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The Effect of Portfolio Assessment on Second Language Writing Self-Regulation of Iranian EFL Students

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ABSTRACT

As an attempt to shed more light on the effectiveness of alternative assessment in second language (L2) writing, the present study sought to investigate the effect of portfolio assessment on L2 writing self-regulation of intermediate Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. To this end, a number of 48 Iranian intermediate EFL students from two intact classes in a language institute were recruited as the participants in this research. The two classes were randomly assigned to an experimental group (N = 22) and a control group (N = 26). The experimental group were instructed through the use of portfolio assessment in their writing instruction, whereas the control group underwent the traditional writing instruction. The L2 writing self-regulation scale was administered as both pre-test and post-test to collect the data. The results of ANCOVA analysis demonstrated that the learners of the experimental group performed better than those of control group in L2 writing self-regulation, revealing that the use of portfolio assessment in EFL writing instruction was significantly effective in improving the writing self-regulation of the participants. The findings have some implications for instruction and assessment of EFL writing.

Keywords: *Portfolio Assessment, Alternative Assessment, Writing Self-Regulation, EFL*

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1. Introduction

Writing educators in foreign language education have traditionally focused on cognitive dimensions of writing ability. Nevertheless, the current approaches consider writing not only just as a product but also as a "social and cultural act" (Weigle, 2002, p. 19). From this perspective, learning writing competencies is not equal to learning just vocabulary and grammar. This kind of change of orientation has legitimized the shift away from positivist, decontextualized, one-shot, product-oriented tests towards contextualized, process-oriented, and learning-centered assessment procedures such as self-and peer-assessment, journals, portfolios, and conferences that are "more authentic in their elicitation of meaningful communication" (Brown, 2001, p. 405).

In line with recent developments in applied linguistics which highlight learner-centered approaches and the significance of authentic communication, portfolio is grounded in the social constructivism theory

and experiential learning in which learners write, edit and think on their written tasks (Kolb, 1984). Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000) argue that "portfolios provide a broader measure of what students can do because they replace the timed writing context, which has long been claimed to be particularly discriminatory against nonnative writers" (p. 61). Portfolio is generally considered as "a purposeful collection of students' works that demonstrates to students and others their efforts, progress, and achievement in given areas" (Genesee & Upshur, 1996, p. 99).

Portfolio is considered as one of the popular procedures in alternative assessment, grounded in the framework of communicative language teaching (Brown, 2004; Brown & Hudson, 1998). As far as foreign language teaching is concerned, portfolio refers to an alternative assessment instrument employed not only to offer opportunities to learning language in a more authentic way but also to assess learning progress of the language learners (Delett,

Barnhardt & Kevorkian, 2001). As Hyland (2003) stated, in EFL writing situations, portfolios act as a reaction against the dominance of testing paradigm in which learners used to produce one-shot drafts of writing without opportunities of topic selection, revision, or receiving feedback. Hyland furthered that "portfolio evaluation reflects the practice of most writing courses where students use readings and other sources of information as a basis for writing and revise and resubmit their assignments after receiving feedback from teachers or peers" (p. 233). Generally, it is argued that while preparing portfolios, learning is enhanced as learners are encouraged to think on their learning process, recognize needs, and get motivated to learn more (Tiwari & Tang, 2003). The general consensus is that the use of portfolio assessment in classroom has the potential to enhance writing competencies because it is more formative and process-oriented as opposed to summative and product-oriented approaches which just focus on final drafts of the essays (Lam & Lee, 2010). Moreover, it is argued that portfolio assessment not fosters only linguistic performance but also improves affective factors of the L2 learners (Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000).

Additionally, in line with process-oriented writing approach, portfolio-based writing instruction emphasizes the process of writing and the sequence of drafts rather than the end-point product of the complete essay. Departed from the traditional product-oriented writing approach, the process-oriented approach is argued to have provided a series of 'prescribed' principles, which have been employed by majority of educators engaged in teaching writing in both L1 and L2 setting (Raimes, 1983; Tsui and Ng, 2000). One key characteristics of the process approach is the fact that it motivates learners to show their own feelings during writing as well as to get involved in a more meaningful learning through rewriting and redrafting (Casanave, 2012; Silva & Matsuda, 2013). The defining characteristics of portfolio writing consist of collection, selection, reflection and delayed evaluation (Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000). Rooted in constructivism, portfolio-based writing instruction not only improves learners' basic writing competencies such as brainstorming, redrafting, and revision, but it also helps writers to become more responsible, autonomous and self-regulated during the writing process (Belanoff &

Dickson, 1991; Lam, 2014, 2015; Weigle, 2002).

