

Understanding of EFL Students' Self-Efficacy in their English Writing Performance

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Abstract

One of the reasons why students faced some problems and pressures in English writing is some anxieties in the learning process. They need to build self-efficacy to be able to involve their confidence in writing achievement. Teachers should understand the students' condition in their self-efficacy before the teaching learning process. This research described the condition of the students' self-efficacy at twelve grades in Senior High School. By qualitative method, this design was used purposive sampling to provide an open-ended self-efficacy questionnaire to 25 students. Adopting from Bandura's theory, the result of this research described students at twelve grades have quite high self-efficacy in writing performance. In the magnitude dimension showed the students' beliefs in passing some difficulties in writing assignment. In Generality dimension, some of the students believe they understand all of the material in writing and affected by their interest, but other students do not believe if they can understand all of the material. In strength dimension showed all students' strength by having motivation when students are in failure in writing performance. The present study is crucial for teachers in designing more targeted teaching approaches in increasing their motivation through understanding EFL students' self-efficacy towards their writing performance.

Keywords: EFL Students; Magnitude; Self-efficacy; Writing Performance.

The barriers to students' English achievement are sometimes found to be due not only to linguistic complexity, but also to psychological factors. One of which is about self-efficacy. Goulão, (2014) stated the concept of self-efficacy means that student learning outcomes are influenced by students' beliefs. A key element of Bandura's social cognitive theory is self-efficacy, which is the belief in one's

own capacity to plan and carry out activities in order to accomplish objectives (Bandura, 1977). Schunk, (1995) stated that an outstanding level of self-efficacy will lead the learners to determine their learning goals and make more efforts to achieve them. Sometimes, a person has a high belief in self-efficacy because it has a significant positive correlation. Awareness of students' self-efficacy makes them confident in

the competencies they have to perform better in achieving the learning process (Siboro et al., 2022). The positive impact of self-efficacy in their daily life makes students increase their academic performance. Basith et al., (2020) claimed that when someone completes specific tasks, self-efficacy indicates his self-belief and states that his task is successful.

The concept of self-efficacy was first discussed by Bandura in 1977. Self-efficacy refers to perception the individual's ability to organize and perform actions to display certain skills (Dharma, 2018). According to Graham (2022), self-efficacy measures the extent to which people can improve their behaviour to survive difficult and potentially stressful situations. It means that self-efficacy determines how people feel, think, motivate, and behave. In an academic environment, self-efficacy has a role in how much confidence students have in executing something related to them based on each individual's abilities (Desmaliza & Septiani, 2018). Bandura, (1977) stated that there are three dimensions of self-efficacy: magnitude, generality, and strength dimension. The magnitude dimension refers to the task's difficulty level when the student feels able to do the task. The generality dimension means students have confidence in specific areas such as interests, talents, and fields in which they think they can do it. The strength dimension focuses on the level of student stability in their beliefs. It refers to how they have a level of strength of confidence in completing a task or persevering in their endeavour. In Addition, there are four sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1977): 1) mastery experience, 2) vicarious experience, 3) verbal persuasion, and (4) psychological states.

Essentially, writing is a skill that includes learning, thinking, and interacting with others (Budiana & Mahmud, 2020). students need to improve complex skills in their writing process especially in sentence organization, spelling skills, word selection, and punctuation (Ilmi, 2022). Related to the issue of writing problems,

it indeed claimed that writing is a difficult skill (Toba et al., 2019), and the most challenging process that develops a number of cognitive and metacognitive activities in brainstorming, planning, outlining, organizing, drafting, and revising for students. Self-efficacy is one of problem found when students carry out learning activities in writing English (Alisha et al., 2019). They have lack of confidence (Khairah & Fatimah, 2022), some anxieties and students' interest during the learning process, especially in performing writing (Yulianawati, 2019). Therefore, teachers' role is essential for improving students' confidence and creating favourable learning conditions. The teachers are relied upon to have a connection between showing methods and creativity in giving some tips on writing (Ghufron & Hawa, 2015). To reduce writing anxiety in academic writing processes, teachers should create a more comfortable learning environment where students' voices, efforts, and persistence are highly valued. The teacher's understanding and support is the one of the factors in developing students' sense of self-efficacy especially in writing (Mitchell & DellaMattera, 2011).

