Feedback from Peers or Teachers: The Preferences and Perceptions of Pre-Service EFL Teachers

Akran veya Öğretmen Geri Bildirimi: İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Tercihleri ve Algıları

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Abstract: Teacher feedback has long been recognized as a very important component of teacher education due to its numerous benefits. Peer feedback, complementing teacher feedback, also plays an important role as a reflective practice by enabling pre-service teachers work collaboratively and understand their teaching practices deeply in a supportive environment. There is a limited understanding of how pre-service teachers compare both sources of feedback and which feedback type they prefer despite the growing body of research related the value of teacher and peer feedback. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' preferences and perceptions regarding the feedback they receive from their teacher and peers. This qualitative case study was carried out with 31 3rd grade pre-service students enrolled in "Teaching English to Young Learners II" course. Following each micro-teaching session, participants received both peer and teacher feedback through a standard feedback form. Data were collected through the structured feedback evaluation forms filled by the pre-service teachers, semi-structured interviews and completed teacher and peer feedback forms. Reflexive thematic analysis was used for data analysis. The results reveal that while both teacher and peer feedback were perceived as valuable, teacher feedback was consistently regarded as more professional, specific, detailed, action-oriented and motivating. Peer feedback was appreciated for its supportive tone and reflective value. Most participants preferred receiving both types of feedback, but none favoured peer feedback alone.

Keywords: *Pre-service teachers, micro-teaching, teacher feedback, peer feedback*

Özet: Öğretmen geri bildirimi, sayısız faydası nedeniyle uzun zamandır öğretmen eğitiminin çok önemli bir bileşeni olarak kabul edilmektedir. Öğretmen geri bildirimini tamamlayan akran geri bildirimi de öğretmen adaylarının iş birliği içinde çalışmasını ve destekleyici bir ortamda öğretim uygulamalarını derinlemesine anlamasını sağlayan yansıtıcı bir uygulama olarak önemli bir rol oynar. Öğretmen ve akran geri bildiriminin değerine ilişkin artan araştırmalara rağmen, öğretmen adaylarının bu iki geri bildirim kaynağını nasıl karşılaştırdıkları ve hangi geri bildirim türünü tercih ettiklerine dair anlayış sınırlıdır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlerinden ve akranlarından aldıkları geri bildirimle ilgili tercihlerini ve algılarını araştırmayı amaçlamış. Bu nitel durum çalışması, "Çocuklara Yabancı Dil Öğretimi II" dersine kayıtlı 31 üçüncü sınıf öğretmen adayı ile yürütülmüştür. Her mikro öğretim oturumunun ardından, katılımcılar standart bir geri bildirim formu aracılığıyla hem akran hem de öğretmen geri bildirimi almışlardır. Veriler, öğretmen adayları tarafından doldurulan yapılandırılmış geri bildirim değerlendirme formları, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve tamamlanmış öğretmen ve akran geri bildirim formları aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Veri analizi için yansıtıcı tematik analiz kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar hem öğretmen hem de akran geri bildiriminin değerli olarak algılandığını, ancak öğretmen geri bildiriminin sürekli olarak daha profesyonel, spesifik, ayrıntılı, eylem odaklı ve motive edici olarak değerlendirildiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Akran geri bildirimi ise destekleyici tonu ve yansıtıcı değeri nedeniyle takdir edilmiştir. Katılımcıların çoğu her iki geri bildirim türünü de almayı tercih etmiş, ancak hiçbiri yalnızca akran geri bildirimini tercih etmemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Öğretmen adayları, mikro öğretim, öğretmen geri bildirimi, akran geri bildirimi*

1. Introduction

Besides the theoretical knowledge, teacher education programs provide practical knowledge, offering pre-service teachers an opportunity to put theory into practice. This opportunity can be created with school-based experiences like practicum enabling teacher candidates to experience real classroom atmosphere with real students in real lessons.

Before the school-based experiences, teacher candidates are also offered learning-based teaching simulations like micro teaching practices which provide them a more controlled environment where the participants take the roles of teachers, students and peers, using trial-error techniques (Ekşi, 2012). Defined by Wallace (1991, p. 87) as "one of a range of techniques for developing experiential knowledge of professional action in a controlled and progressive way," micro-teaching offers opportunities such as practicing teaching in a controlled environment, analysing teaching through reflective practices, receiving feedback, and improving instructional abilities. Micro teaching can be considered like a bridge between the theory and practice since pre-service teachers are supposed to prepare lesson plans and materials considering the level of the target group, using techniques and strategies for an effective instruction, manage the class and do all these using the theoretical knowledge.

Feedback is a crucial part of micro teaching sessions since it helps pre-service teachers improve their teaching skills. Teacher feedback is an essential tool to guide teacher candidates because it offers insights into their teaching practices. It can be defined as the collection of suggestions and evaluations given by the teacher based on their performance and behaviours with the aim of improvement (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback from teachers specifically helps pre-service teachers design activities based on second language acquisition theories (Ellis, 2009), and most importantly encourages pre-service teachers to critically evaluate themselves by reflecting on their own teaching practices (Richards & Farrell, 2005). However, it may also influence peer interactions or create a sense of dependence on expert judgment, as pre-service teachers may view teacher comments as the 'final word' (Okumu et al., 2024). In addition, feedback structures used by instructors can inhibit pre-service teachers' ability to make meaning from the information and move their learning and instruction forward (Wilcoxen & Lemke, 2021).

