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Investigating the Effect of Screencast-based Ipsative Assessment on EFL Students' Writing Performance, Writing Self-regulation and Writing Self-efficacy

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Abstract

Screencast technology in English writing assessment offers personalized, detailed feedback, but not dialogic. However, integrating it with ipsative assessment principles can sustain a dialogue between teachers and learners on students' writing development**.** This study investigated the impact of Screencast-based Ipsative Assessment (SIA) on developing students' writing skills, writing self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy in an Iranian foreign language-teaching context. Screencast technology recorded teachers' feedback and facilitated students' access to and reflection on their previous works. A quantitative research design was used to collect and analyze the data to examine the effect of this approach on the development of the participants' writing skills, writing self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy. The findings revealed that SIA enhanced participants' writing performance and made them self-regulated and self-efficacious in their writing skills. The findings suggest that English teachers can utilize screencast technology for precise, detailed, ipsative feedback in an IA regime. SIA procedures can promote student self-assessment and facilitate teacher and writer communication. This interaction allows them to clarify doubts and strategize their next steps in the writing journey.

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Introduction

Ipsative assessment evaluates learners' progress by comparing previous and current tasks (Hughes, 2011). The learner's previous work is the point of departure for judgment concerning her progress or lack thereof (Hughes, 2011). This assessment approach is similar to formative assessment since it assesses for learning (Hughes, 2011) and improves engagement, intrinsic motivation, and autonomy in English students (Asadi et al., 2017; Malecka & Boud, 2021; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). However, IA differs from formative assessment as it focuses on tracking student progress or lack of progress (Hughes, 2011). In ipsative assessment, ongoing comparison is crucial because it prompts learners to reflect on their performances and dialogue with the teacher, peers, or themselves (Hughes, 2014; Malecka et al., 2021). Its emerging literature indicates that ipsative assessment is a powerful tool that not only nurtures students' self-regulation but also enhances their self-efficacy (McIntyre, 2017) and self-assessment skills (Asadi et al., 2017; Boucher et al., 2017; Tilly & Roach, 2017; Zhou & Zhang, 2017). These studies demonstrate that ipsative assessment motivates students to adopt a proactive approach toward feedback and actively participate in its processes (Hughes, 2014).

However, ipsative assessment has two severe limitations. First, implementing its principles in the current fragmented curricula is challenging as the modules are independent and non-sequential unless the assessments are coherent and interconnected (Hughes, 2014; Hughes et al., 2015). The feedback often does not guide students to the next developmental steps due to a lack of coherence in subsequent tasks (Hughes, 2011; Martínez-Arboleda, 2021; Zhou & Zhang, 2017). In other words, teachers may not gain a feedback history about the learners' progress - from the previous to the current task (Hughes, 2011). Hence, a thread runs through the successive tasks so the teachers can compare individuals' performances soundly (Martínez-Arboleda, 2021). Second, comparing the current and previous work is theoretically interesting (Zhou & Zhang, 2017). However, it is practically a challenging task as it is difficult to annotate the ipsative comments on performances (Martínez-Arboleda, 2021).

These limitations could be mitigated by integrating screencast technology in the ipsative assessment. Research on screencast-based formative feedback shows that screencast comments allow teachers to provide detailed and personalized feedback, which can help students avoid misconceptions in text-based feedback designs (Asadi et al., 2017; Cavaleri et al., 2019; Lien, 2023; Savaşç & Akçor, 2022) and enhance their feedback uptake (Wood, 2022), and, ultimately, become autonomous writers (Cheng & Li, 2020). In ipsative assessment, its affordances can record students' previous works, feedback, and responses to its information, thereby providing the teacher with ipsative evidence of progress or lack of progress in students' performance since the previous tasks (Hughes, 2011). Screencast-based Ipsative Assessment (SIA) can bring the teacher's

previous and current assessments of students' tasks together on one screen, enabling more effective and impactful feedback. The teacher may give ipsative comments in written and audio modes, supporting them with visual indication (Martínez-Arboleda, 2021). Teachers may encourage students to reflect on their performances and self-evaluate their progress against their self-referential goals through comparison (Hughes et al., 2017). Such ipsative procedures could establish a continuous dialogue between teacher and student regarding the writing goals, efforts, progress, and contribution to learning outcomes (Payne, 2022). Moreover, the feedback delivered by the screencasting can support the coherence between successive assessment procedures in an ipsative feedback design (Martínez-Arboleda, 2021). This integration can make the previous tasks and developmental comments available both for the teacher and students, allowing them to track the student's progress toward the learning goals of a specific course over time (Hughes et al., 2017; Martínez-Arboleda, 2021). However, the scant literature on ipsative assessment does not document empirical evidence regarding the effect of a screencast-based ipsative assessment on learners' progress in mastering a skill (e.g., writing development) in a language education context. Therefore, this study aims to probe the role of SIA in enhancing learners' writing performance in an Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. We draw on Mayer's (2014) cognitive theory of multimedia learning to justify integrating screencast technology into ipsative assessment. According to Mayer (2008, 2014), students learn more effectively when information is presented through visual and auditory channels, which aligns appropriately with screencast technology.

The ipsative assessment literature suggests that its cumulative nature may make students self-regulated in their learning process (Boucher et al., 2017; Hughes, 2014; Maecka et al., 2021; Winstanley, 2017; Zhou & Zhang, 2017). In this approach, students are engaged in reflection, enabling them to evaluate their performance, identify strengths and weaknesses, set learning goals, and work toward achieving them (Hughes, 2011). This is because ipsative assessment is not just a tool but a powerful motivational device that can inspire students to improve their self-regulatory skills (Hughes, 2011). The incremental design of ipsative assessment may also make the students self-efficacious in learning procedures since it supports a learner-centric learning process (Gandhi, 2017; Hughes et al., 2017; McIntyre, 2017; Zhou & Zhang, 2017). Previous studies highlight the empowering nature of ipsative activities, which direct learners to concentrate on their progress, establishing a sense of self-growth rather than fostering competition with their peers (Hughes, 2011, 2017). Encouraging self-improvement fosters a strength-based perspective, reinforcing educators' and scholars' belief in their abilities and inspiring them with their potential to motivate students to set higher goals (McIntyre, 2017; Zhou & Zhang, 2017). However, inadequate investigations have been conducted addressing the role of ipsative assessment in developing students' writing self-regulation and writing self-efficacy in an EFL context. Moreover, no investigation has shown how screencast-

based ipsative assessment may make English students self-regulated and self-efficacious in their writing performance. Therefore, this research also investigates the impact of SIA on EFL learners' writing self-regulation and self-efficacy, inspiring us with the possibilities of ipsative assessment in language education.