Self-efficacy occasionally affects the writing outcomes of students when they begin to write about whatever is on their minds. According to Putri et al., (2023), people express thoughts, feelings and opinions through writing. Writing is also communication between the writer and reader in conveying meaning. As students are required to, it is a survival skill to learn, prepare assignments and projects, and interact with others. Ghalem et al., (2016) pointed out that performance is the level/degree of goal and the achievements of an organization/department, not an individual. Therefore, Tutto & Ramos, (2021) claimed that writing performance is a productive language to communicate with each other for any purposes that involve physic and mental activities. In the process of improving and strengthening writing performance, teachers can ask students to write stories of their experiences.

Seeing the related research concerning

students' self-efficacy in writing, a previous study from Wijaya & Mbato, (2020), they used a mixed method to research graduate students' perceptions of their self-efficacy in writing academic papers. Their findings showed that lecturer motivation can produce higher quality student academic writing in learning. The research by Sumarsono & Mbato, (2021) is about qualitative research on how undergraduate students of the English Education Study Program manage self-efficacy and writing anxiety to complete the academic writing class. The results show that undergraduates have high self-efficacy and can complete academic writing on time. In addition, self-efficacy also has a positive relationship with students' writing performance (Basaffar, 2022; Puspita & Iriani, 2022; Thi, 2021). The research aimed to explore the self-efficacy of senior high school students in their writing skills. This research used senior high school students as participants because self-efficacy in writing must emerge when students start learning the steps to write, whereas, in senior high school, they will get good writing practice. Therefore, understanding students' self-efficacy in senior high school can help students create good writing even when they write academic papers or final thesis at the college level. This research would examine students' self-efficacy in working on their writing by following the research question: How is the students' self-efficacy in English writing performance?

Method

This research used qualitative method better to understand the students' self-efficacy in their writing. According to Cresswell (2014), the Qualitative method is a method for exploring and understanding meaning or problems by a number of individuals or groups of people. This research also used qualitative research by a case study to design this research. Case studies are methodological research approaches to comprehensively understand an issue or phenomenon in an event (Coombs, 2022). The research participants were 12th-

grade students at Senior High School. The researcher took 25 students as the participants in the research to determine the overall condition of self-efficacy of class 12 students and conclude at the end. The instruments of this research used open-ended questionnaires to the students. The data were collected by 20 open-ended questionnaires adopted from Siboro et al., (2022). The researcher chose some questions that related with the dimension of self-efficacy in writing performance. The previous research made statement for close ended questionnaire then the researcher changed in the form of questions to become open-ended questionnaire in this research. Every question divided based on Bandura's theory regarding the dimensions of self-efficacy. The first theme in the magnitude dimension is connected to individual of the students' ability in facing difficulties in completing tasks. The second theme in generality is linked to the students' belief in acclimating to the degree of adjustment. The third theme presented the students' strength to perform the tasks successfully.

For data procedure, researchers use data reduction by selecting the data to be used and eliminating unused data. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis procedure. After students filled out the open-ended questionnaire, the researcher transcribed it to find relevant information. then the data was coded to find several themes from the questionnaire that were identified. Next, the researcher used data display by presenting data in descriptions. Then, the researcher concludes the data that has been collected.

Result and Discussion

To answer the research question, the researchers developed several questions related to the dimensions of self-efficacy. The questions were made based on the previous concept of Bandura's theory. After the researcher got the data from the 25 students in senior high school through open-ended questionnaires, The researcher tried to analyze the data and

presented the data in this section. The data is presented in this section based on the dimension of self-efficacy.

Magnitude dimension

In this question related to the magnitude dimension, the researcher asked whether writing was difficult for students and students were also asked to explain the reason. Some representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Table 1. Students' Have no Difficulties in Writing Performance.

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 10	"I do not feel any difficulties in writing because I think writing English is something unique, cool and fun; it becomes exciting if I can write lots of sentences in English."
2	Student 5	"In my opinion, it's not that difficult, because the English letters are almost the same as Indonesian."
3	Student 13	"No, because if we want to try, we will definitely do it."

Based on the table 1, it shows representative from sixteen students have no difficulty in English writing. The first statement shows the students have no feel difficulties in English Writing because they love English. The second reason is the students have no worries in English writing because English letters almost the same as Indonesia. In the third reason is the students considered if writing English is easy if they try to learn English writing. Yet, nine students have some difficulties in writing English. Some representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Table 2. Students' Perception Regarding Difficulties in Writing Performance.

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 14	"I have difficulty constructing sentences."
2	Student 15	"For me, who is not fluent in English, I have difficulty writing English. Sometimes, I can also write in English if the words I hear."

Besides, the table 2 shows students experienced difficulty in writing. The first statement they have difficulties in learning

writing because they did not understand how to construct sentences. The second statement it happened because their English skill is not fluent and they have limited vocabulary, so they can write English only based on the words they have been heard.

