must be adolescence that with age ranging between sixteen and twenty-five years (Mönks, 2002); they should be high school or vocational school graduates, and those who are registered as the students of *Diklat Pelaut-III* Program in BP2IP (translation, third year students of BP2IP Surabaya hence abbreviated into DP III). Students of BP2IP Surabaya who did not meet the criteria were excluded.

There were two instruments used in the present research, Questionnaire of Self-esteem (QSE) and Test of English Writing (TEW). TEW is a writing test as the implementation of Maritime English course outline core section 1, section 4.4 which requires the test takers to write an essay of 200 words about the location, description and purpose of safety equipments on board ship. The TEW also provided 18 safety equipments which can be selected randomly three items by the test takers. The TEW was valid in terms of content as it was a part of the course outline of Maritime English, and the material of TEW were about the safety equipment on board taught to the test takers before it was tested. The TEW was assumed reliable since the same kind of test has been used for several times in the Seafarers Skills Examination or UKP (*Ujian Keahlian Pelaut*) held by The Transportation Ministry of Indonesia.

The other instrument was QSE, a sixty-item Likert scale questionnaire adapted from Al-Hattab (2006) which involved three dimensions of self-esteem to be measured; global self-esteem, situational self-esteem and task self-esteem. Section A of QSE elaborated twenty statements of general assessment a person's make of one's self; section B of QSE elaborated twenty statements of specific situation such as foreign language context; and section C of

QSE elaborated twenty statements of a particular task within situations such as writing in EFL context. QSE as one of the research instruments has been proved valid and reliable since it has been employed on Al-Hattab's study (2006), a jury of experts including three educational psychologists and six specialists in TEFL were involved in the study to determine the face and content validity of the QSE. Besides that, it also has been modified based on the need of the research, such as replacing several statements and turning all the statements into positive. This is done to inspire the students to think positively toward their self-esteem (Mruk, 2006). The questionnaire was translated into Bahasa Indonesia and has been evaluated by a professor in TEFL as well before it was distributed. This was to facilitate the subjects in filling the questionnaire so that they were not misinterpreting what they read in the questionnaire.

The research involved 116 students from four classes of BP2IP Surabaya in DP-III Program, since several questionnaires and TEW did not completely filled in; the total subject of the study became 107 students. First of all, the researcher distributed the TEW by assistance from the English teachers from BP2IP Surabaya, then the students were asked to write an essay of 200 words about safety equipments on board ship, the time allocation was 35 minutes. Afterwards, the subject's TEW was scored by two raters based on the ESL scoring rubric designed by Jacobs et al. (1981) and the average score from the rater and researcher depicted the subject's writing ability (data Y). The QSE was distributed after the subjects have submitted the essay. The time given for filling the questionnaire is 15 minutes. Subsequently, the QSE was scored and the scores represented the subject's self-esteem in three dimensions; global self-esteem (data X1), situational self-esteem (data X2) and task self-esteem (data X3). The correlation between self-esteem and writing ability was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment. Finally the results were depicted in figures and scatter plots which describe the correlations between the variables.

Results

Based on Jacobs et al (1981) the level of writing ability is classified into five levels. The highest percentage was 40.19% which represents the scores of 43 students whose writing ability are in good to average level, the second highest percentage was 28.97% which represents the students in fair level of writing ability and the third highest percentage was 18.69% which represents the students in poor writing ability. Table 1 presents the scores of the TEW which represent the level of the subjects' writing ability.

Table 1

Percentage of Student's Writing Ability Based on Its Level

Writing Ability	TEW Scores Range	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent to Very Good	88 – 100	10	9.35%
Good to Average	75 – 87	43	40.19%
Fair	64 – 74	31	28.97%
Poor	49 – 63	20	18.69%
Very Poor	34 – 48	3	2.80%
Total		107	100.00%

The highest percentage was 40.19% which represents the scores of 43 students whose writing ability are in good to average level, this indicated that most students could probably accomplish the writing requirements in Maritime English course and they are able to take the undergraduate education even though eventually they will need deeper learning about the other skills in English such as grammar enrichment. The second highest percentage was 28.97% which belongs to fair level of writing ability, about 31 students in fair level of writing ability tends to find great difficulty in completing a writing task, because of their lack vocabularies or the other supporting English skills which are beyond their capabilities. The third highest

percentage was 18.69% which belongs to poor writing ability, about 20 students were categorized in poor writing ability. These students unfortunately seen as not feasible yet to enroll the courses of undergraduate education (Jacobs et al, 1981), nevertheless, they still have the opportunity if they were determined to improve the writing skill through a preparatory course with another complementary course to support the other skills in English.

