

In-class or Online: Writing Self-efficacy and Instructional Method Dilemma

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Abstract:

This study aims to investigate EFL learners' perceptions of online writing instruction compared to traditional, face-to-face one and their writing self-efficacy under the circumstances of in-class and online writing instruction. Data were collected from 52 EFL learners having experienced both conditions interchangeably within the scope of 28-week study design. In a mixed-method research design, the participants responded to a writing efficacy scale and were interviewed following each intervention. The data analyses revealed that there was no significant difference between the writing efficacy levels of the participants in in-class and online writing instruction, but they had a lower level of efficacy for accuracy and design in writing tasks, which was expressed as the result of previous learning experience and lack of writing practice. Furthermore, the interviews revealed that they preferred in-class to online writing courses considering interpersonal skills and their need for written corrective feedback in person, implying significance of individual differences and independent learning. Based on these findings, the study proposes several educational implications.

Anahtar Sözcükler:

öz-yeterlik
yazma öz-yeterlik
yüz yüze öğretim
çevrimiçi öğretim

Yüz Yüze ya da Çevrimiçi: Yazma Öz-yeterlik İnançları ve Öğretim Yöntemi İkilemi

Özet: Bu çalışma, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenenlerin geleneksel, yüz yüze öğretime karşı çevrimiçi yazma becerileri öğretimi konusundaki algılarını ve her iki öğretim türüne ilişkin yazma öz-yeterlik inançlarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın verisi, 28 haftalık bir uygulama sürecinde her iki öğretim türünü deneyimleyen 52 İngilizce öğrenen öğrencinin katılımıyla toplanmıştır. Karma araştırma deseninde, katılımcılar öncelikle bir yazma öz-yeterlik inancı ölçeğini cevaplamış ve ardından uygulama sonunda bu öğrencilerle mülakat yapılmıştır. Veri analizi, yüz yüze ve çevrimiçi yazma becerileri öğretimi arasında yazma öz-yeterlik inançları bakımından önemli bir fark olmadığını, fakat katılımcıların öz-yeterlik inançlarının yazma ödevlerinde doğru dilbilgisi kullanımı ve tasarım konularında daha düşük seviyede olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcılar, bu durumun geçmişteki öğrenme deneyimlerinde yazma çalışmaları yapmamalarından kaynaklandığını dile getirmişlerdir. Bununla birlikte, katılımcılarla yapılan görüşmeler, iletişim becerileri ve yazılı düzeltme dönütleri açısından katılımcıların yazma becerileri öğretiminin sınıf-ici öğretim yöntemiyle yapılmasını tercih ettiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Bu durum, öğrenmede bireysel farklılıklar ve bağımsız öğrenmenin önemine dikkat çekmektedir. Bu bulgular ışığında, çalışma birtakım önerilerde bulunmaktadır.

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1. Introduction

In the last three decades, technological developments and the widespread internet use have also led to innovations and changes inevitable for educational programs without the exception of language teaching. Thus, technology integration has given rise to new methods in teaching, going partially or completely online (e.g., flipped classroom). However, being peculiar to the nature of language and language teaching, teaching productive skills not based on lecturing but communicating and interpersonal skills is of question in online teaching in terms of effectiveness and language learners' views and feelings. To this end, research on language learners' views about online teaching presents converse findings. While some suggest positive effects of online learning on students' perceptions and performance as it provides personalized learning opportunities (e.g., Krug et al., 2016; Xu, 2021), others set forth negative aspects such as low level of motivation, especially with respect to productive skills and lack of social interaction (e.g., Meşe & Sevilen, 2021; Mitchell et al., 2019).

Writing is likely to be a productive skill that could be associated with negative aspects proposed as it is already regarded as a complex skill involving cognitive and social aspects (e.g., Ghonsooly & Shalchy, 2013). Help-seeking and getting feedback are among those social aspects that could be handled through social interaction, which is a natural part of traditional, face-to-face writing classes. Therefore, it is essential to explore how they are managed in online teaching or how language learners consider the effect of the two teaching methods on their writing performance. On the other hand, writing self-efficacy, referring to "students' judgments of their confidence that they possessed the various composition, grammar, usage, and mechanical skills appropriate to their academic level" (Pajares & Valiente, 2001, p. 369), is closely related to writing performance (e.g., Mitchell et al., 2019). Thus, this study draws upon instructional methods considering EFL learners' views about their effect on writing self-efficacy.