In spite of the potential advantages associated with portfolios, the use of portfolio assessment has not enjoyed much popularity in the EFL context of Iran. More specifically, as far as L2 writing is concerned, Iranian EFL learners are usually evaluated in terms of their performance on the summative writing tasks which are typically reported in numerical values (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010). However, it is argued that portfolio assessment is likely to provide a more accurate appraisal of students' writing competencies than the scores of summative timed writing essays (Hedge, 2000). Moreover, portfolio assessment provides the teachers and learners with regular feedback which enhance the learning quality (Dysthe, 2008). This formative and ongoing evaluation nature of portfolio assessment has not been widely investigated in EFL classrooms (Lam & Lee, 2010). Furthermore, despite the general assertions made in favor of portfolios, some scholars maintain that further research evidence is required in order to verify the beneficial role of portfolios in writing classrooms (Hamp-Lyons, 1996, 2006). The existing body of literature investigating the advantages of portfolio assessment in writing classrooms has also concentrated on the effects of portfolios on L2 writing affective variables such as writing motivation, sense of ownership, and writing anxiety (Hirvela & Sweetland, 2005; Lam & Lee, 2010). Nevertheless, few empirical studies have ever investigated the effectiveness of portfolio-based writing instruction in fostering EFL writing self-regulation (Lam, 2013).

Overall, the effectiveness of portfolio assessment in EFL writing courses has been widely acknowledged by numerous researchers (e.g., Fox & Hartwick, 2011). However, few empirical studies have ever investigated the effect of portfolio assessment in writing courses on writing self-regulation of EFL learners. In other words, there is little research evidence with regard to how the use of portfolios in EFL writing classrooms may make learners become more autonomous and responsible in doing writing tasks (Hamp-Lyons, 2006). Therefore, as an attempt to shed more light on the effectiveness of alternative assessment in L2 writing, the present study sought to investigate the effect of portfolio



assessment on L2 writing self-regulation of intermediate Iranian EFL learners.

2. Review of Literature

As far as the use of portfolio assessment in L2 writing classrooms is concerned, numerous researchers have considered portfolio as a potentially effective tool for helping language learners to produce higher quality writing tasks (Condon & Hamp-Lyons, 1994; Lam, 2016, 2017, 2018) or have considered portfolio assessment as a viable alternative to product approach in writing instruction (Belanoff & Dickson, 1991). Although it is beyond the scope of this study to review all the studies, some more relevant studies are reviewed here. For example, Taki and Heidari (2011) examined the effect of portfolio-based writing assessment on language learning of EFL students. To this end, 40 pre-intermediate young Iranian EFL learners were employed as the study participants. The participants were randomly divided into an experimental group and a control group. As for the interventions of the study, the experimental group was required to write on five pre-determined topics from their textbook. Their writings were rated in terms of ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions of writing by two scorers. Also, the participants were provided with the opportunity to revise and edit their writings. However, the control group were required to write only once and their essays were rated only by their own teacher. Moreover, the EFL learners were required to fill out a questionnaire to uncover their perceptions on self-assessment. Findings of the study revealed that portfolio-based writing assessment had a positive impact on language learning and writing competence of the participants. It was also found that portfolio-based writing assessment fostered learners' self-assessment and the majority of learners expressed their satisfaction with portfolio assessment. In another study, Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, and Ansari (2010) examined the effect of portfolio assessment as a process-oriented assessment approach on Iranian EFL learners' writing performance. To this end, 61 EFL learners of similar writing ability were selected as the participants of this study. They were divided to an experimental group who received portfolio assessment, whereas the control group received the traditional assessment. The findings of data analysis indicated that the learners in the portfolio assessment group

outperformed those of the control group in their global writing ability and in the sub-skills of focus, elaboration, organization and vocabulary. As for the qualitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants of the study. The findings revealed that portfolio assessment could contribute to improving students' English writing performance.