Based on the overall scores of TEW, it was found that the mean of subjects' scores in TEW was 73.06. According to the Jacobs' level of writing ability (1981), the mean of the student's scores of TEW represented the fair writing ability. It means that generally, the students were probably encounter great difficulties while they were assigned to write in English. The main problem was not about the content, but more about the grammar mastery or the lack of vocabulary. Students need to be taught to the other skills of English besides writing such as speaking, listening and reading as well, to maintain and improve their ability in writing.

The Questionnaire of Self-esteem (QSE) covered three sections of self-esteem such as global self-esteem, situational self-esteem and task self-esteem. Table 2 below reveals the students' means of the variables, including their global self-esteem, situational self-esteem, task self-esteem, overall self-esteem and the Test of English Writing (TEW).

As seen in Table 2, the level of global self-esteem was moderate because the mean was 3.60. The situational self-esteem and task self-esteem also depicted in moderate level. The highest mean between three sections of self-esteem was the mean of situational self-esteem and the lowest was the mean of global self-esteem. The overall self-esteem revealed that the subject's self-esteem was in moderate level, as well as their level of English Writing Ability which was in moderate level. Jantz (2010) maintains that people with moderate level of self-esteem will tend to consider them valuable even though sometimes they still feel unsatisfied toward their ability. This is interpreting that the students' self-esteem are

Table 2

Means of the Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Global Self-esteem (X1)	3.60	.388
Situational Self-esteem (X2)	3.65	.286
Task Self-esteem (X3)	3.64	.314
Overall Self-esteem (X)	3.63	.028
Test of English Writing (Y)	73.06	11.503

generally good in EFL writing. Even though trivial mistakes were found in their writings, it can be improved through their low negative emotional state.

Derived from the means of variables in Table 2, the correlations between variables were analyzed using Pearson Coefficient Product Moment. The result depicted in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Coefficient of Correlations between the Three Section of Self-esteem and Writing Ability

Coefficient of Correlation	Writing Ability (Y)	Significance
Global Self-esteem (X1)	$r = .323$.001
Situational Self-esteem (X2)	$r = .442$.000
Task Self-esteem (X3)	$r = .374$.000
Overall Self-esteem (X)	$r = .443$.000

Table 3 depicts the correlation between the BP2IPSurabaya students' global self-esteem and their writing ability. The correlation between the two variables was .323, which implied the correlation between the two variables was positive. The correlation between situational self-esteem (X2) and writing ability (Y) is .442. It means the correlation between two variables is positive. Concerning the correlation between task self-esteem (X3) and writing ability (Y), $r = .374$ means the correlation between two variables was significantly

positive. Lastly, the correlation between overall self-esteem (X) and writing ability (Y) was .443, it implied the correlation between two variables was positive.

