Investigating the Effect of Using Self-Assessment on Iranian EFL Learners' Writing

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of using self-assessment on Iranian EFL learners' writing. The purpose of this study was to demonstrate whether using of self-assessment as an assessment method was influential in developing learners' English writing performance generally writing processes specifically. The participants of this study consisted of 48 female learners. The subjects in control group (N=23) were instructed writing by using traditional method whereas the subjects in the experimental group (N=25) were instructed by using self-assessment method as the treatment. Data were collected through Self Reporting Questionnaire (SRQ) on writing processes and motivation questionnaire. Test scores and Self Reporting Questionnaire scores were used to evaluate English learners' writing. In order to analyze the data descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, and paired t-test were implemented. The results obtained from the pre-administration of instruments showed that the two groups were homogenous and their English writing performance was poor. However, the results obtained from the post-administration showed improvement in English writing performance of the experimental group learners in comparison with control group. Findings also indicated that there is statistically significant increase in the learners' use of writing processes as a result of using self-assessment method and their writing has developed. As a result of this study it is concluded that using of self-assessment as an assessment method is an effective instructional technique and a useful evaluation instrument.

Keywords: Assessment- Self- Assessment- Writing - Motivation

1. Introduction
1.1 Background of the Study

Writing is one of the essential skills in learning a foreign language. By using writing a learner can show his ability and his learned material, but because of the traditional method of teaching most of the learners do not like to participate in writing courses. Previously most of the teachers in foreign language classes ignored writing skill or at most they just paid attention to the final product and marked it and they did not consider the process through which the learners had gone for producing that final writing.

Recently, writing gained importance because most of the instructors find out it has crucial role in leaning a language. According to Fahed Al-Serhani (2007) writing has gained a lot of fan both for its significance in learning a language and encouraging creativity. Since the importance of writing has been revealed to all of the instructors, a shift in the way of teaching writing has occurred. These days some of the instructors teach writing as a process. According to Myles (2002) for writing academically the writer should have a lot of practice in essay writing and in creating and analyzing viewpoints. Myles also, state that learners should have the ability to describe, explain, and convert different kind of information into the text.

By shifting the procedure of teaching writing from the product-oriented approach to the process-oriented approach, instructors should change their method of assessment and choose a method that is in line with the new trend. According to Farhady, Jafarpoor, and Birjandi (1994) the connection between teaching and assessment is so close that instructors cannot work in teaching without paying attention to assessment. Javaherbakhsh (2010) states that assessment is a procedure that is systematic for collecting data and making decision about strengths of the learners and the quality of the teachers' instruction based on the learners' work.

Self-assessment is especially fruitful in EFL writing courses because by implementing this method learners can discover their strengths and weaknesses and work on them. Osscarsson (1989) defines six features for self-assessment; the first one is its support of learning, the second one is that it enhances learners and teachers' conscious of the learners' abilities, the third feature of self-assessment is that by getting knowledgeable about learning objectives, learner's motivation is increased, next one is that participating of learners in their own evaluation make them more knowledgeable in assessment, the fifth feature is that learners participation in the assessment process reduce the teacher's responsibility , and the last but not least important feature of self-assessment is that it has a lot of advantages during the time and make the learners more autonomous so that they can evaluate their own improvement.

Based on the previous discussion it is revealed that, self-assessment is going to be used in EFL writing courses in a wide range, although, writing and assessment as essential parts of language learning have not been paid attention to, in Iranian EFL situation. Most of the studies considered writing as a product and just pay attention to grammatical aspect of writing. So the main point of this study is the students' progress in writing skill by considering writing as a process and the stages which learners are going through them during the period

