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The Effects of the Use of Blogs on the Writing Performances and Perceptions of Turkish Learners

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Abstract

The research aimed to research the effects of blogging on Turkish EFL learners' writing performances and perceptions. The study embraced 20 Turkish EFL learners from Gazi University's School of Foreign Languages. The research was separated into three parts: (1) the effects of blog use on learners' writing performances, (2) the effects of blog use on learners' perception, and (3) the association of learners' perception of blog usage with their writing performances. Data were obtained by utilizing six blog writing assignments including 12 drafts in total writing, (2) interviews made at the outset and finalization of the term, and (3) a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. There are 24 items in total. The information was obtained both qualitatively and quantitatively. The research lasted 14 weeks. Findings revealed that blog-incorporated writing classes improved learners' writing abilities. The learners had a favourable opinion of using blogs in writing instruction. There was no substantial relationship between overall perception scores and student writing performance. However, the general perception of the learners was related to the student's motivation to utilize blogs. The writing process and writing performances had a substantial relationship. While the blog writing technique was in progress, the student's writing skills improved simultaneously. Furthermore, there was a significant association between the writing process and motivation, indicating that the student's motivation increased due to using the blog.

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Introduction

Writing is an arduous skill to master when compared with other basic skills (speaking, listening, reading) (Bal,2021; Pandey,2020;Prihatmi, 2017) Hedge (2008) reported that writing is an ongoing procedure comprising various activities: defining objectives, developing ideas, arranging material, establishing a relevant language, producing a draft, reading and revising it, and rewriting and editing. According to several studies (Ariyanti & Listyani, 2017; Bolsunovskaya & Rymanova, 2020; Budjalemba & Listyani, 2020), one of the difficulties in writing is that it takes a long time to write. Thus, learners may become reluctant to write because of the lengthy period to produce new content. The lengthy procedure appears far more adverse, and the classroom environment might be intimidating to learners during writing sessions.

Consequently, scholars have proposed numerous approaches in recent years to eliminate this challenging environment (Ariyanti & Listyani, 2017). Over the last decade, scholars have discovered that learners have a good attitude toward ICT in writing. Weblogs have benefited writing by offering an educational place for learners both within and outside the learning environment (Putri, Inderawati & Jaya, 2022). Wikis, blogs, social networks, blogs (video blogs), and podcasts have received much attention in written communication. Such tools allow users to exchange their opinions, thoughts, experiences, and points of view with other cyber citizens, and blogging allows learners to use their time flexibly by taking the hard and long process they allocate for the writing process outside of class. Web tools allow learners to employ this long writing period outside class (Kang, Bonk, & Kim, 2011).

The Use of Blogs in EFL Writing

In today's technologically advanced period, there have been several breakthroughs and improvements in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Thus, an educational system without benefitting from information and communication technologies is simply unthinkable in the modern world. (Inderawati, Petrus & Jaya, 2019; Kumar, 2020). Over the last decade, scholars discovered that learners have a good attitude toward ICT integration in writing. Weblog, considered to enhance writing by offering an educational setting for learners both within and outside the classroom, is one novelty that assists learners in finding opportunities for utilizing writing in the contemporary era (Putri et al., 2022). By means of these technological integrations, the aspect and the facet of writing in an EFL setting have altered. Weblogs and other web 2.0 tools have taken the role of the conventional lecture

approach of teaching writing in the current period. ICT usage as a teaching tool for transferring knowledge to learners has become a teacher prerequisite. Integrating authentic ICT tools into instruction can enhance learners' writing performances (Inderawati, et al., 2019). According to a study conducted in the Chinese EFL writing setting, learners' enthusiasm and involvement in L2 writing classes in various learning environments serve a critical role in learners' writing performances (Yu, Zhou, Zheng, Zhang, Cao & Li, 2019). Due to a lack of practice in authentic circumstances, EFL learners need help to write in the target language in a regular classroom. Social constructivism reflects that learners learn by engaging with other learners in contexts; they construct knowledge by discovering, engaging, comprehending, and experiencing social situations. Thus, teachers are expected to constitute technologically instructional and social settings to elaborate learners' learning from all angles. In this concept, a weblog can be utilized as one of the instructional tools to get learners to construct knowledge by socializing in English language teaching (Fu, Lin, Hwan & Zhang, 2019).

Previous Studies Focusing on the Integration of Blogs into EFL Writing

Siddique, Rizwan, and Khan (2023) implemented a study to measure the usefulness of blogging in increasing writing abilities in EFL learners in secondary school. The learners' blog writings were evaluated concerning text organization and content. An experimental design was adopted to assess the effects of blogging and pen-and-paper instruments on the participants. Sixty-eight learners were randomly assigned to a blogging or pen-and-paper group. Throughout the eight-week intervention period, learners in both groups composed 24 texts following the program of the research. The results of this study revealed that the impact of blogging was noteworthy in terms of text organization and content. Technology, the internet, peer review, and peer feedback encouraged the learners to write with eagerness; they also preferred a novel approach to learning over conventional methods of executing and mastering writing. Perumal (2022) investigates blogs' contributions to improving learners' writing performances. The findings designated learners' English writing abilities improved after socializing and collaborating on weblogs. Participants felt that weblogs are beneficial and crucial tools for improving learners' writing abilities and had positive views toward employing weblogs in the classroom. Bal (2021) conducted a study to evaluate the perspectives and preferences of 28 EFL learners after the participants had created their writing content within weblogs for eight weeks. The researcher practiced WordPress blogs to enhance writing instruction. The learners were expected to develop an essay and post it on their blog page once a week. Semi-structured