Therefore, this study could provide an insightful understanding concerning the effect of screencast-based IA on the development of self-regulation in Iranian EFL students' writing performance. The results could offer significant insights into how English teachers can utilize screencast technology to assess students' writing. This approach may enable educators to provide accurate and comprehensive ipsative feedback, promote self-evaluation, and create a nurturing environment where students can interact with teachers to seek clarification and take necessary actions to improve their writing skills (Malecka et al., 2021). Moreover, in the SIA, teachers can guide students to review their previous writing tasks and comments and determine what to do in the subsequent writing draft. The students' self-reflecting, self-correcting, and self-evaluation of their writing assignments may help them develop their self-regulatory writing strategies. In addition, since students can see their writing progress, which is not compared against predetermined criteria or with others, they can become confident and take pride in their capabilities in writing English texts. Similarly, EFL learners may receive positive teacher comments on their progress, which could further improve their writing self-efficacy.

Screencast technology and ipsative assessment each offer unique benefits. However, a critical aspect of their integration is ensuring students can effectively link the feedback and feedforward comments to their writing tasks. This study investigates the mechanisms through which students interpret and apply these comments, focusing on the processes that facilitate meaningful connections between feedback and subsequent writing improvements. By elucidating these processes, we aim to provide a more transparent framework for EFL teachers to support their students in utilizing feedback constructively.

Literature review

Integration of Screencast Technology into Ipsative Assessment

Integrating screencast technology into ipsative assessment is firmly grounded in Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. This theory, which suggests that learning is more effective when information is presented through multiple visual and auditory channels, is a crucial underpinning of using screencasting in education (Mayer, 2002). By combining visual elements (i.e., videos) with auditory explanations, screencasting reduces cognitive load and enhances the learning experience (Mayer & Moreno, 2003). This theory is based on three key assumptions: dual-channel, limited capacity, and active learning. Dual channel processing suggests that the human brain processes visual and auditory information through separate channels (Paivio & Clark, 2006). Screencasting allows educators to provide feedback that students can see and hear, facilitating a deeper

understanding and retention of information (Mayer, 2014). Limited capacity proposes that each channel has a limited capacity (Baddeley, 1992). By distributing information across visual and auditory channels, screencasting helps manage cognitive load, making it easier for students to process and integrate the comments (Mayer, 2014). Active learning, which suggests that learning is an active process of filtering, selecting, organizing, and integrating information (Mayer, 1996), is a key aspect of screencasting. It enables students to actively engage with feedback, replaying and reflecting on the content as needed. In the context of ipsative assessment, screencasting provides personalized feedback that students can compare with their previous performances. This aligns with the self-referential nature of ipsative assessment, where the focus is on individual progress rather than comparison with peers (Martínez-Arboleda, 2021; Payne, 2022). The multimodal feedback delivered through screencasting can highlight specific areas of improvement and suggest strategies for further development, thereby fostering self-regulation and self-efficacy in writing.

Screencast-based English Writing Assessment

Research on Screencast Feedback (SF) reveals that it allows English teachers to provide detailed, personalized feedback, helping students avoid misconceptions in text-based feedback designs (Lien, 2023; Savaşç & Akçor, 2022) and enhancing their feedback uptake (Wood, 2022). SF also plays a significant role in facilitating the development of feedback engagement and writing competency among English students, as observed by Li et al. (2024). For instance, Kim (2018) found that SF positively impacted English learners' writing performance in English-medium classrooms. Cheng and Li (2020) reported that SF empowered English students to take an autonomous approach to their writing. Research also highlights that SF provides valid, accurate, and detailed information (Pachuashvili, 2021) and motivates students to identify errors more precisely (Wood, 2022). These features lead students to embrace SF and utilize it significantly in improving their drafts, given its engaging, encouraging, supportive, detailed, and personalized nature compared to the written feedback (Mohammed & Alharbi, 2022; Savaşç & Akçor, 2022).

Although SF can significantly reduce students' cognitive load by providing detailed and personalized feedback (Mayer & Moreno, 2003), it falls short of creating a collaborative learning environment (Payne, 2022). The limitation lies in SF's lack of interaction between students and teachers, hindering clarification of feedback misconceptions (Mohammed & Alharbi, 2022). In such a context, SF may fail to prompt individual students to reflect on their actions and compare them with external or internal references to generate new knowledge (Nicole, 2020). However, integrating SF into the ipsative assessment may enhance interactivity and encourage student reflection in an English language-learning context.

Impact of Ipsative Assessment on Writing Performance, Writing Self-regulation, and Writing Self-efficacy

Research on ipsative assessment shows that engaging writing students in ipsative activities (e.g., referential goal-setting, comparing and reflecting on their performances, and evaluating their progress) can make them self-regulated in enhancing their writing performances (Malecka et al., 2021; Winstanley, 2017). Winstanley (2017) indicated that the ipsative activities made the sophomore university students self-regulate in composing their writing in the English language. Zhou and Zhang (2017) further showed that teachers' ipsative assessment improved the English students' learning strategies and made them proactively aware of their learning goals. Malecka et al. (2021) also reported that the ipsative processes developed students' self-regulation in academic writing since the students set the goal of their writing tasks, completed their tasks, and reviewed the tasks against the self-referential goals. Gandhi (2017) found that ipsative principles enabled elementary students to compete with themselves and gain better results in standard high-stakes tests.

These limited studies suggest that students' reflections on their writing performances and previous feedback can make them self-regulated, improve engagement, and create a dialogue (Nicol, 2010). These investigations further elucidate that directing the students to evaluate and reflect on their writing performances motivates them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and set and monitor their writing goals in a conventional criterion-based assessment system. In this situation, the development of writing self-regulation skills could take care of itself, as self-reflection is significant for self-regulating learning in any assessment context (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). However, the literature does not show evidence of how ipsative assessment mediated by screencast technology can foster writing self-regulation in English language students.

Previous investigations also show that ipsative assessment may play a pivotal role in fostering students' self-efficacy in learning (McIntyre, 2017; Zhou & Zhang, 2017). McIntyre (2017), for instance, reported that by supporting a learner-centric learning process, ipsative procedures have been shown to develop secondary students' ipsative self-assessment skills, making them self-efficacious in identifying errors as sources of information, not as a source of shame in their performances. This underscores the crucial role of educators in empowering students to view errors constructively. Similarly, Gandhi (2017) found that the ipsative assessment increased elementary students' awareness of their capabilities to improve their skills in learning various aspects of the English language at the school level. (Zhou and Zhang, 2017) also illustrated that teachers' oral ipsative comments made the English students more self-efficacious in evaluating their changes in learning strategies.

