Action research: video-assisted written constructivist feedback of ELT student teachers in micro-teaching sessions

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Abstract

Language teacher education programs and research on effective teacher education programs highlight the importance of micro-teaching technique (Kumaradivelu, 2012). Feedback sessions following microteaching practices provide opportunity for professional development of student teachers. However, literature on effective feedback sessions following micro-teaching experiences in ELT departments in Turkish context is limited. This action research is conducted to find out effectiveness of video-assisted written constructivist feedback sessions following microteaching practices on increasing student teachers' participation in feedback provision and on altering their perceptions towards these feedback sessions. Constant comparison method of content analysis was conducted on the qualitative data gathered from 40 student teachers in ELT department at a state university. The results of the 6-week implementation indicate effectiveness of these feedback sessions. It was found out that student teachers' participation increased, and their perceptions towards providing and receiving feedback turned into positive. Thus, the results of the study implicate a video-assisted written constructivist feedback sessions following the microteaching performances to enable student teachers provide and receive more effective feedback.

Keywords: Microteaching, Feedback, Constructivism, Student Teachers, English Language Teaching, Pre-Service Teacher Education.

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Introduction

English language possesses a high significance as being the lingua franca which is used as a means of communication amongst non-native speakers of that language (Knapp & Meierkord, 2002). Teaching of English has been the focus of many studies throughout the history in international and nation-wide research (Burns & Richards, 2012; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Snow, 2014; Demirel, 2003; Doff, 1990; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Long & Doughty, 2009; Nunan, 2003; Senior, 2006), and researchers have discussed several approaches, methods, and techniques for the teaching of English language (Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Snow, 2014; Richards & Rodgers, 2002). Hence, history reflects lots of developments in this field; moreover, teaching how to teach a language also needs scrutinizing. As Lima (2012) reports, English Language Teaching (ELT) puts main emphasis on methodology along with language level of pre-service teachers. Thus, the need for proficiency in all four language skills is regarded to be significant in ELT; however, the major role of methodology, how to teach the language skills, is asserted to bear as much importance as linguistic competence does.

With the help of the data gathered from the research in the literature, the ELT departments at universities have been reformed in many aspects (Schulz, 2000). To illustrate, Schulz (2000) states that at early years of the development of ELT programmes, teaching as a profession was believed to be an innate skill rather than an acquired knowledge. However, with the later insights, the shift from theoretical emphasis on how to teach English to positivist paradigm has revealed the changes in the curriculum of the ELT departments (Johnson, 2009). That is, the field of foreign language teacher education, firstly, changed its direction from the transmission modes to the dialogical and reciprocal inquiries in which the student-teachers' identity construction and their teaching experiences were based on the practicality principle of language teaching (Richards, 2008). This change of perspective has led ELT programmes to draw attention to sociocultural perspectives and situational understanding of practice in terms of constituting a cognitively-driven process accompanied with reflective teaching in a "critical classroom" setting (Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Richards, 2008; Singh & Richards, 2006).

The need for and the emphasis on teaching practice caused the emergence of the term micro-teaching (Allen, 1965), and it has started to be the basic element of not only language teacher education programs but also of all educational fields. Among many contributory features of micro-teaching sessions, video-taped teaching experiences provide the student-teachers with a chance to reflect upon their own practices (Amobi & Irwing, 2012; Benton-Kupper, 2001; Can, 2009; Kavas & Özdener, 2012; Savaş, 2012). With the help of the feedback provided by means of observing the classroom practices, reflectional teaching enables a mutual benefit both for the teacher educator and the student teacher. Kumaradivelu (2012) suggests that

Given the importance of seeing what happens in the classroom, teacher education programs have a responsibility to introduce to student teachers classroom observation frameworks that offer new possibilities of and for procedures for seeing the classroom with

clarity and creativity (p.118).