1.1. Self-efficacy Beliefs

Self-efficacy is defined as a person's beliefs about his or her capabilities in completing a specific task or achieving a goal, and it is stated to play a prominent role in shaping behavior (e.g., Bandura, 1989, 1997, 2001). Self-efficacy beliefs are dynamic and change in accordance with the nature of the tasks to be achieved.

Due to the great importance attached to self-efficacy in overcoming challenges and leading to success, it is a prominent psychological construct, and the knowledge of it is also reflected in educational research. Thus, research findings have shown that it is positively related to expected outcomes of learning, such as student motivation, academic achievement, learner autonomy, and self-regulated strategy use (e.g., Chong & Reinders, 2022; Csizér et al., 2021; Jiang et al., 2014; Olivier et al., 2019; Zimmerman, 2001; Zysberg & Schwabsky, 2021). To this end, it has been found that the higher level of self-efficacy beliefs students have, the higher level of student motivation and academic success is (e.g., Bong, 2002; Jiang et al., 2014; Schunk, 1989). Similarly, self-efficacious students tend to be highly autonomous and use more self-regulated strategies (e.g., Kim et al., 2022).

Within the scope of language learning, research suggests similar findings in which language learners' high level of self-efficacy has been associated with learner autonomy (e.g., Chong & Reinders, 2022) and self-regulated learning (e.g., Abadikhah et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2015; Martirosian & Hartoonian, 2015). In addition, the primary language skill related to self-

regulated strategy use is writing because of cognitive and productive aspects of it (e.g., Kormos, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2019; Teng, 2021; Zhang, 2018)

1.2. Writing Self-efficacy

Writing is regarded as a challenging and demanding skill for language learners due to its multi-faceted nature, involving cognitive and social aspects (e.g., Hayes, 2012; Kulusaklı, 2021; Mitchell et al., 2019; Teng et al., 2018). Planning, decision-making, problem-solving, and reflecting/evaluating comprise the cognitive dimension of writing, while the social dimension involves contextuality and interactive conditions such as peer feedback and help-seeking (Mitchell et al., 2019). Similarly, on the challenges and multi-dimensional nature of writing, researchers have indicated that it requires competence in linguistic knowledge, capabilities in generating ideas, working memory, and metacognitive processes as well as the physical and social environment (e.g., Bruning et al., 2013; Sun & Wang, 2020; Sun et al., 2021).

Taking major significance of efficacy beliefs in achieving challenging tasks into account, one is supposed to have a high level of self-efficacy to handle the demands of producing written works, especially in L2 (e.g., Pajares & Valiente, 2001; 2006; Teng et al., 2018; Zhang, 2018). In this sense, writing self-efficacy is defined as “self-assessed ability to successfully implement writing in a specific context” (Mitchell et al., 2019, p. 1) and has been proposed to affect writing performance and outcomes positively (e.g., Pajares & Valiente, 2001; 2006) by boosting writing interest, effort, self-regulation and motivation to write (e.g., Bruning et al., 2013; Ho, 2016; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Prat-Sala & Redford, 2012; Teng et al., 2018). Specific to writing self-efficacy in EFL contexts, it has been suggested that EFL learners’ perceptions about how they perform in class determine how they value writing tasks and activities, which plays a role in shaping writing self-efficacy and self-regulated learning (e.g., Pajares, 2003; Schunk & Pajares, 2010).

