Self-Regulation and Motivation reconsideration through Persian EFL Learners' Writing Achievement (11060301)

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ABSTRACT: *The present study serves as an attempt to shed light on any probable effect of self-regulation and motivation on the writing performance of Persian EFL language learners. To achieve the purpose, two questionnaires (on self-regulation and motivation) were employed as study tools and were distributed among 80 Persian EFL language learners. They were also required to write an essay. Analyzing the gathered data, the results revealed a strong, positive relationship between each of the variables of the study (self-regulation and motivation) and the writing performance of learners, and also between motivation and self-regulation. The study further showed that motivation is a better predictor, compared to self-regulation, of their writing performance.*

Key words: self regulation, motivation, writing achievement.

Introduction

Various theories have attempted to account for why some students are more successful than others. Phenomenologists like McCombs (1989) explore self concepts of students and observed some students capable to perform more and better than others. Attributional Theorists (like Dweck, 1986), on the other hand, focus on personal outcomes such as effort and ability. Meta-cognitive theorists like Pressesley (2000) also examine students' self regulated learning strategies and proposed some theories. Investigation of self-regulation of academic learning and performance emerged almost more than two decades ago with the purpose of answering the question of how students become masters of their own learning processes. Furthermore, as the general picture of school to date is not a satisfactory one, the concept has been accepted by policy makers, teachers, educators and parents to be of remarkable significance. With the emergence of this construct, lots of debate about school reform appeared world-wide. Policy makers nowadays approve and support the basic principles of self-regulated learning and consider school reform as one of their main goals intending to change the status of the schools. In other words, educational psychologists and policy makers seek self-regulated learners. Self-regulated learning can also be described as an active process whereby learners construct goals for learning, monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior (Paris & Paris, 2001). They are guided and constrained by their own goals and the individual characteristics of a particular learning environment. Self-regulatory activities affect individual students, their level of achievement, and the learning context. It is important, therefore, for students to learn how to learn and take control of their efforts (Wolters *et al*, 2005).

Further, Pintrich (2000) asserts that self-regulation learning (SRL) refers to the self-directive processes and self-beliefs that enable learners to transform their mental abilities, such as verbal aptitude, into an academic performance skill, such as writing. Pintrich (2000) also argues that SRL may be regarded as proactive processes that students employ to acquire academic skill, such as setting goals, selecting and deploying strategies and self-monitoring one's effectiveness, rather than as a reactive event that happens to students due to impersonal forces. Although SRL was viewed as especially important during personally

directed forms of learning, such as discovery learning, self-selected reading, or seeking information from electronic sources, it was also deemed important in social forms of learning, such as seeking help from peers, parents, and teachers. The central point, however, is whether a learner displays personal initiative, perseverance, and adaptive skill. These proactive qualities of learners stem from advantageous motivational feeling and beliefs as well as metacognitive strategies (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2007).

Besides, language learners learn a language because they want to acquire and use it to communicate with those who speak the language. They may also want to get to know the native speakers' culture and learn about the country where the language is spoken. However, what happens if a university requires students to learn a second or foreign language that the students do not wish to learn? It is obvious that students who do not want to learn the language will not be able to do well in class. Researchers believe motivation to learn is an effective factor in language learning.

Moreover, it is axiomatic that the higher the motivation, the more the effort one tends to put into learning the language and this leads to success in learning and consequently, can learn better. Gardner (1985), however, defines motivation to learn an L2 as the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity. In addition, according to Oxford & Shearin (1994), motivation should be considered as one of the main elements that determine success in developing a second language and it determines the extent of active personal involvement in L2 learning.

Further, writing in a second or foreign language is a complicated, challenging, and difficult process. This difficulty and complexity stems from the fact that writing involves discovering a theme, developing support for it, organizing, revising, and lastly editing it to ensure an effective, error-free piece of writing (Langan, 2005). Harris (2010) also rightly illuminates that almost all learners face challenges in writing. Even some of the strongest writers suffer from the most common problems including

generating content, organizing compositions, formulating goals and higher-level plans, efficiently executing mechanics, and revising text and goals.