In the next question related to the magnitude dimension, the researcher asked the students' attitude when they have some difficulties in their writing assignment. Here the students' representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Table 3: Students' Attitudes in Facing Difficulties in Their Writing Assignments.

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 1	"When I have difficulty writing English, I usually look at the dictionary, look for information on Google and ask teachers and friends."
2	Student 18	"I will continue to do English writing assignments even though I experience difficulties."
3	Student 22	"I do not do the task and choose to sleep if the task is difficult."

There are twenty-four students stated that they will continue to do their assignments even though they find some difficulties in writing. Based on the table 3, it shows almost all of students are keep trying by asking teachers, friends, and dictionaries if they have some difficulties in doing Writing assignment. However, only one student perceives that he prefers to sleep when he finds it difficult to do his assignments in writing.

Generality dimension

In this question related to the Generality dimension, the researcher asked students' priorities in working on English writing. Some representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Based on the data, there are twenty students prioritize their English writing assignments when they have some other tasks. In the table 4 presented that some students still do the writing assignment because they have self-awareness that assignments are a responsibility and

Table 4: Priorities in working English Writing.

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 1	"I still do English writing assignments because it is the responsibility of students in class to do assignments."
2	Student 18	"I will continue to do English writing assignments even though I experience difficulties."
3	Student 3	"I will take the time to do the English assignment first because I quite like and am interested in English."
4	Student 23	"I still do it because English is my interest subject."
5	Student 9	"If I have more important task than English, I will leave it"

obligation that students must carry out. The other students said they prefer to do the Writing assignment because they are interested in English. However, there are 3 students prefer to do other assignment because they consider there are some other assignments is more important.

Data has been found as well related with generality dimension by the question about students' beliefs in understanding all of the material and doing the assignments in English writing. Some representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Table 5. Students' Beliefs in Understanding All of the Topic of Writing.

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 21	"I am sure I can do all the English material. The important thing is that I intend to learn as much as possible."
2	Student 25	"I have not mastered all the material about English because there are some that I have difficulty understanding English."

Based on the data, there are ten students have strong beliefs if they will master all of the material in English writing. Meanwhile fifteen students do not beliefs if they master all of the material. The table five shows the students will learn English as much as possible. While, other students stated they do not beliefs that they will understand all of the material because they have difficulties in understanding English itself.

Strength dimension

To know the students' self-efficacy in strength dimension, the researcher made several questions. The first question is regarding to students' feeling when they get the low score in writing assignment. Here some representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Table 6. Students' Attitudes toward their Failure.

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 1	"I still do English writing assignments because it is the responsibility of students in class to do assignments."
2	Student 18	"I will continue to do English writing assignments even though I experience difficulties."
3	Student 3	"I will take the time to do the English assignment first because I quite like and am interested in English."
4	Student 23	"I still do it because English is my interest subject."

The table 6 shows the students' response when they have low score in English writing assignment. There are twenty-two students feel sad, cry, and disappointed, but they do not feel give up to learn more about English writing. However, there are three students only feel disappointed without any statement they will to learn again.

Connecting with statement above, the next question is about students' motivation in English writing. Here some representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Table 7. Students' Motivation.

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 1	"I am trying to learn English because English is a very useful language in looking for work."
2	Student 10	"My biggest motivation is my idol who is really good at English and that is my source in learning English."
3	Student 18	"if I fail in writing English, keep trying until my writing is correct,"

Based on the data, all of the students have motivation when they learn English especially in writing performance. The table 7 shows the kinds of students' motivation as representation from all of the students. Some students get the motivation because

English will be useful in the terms of job. Other students stated the motivation come from their idol and it will be the source in learning English. Last, some students have motivation from their self to keep trying when they have failure in English Writing.

Students' self-efficacy

In this part is the data from the question that the things make them confidence in writing. Here some representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Table 8 Students' Self-Efficacy in Writing Performance

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 3	"I believe in my own abilities."
2	Student 10	"I am confident when I get good grades in writing."
3	Student 13	"I like English and I have no doubts about my abilities."

The table 8 shows the students feel confidence with their own abilities. Some students feel confidence when they get high score in English writing assignment. Other students stated because they love English and they have confidence by their self in writing.

In this part is the data from the question that the things make them confidence in writing. Here some representative students' responses were transcribed in the following:

Table 9. situations of distrust of students' self-confidence

No	Students	Responses
1	Student 3	"I believe in my own abilities."
2	Student 10	"I am confident when I get good grades in writing."
3	Student 13	"I like English and I have no doubts about my abilities."