Peer feedback, on the other hand, as a form of collaborative learning, helps both sides develop their skills because it requires "a critical stance or attitude towards both their own practice and that of one's peers" (Johnston & Badley, 1996, p. 4). Topping (2009) defines peer feedback as "arrangement for learners to consider and specify the level, value or quality of a product or performance of other equal status learners" (p.20). Different from teacher feedback as an expert guidance, peer feedback may provide practical suggestions and opinions since the peers experience a very similar process. It helps pre-service teachers improve their ability to reflect on their teaching practices because "observing another teacher may also trigger reflections about one's own teaching" (Richards & Farrell, 2005, p. 86). Previous research has also revealed several challenges that can affect the quality of peer feedback. Emotional and cultural concerns, like the fear of offending peers may reduce active participation (Ekşi, 2012). Similarly, lack of confidence or limited pedagogical knowledge can lead to inaccurate or superficial comments (Cavanagh & Tran, 2025). These issues show that while peer feedback offers good opportunities for collaboration and reflection, it also requires structured guidance and clear criteria to be effective.

It is clear that both teacher and peer feedback help pre-service teachers end up with self-monitoring, self-reflection and self-evaluation. Since reflection frees the teachers from a single view of a situation that restricts them while defining problems and finding solutions, it contributes to personal development (Roberts, 1998). Conscious development would be possible with reflection (Wallace, 1991), but Roberts also indicate the importance of collaboration by saying "It seems that growth through reflection is very difficult to achieve unless there is a social or collective element to it. A trusted and interested listener and critic provide best conditions for rethinking and self-assessment" (1998, p. 59). Based on the assumption that reflection promotes conscious professional development (Wallace, 1991) and that collaborative

feedback processes enhance reflective thinking (Roberts, 1998), both teacher and peer feedback are expected to contribute to pre-service teachers' progress and professional development.

Although the interest in the importance of implementing reflective practice in teacher education programs and investigating the tools supporting this process is increasing, studies focusing on teacher and peer feedback as a contributor of reflective practice, are scarce. In addition, little is known about how teacher candidates interpret the functions of each feedback sources separately and evaluate them comparatively and what shapes their preferences in their micro-teaching context. In teacher education settings where cultural norms, instructional expectations, and feedback practices might influence how feedback is perceived and valued, the need for research investigating feedback types comparatively is evident. For this reason, further research is still needed on the preferences and perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers regarding teacher and peer feedback because understanding how pre-service teachers compare teacher and peer feedback can help teacher educators design more effective, supportive, and dialogic feedback practices. With this aim, this qualitative case study investigates the perceptions and preferences of pre-service EFL teachers related to feedback they receive from their teacher and peers after performing micro teaching. To achieve this end and build on the existing knowledge about the use of teacher feedback and peer feedback, this paper offers an empirical contribution by asking the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers regarding teacher and peer feedback?

2. What are the preferences of pre-service EFL teachers related to the source of feedback they receive?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Teacher Feedback

The effectiveness of teacher feedback has been investigated over the years in different contexts like students' writing, oral presentation, academic performance and student-teacher relationship. Within these contexts, it has recently been investigated with different aims like comparing face-to face and digital feedback (Er & Küçükali 2024), translanguaging pedagogies used in feedback (Küçükali & Er, 2023), how students use, value and trust comparing AI-generated feedback with feedback from educators (Henderson et al., 2025) and the role of feedback from teacher educators in promoting lifelong learning dispositions such as curiosity, motivation, perseverance, and self-regulation (Matsumoto-Royo et al., 2023).

It has also been the subject of the studies conducted with pre-service teachers having practicum or micro teaching sessions. Erdemir and Yeşilçınar (2021) investigated the perceptions of pre-service teachers towards reflective practices in micro teaching and found that for pre-service teachers, teacher feedback was the most useful tool compared to peer feedback and self-reflection. Yigitoglu-Aptoula (2021) also investigated pre-service teachers' perceptions regarding the efficacy of the feedback they received from their teachers and peers on their micro teaching activities. She also found that teacher feedback was valued as the most influential one. Another study conducted with pre-service teachers aimed to understand how university supervisors and cooperating teachers approach giving feedback to prospective teachers during practicum (Akcan & Tatar, 2010). In her study examining the effectiveness of the feedback strategies, Fki (2023) also found that although pre-service teachers valued their peers' feedback for complementing the teacher's, they regarded teacher feedback as more professional.

More recently, Karakaş and Yükselir (2025) examined the role of both peer and instructor feedback in shaping pre-service EFL teachers' reflection types and levels during a video-mediated microteaching process. Their findings revealed that while microteaching alone often led to surface-level reflection, the combination of video review, peer and instructor feedback, and collaborative discussions supported participants in moving towards more evaluative and critical reflections. On the other hand, some studies focus on the impacts of different types of feedback and relate them with reflective practices of pre-service teachers on their micro teaching (Asregid et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024).

Despite its pedagogical value, teacher feedback may also show some limitations like being authoritative, non-dialogic or one-directional. As it is stated in several studies (Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Bader et al., 2024), pre-service teachers may feel the authoritative pressure when they receive feedback from their instructors if the feedback is one-directional rather than dialogic. In order to prevent such a pressure, teacher feedback should be collaborative, supportive and dialogic. Through feedback, instructors should encourage pre-service teachers to have dialogic interactions rather than transmission of information (Asregid et al., 2023).

2.2. Peer Feedback

Reflective practices adopted by pre-service teachers have been given importance recently. One way of increasing reflectivity of pre-service teachers is the collaboration with peers and getting feedback on their performance after micro teaching. Study conducted by Ersel-Kaymakamoğlu (2009) indicates that prospective teachers found peer feedback valuable since they learned from their peers, and evaluating and observing peers created an awareness regarding their own teaching. Another study investigating the pre-service teachers' perceptions regarding the feedback from peers has a similar result indicating that pre-service teachers consider feedback as a useful task to improve their learning and as a way to strengthen their relationships with their peers (Cañabate et al., 2019). A significant increase is also found in levels of pre-service teachers' teacher efficacy after giving peer feedback (İnce, 2016).