Besides, the importance of writing in life for both children and adults has been several times admitted. Writhing is also often considered as an integral essential element of life (Swedlow, 1999). It is considered not only a means for understanding, but also a tool for learning. Because of the importance of writing in the learning process, it is a necessity to pay attention to the skill and try to remove writing problems. Besides, writing can play a significant role in improving communication and connection among members of families, communities, and nations; promotes self-expression and personal development; and allows us to gather, refine, share, and preserve knowledge and understandings (Graham et al, 2007). From the upper elementary grades forwards, writing is one of the most fundamental and powerful tools we have for learning and demonstrating what we know (Graham 2006; Prior 2006). Thus, students and adults who struggle with writing often face significant barriers in education, employment, and other life pursuits. Writing well in a second language would require more and higher cognitive skills to be able to write well.

Although several studies have been conducted in recent years on self-regulation, very few, if any, have specifically focused on exploring the relationship between self-regulation, motivation and writing. Besides, this study is significant in that it can provide valuable data to those who serve on the front line of education. The research results may serve as a guide for foreign language teachers in terms of helping them to increase their understanding of language learning from the learner's perspective and give them more insight into the advantage of self-regulation in writing and thereby assist then in enhancing students' ability to write bettering English. In addition, motivation is underappreciated in psychology generally, no doubt partly because the cognitive revolution of recent decades has induced the majority of researchers to think in cognitive rather than motivational terms. Motivation's role in self-regulation has been similarly underestimated.

All in all, the present paper serves as an attempt to address the following research questions:

1- Is there any relationship between self-regulated learning and EFL students' writing performance?

2- Is there any relationship between motivation and EFL writing performance?

3- Is there any relationship between self-regulated learning and EFL students' motivation?

4- Which of the independent variables (self-regulation and motivation) is a better predictor of learners' writing performance?

Related Review of Literature

Self regulation, motivation, and writing have been considered in a host of studies each focusing on a specific aspect. Here in this section of the study some of these studies are dealt with.

Self- regulation

Different cyclical models of self-regulation, like what propounded by Pintrich and Zimmerman, highlight the interdependence of the different sides of self-regulation. As an example, learners' berefting of confidence in their own learning ability are unlikely to use telling task strategies. Consistent with this suggestion, a host of practical studies have revealed positive correlations between self-efficacy for learning and application of effective learning strategies (Schunk and Ertmer, 2000). Schunk and Ertmer state that programs should try to increase both self-regulatory competence and self-efficacy in the performance stage, rather than addressing these issues in isolation. That is, students who enjoy self-regulatory skills are not capable to use them proficiently if they are skeptical about their learning capabilities.

In addition, Schunk and Zimmerman (1998) have pointed out that self-regulated learners are generally characterized as active participants who efficiently control their learning experiences in many different ways, including organizing and rehearsing information to be learned, and holding positive beliefs about their capabilities, the value of learning and factors that influence learning. SRL is also the ability to control and influence one's learning processes positively. The learners take personal initiative and apply powerful strategies to attain individually valued learning goals and monitor their understanding in order to detect and eliminate possible comprehension problems (Paris & Paris, 2001).

Motivation

Motivation has been defined in various ways. It is generally viewed as a process through which an individual's needs and desires are set in motion (Alexander & Murphy, 1998). Academic motivation reflects students' levels of persistence, interest in the subject matter, and academic effort (Diperna & Elliot, 1999); it is viewed as a contributer to academic success (Alexander, 2006). It is also described as a process through which individuals instigate and sustain goal-directed activity. Crookes and Schmidt, (1991, p.481) also defines motivation as the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect. In addition, Oxford and Shearin (1994), motivation should be considered as one of the main elements that determine success in developing a second language and it determines the extent of active personal involvement in L2 learning. Piaget (cited in Oxford and Shearin, 1994, p.23) says that "motivation is a built-in, unconscious striving toward more complex and differentiated development of the individuals' mental structures"