1.3. Writing Self-efficacy and Instructional Method

Instructional practices such as learners’ strategy use for help-seeking, asking for and responding to feedback, and engaging in feedback are proposed to be directly related to self-regulation, in turn, writing self-efficacy. While instructional support is suggested to be a way to increase writing self-efficacy, the model of providing that support is of question. In the literature, drawbacks of online instruction for giving feedback on writing have been presented in studies, and lack of social interaction (thus, interpersonal relationships) has been the primary drawback of online instruction reported by students (e.g., McVey, 2008; Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006). As for providing feedback, online instruction has been reported to pose challenges since students have limited connection to their instructors and prefer face-to-face interaction (e.g., Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006). For this reason, Mitchell et al. (2019) stated that in the classroom, students are supported in need of help as part of course content as it is a scaffolded environment, but in many cases, students have to make their own decisions about their writing task and when, how and from whom to ask for help. In a recent case study, Meşe and Sevilen (2021) investigated EFL learners’ motivation in online learning, focusing on writing skills. Their findings revealed that the participants had low motivation levels in online learning as social interaction was missing part of that, and the content of online courses could not meet their expectations.

Contrary to studies on the drawbacks of online writing courses, research also provides findings that imply the effectiveness of online teaching, especially in providing written

corrective feedback. For instance, Xu (2021) investigated students' views on online feedback. The findings of that study conducted with 311 participants responding to a questionnaire and 12 students participating in semi-structured interviews suggested that the students had positive views about getting online feedback due to teachers' efforts to create a scaffolded environment. However, it was also indicated that the missing part of that positive environment was the lack of social interaction.

To conclude, research suggests that writing self-efficacy is positively related to writing performance. Furthermore, the instructional model (in-class or online) influences students' views and feelings, in turn, writing performance, so it is necessary to find out if there is a relationship between these concepts. It is also suggested that there is a need for more research on L2 writing self-efficacy (e.g., Teng et al., 2018). Therefore, this study aims to investigate whether the instructional method for teaching writing affects EFL learners' writing self-efficacy. For this purpose, the following research questions are to be addressed:

1. How do EFL learners consider their writing self-efficacy?
2. What factors are influential in EFL learners' preferences for the instructional method for writing with respect to their self-efficacy?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study employs the mixed-methods research design to seek answers to the research questions. To benefit advantages of both quantitative and qualitative research procedures and to get a deeper understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2014), the mixed-methods design was decided on. More specifically, the explanatory sequential mixed-method design in which quantitative data are followed by qualitative ones for a detailed explanation of the quantitative results (Creswell, 2014) was chosen to collect data. With this respect, descriptive study procedures were employed to collect quantitative data through a survey. Second, qualitative data were collected to support the findings, holding semi-structured interviews with the participants. Consequently, appropriate statistical analyses were employed.

2.2. Participants

The participants were 52 (27 female, 22 male, 3 prefer not to say) English Language and Literature students studying English at the B1-B2 level (Council of Europe, 2001) program in two classes at the School of Foreign Languages of a state university in Turkey. In the academic year 2021-2022, the school provided both in-class (60%) and online (40%) courses to deliver its content for 28 weeks; that is, the students took 16 hours in class and 8 hours online for available programs. The B1-B2 level had a separate course for academic writing in which students learned academic paragraph and essay writing and practiced through academic writing tasks. In the fall term, the focus was on paragraph writing, and in the spring term, students learned how to write essays. As part of the coursework of the school, one group took a writing course online and the other one face-to-face in the fall term and vice versa in the spring term. Therefore, the two groups experienced the same conditions naturally and did many writing tasks that could be associated with any possible effect on writing self-efficacy beliefs. These aspects made the group eligible for the research purpose regarding the principles of purposive sampling.

2.3. Data Collection

To collect quantitative data, the related literature was reviewed to find a fit-for-purpose instrument. As a result, the 21-item writing self-efficacy scale designed by Erkan (2013) was selected as it involved sub-scales such as beliefs about accuracy and punctuation that were suggested to be essential to evaluate writing self-efficacy (Pajares, 2003). The scale's reliability was reported to be .81 by the designer (Erkan, 2013). In the pilot-study of the current research, one item was removed, and the Cronbach Alpha score was found to be .96, suggesting that the scale was a reliable instrument to be implemented.

The study was processed throughout the academic year (28 weeks). As the writing course was part of the participants' coursework and participation was compulsory, all students in the two groups agreed to participate in the study; thus, no student dropped out till the end of the academic year. In this sense, there was no practice particularly designed for the research purpose, and data were collected in line with the procedures shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1.