These studies underscore the empowering nature of ipsative processes, which direct students' attention to their progress and improvement, fostering a sense of self-improvement rather than competition with others (Hughes, 2011, 2017). This recognition of personal progress can significantly enhance their confidence and motivation, instilling a sense of pride in their development rather than feeling inadequacy compared to external standards

(McIntyre, 2017). Furthermore, emphasizing self-improvement encourages students to adopt a strength-based view of their learning journey, fostering a belief in their capabilities and setting higher goals for themselves (McIntyre, 2017; Zhou & Zhang, 2017). However, no study has reported how audio-visual ipsative assessment mediated by screencast technology may improve EFL students' writing self-efficacy.

Challenges of Ipsative-based Writing Assessment

The reviewed studies indicate that ipsative assessment may lead to significant issues in teaching writing skills. In a case study, Nishizuka (2022) reported that some high school students did not engage with the ipsative feedback or put in more effort to revise and develop their writing assignments based on the teacher's ipsative comments. This lack of engagement could potentially hinder their writing skill development. Tilly and Roach (2017) also found that some high-achieving engineering students tended to overlook the ipsative comments on their abilities to write how to design offshore wind farms, which could affect their future performance in this area. Moreover, Hughes et al. (2017) found that some PhD students preferred to refrain from engaging in ipsative activities, potentially impacting their overall performance as the teachers, supervisors, and PhD program leaders could have access to their performances, including the writing drafts available in the virtual technology.

The studies support that the intervention of ipsative assessment in a summative educational system can produce tension (Hughes, 2014). This is because positive evaluations are common when ipsative feedback is incorporated into formative assessment, and the students still see the criteria as transparent measures to pass or reach a graded level (Hughes, 2014). In such competitive education, the students may prefer to refrain from engaging in the IA primarily due to fear of being compared with their peers or other external criteria (Hughes et al., 2017). Moreover, in competitive environments such as school contexts, as observed in Nishizuka (2022), students may prioritize norm-referenced assessments because the learners' performance scores are considerably significant in their subsequent college or university admissions. Therefore, they may expect immediate high scores (Hughes et al., 2014). Given these factors, the teachers need to establish supportive learning environments so students can embrace the ipsative assessment. Teachers can feel comfortable giving feedback on students' writing progress in live meetings via dialogue, helping students connect the ipsative feedback to the summative writing tasks (Tilly & Roach, 2017). To achieve this goal, the teachers may need to be trained, and the system must provide opportunities to practice the ipsative elements in their writing (Hughes et al., 2017).

Screencast-based Ipsative Assessment Design

Previous studies have used various techniques, such as cumulative coversheets (Winstanley, 2017), reflective journals (Nishizuka, 2022), and e-portfolios (Malecka et al., 2021) to engage students in a reflective conversation about their perception and implementation of feedback in their writing compositions. These methods have made previous work and developmental

comments available to teachers and students. However, in these ipsative designs, teachers typically generated ipsative comments and judgments in written format, which may require them to provide more high-quality information. Students may need more time to understand the feedback message as it could impose a cognitive load on their working memory (Mayer, 2014; Mayer & Moreno, 2003). This is where technology can play a crucial role. For instance, technological platforms can create opportunities for students to receive narrative and visual feedback simultaneously, making the feedback more comprehensive and easier to understand (Hughes et al., 2017; Martínez-Arboleda, 2021; Payne, 2022). A specific example is using screencasts, which can visually represent the feedback, making it more engaging and accessible (Hughes et al., 2017). Moreover, the ipsative comments may not necessarily move the students to the next developmental steps because of a lack of connectivity between the writing tasks (Martínez-Arboleda, 2021). Therefore, the assessor may not have access to the student's previous work and feedback. This lack of coherence is a significant challenge that instructional designers must address (Hughes et al., 2017). However, screencast technology can provide a new and intriguing avenue for researchers to explore, as it can help students and teachers to access the frequency, nature, and types of feedback in the previous assessment drafts, supporting the coherence between successive assessments in an ipsative feedback design (Martínez-Arboleda, 2021). This capability may allow the teachers to track the student's progress over time, providing a clear and comprehensive view of the learning journey. However, no existing studies explore the integration of SF within an ipsative approach to writing assessment in an EFL context. Hence, this study aims to address this gap by leveraging screencast technology to apply the principles of ipsative assessment to English students' writing performance. These research questions lead this investigation:

- Does screencast-based ipsative assessment enhance students' English writing performance?
- Can screencast-based ipsative assessment significantly develop students' self-regulation in English writing?
- Can screencast-based ipsative assessment significantly foster students' self-efficacy in English writing?

Method

Design

To address the research questions, a quantitative approach was taken to investigate the effect of Screencast-based Ipsative Assessment (SIA) on participants' writing performance, writing self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy.

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Participants

The study involved intermediate EFL students from a small city in northwest Iran. The researchers used convenience sampling to select 67 male students, all native Azeri Turkish or Kurdish speakers. Their ages ranged from 14 to 18 years, and none had experience living in an English-speaking country. The participants reported owning technological devices like smartphones, laptops, and tablets. They frequently utilized these gadgets for activities such as listening to English podcasts, exploring English vocabulary meanings, and communicating with international friends through online forums.

Despite their extensive gadget use, their advanced writing performance remained limited. Before this study, these students had not been exposed to advanced writing courses; instead, they had experience with simpler writing genres like email or letter writing. Two intact classes participated in this study. The first class, consisting of 35 students, was randomly assigned to the experimental group. They engaged in ipsative activities facilitated by the screencast technology. The second class, comprising 32 participants, formed the control group. They followed traditional formative assessment procedures.

The institute's EFL program requested that teachers instruct students on the three areas of clarity of the produced message (i.e., writing content), information organization (i.e., writing structure), and the use of grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (i.e., language use). Both groups were tasked with learning how to write an essay based on these elements during a seven-week summer semester.

Researchers used the Oxford placement test to confirm that the EFL students participating in the study had equivalent English language proficiency (Allan, 2004). The test results indicated that the participants were at an intermediate level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine any differences in test performance between the two groups. The results indicated no significant differences between the groups' English language proficiency levels. Since ipsative assessment demands precise task refinement for levels beyond B1 of the CEFR, the participants needed to be at least at an intermediate level. This is because students often encounter a learning plateau effect at higher CEFR levels (Martínez-Arboleda, 2021).

The participants who volunteered completed and signed an informed consent form. This document clearly explained the study’s purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits. Participants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that their writing tasks would be kept confidential.

