

# Self-efficacy and Writing Abilities: A Correlational Study with Indonesian EFL Students

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**Abstract:** For many EFL learners, English writing is challenging. To create good writing, students must master both linguistic and non-linguistic components. The non-linguistic component refers to students' self-efficacy, or their perception of their own writing abilities. While self-efficacy has been widely studied, there is limited research on its relationship with writing abilities. This study investigates the correlation between self-efficacy levels and performance in descriptive writing tasks among Indonesian EFL students. The study uses a correlational research design with a sample of 41 tenth-grade students. Data was collected using tests and questionnaires. Correlational analysis was applied to the students' writing scores and self-efficacy questionnaire results. The analysis showed that the value of  $r$  was 0.640, higher than the  $r$ -table value of 0.308 for  $N=41$ . This indicates a strong positive correlation between students' self-efficacy and their writing abilities. The findings suggest that higher self-efficacy is associated with better writing performance, highlighting the importance of fostering self-efficacy in EFL learners to improve their writing skills.

**Keywords:** Self-Efficacy; Writing; Correlation

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the four linguistic skills. Writing is one of the most important linguistic abilities that all pupils should acquire. However, for some pupils, writing is a challenging subject, and students facing many challenges in generating good writing. (Harmer, 1992) is seated. For many EFL learners, however, English writing looks to be difficult. To develop outstanding writing, students must master and incorporate linguistic components. According to (McLeod, 1987), writing is both an emotional and cognitive activity; we feel and think when writing. Furthermore, (McLeon, 1987) identifies various affective factors that can influence students' writing, including anxiety about writing, motivation, and beliefs. Beliefs here indicate pupils' perceptions of their own talents as writers or also called students' self-efficacy. According to (Bandura, 1998), self-efficacy refers to individuals' ideas about their ability to generate specific levels of achievement that exert control over events in their lives; these beliefs influence how individuals feel, think, motivate their own, and conduct.

Writing is more than just connecting words to create paragraphs. There are a few writing processes that need to be mastered in order to produce writing that is both clear and meaningful. According to (Langan, 2006), in his book English Skills mentions that there are four steps in writing process, including (1) Pre-writing, (2) Drafting, (3) Revising and (4) Editing. Writing is a dynamic process that involves generating ideas, organizing thoughts, drafting, revising, and editing. Based on (Flower, 1981) writing is a journey of

exploration and refinement, where writers craft their message to effectively communicate with their audience.

In students of EFL discover things which influence the growth of self-efficacy in the individual or can be called sources for self-efficacy. Based on (Bandura, 1998) there are four different sources of self-efficacy, such as (1) Enactive Mastery Experience, (2) Vicarious experience, (3) Verbal persuasion and (4) Psychological and efficient stage. Based on (Bandura, 1998) Human functioning is controlled by self-efficacy through four primary processes: these are (1) Cognitive process, (2) Motivational Process, (3) Affective process and (3) selection process.

Students need two components during the writing process: linguistic and non-linguistic components. According to (Harris, 1969) excellent writing requires five linguistic components: content, form, grammar, style, and mechanic. In addition, (McLeod, 1987) said that the students include non-linguistic aspects, writing is a blend of emotional and cognitive processes; however, affective variables and attitude have an important effect on individual writing. Self-efficacy is an affective component that can influence students' writing. According to (Bandura, 1998) Strong and low self-efficacy might determine a person's success or failure in completing a task. Furthermore, (Pajaraes, 1993) claimed that self-efficacy can predict academic achievement. A significant aspect to the mentioned issue is students' low self-efficacy. High self-efficacy scores, on the other hand, indicate a writing style based on scepticism and the belief that writing is a difficult undertaking (Lavelle, 2006). Perceptions of increased self-efficacy led to the creation of more successful strategies required for successful performance on the challenging task as stated by (Stajkovic, 1998). Conversely, people with poor self-esteem or negative opinions will make an effort to avoid writing tasks and will be grumpier when they do. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that one of the psychological factors that may motivate someone to perform is self-efficacy. Consequently, the researcher is motivated to do research to identify a correlation between students' self-efficacy and their writing performance at SMK Baitul Hikmah Tempurejo. Regarding the latter issue (i.e., difficulty in completing writing assignments), EFL learners who have low levels of self-efficacy may make more mistakes than those who have high self-efficacy. However, it should be noted that research on this issue is relatively scarce. Therefore, relatively little is known about whether this is true.

In the previous research conducted by Hoesny (2023), the relationship between speaking proficiency and self-efficacy was examined. Researchers in the past recommended that future studies look into the relationship between students' self-efficacy and other skills in the English language. This study is to look into the relationships between students' writing skills and their levels of self-efficacy in an effort to close this gap. As a result, the following is how the research question for this study is phrased: How much of a correlation exists between the self-efficacy levels of Indonesian EFL students and their descriptive writing skills?

