

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing is a process of pouring thoughts into a series of words which requires cognitive and affective process. It is considered the most complex skill because it goes through several stages, such as prewriting, writing and revising to reach its final product. Additionally, writing involves different aspects such as spelling, punctuation, organization, etc. Despite its complexity, writing is very important for communication. It creates a communication channel between the writer and the reader. It is needed to transfer messages, letters, and knowledge to take exams and to maintain learning. Writing is a combination of cognitive and affective process, thus, attention should be paid to the two aspects. If there is an imbalance in both domains, the ability to write may also be disrupted. Andres (2002) claims that language learning is affected by both domains which are the mental and emotional sides of human behavior.

Affective domain contains learning skills that are predominantly related to emotional process. Bloom cited in Brown (2000) claimed that there are five aspects contained in the affective domain; receiving, responding, organizing, valuing, and internalizing. Within each of these general process areas are several “clusters” of specific learning skills. As in “responding” aspect, the cluster of believing in oneself especially developing and maintaining self esteem appears. In learning activities, self-esteem is needed to support successful learning. A cluster of affective domain can be a bottleneck if the students do not have it because self-

esteem is a crucial cluster which will affect the confidence of students in learning the entire language skills.

Writing skill in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) involves the learner's cognitive and affective aspects. So far, the study of the correlation between the cognitive aspects or linguistic and EFL learning has been done many times in Indonesia, but it is still very limited studies in Indonesia that concern about the correlation between the affective aspects and EFL learning, especially in terms of self-esteem. However, there are still many problems in EFL learning caused from affective aspects. 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. In the 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, especially in foreign language requires confidence and trust in one's self. As Brown (2000) stated that there will be no successful cognitive or affective activity without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of one's self, and belief in own capabilities for that activity. Thus, self-esteem is one of the crucial factors that can affect the successful learning process. If the self-esteem is considered low, it will lead to low achievement in the learning process. Whereas the confidence is moderate, then it will be easier for someone to gain success in learning and get higher achievement.

Self-esteem is much-needed in the process of foreign language learning. The high-self-esteem students evidence more task-oriented behavior and successfully done the task while low self-esteem students show more non-task behavior such as procrastinating the task and end up with lower achievement (Dusek, 1996). Marsh cited by Dusek (1996) reported that the measures of self-esteem are positively correlated with grades earned by the performance on the achievement test. Those who have higher self-esteem get higher grades and do better on achievement tests than do students with lower self-esteem.

Self-esteem has two aspects: self confidence which is the sense of efficacy and self-respect which is the sense of worthiness (Branden, 2001). So, self-esteem reflects the student's feelings about one's self. Most studies (as cited in Timothy et al., 2001) consider self-esteem as the personal judgment, opinion and the internal attitude of one's self. If this judgment is positive, it will lead learners to success. If it is negative, it leads to troubles and low academic achievement.

Almost all ages feel that they have low self-esteem, but the biggest number is adolescents. The age of adolescence ranges from sixteen to twenty-five as declared by Mönks, et al. (2002). Research findings have confirmed that about 50% of adolescents are considered to be "at risk" of engaging in different learning problems because of low self-esteem (Reasoner, 2004). BP2IP Surabaya students are classified as adolescents who can be at risk suffering low self-esteem, this can be harmful for their achievement in EFL writing.

BP2IP (Balai Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Ilmu Pelayaran) Surabaya is a public institution under the Ministry of Transportation Indonesia that provides educational seafaring courses, yet EFL is a subject that must be taken by all

students. The educational background of BP2IP Surabaya students are vary, some of them are high school graduates majoring in science, and the rest are vocational school graduates majoring in automotive engineering and electronics engineering. BP2IP Surabaya students are the candidates of deck and engine officers who are educated to be professional seafarers and are expected to be able to compete on the international scene. Besides that, ability to write in EFL also will be one of the requirements to pass the seafaring course in BP2IP Surabaya. Thus, teachers in Surabaya BP2IP students are really concerned about the students' ability to write. In order to support the success of English language teaching as the international language which will be used on board ship, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has been designed and regulated a particular lesson for the student which is called Maritime English. The curriculum of writing as one of the English communication skills taught to the BP2IP Surabaya students has been regulated as well in the IMO Model Course Maritime English 3.17 (IMO, 2000).