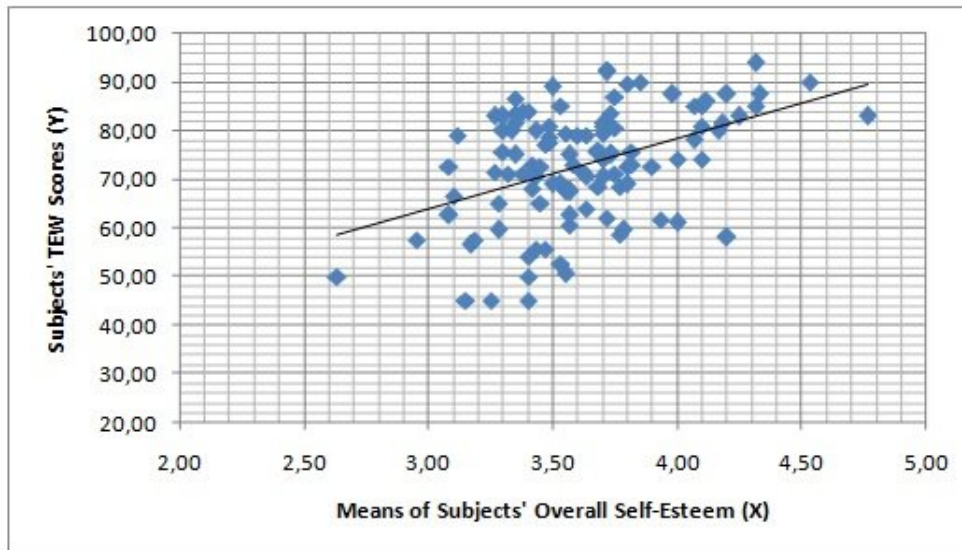


Figure 1 *The Correlation Pattern between Subjects' Overall Self-Esteem and Subjects' Writing Ability*

Figure 1 presented the correlation of the writing ability and self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students. A line that extended in the middle of the scatter plot was sloping from the bottom to top and the dots around the line represented the subjects' scores of overall QSE and TEW were scattered but remains close to the line. This captured that the correlation between writing ability and self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students was positive. The overall results showed that the correlation between writing ability and global self-esteem was positive, the correlation between writing ability and situational self-esteem was positive as well, so did the correlation between writing ability and task self-esteem. Lastly, there was a significant correlation between the writing ability and overall self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students.

Discussion

The results of the study pointed out that there was a correlation between self-esteem and writing ability of BP2IP Surabaya students. This is consistent with the theory presented by James as quoted by Mruk (2006) that self-esteem can motivate a person to become an

expert in a certain ability and self-esteem can be the cause of failure or success because it is possible to change. Besides that, the theory presented by Dusek (1996) maintained that self-esteem involved in the student's academic achievement, in which writing ability was one of academic needs. Dusek (1996) investigation about the correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement pointed out that the students with higher self-esteem got better academic achievement than those with lower self-esteem. It was reinforced by Brown (2000) that emphasized the influence of self-esteem in learning to write. He mentioned that self-esteem is one of the affective factors that influenced the success of learning to write in English.

On the other hand, the present study results did not support Davies and Brember's statement concerning the correlation between self-esteem and school achievement. Santrock (2007) quoted that Davies and Brember declared that high self-esteem has no correlation on school achievement including writing ability; and the efforts deployed to increase the student's self-esteem cannot improve school performance. Through the present study, it was not proven because the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability showed $r = .443$ which means significantly correlated.

Concerning the students' level of writing ability as displayed in Table 1, there were five levels of the students' writing ability categorized based on Jacobs et al table of interpretive guide (1981). The lowest percentage of the writing ability level was in very poor level because there were merely 3 students in this level. The students in very poor level has no virtually writing competence (Jacobs et al, 1981) because it was not supported by the mastery in other skills of English such as reading, listening and speaking, and students in this level unfortunately will not be able to complete a writing course independently, they need much attention from the EFL teachers such as being facilitated to learn simple initial step to learn writing in EFL, such as introduced to vocabulary as well as vocabulary drilling. The