interviews were administered with ten learners selected randomly to determine their perceptions regarding blogs and choices for writing lessons at the final stage of the intervention. In contrast to earlier studies on blog writing in EFL classes, these findings demonstrated the learners' promising perceptions about their self-confidence, digital literacy, and writing habits. It was concluded that the participants favored weblog writing instead of conventional paper-based tasks. Sütçü (2020) aimed to evaluate the effects of a blog on academic writing and examine undergraduate English language learners' perceptions of weblog writing. The findings revealed that learners who utilized weblog in their academic work had much higher scores of achievements, showing that weblog enhances their ability to write. In addition to these results, learners displayed a favorable perspective toward operating blogs in their writing, implying that learners with a positive view toward blogging are prone to be more effective writers. Previously addressed studies indicated that blog integration into EFL writing instruction increased the learners' writing performances in connection with text design and context creation and their self-confidence toward writing. It can add some up-to-date component into conventional writing sessions and be preferred instead of pen and paper writing; hence, it enhances motivation and positive perception regarding writing. Unlike the findings of current studies, blog writing may not be defined as a highly effective tool for writing instruction in the EFL context. Chen, Cheng, and Lin (2020) compared the linguistic performance and perceptions of two groups of learners in a blog-integrated writing class as a foreign language (EFL) undergraduate writing course in Taiwan. The fluency levels of the two groups were compared. Language performance, accuracy, and lexical complexity are substantial factors. They were also compared based on their opinions of the course of study regarding the instructor's teaching style, the course's facilitative influence on their learning to write, their interests/preferences, and the course's effect on their writing confidence. The findings indicated that there were not any major differences in linguistic ability between the two courses. However, intra-group studies demonstrated that each group improved writing accuracy and fluency. While most learners had favorable views concerning their field of study, there were no significant distinctions in opinion between the two groups. With regard to the experimental class's perceptions of blogging to write, the learners found the blog-integrated class enjoyable. Even blogging has little impact on the learners' writing performances. All the studies above favored blog integration instead of a conventional writing environment in the EFL setting. Thus, the problem identified for this research is that in-class writing lessons are becoming less popular. It might become outdated with the incorporation of Web 2.0 tools into teaching. Traditional writing teaching has numerous drawbacks. The main issue with in-class writing

training is that it occupies a long time (Hyland, 2008). This study aims to examine the impacts of blogging on the writing abilities and perspectives of Turkish EFL learners. The research questions of the present study are as follows:

1. Does the use of blogs improve EFL students' writing performances?
2. What are the perceptions of students towards blogs through writing tools?
 - a. Do students' perceptions of blog application affect their writing performances?

Methodology

This study sought to discover the use of blog in foreign language writing context; especially it attempted to shed light on the impact of the use of blog, in other words, the effects of web-based writing (e-writing) on EFL learners' writing performances and learners' perceptions of the use of blog in writing instruction. To investigate the effects of the use of blog on students' writing performances, the first three and the last three blog assignments written by the participants were compared. The researcher also conducted semi-structured interviews to analyze the students' perceptions on blog as a writing tool. Moreover, a five-point Likert scale was also employed to examine and gain a better understanding related to the perception of the learners towards blog implementation.

Research Design

A mixed method design and a survey method were executed to gather data to explore learners' perspectives on blog utilization. In addition, considering the classroom context, the teacher researcher did action research, which has been widely used in the research methods (Murcia, 2001; Nunan & Bailey, 2009). Richards and Lockhart (1996) identify action research in L2 education as 'teacher-initiated classroom investigation which seeks to increase the teacher's understanding of classroom teaching and learning and to bring about change in classroom practice' (cited in Krastel & Lacorte, 2000, p. 43). Initially, the teacher researcher should identify obstacles in the class. Second, the researcher must organize and act. The researcher monitors the action phase subsequent to implementing the action plan. Finally, the process includes a reflection part. The study findings are presented in the reflection section, and the research method is examined to determine whether it is effective. This cycle continues until the problem is resolved in the learning environment (Krastel & Lacorte, 2000, p. 43). The current study's challenge in the classroom was the learners' negative attitudes toward writing. The teacher-researcher discovered that learners were unwilling to write and did not complete

their writing tasks because they found the in-class and out-of-class writing procedures could have been more interesting and effective. The teacher-researcher implemented an action research technique to change this negative perspective.

Participants

The study encompassed 20 learners from Gazi University's School of Foreign Languages. Because of the curriculum and administrative constraints of the school, a convenience sampling method was utilized, which 'involves selecting the nearest persons to serve as respondents' (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 88). The learners were informed of the study's goal and scope for ethical reasons, and their real names would not be utilized. Except for two of the 22 registered learners, they all chose to take part in the study after the procedure was explained comprehensively.