of writing class. It also considers assessment as a process which has crucial role in the instructional setting. Since teaching writing and evaluation are closely related to each other, self-assessment is the useful tool for educational objectives.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the recent approaches toward teaching English as a foreign language there has been a growing interest to replace teacher-centered approaches with learner-centered ones. This shift of attention from teacher-centered approach to learner-centered one resulted in the emergence of some issues such as self-assessment, and motivation. In Most of Iranian (EFL) courses the dominant approach to teach English has been the use of traditional methods. So, the EFL learners seldom assume the responsibility of their learning and do self-assessment. This is also the case in writing courses which are predominantly teacher centered. In order to teach EFL writing skill teachers ask students to write the required text and submit it in the due time. The only feedback that the learners receive is often in the form of marks. Such a cumbersome and time-consuming process is of little if any advantage (Harris & McCann1994). In traditional courses, teachers mark the texts and students with little attention to the process just receive a mark. As a new approach toward teaching writing, self-assessment method is often cited to yield positive results. It is assumed that by using self-assessment students consciously engage in the process of evaluating their texts and analyzing all errors and mistakes they have committed, hence they learn from themselves. This may help learners develop their meta-cognitive ability.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be described in the following way:

This study offers a new way of using self-assessment in Iranian EFL writing course. It may contribute new knowledge on improving Iranian EFL learners' writing ability. It may also be important for EFL students, since it may help them to find their strengths and weaknesses and work on them. This study can also be significant for teachers and help them to improve their teaching and evaluation strategies. Another advantage of this study for teachers is that they can use it in their classes to improve the quality of their learners' writing. To the researcher's knowledge, importance of this study can be enhanced because little study has been done that address the use of self-assessment in Iranian EFL writing classes. It may also motivate researchers to do research in the field of writing and connect it to the self-assessment.

1.4 Research Question

1- Are there statistically significant differences between the mean scores of experimental   group and control group on writing performance after the treatment?

2- Does self-assessment have positive effect on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill?

3- Does self-assessment have positive effect on Iranian EFL learners' motivation?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

1- Self-assessment does not effect on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill.

2- Self-assessment has positive effect on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill.

3- Self assessment has positive effect on Iranian EFL learners' motivation.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1.6.1 Self-Assessment

According to Richards and Schmidth (2002) self-assessment is "checking one's own performance and a language learning task after it has been completed or checking one's own success in using a language."(p.575)

Harris (1997) states that self-assessment acts as a base for learners to become more autonomous in the process of learning and gives them a chance to evaluate their own learning and improvement. Iraji and Janebi Enayat (2016) defined self-assessment as procedures "which give the learners a chance to judge their own learning. Students need to know their own capabilities and how much improvement they are making and what they can do with the abilities they have achieved."(p.716). Harris and McCann (1994) believe that self-assessment is what carried out by the students upon their work, their difficulty, and their improvement.

1.6.2 Writing Process

Hyland (2003, p. 10) mentioned "the process approach to teaching writing emphasizes the writer as an independent producer of texts, but it goes further to address the issue of what teacher should do to help learners perform a writing task." Myles (2002) states that writing process "involves composing, while implies the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narratives or description, or to transform information in to new texts, as in composing or argumentative writing" (p.1).

1.6.3 Writing Product

According to Harmer (2006) "when concentrating on the product we are only interested in the aim of a task and

in the end of product" (p.257). Fahed Al-Serhani (2007) mentioned that writing product "involves certain productive writing skill, which are taken into account in the assessment of the end product namely; purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure and mechanics." (p.16)

1.6.4 Assessment

Brown (2004) define assessment in the following way; " assessment is an ongoing process that encompasses a much wider domain, whenever a student responds a question, offers a comment, or tries a new word or structure, the teacher subconsciously makes an assessment of the student's performance." (p.4)

1.6.5 Motivation

As Broussard and Garrison (2004) defined "motivation as the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something" (p. 106). According to Ryan and Deci (2000) motivated person is one who performs an action enthusiastically.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This chapter consists of two sections. First a theoretical framework and in the second part, review of the previous studies conducted in this field. In the first part development of assessment process, the concept of self-assessment, characteristics of self-assessment strategies, essential principles of self-assessment, advantages of self-assessment, challenges of using self-assessment, and self-assessment and writing instruction are reviewed. The second part of this chapter consists of previous studies which are related to this study. These days the methods of language assessment have shifted. They consider not only what students know about language but also what they can do with their knowledge in practical way. Fahed Al-Serhani (2007) declares that just gaining information, learning vocabulary, ability, and knowledge about language is not sufficient, learners should learn to implement these things that they have achieved.