Rakes (2010) studied the influence of effort regulation as a self-regulatory skill, and intrinsic motivation on online graduate students and their levels of academic procrastination. He understood that both effort regulation and intrinsic motivation among online graduate students in this study had a significant influence on procrastination. Results of this study also indicated that as intrinsic motivation to learn and effort regulation decrease, procrastination increases. Since procrastination has a negative influence on student performance, the findings provide important information for online teachers trying to develop strategies that will improve student achievement in online courses. In addition, both effort regulation and intrinsic motivation influence procrastination behavior are characteristics that can influence by online instructors in an effort to reduce procrastination. The results of this study indicate that together, these two factors powerfully influence procrastination.

Research on the effects of academic self-regulation and motivation on learning has also revealed significant links between the two constructs (Schunk, 2005). Students with more developed self-regulatory cognitive skills are more likely to be more academically motivated and as a result learn more than others (Pintrich, 2003).

Self-Regulation and Motivation
Baumeister, et al. (1994) highlighted four main ingredients of the self-regulation process: standards, monitoring, self-regulatory strength, colloquially known as willpower, and motivation, specifically, motivation to achieve the goal or meet the standard, which in practice amounts to motivation to regulate the self. To emphasize the importance of motivation, it suffices to say that even if the standard are clear, monitoring is fully effective, and the person's resources are abundant, he or she may still fail to self-regulate due to not caring about reaching the goal. Motivation may be especially effective at substituting for willpower. Even if willpower (i.e., self-regulatory strength) has been depleted by prior acts, the person may be able to self-regulate effectively if motivation is high.

Some studies also ascertain that students who use self regulated strategies are autonomous learners and are more likely to volunteer for special projects. In other words, they are intrinsically self motivated, rely on a planned learning, and use more goal setting, planning, organizing, memorizing and self-monitoring strategies (Maxim, 2009; Zimmerman & Martinezpone, 1988).

On the other hand, Borkowski and Thrope (1994) deal with underachievers and the relation between self regulation and motivation proposing that an understanding of underachievement can be found in the failure to integrate self regulation and affect and is attributable to insensitivities, unresponsiveness placed by parents on children (p. 45).

Writing
It is an axiomatic that writing is an extremely powerful tool in our culture because it facilitates communication across distance and time, makes it possible to gather and preserve information, allows knowledge about a topic to be refined and extended, and provides a flexible medium for artistic, political, spiritual, and self-expression (Applebee, 1984; Diamond, 1999; Dust & Newell, 1989; Graham & Harris. 2000). However, even expert writers frequently lament the difficult and complex aspects of planning, composing, evaluating, and revising

(Zimmerman & Reisemberg, 1997) that are necessary for effective communication. Therefore, it is not surprising that many students, especially those with learning disabilities, experience difficulty with writing (McCutchen, 1988; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1985). This difficulty with writing is much more salient in EFL contexts like Iran. In these contexts less attention is paid to writing skill and more on reading and speaking skills.

Self-regulation and Writing Skill
As to the relationship between self regulation and writing, self-regulation is thought to enhance writing performance in two ways. First, self-regulatory mechanisms, such as planning, monitoring, evaluating, and revising, provide building blocks or subroutines that can be assembled along with other subroutines, such as procedures for producing text, to form a program for effectively accomplishing the writing task (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1985). Second, the use of these mechanisms may act as change-inducing agents, leading to strategic adjustments in writing behavior (Zimmerman & Riesemberg, 1997).

Lenski (1998) also showed that writing involves planning, translating, executing, evaluating, and revising. The steps on planning, translating, and executing reflects approach to learning since it involves generating ideas, converting ideas into words, and writing the content. The self-regulation part is shown in the evaluation and revision where the writer judges what he/she though about and correcting the inadequacy in the work.