More recently, Prilop and Weber (2023) highlighted that peer feedback training, particularly when complemented with expert feedback, significantly improved the quality of peer feedback as well as pre-service teachers' beliefs about feedback, underscoring the importance of scaffolding in developing reflective and evaluative skills. Building on this, Cavanagh and Tran (2025) showed that collaborative lesson plans can provide valuable source material for peer feedback activities, as pre-service teachers were able to engage critically with pedagogy, tasks, learning intentions, lesson structure, and diversity considerations when providing constructive written commentaries on their peers' plans. Along with these findings, Tiainen and Lutovac (2024) demonstrated that peer group mentoring supported by video-recorded lessons can foster joint reflection, where peers create a shared learning context and mentors act as co-reflectors rather than directive authorities.

On the other hand, peer feedback is also considered as intimidating and uncomfortable by the prospective teachers concerned with the feelings of their peers (Ekşi, 2012). This can stem from the contextual and cultural factors shaping the interactional norms that restrain pre-service teachers from criticising overtly in Turkish classrooms. Ekşi (2012) also reported that pre-service teachers did not want their friends to lose face when their instructor is in the classroom since they might be accepting the instructor as an authority. In a study conducted by Howard et. al (2010), the results show that peers who are anonymous while giving feedback are approximately five times more likely to provide substantively critical feedback than are those whose identities are known to their recipients. When it is compared with teacher feedback and self-reflection, peer feedback is found partly useful by pre-service teachers (Erdemir & Yeşilçınar, 2021).

Similarly, recent research with teacher education students in Norway revealed that while teacher feedback was overwhelmingly valued, peer feedback was considered less favourably since they found it unprofessional, overly positive and not guiding for improvement (Bader et al., 2024). This indicates that its role in higher education may need to be reconceptualized to recognize both its strengths and its limitations. The process can be more effective if it is supported by clear criteria, guidance and training which can increase its objectivity and constructiveness (Ekşi, 2012; Topping, 2009).

Building on the studies reviewed above, this study is grounded in social constructivist theory, which views teacher learning as an experiential engagement and socially mediated process. According to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept, feedback is accepted as a tool for mediation since it supports pre-service teachers' learning through dialogue and collaboration with peers and teachers. Within the constructivist view of teacher education (Borg, 2011; Kumaravadivelu, 2006), teachers are considered active decision-makers who learn by theorizing from practice and reflecting on experience. Accordingly, Schön's (1983) notion of reflective practice highlights how feedback, either from teacher or peer, stimulates analysis, self-evaluation, and professional growth. In the context of microteaching, learning occurs through the steps of planning, teaching, feedback, and reflection. Thus, feedback serves both as cognitive scaffolding and as a reflective tool, enabling pre-service teachers to integrate theory with practice and construct pedagogical knowledge collaboratively.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study draws on a qualitative case study design since it aims to get a deep understanding of a particular phenomenon through the use of qualitative data. Creswell and Poth (2018) define qualitative case study as a research design which explores a case through in-depth data collection with multiple sources like interviews, documents or observations. For this study, the aim is to explore the perceptions and preferences of pre-service teachers related to peer and teacher feedback through reflection and evaluation forms and interviews.

3.2. Participants and Research Context

This study was conducted with 31 pre-service EFL teachers aged between 21 and 29 during the 2024-2025 spring semester. All the participants were 3rd grade students studying at the department of English language teaching of a foundation university in South-east part of Türkiye, and they all voluntarily accepted to take part in this study. Among the sampling methods, convenience sampling was used since the researcher selected participants who were readily available, easily accessible, and willing to participate. (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). All the 3rd grade students who completed a micro-teaching task voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants, including gender, mean age and year of study.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Category	n (%) or M ± SD
Gender	Female	26 (83.9%)
	Male	5 (16.1%)
Age		21.52 ± 1.48
Year of study	3rd year	31 (100%)

The participants practiced their micro teaching as a part of the course called "Teaching English to Young Learners II". This course mainly offers theoretical knowledge about the characteristics of young learners who are aged between 7-12, teaching language skills and areas to this group, and designing a lesson plan. As part of the final assessment for the course, students are expected to conduct a micro-teaching session by designing a well-prepared lesson plan and necessary materials for the lesson.

3.3. Procedure and Data Collection

As a first step, the researcher provided training about how to give peer feedback to make sure all the participants would have enough information about giving feedback to their friends. This training session took approximately 90 minutes during the eighth week before the micro-teaching sessions. The researcher explained the aim and importance of peer feedback, strategies to keep objectivity and professional tone and the characteristics of constructive feedback. The micro-teaching feedback form prepared by the instructor was introduced to the participants. Sample feedback forms filled by peers and instructors form previous years were also analysed focusing on each criterion on the form.

After the 8-week theoretical part of the course, the pre-service teachers were asked to prepare a 2-hour-long lesson plan and perform a micro-teaching based on the skill and topic they were assigned, and it took 5 weeks to complete all the sessions. Each micro-teaching session took approximately 20 minutes. Both pre-service teachers and the teacher used the same micro-teaching feedback form to give detailed feedback specifically on the level, objectives, duration, pre-, while-, post-stages, materials, lesson plan, instruction and presentation skills of the pre-service teacher conducting the micro-teaching.