Reflecting instructional objectives can be mentioned as one of the significant attributes of alternative methods of assessment. In this kind of assessment every day activities of learners done in the classroom are evaluated. Alternative methods of assessment which have different kinds such as performance base assessment. Journal, portfolio assessment, conference, self and peer-assessment, interview and, observation can encourage students to cooperate with their teacher in the process of evaluation. In this study self-assessment as one form of alternative methods of assessment accompany standardized test to evaluate learners writing ability in order to improve this important skill.

2.2 Development of the assessment process

Assessment has a crucial role in learning helping the learners and teachers to know that the learning process is useful or not. Hyland (2003) states that "Assessment refers to the variety of ways used to collect information on a learner's language ability or achievement." (P. 213) According to Tavakoli and Amirian (2012) academic assessment of language skills for every learners is an important part of class activities, especially it reveals learners' weaknesses and strengths and guide teachers for programming their teaching based on these strengths and weaknesses. Gipps (1994) states that assessment evaluates learners' performance and achieved knowledge and it consists of a lot of methods including formal testing and evaluation, practical and oral assessment which is done by the teachers.

Clearly new forms of assessment attain consideration because improvement of assessment strategies leads to the improvement of educational process of teaching and learning. Through using alternative methods of assessment teacher can recognize the deficiency of their teaching and refine their strategies for teaching, learners can also find out in what area they have difficulty and need more practice. Caner (2010) states that alternative methods of assessment reveal learners' achievement and their ability to use their knowledge in practical ways.

Since all of the learners are not the same and they have different abilities, favors, needs, skills and weaknesses, so, instructor cannot use a single method to assess them. The method for evaluating learners should be more flexible and consider the above mentioned points. Instructor should use a method that is multidimensional and is done during time to find information about different students with different abilities, needs, skills, weaknesses and etc.

2.3 Concept of Self-Assessment

Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid (2010) states "the term assessment comes from 'ad sedere' – to sit down beside". (p. 211). Self-assessment as a new method of assessment refine shortcomings of traditional method. Harris and MacCan (1994, p.63) mentioned that "In traditional method we are ignoring the role of students themselves as a useful source of information and self-assessment provide us with useful information about student's expectations and needs, their problems and worries". Fahimi and Rahimi (2015) stated that "Self-assessment methods introduce meaningful ways to nurture student writing achievement through reflection and analysis. Self-assessment includes a wide range of practices and varied terminology." (p. 735)

2.4 Characteristics of Self-Assessment Strategy

Osscarsson (1989) defines six characteristics for self-assessment; the first characteristic is its support of students' learning, the second one is that it promotes learners and teachers' conscious of the learners' knowledge, the third characteristic of self-assessment is that by getting knowledgeable about learning objectives, learners' are encouraged for learning, next one is that participating of learners in the process of their own evaluation make them more knowledgeable in assessment, the fifth characteristic is that learners participation in the evaluation of their own work reduce the teacher's responsibility toward assessment, and the last but not least important characteristic of self-assessment is that it has a lot of benefits during the time and make the learners more independent so that they can evaluate their own improvement in the instructional course.

2.5 Essential Principles of Self-Assessment Strategy Development

One of the most key principles of self-assessment is conscious self-evaluation in which students become familiar with their errors and problems by which they can find ways of changing, adapting and developing. Another principle is the reflection that teachers show to their students' work by considering which students find out the extent of their works' correctness. Harris and MacCan (1994) state that "In the learning based model both the teacher's assessment and student's self-assessment have a direct effect in the learning process" (p. 65).