Instruments

Two 50-minute writing tasks were used to examine the participants' writing performance in the pre-and post-tests. Each task required participants to write a 200-250 word essay

on a topic the researchers gave. The following were the topics of the writing tasks used in the pre-and posttests, respectively:

Topic 1: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

People who do exercise regularly are successful in their lives. Please use specific reasons and examples to support your idea.

Topic 2: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Young teachers who are well-educated are kinder than those with low levels. Please use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

A rubric (Jacobs et al., 1981) was used to evaluate the content and structure of participants' writing performance. This rubric was a 100-score scheme that assessed writing criteria, including content (25 points), organization (25 points), grammar (25 points), vocabulary (15 points), and mechanics (10 points). Two highly skilled and experienced raters, well-versed in the nuances of EFL writing, evaluated the students' writing tasks to reduce subjectivity and bias and ensure inter-rater reliability. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cohen's kappa, yielding a value of 0.86, indicating high agreement between raters.

The second data collection tool was a second language writing self-regulation questionnaire (Appendix A), developed by Han and Hiver (2018). This scale was adapted to examine the development of participants' writing self-regulation in both groups. This scale had nine items, and its main objective was to measure the participants' strategies to plan, organize, and monitor their goals and processes in second-language writing. Participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The questionnaire demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.96, and the confirmatory factor analysis supported the instrument's construct validity, aligning with the dimensions of goal setting, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation (Han & Hiver, 2018).

The third instrument was a second language writing self-efficacy scale (Appendix B), comprising seven items. Han and Hiver (2018) designed this tool to measure students' confidence in their writing abilities. These researchers demonstrated its adaptability by modifying the items of this questionnaire from Mills et al. (2006). It was a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument showed high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.95. The validity evidence, supported by significant correlations with writing performance and self-regulated learning strategies (Han & Hiver, 2018), instills confidence in its effectiveness and accuracy.

The fourth data collection tool was the ScreenPal Web Launched Software. This free web-based platform allowed researchers to capture their laptop screens and provide audio-visual feedback on participants' writing. This tool enabled them to engage students in ipsative activities in experimental groups. With ScreenPal, researchers could view and

compare two writing drafts side by side, highlight specific sections, and give audio-visual feedback. While the researchers created an account for creating, customizing, and sharing video clips, participants did not need to create an account. Students accessed the video by clicking on a shared link. Additionally, they could engage in a discussion board below each video, reflect on it, and leave comments. However, the researchers guided their reflections using questions due to participants' lack of confidence in typing and discomfort with writing comments. The participants recorded their reflections and submitted them alongside the writing tasks.

The researchers also employed ten reflective questions (Appendix C) to guide ipsative group participants to reflect on the previous feedback and explain how they incorporated it into their writing drafts (Hughes et al., 2014). Participants were encouraged to reflect in Persian, aiming for greater accuracy and higher-quality data due to its comfort. Previous research indicates that reflective questioning can enhance student engagement with feedback and facilitate meaningful dialogues between teachers and students in an ipsative approach to assessment. This approach promotes a more profound and sustainable learning experience (Hughes et al., 2014, 2017; Malecka et al., 2021; Winstanley, 2017). The participants' subjective feedback was not just significant but crucial because it enabled the researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of their feedback implementation and decide if further developmental feedback was needed (Hughes et al., 2014; Winstanley, 2017).

Procedures

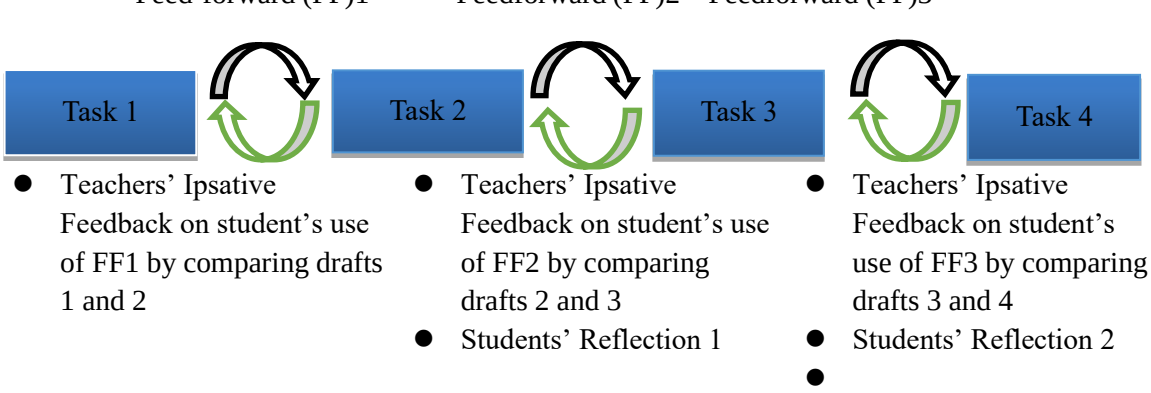
Before writing, the researchers distributed the self-regulation and self-efficacy scales and asked participants in both groups to answer the items. In each group, the participants were allowed to answer the items of two questionnaires within 30 minutes. The researchers scored the questionnaires and kept the scores. These scores were then compared with those achieved in the post-test phase using a statistical analysis method to ensure the validity of the results. Then, the researchers asked both groups to write an essay on a topic on the class's whiteboard. The participants had to write about their agreement or disagreement about the topic and support it with reasons and examples. The students had 50 minutes to write and submit it to the researchers. The researchers then used a rubric to assess the content, organization, and language use of students' writing performance. The scores were kept as the pre-test writing scores to be compared with those obtained in the post-tests.

Since writing a whole essay for each session was challenging for the participants, the researchers decided to focus on the steady development of each part of their essay. This strategy was helpful because it reassured the participants that the researchers had a genuine interest in supporting their progress in writing essays (Winstanley, 2017). Unlike the pre-test part held in the class, this study phase was performed electronically. Specifically, the screencast technology was crucial in supporting researchers' ipsative

comments, and the students wrote, revised, and submitted their drafts electronically. Moreover, the researchers allowed the participants to write an essay based on their interests and continue developing the topic by writing an introduction, a three-paragraph body, and a conclusion over the semester. This study followed Hughes' (2011) cumulative ipsative feedback model for four writing tasks (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Ipsative Feedback Design for Four Sequential Writing Tasks



The students submitted their first draft within one week. The researchers, recognizing the importance of this feedback process, consulted two sources, including a rubric (Jacobs et al., 1981) and Grammarly Premium, to generate effective feedback on each student's writing performance. In the ScreenPal Web platform, comments were provided in written form along with aural narration and visual cues. Due to connectivity issues, each video clip was kept to three to four minutes. This short length facilitated uploads and encouraged participants to download and save the videos on their technological devices easily. In some cases, due to participants' inability to access their accounts, the researchers shared the clip directly via other technological venues such as their Whatsapp or Telegram accounts.