In another study, Farahian and Avarzamani (2018) investigated the effectiveness of portfolio assessment on EFL writers' metacognition as well as their writing ability. To this end, sixty-nine undergraduate English major university students were randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group. The students in both groups were provided with a writing test, a Metacognitive Writing Questionnaire, and a students' attitude questionnaire as pre- and post-tests. As for the intervention of this research, the experimental group was given the particular guidelines and reflection sheets. The results indicated that the employment of portfolios significantly improved both metacognition and writing performance of the participants. Concerning the students' attitudes toward writing assessment, it was found that the students of the experimental group had positive perceptions of formative assessment and peer-assessment. The researcher finally argued that portfolios were effective for improving both assessment and metacognition in writing. Likewise, Meihami, Husseini, and Sahragard (2018) carried out a study to investigate the effect of providing corrective feedback in the form of portfolio-based writing instruction on the overall writing performance as well as its components. To this end, forty-four Iranian EFL learners participated in an EFL writing program. These participants were randomly divided into the experimental group who received the corrective feedback on their writing through the portfolio-based writing, and the control group who were instructed traditionally through receiving paper-and-pen corrective feedback on their writing. The results of the research indicated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group both in overall and componential writing ability. The justification for this superiority was related to some features of portfolio-based writing such as improving the motivation of the EFL learners to write, enhancing their autonomous learning, thinking, and awareness of their own writing process.

In another study, Roohani and Taheri (2015) investigated the effect of portfolio assessment in EFL learners' expository writing competence. This study was carried out using a quasi-experimental research design in which two writing classes, including 44 undergraduate EFL students in two universities, served as the control and experimental groups. To collect the data, expository writing tasks were administered as the pretests and posttests. As for the treatment of the study, the students of the control group were taught traditionally whereas the students of experimental group were engaged in portfolio assessment activities. The findings of the study revealed that the students of the experimental group outperformed those of the control group with regard to their expository writing ability, in general, and the subskills of focus, support, and organization in particular. However, no significant difference was found in the performance of the two groups in terms of the subskills of vocabulary and writing convention.

In a more recent study, Alam (2019) investigated the effect of employing formative portfolio assessment on students' global writing performance. The participants of this research included 40 male and female undergraduate Saudi EFL students at a University. As for the treatment of the study, formative portfolio assessment technique was implemented in the ongoing preparatory Intensive English Language course. To collect the required data, semi-structured interviews were carried out with the participants. The results of the study revealed that formative portfolio assessment fostered learning autonomy of the EFL learners by enabling them to take more control and responsibility of the learning and assessment process. Similarly, Ghoorchaei and Tavakoli (2019) carried out a study to compare teacher assessment and students' self-assessment of writing in a portfolio program among Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, learners' perceptions about self-assessment were investigated. To accomplish the objectives of this study, 30 undergraduate EFL students who were majoring in English literature were recruited as the participants of the study. The data were collected by administering a questionnaire, writing tasks, and oral interviews. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to analyze the collected data. The findings revealed that a significant difference existed between teacher's assessment and students' self-

assessment at the beginning and the end of the portfolio program. Also, the analysis of qualitative data concerning students' perceptions revealed that students had a positive attitude toward self-assessment.

With regard to the effectiveness of portfolio assessment in improving writing self-regulation, Lam (2014) argued that portfolio assessment can significantly contribute to enhancing self-regulated learning in EFL writing classrooms, and, more particularly, he developed a conceptual model of self-regulated learning within the context of writing portfolios and iterative feedback processes. In another study, Lam (2013) conducted a study to investigate the impacts of portfolio assessment on EFL pre-university learners' perceptions of writing ability, text improvement, and feedback in an academic writing classroom. He investigated two portfolio systems and employed case study as his research design and collected the data through qualitative data elicitation techniques such as semi-structured interviews, reflective journals, observations, and analysis of text revisions. Findings of his study demonstrated that EFL learners from the showcase portfolio group were less motivated to use portfolio assessment, and doubted whether portfolio assessment can enhance writing autonomy while the working portfolio group learner were more interested in the experience of portfolio assessment, and believed that employing feedback in the working portfolio system could contribute to improving writing performance. Duong (2015) carried out a study to investigate the effectiveness of the Portfolio-based Learner Autonomy Development (PLAD) model on learner autonomy and global writing performance in an EFL writing course. Moreover, participants' perceptions of the PLAD model and variables affecting their willingness or unwillingness to using the PLAD model in EFL writing classroom were investigated. To this end, thirty-five EFL students participated in the 15-week writing course. The data were collected using questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, tests, and portfolios. The findings revealed that the use of the PLAD model in the writing course significantly increased learner autonomy with regard to three components of *knowledge*, *awareness*, and *skills*. It was also revealed that the writing course significantly contributed to improving the writing performance of the participants. Also, it was found that the participants held positive attitudes toward