## METHOD

### *Research Design*

A correlational design was used to carry out this study. Finding or measuring the correlation between two or more variables is the goal of correlational research. The writing abilities of the students serve as the dependent variable in this study, while their writing self-efficacy serves as the independent variable. Finding out if students' self-efficacy affects their writing abilities was the aim of this study. The researcher uses a quantitative approach for data analysis. The researcher used descriptive analysis and the following formula to analyse the data on students' writing talents and writing self-efficacy:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100 \%$$

Where:

P = Total of percentage

F = Frequency

N= Number of populations

The researcher classified the students' scores according to (Arikunto, 2006) in order to assess the students' writing proficiency and self-efficacy in producing descriptive texts.

Table 1. The Classification of Students' Score

Score	Categories
80-100	Very Good
66-79	Good
56-65	Enough
40-55	Less
30-39	Fail

The researcher applied Microsoft Excel to examine the relationship between students' writing self-efficacy and their writing proficiency when producing descriptive prose. Next, using the coefficient correlation shown in the following table, the correlation's strength is deduced:

Table 2. Criteria of Correlation Coefficient

Coefficient Interval	Interpretation
0.80-1.00	Very High
0.60-0.79	High
0.40-0.59	Medium
0.20-0.39	Low
0.00-0.19	Very Low

Adopted from Ridhuwan (2010)

### ***Population, Sample, Sampling***

According to (Arikunto, 2006), if the number of people is under 100 individuals, the writer can use the entire population as a sample; if the population exceeds than 100, the researcher can use 10%, 15%, or 20%, 25% as a sample. The samples in this research are taken from 2 classes at SMK Baitul Hikmah Tempurejo. In this research, all pupils in the class were involved in this research because the number is less than 100 students. The population of this study is tenth grade student of SMK Baitul Hikmah Tempurejo in academic year 2023/2024. The 10th grade students of SMK Baitul Hikmah Tempurejo. There are 2 classes used as samples in this research, the first class is tenth grade E Marketing and Business (for boys) which consists of 20 students and the second is tenth grade E Marketing and Business (for girls) which consists of 21 students. The total population in this study is 41 students.

### ***Intervention Procedure***

1. Sample: Determine the number of students who will be research subjects.
2. Self-efficacy test: Use questionnaires to measure students' level of self-efficacy in their writing abilities.

3. Writing Skills test: Create clear assessment criteria to assess students' descriptive text writing abilities. This may involve a structured rating scale or rubric.
4. Data Collection: Give students the task of writing a descriptive text and ask them to fill out a self-efficacy questionnaire.
5. Data Analysis: Use statistical methods to analyze the correlation between students' writing self-efficacy level and students' writing abilities scores.
6. Interpret Results: Interpret the results of data analysis to draw conclusions regarding whether there is a correlation between students' self-efficacy and their descriptive text writing skills. Is there a positive, negative, or no relationship at all?

### ***Instrument***

Writing test is given to find out the students' writing abilities. The test is written test and the test are given directly by the researcher. Students are given a piece of paper and which contains the student's identity, instructions, pictures and blank parts to create descriptive text. Students are asked to create descriptive text as detailed as possible based on the image. To assess students' writing abilities, the researcher utilized a scoring rubric for writing developed from (Weigle, 2002) that includes four aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, and language use.

Questionnaire are given to find out the students' self-efficacy level. The questionnaires are given directly by the researcher after the writing test. Students are given a piece of paper and which contains the student's identity, instructions, 15 questionnaires. The questionnaire was modified by the researcher and created by Bruning et al (2012). The questionnaire asks students to rate their opinions using the Likert scale that was introduced by Cresswell (2012). There are five options for each of the statements: strongly disagree, disagree, disagree and disagree strongly. The score is 5 for highly agreeing responses, 4 for agreeing responses, 3 for neither agreeing nor disagreeing responses, 2 for disagreeing responses, and 1 for strongly disagreeing responses. The score of each statement ranges 1-5 scores and to find out the maximum score, the total score obtained by the student will be divided by 70 and times 100. So, the maximum score will be 100.

Table 3. The Likert-scale rating

Option	Favorable
Strongly Agree	5
Agree	4
Neither agree or disagree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

The Likert Scale was used to assess student writing self-efficacy at SMK Baitul Hikmah Tempurejo. The questionnaires describe a few thoughts about tenth-grade students' writing self-efficacy at SMK Baitul Hikmah Tempurejo.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The aim of the data analysis in this research is to measure the significant correlation between students' self-efficacy levels and students writing skill of the tenth grades students at SMK Baitul Hikmah Tempurejo in 2023/2024 academic year. The description of research finding data is provided as follows by using descriptive statistic technique.