Harris (1997) states that in evaluation through self-assessment, learners are motivated as a result of getting involved in the process of learning and being aware of individual development. One of the most essential rules of self-assessment is sharing of learners in the process of evaluation. According to Hadidi Tamjid and Birjandi (2011) "learner participation in the assessment of educational effects is increasingly felt to be an important feature of modern views toward teaching and learning" (p. 245). Another principle for self-assessment strategy is that in this method of assessment learners perform real task. Shaaban (2005) mentioned that being practice-based is one principle of this type of evaluation, it make learners to do authentic practice. According to Joyce, Spiller, and Twist in this method of assessment learners collect those works which show their learning, make comparison among their work and revise them when needed, define some objectives for themselves and have control upon their improvement to achieve to their objectives (2009). Other principle of self-assessment is learners' reflection to their own work. Khodadady and khodabakhshzadeh (2012) believe that making learners aware and reflective to their own work is practical through self-assessment. One way to make learners more autonomous is through using self-assessment. Harris (1997) states that "self-assessment is rightly seen as one of the pillars of learner's autonomy." (p. 12) In summary, when students have chances to reflect to their own work, instructor should give feedback to their work and have interaction with them to collect information about their problems and pave the way for more effective learning.

2.6 Advantages of Self-Assessment

As one of the alternative method of assessment self-assessment has many advantages which have been referred to in different studies. According to Birjandii and Hadidi Tamjid (2010) by using self-assessment learners can recognize their problems and strong point and work on them. Gardner (2000) believes that by using self-assessment, learners' language learning can be controlled, they have chances to give feedback to their own work and evaluate their procedure for learning, and it can also present them criteria to evaluate their work. Gardner also states that this method of assessment help teacher to support learners where needed, because by paying attention to students' reflection, instructor can find out their weaknesses and make them to practice on them.

Self-assessment strategy enhances learners' motivation. According to Joyce, Spiller, and Twist (2009) when learners know how develop their learning and practice it in real world, they will be motivated intrinsically. Self-assessment is also helpful in learners' thinking. Garcia Garrido (2010) states that for growing learners' thinking and giving them the chance to make their work meaningful, it is a good way for instructor to encourage them to evaluate their own work. According to Lam (2010) other advantages of self-assessment are "1) building up linguistic awareness, 2) self-assessment as monitoring tool, 3) improving future writing, and 4) having more practice in writing." (p. 25)

Therefore self-assessment is a way for students to have control on their own work, and by using this method of assessment they can reach valuable information about their weak points, think about them critically, investigate different strategies to work on them and find an effective one to abolish them. So, by implementing this method learners would become more independent and aware of their capabilities.

2.7 Challenges of Using Self-Assessment

In comparison with traditional method of assessment, self-assessment is a good way for evaluating learners, but it cannot be considered a panacea for all of its shortcomings. As an innovative method, this method should be implemented by taking all aspects into consideration. According to Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid (2010) since in performing this method cognitive ability is involved and it cannot be controlled completely, there are some difficulties about using this method effectively. Another issue of concern in using self-assessment is reliability.

Blue (1988) states since this method is not reliable one, its use in formal context may create problem. Gardner (2000) believes that there are a number of reasons which may lead to unreliability such as: doing assessment by learners, learners' age, their first language, their culture, way of doing assessment and etc. In summary, self-assessment can be used as complementary technique for learners' evaluation. It can be used along with standard test and help teachers to have better understanding of their learners' real abilities.

2.8 Self-Assessment and Writing Instruction

Since writing is an important skill in communicating with others, so, it is a valuable skill in learning of a foreign language. It is one of the problematic skills in learning a foreign language. Since writing is not considered as a process, most of the learners have problem in learning writing fundamentally. Harmer (2006) states that writing is as important as speaking but there are a number of aspects which distinguish it from speaking. For evaluating writing process, traditional method of assessment is not a comprehensive method. Self-assessment is one of the most appropriate methods for assessing learners' achievement during teaching writing as a process. Brown (2004) believes that self-assessment has some principles including; make learners more autonomous, creating internal motivation for learners to become more successful, and help them to learn more cooperatively.