second lowest percentage of the student's level of writing ability was the 10 students who are in excellent to very good level. Contrast with the students in very poor writing ability level, the students of this level are in the best level of writing ability. Students in excellent to very good level are adequate to compete with native writers in writing course, they also will not encounter many difficulty in writing because their ability on the other skills in English are able to support the writing process. Students in this level of writing ability tend to be more ready to carry out the EFL writing class without any complement course of preparation. Meanwhile, the highest percentage of writing ability level lied on good to average level; about 43 students were in this level. The student's ability of writing in this level is slightly different compared to the excellent level. Students in this level can probably compete with the native writers in writing course, although sometimes they still encounter minor or insignificant obstacles in writing. To be ready with the undergraduate education, students in this level may need the grammar review (Jacobs et al, 1981). Afterwards, the second highest percentage of writing ability level was in fair level, about 31 students found to be in this level. The mean of students' TEW scores showed was 73.06 which were also indicated that generally the students of BP2IP Surabaya are in fair level of writing ability. The students with fair writing ability usually experience great difficulty while they are writing in EFL, they are also not yet feasible to compete with the native writers before they are given a certain preparatory course to improve their writing ability (Jacobs et al, 1981). The preparatory course also should be designed from the easiest material to the most difficult ones, such as it is started from the vocabulary introduction, grammar review and equipped with the enrichment from the other skills in English communication like reading, listening and speaking. Unfortunately, the third highest percentage of the writing ability level still lied on poor level, about 20 from 107 students are in this level. Those students according to Jacobs (1981) are not prepared for the college level writing, because students in this level certainly

have low ability in the other skills of English communication such as reading, listening and speaking. Students in this level should be reinforced through a preparatory writing course (Jacobs et al, 1981). The EFL teachers also should give specific reinforcement to improve the writing ability of students in poor writing ability level. Teachers may put them together and give an extra class of writing and provide them applicable steps to master writing in EFL, by providing them simple writing task such as controlled writing from simple paragraphs as well as planning content by organizing ideas for writing, and then drafting before they start to write (IMO, 2000).

Concerning the correlations between three sections of self-esteem and writing ability as presented above, the correlation between the global self-esteem and writing ability was $r = .323$ which means that they were significantly correlated. The most dominant items in global self-esteem questionnaire were number one, eleven and three. The first most dominant items was number one, "I do not give up when I face any difficulty" with 30% students strongly agree with the statement, 62% agree, 7% undecided, the rest were disagree and none chose strongly disagree. It showed that the students generally do not easily give up when they find difficulties, this indicated the level of global self-esteem within themselves were strong enough. The second most dominant items was number eleven, "I speak confidently when I am sure of what I am saying" with 34% students strongly agree with the statement, 53% agree, 11% undecided, the rest were disagree and none chose strongly disagree. This result emphasized that the students' global self-esteem generally considered fair. This was in accordance with Wilding and Palmer (2010) that a person with a healthy self-esteem is having confidence in one's own abilities and values. Wilding and Palmer's statement was also supported by item number three as the third most dominant item, "I do not avoid the leadership role in my life" with 20% students strongly agree with the statement, 47% agree, 28% undecided, the rest were disagree and none chose strongly disagree. This implied that

students felt they were worth enough to be a leader. The most dominant phase of global self-esteem that affect students' writing ability obtained from the most frequent responses was "the confidence toward their own ability".

The level of correlation $r = .323$ implied that the relationship between global self-esteem and writing ability was positive. This means that when students have a high global self-esteem, then their writing ability were also high and vice versa. The degree of correlation between two variables is the lowest compared to the level of correlation between the other set of variables but it does not mean that the result is insignificant such as several related studies conducted by Grodnick (1996) and Al-Hattab (2006).

Grodnick (1996) investigated the relationship between self-esteem and writing ability among students at the Union Country College, United States of America and found that self-esteem did not impact significantly on the writing ability level. This was possible because the instrument used to measure the subjects' self-esteem was Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory. It was one of the weaknesses of Grodnick's study because the self-esteem test (Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory) was mainly focused on general self-esteem. Whereas, the test should be more specific that directly measures the global or situational or task self-esteem. Therefore, in the present study the researcher used a more specific instrument for measuring the three-dimensions of self-esteem, so it can be found that self-esteem was positively correlated with writing ability. Another difference found was the subject of the study. Grodnick's subjects were using English as their mother tongue (L1), whereas in the present study, English is EFL for the subjects. Thus, it was possible that Grodnick's subjects evidenced self-esteem insignificantly correlated to their writing ability.