To investigate the self-regulated strategy development in writing, Harris, Santagelo, and Graham (2008) demonstrated SRSD is an effective instructional model for students who struggle with writing, as well as those who do not. "SRSD leads to significant and meaningful improvements in students' writing knowledge, skills, motivation, and self-regulation because they learn strategies that help them independently manage the writing process" (Graham & Harris, 2003, pp.323-344; Harris & Graham, 2000, pp. 251-262). They have emphasized throughout this article, the efficiency associated with using SRSD. It is largely attributable to the thoughtful, pragmatic blending of research from multiple theoretical perspectives in the original development and

dynamic evolution of the model. Achieving positive outcomes with SRSD requires teachers to devote time and effort toward learning the model and implementing it with integrity.

Lastly, the last quarter of the 20th century provided opportunity for extensive research in writing with the appearance of new theoretical models of writing. The majority of these models describe writing as a difficult and demanding task. The process of writing a text comprises components that are employed recursively. Coordinating these processes in a way that results in a text that meets the demands of the writing task requires extensive attention control and self-regulation. Skilled writing as a self-planned, self-initiated, and self-sustained activity involves high level of self-regulation (Graham & Harris, 1997). Students, who learn to use self-regulated learning strategies in writing, increase their ability to tackle better with writing problems and can plan, monitor, control, and regulate themselves during the writing process.

Methodology
Participants
Altogether, 80 participants, ranged from 20 to 36 in age, studying in a language institute in one of language institutes in Shahrekord, Iran, took part in the study. They were taking advanced-level classes of English, having been learning English language for at least 7 years, and were selected based on their availability to the author. The point with regard to them is that although the participants were both male and female, the sex of the participants was not considered in the research. Finally, the main reason for selecting advanced-level language learners for this study was that learners of this level of proficiency deal with writing skill more frequently than beginning and intermediate learners. In other words, the majority of courses offered to them at this level require the learners to write. Besides, advanced-level learners are more familiar with writing skill and also the approaches and methods for writing effectively.

Instruments
On the whole, two instruments were used in this study: Language-Learners' Motivation and Self-Regulating Questionnaire (LLMSQ), and Motivation and Attitude Questionnaire utilized to measure the motivation

and attitude of the participants with regard to writing skill.

As to the LIMSQ, it consists of a total of 36 items in a four-choice Likert format as shown in Appendix A. The learners were required to read the items and then select the choice that was most applied to him/her. To develop the questionnaire, scads of books and papers about both the variables of the study and the approaches of questionnaire development were studied by the author and some professors and experts were also consulted with. Besides, for ensuring about the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted on 40 advanced-level language learners who were not included in the study sample. The reported reliability was about .78. Lastly, as to the validity of the questionnaire, it was looked into by some professors and was approved by them to be valid for the study purpose. The professors were 3 Iranian, male, instructors teaching English at Shahrekord state university and have had more than fifteen years experience in their job.

The second questionnaire used in this study was a five-choice Likert-format questionnaire consisting of 36 items intended to measure the participants' motivation and attitude (See Appendix B). The items of the questionnaire, all of which were positive items, were developed and validated by Lain (1987) at the University of Jyvaskyla, Finland. The possible range of scores on this questionnaire was 36 to 180. Higher scores indicated higher levels of motivation and positive attitude. This questionnaire included two major categories of items. The first category, including items 1 to 20, measured students' direction of motivation, intensity of motivation, instrumental motivation, integrative motivation and cognitive orientation. The second major category covering items from number 21 to 36 measured students' attitudes including attitude toward academic language learning, attitude toward target language culture, attitude toward English language and attitude toward teaching method. Finally, the reliability of the questionnaire was calculated through Cronbach alpha and turned out to be almost .81. Besides, for its validity the same procedure as for the LIMSQ was taken.

Materials
With regard to the material employed in this study (writing essay), the participants were asked to write an essay to describe their city and then

compare it with another city that they liked. They were asked to explain how and why the two cities were different or similar. They had 60 minutes, at maximum, to write their text. To ensure scorer reliability, three teachers scored the essays and the average of the three independent scorings was taken to represents the students' score.