Data Collection Tools

Data were obtained through a blog writing technique, a questionnaire, and a semi-structured student interview. At the outset of the study, the first portfolio writing was exercised in the classroom to give a model paragraph for the starter learners. The goal and scope of the study, as well as the blog method, were then described to the participants. Taking an account, updating profile, finding classmates, sharing photographs and videos, publishing writing assignments on blog, and commenting on others' blogs were all covered in detail with reflected slides on the board. Following the presentation, two volunteers signed up for an account in front of the classroom to serve as a model. The teacher-researcher set seven portfolio writing projects, each with a first and second draft. When the participants submitted their initial draft, the researcher provided structured feedback on each draft time. Following that, the participants published their second, final versions, which were rated by the researcher using the rubric. The first three and last three blog assignments created by learners were examined to explore the impact of blog use on learners' writing achievements. The investigator conducted semi-structured interviews with learners to examine their perspectives on blogs as a writing medium. A five-point Likert scale was also utilized to analyze the respondents' opinions towards blog integration into writing as a post perception survey. The questionnaire embodies 24 items derived from Cunningham (2000) and Chuo (2004) in Kızıl's research (2007). The items were organized into five categories: '(1) blog influence on writing performance, (2) feedback and

revision impacts, (3) interest and motivation, (4) autonomous learning, and (5) technology use'. The information was obtained both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Data Collection Procedure

The information was gathered through a blog writing technique, a questionnaire, and a semi-structured student interview. At the outset of the research, the first portfolio writing was used in the classroom to provide a model paragraph for the learners. The goal and scope of the study, as well as the blog method, were then described to the participants. Following the presentation of a model blog session, the teacher-researcher set seven portfolio writing tasks, each of which includes first and second drafts. When the participants' first drafts were published, the researcher provided feedback on each draft at a predetermined time. Then the participants published final versions, which were rated by the researcher using the rubric. The research took 14 weeks. A perception questionnaire, participant writing scores, and before and post-interviews were resorted to collect qualitative and quantitative data.

Data Analysis

In the present research, data collection instruments were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to examine the data. The data-gathering instruments were writing assignments, pre- and post-interviews, and post-questionnaires administered to the respondents. The data needed to respond to the first research question, "Does blogging improve learners' writing performances?" were gathered using writing assignments to see whether there was a significant discrepancy between the student's first three and last three blog entries. The statistics were gathered using the learners' writing scores. The 'Paired Sample t-test' was used to determine whether there was a variation between the respondents' first three writing scores and their last three writing scores. To investigate whether the level of learners' opinions of blog use for writing lessons could positively correlate with the level of learners' improved writing performance, a questionnaire was administered to address the research question "What are the perceptions of learners towards blogs as a writing tool?" and "Does learners' perceptions of blog application affect their writing performances?" As a result, the Pearson product-moment correlation was used. The questionnaire and writing assignments were administered to collect consistent data. The Pearson correlation measures the strength of correlations between continuous variables. According to Lena and Margaret (2010), "the Pearson correlation coefficient is a widely used measure of linear dependence between two random variables of the same length" (p. 679). To

address the second research question, "What are learners' perceptions of blogs as a writing tool?" content analysis was performed. Data for content analysis were acquired through pre- and post-interviews.

Results

The section of the manuscript is organized into three parts, each corresponding to one research question. The results of the data analysis are given and discussed in the order of the questions.

Results of Writing Performances

The research question "Does the use of blog improve learners' writing performances?" was addressed to determine the impact of blogging on the writing performances of the participants. The variation in the writing scores of the learners is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. The comparison of First 3 & Last 3 Writing Assignments

TEST	N	Mean	SS	T-test		
				T	S.D.	Sig
Pre-Test	20	82.6	1.537	-5.865	20	0.000
Post-Test	20	87.8	1.212			

A paired-sample t-test was employed to measure if the participants performed better writing tasks in their last three drafts. The outcome of a paired-sample t-analysis identified a significant difference between learners' first three and last three drafts ($p < 0.05$). Table 1 indicated that the intervention led to a meaningful, significant ($p < 0.05$) difference between pre- and post-drafts. ($T = -5.865$, $\text{sig} = 0.000$). The writing performances of the learners improved during the blog procedure. As seen in Table 1, the participants improved their writing scores from a pre-test mean of 82.6 to a post-writing mean of 87.8. According to the findings of this comparison, the blogging technique can help learners improve their writing abilities. Incorporating blogs into writing education positively impacted the learners' writing performances.

Results of the Participants' Perceptions of Blog Writing

The learners' opinions of blog use were assessed using a post-perception questionnaire and pre- and post-interviews. The following sections describe the outcomes of these two instruments in more detail.

Post-Perception Questionnaire

To determine the answer to the second research question, "What are learners' perceptions of blogs as a writing tool?", a post perception scale was conducted. The essential data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Furthermore, the findings were classified into five groups: (1) blog influence on writing performance, (2) feedback and revision impacts, (3) interest and motivation, (4) autonomous learning, and (5) technology use'. Table 2 displays the averages, frequency percentages, and standard deviations of learners' perceptions of blog usage.