the PLAD model. Carrying out a study to examine self-regulation as the dependent variable, Fathi and Shirazizadeh (2019) investigated the role of doing self- and peer-assessment activities in a writing course in improving self-regulated learning of a sample of Iranian EFL learners. In so doing, 79 intermediate Iranian EFL students from three intact university classes participated in this study. Class one was assigned as the self-assessment group who were required to self-assess their writings, class two was assigned to peer-assessment group who were required to assess the writing of their peers and class three was considered as the control group in which the assessment practices were carried out by the teacher. The questionnaire of writing self-regulated learning was administered to collect the data. The results revealed that self-assessment and peer-assessment practices had a positive effect on students' level of self-regulated learning. Moreover, it was found that no statistically significant difference existed between the self-assessment and peer-assessment groups in terms of self-regulation.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

A sample of 48 female Iranian intermediate EFL learners participated in the present study. These participants were chosen from about 70 intermediate learners from two intact classes available at a language institute in Tehran, Iran. First a general English proficiency test (TOEFL, 2004) was administered. Then the learners whose scores lied one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the participants of the study. The age of the participants varied from 19 to 26 with the average age of 23.09. Afterwards, the two classes were randomly assigned to an experimental group (N = 22) who were instructed through portfolio-based writing instruction and a control group (N = 26) who were taught traditionally. The participants of the two intact classes participated in a writing program whose purpose was to develop basic writing abilities of the intermediate EFL learners.

3.2 Instruments

English Proficiency Test

In order to ensure the homogeneity of the students before starting the intervention of the study, a retired version of TOEFL (2004) was administered to the participants of the two groups. The test items included Structure and Written Expressions and

Reading Comprehension sections, each section consisting of 30 multiple choice items. The internal consistency of the test was measured using Cronbach Alpha analysis which demonstrated a relatively high-reliability index ($r = .82$) for the proficiency test.

Second Language Writing Self-regulation

This L2 writing self-regulation scale developed by Han and Hiver (2018) was administered to measure the level of writing self-regulation. SLWS contained eight items adapted from Tseng, Dörnyei and Schmitt (2006, as cited in Han & Hiver, 2018) (see Appendix) which aimed to assess the strategic effort of language learners to organize and manage their L2 writing-specific objectives and learning processes. It is a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The internal consistency of the scale, as measured by Cronbach's Alpha formula, turned out to be 0.79 in the present study.

3.3 Procedure

A session before the beginning of the treatment, a retired version of TOEFL (2004) was administered to both groups as the homogeneity test. The students (N=46) whose scores fell one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the participants of the study. During the first session, L2 writing self-regulation questionnaire was administered as the pre-test of the study in order to identify the writing self-regulation of the participants before the conduction of the treatment. As for the procedure of the writing course, the learners of both classes were required to do some written tasks in each session. More specifically, the participants of the experimental group wrote paragraphs or essays on particular topics and received feedback and comments regularly via their portfolios while the participants of control group were required to do the same written tasks without receiving regular feedback or comments by instructor. Both groups were instructed by the same instructor and the same materials were used in both classes. Various types of paragraphs and genres such as cause-and-effect, comparison and contrast, classification, and example were covered by the instructor during the course.

As for the particular instructional procedure of the experimental group, the teacher read the first draft of the learners' essays and tasks very carefully. Then he provided corrective feedback and comments on various aspects like organization,

grammar, conventions, elaboration, and focus so that the students could get aware of their strengths and weaknesses in terms of these aspects. Moreover, the participants self-assessed and thought about their writings in terms of these aspects in the classroom. Also, they could have discussion with peers or the teacher with regard to their weaknesses or the parts which needed revisions. Then the students were required to revise and redraft their writing tasks at home. They were asked to consider the corrective feedback and comments of the teacher and peers while editing their drafts. The revised drafts were re-read by the teacher and received further feedback if it was necessary. All the drafts were kept and archived by teacher as the portfolios of the students.