The feedback provided only by the teacher educator is suggested to be inadequate since reflection requires the student-teachers to observe and analyse themselves, and learn from their own teaching process. Bailey (2006) agrees with this idea and adds that reflection is a matter of teachers' reflecting on themselves as it is defined as mainly personal although it may be "verbalized and shared".

As the nature of ELT programs, micro-teaching sessions are mainly included in the third and fourth years of teacher training programs (YÖK, 2007). Micro-teaching sessions provide the prospective teachers with the opportunity to experience the real teaching in an artificial setting at minimum level (Canbazoğlu, 2008; Shulman, 1987; Sims & Walsh, 2009). Through the feedback provided by the teacher trainers, the teacher trainees learn lessons from their lessons (Sims and Walsh, 2009). However, the quality and the quantity of the feedback provided by the peers have been questioned by several researchers (Amobi, 2005; Cloes & Premuzak, 1995; Remesh, 2013).

Literature on micro-teaching practices bears various studies conducted as action research (Amobi & Irwing, 2012; Dikilitaş, & Griffiths, 2017; Ekşi & Aşık 2015; Kuter, Gazi & Aksal, 2012). Although some researchers decry that action research is too limited and cannot be generalised, the results of this type of research can be re-implemented, and its effects can be observed and might be used in other contexts (Koshy, 2005). That is, the results of this action research can be transferred to other contexts.

However, when the literature is reviewed, it is observed that the studies conducted in Turkey generally focus on pre-service teachers' attitudes towards microteaching integration in methodological courses and effects of integrating microteaching on teacher training (Arsal, 2015; Aydın, 2013; Bağatur, 2015; Bulut, 2012; Bilger, 2017; Can, 2009; Karçkay & Sanlı, 2009; Kartal, Öztürk & Ekici, 2012; Kılıç, 2010; Ögeyik, 2009; Saban & Çoklar, 2013; Şen, 2010;). Still and all, the literature lacks adequate number of research scrutinizing the links between microteaching and effective feedback sessions. Only a few researchers (Can, 2009; Ekşi, 2012; Ögeyik, 2009) in Turkey mention the effective ways of integrating successful feedback sessions in courses requiring microteaching.

On the other hand, another crucial point to bear in mind is the importance of integrating constructivist feedback sessions in micro-teaching performances. According to constructivism, which has a huge impact on learning theories and teaching methods in language education, knowledge can be constructed through accommodation (re-planning mental representation of the external world to match new experiences) and assimilation (incorporating the new experience with the existing one without changing) processes. Hence, feedback strategies enable learners to form their own questions, to verbalize their reasoning, and to solve their problems. Thus, the need for these strategies has emerged as a result of the need for teacher's initiation of the accommodation process on the grounds that constructivist theory suggests that knowledge shaped by learners themselves can be more transferable and useful (Reitbauer & Vaupetitsch, 2013). Nonetheless, the effectiveness of feedback is not solely limited to improving language skills such as writing or speaking. A number of studies conducted about the role of feedback in micro-teaching indicated that feedback given after the

performance by peers and lecturers was effective in improving the pre-service language teachers' teaching practice (Douglass & Pfeiffer, 1973; Jerich, 1989; Peck, 1977; Sharper, So, Mavi, & Brown, 2002).

In this research, the researchers aimed to determine the applicability and usefulness of the use of written constructivist feedback with the help of video recordings of micro-teaching, and to see any potential effects of this type of feedback on the student teachers' use of feedback for their and their peers' micro-teaching performances. Thus, the researchers sought the answers of the following questions throughout the research:

1) Do student teachers participate in feedback sessions after microteaching demonstrations actively?

2) What are the factors refraining student teachers from active participation in feedback sessions?

3) Does the video-assisted written constructivist feedback increase participation in discussion sessions for micro-teaching and lead to in depth-feedback?

4) Is there any change in the student teachers' perceptions of feedback after the implementation of video-assisted written constructivist feedback?

5) What are the perceptions of Ss about receiving and providing video-assisted written constructivist feedback for future microteaching sessions?