Data were collected through the structured feedback evaluation forms filled by the participants after the micro-teaching sessions, semi-structured interviews recorded and transcribed by the researcher and teacher and peer feedback forms completed by the course instructor and peers after each micro-teaching session. Each participant was given feedback by a peer and the teacher, and were asked to fill in the feedback evaluation form. The form was prepared by the researcher with the aim of learning the perceptions of pre-service teachers regarding teacher and peer feedback they received. The form consisted of eight open-ended questions (four about peer feedback and four about teacher feedback). After they filled in the form, each participant was also interviewed by the researcher. Semi-structured interviews served two purposes: (1) to explore the extent to which peer and teacher feedback were perceived as compatible or aligned, and (2) to gain deeper insights into participants' preferences regarding the source of feedback they received.

The data collection tools complemented each other in meaningful ways. The teacher and peer feedback forms provided an objective record to be compared with participants' perceptions during analysis. The feedback evaluation forms provided participants' perceptions of both feedback types while the interviews provided deeper explanations for these evaluations and additional insights regarding the compatibility of and the preferences for both types of feedback. Thus, the interview data extended and enriched the written responses, enabling triangulation by comparing structured perceptions with participants' more detailed, reflective accounts.

Before the data collection, all the participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. During the data analysis, all personal identifiers were removed from the completed feedback forms, feedback evaluation forms and interview transcripts and each participant was assigned a numerical code (e.g., PT-1, PT-2) in order to ensure anonymity. In order to minimize this risk of power relations and politeness norms that could have influenced participants' responses to

feedback, several steps were also taken. Participants were clearly informed that the they would not see the names of the peers who would provide feedback, and that they were free to express both positive and critical views. All these were done to reduce the likelihood of personal sensitivities and politeness pressures influencing either the giving or the receiving of peer feedback. Finally, they were reminded that their course grades were not related to the research data, and grading was conducted separately from the research process.

Several ethical considerations were made prior to data collection, ensuring participants' informed consent, confidentiality, and their rights to refuse or withdraw. Ethical approval was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of the university where the researcher works. (Approval Date: 22.04.2025; Reference No: 79445).

3.4. Data Analysis

Data were analysed through reflexive thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. These steps involved familiarisation with the data, creating codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, naming themes and presenting the findings. All the steps followed throughout the analysis process are explained in the following paragraphs.

The researcher adopted an interpretivist perspective because of her dual role as both the course instructor and the primary analyst. While this dual position provided valuable contextual insights, it also has the risk of bias. As the first step, all data were anonymized before the analysis in order to eliminate any potential bias. The researcher also systematically collaborated with a colleague who was not involved in teaching the course with the same objective. These collaborative discussions were conducted during the coding and theme development stages through regular online meetings.

During the analysis process, both researcher and the colleague became closely familiar with the data through by repeatedly reading the feedback evaluation forms, interview transcripts and completed feedback forms as the first step of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the purposes of reliability, they coded the data inductively, categorised the coded items and compared them for consistency. Although peer and teacher feedback data were drawn from different forms, feedback evaluation forms were structured through eight open-ended questions in order to see the evaluations related to peer and teacher feedback together.

The analysis revolved around *'usefulness'*, *'feelings'*, *'motivation'* and *'more feedback'* themes depending on the data collected through eight-open ended questions serving as pre-determined framework for theme development. Each theme included related codes that reflected participants' views on peer feedback. For example, *usefulness* involved improvement-focused evaluations (*realizing mistakes*, *constructive*), while *feelings* captured emotional reactions (*encouraged*, *discouraged*). *Motivation* reflected whether feedback increased or decreased their willingness to improve, and *more feedback* indicated their future expectations for peer comments. Representative excerpts were included in Table 2 to enhance transparency and illustrate how the codes informed the final themes.

The colleague contributed actively to this theme development process as well acting as an independent analyst, not merely a verifier. As a last step, final themes were clearly defined and named to best represent the participants' perspectives. For this aim, illustrative quotations were used to show transparency and support the interpretations presented in the findings. Although the same thematic domains were retained across datasets to enable transparent

and like-for-like comparison, the content and emphasis of the codes and representative extracts differed between peers and the instructor, which reflected their distinct roles and perspectives.

4. Findings

Reflecting the different aims of the data sources, the findings are presented in three parts. First, participants' perceptions of teacher and peer feedback are reported with the analysis of the feedback evaluation forms and the completed teacher and peer feedback forms. Second, insights from the semi-structured interviews are presented. Since the interviews focused specifically on participants' views regarding the compatibility of teacher and peer feedback and their preferences for the source of feedback, these findings are analysed and reported independently.

4.1. Perceptions of Teacher and Peer Feedback

According to the results of the data obtained through the structured feedback evaluation forms, several themes and codes emerged. The analytic process prioritized reflexivity, transparency, and depth of interpretation. There were two categories "peer feedback" and "teacher feedback". Table 2 shows the themes and codes that emerged from participants' opinions on the "teacher feedback" category.