Data collection procedures

Weeks	Procedures	
	Group 1	Group 2
Week 1	Pre-test	Pre-test
Week 2-13	In-class writing instruction	Online writing instruction
Week 14	Post-test + interviews	Post-test+ interviews
Week 15-27	Online writing instruction	In-class writing instruction
Week 28	Post-test+ interviews	Post-test + interviews

As seen in the table, the students took training appropriate to their assigned groups for 14 weeks in the fall term, and the teaching method was changed to the other (in-class-online and online-in-class) in the spring term. Therefore, they experienced both conditions, which makes the data sustainable and reliable. At the end of each term, the students were administered the scale that was adapted to address the study groups (e.g., *Through the online/ in-class writing courses, I believe I can use the grammar rules that I learned in class easily and correctly*). At the end of the spring term, the scale was readministered to the groups as appropriate to the teaching method.

Semi-structured interviews were utilized to collect qualitative data, and these interviews were held with 10 participants (five in-class and five online) agreeing to participate in Turkish. Interview questions addressed efficacy beliefs about general writing abilities (strengths and areas to improve) and the effect of the instructional method assigned to the group. For reliability concerns, the same students were interviewed at the end of each period, and they expressed their beliefs about general writing abilities, academic writing (paragraph and essay writing), and whether the instructional method influenced their writing self-efficacy.

2.4. Data Analysis

Several statistical and content analyses were conducted to address the research questions. For the analyses of quantitative data, descriptive statistics, Shapiro-Wilk normality test, Mann Whitney U test, and independent and paired samples T-tests were conducted. In this sense, the homogeneity of the groups was detected by performing the Shapiro-Wilk normality test before statistical analyses to compare the groups. First, the test was carried out for the data

collected in the pre-test design. The output of the test suggested significant values (in class; $p=.01$ and online $p=.00$) with skewness $-.40$ ($SE=.46$) and kurtosis of 4.09 ($SE=.90$) for in-class and skewness of -1.64 ($SE=.46$) and kurtosis of 5.08 ($SE=.90$) for online, suggesting nonparametric Mann Whitney U test to reveal any group differences. Second, the normality test was performed on the data collected at the end of the first instructional period. The output revealed that the data were normally distributed with statistically insignificant values (in-class; $p=.88$ with skewness of $-.03$ ($SE=.46$) and kurtosis of $-.20$ ($SE=.90$); online; $p=.67$ with skewness of $.30$ ($SE=.46$) and kurtosis of $-.25$ ($SE=.90$)) suggesting further parametric independent samples T-test to examine group differences. Similarly, the output of the test performed on the data collected in the second instructional period suggested that the variables did not have statistically significant values (in-class; $p=.26$ with skewness of $-.36$ ($SE=.47$) and kurtosis of $-.13$ (.91) online; $p=.42$ with skewness of $-.19$ ($SE=.47$) and kurtosis of $-.00$ ($SE=.91$)). Therefore, independent-samples T-test was conducted to reveal any group differences. Lastly, as the data had normal distribution, paired samples T-test was performed to detect in-group differences.

Qualitative data were analyzed by conducting thematic analyses on the data collected from the semi-structured interviews in accordance with the framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006; 2013). Concerning the reliability of the emerging codes and themes, also the appropriateness of translation of the participants' responses to report findings, qualitative data were analyzed by another researcher who was informed about the procedures. Therefore, codes and themes were agreed upon and finalized.

3. Findings

The first research question focused on how EFL learners consider their writing self-efficacy. To reveal that, quantitative data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed statistically. First, the participants' self-efficacy about general writing abilities was addressed by administering the questionnaire to both groups in the first week of the course in the pre-test design. The sub-scales of writing self-efficacy included content, design, unity, accuracy, and punctuation. Table 2 illustrates the writing self-efficacy beliefs of the sample before assigning them to instructional groups in in-class and online.

Table 2.