Teachers are often concerned about the ability to write in English because based on the latest midterm test of English, the students showed that their ability in EFL writing was quite alarming. This led the EFL teachers to find ways to improve the student's writing ability. Recently, the issue of self-esteem plays role in student's EFL learning achievement widely investigated. Some previous studies have shown that self-esteem impacted the success of students learning a foreign language, especially the students that are still in the adolescence (Al-Hattab, 2006; Fahim and Rad, 2011; Hisken, 2011; Rashidi, et al, 2011). BP2IP Surabaya students who were the subject in the present study belong to the category of adolescents (Monks, et al., 2002). Lawrence (2000) found that students in

adolescence quite possible in anxious period of self-esteem which can affect their ability in writing especially in the context of foreign language. This issue convinces the researcher to investigate the correlation between BP2IP Surabaya students' writing ability in EFL and their self-esteem.

There are some studies about the same issue in the investigation of the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability (Grodnick, 1996; Al-Hattab, 2006; Fahim and Rad, 2011). Grodnick (1996) who conducted the study at United States of America reported that there is non-significant correlation between self-esteem and writing ability among the students in the United States, but the result is different with the two other studies which were conducted in non-English-speaking countries. Al-Hattab (2006) found a significant correlation between task self-esteem and EFL writing achievement among students in Saudi Arabia, so did Fahim and Rad (2011) who reported a significant correlation between self-esteem and EFL writing ability among Iranian students. The previous studies concerning self-esteem and writing ability were also appealing to be investigated in another non-English speaking country like Indonesia. Thus, the present study attempts to investigate the correlation between writing ability and self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students.

1.2 Research Problems

Students of BP2IP Surabaya are slightly different from students of the school in general, because they live daily in dormitories with strict rules, high level of discipline and vulnerable to punishment. The semi-military environment can trigger the student's anxiety while learning. Anxiety is often perceived can

affect the high and low of self-esteem that will affect the success of their learning as well.

The ability of writing in English has been the main concern of BP2IP Surabaya teachers, since it is an international language used to communicate on board ship that has been defined by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The ability to write in EFL has been introduced through a subject the so called Maritime English which has been regulated in the IMO Model Course Maritime English 3.17 (IMO, 2000). The ability to write in English has been one of the requirements to pass the seafaring course as well (IMO, 2000). However, the students' writing ability revealed from the latest midterm test held in BP2IP Surabaya showed that the level of writing ability among the students was quite alarming. The EFL teachers were willing to devise the ways to improve the students writing ability not only from the cognitive sphere, but also from the affective sphere. Recently there was several studies (Al-Hattab, 2006; Fahim and Rad, 2011; Hisken, 2011; Rashidi, et al, 2011) pointed out that a cluster of affective sphere named self-esteem brought impact on the success of students learning a foreign language, especially the students that are still in the adolescence. BP2IP Surabaya students who were the subject in the present study belong to the category of adolescents (Monks, et al., 2002). Based on Lawrence (2000) reported that students in adolescence quite possible in alarming period of self-esteem which can affect their ability in foreign language writing.

Several related studies have been 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 the 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. The two other researches who investigated the correlation between self-esteem and writing achievement in EFL also concluded that they are positively correlated (Al-Hattab, 2006; Fahim and Rad, 2011). On the other hand, Grodnick (1996) who investigated the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability of American students claimed that there is non-significant correlation between self-esteem and writing ability, but the other studies in non-English-speaking countries pointed out different result from Grodnick (1996). The studies that investigate the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability in Saudi Arabia (Al-Hattab, 2006) and in Iran (Fahim and Rad, 2011) reported there were significant correlation between self-esteem and writing ability. The gap between the different results of previous related studies convinced the researcher to investigate the correlation between the student's writing ability and their self-esteem.

1.3 Questions of the Study

Accordance with the issues that have been outlined above, there is a major question posed in the present study:

1.3.1. Is there a correlation between writing ability and self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students?