In the first step, participants submitted draft work and received screencast-based developmental feedback. This formative procedure was in written, narrative, and visual formats using Word Processing software on a computer system (Figure 2). The platform recorded the entire process. After receiving the feedback, participants identified developmental areas and made revisions, submitting a second draft to the researcher within one week.

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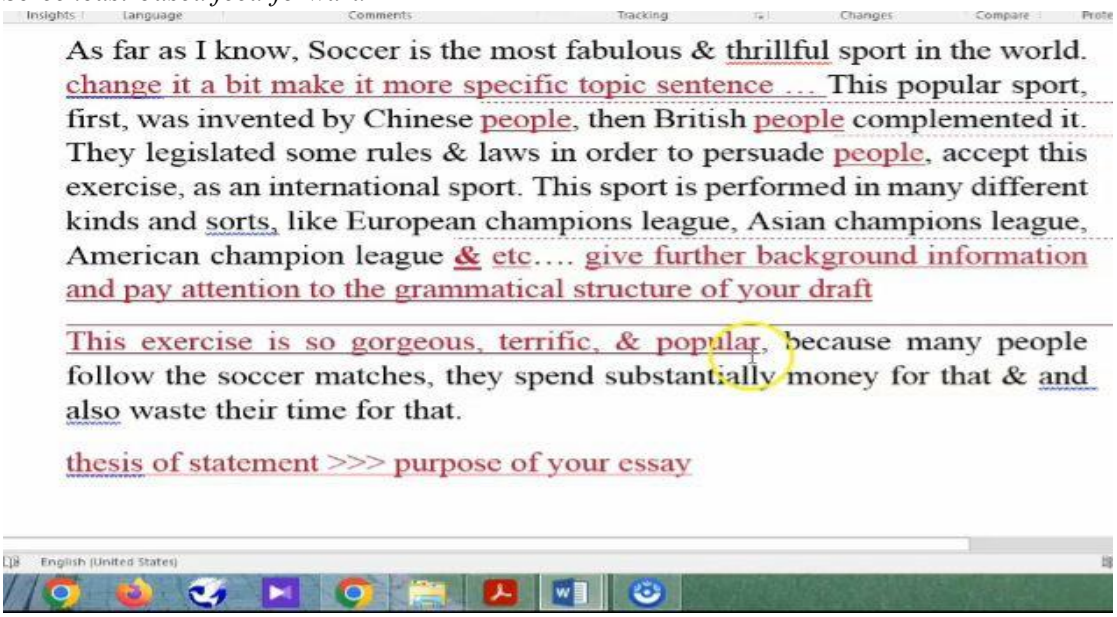
Figure 2

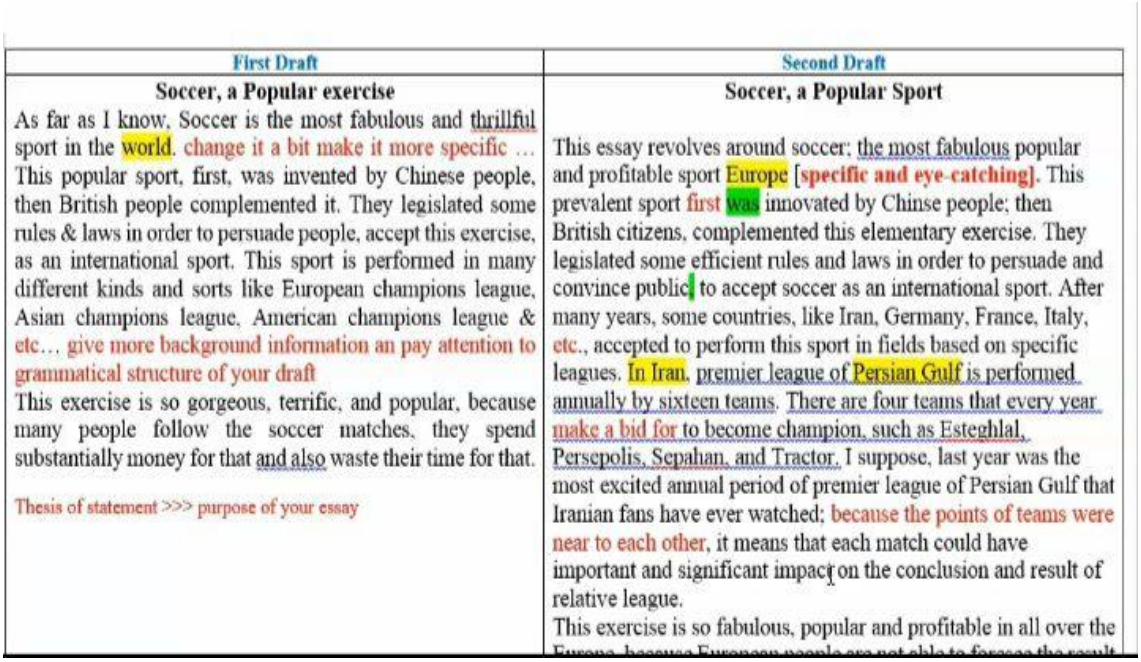
Screencast-based feed-forward



Next, the researchers received the revised draft. Using Word Processing software, they created a two-column table, placing the previous writing draft in the left column and the current work in the right column to compare (Figure 3). The researchers then conducted an ipsative assessment, evaluating students' progress since the previous draft. They provided developmental feedback and asked students what to do in the next assignment. The recorded feedback was uploaded to the website, allowing each student to download it and move forward based on the content provided.

Figure 3

Screencast-based Ipsative Assessment



First Draft	Second Draft
Soccer, a Popular exercise As far as I know, Soccer is the most fabulous and thrillful sport in the world. change it a bit make it more specific … This popular sport, first, was invented by Chinese people, then British people complemented it. They legislated some rules & laws in order to persuade people, accept this exercise, as an international sport. This sport is performed in many different kinds and sorts like European champions league, Asian champions league, American champions league & etc… give more background information an pay attention to grammatical structure of your draft This exercise is so gorgeous, terrific, and popular, because many people follow the soccer matches, they spend substantially money for that and also waste their time for that. Thesis of statement >>> purpose of your essay	**Soccer, a Popular Sport** This essay revolves around soccer; the most fabulous popular and profitable sport Europe [**specific and eye-catching**]. This prevalent sport first was innovated by Chinse people; then British citizens, complemented this elementary exercise. They legislated some efficient rules and laws in order to persuade and convince public to accept soccer as an international sport. After many years, some countries, like Iran, Germany, France, Italy, etc., accepted to perform this sport in fields based on specific leagues. In Iran, premier league of Persian Gulf is performed annually by sixteen teams. There are four teams that every year make a bid for to become champion, such as Esteghlal, Persepolis, Sepahan, and Tractor. I suppose, last year was the most excited annual period of premier league of Persian Gulf that Iranian fans have ever watched; because the points of teams were near to each other, it means that each match could have important and significant impact on the conclusion and result of relative league. This exercise is so fabulous, popular and profitable in all over the

Later, participants watched the videos and revised the subsequent drafts based on the feedback. Additionally, they received a separate set of questions, guiding them to reflect on their actions and describe how they addressed the feedback. Using their smartphones, they self-recorded their reflections and submitted the file and the revised draft to the researchers.

