

تقدير الذات والإنجاز الكتابي لطلاب الجامعة الليبيين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

أ. هناء عبدالنبي علي الكالي - قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كلية التربية بنزور - جامعة طرابلس

الملخص :

يُعتبر احترام الذات أحد العوامل المؤثرة التي لها تأثير قوي جداً على تحصيل متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ؛ لذلك هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف العلاقة بين تقدير الذات والإنجاز الكتابي لطلاب الجامعة الليبيين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، وقد كان عدد المشاركين في هذه الدراسة 34 طالبة ليبية من اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، تم اختيارهم بشكل عشوائي ليكونوا عينة في هذه الدراسة بكلية التربية بنزور، جامعة طرابلس ، والمشاركون متخصصون في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية الذين التحقوا بالفصل الدراسي السادس في خريف 2015.

وتم الحصول على بيانات هذه الدراسة من نسخة معدلة من استبيان احترام الذات الصادر عن أميرة الحطاب (2006 م) بالإضافة الي درجات الفصل النهائية لمادة الكتابة للعينة المختارة ، من أجل تحديد العلاقة بين المتغيرين ، وتم استخدام ارتباط منتج (**Pearson Coefficient-Moment**) ، و أظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة أن هناك علاقة إيجابية ومهمة بين تقدير الذات للمهمة وتحقيق الكتابة.

Self-Esteem and Writing Achievement of Libyan EFL University Students

Abstract

Self-esteem has been considered as one of the affective factors that have crucial impact on the English Foreign Language learners' achievement. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between self-esteem and English writing achievement of Libyan EFL university students. The participants of this study were 34 Libyan EFL female students. who were

randomly selected to be a sample in this study, at Faculty of Education – Junzour, University of Tripoli. The participants were majored in English department who enrolled in the sixth semester in autumn 2015. The data of this study were generated from an adapted version of Ameerah Al-Hattab's Task Self-Esteem questionnaire (2006) and the final writing grade of the selected sample. In order to determine the correlation between the two variables, Pearson Coefficient-Moment Product Correlation was used. The results of this study showed that there was a positive and significant correlation between Task self-esteem and writing achievement .

1. Introduction

Writing is the subject that involves cognitive effort of English foreign language learners. This cognitive effort could positively or negatively influence by affective factors such as anxiety, motivation and self-esteem. Many scholars have claimed that self-esteem is prevalent affective domain, which could negatively or positively influence on the language learners' performance. This affective factor is one of the topics that have received attention from psychologists and educators. The psychologist, William James was one of the first scholar who use the terminology of self-esteem (Snuffer, 2004). James (1896/1958) defined self-esteem as "in this world depends entirely on what we back ourselves to be and do" (p. 54). In other words, our level of self-esteem can determine based on what we expect of ourselves and abilities. If we expect the successes and happiness in our live, our self-esteem, in this case, is high. Otherwise, if we negatively think about our future and expect the failure as an outcome of our ability, in this case, we have low level of self-esteem. Additionally, self- esteem is defined by Nelson and Low, (1999) as the ability, belief, and skill to view self as positive, efficient and successful in accomplishing personal aims. Self-esteem can be defined in different ways and sometimes is utilized synonymously with other terms such as, self-image, self-concept or self-confidence (Ahmed & Bruinsma, 2006). According to Brown *et al.*, (2001), self-esteem can be used with three main types: general self-esteem, self-worth and self-evaluation. The first type is general or global self-esteem. This type of self-esteem is called by many psychologists as global self-esteem or trait self-esteem (Brown, Dutton and Cook, 2001). Global self-esteem is defined by Rosenbery (1979) as depends

on how the people judge their specific qualities in areas of high personal importance (cited in Brown and Marshall, 2002: 5). In terms of self-worth (situational self-esteem), Brown *et al.* (2001) articulated that Self-esteem could also refer to rather momentary emotional states, particularly those that emerge from a positive or negative outcome. They illustrated that the particular conditions or circumstances could contribute in the degree of self-esteem if it is high or low. For instance, “a person might say her self-esteem was sky-high after getting a big promotion”, in contrast “a person might say his self-esteem plummeted after a divorce” (p, 616). The third type of self-esteem is Self-Evaluations (Task Self-Esteem). According to Brown *et al.* (2001: 616) said that self-evaluation (task self-esteem) could “refer to the way people evaluate their various abilities and attributes”. They also demonstrated that it is preferred to call these beliefs self-evaluations or self-appraisals, as they refer to the way people evaluate or appraise their particular abilities and identity features.