Descriptives of writing self-efficacy

Sub-scales	In-class <i>M (SD)</i>	Online <i>M (SD)</i>
content	4.35 (1.22)	4.50 (.98)
design	3.75 (.92)	4.01 (.77)
unity	4.05 (.96)	4.32 (.97)
accuracy	3.99 (.92)	4.09 (.82)
punctuation	4.12 (1.34)	4.30 (1.10)

As seen in the table, design and accuracy are the two dimensions that the learners have a lower level of self-efficacy. To this end, the items with the lowest mean scores were “*I find it easy to start writing on a given topic.*” for design (in class; $M=3.77$, $SD=1.60$ online; $M=4.32$, $SD=1.37$) and “*I can write error-free sentences in my paragraphs.*” for accuracy (in-class; $M=3.59$, $SD=1.04$ online; $M=3.60$, $SD=1.22$). Moreover, the analysis of nonparametric Mann Whitney U test suggested that the two groups were the same regarding their writing self-efficacy ($U=262$, $p=.16$).

Qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews supported the results that the participants had lower level of self-efficacy for design and accuracy for their writing. Table 3 demonstrates the themes and codes about general writing abilities that emerged from the interviews:

Table 3.

Themes and codes about general writing abilities

In-class	Online
Areas to improve (N=2) accuracy (grammar and vocabulary)	Areas to improve (N=4) accuracy (grammar) design
Self-awareness about the improvement of language knowledge and skills (N=3)	Self-awareness about the improvement of language knowledge and skills (N=2)

Also seen in the table, the interview participants reported that they had problems with sentence structure and construction of their paragraphs, which is in line with quantitative data finding the sub-scales of accuracy and design as having lower levels of efficacy. Regarding the lower level of self-efficacy in the design of paragraphs, they expressed that it stemmed from the lack of writing practice in their previous level of education, focusing only on form and taking tests. Therefore, it was the first time they engaged in academic writing (See an extract on the related finding).

S7 (online-in-class): *I believe this course improved my writing skills because we never practiced it in secondary or high school. We did not have that in exams, either. As we heavily focused on being admitted to the university, thus, the placement exam, we did not do any writing tasks. Therefore, it was the first time that I practiced writing through this course. I think I improved my skills over time.*

Overall, data analyses on the participants' writing self-efficacy revealed that they felt efficacious. However, they had a lower level of efficacy for accuracy and design in writing tasks, which was expressed as the result of previous learning experience and lack of writing practice.

Data were collected and analyzed in a mixed-method design to investigate if any factors influence EFL learners' preferences of the instructional method for writing (in-class or online). In this sense, the study groups were instructed in-class or online for an academic term and vice-versa for the second academic term. The scale was readministered, and interviews were held at the end of each term. Analyses of the data are as follows:

As also mentioned in the section above, there was no significant difference in efficacy beliefs between the study groups before the instruction. Statistical analyses were performed to examine if the participants' efficacy beliefs changed with any effect of the teaching method at the end of the first instructional period. With this respect, the analysis of independent-samples T-test suggested that scores were higher for the in-class instruction group ($M=5.45$, $SD=.77$) than online instruction group ($M=4.86$, $SD=.89$), $t(49)=2.54$, $p<.05$ with a medium effect size ($d=.71$) (Cohen, 1988). In addition to statistical data, interviews were held for in-depth analyses of the emerging results.

In the second instructional period, the groups were taught in the method different from the first period (in-class instruction was changed to online; online instruction was changed to in-class), and the same statistical tests were conducted. The output of independent samples T-

test indicated that there was no significant difference in the values of the in-class instruction group ($M=5.49$, $SD=.68$) and online instruction group ($M=5.16$, $SD=.99$), $t(47)=1.345$, $p>.05$.

Moreover, it was aimed to detect if there were significant changes in writing self-efficacy beliefs of a group between the first and the second instructional period, and it was found out that while there was no significant difference in the scores of the first group taught in-class and online (first period; $M=5.50$, $SD=.78$; second period; $M=5.16$, $SD=.99$), $t(23)=1.57$, $p>.05$, scores of the second group were significantly higher in in-class instruction ($M=5.49$, $SD=.68$) than in online instruction ($M=4.86$, $SD=.89$), $t(24)=3.07$, $p=.005$, $d=.77$.

Analyses of the interviews revealed data on the effect of in-class and online instruction for writing (See Table 4 for the themes and codes of the interviews with the in-class-online instructional group).

Table 4.