Javaherbakhsh (2010) believes that using of self-assessment in writing classes is very helpful because it assist instructors to find out information about learners' ability and weaknesses. Zheng, Huang, and Chen (2012) mentioned that since learners can use self-assessment in writing courses successfully, it would develop their ability in writing composition. El-Koumy (2001) states that considering learners' writing product or the process through which learners have gone to write this product separately is wrong, so, by using self-assessment instructors can combine both writing final product and process of writing that product and have justice judgment about learners' capabilities. To sum up, evaluating writing through self-assessment is not only based on the final product, it provides the learners with the opportunity to experience different stages of the process of writing and therefore motivate them to pay attention to this stages carefully and find ways to improve their writing.

2.9 Previous Studies

This section is a survey of some related studies to self-assessment and its impact on learning language skills especially writing. Moradan and Hedayati (2011) mentioned that today using traditional methods of assessment which are one shot exam have been replaced with alternative methods of assessment. Fahed Al-Serhani (2007) mentioned that alternative methods of assessment focus on learners' abilities in relation with the using language not to their reproduction.

A research study was conducted by Khodadady and Khodabakhshzadeh (2012) to show the influence of portfolio and self-assessment on writing skill and learners' autonomy in Tabaran University in Iran in 2010. Participants of this study were 59 Persian Students. They were assigned to two experimental and control groups. Students in experimental group were assessed by using portfolio and self-assessment. According to the results of this study at the beginning of the course performance of the two groups shows no significant difference, but after performing the treatment, writing ability and autonomy of the experimental group improved significantly.

3. Methodology
3.1 Design of the Study

Because arrangement of a true experimental design in institutes is difficult, so, this study adopts one of the quasi-experimental designs. It is 'The pretest-posttest intact groups'.

To conduct the experiment of the present study, two classes were selected. One of the classes was assigned to serve as the experimental group and the other one as the control group randomly. Once prior to the introducing of self-assessment as the treatment of the study and once again at the end of the experiment, the difference between the mean scores of the control group and experimental group were computed and compared for statistical significance.

3.2 Participants

Subjects participated in this study were selected from Iranian EFL learners who enrolled in the Fanaver institute in Kermanshah at intermediate level. Two classes with the same level of English knowledge (Interchange 3, part three) were selected. They were 48 female students who attending two separate class at the same institute. To conduct the experiment one of the classes was randomly chosen as the experimental group and the other as the control group. There were 25 learners in the experimental group, while 23 learners existed in the control group.

3.3 Instrument of the Study / Materials

The following materials were used in this study to investigate the effect of the self-assessment as an alternative method of assessment on learners' writing ability and investigating learners' motivation in the experimental group toward learning English before and after the experiment.

3.3.1. Self-Reporting Questionnaire (SRQ)

The writing process used by the learners in their writing performance was determined by implementing the self-reporting questionnaire (SRQ) created by Fahed AL-Serhani (2007) to see if they implement writing processes or not. The SRQ consists of 25 items and includes four writing process, named: planning, drafting, revising, and editing and it has a 3-points scale: point 0 for never, point 1 for sometimes, and point 2 for always (Appendix A). Clear explanation was given to the students about using of the SRQ. Reliability, Validity, and needed time to accomplish the SRQ were measured by piloting it on a group of subjects selected randomly by Fahed AL-Serhani. Reliability of SRQ has been computed by means of Spearman-Brown Formula and it has been reported as being 0.95 which was significant at 0.01 level. A group of experts stablished its validity by providing revision, modification and expertise opinions. Its validity was reported to be 0.97. Results obtained by Fahed AL-Serhani indicated that the SRQ is valid and reliable and time needed to do it was estimated to be 25 minutes.