Table 2

Teacher feedback: Themes, Codes, and Excerpts

themes	codes	excerpts
usefulness	helps improvement, realizing mistakes, detailed, professional perspective, constructive, objective, different perspective, suggestions, realistic	"The feedback my teacher gave me was very useful. Because it made me see my mistakes through a teacher's eyes and it helped me improve the areas I was not good enough" (PT- 9) "It was definitely very effective because I was able to see both the things I hadn't noticed and the details my friend didn't mention in her feedback. This gave me a more detailed perspective" (PT-10)
feelings	positive, negative	"I felt motivated to improve myself. The way she gives feedback is really nice and encouraging" (PT- 19) "I just realized the missing parts and that made me surprised because having of getting others' perspectives is so valuable for improvement." (PT-12) "At first I was nervous, but as I listened, I agreed and realized the parts I need to fix" (PT- 18)
motivation	increase, no effect, positive, constructive, valuable, detailed, inspiring	"My instructor's feedback increased my motivation because I saw all my mistakes and I saw the places I was good at very well." (PT-21) "My instructor's feedback greatly increased my motivation because it was delivered in a constructive way that emphasized my potential for growth inspiring me to strive for excellence." (PT-30)
more feedback	helps improvement, professional, useful, realizing mistakes, gives confidence, motivating, constructive	"I would like to get feedback from my instructors because it is something that will contribute to my growth." (PT- 10) "I would like to get feedback again because our instructor has more experience and can provide professional advice." (PT-3)

As shown in Table 2, several codes emerged under the theme 'usefulness' within the *teacher feedback* category. Pre-service teachers consistently emphasized that feedback from their course instructor played a crucial role in their professional development, particularly by helping them improve their teaching performance and identify mistakes that they had not previously noticed. They described the feedback as detailed, constructive and grounded in a professional perspective. The realistic and objective nature of teacher feedback was also appreciated. Some also valued being exposed to a different perspective and receiving practical suggestions. These reflections were supported by the teacher feedback forms, which contained concrete, professional remarks such as *"The warm-up activities are really effective to*

arouse curiosity; you could also make use of materials like puppets to make it fun." and *"The materials you prepared are great; you could also use one in the pre-stage to take their attention."* Such comments illustrate the depth and practical orientation of teacher feedback, reinforcing participants' perceptions of its usefulness and confirming that it provided both detailed critique and actionable guidance for improving their teaching.

The second theme identified under the *teacher feedback* category was 'feelings'. This theme captures the emotional responses of pre-service teachers. Most participants described positive emotions such as feeling good, motivated, excited, and confident, suggesting that teacher feedback fostered a supportive and encouraging environment. the emotional impact of teacher feedback was largely positive, contributing to both affective support and professional growth. Several participants mentioned feeling comfortable and supported, indicating that the instructor's tone and approach to giving feedback fostered a safe and encouraging learning environment. Some also felt grateful and surprised, especially when receiving unexpected praise. However, a few participants mentioned feeling nervous or disappointed, indicating that receiving evaluative comments could also provoke anxiety. These emotional reactions were the reflections of the encouraging remarks in the teacher feedback forms such as *"Well done, you used time really effectively."* and *"Language use, eye contact, posture, gesture... all were good."* Such affirming comments explain why participants reported feeling motivated, supported, and grateful. At the same time, some forms contained more critical statements such as *"You should be careful with giving instructions; they could be shorter."* or *"Please, be careful with your tone of voice; it should be louder"* which may account for the nervousness or disappointment expressed by a few participants. These findings suggest that teacher feedback not only provided professional guidance but also carried an important emotional weight, shaping how participants felt about their performance and progress.

The third theme that emerged from the analysis was 'motivation', with the vast majority of the participants reporting that teacher feedback significantly increased their motivation to improve their teaching. They described the feedback as constructive, positive, inspiring, and valuable, emphasizing that its clarity and level of detail encouraged them to reflect more deeply and encouraging self-improvement. While a small number of participants reported no effect, the overall findings suggest that teacher feedback served as a powerful tool for motivation. Teacher feedback forms frequently included encouraging remarks such as *"Your lesson plan is very well-prepared; keep preparing suck plans that include every single detail of the lesson"* and *"I really like the post activities you prepared; you should always use such creative activities and games."* Such comments illustrate why participants perceived teacher feedback as motivating, since they combined recognition of effort with constructive advice. Both data sources show that teacher feedback was generally experienced as a source of motivation, especially when it balanced encouragement with specific guidance.

The final theme under the *teacher feedback* category was 'more feedback', which explored participants' willingness to receive additional feedback from their instructor in future micro-teaching sessions. Every pre-service teacher emphasized their wish to receive more feedback, emphasizing that it supported their improvement, helped them recognize their mistakes, and was consistently perceived as professional, useful, and constructive. Some also noted that teacher feedback boosted their confidence and motivation, these findings suggest that teacher feedback is regarded as an essential and ongoing component of the learning process. This perspective was supported by the teacher feedback forms, which contained constructive and professional comments such as *"Your post activity was engaging, but short; next time you should allocate more time for post activities"* and *"The lesson was good in general, but you should focus more on your classroom management skills."* These written remarks exemplify the balance of encouragement and

specific guidance that participants described as motivating and professionally valuable. The alignment between participants' desire for more feedback and the concrete, detailed nature of the teacher's written comments confirms that teacher feedback was not only highly valued but also seen as indispensable for their continued development.

Table 3 shows the themes and codes that emerged from participants' opinions on the "peer feedback" category. The data obtained through the peer feedback forms are also presented in the following table.