Themes and codes of the interviews with the first group

In-class instruction	Online instruction
Positive effect of in-class instruction (N=5) providing opportunities for immediate corrective feedback	Positive effect of online instruction (N=2) promoting learner autonomy and self- regulated learning Preferences for in-class instruction providing opportunities for immediate corrective feedback (N=5) providing opportunities for social interaction (N=4) boosting perception about the importance of the course (N=2)

(Also see Table 5 for the themes and codes of the interviews with the online-in-class instructional group)

Table 5.

Themes and codes of the interviews with the second group

Online instruction	In-class instruction
Positive effect of online instruction (N=2) promoting learner autonomy and self- regulated learning Negative effect of online instruction (N=1) technical problems (e.g., internet connection)	Positive effect of in-class instruction providing opportunities for immediate corrective feedback (N=5) providing opportunities for social interaction (N=4) boosting perception about the importance of the course (N=1)
Positive effect of teacher regardless of instructional method (N=2)	Positive effect of teacher regardless of instructional method (N=2)

As seen in the tables, both groups experiencing the two instructional methods reported advantages and/or disadvantages of in-class and online writing instruction. Table 4 illustrates the responses of the first group taught in-class in the first period and online in the second. In addition to the same codes as the second group, this group also reported that they preferred in-class instruction to online one, and they could not do well in the online course and did not mind it due to lack of motivation. As for the common themes, the primary

advantage of in-class writing instruction was reported to be immediate feedback provided, as each participant emphasized in the interview. Providing social interaction was the other advantage of in-class writing on self-efficacy beliefs reported while it was to enhance self-regulated learning for online instruction. Furthermore, the second group highlighted the effect of teachers' quality for two periods by suggesting consistency of the responses (See extracts on the emerging themes and codes below).

One of the themes and codes was on the advantage of in-class instruction, as presented below:

S1 (in-class-online): *...Even though the online course was also OK, I could ask the teacher if my writing was alright and "is my word choice OK?" or I could ask for help "I can't generate this sentence" in the in-class writing course. Also, the teacher would explain my errors at that time, so we could realize them immediately. Therefore, I think the in-class writing course was more effective than the online one. The online course can also be effective, but that can't be as effective as the in-class one in terms of interaction with the teacher. Also, interaction in class was better. Thus, I prefer in-class one.*

Promoting learner autonomy and self-regulated learning was the theme related to the advantage of online writing instruction:

S3 (in-class-online): *To me, I could focus more on writing during the online course as I was alone directly looking at the screen for instruction, and it was like tuition. Of course, it is because of my personality. What is more, we would write at the same time as everyone in the class, but in the online course, we would write individually, so I felt relaxed while writing.*

Another code emerged to be a positive effect of the teacher regardless of the teaching method:

S10 (online-in-class): *I didn't have any problems in the online course. In-class or online, it doesn't matter. I think it is all about the teacher. If the teacher teaches well, it is alright whether the lesson is in-class or online. Thus, we had a good time online.*

The perceived importance of the lesson was the theme related to in-class instruction, as seen below:

S2 (in-class-online): *In online courses, I wasn't interested in the lessons. At first, I attended the courses, but I didn't complete my assignment. I totally forgot that, and I always missed the deadlines for submission. I never engaged in the process, and I didn't attend the courses later, so online lessons were not effective for me.*

In conclusion, data analyses revealed that the participants had a lower level of writing self-efficacy for accuracy and design, reported to be caused by the lack of practice in writing. As to the effect of the instructional method, it could be concluded that even though statistical analyses suggested that there was no significant difference between the study groups in their writing self-efficacy beliefs, there was a positive tendency towards in-class instruction considering higher self-efficacy levels through in-class writing course, which was also reported in the interviews.