2. Literature Review

According to findings of many studies, the majority of foreign language learners negatively evaluate themselves in terms of their learning the language which in turn adversely influences on their language acquisition, for instance, when the learner thinks that “I am not good in English” or “Even if I studied hard, I will not be a proficient in English.” However, it is argued that “by leading the self to expect poor outcomes, one lays the groundwork for defending against loss of self-esteem in event of failure” (Fiske and Taylor, 1991: 216). In other words, Amber found that unachieved language learners had lower self-esteem than achiever language learners whose self-esteem is high (cited in Tyacke and Mendelsohn, 1986).

The previous studies have been reinforced the idea that self-esteem could influence on academic achievement when the self-esteem increases the achievement will increase as well and vice-versa. In terms of language learning, it has been reported that self-esteem is one of the affective factors that have a great impact in language mastery whether this influence is negative or positive. In other words, learners with high self-esteem have more opportunities to be successful language learners than those who have a low level of self-confidence. For example, Demo and Parker (1987) proposed that

there exist an interacting association between language learning and self-esteem, and if one of these components increases the other factor will be increased.

As many other affective factors, self-esteem may influence on the individuals' language learning achievement. The correlation between self-esteem and foreign language achievement has been investigated by many researchers. For example, Clement, Dornyei, and Noels (1994) studied the effect of self-confidence and motivation in the foreign language setting among 301 Hungarian high school students and this study also aimed to evaluate those EFL learners' attitudes, motivation and anxiety towards learning English. The findings yielded that the self-confidence associated to FL achievement, and course difficulty. Another study was carried out by Elkali (2011) to investigate the relationship between language anxiety and self - esteem in learning a foreign language among 40 Libyan students in Malaysia. The results revealed that there was a relationship between the two variable and the level of the Libyan students' self-esteem was average (3.22). Furthermore, Hayati and Ostadian's (2008) study aimed to investigate the correlation between self-esteem and listening comprehension among sixty (60) EFL intermediate students in Iran. Students' English listening comprehension scores were calculated by applying a model test of TOEFL, including 34 audio conversations and 34 written form tests. The results showed that the students' listening comprehension was significantly influenced by their self-esteem. Another study of Gardner *et al.*'s (1987) indicated that the difference was insignificant between the grade of twelve students who dropped out of their program after summer break, and the students continuing on objective proficiency measures. They justified that the learners dropped out not only because they were more anxious in French class but also because of their lack of self-confidence in their speaking competence. Recently, a study conducted by Alrabai (2017) investigated the relationship between the self-esteem and English language achievement of 236 EFL Saudi Arabia. The data of this study was gained from self-esteem questionnaire and the participants' English language achievement. The results revealed that students experienced low level of self-esteem and low language achievement. Additionally, the students' EFL achievement strongly and positively

correlated with their self-esteem. In the Libyan context; therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between EFL Libyan self-esteem and their writing performance.

In the previous paragraph, the impact of self-esteem on the language learning achievement in general has been discussed. On the other hand, the following paragraph will address the correlation between the writing performance and self-esteem. Starting with Al-Hattab's study (2006), her study was conducted to examine 81 Saudi Arabian students (36 males and 45 females), who were EFL junior in secondary school, to specify the influence of self-esteem on writing achievement. The instruments which were prepared for this study were three scales of self-esteem facets, general, situational and task, and writing test to measure the students' English writing achievement. The results indicated that situational self-esteem and task self-esteem positively associated with writing achievement, whereas the global self-esteem is insignificantly related to the writing performance. She concluded that the students' levels of self-esteem are generally average and self-esteem could affect upon the students' writing achievement.

Another study goes in the same line, Fahim and Rad (2012) conducted a study to investigate the correlation between self-esteem and paragraph writing among 80 Iranian who were majored at translation at Tonekabon and Lahijan Azad Universities. The data of this study was gained from TOEFL test and the Coopersmith's Self-esteem Scale. Furthermore, the participants of this study were asked to write three different types of paragraphs. The finding of their study showed that relationship between self-esteem, paragraph writing and English language proficiency was significant.