Table 2. Impact of blog on overall writing performance

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		SD	\bar{X}
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Promoted writing performance	-	-	-	-	3	15	13	65	4	20	0.605	4.05
Negatively influenced writing performance	11	55	8	40	1	5	-	-	-	-	0.582	1.45
Resulted in writing attentively	-	-	1	5	-	-	11	55	8	40	0.619	4.37

As specified in Table 2, 85% of the respondents stated that blogging improved their writing abilities. They had no positive or negative attitudes toward blogging. To elicit natural responses from participants, they were questioned if blogging negatively influenced their writing performance. According to the findings, 55% of the respondents strongly disagreed that blogging had a detrimental impact on their writing abilities. Furthermore, 40% of them disagreed with the negative impact of blogs. 95 % students reported that blogging resulted in writing attentively. As a result, most learners reported that blog writing enhanced their writing abilities ($X=4.05$). Besides contributing to the student's overall writing performances, the writing components (content, vocabulary, language use, and organization) were examined to determine the most influenced aspects.

Table 3. Impact of blog on the components of writing

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		SD	\bar{X}
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Content	-	-	1	5	-	-	5	25	14	70	0.754	4.60
Vocabulary	-	-	1	5	2	10	10	50	7	35	0.813	4.15
Language	-	-	1	5	-	-	15	75	4	20	0.641	4.10
Organization	-	-	1	5	-	-	8	40	11	55	0.759	4.45

As noticed in Table 3, 95% of learners reported focusing more on the content when they published their writings on a blog. These learners reported that the blog positively affected the writing components. The content part had the highest mean ($X = 4.6$). The second element that was given greater emphasis while writing on the blog was organization ($X = 4.45$). Furthermore, 55 % denoted that blogging helped them enhance their vocabulary and linguistic skills.

The learners were asked to share their thoughts on the impact of feedback and revision on their writing abilities. Table 4 displays the averages, frequency, and standard deviation of learners' perceptions of blog usage after feedback and revision.

Table 4. Impact of blog on feedback and revision

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		SD	\bar{X}
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Reviewing peers' writing & giving feedback promote writing	-	-	-	-	5	25	8	40	7	35	0.788	4.10
Revision and editing peer writing	-	-	1	5	1	5	7	35	11	55	0.821	4.40
Blog use makes revision of the peers' writing easier	-	-	-	-	1	5	6	30	13	65	0.598	4.60
Seeing the feedback to peers via blog is advantageous	-	-	-	-	3	15	7	35	10	50	0.745	4.35
Receiving feedback from peers is advantageous	-	-	2	10	3	15	6	30	9	45	1.021	4.10

According to the table, 75% of the learners said that examining their classmates' assignments and providing feedback via blog enhanced their writing performances ($x= 4.10$). However, 25% of the learners said nothing about it. 90% of learners remarked that blogging allowed them to easily review and edit their writing tasks ($x= 4.40$). 95% of the respondents reported that they easily reviewed their peers' writings via blog ($x= 4.60$). One of the learners appeared unconcerned about the situation. While 85% of participants reported that feedback from their peers via blog benefited their writing achievements ($x= 4.35$), 15% of those respondents had yet to learn what it was. Blogs were considered ineffective for receiving peer input by 10% of participants. 15% of the pupils were unaware that they might receive feedback from their peers. Obtaining feedback from classmates was beneficial to 75% of the learners ($x= 4.10$). Table 5 indicates how the blogging procedure affected learners' interactions with peers

and teachers. Furthermore, self-selected materials and a reflection on the learning procedure were incorporated.

Table 5. The impact of blog on interaction and self-reflection

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		SD	\bar{X}
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Interaction with peers	1	5	1	5	6	30	8	40	4	20	1.040	3.65
Interaction with teachers	-	-	3	15	4	20	8	40	5	25	1.020	3.75
Self selected course materials	-	-	-	-	3	15	8	40	9	45	0.733	4.30
Reflection on learning process	-	-	-	-	3	15	11	55	6	30	0.671	4.15

10% of learners expressed dissatisfaction with receiving lots of feedback from their classmates. 30% of learners were indifferent to blog interactions with peers. 60% of participants reported having much interaction using a blog ($x = 3.65$). As a result, blogging may improve peer interaction. While 15% of the participants disagreed that they had plenty of interaction with teachers, 65% of the learners said that they experienced plenty of communication with the instructor via blog ($x = 3.75$). 85% of participants preferred blog integration as a self-selected course material and 85% of participants appreciated the impact of blog on self-reflection on their learning process.

Correlation of Writing Performances and Perceptions

To investigate the research question "How do learners' perceptions of blog applications affect their writing performances?", the level of the participants' perception scores derived from blog perception Likert scale including subtitles such as motivation, independent learning and writing process was analyzed concerning the learners' advanced writing performance to see if they were associated. To determine whether there was a relevant association between

learners' perceptions and their writing performances, the Pearson Correlation test was used to evaluate the data.