Table 3

Peer feedback: Themes, Codes, and Excerpts

themes	codes	excerpts
usefulness	realizing mistakes, helps improvement, constructive, supportive, detailed, suggestions, creative comments, objective, different perspective, motivating	"It was useful because it helped me see the areas I need to improve and gave me practical suggestions for teaching better." (PT-3) "The feedback my friend gave me was very helpful and useful because it helped me see my deficiencies in the presentation. I will change them and make future presentations better." (PT-9)
feelings	positive, negative	"I felt encouraged and motivated because my friends' feedback was constructive and supportive." (PT-30) "I felt a bit discouraged because it was mostly negative and lacked encouragement." (PT-29)
motivation	increase, no effect, positive, decrease, supportive, discouraging, objective, detailed	"It increased my motivation because it showed me that my efforts were recognized, and I could improve more with small adjustments." (PT-3) "I changed nothing because my friend is a student as well. S/he still needs expertise to give well-planned feedback." (PT-12)
more feedback	helps improvement, peers' point of view, realizing mistakes, only if constructive, unique experience, good perspective, not objective, not professional	"I would definitely like to get feedback because it makes me realize my mistakes and good points better. I think it is very beneficial for my development." (T-14) "If they can deeply understand my presentation and make constructive comments, they can give feedback." (PT-13)

As shown in Table 3, there are four themes under the *peer feedback* category. Ten codes emerged under the first theme 'usefulness'. Pre-service teachers mostly indicated that receiving peer feedback contributed significantly to their professional development by helping them recognize their mistakes and improve their teaching performance. They described the feedback as useful, particularly when it was perceived as constructive, supportive, and detailed. Participants also valued the opportunity to gain different perspectives, receive practical suggestions, and benefit from creative, objective, and motivating comments from their peers. This finding was further supported by the actual peer feedback forms, which contained concrete comments such as *"Giving clearer and shorter instructions would be better"* and *"I think you should be careful with time management so that you can feel better during the activities"* These remarks are in line with the participants' reflections in the evaluation forms, confirming that usefulness was not only recognized at a reflective level but also evident in the specific and practical suggestions peers provided.

The second theme that emerged under the *peer feedback* category was 'feelings', which reflected the emotional responses of pre-service teachers to the feedback they received from their peers. Most participants reported positive emotions, stating that peer feedback made them feel happy, motivated, comfortable, encouraged and proud. However, not all reactions were positive. A few participants reported experiencing nervousness or discouragement. This theme was also evident in the peer feedback forms. For instance, several comments were made in a supportive and affirming way, such as *"I really liked the post activity since it was so fun"* or *"I am sure you worked so hard to prepare the second while activity; it was very good and useful."* Such encouraging remarks align with participants' descriptions of feeling motivated and proud when receiving peer feedback. At the same time, some forms included more critical statements

like *"You have to be careful with the instructions; too long and too confusing"* or *"I didn't like the vocabulary activity because it was a bit boring"* which may have contributed to the feelings of nervousness and discouragement reported in the evaluation forms. Taken together, the two data sources demonstrate that while peer feedback often fostered positive emotions through supportive language, it also generated negative feelings since it sounded less constructive or overly critical.

The third theme identified under the *peer feedback* category was 'motivation', reflecting how participants perceived the influence of peer feedback on their motivation. Most pre-service teachers reported that receiving feedback from their peers had positive impacts on their motivation, often describing it as supportive, encouraging, detailed, objective, or supportive.

Many written comments were framed in an encouraging and constructive way, such as *"Your lesson gave me inspirations, especially the pre-stage!"* or *"You should go on using such hand-made materials; I am sure you students will also love them."* These types of comments resonate with participants' descriptions of feeling encouraged and motivated by peer recognition. However, a few pre-service teachers noted that peer feedback had no effect on their motivation or even slightly decreased it. This finding was also evident in the peer feedback forms. Some forms included more neutral or less supportive statements, for example *"The post activity was a bit boring; you could have organized it better."* or *"You couldn't manage the classroom, you have to work on it."* Such remarks may explain why some participants reported that peer feedback had little or even negative impact on their motivation. From a pedagogical perspective, these sources suggest that when feedback from peers are not constructive, supportive or encouraging, it can decrease or limit the motivation of pre-service teachers while positive and constructive comments are motivating.

The final theme that emerged in relation to *peer feedback* was 'more feedback', which explored participants' willingness to receive peer feedback in future micro-teaching sessions. Many pre-service teachers expressed a desire for continued peer feedback, emphasizing that it contributed to their improvement and helped them recognize mistakes. Several participants valued the opportunity to hear a peer's point of view, describing it as a good and unique experience. Several participants emphasized that they would be willing to receive more peer feedback only if it was constructive. A few participants also raised concerns about the objectivity and professionalism of peer feedback. Evidence from the peer feedback forms supported these views. Several forms contained constructive suggestions such as *"It would be better if you could give simpler instructions so that your students can follow more easily"* or *"Your materials were really good and creative, but you need to be careful with time management."* These kinds of practical comments illustrate why participants found peer feedback useful and wanted more of it. However, some forms included vague or overly general remarks, for example *"It was good"*, *"Everything was fine,"* or *"I didn't like your lesson"* which lacked detail or guidance. The presence of such superficial comments helps explain participants' concerns about the objectivity and professional quality of peer feedback, reinforcing their preference for constructive and specific feedback in future sessions.

4.2. Perceived Compatibility of Feedback

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' views on the compatibility of peer and teacher feedback, as well as their preferences regarding the source of feedback they received. Many participants described the feedback received from peers and the course instructor as compatible, indicating that the content of the feedback was generally aligned across both sources. Participants highlighted that the feedback emphasized similar strengths and areas for improvement, contributing to a clearer understanding of their teaching performance. As one participant noted:

"They were compatible because they both tried to look objectively so that I could see my mistakes." (PT- 4)

Another emphasized the similarity of content despite differing levels of detail:

"They were compatible because both my teacher and friend commented almost on the same points; however, of course my teacher's feedback was more detailed." (PT- 16)

"Both highlighted similar strengths and areas for improvement, which helped me see the aspects I need to work on." (PT- 30)

A smaller group of participants considered the feedback to be only partly compatible. These participants often referred to overlaps in positive comments but differences in the scope or depth of constructive feedback. For example:

"The points they liked were the same, but the points I should improve were different. My friend made only one criticism about my presentation, but my instructor could see different points and evaluate my presentation deeply." (PT- 13)

"There were slight differences. The reason can be related to the different experiences of my teacher and friend." (PT- 19)

A smaller number of participants highlighted the feedback as not compatible at all. These participants pointed to discrepancies in tone, focus, and perceived professionalism:

"They weren't compatible. My friend's feedback was a little bit personal, but my teacher's feedback was more professional." (PT- 12)

"Not really. My friend's feedback was more negative, but my teacher's feedback was more professional." (PT- 29)

These responses suggest that while peer and teacher feedback were often aligned, the level of detail, perspective, and professionalism may vary depending on the source, influencing how participants interpret and value the feedback they receive.