After that, by listening to the students' reflections, the researchers gained insights into how they had incorporated previous feedback. This process allowed them to assess whether students had met their self-referential goals in their current writing drafts. Based on this assessment, the researchers provided feedback to help students gauge their progress. This awareness enabled students to anticipate their future development in writing. All these steps were documented using screencast technology, and the ipsative cumulative processes were repeated as needed.

Like the experimental group, the control participants were requested to write an introduction for a topic based on their interest and submit it electronically to the researchers. This group was also informed that the researchers would help them steadily develop the sections required for an English essay. Unlike the experimental participants,

the researchers did not engage this group in ipsative activities, but they received traditional formative comments in the margin of their drafts.

As the researchers received each student's writing draft, they used the analytical rubric and Grammarly Premium as guides to give appropriate feedback on their writing content, organization, and language use. The researchers detected each participant's mistakes or errors and specified what they needed to do in the next draft by writing feedback in the margin of the file. The commented draft was electronically submitted to the participants, who were requested to revise it based on the feedback. Then, participants took the initiative to read the comments, edit, and submit their second drafts. The students were expected to resubmit the revised version within one week. The researchers checked each student's previous draft to see whether the participant had revised what he was supposed to fix in the current drafts. However, the researchers did not give any ipsative comment on students' drafts to make them set their goals, reflect on their writing, or evaluate their progress. Instead, they gave other feedback forms, such as praise, advice, clarification requests, or critical comments on their writing performances. The researchers repeated and performed all these procedures for each writing assignment the students shared for further revisions and development.

The researchers requested both groups to complete the same writing self-regulation and writing self-efficacy questionnaires again within 30 minutes. The post-test scores were compared with those obtained in the pre-test phase. The two groups of participants were also asked to write an essay based on a different topic in the class. After writing, the researchers used the rubric to assess participants ' abilities in writing different sections of their essays. The scores were compared with pre-test scores to find the participants ' development in both assessment approaches.

Data Analysis Procedures

The researchers undertook a comprehensive series of paired samples t-tests to examine the impact of SIA and traditional assessment perspectives on the development of participants' writing performance, writing self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy. Additionally, one-way between-group analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) were conducted to determine the extent of differences between experimental and control groups regarding the development of the mentioned variables. These tests were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (version 26).

The researchers employed the analytic rubric (Jacob et al., 1981) to rate the students' pre- and post-test writing performances. Furthermore, the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test confirmed the normality of the two sets of data obtained in the pre and post-test phases of the study. These two crucial steps ensured the validity of the data, allowing the researchers to use the parametric tests of paired samples t-tests and ANCOVA to investigate the impact of independent variables on the development of each participant's writing performance in both groups.

Moreover, since the writing self-regulation and self-efficacy questionnaires were Likert-based scales with five points, they generated ordinal data, making it impossible to run the aforementioned parametric tests. However, some scholars argue that it could be possible to convert the perception scales into interval data if the scales meet certain assumptions (Agresti & Finlay, 1997). These criteria include (a) the scales must have no more than five scores, (b) scores must not be extreme, and (c) the data need to be normally distributed (Tabachnick et al., 2007). Our scales measuring students' attitudes toward self-regulatory and self-efficacious abilities met these assumptions, permitting the researcher to use parametric tests.

Findings and discussion

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the SIA and traditional participants' pre-and post-test scores on writing self-regulation, self-efficacy, and performance. Table 1 demonstrates the variation in mean scores between the SIA and traditional writing assessment groups for the posttests, with only slight differences in the pre-tests.

Table 1

Mean and SD of the writing self-regulation, and self-efficacy, performance on pre and posttests

	Groups	Number of Participants	Mean	SD	SD error mean
Pre-writing task	SIA	35	11.378	2.297	0.387
	Traditional	32	11.215	2.134	0.374
Post-writing task	SIA	35	14.993	2.148	0.358
	Traditional	32	12.836	2.037	0.367
Pre- self-regulation	SIA	35	14.498	3.496	0.497
	Traditional	32	15.527	3.348	0.621
Post-self-regulation	SIA	35	19.643	2.897	0.491
	Traditional	32	17.514	3.798	0.712
Pre-self-efficacy	SIA	35	19.413	5.982	0.848

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Table 2

Paired samples t-test changes in the mean scores on writing performance, self-regulation, and self-efficacy in the pre and posttests SIA *group*

Pre- & posttest writing	Mean	SD	Std. Error mean	t value	degree of freedom	Sig.
performance	- 2.673	1.048	0.153	-14.832	34	0.00
self-regulation	-5.087	2.136	0.341	-13.874	34	0.00
self-efficacy	-2.986	4.815	0.837	- 3.687	34	0.00
Post-self-efficacy	Traditional	32	20.738	4.055	0.697	
	SIA	35	22.536	3.381	0.536	
	Traditional	32	19.787	4.469	0.821	

Table 2 shows the results of paired samples t-tests for SIA group. It demonstrates the significant variation in the mean scores of writing performance ($t = -14.832$, $p < 0.00$), self-regulation ($t = -13.874$, $p < 0.00$), and self-efficacy ($t = -3.687$, $p < 0.00$) in the SIA group. These results provide a clear picture of the impact of using a SIA assessment of EFL students' writing, mediated by screencast technology, on their performance, self-regulation, and self-efficacy in composing an essay in the English language from pre- to post-tests.

Table 3 represents the changes in the mean scores of these constructs from pre- to post-tests for the EFL students in the SIA writing assessment. These results elucidate that the traditional assessment approach improved students' performances ($t = -6.991$ $p < 0.00$), and made them self-regulated ($t = -11.253$, $p < 0.00$) and self-efficacious ($t = 2.228$, $p < 0.00$) in English writing from pre to posttests.