Table 5. Pearson correlation of perceptions and writing performances

		Writing Performance	Motivation	Independent Learning	Writing Process	Overall Perception	WP Pre-Test	WP Post-Test
Writing Performance	Correlation	1.000						
	p	-						
	N	20						
Motivation	Correlation	0.443	1.000					
	p	0.051	-					
	N	20	20					
Independent Learning	Correlation	0.346	0.519	1.000				
	p	0.135	0.019	-				
	N	20	20	20				
Writing Process	Correlation	0.924	0.477	0.397	1.000			
	p	0.000	0.034	0.083	-			
	N	20	20	20	20			
Overall Perception	Correlation	0.278	0.573	-0.051	0.195	1.000		
	p	0.235	0.008	0.830	0.411	-		
	N	20	20	20	20	20		
WP Pre-Test	Correlation	0.300	0.012	-0.048	0.257	0.302	1.000	
	p	0.199	0.961	0.842	0.275	0.196	-	
	N	20	20	20	20	20	20	
WP Post-Test	Correlation	0.267	0.177	0.016	0.216	0.359	0.821	1.000
	p	0.255	0.455	0.946	0.360	0.121	0.000	-
	N	20	20	20	20	20	20	20

As could be distinguished in the table, there was no significant relationship between overall perception evaluations and student writing performances because the p-value was greater than 0.005. This circumstance explains why the participants' positive evaluations of the blog application did not affect the learners' improved writing performances in the post-test (last three blog entries). However, learners' overall perceptions were related to their motivation to use the blog. The writing process and performance had a significant connection (p 0.005). While the blog writing technique was in progress, the student's writing abilities improved at the same time. There was a significant association between the writing process and motivation.

The Results of the Interview

Six themes were identified as a result of the pre- and post-interview questions. They appear in the following order: 1) Pedagogical Aspect, 2) Feedback Aspect (teacher, student, and immediate feedback), 3) Peer Evaluation and Real Audience Awareness Aspect, 4) Technology Aspect (technology literacy, experiences with technology, technology utility), 5) Affective Aspect (pleasure perspective, resistance/demanding perspective), and 6) Web-based versus Paper-based Aspect.

Pedagogical Aspect

This aspect incorporates the learners' views of the blog as an educational tool. Based on the comments supplied by the participants via the pre- and post-interviews, the pedagogical element showed the participants' negative and positive viewpoints. At the beginning of the blog treatment, just 10 participants regarded blogging as a useful and educational medium. However, at the end of the procedure, 17 learners specified blogging was useful, while three said it was pointless. In the pre- and post-interviews, both favorable and negative evaluations of blog integration were stated as understood from the quotations below.

At the beginning of the intervention, one student stated that “We need to improve our writing skills. Blogging may be a challenging experience; however, I hope it will be useful. It can improve our language learning process” (S1). He affirmed at the end of the procedure: “It’s instructional. You can get cues from others’ writing about the thing you write. That is the reason I call it instructional. In addition to this, we can learn the correct form of some difficult vocabulary items. Consequently, it is very useful and nice” (S1).

Feedback Aspect

This aspect is divided into two subcategories: teacher feedback and immediate feedback. For each category, the participants' statements are given below, respectively.

Teachers' Feedback

Throughout the blog writing procedure, teachers gave feedback. For the first and second drafts, each student was provided feedback. Most learners enjoyed the teacher feedback and indicated that it helped them enhance their writing accomplishments, broaden their vocabulary knowledge, and learn novel patterns. At the outset of the blog treatment, one interviewee expressed that “*When I write the portfolio on blog, the things that I have learnt and the feedback that you (teacher) provide are more consistent. Thus, blog is more beneficial*” (S7). At the end of the blogging process, one of the students said that “*Blogging affected me in a positive way. I used to make lots of mistakes while writing on a paper. Even if I used the correct structures in terms of meaning, I used to write the spelling of the words incorrectly. It is very easy to write “waiter”, but instead of this, I used to write “wait”. However, we can see these*

mistakes on blogger immediately and easily. We can correct the mistakes easily with your clear feedback” (S1).

- “I think that I improved my writing when I received feedback from you and evaluate my texts. I also expanded my vocabulary knowledge while reading my friends’ blog posts” (S11).

- “When you provide feedback below the assignments, I can easily understand and learn something by my mistakes. I like your feedbacks. With the help of my mistake, I can clearly notice my mistake” (S18).

Immediate Feedback

The nature of blogs allows for immediate feedback (Zhang, 2009). When the blog owner enters his/her publishing on the blog, everyone in his/her circle (including friends the holder adds or accepts) may read the owner's publishing, and the friend of the blog owner can immediately submit a response under the publishing. The learners described the blogging experience as 'instructive, constructive, beneficial, and valuable' due to the nature of the blog's instant feedback. The respondents noted that:

- “There is an immediate correction. When we make a mistake, we can immediately notice and correct it. As a result, blogger is more instructive than pen and paper instruction” (S1).