The study of Khansir and Abdolahi (2014) examined the correlation between self-esteem and writing achievement of eighty Iranian EFL learners from two English language institutes. The results showed that the participants' self-esteem was positively and significantly correlated with their writing achievement. Moreover, the study of Agata (2013) aimed to investigate the relationship between English writing ability and self-esteem of 107 Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy students. The results revealed that the correlation between writing ability and self-esteem was significantly positive.

3. Statement of the Problem

Self-esteem also has a great impact on the fulfillment in learning the language. Self-esteem is defined as one of the major affective elements (Oxford 1996). That is students when they fear from commit linguistic mistakes in front of the others especially L2 learners or in front of the native speakers they may because of their low self-esteem. In other words, Libyan students like other EFL may suffer from the same problems that are associated to EFL classes such as their self-esteem and their writing achievement. Although, such these issues are serious in the foreign language learning field, there are only few studies that actually investigated the correlation between them, especially among Libyan students. Therefore, this study aimed to determine whether self-esteem correlated to writing achievement.

4. Research Question

Q1. What is the correlation between EFL Libyan students' self-esteem at Faculty of Education -Janzour and their writing performance?

5. The importance of the Study

This study is important because it will enable the teachers to increase their awareness about students' foreign language anxiety and their self-esteem. Additionally, the findings of this study may lead teachers to provide proper assistance to students who learn a foreign language. It might enable the teacher to apply creative ways to increase students' awareness in viewing themselves as foreign language learners. With this new understanding, language teachers can identify different strategies in order to create and facilitate less stressful learning environment so that good self-esteem can be fostered, which in turn helps in gaining the desirable goal of language acquisition.

6. Research Methodology

In this part, the participants, the instruments, the procedure and data analysis will be discussed.

6.1 The Participants

The participants of this study were 34 females English language students enrolled in the sixth semester of academic year (2015-2016) at Faculty of Education –Janzour, University of Tripoli. They were randomly selected. Furthermore, they took different subjects include the academic writing subject which was the specialized one. Furthermore, they should attend

academic writing lectures twice a week to had enough exposure to it. All the participants were Libyan and their first language is Arabic.

6.2 The Instruments

This study was utilized two instruments, questionnaire and final academic writing grads.

6.2.1 The questionnaire

The questionnaire (Task self-esteem) was adopted from Al-Hattab's (2006). It is with 5-point Likert scales (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree) for participants to indicate their degree of agreement and disagreement. The questionnaire consists of 20 items that correlated to the task self-esteem. According to Al- Hattab (2006), this questionnaire was "highly reliable and valid. Its intrinsic validity was(0.949) for the whole questionnaire, and Alpha Cronbach for task self- esteem was(0.88)". The participants were asked to write their names in order to match their questionnaire responses with their final grades.

6.2.2. The Final Writing Grade

The final academic writing scores were gained from the class instructor at the end of the semester, In order to compute the participants' writing achievement. In this subject, academic writing, the students were taking how develop an essay into research paper. So they learnt how to paraphrase, how to summarize academic context, and how to support their ideas by using resources. They were familiarized with the APA citation style for inside the text and in the references. Furthermore, the students at the end of the semester were required to submit the descriptive research paper as final semester assignment. The academic writing is 4 credit hour, so the students should attend two lectures per week. The final semester grades contained the class assignments and the midterm (40% of marks), and the final examination(60%of the marks). The examinations contents were similar across the lectures. Therefore, the final grade of the selected participants were out of 100%.

7. The Procedure

The task self-esteem questionnaire was distributed to the participants at Faculty of Education-Janzour. The participants were informed that purpose of this questionnaire was only to gather the information about their self-

esteem and its relation with their writing achievement. In order to obtain better results, the subjects were inquired to read carefully the items before giving their answers. the writing achievement were optioned from the final writing grade of the students.

8. Data Analysis

The data in this research was analyzed by using SPSS version 20. To describe the data in the accurate way from each variable; the descriptive statistical process was utilized. “Descriptive statistics involve summarizing scores by developing tabular or graphical presentations. Descriptive statistics involve measures of the central tendency which is the mean, median, mode, square-root from, and standard deviation (Green, Salkind, and Akely cited in Vela, 2003). In this study, The means and standard deviation were computed. The relationship between the two variables was examined by computing the Pearson correlations common indices of association” (Crowl, 1996). The responses for self-esteem ranged from 1 to 5 for each statement.