The results of this study were also not in line with the results of a study conducted by Al-Hattab (2006) in Saudi Arabia. Al-Hattab investigated the correlation between self-esteem and writing achievement of secondary school students. Even though the instrument used to

measure self-esteem was a questionnaire with three sections (section A to measure global self-esteem, section B to measure situational self-esteem and section C to measure task self-esteem) which was similar to the instrument used in the present study, but her study showed that the correlation between global self-esteem and writing achievement was insignificant. Despite both subjects were using English as their foreign language, the present study showed different result from Al-Hattab (2006). It was possible caused by the difference of background of the subjects from both studies. There was a significant correlation found between global self-esteem and writing ability of BP2IP Surabaya students because their global self-esteem influenced the success of their writing. Based on James as cited by Mruk (2006, p. 108), self esteem lives in a person as a social role that is impacted by several factors such as history, culture, family, interests and circumstance. Global self-esteem seem as an essential issue that affect the students' writing ability because the global self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students were often fostered through a tight semi-military circumstance, dissimilar to the learning environment where Al-Hattab carried out her study which was a general learning environment at a secondary school in Saudi Arabia. This difference can lead to the contrast of correlation between global self-esteem and writing ability in the present study and in Al-Hattab's study (2006).

Concerning the correlation between situational self-esteem and writing ability, it was showed that $r = .442$ which means that there were a significant correlation. Based on three sections of self-esteem, this correlation was the highest. The most dominant items in situational self-esteem questionnaire were number one, ten and nineteen. The first most dominant items was number one, "I like English lesson" with 30% students strongly agree with the statement, 51% agree, 18% undecided, the rest were disagree and none chose strongly disagree. It showed that in a particular condition especially while learning English, the students generally agreed that they liked to learn English, it implied that passion for

learning English can lead to a sense of high situational self-esteem while learning English. The second most dominant items was number ten, "I do not feel embarrassed when my English teacher asks me to repeat my answer" with 19% students strongly agree with the statement, 73% agree, 7% undecided, the rest were disagree and none chose strongly disagree. It depicted that 92% students were courageous enough to take risk when they revealed their answers in English, this is accordance with Brown (2000) who insisted that learning EFL requires the courage to communicate using the language and take the risk of being wrong. The third most dominant items was number nineteen, "I believe my abilities in English are not the worst in the class" with 25% students strongly agree with the statement, 57% agree, 16% undecided, the rest were disagree and none chose strongly disagree. Through this statement, 82% of the students revealed that they believe to their ability in writing were not the worst in their classes, this indicated their level of situational self-esteem considered moderate to high, and this evidenced by their scores in English writing which correlated positively with their situational self-esteem. The most dominant phase of situational self-esteem that affect the student's writing ability as obtained from the most frequent responses was "the confidence in ability to learn English".

Concerning the correlation between task self-esteem and writing ability, it was showed that $r = .374$ which means that they were significantly correlated. The most dominant items in task self-esteem questionnaire were number five, fifteen and six. The first most dominant item was number five, "I prefer to write an incorrect sentence than leave my paper blank" with 33% students strongly agree with the statement, 52% agree, 15% undecided and none chose disagree or strongly disagree. The second most dominant item was number fifteen, "I believe my English teacher always appreciate my English writings" with 28% students strongly agree with the statement, 54% agree, 16% undecided, the rest chose disagree and none of them chose strongly disagree. The third most dominant item was

number six, "I write a sentence even though I am not really sure it is correct" with 25% students strongly agree with the statement, 58% agree, 12% undecided, 5% disagree and none of them chose strongly disagree. The most dominant phase of task self-esteem that affect the student's writing ability as obtained from the most frequent responses was "the awareness of the lack of English writing skill but brave enough to attempt". Based on those three most dominant statements, the subjects implied that they were brave enough to take risk of being wrong through their writings in English, this is in line with Brown (2000) who claimed that person who do not take errors in learning as shame, tends to have better degree of self-esteem. Based on the mean of the task self-esteem scores, the level of task self-esteem was in moderate level, results obtained from the task self-esteem questionnaire responses in line with their level of task self-esteem task and this is supported by Jantz (2010) who maintained that person with moderate self-esteem consider themselves valuable, though sometimes they still feel unsatisfied toward their abilities.