- “I can write long and complicated words more easily now. It was beneficial for me. I have learnt collocations as we always see and write” (S2).

- “I can see what my friends write, and I can correct my mistakes in a short time while checking their assignments. Our friends can comment on our writings which we give to the instructor. I find it useful in this respect” (S9).

Peer Evaluation and Real Audience Awareness Aspect

This component was derived from the most expressed phrases of the participants. Since their peers read their blog writings, 14 learners reported that they provided extra attention to their tasks. Most learners, encompassing those who declared blogs useless at the beginning and

end of the intervention, stated that they needed to revise their assignments several times before publishing them on their blog pages because their peers followed everything they posted on their blogs. This feature highlighted the significance of peer evaluation, which prompted learners to be conscious of what they published. Some of the respondents discuss about peer evaluation as below:

- *“I don’t think my writing skill would improve this much with writing on paper. I see my friends writing on paper, they are bored, and they don’t think it improves their writing. There is a thought: we only write and give. But we are in a psychological situation: as our friends can see what we write on paper, we pay much more attention to what we write on blog. And it appeals more to me” (S7).*

- *“We can follow our friends’ blogs and get some ideas about our assignments. With the help of following our blogs, we have an opportunity to improve ourselves” (S4).*

- *“I think blog will improve our writing performance. Everybody can see our blogs, so we have to pay more attention to our blogs while sharing our assignments on blog. I can improve myself because I have tried not to make mistake” (S8).*

Technology Aspect

The technology aspect is primarily concerned with the incorporation of technology into educational settings. This element is separated into three areas based on participant answers: technology literacy, experiences with the use of technology, and its utility.

Technology Literacy

According to the International Technology Education Association (2007), educational technology is defined as employing "technology as a tool to enhance the teaching and learning process." Consequently, incorporating technology in education can be defined as a tool that is meant to facilitate learners' learning processes. The blog application was used on the participants based on this notion. With reference to integration of blog in their writing sessions, they provided both positive and negative perceptions. Some participants expressed their negative perspectives towards blogging as below:

- *“In fact, I am not really into technology. I like writing on paper, and I have found blog and surfing on the internet tiring” (S14).*

- *“I think blogging did not help so much to improve my computer skills.” (S10)*

However, a great number of respondents denoted that they improved their technology literacy with the help of blogging. Through their explanations below, many of them can be named as ‘technology literate students’ (Warschauer, 2006).

- *“Paper-based assignments are out-of-date. It was difficult at the beginning, but it is easier now” (S4).*

- *“As I have had computer and internet access since I was a child, blogging is easy for me. I had some difficulty in publishing, but it is easy now” (S1).*

- *“It is easy. I have been using computer since I was a child. I can use it easily” (S19).*

- *“We are in technology era and we should be good at using computers. Using blog is better because it is we can share things faster with other people” (S9).*

Experiences with the use of technology

Most of the learners displayed a strong interest in technology. Furthermore, all of the learners claimed to be members of social networking sites. Only two students explained that they found technology tiring, time-consuming. One of them remarked that:

- *“I don’t like technology. I am a kind of traditional one. I like paper and pencil style” (S14).* Technology literate students expressed that:

- *“I have chatted with foreign people via internet sites/chat rooms” (S1).*

- *“I have used class ware before” (S4).*

- *“I have prepared slide show at high school. Using technology in education assist us obtain information more quickly” (S9).*

- *“Writing with paper and pencil is out of fashion. Technology is the fact of our time. Also, my computer skills are getting better and better” (S5).*

- *“We used smart board at high school. While doing our research at high school, we surfed on the net a lot” (S6).*

- *“We are in an age of technology, so we need to keep up with technology” (S8).* - *“For our homework, we had to goggle on the net” (S11).*

Utility of Technology

All participants praised the Web's quick access to information. The participants could get what they needed on the Web thanks to quick data transfer. The majority of the learners stated that using online dictionaries helped them create new structures without making spelling mistakes. Participants responded that using new words on their blog accounts made the *new vocabulary items more memorable*.

- *“When I write new structures on my blog, they can be more memorable. For example, I have forced myself while remembering the spelling of new vocabulary items but on blog I can immediately check the spelling of new vocabularies. I don't spend time to look up my dictionaries to find vocabulary items. I just type the unknown vocabulary item and see/learn what it means. That's all” (S7).*

- *“We can quickly reach information that we need to do our homework. I can search for unknown vocabulary items on online dictionaries. I can find vocabulary items in a short time so I can easily check how it is spelled or what it means” (S6).*

- *“In terms of technological developments, blog will be useful both for our personal developments and writing performance. It seems more stylish among teens” (S8).*

- *“I am more careful while writing on blog. We can lose the paper, but it can't happen on blog. We can access it whenever we want” (S10).*

Affective Aspect

Many learners mentioned they enjoyed blogging, yet several learners voiced unhappiness. The pleasure and resistance aspects were incorporated into the affective aspects.

Pleasure Perspective

Many respondents reported having fun because they could contribute photographs, videos, and audio while uploading their writings (Bromley, 2011; Chang, 2010). Participants can enrich their writings by using these resources.