9. The Results of the Study

9.1 Descriptive Statistics of Writing Final Grades and Task self-esteem

The Table 1 indicates the descriptive statistics of final grade of EFL Libyan students on one side and their task self-esteem from the other side . It obvious from the table that the highest final score is 96 and lowest score is 25 , and the mean is 58 . On the other hand, the mean score of EFL Libyan students' self-esteem in this study is 3.281 with Std. Deviation .657. the results of this study revealed that participants of this study have average self-esteem.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Writing Final Grade and Task self-esteem

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	N
The final Grade	58.53	20.816	25	96	34
Task Self-Esteem	3.281	.657	1.95	4.55	34

9.2 The Correlation Between Task Self-Esteem and Writing Achievement

The aim of the present study is to investigate the relationship between the self-esteem and writing achievement of Libyan university students at faculty of education-Janzour. Table 2 illustrates the results of Pearson Coefficient-Moment Product Correlation between Task self-esteem and writing achievement of EFL Libyan learners at the 0.01 level of significance. The correlation between the two variables is positive and statistically significant ($r= 0.740$).

Table 2 : Correlation between task self-esteem and writing achievement

		Final Grade	Task self-esteem
Final Grade	Pearson Correlation	1	.740**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	34	34
Task self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	.740**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	34	34

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

10. Discussion

The mean of task-self-esteem(3.22) determined that the Libyan students in this study have an average level of task self-esteem. The Libyan task- self-esteem mean was higher than that of Saudi Arabia students in Alhatab (2006)'study (2.90) which was under average, and similar of that of Libyan students in Elkali (2011) study(3.22). This average level could be explained; therefore, this study was conducted in the middle of the academic semester. and the students were asked to write a small research paper as the course achievement which was challenging task for them . Furthermore, they might be adapted with the subject which this reflect on their response to the questionnaire. And this was obvious of their average in the writing performance which was (58). This interpretation reinforced by Al-Hatab(2006)'s explanation of her results that the participants have low task-

self-esteem because of their poor writing achievement. Furthermore, this explanation result lends weight to a comment made by Demo and Parker (1987), who argued that that there exist an interacting association between language learning and self-esteem, and if one of these components increases the other factor will be increased.

On the other hand, the main objective of this study was to explore the correlation between self-esteem and Libyan writing achievement. The results revealed that the correlation between these two variable was positive and significant ($r = 0.740$) at the level 0.01. In other words, the writing achievement increases if the self-esteem increased. This reflects that the relationship between self-esteem and writing achievement is interchangeable. And the students with high self-esteem have high writing achievement level and vice-versa. This result support that of Al-Hatab (2006)'s result which showed that the relationship between task self-esteem and writing achievement was positive ($r = 0.374$). This finding goes in line with the results of Agata's (2013) study which aimed to investigate the relationship between English writing ability and self-esteem of 107 Surabaya Merchant Marine Academy students. The results revealed that the correlation between writing ability and self-esteem was significantly positive. Moreover, the result of the current study confirms those of Fahim and Rad (2012) and Khansir and Abdolahi (2014) who investigated the correlation between self-esteem and writing achievement among Iranian students. Their results revealed that the participants' self-esteem is strongly and positively related with writing achievement.

11. The conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the correlation between task self-esteem and writing performance of EFL Libyan at Faculty of Education -Janzour and their writing performance. The results of this study revealed that participants of this study have average final grade and self-esteem. Furthermore, the results of this study indicated that the self-esteem and writing achievement of Libyan EFL students at faculty of education –Janzour were positively and significantly correlated. It could be said that, the writing instructor in Libyan colleges should pay more attention to the significant of self-esteem's impact on the students writing performance due to the self-

esteem's impact on language learning process could be positively or negatively. Therefore, the Libyan writing instructors should create an effective and non-threaten learning atmosphere which in turn positively influence on the students' self-esteem, in general and to increase the students' positive thinking about the writing skill in particular. However, it could be concluded that English teacher should increase their awareness of the students' self-esteem which has a great impact on the students' mastering the language skills especially writing skill.

12 .Recommendation

12.1 Recommendation for Writing Instructors

As a recommendation, The instructors should give the students sufficient time to prepare themselves for writing tasks, especially those topics that they are not familiarized with, consequently they feel more relax while they are writing. Additionally, The instructors, also, should encourage students to make mistake in order to develop their language skill. Engaging students in groups or pairs could have benefits to elevate students' self-esteem. Furthermore, the teachers should Apply writing strategies in the classroom; therefore, these strategies play a vital role in both having good writing production and uplifts their self-esteem.