4. Discussion

The current study aiming to investigate EFL learners' writing self-efficacy beliefs and the factors affecting their preferences of the instructional method related to their perceived self-efficacy sets forth findings that could contribute to existing research. To start with, EFL learners' writing self-efficacy beliefs were addressed, and the findings were in line with the definition and what has been suggested about writing and writing self-efficacy in the literature. In this sense, writing is stated to include cognitive and social properties such as planning, monitoring, evaluating, and help-seeking (e.g., Hayes, 2012; Kulusaklı, 2021; Mitchell et al., 2019; Teng et al., 2018). The data of this study proposed that the participants perceived an awareness of their abilities in the writing process. As for writing self-efficacy, it has been suggested that it is associated with writing performance, motivation, and self-regulated learning (e.g., Pajares & Valiente, 2001; 2006; Teng et al., 2018). To this end, the results of this study, especially emerging from the interviews, put forward that writing self-efficacy is related to motivation and self-regulated learning.

Another concern of the present study was to examine if the instructional method was associated with writing self-efficacy. With this respect, in-class and online writing instructions were addressed within the scope of the research. In the literature, it is implied that one advantage of online teaching is that students can learn at their own pace and access course materials when necessary (Krug et al., 2016), which was suggested in this study. On the contrary, the study provides findings about the disadvantages of online teaching, reported to be basically the lack of social interaction and opportunities for immediate feedback. These findings align with existing research findings (e.g., McVey, 2008; Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006). Yet, there is also research focusing on getting feedback in online teaching and suggesting that thanks to teacher effort, getting feedback can be handled in online teaching (Xu, 2021). This can also be supported by the findings of the current study since one of the revealing themes of the online-in-class group was the effect of teachers regardless of the teaching method. Moreover, this study supports findings indicating the connection between online writing instruction and decreased motivation (e.g., Meşe & Sevilen, 2021), as was reported in the interviews. To this end, it could be associated with the finding that participants in one group reported that they could not do well in online writing courses and did not care about writing courses. This finding concurs with existing research reporting that learners' perceptions about how they value their performance affect the importance they attach to writing tasks and activities in the EFL context (e.g., Pajares, 2003; Schunk & Pajares, 2010). Overall, this study contributes to existing research by specifying the advantages and disadvantages of online teaching in writing self-efficacy.

As well as online teaching and writing self-efficacy connection, this study also suggests findings about in-class teaching. To this end, there was a tendency toward in-class writing instruction regarding self-efficacy beliefs. The major reasons for that were reported to be immediate feedback received and social interaction promoted through in-class teaching. This finding is in line with previous research (e.g., Mitchell et al., 2019). In their study, Mitchell et al. (2019) searched for learners' preferences of help-seeking, revision, and response to feedback habits, and they found that through instruction, students can cope with negative feelings and find ways for help-seeking and asking for feedback, in turn, it promotes writing self-efficacy beliefs.

To summarize, this study presents findings that could help understand the related concepts better by providing empirical data on a two-sided issue: in-class or online instruction for

writing self-efficacy. The overall indication is that in-class instruction has more positive effects on EFL learners' writing self-efficacy beliefs as it provides two basic benefits: immediate corrective feedback and social interaction.

5. Conclusion

The findings of the study focusing on EFL learners' writing self-efficacy and whether in-class or online instruction of the course influences their efficacy beliefs lead to several educational implications on teaching L2 writing. Based on the finding that the learners did not practice writing but took multiple-choice tests instead, one of the educational implications could be that language knowledge and skills should be focused on in language programs in equal terms. Thus, their writing abilities could improve, and, in turn, self-efficacy beliefs could be promoted. Second, the participants' preferences for in-class and/or online instruction depended on the benefits or drawbacks of the methods. Getting immediate feedback and self-regulated and self-paced learning were the needs reported. Therefore, while online writing instruction is to be integrated with more opportunities for immediate feedback, in-class instruction could be organized to consider individual differences and allow independent learning. The finding could support this implication that the participants emphasized the effect of teachers considering these points regardless of the method.

The findings and implications of this research are to be considered in light of some limitations. First, the sample size may hinder the generalization of the findings. Second, the interpretation of the results is based on the research design and responses of the participants and may yield different findings in other contexts. Thus, one suggestion for further studies is to conduct similar studies to compare the findings of this research. Furthermore, this study suggests findings about the participants' views about their writing efficacy and the effect of the teacher or past learning experiences in relation to instructional methods, which may be a focus in further studies.

Note on Ethical Issues

The author confirms that ethical approval was obtained from Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University (Approval Date: 08.12.2021).

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