Based on the correlation results of the three variables of self-esteem with writing ability, it depicted that the correlation between situational self-esteem and writing ability is the highest, $r = .442$. This was slightly different with the results of similar studies carried out by Al-Hattab (2006) in Saudi Arabia. She also conducted a correlative study of the three dimensions of self-esteem with writing ability and the results of the study showed that situational self-esteem was correlated with writing ability, but the highest correlation was between the task self-esteem and writing ability. Of course it was different, because as has been mentioned previously that the subjects of each research, the learning environment and the circumstances were much different, obviously this difference possibly arouse. Brown (2000) maintained that a person may have different degree of situational self-esteem depending upon the situation or the trait in question, this was also supported by James as cited by Mruk (2006, p. 108) which declared that circumstance is one of the factors that gives

impact toward one's self-esteem. This is in accordance with the difference in the learning environment of the subject's of Al-Hattab's study (2006). BP2IP Surabaya students indicated that their situational self-esteem was the highest correlated with writing ability because of their daily circumstance in semi-military education environment largely determines their writing ability.

Conclusion

Derived from the overall scores of the students' TEW, the mean scores indicated that in general the Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy students' writing ability level was fair. It was revealed that the highest number of students were in good to average writing ability level, the second highest number of students lied in fair writing ability level and the third in poor writing ability level, meanwhile the lowest number of students were in very poor writing ability level and the second lowest were in excellent to very good writing ability level.

The level of global self-esteem, situational self-esteem and task self-esteem were all moderate. The correlation between overall self-esteem and writing ability of Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy students was shown significantly positive. The highest level of correlation appeared between situational self-esteem and writing ability and the lowest level of correlation appeared between global self-esteem and writing ability. Finally it can be deduced that there was a positive correlation between the Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy students' writing ability and their self-esteem.

Recommendations for EFL Teachers

Since the writing ability of the students are found in fair level, it is suggested to the EFL teachers to conduct a separate writing complementary course for the students to improve their writing ability, basically to enrich their vocabulary so that when students are starting to write, they will feel more confident because of the increasing level of their vocabulary size. The materials given in the complementary course should be compiled from the easiest to the

most difficult ones. EFL teachers probably should start it from the vocabulary enrichment, grammar review, planning content by organizing ideas for writing, and then drafting and then provide them simple writing tasks such as controlled writing from simple paragraphs. Besides that, to improve the students' writing ability, teachers may also involve students to give feedback to their friends' writing. Peer feedback can facilitate students to be evaluated without being judged, they also may take lessons from their friends' mistakes and errors in writing. It is also important for the EFL teachers to concern was the students' fair level of writing ability, EFL teachers should conduct remedy so that students will have opportunity to improve their score in writing, and it is suggested that before teachers conduct the remedy, reviewing the latest writing task is highly recommended to avoid the same mistakes or error which may occur.

The positive correlation which is drawn between the writing ability and self-esteem implicitly signifies a hint for EFL teachers to be able to take advantage from this correlation to improve the student's writing ability. In order to build the student's self-esteem, healthy learning environment within a semi-military circumstance should be created by supporting a non-threatening interaction between teacher and students as well as among students. Besides that, EFL teachers should facilitate students to utter their needs and expectations while they are learning to write in EFL and develop strategies to overcome the difficulties they encounter. Collaborative and cooperative atmosphere in classroom which involves students into every interaction in classroom is required to be created to encourage students' self-confidence. Besides that, teachers should create a multidimensional classroom which supports students to achieve success through many pathways besides writing in EFL, this will lead them to reach the same success while learning to write in EFL. The last and the most important support is that EFL teachers should praise the students' positive progress in

learning EFL writing skills and accept the student's errors in writing as the part of natural process of learning.

Suggestions for Further Studies

This study was conducted with seafarer students. Other researchers could do studies to those having similar education system, or military learning environment, studying the English for Specific Purpose (ESP). They could be students of the Military Academy of Indonesia, Air Force Academy of Indonesia, or Navy Academy of Indonesia. Besides that, similar study could be done using different instruments (instruments with higher reliability and validity indexes) in order to obtain more optimal result is suggested as well.

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