- *“Blog is better, and we have more time because even if we cannot deliver our tasks to you, we can write on blog and send it to you. We can send our whenever we want. And we can upload pictures and share videos. It looks nice. Writing is colorful with videos and pictures. I like it” (S2).*

- *“Technology has improved so much recently. It is very practical to use the computer. Writing on paper is nice but writing on a blog is also good. I like blog more than I do paper. I like using computer” (S5).*

- *“As we are in a digital era, we don't use paper so much anymore. We generally write on internet. It was fun for me. I can also share pictures related to the topic I write about. Thanks to the blog, we can see mistakes of others. I can get information about what they write. Generally speaking, blog affected my writing skill in a positive way” (S11).*

- *“I think blogging is a kind of fun activity. Furthermore, it's totally virtual so it can easily attract lots of attention” (S12).*

Resistance/ Demanding Perspective

Many learners considered blogging exhausting, demanding, unproductive, and time-consuming at the study's outset. Following the treatment, many learners discovered blogging to be an effective teaching tool. Few participants, however, continued to express their negative viewpoints.

- *“Firstly, I write my homework on paper; then publish it on my blog so it's pretty much tiring but I hope it will be useful” (S2).*

- *“You can easily reach the information you need. On the other hand, this quick access can make people lazier” (S14).*

- *“I have tried harder while publishing on blog” (S7).*

- *“In fact, it’s useful; however, it takes time. When you focus on your writing, you can create great work; on the other hand, you can consume a lot of time” (S12).*

- *“No problem whether blog is used or not. I have no internet at home so it’s difficult to publish my assignments. I have no time to read others’ portfolios. I think we only learn how to spell vocabulary items, that’s all” (S10).*

At the beginning of the study, another respondent expressed; “No difference for me. I can write or publish. Maybe blog is better to be able to see others’ sharing that’s all but I have no time to read others’ portfolios, so I think that blog is useless for me” (S18). After the procedure she explained that “The blog is useful for me. Because we can examine our friends’ writings and see that they use different structures for the same sentences and that helps me learn new things” (S18).

Web-based versus Paper-based Aspect

After the blog application, 17 respondents expressed gratitude. However, 3 voiced dissatisfactions with the blog procedure. Respondents compared and contrasted web-based assignments with paper-based assignments in this regard. Below are both positive and negative viewpoints stated.

- *“I think that blog is more serious than paper and pencil. Blog is something different. When I write my assignment on my blog, homework process seems more serious. I have found blogging process more serious” (S17).*

- *“The blog seems more formal to me. While writing on paper we are not that careful. We make more mistakes with words or sentences on paper. However, as the blog is more formal, I am more careful while writing on blog” (S6).*

- *“It is more useful compared to paper-based techniques. Blog seemed a bit more formal, and we consider it as a duty. When there is paper based homework, it seems to me that it is informal. You know that I did not do my homework especially writing in general but when it is on blog, I do it voluntarily” (S15).*

Discussion and Conclusion

Results deduced from the research questions can theoretically draw some debates, conclusions, and attributes. Each result was reviewed and finalized respectively. The initial research question was to determine the impact of the blogging activity on learners' writing abilities. According to the overall evaluation of the writing scores, the results of the first study question revealed a considerable enhancement in learners' last three drafts. Responses to the second research question aimed to determine learners' attitudes toward blog usage. According to the post-survey results, 85% of the learners expressed that using a blog enhanced their writing abilities. Noone claimed that blogging had a negative impact on learners' writing abilities. However, 15% said they were indifferent about blog use. As a result, learners' opinions of blog integration were enhanced positively. This study supports the findings of other studies (Bal, 2021; Cifci, 2009; Kızıllı, 2007; Perumal, 2022; Siddique et al., 2023; Sun, 2010; Sütçü, 2020) studying the impact of blogs on learners' writing achievements. Based on the findings, using a blog in Turkish EFL writing classrooms can help learners enhance their writing abilities. The usage of blogs in writing sessions improved learners' writing abilities. The learners questioned whether blog use had a negative impact on their writing abilities. According to the findings, 95% of the participants disagree with the notion that blog applications have a negative impact on learners' writing abilities. As a result, almost all learners were opposed to the negative impact of blog use on their writing. Furthermore, genuine audience awareness increased their motivation and attention to their writing because 95% of the learners stated that they would write better if someone had access to their writing assignments on their blog. In association with writing components, the most significant element was content. The participants stated that the content of their writing was of the utmost significance to them. The organization evolved as the second most important aspect of writing. Following that, through a blog, their knowledge of vocabulary and language advanced. A large majority of learners stated that peer revising and providing criticism on their friends' posts improved their writing abilities. 90% of the respondents said it was easier to rewrite and edit their writing tasks on paper. Furthermore, virtually all learners said they could quickly review their colleagues' works using a weblog program. Fleta and Sabater (2010) discovered similar results in their study. The study's findings revealed that writing on a blog assisted learners in generating English more fluently. Fleta and Sabater emphasized that the blog was viewed as an efficient means for improving writing components among participants. The usage of blogs can improve student-student or student-teacher interaction as well as student autonomy. One