12.2 Recommendation for Future Research

Concerning to interdisciplinary study on task self-esteem and writing achievement, several recommendations for future research are addressed. Firstly, further study could use qualitative instruments such as interview, observation or reflective journal to see the unnoticeable emotions of participants' self-esteem during and their writing progress in the whole semester or academic year. Therefore, these instruments contribute to enrich the understanding about this phenomenon. Additionally, future study in this area could be useful to conduct the same study with a larger number of participants who have similar learning language background and major to see whether there are any similarities in the findings. Moreover, it is recommended that future research be undertaken to investigate students' copying strategies for enhancing self-esteem. Therefore, the instructors and the educators could utilize these strategies in order to solve the students' problems with self-esteem.

13 References

- Ahmed, W., and Bruinsma, M.(2006). A Structural Model of Self- Concept Autonomous Motivation and Academic Performance in Cross-Cultural Perceptive. *Electronic journal of research in educational psychology*, 4 (10), 551-576.
- Agata, D. (2013). The Correlation between the Writing Ability and Self-esteem. *Beyond Words*. 1 (1) , 111-137
- Al-Hattab, A. A. (2006). *Self-esteem and Writing Achievement of Saudi EFL Students in Secondary Schools*. Unpublished M. A. Thesis. Taibah University. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Alrabai, F. (2017) Self-esteem of Saudi Learners and Its Relationship to Their Achievement in English as a Foreign Language. *English Linguistics Research*, 6 (4), 1-12
- Basco, L. M., & Han, S.-H. (2016). Self-esteem, Motivation, and Anxiety of Korean University Students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 7(6), 1069-1078
- Brown, J. D., Robson, G., & Rosenkjar, P. R. (2001). Personality, Motivation, Anxiety, Strategies, and Language Proficiency of Japanese Students. In Z. Dörnyei & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 361-398). Honolulu: University of Hawaii.
- Brown, J. D., Dutton, K. A., and Cook, K. E. (2001). From the top down: Self-esteem and self-evaluation. *Cognition and Emotion*, 15 (5), 615–631
- Brown, J. D., and Marshall, M. A. (2002). *Self-Esteem: It's Not What You Think*. University of Washington, 1-35.
- Clement, R., Dornyei, Z. and Noels, K. A. (1994). Motivation, Self-Confidence, and Group Cohesion in the Foreign Language Classroom. *Language Learning*, 44, 417-448.
- Demo, D. H., and Parker, K. D. (1987). Academic Achievement and Self-Esteem among Black and White College Students. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 127, 345-355.
- Elkali, H. A. A.(2011) *The Relationship Between Language Anxiety And Self Esteem In Learning A Foreign Language Among Libyan Students In Malaysia*. Unpublished M. A. Thesis. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

- Fahim, M., and Rad, S. K. (2012) The Relationship between Self-Esteem and Paragraph Writing of Iranian EFL Learners. *Psychology Journal*, 3, (1), 24-29
- Fiske, S., and Taylor, S. E. (1991). *Social Cognition* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gardner, R. C., Laonde, R.N., Moorcroft,R., and Ever, F.T.(1987). Second Language Attrition: The Role Of Motivation And Use. *Journal Of Language And Social Psychology*,6,29-97.
- James, W. (1896/1958). *Talks to Teachers*. New York: Norton.
- Khansir, A. A., and Abdolahi, Z. (2014). Self-Esteem and Writing Achievements of Iranian EFL Learners. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 3(2), 155-164
- Nelson, D. B., and Low, G. R. (1999). *Exploring and Development Emotional Intelligence Skills: A personal Guide to Lifelong Emotional Learning*. Corpus Christi, TX: Authors.
- Oxford, R. (1996). *Language Learning Strategies around the World: Cross-cultural Perspectives*. Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center, Hawaii at Manoa.
- Poorsoti, S., Asadi, N.(2016). Relationship between Iranian EFL Learner's Self-Esteem, and Grammatical Accuracy in Written Discourse. *Journal of Arts & Language Studies*, 1(1).1-6
- Rosenberg, M. (1979). *Conceiving the Self*. New York: Basic Books.
- Snuffer, D. W. (2004). *Effects of Intervening Items on Self-Esteem Tests: A Study of Face Validity*. Unpublished M. A. Thesis. Marshall University.
- Tyacke, M. and Mendelsohn, D. (1986). Student Needs: Cognitive as well as Communicative. *TESOL Canada Journal*, 1, 171-183.