Methods and Procedures

To seek answers to the aforementioned research questions, the researchers observed and conducted the current study with 40 third grade students at a state university ELT Department. This research was designed as a participatory action research. Creswell, Hanson, Plano, and Morales (2007) describe participatory action research as "a qualitative research inquiry in which the researcher and the participants collaborate at all levels in the research process (participation) to help find a solution for a social problem that significantly affects and underserved community (action)". Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) describe seven key features of participatory action research as social process, participatory, practical and collaborative, emancipatory, critical, recursive, and transforming both theory and practice. While designing the current study, the researchers took each and every feature suggested by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) into consideration and carried out this action research accordingly.

Koshy (2005) along with McNiff and Whitehead (2006) indicates that the main purpose of action research is to generate knowledge based on the experience of the researcher and the participants leading to professional development. Based on these remarks, the researchers focused on eliminating the problems and optimizing the situation after sensing a problem in the teacher training program in which one of the researchers worked as an instructor.

The current research included a study on one of the researchers' own practice as that researcher was also the instructor of the class in which the study was carried out. Teacher

trainees participated in all stages of the research (determining the problem(s), finding out solutions, implementation, reflection, and evaluation) which made it participatory. The steps of this participatory action research are planned according to the spiral model of action research put forward (see Figure 1) by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000). The researcher followed each step consecutively throughout the study.
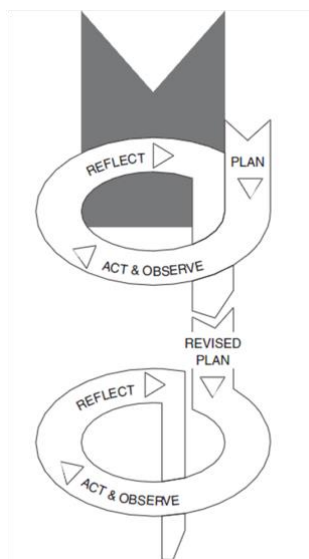

Figure 1

Spiral action research model (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000)

As the first step, the researchers formed an action plan for possible solutions for the identified problems. The researchers sensing the reluctance of the student teachers in providing feedback following the micro-teaching sessions interviewed two lecturers teaching methodological courses at the ELT department. A semi-structured interview was conducted with them separately in English in accordance with their language choice. Constant comparison method of content analysis of qualitative data was conducted for these semi-structured interviews.

The interviews with the lecturers revealed the reluctance of the student teachers in feedback provision, and the researchers implemented a questionnaire which included 1 Likert-type question and 5 open-ended questions with the aim of identifying the opinions of the student teachers regarding the micro-teaching sessions and the rate of their participation in these feedback sessions. The researchers analysed the responses of the participants by means of content analysis. Following the implementation of this questionnaire, the student teachers were interviewed in two groups, and these interviews were video- recorded. The interviewer clarified the purpose of the interview both for the interviewer and the interviewees as suggested by Polkinghorne (2005). The interviews took place as focus groups interview so as to eliminate the possible occurrence of social pressure to talk for the participants (Altrichter, Posch, and Somekh, 2013). This semi-structured interview was conducted in Turkish to create a stress-free atmosphere for the participants (Barriball and While, 1993; Hopf, 2004).

The opinions of the student teachers and the reasons for inadequate participation were aimed to be covered in this interview.

Pursuant to the interviews with lecturers and pre-service teachers, the researchers formed an action plan by regarding the possible solutions for the identified problems. The drawbacks of a traditional feedback session taking place during micro-teaching sessions were identified, and the need for adequate time for peers and performer to remember the details of the performance and removal of role confusion for the student-teachers were identified as the most challenging problems for feedback provision. Additionally, being afraid of the reactions of the performer was uttered to be discouraging for the peers while providing feedback. Thus, instead of asking for oral feedback from the pre-service teachers, use of a written form to provide feedback was thought to be beneficial to eliminate the element of refrainment from peer criticism and discussions at feedback sessions.