However, the participants of the control group received traditional assessment in which the teacher explicitly instructed the structure of the essay. The students were asked to write the same type of paragraphs and essays which were taught for the experimental group. The only difference was that these participants were not required to think about, redraft and edit their essays several times. The instructor did not keep portfolios for each student and provided corrective feedback and comments to learners only once and the learners were asked to edit their essays only according to those corrective feedbacks. Ultimately, after the completion of the course, the participants of both control and experimental groups were invited to fill out the L2 writing self-regulation questionnaire whose scores were considered as the post-test of the study.

3.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS, Version 22). Both descriptive and inferential statistical approaches were employed for the data analysis. With regard to descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviations of the scores on writing self-regulation scale were taken into consideration. As for the inferential statistics, paired-samples *t*-test and a one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were conducted in order to statistically investigate the effect of portfolio assessment in the writing course on the L2 writing self-regulation of the participants.

4. Results

With regard to the data analysis of this study, first two paired samples *t*-tests were carried out in order to trace the progress in the writing self-regulation scores of the EFL

learners in both experimental and control groups from the pre-test to the post-test. The results of paired samples *t*-tests demonstrated that there was a statistically significant increase in the mean scores of the writing self-regulation for the participants of both groups.

Table 1: Paired samples t-test for writing self-regulation scores

Groups	Pre-test		Post-test		<i>t</i>	Sig.
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Experimental	14.77	3.46	19.95	3.56	-12.67	0.00
Control	15.33	3.43	17.47	4.01	-7.11	0.00

As seen in Table 1, the increase in the writing self-regulation mean scores of the experimental group was statistically significant ($t(21) = -12.67, p < 0.01$). In the same vein, the increase in the writing self-regulation mean scores of the control group was statistically significant ($t(25) = -7.11, p < 0.01$). More specifically, the results of descriptive statistics also showed that the mean score of writing self-regulation for the experimental group was 14.77 ($SD = 3.46$) on the pre-test and this value increased to 19.95 ($SD = 3.56$) on the post-test, an increase which was statistically significant. Similarly, mean score of the writing self-regulation on the pre-test for the control group increased from 15.33 ($SD = 3.43$) to 17.47 ($SD = 4.01$) on the post-test, a change which was statistically significant.

Moreover, in order to exactly investigate the effect of portfolio assessment on L2 writing self-regulation of Iranian EFL learners, a one-way ANCOVA was carried out, with the EFL learners' writing self-regulation scores in the post-test as the dependent variable, learners' writing self-regulation scores in the pre-test as the covariate, and the group (experimental vs. control group) as the independent variable of this research. ANCOVA was conducted after checking the normality of writing self-regulation score distribution, equality of variance in the groups, and the lack of a significant interaction between the covariate (writing self-regulation scores in the pretest) and the independent variable (group/type of intervention). The normality of writing self-regulation scores, investigated by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, verified the acceptable normality level of the scores for both experimental ($F = .31, p = .310$) and control ($F = .24, p = .300$) groups. Furthermore, the Levene's test for homogeneity of variance showed that the variance was equal and there was no significant difference between the variance of both groups, ($F = 5.12, p = .426$). Additionally, it was found that the



interaction between the covariate and independent variable was not significant ($F = 30.13, p = .395$).

After ensuring that the assumptions of normality, linearity, homogeneity of variances, homogeneity of regression slopes, and reliable measurement of the covariate were not violated, ANCOVA was run.