Based on the major question, the following minor questions emerge:

1.3.1.1 Is there a correlation between writing ability and global self-esteem and of BP2IP Surabaya students?

1.3.1.2 Is there a correlation between writing ability and situational self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students?

1.3.1.3 Is there a correlation between writing ability and task self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students?

1.4 Purposes of the Study

This study aims at fulfilling the following main objective that is to measure the correlation between writing ability and self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students. Derived from the main objective, the following sub-objectives emerge; first, to measure the correlation between writing ability and global self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students. Second, it is to measure the correlation between writing ability and situational self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students and third, to measure the correlation between writing ability and task self-esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Writing is seen not just a standardized system of communication but also as an essential tool for learning (Hyland, 2002; Weigle, 2002). Weigle (2002) also emphasized that writing in EFL will concern to the content of the writing,

organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics as well. In line with Weigle, Jacobs et al (1981) defined the criteria of a good piece of writing. They delivered the so called ESL Composition Profile or widely known as ESL scoring rubric. The rubric covers five component scales each focusing on an important aspect of composition in writing and weighted to its approximate importance for written communication.

Writing is one of the language skills which are taught in Maritime English (IMO, 2000). Writing skill in Maritime English has been introduced to the students since the first core section. The main focus of the writing task given to the students is adapted from the communication skills that related to the authentic maritime situations, which is mainly about describing the location, role or purpose, based on the object being studied. The students, especially those in elementary levels are not forced to write a certain genre of writing such as descriptive writing, in fact they are taught and are expected to write a basic informational writing about the location and purpose of certain object, for example write about the location and purpose of safety equipments on board ship.

Self-esteem plays an important role in the student's academic achievement at school (Dusek, 1996), and Brown (2000) insisted that self-esteem is one of the important factors in language learning especially writing. Brown also asserted that there will be no successful cognitive or affective activity without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of one's self, and belief in own abilities for that activity. Thus, self-esteem is one of the crucial factors that can affect the successful learning process.

Self-confident rooted from the learning motivation that will lead to self-esteem can influence the students' learning outcomes. Students with high self-esteem get higher grades and do better on achievement test than do students with lower self-esteem (Dusek, 1996). Research has consistently shown a positive correlation between how people value themselves and the level of their academic attainments. Those who feel confident, generally achieve more, while those who lack confidence in themselves achieve less. The students who suffer in low-self-esteem considered have low achievement in foreign language learning as well (Timothy et al., 2001). Self-esteem and writing ability is interrelated. Brown (2000) declared that self-esteem is involved in student's writing and oral performance. The correlation has been shown by several studies conducted by Al-Hattab (2006) and Fahim and Rad (2011).

To support the investigation, there were several theories of self-esteem being the basis. Mruk (2006) reviewed several theories of self-esteem, and this is the summary of the review: James as the pioneer of the self-esteem theory declared that self-esteem lives in a person as a social role by some influence from history, culture and family. Rosenberg and Coopersmith defined self-esteem as self-worth. Maslow, Rogers and Branden pointed out that self-esteem is a basic human need. Whereas Epstein as the originator of self-esteem cognitive theory assumed that self-esteem is positioned between self-maintenance and self-enhancement. Harter added that self-esteem theory is connected to the cognitive structure based on the development theory. Becker stated that self-esteem is the system of human being who governs the behavior to cope with situations, and lastly, sociometer claimed self-esteem as self-defense. Since the research will

explore self-esteem in the realm of affective domain, then the theories will be used in the research is the traditional approach which covers the James, Rosenberg, Coopersmith, Maslow, Rogers and Branden.

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

In line with the question of the study, this main null hypothesis is posed:

1.6.1 There is no significant correlation between writing ability and self esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students.

From the main hypothesis the following sub-hypotheses formulated:

1.6.1.1 There is no significant correlation between writing ability and global self- esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students.

1.6.1.2 There is no significant correlation between writing ability and situational self- esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students.