As for the second step of the action research, the researchers, by getting help from literature review and lecturers of methodological courses in ELT departments, planned a feedback session which included watching video recordings of performances and provision of written constructivist feedback (VAWCF). The implementation of VAWCF lasted for 6 weeks, and the implementation was carried out in Teaching English to Young Learners (ELT 302) course, which requires microteaching and feedback sessions. During the implementation, the student teachers were first asked to actively participate- behave like learners in a natural classroom- in the microteaching performances, and then watch the video recordings of the performances and observe the microteaching demonstration in detail. For the observation process, the student teachers had a feedback form designed by Ekşi (2012). The observation process was three-faceted; self-reflection, peer feedback, and instructor feedback. First, the performers reflected on their own performance immediately after microteaching sessions, then while watching the video recording of their own microteaching, and finally after gathering and reading the feedback forms filled out by their peers and instructor. The peers provided feedback only while watching the video recordings. Not serving the aim of the study, the content of the feedback forms were excluded from the scope of the current study as the study focused on finding out problems that occur in discussion sessions following microteaching performances and on planning a change to eliminate these problems.

At the end of the implementation, the student teachers were given the same questionnaire they had been applied before the implementation so as to seek for any potential differences in student teachers' frequency and perceptions of feedback use in micro-teaching. A reflection report was also provided to gather the student teachers' perceptions of the implementation in a written way with the help of open-ended questions. After analysing the answers to the questions in the latest questionnaire and reflection report, a semi-structured interview was designed to have a video recorded discussion session in order to find out the student teachers' perceptions on the implementation. The aim of the researchers conducting semi-structured interviews with the student teachers before and after the implementation was to complete the triangulation of data so as to present credibility of the study (Flick, 2004;

Shenton, 2004). Content analysis of the questionnaire, reflection report, and semi-structured interview were carried out to evaluate effectiveness of the implementation.

The current study included a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and a reflection report as data collection instruments. The questionnaire comprised of one Likert-type and five open-ended questions. The Likert-type question was analysed quantitatively and the frequencies of participation in feedback sessions were determined. Other questions in the questionnaire were firstly analysed by means of constant comparison method (Creswel et al, 2007). The contents of the questions were identified, coded, and categorized. Later, the qualitative data was quantified with the aim of receiving frequencies for participants' response and being able to compare these findings with the findings of questionnaire re-conducted after the implementation.

The semi-structured interviews conducted with the participants before and after the implementation were also content analysed along with the interviews conducted with two lecturers. The findings of the data were processed through a qualitative content analysis; firstly identified, then coded, and finally categorized. The interpretations of the data were based on these processes.

For the analysis of reflection reports, upon gathering the data, the researchers used content analysis, too. The responses of the participants were carefully examined. The aim of researchers in using a reflection report and semi-structured interviews was to analyse the participants' perceptions of this experience from different perspectives (Polkinghorne, 2005). The triangulation of data (Creswell and Miller, 2000) was prioritized in the current study as Denzin (1978) defines the triangulation process as 'a validity procedure'.

Results and Discussion

Sensing the reluctance of the student teachers in feedback sessions, as the instructor of the course, the researchers aimed to find out the existence of the problem, and conducted an interview with two lecturers at the same university. The results of these semi-structured interviews showed that the lecturers had the same problem in their own methodology courses, too. The interviewees mentioned how important feedback sessions are in terms of professional development and how much time and effort they allocated to the feedback sessions following the microteaching sessions. The interviewees' statements revealed that only a few student teachers actively participated in the discussion sessions, and other students remained silent for most of the time. The lecturers also confessed that they were not satisfied with the reflection feedback provided by these few students. The themes and codes found in these interviews are tabulated below (Table 1).