Table 2: The results of ANCOVA for cognitive component

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Covariate (pre-test)	17.543	1	17.543	8.213	.005	.192
Between-subjects	35.152	1	35.152	17.682	.002	.283
Within-subjects	89.854	45	1.847			

As Table 2 indicates, there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups on post-test scores of L2 writing self-regulation, $F(1, 45) = 17.682, p = 0.002$, partial eta squared = 0.283), revealing that the participants of the experimental group outperformed those of control group on the post-test of writing self-regulation. These results suggest that portfolio assessment in writing instruction significantly contributed to improving L2 writing self-regulation of the students.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was set to investigate the effect of portfolio assessment on writing self-regulation of Iranian EFL students. The results obtained from the statistical analyses revealed that the portfolio-based writing course significantly contributed to the writing self-regulation of EFL students, leading to the better performance of the experimental group on the post-test of writing self-regulation. More particularly, the learners of the experimental group who were instructed based on portfolio-based instruction outperformed the learner of the control group who were instructed traditionally. This finding is partially in line with the findings of a significant number of previous studies (e.g., Alam, 2019; Farahian & Avarzamani, 2018; Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010; Meihami, Husseini, & Sahragard, 2018; Roohani & Taheri, 2015; Taki & Heidari, 2011) which verified the effectiveness of portfolio assessment in EFL writing courses. Also, the findings of the study are more directly consistent with the findings of Duong (2015) who found portfolio-based writing instruction as an effective medium to enhancing autonomous learning. The results of the present study re-echo the claims made by Lam (2014) who asserted that portfolio assessment can significantly improve self-

regulated learning in EFL writing classrooms.

As the main justification of the findings, it may be argued that portfolio assessment as a kind of learner-centered approach provided the participants with a heightened sense of engagement and agency in the writing process, therefore, they became more self-directed and self-regulated in doing their writing tasks. In other words, portfolios served as viable instruments by which the learners could gain control over their learning of how to do written tasks. The participants felt more sense of responsibility in revising their drafts according to the received feedback and comments by the instructor and felt more committed to improve the quality of their writing and produce essays with better quality than their previously archived essays. Moreover, since the students of the experimental group received further feedback, they became more aware of the assessment criteria of the teachers. As a result, they made more attempts to plan and monitor their writings in order to be able to write more effectively (Fathi, Ahmadnejad, & Yousofi, 2019; Han & Hiver, 2018). Since the participants of the experimental group received further feedback and corrective feedback, they were more able to take the control of their own learning and had more time for planning and monitoring their learning process while doing written tasks, all of which fostered their self-regulation and sense of autonomy in learning. It is argued that regular feedback develops learners' sense awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, a sense which is viewed as the essential component of learner autonomy (Benson, 2006, 2013).

Parallel with the constructivist paradigm in which formative assessment techniques are integrated into teaching and learning (Hagstorm, 2006), assessment is better to be considered as a process employed for and associated with better learning rather than a product dissociated from learning. From this perspective, portfolio assessment in writing courses can be implemented as a vehicle in which learning, teaching and assessment are integrated. Portfolio assessment can be considered as a collaborative formative process that encourages learners' motivation, confidence, and autonomy as they aspire to fulfill their writing objectives.

Put together, it can be argued that portfolio assessment may be an effective

substitute for traditional product-oriented writing approached which are still widely used in EFL educational milieus. Therefore, EFL writing educators are recommended to incorporate portfolio assessment in their writing courses so that they can provide their own learners with more corrective feedback and instructional comments. These further individual feedback and regular revisions and re-drafting of the written tasks will help learners to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses and motivate them to take the control of their learning process by further planning and monitoring, thereby improving their writing performance and writing performance. However, the successful implementation of portfolio assessment is not guaranteed unless teachers themselves are equipped with the practical knowledge and support to use portfolios in EFL classrooms. Therefore, EFL practitioners and pre-service instructors can be trained on how to employ portfolios in foreign language teaching. In addition, given the fact that some learners may think that portfolio writing is tedious, tiring, and time-consuming, and that they have some troubles doing pre-writing activities, redrafting, and rewriting processes, writing instructors should also be notified of the motivational factors and autonomous learning in order to overcome the above-mentioned obstacles.

With regard to the limitations of this study, it should be pointed out that this study was quantitative and failed to use qualitative data elicitation techniques to investigate how portfolio assessment in writing instruction could help students improve their L2 writing self-regulation. Future researchers are recommended to employ qualitative or mixed-methods research designs in order to acquire deeper understandings of the potential contribution of portfolio-based assessment to improving both writing performance and self-regulated learning for EFL learners. Also, this study can be replicated with bigger numbers of participants with various levels of proficiency levels in other EFL contexts.

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