4.3. Feedback Source Preferences

During the interviews, participants were also asked to share their preferences regarding the source of feedback. A large majority of participants reported a preference for receiving feedback from both their peers and their course instructor. These participants emphasized the complementary nature of peer and teacher feedback, noting that feedback from multiple perspectives provided a more comprehensive understanding of their performance. For instance:

"Both would be good to get different comments, but of course I would always prefer teacher feedback because getting accurate feedback from a knowledgeable person would be more beneficial." (PT- 13)

"Actually, I found both of them useful. I think both types of feedback are necessary to see my weaknesses." (PT- 14)

"I think both are useful because you get a general comment from your friend about a point, but when the teacher's comments about the same points are deeper, you realize that the teacher's expectation is different, and you have to be more careful." (PT- 16)

This preference for receiving feedback from both sources was also evident in the findings from feedback evaluation forms and completed feedback forms. In the former, participants highlighted that peer feedback helped them recognize mistakes and offered alternative perspectives, while teacher feedback was consistently described as professional, detailed, and motivating. Similarly, the completed feedback forms contained constructive peer comments and teacher remarks, which confirms that participants valued the complementary nature of feedback from peers and instructors, as each source contributed differently to their professional growth.

Notably, none of the participants preferred peer feedback over teacher feedback. A minority explicitly stated that they favoured teacher feedback alone. These participants cited reasons such as the instructor's expertise, the perceived objectivity and professionalism of teacher feedback, and its greater motivational value. As some participants explained:

> *"My teacher's feedback was more important for me because she knows better, so I prefer teacher feedback. My friend was more emotional while giving feedback, but my teacher did not give feedback according to her emotions and she was more professional."* (PT- 17)

> *"Teacher feedback was more useful since she is more experienced and she knows how to give feedback very well, that's why it was more reliable."* (PT- 19)

> *"I find teacher feedback more useful because it helped me stay motivated while helping me realize my mistakes. Peer feedback could be more useful if it was more constructive."* (PT- 29)

These findings indicate that while peer feedback is valued as a supplementary tool for reflection and awareness, teacher feedback remains the primary and most trusted source for instructional improvement among pre-service EFL teachers.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to explore pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions and preferences regarding teacher and peer feedback during micro-teaching sessions. While most participants valued both types of feedback, teacher feedback was mostly regarded as more reliable, professional and useful for development, which confirms prior research (Erdemir & Yeşilçınar, 2021; Yigitoglu-Aptoula, 2021; Bader et al., 2024; Fki, 2023). This study also highlights the dominant role of teacher feedback in shaping student teachers' development, which is consistent with the results of the study conducted by Bader et al. (2024) who found that teacher feedback was overwhelmingly valued while peer feedback was considered less favourable.

Some of the participants described teacher feedback as more "reliable," a term they used to refer to the instructor's experience and expertise. This perception aligns with sociocultural expectations in Turkish teacher education, where instructors are traditionally regarded as authoritative and trustworthy sources of pedagogical guidance. In Türkiye, educational settings are often characterized by hierarchical teacher–student relationships, and the instructor is regarded as the primary authority figure whose expertise is rarely questioned. This belief also contributes to pre-service teachers' stronger trust in teacher feedback and shapes how they perceive its reliability.

Participants highlighted the usefulness of both feedback source, especially in recognizing mistakes and supporting instructional improvement regarding the first research question. Teacher feedback was mostly perceived as more professional, detailed, and reliable, which led to deeper reflection in participants' evaluations of the feedback they received. Similarly, Karakaş and Yükselir (2025) reported that instructor feedback in video-mediated microteaching offered higher-level reflections compared to peer comments. Participants emphasized its specificity and evidential

basis, which is observed in the clear identification of the problems and specific examples of particular classroom events or practices. They also viewed teacher feedback as more constructive because it provided action-oriented guidance that helped them understand how to improve their teaching rather than only describing weaknesses. These findings are consistent with previous studies (Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Fki, 2023), stressing the important role of teacher feedback in shaping pre-service teachers' professional growth.

Peer feedback, on the other hand, was valued for its supportive tone, different perspectives, and capacity to foster self-awareness. These results align with previous studies that emphasize the reflective benefits of peer feedback in teacher education (Ersel-Kaymakamoğlu, 2009; Cañabate et al., 2019; İnce, 2016). Peer feedback might have been regarded as supportive since pre-service teachers might have focused mostly on the positive sides in order not to offend their peers. Nevertheless, participants raised concerns regarding the objectivity and professional quality of peer feedback, which have also been identified in previous studies (Ekşi, 2012; Erdemir & Yeşilçınar, 2021; Howard et al., 2010; Bader et al.). Prilop and Weber (2023) also reported that results related to the variability in peer feedback quality. These results suggest that explicit training can be used to improve the quality of peer feedback. Another important result was that most participants found peer feedback emotionally encouraging and motivating while some reported mixed feelings when the feedback lacked clarity or seemed critical. Similarly, a tension was also visible in Cavanagh and Tran's (2025) study on peer lesson plan evaluation.