Table 3

Paired samples t-test changes in the mean scores on writing performance, self-regulation, and self-efficacy in the pre and posttests traditional group

Pre- & posttest writing	Mean	SD	Std. Error mean	t value	degree of freedom	Sig.
performance	-1.598	1.264	0.299	- 6.991	31	0.00
self-regulation	-1.935	0.978	0.142	- 11.253	31	0.00
self-efficacy	0.786	2.147	0.346	2.228	31	0.03

Three one-way ANCOVA tests examined the differences between SIA and traditional writing assessment groups. The focus was on developing the participants' performances, self-regulation, and self-efficacy skills in writing English essays while also controlling for preexisting differences in the pre-tests. First, the researchers performed a one-way ANCOVA test to measure the difference between SIA and traditional approaches to assessment in improving the participants' performances in writing English essays. Table 4 shows the results of this test.

Table 4

ANCOVA test results for examining the differences between SIA and traditional approaches in improving students' writing performances

Source	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Group	21.02	1	21.02	16.79	0.00	0.20

Table 4 demonstrates meaningful differences between two approaches in enhancing the participants' writing performance (F 1, 65) = 16.79, p = 0.00, partial eta squared = 0.20]. This result suggests that the participants who experienced SIA outperformed those who exposed to traditional activities in writing essays in the English language. Then, the researchers ran another one-way ANCOVA test to find the differences between the two assessment approaches in improving participants' writing self-regulation. Table 5 depicts the results of this test.

Table 5 demonstrates significant differences between the SIA and traditional approaches in fostering self-regulation among students in English essay writing [F (1, 66) = 56.49, p = 0.00, partial eta squared = 0.39]. This finding indicates that the level of self-regulation was notably higher in students whose writing performances were assessed using an SIA approach than in those whose writing performances were assessed using a traditional assessment approach.

Table 5

ANCOVA test results for examining the differences between SIA and traditional approaches in improving students' writing self-regulation

Source	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	F value	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Group	163.2	1	163.2	56.49	0.00	0.39

The researchers conducted a further one-way ANCOVA test to investigate the differences between the two approaches to improving the participants' self-efficacy in writing essays in English. The results, as presented in Table 6, are significant.

Table 6

ANCOVA test results for examining the differences between SIA and traditional approaches in improving students' writing self-efficacy

Source	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Group	183.89	1	183.89	18.89	0.00	0.21

The two approaches showed a marked difference in making the participants self-efficacious for writing English essays [F (1, 66) = 183.89, p = 0.00, partial eta squared = 0.21]. This finding underscores the effectiveness of the SIA approach, which increased students' writing self-efficacy more than the traditional approach.

Discussion

This study investigated the effect of SIA on the development of writing performances, writing self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy of EFL students. The results revealed that SIA significantly enhanced participants' writing performance (Table 4). This finding echoes the research of Malecka et al. (2021), who conducted a study on using ipsative procedures to improve writing content in academic settings, and Nishizuka (2022), who found similar results in high school settings. These results underscore the potential of ipsative activities to enhance students' writing skills. Our finding is consistent with

previous works that support the application of technology to provide students with accessible feedback and work for comparison (Boucher et al., 2017; Hughes, 2014; Hughes et al., 2017). For instance, Hughes et al. (2017) showed that virtual technology enabled doctoral students to reflect and evaluate their progress in mastering research strategies. Boucher et al. (2017) also discovered that music learners who reviewed their video-recorded performances could successfully self-assess their development, further validating this approach. Additionally, Hughes (2014) concluded that feedback recorded in an online forum encouraged teacher students to reflect and self-evaluate their progress in applying technology in their classrooms.

It seems that the integration of technologies into ipsative assessment records feedback and facilitates the provision of accessible feedback, allowing students to engage in reflective practices and compare their current work with previous performances. Hence, the ipsative comments recorded in the screencast technology, for example, can make the students autonomous in writing (Cheng & Li, 2020) since it mediates and presents the feedback message in a clear, concise, and personalized manner (Pachuashvili, 2021; Savaşç & Akçor, 2022). These features, in turn, can decrease the students' cognitive load processing since the detailed information prevents learners from misunderstanding the feedback (Mayer & Moreno, 2003; Wood, 2023).

In English classes, teachers may discuss the benefits and challenges of the screencast-supported ipsative assessment of writing skills with the students. In such cases, the teachers may direct each student to review and reflect on their writing performances recorded by the technology and foster a dialogue. This interaction can motivate students to determine what to perform next and help them anticipate their progress (Hughes, 2017). Screencasting technology enables students to access their previous assignments easily, and feedback can encourage learners to review their development in writing performance and decide what to do in the next steps of their learning journey. However, this conclusion cannot be broadly applied to similar educational contexts because the participants were not trained in assessment, potentially affecting the reliability of their evaluations. To mitigate this concern, English writing teachers might discuss the advantages and challenges of SIA with students. They can guide each student to review and reflect on their performances, fostering a continuous dialogue around their progress. This conversation can inspire learners to decide on their next steps and anticipate their writing development (Hughes, 2017).

The research further revealed that the SIA empowered ipsative participants to be self-regulated and actively participate in English writing (Table 5). This finding supports previous works where researchers report that students' self-regulated skills could be enhanced when the concentration of ipsative comments is on students' learning content (Boucher et al., 2017; Gandhi, 2017; Tilly & Roach, 2017; Winstanley, 2017). In ipsative approaches to assessment that advocate long-term learning goals, teachers can employ reflective tools, including feedback response forms (Hughes et al., 2014), e-portfolios

(Malecka et al., 2021), or reflective journals (Nishizuka, 2022) to establish an ongoing conversation with the students around their development. This dialogue is crucial as it clarifies the learning goals for students, empowering them to implement suitable strategies for self-monitoring and self-assessment about those specific goals (Hughes, 2011). The interaction between the teacher and students can reveal a gap between their current and previous performances, which could have discouraged the students from continuing (Hughes et al., 2014; Winstanley, 2017). However, using screencast technology can make previous work visible to students and the teacher, sparking a dialogue about students' progress. This may allow learners to become aware of their writing goals, plan their next steps, and use strategies to predict their progress, thereby empowering them in their learning journey.

In assessing English writing ipsatively, screencasting could offer students personalized, clear, and comprehensible feedback and guide them on what to do in their writing performances (Mohammed & Alharbi, 2022; Savaşç & Akçor, 2022). Teachers may encourage students to review their writings in alignment with their initial objectives. These systematic reflections, as the research suggests, can significantly enhance students' self-regulation. They empower students to assume responsibility for their writing growth, discern patterns, pinpoint areas for enhancement, and acknowledge progress (McIntyre, 2017; Winstanley, 2017). This process not only enhances self-regulation but also holds the promise of continuous improvement and progress, instilling a sense of hope and optimism in the students and educators alike.