1.6.1.3 There is no significant correlation between writing ability and task self- esteem of BP2IP Surabaya students.

1.7 Assumptions

There are two assumptions about the research. The first one is that the Test of English Writing has been proven reliable and valid because it is devised based on the course outline of Maritime English (IMO, 2000, p. 16) which has been adjusted with the level of English proficiency of the subjects. Second, the Questionnaire of Self-esteem (QSE) as the research instruments have 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. Thus, both instruments were valid and reliable to be employed in the present thesis.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The significance of the research is mainly to facilitate the English teachers of BP2IP Surabaya to enhance the writing ability of BP2IP students especially in the context of EFL writing. The present study investigated the correlation between self-esteem and writing ability of students in BP2IP Surabaya, which followed up with some suggestions for teacher to build the student's self-esteem in order to enhance the EFL writing ability of the students as well.

Secondly, the research significance is to attest the traditional theoretical approach of self-esteem explored by several specialists in self-esteem such as James, Rosenberg, Coopersmith, Maslow, Rogers and Branden which is maintained by Mruk (2006) that self-esteem can motivate person to try to master certain ability or the challenges of life, self-esteem can also be the factor of success or failure because it is possible to change.

1.9 Scope and Limitation of the Study

There are two variables discussed in the research, the first variable is writing ability, the second is self-esteem and the subject of the research is students of BP2IP Surabaya. Both variable and subject of the research were delimited as described in the following paragraphs.

The writing ability in the research was delimited to the context of writing in English as a foreign language (EFL) based on the course outline of IMO Model Course 3.17 about Maritime English (IMO, 2000). The course outline was delimited to core section 1 which is reserved for students of BP2IP Surabaya who are in elementary level of English proficiency. The writing task was delimited to section 4.4 about writing as the communication skill to describe the location and purpose of safety equipment. The writing task section 4.4 was implemented through the Test of English Writing (TEW) which asked the subjects to write an essay of 200 words about safety equipments on board ship that contains the location, description and purpose of the safety equipments. The TEW also provided 18 safety equipments which can be selected randomly three items by the subjects. Writing task in section 4.4 was chosen because that time, it was the latest material that has been taught to the students, thus it was expected that the students could write more weighty content.

Self-esteem which covers three dimensions; global self-esteem, situational self-esteem and task self-esteem (Brown, 2000) impacted student's writing ability. The self-esteem discussed in the research was delimited to these three dimensions of self-esteem. The self-esteem theory applied was the traditional theoretical approach of self-esteem (Mruk, 2006) which explored several theories from James, Rosenberg, Coopersmith, Maslow, Rogers and Branden. The subject of the study was delimited to students of Balai Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Ilmu Pelayaran (BP2IP) Surabaya who are Indonesians, adolescents with age ranged from sixteen to twenty-five years old, senior high school graduates and enrolls the program of Diklat Pelaut III (DP-III).

The limitation of the research was about the number of the subjects. The researcher has involved four classes with one hundred sixteen students to be the subjects in total. Since the researcher cannot control some students who unfinished the writing test, or those with age lower than sixteen years old or older than twenty-five years old, in fact, the researcher can only collected one hundred seven data from the subjects, because nine of them did the instruments incompletely so their data were not qualified enough to be processed.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

A. Self-esteem

Self-esteem is 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.

B. Global 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.

C. Situational Self-Esteem

Situational self-esteem is one's self-appraisal in particular life situations or circumstances.

D. Task Self-Esteem

Task self-esteem is the self-esteem that relates to particular tasks within specific situations.

E. Writing Ability

Writing ability is the ability of pouring ideas and thoughts into a series of words in the form of essays which is containing certain quality in content of the writing, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics.

F. 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.

1.11 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis elaborated five chapters, chapter one contained the introduction, research problem, research questions, research purposes, theoretical framework, research hypotheses, assumptions, research significance, scope and limitation, and definition of terms. Chapter two explored the review of related literature. Chapter three described about the methods and procedures. It included design of the study, sample of the study, instruments of the study, pilot study summary, data analysis technique and procedures that are followed in the study. Chapter four depicted the results and discussion of the present study covered the results concerning the three dimensions of self-esteem questionnaire, the results concerning the test of English writing, coefficient of correlation between self-esteem and writing ability which was enriched by the figures of scatterplots and charts. It was equipped by hypotheses testing as well and certainly a detailed discussion of the results of the study related to the theory as well as the related

previous studies. Lastly chapter five provided the summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations for EFL teachers and suggestions for further studies.