Procedure
First, the LIMSQ was distributed among the participants. They were told that they would have been given enough time to fill it out (the original intended time limit was half an hour). Having finished the LIMSQ, they were asked to fill out the Motivation and Attitude Questionnaire (again by giving sufficient time, about half an hour) and finally, they wrote their essays (within an hour). The point with regard to the writing task was that the author of the study developed a writing scheme for correcting the learners' performance. The scheme involved a series of criteria for assessing different aspects of writing such as: grammar, cohesion, coherence, vocabulary, etc.

Having gathered the required data, the author of the study first ran three correlation analyses to measure the degree of relationships between self-regulation, motivation, and writing performance. Then, in the case of proving any relationship between the variables and in order to pinpoint which of the independent variables is a better predictor of the dependent variable, a regression analysis was run too.

Results and discussion
Having gathered and analyzed the collected data, the results of the study are now brought in this section of the study. To do so, the research questions of the study (mentioned in the first section) are one by one repeated and then the tables of each of them are presented and illuminated.

Relationship between self-regulation and writing performance
The first research question of the study deals with the any probable relationship between self-regulation (as an independent variable) and the learners' writing performance. Table 1 represents the main findings for this question.

Table 1
Correlation Between SRL and Writing

		motivation	Writing
Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	1	.788[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80
writing	Pearson Correlation	.788[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

As the table reveals, firstly, there is a strong positive relationship between the two mentioned variables (r = .78). Secondly, a significant difference is observed between the learners' self regulation and their performance on writing skills (p= .00 < .5). It indicates that language learners with high self-regulation abilities performed high on the essay writing task, while the learners with lower self-regulatory capabilities performed low on the same writing task.

Relationship between motivation and writing performance
Regarding the second research question of the study which is about the correlation between the other independent variable of the study, that is motivation, and the writing performance of learners, Table 2 clearly explains its answer.

Table 2
Correlation Between Motivation and Writing

		motivation	Writing
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.89
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.01
	N	80	80
writing	Pearson Correlation	.89	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.01	
	N	80	80

As it is conspicuous from this table, firstly, like the previous case,

there is strong positive relationship between the motivation and the writing performance of learners; that is, the higher the level of learners' motivation, the higher their writing performance (r = .89). And secondly, since the reported p value is less than .05 (p = .01), it can be inferred that the two variables differ significantly from each other.

Relationship between self-regulation and motivation

Finally, with regard to the relationship between self-regulation and motivation of the language learners, Table 3 reveals the results of correlation analysis ran for this question.

Table 3
Correlation Between SRL and Motivation

		Self-regulation	Motivation
Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	1	.71
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	80	80
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.71	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	
	N	80	80

The table indicates that there is an almost positive relationship between the two independent variables of the study (r = .71). It also implies a significant difference between the two variables (p = .00).

The predictability effect of self-regulation and motivation on writing performance

Having proved the existence of correlation between each of the independent variables (self-regulation and motivation) and the dependent variable of the study (writing performance), now it is time to see which of the independent variables has the potential to predict the performance of learners on their writings. With regard to this question, Table 4.4 shows the model summary findings of regression for it.

Table 4
Model Summary of the Variables

Mode l	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.915	.71	-.70	1.72

As the table reveals, 71 percent of the variance in the learners' writing performance is explained by the combination of the two independent variables namely self-regulation and motivation (R^2 = .71). Besides, to see whether the coefficient of the regression demonstrated by

R^2 is significant or not, Table 5 are brought.

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Table 5 *ANOVA Results of SRL and Motivation Related to Writing*					
1	Regression	97.0	2	48.5	.513	.001
	Residual	7191.5	76	94.6		
	Total	7288.5	78			

The tables demonstrates that the coefficient reported by R^2 is significant (Sig. = .001). Now to pinpoint which independent variable is a better predictor of writing performance, Table 6 needs to be examined.