The primary data in this research consists of the data obtained from giving test and questionnaire. The test and questionnaire were given to the respondents on March 5th, 2024. The forms of this test were writing test, the students were asked to make a descriptive text based on the picture given by the researcher in 30 minutes. For the questionnaire there are 14 statements adapted from by Bruning et al (2012).

The data description of each variable is provided in the form of minimum Score, maximum score, mean and standard deviation in order to make the dissemination data of students' grammar mastery and writing skill to be understood by the readers. The data will be provided using tables based on the classification. Each variable's data description is provided in the form of a minimum score, a maximum score, a mean, and a standard deviation so that readers can understand the dissemination data of students' self-efficacy and their students' descriptive text. The data will be presented in tables based on classification.

The scores achieved by the participants in terms of self-efficacy and writing abilities are presented in the table below:

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of the students' scores of self-efficacy levels and writing abilities

Variable	Sample Size	Mean	St. Deviation	Max. Score	Min. Score
Self-efficacy	41	67	8.94	91	46
Writing Ability	41	59	16.22	88	25

The data in this study are analysed using a statistical formula to determine the acceptance or rejection of the alternative hypothesis. Since quantitative data were employed in this study, the data were shown as numbers. Statistical analysis of the data was conducted using Microsoft Excel. It was employed to ascertain whether writing skill and writing self-efficacy in tenth grade students at SMK Baitul Hikmah are correlated. The study obtained the correlation number 0.640, and then compared it to the r-table. This data analysis was carried out on a computer using Microsoft Excel. The researcher used Microsoft Excel to process data and correlated students' self-efficacy scores with their writing scores. A correlation was obtained from these data and compared to the r-table.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of correlation between students' self-efficacy and their writing abilities.

	Writing	Questionnaire
Writing	1	
Questionnaire	0.640336475	1

The result in this research proved that students' self-efficacy levels has significantly correlation with the students' writing abilities. The result of analysis showed that the value of  $r_{xy}$  was 0.640 and the value of  $r_{xy}$  was higher than r-table. Because the r-table with  $N=41$ , it's found that r-table had a value 0.308. It could be seen previously that the value of  $r_{xy}$  is higher than the r-table. It showed that the degree of correlation between students' self-efficacy and their students writing abilities was high.

The result indicated that there was a positive correlation between students' self-efficacy and their students' writing abilities at the tenth grades students of SMK Baitul Hikmah Tempurejo in the 2023/2024 academic year. It can be said that students' self-efficacy and their students writing abilities has a positive correlation because  $0.640 > 0.308$ . It means that the increase of variable X is followed by the increase of variable Y.

Reinforcing the idea explained by (Bandura,1998) that strong and low self-efficacy can have a significant impact on an individual's ability to succeed or fail in completing tasks. (Pajares, 1993) argued that self-efficacy functions as a predictor of academic achievement. Those theoretical explanation by specifically linking self-efficacy to academic performance. When considering the implications of these theories in the context of student writing, it becomes clear that students with higher levels of self-efficacy will perform writing tasks with more confidence and persistence, so that students with high self-efficacy will produce better written results. on the other hand, students with low self-efficacy may have higher levels of anxiety or self-doubt, which can hinder their writing process. According to the theories (Bandura, 1998; Pajares, 1993) assessing students' level of self-efficacy is an easy way to predict how effective they will be in their writing efforts and students' level of self-efficacy can also be used as a reference to determine their level. student writing scores. This can be concluded the importance of increasing students' self-efficacy to improve their academic abilities in writing.

This finding suggests that students' self-efficacy plays a significant role in their writing ability. It is clear from the research's findings that the theory is accepted. Students do better when they have higher levels of self-efficacy. The less confident a pupil feels in himself, the less capable they will be on writing tests. Because the research's findings indicated that students with high levels of self-efficacy also performed well in writing assignments. Put differently, pupils with high levels of self-efficacy are able to express themselves more fully in written form.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to determine if or not there's a significant relationship between students' writing proficiency and their sense of self-efficacy when producing descriptive texts for tenth graders at SMK Baitul Hikmah. The researcher concluded that there's a significant correlation (0.604) between students' writing ability and their self-efficacy when they are writing descriptive texts at the "High" level in the tenth grade at SMK Baitul Hikmah. This conclusion is based on the material that has been discussed, presented, and analyzed in the preceding chapters.

Self-efficacy influenced students' abilities for writing. Therefore, it is beneficial for teachers to increase their pupils' self-efficacy by providing them with motivation that might help them believe in their own skills. It is important for other researchers in the future to understand the variables, particularly self-efficacy, that can impact students' writing abilities. Verifying that the learner has previously studied and comprehended the text type that will be examined is crucial to ensuring that the scores are more relevant and pertinent. Future studies should be aware that speaking, listening, and reading are just a few of the language skills in which self-efficacy can be examined.

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