The study further showed that the SIA fostered the students' self-efficacy skills in writing and motivated them to take a proactive view toward the feedback information (Table 6). This shows that SIA can motivate students to work hard to attain their goals in their writing journeys. This finding corroborates previous research where the researchers found that ipsative activities led participants to be self-efficacious in developing their writing skills (McIntyre, 2017) and learning strategies (Zhou & Zhang, 2017). These findings elucidate that ipsative processes can enhance students' writing self-efficacy by fostering a strength-based approach to learning (McIntyre, 2017). In such circumstances, they perceive the feedback not as a source of shame or embarrassment but as a means of developing their writing capabilities, yearning to actively seek feedback on their performance to compete with themselves, not others (Gandhi, 2017; McIntyre, 2017).

In English writing classrooms, the teacher can use screencasting so that the students can review, reflect, and compare their current performance to their past performance. This ipsative approach mediated by technology can enable them to give feedback highlighting students' improvement from previous drafts. This assessment practice can encourage learners to reflect on their writing performance and feel proud of their endeavors, capabilities, and progress in their writing journey (McIntyre, 2017). By focusing on their progress from one draft to the subsequent one, rather than discussing meeting the external criteria/rubric, the teacher can make the writing students aware of their writing abilities

and thereby take ownership of their writing process and strive for further progress (Maleka et al., 2021).

Conclusion

This study indicated that SIA enhanced participants' writing performance, self-regulation, and self-efficacy. The findings may contribute to the existing literature on EFL education in several significant ways. First, this study provided empirical evidence that SIA can significantly enhance EFL students' writing performance. By offering personalized, multimodal feedback, this approach addresses individual student needs more effectively than traditional methods. Second, the results demonstrated that SIA could improve students' self-regulation by providing immediate, actionable feedback and encouraging reflective practice. This contribution is valuable as it offers a practical tool for teachers to foster student self-regulation. Third, this study showed that SIA could boost students' self-efficacy by providing clear, supportive feedback that helps students recognize their progress and areas for improvement. This finding is particularly important as it provides a concrete strategy for teachers to enhance students' confidence in their writing abilities. The findings may suggest several pedagogical implications for EFL teachers interested in implementing SIA to enhance students' writing performance, self-regulation, and self-efficacy. English writing teachers are suggested to incorporate screencast feedback into IA since this integration can enhance the clarity, specificity, and dialogic nature of ipsative comments for English writing students. This approach mainly benefits low-achieving students, providing precise and personalized feedback and encouraging them to embrace errors and explore their learning (Hughes et al., 2014). English teachers can utilize screencast-based ipsative feedback for self-assessment, identifying strengths, and targeting areas for improvement. Ultimately, this process can foster self-regulation and empower students to take control of their writing journey and be aware of their capabilities. SIA can help teachers clarify the ipsative comments by using both visual annotations and verbal explanations. This dual modality aids in better comprehension and retention of feedback, making it more impactful for students (Wood, 2023).

English teachers can include reflective questioning within screencasts, prompting students to think critically about their writing process and self-regulation strategies. This reflective practice can foster deeper learning and self-awareness (Hughes et al., 2014, 2017; Malecka et al., 2021; Tilly & Roach, 2017; Winstanley, 2017). English instructors may improve the students' engagement with the screencast-based feedback by encouraging them to pause, review, and take notes. This active engagement can help students internalize feedback and apply it to their writing (Nicol, 2020).

Ipsative assessment may challenge the currently established criterion-referenced model in education (Zhou & Zhang, 2017). However, Hughes argues that if teachers could be adequately literate and learn how to use its principles appropriately in their classrooms (Hughes, 2011), ipsative activities can be introduced to the established traditional

assessment contexts, that is, formative and summative assessment types, and enhance their effectiveness (Hughes, 2014). Accordingly, the findings of our study suggest that providing training and support for teachers to use screencast technology and implement ipsative assessment strategies effectively is essential. Professional development opportunities, such as workshops, tutorials, and ongoing coaching, can equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to successfully integrate these practices into their teaching.

While significant, this study's findings also acknowledge some limitations. First, the findings are based on a quantitative analysis of the data. Therefore, they can not accurately represent the impact of SIA on students' writing performance, writing, self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy skills. One line of research may validate these findings by interviewing learners and teachers to probe the impact of this approach on the deep development of the constructs above. Second, this study investigated the effect of SIA on the development of writing performances, writing self-regulation, and writing self-efficacy skills of intermediate EFL students. Future studies, particularly those that extend the research to different levels of English language learning, may use this approach to measure its effect on enhancing these variables. Third, the participants' baseline writing proficiency and technological literacy were not addressed as potential confounding variables. These factors may have influenced the results, as variations in writing skills and familiarity with technology could impact the effectiveness of SIA. Future research should consider controlling for these variables to isolate the intervention's effects better. Finally, the participants were young secondary or high school students who learned English as a foreign language in private language institutes. The coming investigations can engage the university English students in ipsative activities and measure its effect on participants' development concerning these variables.

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Table 7

Appendix A: English Language Writing Self-regulation Scale

1. I know how to reduce my stress from learning writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
2. I have special techniques to achieve my learning goals when learning writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
3. I feel satisfied with my own special methods for reducing the stress of writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
4. I have special techniques to keep my concentration focused when learning writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
5. I persist until I reach the goals that I make for myself when learning writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
6. I believe I can achieve my goals more quickly than expected when learning writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
7. I can cope with the stress from learning writing in English immediately.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
8. When it comes to learning writing in English, I think my methods of controlling procrastination are effective.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
9. I know how to arrange the environment to make learning more efficient when learning writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

Table 8

Appendix B: English Language Writing Self-Efficacy Scale

1. I feel confident about writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
2. I know how to write well in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
3. I write in English with an underlying logical organization.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
4. If I put in the needed effort, I am sure I can become a good writer in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
5. I can write relevant and appropriate essays to the assignment.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

6. I present my point of view or arguments accurately and effectively when writing in English.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always
7. I am sure I can do well in writing courses even if they are difficult.
   Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

Table 9

Appendix C: Reflective Questions

1. How do you think you did on this draft?
2. Which parts of your draft were you happiest?
3. Which comments on the text make the most sense to you?
4. Have you had these kinds of comments on previous work?
5. Which comments do not make sense or are surprising to you?
6. What have you done to address them?
7. How could you avoid getting that comment on your next writing?
8. What feedback were you given for your previous assignment regarding how you could improve?
9. What comments were you given for your draft of this assignment regarding how you could improve?
10. How much do you feel you have responded to feedback?