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Table 6 *Coefficients of SRL and Motivation*					
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	74.566	8.207		9.085	.000
	motivation	.053	.136	.47	.390	.02
	self-regulation	.103	.102	.21	-1.010	.04

The table indicates that of the two independent variables, it is motivation that is a better predictor of the writing achievement of learners. In other words, by examining the Beta value reported in the same table it can be inferred that with regard to motivation, one standard deviation unit change in the score for motivation leads to .47 unit of change in the writing score. And as to the self-regulation variable, this unit of change would be .21. Therefore, motivation can better predict the writing performance of language learners.

Discussion

The results of the study revealed some interesting findings discussed in detail in this section of the study.

The first finding of the study was the existence of a strong, positive relationship between self-regulation and writing skill of learners. As to other related studies which examined the same issue, Harris (1998) and also Glasser and Brunstein (2007) concluded in their studies that there is a significant and meaningful relationship between self-regulation and writing performance. Moreover, Hammann (2005) studying the relationship between writing belief, self-regulatory behaviors, and epistemology beliefs of pre-service teachers in academic writing tasks concluded that both knowledge and regulation of cognition were positively related to writing enjoyment, and knowledge of cognition was negatively related to beliefs of ability as a fixed entity. Enjoyment of writing was related to learnability and self-assessment. It may be that students who are more self-regulated during writing also believe they can learn to revamp their writing skills. It may be, however, that students who believe writing is learnable will exert the effort to self-regulate during writing. Student beliefs and feelings about learning and writing play a significant and complicated role in their self-regulation behaviors. Finally, Nuckles, Hubner, and Renkl (2009) proved a significant relationship between the regulation ability of learners and their ability in writing protocols. Finally, Alsamadani (2010) also conducted a study on the same issue in an Arabic context and finally concluded that self-regulation and writing are highly correlated. In contrast, Graham and Harris (2000) found no significant difference between these two variables.

Besides, the study also showed that there is a strong relationship between motivation and writing. This finding accords with the study achieved by Fazel and Ahmadi (2011) in which a strong correlation has been found between the two types of motivation that is, instrumental and integrative, and the writing proficiency. Besides, Gottfried (1990) in another study stated that students who are more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated perform better, and students who are not motivated to engage in learning are unlikely to succeed in different aspects of language learning including writing skill. In addition, higher academic standards make it even more important to motivate even the disengaged and discouraged learners (Brewster & Fager, 2000).

The third finding obtained from the current study was that the learners with high motivation also enjoy high self-regulation abilities and those enjoying low motivation are low self-regulated. As it was mentioned in the literature review section of the study, Baumeister, et al. (1994) cited four main ingredients of the self-regulation process one of which was motivation, specifically, motivation to achieve the goal or meet the standard, which in practice amounts to motivation to regulate the self. They further highlighted the important role of motivation by accounting for that even if the standard are clear, monitoring is fully effective, and the person's resources are abundant, he or she may still fail to self-regulate due to not caring about reaching the goal. Borkowski and Thrope (1994) also deal with the relation between self regulation and motivation concluding that an understanding of underachievement can be found in the failure to integrate self regulation and affect and is attributable to insensitivities, unresponsiveness placed by parents on children (p. 45). Rakes (2010) also achieved a research examining the relationship of motivation and self-regulation. He understood that both effort regulation and intrinsic motivation among online graduate students in this study had a significant influence on procrastination. In another study by Zimmerman (2008) self-regulation and motivation was also investigated. The result showed that students in the training group reported significantly greater increases in time management skill and self-reflection on their learning than those in the control group. Students in the self-regulation training condition also displayed increases in several measures of motivation. Their willingness to exert effort, their task interest, their learning-goal orientation, and their perceptions of self-efficacy all increased after training, and their feelings of helplessness declined significantly. Students in the self-regulation training group displayed significantly greater gains in math achievement than students in control group. Interestingly, all students in the self-regulation training group passes an entrance exam for admittance to a higher level school, which was an increase of 50% compared to pass cohort groups of students.