Table 1

Content Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews with Lecturers

Themes	Codes
Procedure of feedback sessions	Instant oral feedback
Observed problems	Limited participation
	Ineffective self-reflection
	Ineffective peer feedback
Possible causes for the observed problems	Forgetting the details of microteaching
	Anxiety
	Being afraid of offending friends
	Focusing on only negative points
Suggestions	Playing video recordings of microteaching performances
	Creating a stress-free feedback atmosphere

Following the identification of the problem, the researchers provided a questionnaire to the student teachers and aimed to find out what student teachers think about their participation in the feedback sessions. The results of the questionnaire indicated that more than half of the student teachers (52,5%) *often* involved in the discussion sessions, while only 7 % of the student teachers claimed they *always* participated in the discussion sessions. To verify the answers of the student teachers, the researchers interviewed the participants after gathering the data of the questionnaire. When the student teachers were asked the same question this time orally, they exclaimed that they wished not to participate in the oral feedback sessions. Thus, the analytical results of the data related to the first research question (Table 2) revealed that the student teachers were reluctant to actively participate in oral feedback sessions after microteaching practices. Amobi (2005) and Ekşi (2012) also mention the passive participation of pre-service teachers in reflection and feedback sessions. Thus, it can be inferred that the responses received by the student teachers and instructors are in parallel with the findings in the related literature.

Table 2

Student Teachers' Participation in Feedback Sessions

Q1. How often do you give feedback to your peers in micro-teaching sessions?		
Before the implementation		
	N	**%**
Never	0	0
Rarely	12	30
Often	21	52,5
Always	7	17,5

Upon realizing that student teachers have problem in giving and receiving effective feedback for their microteaching practices in methodology courses where microteaching practices are crucial, the researchers aimed to eliminate the problem so it is thought to be necessary to determine the causes of this problem. Firstly, the researchers asked the lecturers about their guesses on possible causes for this problem. The interview with the lecturers revealed that they believed that student teachers perceived providing feedback as offending their peers, and most of the time the students claimed that they forgot the details of their own microteaching performance mainly because of the anxiety caused by being evaluated by the instructor. As for their peers' performances, they also claimed that they forgot the same details due to assuming two completely different roles during the performances; as the learner and the observer of the micro lesson.

As displayed in Table 3, the student teachers' answers for the questionnaire indicated that the participants (55%) were refraining from providing genuine feedback so as not to offend their peers. Another factor pointed by most of the participants (45%) was that student teachers were afraid that their friends would lose face in front of the instructor. The researchers observed that the participants also hesitated to utter negative comments in order not to harm their friendship.

Table 3

Factors Refraining Student Teachers from Active Participation in Feedback Sessions

Why do you refrain from giving feedback?				
	Before the implementation		After the implementation	
	N	%	n	%
I don't observe the lesson, I'm not interested.	2	5	0	0
I have no idea/nothing to say.	4	10	1	2,5
I do not know what to look for during observation.	3	7,5	2	5
I'm afraid that my friend will lose face in front of the instructor.	18	45	5	12,5
I'm afraid my friend will be offended.	22	55	10	25
Other	7	17,5	3	7,5
No response	8	20	27	67,5

Apart from these factors, the student teachers stated that they would forget, both as a performer and an observer, the details of the microteaching after the performance when they were asked in the interview about the factors keeping them from providing oral feedback actively in the classroom setting. The participants also mentioned their challenging experience in assuming two roles during a microteaching performance: learner and observer. The student teachers acted like a student of the target group of the microteaching, and at the same time during the microteaching, they had to take notes to remember the details later on. However, the participants declared that they had concerns when they saw their friends and the instructor taking notes during the performance, and they would feel anxious. Another issue enunciated by the participants was that the student teachers did not believe the effectiveness of the

feedback they provided for their peers and they were provided by their peers. In other words, the comments could be superficial. Thus, the student teachers confessed that they would hold their feedback and be content with the feedback provided by the instructor as necessary points would be commented on eventually. Lastly, another factor the student teachers stated was receiving similar comments repetitively. As the feedback sessions were conducted orally and the classrooms were overpopulated, the student teachers had concerns on repeating peer comments, which led them to remain silent. Although the refrainment reasons are similar to the ones stated in a study conducted by Ekşi (2012), different reasons are also observed in the current study. To exemplify, the student teachers' assuming two roles at the same time and forgetting the details of the performance are the reasons that differ this study from the previous ones. Thus, the answer of the second research question was identified as STs'

- forgetting the details of the microteaching performance,
- assuming two simultaneous roles,
- being afraid of harming their relation with the performer,
- anxiety during and after the performance,
- superficial comments,
- refrainment from repetitive comments.