3.3.2. Motivation Questionnaire

The motivation of the learners toward learning English was measured by using of a 39 items motivation questionnaire in a Likert scale which was developed by Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid (2010) (Appendix B). This questionnaire included the items related to learning English in general and writing classes in particular. It was given to the participants to answer it anonymously. Participants had to answer each of the 39 questions individually on a 5 point Likerts scale, which is ranked strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). To identify learners' motivation toward learning English generally and writing particularly all of the answers in the questionnaire were analyzed.

To check content validity of the questionnaire, Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid (2010) consulted four of their colleagues who taught writing courses. Moreover, in a pilot study the questionnaires were given to a sample of 30 ESL learners taught by them in a writing class at Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch, before conducting their research. The participants in the pilot study were similar to that of the main study sample but did not participate in the main study. Based on the results obtained from the pilot study the reliability of the questionnaire was 0.84. The participants were told that it was just part of a research project and there was no 'right' or 'wrong' answer. The questionnaire was given to the participants twice, at the beginning and at the end of the term. It was in English and the participants were required to question any ambiguity in the items. The needed time to accomplish the questionnaire was 10 minutes (Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid, 2010).

3.3.3 Analytic Scoring Rubric (ASR)

ASR includes six criteria named; purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, and mechanics for scoring learners writing, has been developrd by Fahed AL-Serhani (2007). Based on the instruction explained in Fahed AL-Serhani (2007), complete guidance is presented for instructing writers other than the researcher in order to gain consistent score.

The validity of ASR has been established by Fahed AL-Serhani (2007) by giving it to a group of experts for providing their expertise opinions about the ASR. The inter-rater reliability has been measured by using Spearman-Brown Formula. It has been reported as 0.93 which is statistically significant at the level of 0.01 and for its internal reliability, correlation of coefficient of all of the criterion has been computed individually with the overall ASR, by means of Spearman-Brown Formula, the correlation of coefficient of purpose, content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, mechanics has been reported as: 0.70, 0.80, 0.91, 0.84, 0.83, and 0.79 respectively. Achieved results by Fahed AL-Serhani (2007) revealed that this instrument is valid and reliable.

3.4 procedures

In order to determine the learners' homogeneity before conducting the experiment all of the students writing were assessed by using the Self Reporting Questionnaire as a pre-test. The researcher and another teacher of English administered the SRQ in two classes in the following way:

In the first class students wrote a paragraph about their favorite hobbies. Then in the second class they wrote a paragraph about characteristics of a good friend. The SRQ was used to obtain information about writing process used by the students and it was given to them immediately after the administration of the writing test as the pre-test. The treatment lasted 8 weeks and during each week two classes were held. Similar writing tasks selected from the textbook were given to both experimental and control groups' students. Both groups were taught by the teacher; the participants in the experimental group received the treatment i.e. self-assessment technique. During the course learners assessed their own writing process by using SRQ and another checklist which has been developed by Fahed Al-Serhani (2007) named Analytic Scoring Rubric (ASR) to improve their writing product (Appendix C). Finally at the end of the treatment, both experimental and control group were assessed by using the Self-Reporting Questionnaire for the second time as the post test.

It also has to be mentioned that before and after the treatment a motivation questionnaire was given to the participants in the experimental group to investigate their motivation toward learning English, to see if using self-assessment increase their motivation after the treatment or not.

3.5 Data Analysis

To evaluate the effect of the self-assessment on the writing performance of a sample of Iranian EFL learners the quantitative analysis of data was conducted. The computer package SPSS was implemented to analyze the collected data statistically. Descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and etc were computed. Before and after the treatment independent samples t-test was implemented to reveal if there were any significant differences in the mean scores between the experimental and control groups on the pre-test and post-test of the self-reporting questionnaire (SRQ). For statistical analysis, the alpha level of significance 0.05 of confidence was set.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Comparing subjects' homogeneousness in both groups before the treatment

In order to check whether two experimental and control groups are homogenous in terms of writing performance before the treatment, independent sample t-test was used and results obtained from the data analysis are presented in the table 4.12.