All in all, it can be inferred that motivation is fundamental to life, and indeed most likely the self as agent evolved to facilitate the goal pursuits associated with crucial motivations. However, in order to manage contradictions between inner motivations and between external

constraints and inner motives, self-regulation is a vital function of the agented self.

Conclusion

The current study was, in fact, an attempt to determine whether there is any relationship between the two independent variables of self-regulation and motivation and the writing performance of Persian EFL language learners. To put another way, the study tried to understand if the degree of self-regulation and also the motivation level of language learners bear any impact on the writing achievement of language learners or not. To achieve the purpose, three above-cited instruments (two questionnaires and a writing essay) were distributed among eighty advanced language learners. The analysis of the gathered data led to the following conclusions: First, there is a strong, positive relationship between the self-regulation of language learners and their writing performance Second, there is also a strong, positive relationship between the degree of motivation of language learners and their performance in writing achievements. The existence of a strong, positive relationship between self-regulation and motivation was the third finding of the study. And finally, of the two intended independent variables, motivation is a better predictor of the learners' writing achievement.

Accordingly, the study also can culminate in some implications. First, self-regulation is important for EFL writing teachers themselves. EFL teachers, therefore, continually need to reflect upon their teaching strategies and activities. Therefore, they must monitor and evaluate their own teaching and ensure that their objectives and expectations are met. Second, teachers while teaching need to take into account the significant role of learners' motivation. In other words, they should try hard to attract the attention to and make them interested in the aspect of language they are teaching. The other implication is that teachers should also consider the point that the more self-regulated the learners, the more is the likelihood that the learners achieve higher acceptable functions they are assigned. And lastly, the study also suggests that L2 writing instruction should help students build proper writing schemata and regulate their writing processes.

Finally, with regard to the limitations of the study, it suffers from a set of restrictions. First of all, the study was achieved with a small number of participants and also just with advanced language learners. Therefore, to reach much more reliable findings, the need for replicating the same study with larger participants from a range of different proficiency levels is strongly felt. Second, it was just the writing skill focused on in this paper. However, in order to get wiser to the roles of self-regulation in different language learning aspects, other skills and aspects of language like reading, listening, structure, etc. should be studied in further studies.

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Appendix A
Language-Learners' Motivation and Self-regulating Questionnaire
(LLMSQ)

Self-regulation questionnaire

Dear participants:

  Please read the following items and then mark the choice which best matches your perspectives. It should be remembered that the results of your purposes is just for research, and all your choices will be kept secret. In the end, the author expresses her heartfelt thanks to you for your honest and sincere cooperation.

Gender: Male ◯ Female ◯
Age: ………………..
The questions have a five-point answering scale. The numbers mean:

A lot like me **like me**   **A little like me** **Not like me**

1	I want to find out something new	1	2	3	4
2	I am certain I can understand the ideas taught in this course	1	2	3	4
3	When I am studying, I stop once in a while and go over what I have studied	1	2	3	4
4	When I study for a test, I try to remember as many facts as I can	1	2	3	4
5	When I study, I put important ideas into my own words.	1	2	3	4
6	I want to do as little as possible for this course	1	2	3	4
7	I am so nervous during the test that I forgot those facts I have learned.	1	2	3	4
8	In studying, I put together the information from class and from the book	1	2	3	4
9	I asked myself questions to make sure I know the material I have been studying	1	2	3	4
10	When my teacher does not ask us to do practice exercises and to answers end-of-lesson questions, I work on them myself	1	2	3	4
11	I want others to think I am smart	1	2	3	4
12	I start studying several days before exam, and I pace myself	1	2	3	4
13	I am sure I can do a good job on the tasks assigned for this class	1	2	3	4