With regard to the findings in terms of factors causing student teachers refrain from active participation in feedback sessions, the researchers planned a VAWCF session, in which the participants would provide feedback and reflection by means of a written constructivist feedback form while watching the video recordings of the microteaching performances. The need for a written feedback form emerged upon the student teachers' concerns about offending the performer in public; hence, with the help of a written form, it was aimed to eliminate this problem as the student teachers would provide their feedback directly to the performer and rest of the class would not witness the feedback provision process or the content of the feedback. The researchers included replaying the video recordings of microteachings after the performances as the participants and lecturers claimed the student teachers had difficulty in recalling the details of the performance mainly because of feeling anxious and having two simultaneous roles during the microteaching practice.

Table 4

The Frequencies of Student Teachers' Feedback Provisions

	How often do you give feedback to your peers in micro-teaching sessions?			
	Before the implementation		**After the implementation**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Never	0	0	0	0
Rarely	12	30	4	10
Often	21	52,5	15	37,5
Always	7	17,5	21	52,5

By integrating VAWCF, the researchers aimed to eliminate the problem and increase participation in the feedback sessions and alter perceptions of student teachers. Before the

implementation the frequency of participation in discussion sessions following the microteaching performance was identified (Table 4). It was found out while 52,5 % of the participants *often* participated in these discussion sessions, 7% of the participants *always* participated. However, the results of the questionnaire conducted after the implementation of VAWCF indicated a change in the percentage of participation of student teachers in that the percentage of participants who *always* participated in the feedback session increased to 52,5% from 7 %, while the percentage of the participants who *rarely* participated decreased from 30% to 10 %. Thus, the results indicate that the VAWCF increased the participation rate of student teachers in feedback sessions.

Video recordings of the performances led student teachers to provide objective feedback as they watched themselves as an observer and witnessed their strong and weak skills in teaching practices. This result of the study is parallel to the study conducted by Wilkinson (1996) as both studies determined the effectiveness of replaying the video recordings in displaying strengths and weaknesses of the performers. The current study's results also show similarities with Serdar Tülüce and Çeçen's (2017) recent study on the use of videos in microteachings.

Student teachers' perceptions of feedback was analysed with regard to their answers to the questions in the questionnaire and interviews. The findings revealed that student teachers generally had positive perceptions of VAWCF sessions. Before the implementation of these sessions, the student teachers complained about unfair evaluation by peers and teacher trainers as presented in Table 5. They also exclaimed that if the feedback was negative, they felt frustrated, and this effected their future performances in the course. However, after the implementation of the feedback sessions, the student teachers stated that they were satisfied with the feedback content as they could see the explanations of the feedback in detail even though some participants still had concerns about their peers' comments. The peers were believed to reflect their personal feelings in their comments. The percentage of the participants who felt being unfairly evaluated decreased from 60% to 32,5%. One of the participants asserted that with the help of video recordings, the burden on the instructor weakened as the instructor could touch upon the missing points of the performance by showing them on the video.