Table 4.1.2 Independent T-Test to Compare Subjects' Homogeneousness in both Groups before the Treatment

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	sig
Experimental Group	25	14.35	1.454	-1.059	35.747	0.297
Control Group	23	13.74	2.388			

By considering significant level obtained from the data analysis that is equal to 0.297 and its comparison at 0.05 level with 95% confidence it is concluded that selected groups for the experiment in both experimental and control groups in terms of knowledge of writing skill are statistically equal, i.e. there are no statistically significant differences between subjects' writing performance in both groups before the experiment. So, two groups are homogeneous.

4.1.3 Results Obtained about the Hypotheses of the Study

This part provides a discussion of the hypotheses and questions proposed in the study in the light of the results obtained from the analysis of the data.

4.1.4 The First Hypothesis

There are not statistically significant differences between the mean scores of experimental group and control group on writing performance after the treatment.

In this hypothesis in order to compare two instructional method with each other and deleting of the factors which may have negative influence on the conclusion, first difference between subjects' score in pre-test and post-test is obtained, then by using independent t-test two experimental and control groups are compared with each other.

Table 4.1.5 Independent T-Test to Compare Subjects' Writing Performance of both Groups after the Treatment (SRQ)

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig
Experimental Group	25	21.35	5.122	-4.829	41.103	0.000
Control Group	23	15.41	3.261			

By considering significant level obtained from the data analysis that is equal to 0.000 and its comparison at 0.05 level with 95% confidence it is concluded that there are statistically significant differences between subjects' writing performance in both experimental and control groups after the treatment. By considering mean scores presented in the above table, it is observed that the mean score of the subjects in the experimental group is higher than the mean score of the subjects in the control group. So, the second hypothesis is rejected.

4.1.6 The Second Hypothesis

Self-assessment has positive effect on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill.

In order to check this hypothesis only experimental group is considered and by using paired t-test the scores of the subjects' writing skill before and after the experiment are compared with each other.

Table 4.1.7 Descriptive and Deductive Statistic of Comparison of the Subjects' Writing Skill Score before and after the Experiment

	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	d.f	Sig
Before the experiment	14.35	1.454	-20.842	24	0.000
After the experiment	35.70	4.705			

By considering significant level obtained from the data analysis that is equal to 0.000 and its comparison at 0.05 level (t= - 20.842 and p< 0.05) with 95% confidence it is concluded that this treatment has influence on subjects' writing skill, so by considering mean scores presented in the above table, it is observed that the writing skill of the subjects in the experimental group is better after the treatment than their writing skill before the treatment. So, the second hypothesis is accepted.

4.1.8 The Third Hypothesis
Self-assessment has positive effect on Iranian EFL learners' motivation.
In order to check this hypothesis only experimental group is considered and by using paired t-test the motivation scores of the subjects before and after the experiment are compared with each other.
Table 4.1.9 Descriptive and Deductive Statistic of Comparison of the Subjects' Motivation Score before and after the Experiment

A	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	d.f	sig
Before the experiment	111.720	5.128	-16.262	24	0.000
After the experiment	130.560	2.770			

By considering significant level obtained from the data analysis that is equal to 0.000 and its comparison at 0.05 level (t= -16.262 and p< 0.05) with 95% confidence it is concluded that this treatment has influence on subjects' motivation, so by considering mean scores presented in the above table, it is observed that the motivation of the subjects in the experimental group is higher after the treatment than their motivation before the treatment. So, the third hypothesis is accepted.