of the most significant discoveries was that many learners considered blogging an extremely engaging tool for their writing. In line with these findings, Pathan, Khatoon, Raheem, Mushtaq, Mohammad & Memon, (2021) investigated the effects of blog-mediated instructional methods and their implementations on undergraduate learners' autonomy in the ESL context. The research results demonstrated that blog-mediated learning methodologies aided ESL learners in increasing their autonomy in an ESL setting. The research stated that there should be a blog-generated approach to learning and lessons in course design, instruction, and educational programs. These components are suitable for enrolling learners; they can observe their progress in an ESL setting. The research also suggests that there should be more options for learners to participate, such as establishing a learning setting that is student-focused and managing to construct group activities to promote the motivation and enthusiasm of learners in reading. Amir, Ismail & Hussin (2011) conducted a similar study and discovered that blogs promoted student autonomy while providing a new pathway for peer contact. They also noted that the blog encouraged individuals to improve their writing skills. Blogs were also more beneficial for learners in developing a strong sense of community in which learners could actively participate in their educational setting. Another interesting result from the study was that using a blog made the learners' writing process more enjoyable. 90% of the respondents said they enjoyed publishing something on their blog. This conclusion was consistent with Amhag and Jakobsson's (2009) finding that participants in their study viewed blog use in asynchronous talks as a fun pastime. Furthermore, the current study spotted that learners were not tense when they published their drafts on a blog. Similarly, Ge (2011) discovered that learners appreciated reviewing and criticizing their peers' work, which increased their confidence in their learning since online peer feedback helps learners solve writing problems to improve their writing ability. Different forms of e-feedback have been utilized in foreign language writing courses for learners to finish their work and upload their writing online (Seiffedin & El-Sakka, 2017; Shintani, 2016)

To explore an answer to the second study question, "What are learners' perceptions of blogs as a writing tool?" Pre and post-interviews were conducted. According to the responses of the learners, the majority of the participants considered the writing process challenging at first; nevertheless, 62% of the respondents stated that the writing procedure was easy by the end of the intervention. As a result of blogging, learners' attitudes toward using blogs improved. The usage of a blog can make the writing process more relaxed. As the learners were writing posts on their blogs, the researcher questioned the most challenging element of writing,

and the responses pointed out that the most difficult component of writing was vocabulary. Finding appropriate vocabulary pieces while maintaining context compliance took much work for learners. Another result revealed that all the learners were technologically literate. All respondents said they used the Internet, visited numerous websites, and benefited from different digital tools. They were all registered users of distinct social media networks except one student. This result was consistent with the finding that only two learners felt that using a blog was difficult after receiving treatment..

When we analyzed the instructors' opinions about the effects of being non-native speakers on pronunciation, the instructors claimed that native-like pronunciation is important for them. However, since they do not regard being non-native as a hindrance to their pronunciation, the instructors are found to be confident. This finding is consistent with that of Yavuz and Keser (2019). The participants were found to believe that sounding like a native speaker is important for them, and they also believe that they can produce sounds as good as native speakers.

Implications of the Study

The current study illustrated the impact of blogs on EFL learners' writing performances and perceptions. Although this research had a small sample size, the findings have crucial implications for teachers and course designers considering blog incorporation into EFL writing instruction. According to Kızıllı (2007), "By incorporating blogs into the classroom, the teacher can extend the instruction beyond school walls, as blogs enable teachers and learners to be together at any time and place" (p. 133). That is, the blog platform liberates both learners and teachers from the confines of the classroom. Taking the complete study's findings into account, the results revealed that including some parts of web-based learning into the curriculum of foreign language instruction can be advantageous. EFL teachers with insufficient experience using Web 2.0 tools can profit from the blog as an initial Web tool to supplement their teaching practices and put new technology to use because blog application does not demand advanced computer knowledge, teachers can readily use and integrate the blog into their teaching.

Regarding authenticity, blogs have an open nature and genuine audiences, likely leading learners to write more carefully. The findings revealed that virtually all participants were aware of the real audiences. Thus, they mentioned that they would write more attentively and be more interested in completing the task if someone read their assignments on the blog.

As a result, blog integration should be implemented in learning environments where learners have no audiences other than the teacher to account for. Another aspect to consider is that keeping learners current heavily depends on the teacher's methodology. Teachers in innovative roles must keep up with new technologies that improve web-based teaching in education and allow teachers and learners to become more conscious of pedagogical innovations. In today's world, teachers must be technologically literate enough to incorporate technology into their classes so that teachers can be productively literate individuals with the help of web tool integrations.

Limitations

The present research has some scope constraints regarding content and data-gathering techniques. This study is a kind of small-scale study, the number of learners would be increased. In addition, more studies can be conducted in various areas to expand our awareness of web-based language learning and the literature on foreign language writing in web-based education. This research inspired only learners in the beginning and elementary levels; however, a comparative study can be conducted for learners at other levels. Although the learners were not requested to submit comments to their peers, they did so, and the study found that it worked successfully. If the respondents are advanced learners, peer feedback may be used as an assessment technique.

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