14	I try to connect the things I am studying with what I already know	1	2	3	4
15	When studying, I copy my notes or important parts again to help me remember	1	2	3	4
16	No matter whether the materials for this course are interesting or not, I keep on studying until I finish	1	2	3	4
17	When I study, I think about the main ideas of what I just study	1	2	3	4
18	I make plans for study	1	2	3	4
19	It is important for me to learn what is being taught in this class	1	2	3	4
20	I know that I will be able to learn the material for this class	1	2	3	4
21	I worry a great deal before taking tests	1	2	3	4
22	It is very important for me to do better than other students	1	2	3	4
23	I want to learn as much as possible	1	2	3	4
24	I think what I am learning in this class is useful	1	2	3	4
25	When I study, I try to make everything fit together	1	2	3	4
26	For this course, I want to do things as easy as possible	1	2	3	4
27	When I study, I say or write the important facts or words over and over	1	2	3	4
28	I am willing to spend lots of time in studying the material for this course	1	2	3	4
29	I feel involved in my work for this course	1	2	3	4
30	When studying, I know where I don't understand	1	2	3	4
31	I think about not doing well when I am taking a test	1	2	3	4
32	After studying for a while, I decide what the main ideas are	1	2	3	4
33	I just want to do what my teacher supposes me to and get it done	1	2	3	4
34	When I know there will be an exam two weeks later, I study according to my plan	1	2	3	4
35	It is important for me to understand English	1	2	3	4
36	It is very important that the teacher thinks I do a good job	1	2	3	4

（1）   (2)   (3)   (4)

Appendix B

Dear student,

Please indicate the degree of your agreement with the following statements through choosing one alternative ((1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) neutral, (4) disagree, (5) strongly disagree) by putting a tick in the appropriate box.

1	I like English more than other	1	2	3	4	5
2	I would like to have more personal practice in English course.	1	2	3	4	5
3	If I saw a tourist on the street, I would like to speak English	1	2	3	4	5
4	I would like to have more English spoken	1	2	3	4	5
5	In my English study, I get through hard work	1	2	3	4	5
6	Doing my homework, I carry on till I really know it	1	2	3	4	5
7	I work more with my English studies than with other subjects	1	2	3	4	5
8	If there is a panel discussion on the radio in English, I just do my best to understand it	1	2	3	4	5
9	Learning English is more important to me just because I want to get a good job	1	2	3	4	5
10	other people think more highly of me if I know a foreign language	1	2	3	4	5
11	Learning of foreign language makes me a more knowledgeable person	1	2	3	4	5
12	I would like to learn English because I would like to teach it	1	2	3	4	5
13	Learning English is important to me because I can then get in contact with English speaking people	1	2	3	4	5
14	I would like to learn English because I would like to be like a native speaker	1	2	3	4	5
15	I learn English because I would like to join the English people	1	2	3	4	5
16	I learn English because I would like to get familiar with English culture	1	2	3	4	5
17	I would like to learn English perfectly	1	2	3	4	5
18	I am curious about English	1	2	3	4	5
19	I would choose to learn English even it weren't compulsory	1	2	3	4	5
20	I feel learning a foreign language truly help me to develop my real self	1	2	3	4	5
21	I think Academic learning is pleasant	1	2	3	4	5
22	I think that the number of Academic years should be increased	1	2	3	4	5

23	If I could choose, I would take more courses in English	1	2	3	4	5
24	I think English courses in university should be increased	1	2	3	4	5
25	I love English/American music	1	2	3	4	5
26	It is important to know life in the English speaking world	1	2	3	4	5
27	I found the English way of life exciting	1	2	3	4	5
28	I think one should know English history and culture	1	2	3	4	5
29	I love the sound of English	1	2	3	4	5
30	I think English is an exciting language	1	2	3	4	5
31	I think it's useful to know the inner structure of English	1	2	3	4	5
32	I would really like to understand how the English language works	1	2	3	4	5
33	I love the way English is thought to us	1	2	3	4	5
34	I feel I can express myself in the English lessons	1	2	3	4	5
35	I find our English teaching methods useful	1	2	3	4	5
36	I find our English teaching methods boring	1	2	3	4	5

Biographical Notes

Kamal Heidari Soureshjani holds an M.A. in TEFL from Shiraz University, Iran. He has published scads of papers on TEFL-related areas including: SLA, applied linguistics, language testing, and language skills.