The table 9 explain that some students feel not confidence when they can not translate from Indonesian to English in writing assignment. Other students stated they afraid when they made some mistakes in writing and some students not confidence whey cannot construct the sentence in English.

Based on the data findings, the researcher found some students have no difficulties in learning or do the English writing assignment. Yet, some students also found some difficulties when they learn English

writing. This is due to a lack of mastery of vocabulary and difficulties in translating Indonesian into English. On the other hand, students also find it difficult to understand the content of the writing topic itself. Some difficulties in English writing happened with other students especially in senior high school. It is related to the Fratiwi et al., (2021) that stated the students have 'lack of knowledge in mastering the component of writing such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. However, the students who have difficulties in English writing, they still do the task well. They will ask to the teacher, friends, or online dictionary to overcome their difficulties in English writing. Some students also argued if the task is one of the obligations and responsibilities for students that should be done even the task is difficult. Furthermore, some students also stated that English is one of their favorite subjects and they are interested when they write English. Remembering the magnitude dimension is the difficulty level when the student feels able to do the task (Bandura, 1977). Therefore, Students' consistency in continuing to do their English writing assignments is the evidence that almost students in that senior high school have high self-efficacy in magnitude dimension. It is also related to the Siboro et al., (2022) stated they magnitude dimension relates to people's self-confidence over their abilities to perform activities at different levels in addition to their problem-solving skills.

Regarding students' priority, some students stated they still do the writing assignment, even they have other important activities, they prefer to do the assignment because they love English, and they feel the task is their obligations. However, other students stated they prefer to do the important assignment then writing. In other condition, some students explained they can master all of the topic in English writing. Other students with the same amount stated, they can not do all of the topic in English writing because they feel difficult and do not understand with

the some topic. Siboro et al., (2022) explained individuals who can implement self-efficacy in all situations have high self-efficacy. Related with this statement, the students in senior high school have medium self-efficacy in generality dimension. Some students have high self-efficacy in doing all of the writing assignment in all of the condition, but other students stated they cannot do all of the writing task when they have some important activities. It is supported by Yulianawati, (2019) that Students with low self-efficacy will discover that, in certain cases, just a few regions are required to finish a task. The ability to adapt a person's form of self-efficacy to various circumstances is called generality. The level of situational adaptation ability possessed by an individual is reflected in the higher level of self-efficacy (Benawa, 2018).

The other data showed some students do not feel give up to learn more about English writing even they got low score on their assignment. Only little among them feel disappointed without doing anything, they tend to blame themselves because they feel failure in doing the assignment. However, all of the students still have motivation when they got low score. There are some variations that they have to motivate themselves in learning English especially in writing. They have strength in building their self-efficacy. In strength dimension refers to do with how steadfast or strong a person is in their convictions (Musyarrafah et al., 2022). Regarding to this statement, students in this senior high school have high self-efficacy in strength dimension. It happened because still have motivations to keep trying in learning writing. Experiences that weaken one's self-efficacy can quickly destabilize lower levels of self-efficacy. Conversely, if someone has the strength to solve a problem even if they keep trying when they fail, someone's self-efficacy becomes stronger.

In other parts, regarding to the improving students' self-efficacy, the students will have high confidence in learning writing,

because they are interested with the English subject. Besides, they feel enthusiasm when they get high score in their assignment. According to Dewi et al., (2023) stated the students need interest and self-efficacy in learning process to achieve the desired learning outcomes. Furthermore, sometimes students afraid if they have some mistakes in their writing because they still do not understand with the topic in writing. Therefore, it will become one of the teachers' obligations for teaching based on the student' interest with the strategy to make students more understand easily. When students are interested in a topic, it will build good self-efficacy in students. Thus, that students tend to be more confident in trying and learning, especially in writing. When students have high self-efficacy, it will influence student learning outcomes in writing achievement.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the data, the students in 12th grades in senior high school have quite high self-efficacy in writing performance. In the magnitude dimension, the students can pass the difficulties in writing assignment. In Generality dimension, some of the students believe they understand all of the material in writing, but other students do not believe if they can understand all of the material. The last in strength dimension, all of the students still have some motivation when they get failure in writing performance. this research concludes that these students have high self-efficacy indicated by their magnitude and strength.

From the result of this research, the future research can use quantitative methods to measure the level of self-efficacy so that the results are accurate to be presented. the researcher also suggested to explore the students' self-efficacy in other fields to add more information regarding students' beliefs in learning English. therefore, it will be affecting for the teachers to use more good strategies in teaching English based on what kinds of

source of students' self-efficacy in learning.

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