In response to the second research question exploring participants' preferences for feedback sources, the majority of participants perceived peer and teacher feedback to be largely compatible, with similar points emphasized. On the other hand, some differences in depth and tone were also indicated by the participants, especially in the constructive aspects of teacher feedback. The tone of teacher feedback was significant, with participants describing it as generally balanced combining constructive comments with encouragement. Teacher feedback remained the most preferred and trusted source, which is consistent with Erdemir and Yeşilçınar (2021) and Yigitoglu-Aptoula (2021). This preference may stem from pre-service teachers' perceptions of instructors as authoritative figures, influenced by the traditionally hierarchical nature of teacher–student relationships in Türkiye. Similarly, Fki (2023) found that teacher feedback was valued for its authoritative and expert nature while peer feedback was appreciated as a complement. These results also support the findings of Bader et al. (2024) who found that teacher candidates value teacher feedback as their primary source of guidance while peer feedback was considered less favourable.

Teacher feedback was exclusively favoured for its professionalism, clarity, and motivational value. This preference may reflect the detailed and supportive nature of teacher feedback, which creates a trustworthy, practical and professional image for teacher feedback. The findings also suggest that peer feedback is as a meaningful supplement to teacher feedback, but it should not be replacing teacher feedback. These results support Cañabate et al. (2019) and Ersel-Kaymakamoğlu (2009), who found that peer feedback fosters collaboration and contributes to self-awareness by allowing pre-service teachers to view their performance through others' eyes. Tiainen and Lutovac (2024) similarly found that collaborative peer settings, such as group mentoring, can stimulate joint reflection. While it promotes reflection and peer collaboration, its effectiveness depends on the quality and constructiveness of the comments. While most participants preferred to receive teacher feedback, none preferred peer feedback alone. These findings reflect concerns in the literature regarding the limitations of peer feedback, such as its perceived lack of objectivity and the emotional discomfort it may cause (Ekşi, 2012; Howard et al., 2010).

Finally, when interpreting the findings, the influence of power dynamics and social desirability should also be considered. Peer feedback may have been shaped by politeness norms and a desire to avoid offending classmates, and this may lead to a greater emphasis on supportive rather than critical comments. Likewise, the perception of teacher feedback as more authoritative and professional may have been reinforced by the instructor's dual role as both researcher and course teacher. While measures such as anonymization and the separation of grading from research were used to reduce these risks, the findings may still reflect the subtle impact of power relations and social desirability on how feedback was perceived and expressed.

In sum, while peer feedback plays an important role in fostering reflection and peer collaboration, teacher feedback remains central to pre-service teachers' professional growth. The integration of both sources is seen as most beneficial, with peer feedback offering emotional and interpersonal value, and teacher feedback providing depth, expertise, and structured guidance. Encouraging pre-service teachers to engage in feedback-giving practices, alongside receiving structured feedback from instructors, may deepen their reflective skills, promote critical thinking, and enhance their teaching confidence.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study explored pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions and preferences regarding teacher and peer feedback during micro-teaching sessions. The findings show that pre-service EFL teachers favour both feedback sources, with teacher feedback viewed as more professional, specific, detailed, action-oriented and motivating, and peer feedback valued for its supportive tone, alternative perspectives and reflective potential. Although pre-service teachers appreciate the complementary nature of both types, teacher feedback was consistently regarded as the primary source of feedback, especially for instructional improvement.

The study contributes to the educational literature by offering empirical insight into how pre-service teachers weigh different sources of feedback within a micro-teaching context. The findings are important because they show that examining feedback practices helps explain why teacher feedback maintains a strong position in early teacher learning and why peer feedback requires deliberate scaffolding to be equally effective.

Based on the findings of the study, several implications for teacher educators can be identified. These results underscore the importance of maintaining a balanced feedback structure in teacher education programs. For teacher educators, the results show the importance of integrating peer feedback alongside structured teacher feedback, which can enrich pre-service teachers' reflective practices, foster critical thinking, and promote collaborative learning environments. In order to increase the effectiveness of peer feedback, explicit training on how to give constructive, objective, and professionally appropriate feedback can be planned. Encouraging students to practice peer feedback in guided settings may reduce emotional discomfort and improve the quality of their evaluations. Therefore, use of rubrics or observation forms might be integrated into peer feedback practices. Also, developing feedback literacy may be aimed in order to enhance student uptake of feedback so that pre-service teachers can understand how to make judgements and take actions after receiving feedback.

Despite the significant findings, this study has several limitations. First, study involved a small sample size, and the participants were from a single institution, which restricts the findings to be generalized to other teacher education contexts. Second, the dual role of the researcher as an instructor and primary analyst may have created bias despite

peer check and anonymization. Finally, the data were collected through only qualitative sources such as feedback forms, reflections and interviews, which might limit the objectivity.

Future research could extend this study by addressing these limitations. Broader and more diverse participants group and employing mixed-method designs to capture a more comprehensive understanding of pre-service teachers' experiences with teacher and peer feedback. Self-reflection could also be added as an additional reflective tool alongside peer and teacher feedback to examine its combined effect on teaching performance and professional growth. In addition, using different data collection tools could provide a deeper understanding of how feedback is received, interpreted, and applied by pre-service teachers.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Declaration of Generative AI Use

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool was used only for improving language fluency, without affecting the originality of the manuscript.

Ethical Statement

Ethical approval was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Hasan Kalyoncu University (Approval Date: 22.04.2025; Reference No: 79445).

Author Contributions

The author was responsible for all aspects of the study, including conceptualization, methodology, data analysis, interpretation, and manuscript preparation.

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