Table 5

Student Teachers' Feelings about Receiving Feedback and Their Reasons before the Implementation

	Feelings about receiving feedback	Reasons for the feelings when receiving feedback
Before the Implementation	Good	Urge to improve
	Fine if feedback is positive	A need for teacher candidates
	Bad if feedback is negative	A tool to see strong and weak points(mistakes)
	Frustrated if too negative	Unfair judgements are
	Nervous	counterproductive/disappointing/frustrating
	Sometimes offended	Tactful/polite criticism is needed

Receiving and providing feedback along with reflection were stated to be a necessity for student teachers, and the student teachers expressed how the feedback they received helped them in terms of self-improvement, self-monitoring, and autonomy. Additionally, the participants claimed that with the help of feedback and reflection, they could identify their strengths and weaknesses. Feedback forms used in these sessions were mentioned to be effective in providing opportunity of receiving and providing detailed fair feedback. Most of the student teachers believed the process was enjoyable and exciting; however, some student teachers did state the process was boring (7,5%) and time consuming (5%). Student teachers' feelings about receiving feedback and their reasons after the implementation are displayed in Table 6. In a nutshell, the results of the study indicated that the student teachers held positive perceptions of VAWCF in terms of professional development

Table 6

Student Teachers' Feelings about Receiving Feedback and Their Reasons after the Implementation

	Feelings about receiving feedback	Reasons for the feelings when receiving feedback
After the Implementation	Glad	A chance to correct mistakes
	Satisfied	Criticisms are important in terms of seeing
	Relaxed	next step
	Good	Harsh feedback is more beneficial
	Fine if positive	to see strong and weak points
	Reconsidering the mistakes if negative	to improve and self-monitor
	Nervous	a necessary feature of a teacher to learn
		how to give feedback

With the aim of verifying the student teachers' perceptions of VAWCF and determining their choice of feedback type for future microteaching performances, data gathered from the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and reflection reports were analysed. The results revealed that student teachers had positive attitude towards receiving and providing VAWCF in the future. 87,5 % of the participants expressed their wishes to have VAWCF in future methodology courses (Table 7).

Table 7

Student Teachers' Preferences of VAWFC use in Future Microteaching Sessions

Q3. Would you like to receive feedback in this way again? Why?	n	p
Yes	35	87,5
No	5	12,5

Q4. Would you like to give feedback in this way again? Why?	n	p
Yes	35	87,5
No	5	12,5

The student teachers explained their reasons for choosing this feedback type, and these reasons were:

- Video recordings made it easier to remember the details of the microteaching.
- Opportunity for fair and detailed feedback was provided.
- Enhancement of professional development was ensured.
- An effective feedback form was provided.
- Autonomy for students was enhanced.
- Permanent feedback was provided.

Before the implementation, the student teachers complained about forgetting the content of the microteaching performances; however, with the help of video recordings, they had the chance to recall the activities and teacher acts in detail. Watching themselves, receiving written feedback by means of the feedback form, and possessing the feedback forms after the performance were mentioned to be beneficial for their improvement and autonomy. The process was described as beneficial in terms of seeing their strengths and weaknesses, having no questions about the fairness of the evaluation, and being able to scrutinize the feedback whenever they wish so. Thus, the results of the study paralleled with the results of the study conducted by Ekşi (2012) in terms of the fact that feedback forms proved to be helpful for student teachers in terms of dividing the details to observe into separate divisions. The student teachers had the opportunity to convey their comments without being afraid of offending their friends in front of the instructor and to provide genuine feedback as they did not need to be afraid of repeating similar comments.

On the other hand, 7,5% of the participants did not wish to have VAWCF sessions in methodology courses as they believed instant oral feedback was superior to VAWCF. These participants regarded the latest feedback session as time consuming and lacking in providing chance to discuss the ideas of peers. However, 10 % of the student teachers believed that both instant oral feedback and VAWCF had certain drawbacks and advantages. So as to have effective feedback sessions, they suggested a mixture of these two feedback types.

Conclusion

The changes in the ELT programmes, as discussed in the first section of this article, have led researchers to search for effective ways of increasing quality of teacher education programs as well as English language teacher education programs in universities. As constructivism focuses on prior knowledge of the decision making bodies, importance of microteaching has increased, and microteaching has been integrated into language teacher education programs. Microteaching experiences require student teachers practice a minimized lesson by planning, receiving feedback, re-planning, and re-receiving feedback from the instructors and peers. To increase the quality of teaching practices, studies on effective feedback sessions are needed. Feedback is regarded as a very beneficial tool in improving student teachers' teaching skills. However, related literature is not rich in the number of the studies conducted on effective feedback sessions in microteaching practices, especially in Turkish context.