4.2 Discussion
As it was revealed from the results of the data analysis, writing skill of the subjects in the experimental group improved after performing the treatment. It can be concluded that using self-assessment for evaluating learners' writing ability is fruitful because it gives the opportunity to the learners to have more concentration on their writing and develop it during the time. Because of the chance given to the subjects to correct their own writing they can find their weaknesses and improve them. Results of this study also show that writing skill of the subjects in the experimental group have more improvement after the treatment because they have time and they are motivated to identify and practice their errors and do not repeat them in the next writing assignments.

5. Conclusion
5.1 Summary of the Result
This chapter is summarized in the following statements:
As it is revealed from the results of data analysis English writing skill of the Iranian EFL learners was poor before the experiment. The mean scores of their writing skill were 14.35 and 13.74 for experimental group and control group respectively. Results show that writing skill of the subjects in the experimental group was better than the writing skill of the subjects in the control group after the treatment. The mean score of the experimental group in the post administration of the writing test was 35.70 in comparison with the control group which its mean score was 29.15 after the treatment.

5.2 Summary of the main findings
The following results were obtained from the data analysis:
As it is clear from the results of data analysis English writing of the Iranian EFL learners was poor before conducting the study. The mean scores of their writing performance were 14.35 and 13.74 for experimental group and control group respectively before the experiment. Results indicate that experimental group outperformed the control group after conducting the experiment. The mean score of the experimental group in the post administration of the writing test was 35.70 in comparison with control group which its mean score was 29.15 after the treatment.

5.3 Implication of the Study
This study contributes new knowledge on improving Iranian EFL learners' writing skill. It may also be useful to EFL learners because it can help them to learn more about their own strengths and weaknesses in writing, and it may help them to show feedback to their own writing and improve it. It can also be significant for teachers because it may help them to develop their teaching and assessment strategies by discovering advantages of self-assessment technique in writing courses. Another implication of this study for teachers is that they can implement it in their classes to develop writing skill of their learners. To the researcher's knowledge, implication of the present study can be increased because little research has been conducted to investigate using of self-assessment in Iranian EFL writing classes. It may also motivate the researchers to do study in the field of writing and its relation with assessment especially self-assessment technique.

5.4 Limitations
One of the limitations of the present study is the small number of subjects involved in this study n= (48). The participants of the present study were female learners; other research could be conducted with both genders. It also only has been conducted on intermediate EFL learners; so for other studies the researcher can conduct the research by using learners with different educational levels. This study just considered the learners studying

English at institute but other studies could be conducted to investigate language learners studying English in universities as their academic major. Doing study just by one gender makes the generalization of the findings of data analysis rather risky. This study suggests that further research could be conducted to take into consideration the factors of age and gender and their role in relation with using self-assessment method and its linking with evaluation.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research
1. Further research is necessary to investigate the influence of using self-assessment on developing Iranian EFL learners' motivation towards improving different language skills.
2. Other research could be done to investigate the influence of using self-assessment on Iranian EFL learners' other language skills.
3. The influence of self-assessment on evaluating Iranian EFL learners' language learning could be done electronically in another research.
4. Further study is needed to investigate the disadvantages of implementing self-assessment technique in Iranian context.
5. Investigating the effects of using self-assessment on improving learners' reflection skills.
6. Conducting this research on the learners with different educational level.
7. More research is needed to investigate the influence of using self-assessment on developing Iranian EFL learners' self-confidence.

5.6 Conclusions
Self-assessment as a complementary to traditional method of assessment influence Iranian EFL learners' English writing skill by focus on writing processes. Using self-assessment is useful for Iranian EFL learners and its introduction is helpful for teaching writing skill. The self-assessment method could be used as an advantageous tool for assessing and learning writing skill.

As can be seen from the results of this study there is a positive relation between the self-assessment and writing of the learners because using self-assessment improve learners writing skill. It is revealed from data analysis that using self-assessment to evaluate learners also make them more motivated to learn English. Using self-assessment strategy makes the class more learner-center and increase the cooperation between the teacher and the learners.

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