One of the researchers of this study, who was also an instructor in a state university English Language Teacher Education department, observed reluctance of student teachers in participation in feedback sessions and aimed to conduct an action research to find out the problem, causes of the problem, and possible solution for this problem. 40 student teachers in the ELT department participated in the current study. The qualitative design of the study included semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire, and a reflection report as data collection instruments. The collected data were analysed with constant comparison method of content analysis.

The results of the data collected from the interviews with two lecturers at the state university revealed that student teachers did not tend to actively take part in oral feedback sessions, and possible causes for this problem were mentioned to be anxiety of student teachers after the performance, student teachers' being afraid of offending their friend, and student teachers' forgetting details of the microteaching performance. The interviewees indicated that even though their microteaching performances were video recorded, these recordings were not watched in the classroom settings but student teachers were recommended to watch these recordings later. However, only some students were stated to demand the video recording of their performances. With the aim of eliminating this problem and ameliorating the microteaching processes including feedback sessions, the researchers administered VAWCF throughout the educational term.

VAWCF provides student teachers with the opportunity to reflect on their own and peers' microteaching performances. Watching video recordings of the performances helps student teachers observe themselves and their friends objectively and identify their strong and weak teaching skills. With the help of video recordings, the student teachers can provide more detailed feedback as they do not have to keep the details of the microteaching experience in mind. In addition to video recordings, written constructivist feedback forms eliminate student teachers' concerns on harming their friendship while providing feedback. The feedback forms guide teacher trainees as they include the points to pay attention to while filling in the forms. VAWCF sessions enhance professional development of the student teachers as they can monitor and reflect on their own performances, and also provide feedback for their peers.

After the implementation, the participants of the study held positive perceptions towards VAWCF. In addition to their perceptions, at the end of the study, it is observed that the student teachers' participation frequency increased, and the problems they faced in instant oral feedback sessions were generally eliminated. Most of the participants wished to have VAWCF sessions in their future methodology courses even though almost half of the participants (45%) stated that this type of feedback was boring for them as they had to fill in forms for every microteaching performance.

The results of this study indicated effectiveness of VAWCF with regard to student teachers' perceptions. To enhance student teachers' teaching practices, professional development, and reflectivity, teacher education programs may benefit from this feedback type. As this study was conducted as an action research, generalisation of the results may be

questioned; however, this feedback session may be re-implemented in a different context, and the results of the study in a different department may be observed (Koshy, 2005).

Limitation

The researchers carried out this research with 40 third grade students at a state university ELT Department. The researchers note that should the same research be conducted in a different setting, the results may show differences as the perception of providing and receiving feedback might vary from region to region or from culture to culture. The researchers assumed that the participants sincerely responded to the questions in the interviews, questionnaires, and the reflection report. The researchers find it necessary to highlight the fact that the background features of the subjects were not taken into consideration while analysing the results of the implementation.

Suggestions and Implications

For further studies, this study signals that the use of video-assisted written constructivist feedback can be implemented in other ELT departments. However, as also mentioned in the limitations, this research may be implemented in different departments to identify if backgrounds of the participants, location and structure of the university, and gender distribution have any impact on the effectiveness of this feedback session. Another significant point to be taken into considerations is that since the participants in the current study had prior experiences of microteaching sessions, another research on this feedback sessions may be conducted with student teachers who have no prior experience of microteaching so as to identify if the results of this study were dependent on prior experiences. Lastly, ELT departments may train student teachers on how to give feedback as the results of this study indicated that student teachers believe in benefits of feedback sessions, but they claimed they were unsure about the effectiveness of the feedback they provided.

Acknowledgements

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