

“YOU ARE GOOD IN GENERAL”: INSIGHTS FROM PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS’ FEEDBACK SESSIONS IN PRACTICUM

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Received: December 02, 2021

Accepted: January 25, 2022

Published: April 30, 2022

Suggested Citation:

Bekereci-Şahin, M., & Gürbüz, N. (2022). “You are good in general”: Insights from pre-service EFL teachers’ feedback sessions in practicum. *International Journal of New Trends in Arts, Sports & Science Education (IJTASE)*, 11(2), 67-77.



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Abstract

This study explores pre-service EFL teachers’ perceptions about feedback practices in practicum courses. It also investigates the problems pre-service teachers face during practicum in terms of receiving feedback from their mentor teachers and university supervisors. In this exploratory case study, the data were collected through a survey and two focus group interviews. The participants were ten pre-service EFL teachers in an English Language Teaching department of a state university in Turkey. Findings revealed three significant points. Firstly, participants did not receive feedback regularly even in the courses mainly based on teaching practices. Secondly, participants implied the fact that the feedback they received in practicum did not motivate them, since they were not constructive. Thirdly, all participants indicated that receiving feedback after completing teaching tasks did not contribute much to their teaching practices and motivate them for pursuing teaching as a career, since feedback sessions turned into criticism sessions.

Keywords: Feedback, pre-service English language teachers, practicum.

INTRODUCTION

In the most general sense, feedback is conceptualized as “information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one’s performance and understanding” (Hattie & Timperly, 2007, p.81). In a broad sense, in education, it is generally recommended that feedback should include telling students about their strengths and then telling them about deficiencies in a gentle way by finalizing the feedback session with complimentary information, and giving suggestions about what could be done next time to improve their works, which is defined as the ‘sandwich model’, (Brinko, 1993). In the education field, feedback should be constructive and supportive (Hounsell, McCune, Hounsell & Litjens, 2008). The characteristics of an effective feedback are listed as follows: clear, purposeful, meaningful, compatible with students’ prior knowledge, and providing logical connections (Hattie & Timperly, 2007).

In higher education, feedback is very useful for making a difference in undergraduate and graduate students’ learning; however, the provision of feedback does not necessarily result in improvement in university-level (Crisp, 2007), since feedback can be accepted, modified, or rejected by the university students very easily (Kulhavy, 1977). For instance, Tuckman & Oliver (1968) claim that feedback provided by supervisors produces opposite change in teacher behavior after the feedback sessions as the source of feedback is higher in status than the recipient, which may cause student-teachers to feel intimidated. In this sense, with respect to higher education, feedback should promote students’ autonomy in their own learning process (Carless, 2006) and pave the way for students to bridge the gap between their current status and the desired status (Sadler, 1989). In a similar vein, Locke & Latham (1990) state that feedback allows students to “set reasonable goals and to track their

performance in relation to their goals so that adjustments in effort, direction, and even strategy can be made as needed” (p.23).

Feedback is essential for student teachers’ professional development, since it helps them understand what should be done in the classroom and how to improve their teaching skills. It also gives student teachers a chance to self-assess their performance in terms of strengths and weaknesses in teaching practices (Brooks et al., 2019). To this end, in teacher education programs, methodology and school-based practicum courses are very critical to student teachers’ development. Feedback sessions may reconstruct student teachers’ self-images through background knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values (Roe & Ross, 2002). It is suggested that both written and oral feedback should be given to student teachers in order to help them improve their teaching and pedagogical skills (Ali & Al-Adawi, 2013).

Effective feedback, as a part of pedagogy, should be interactive and dialogic (Carless, Salter, Yang, Lam, 2011), since it has a power to promote students’ motivation and help them assess their own performance in order to plan what could be done next time (Black & William, 1998). According to relevant literature, mentor feedback during practicum and methodology courses are seen as the heart of pre-service teachers’ professional development because they provide advice and suggestions for future use (Copland, 2011). In their article, Hattie & Timperley (2007) indicate that practicum feedback is of vital importance for pre-service teachers if it provides them opportunities to know their strengths and weaknesses by being engaged in a dialogue with their supervisors and mentors rather than organizing didactic sessions.

Underpinning the importance of constructive practicum feedback, White (2007) claims that student teachers should be encouraged to think about their performances with a critical stance. According to the literature, designing the stages of an effective practicum feedback session is at least as important as the characteristics of the feedback provider (e.g. Copland, 2011; Moody, 2009; Fairbanks et al., 2000). For instance, Copland (2011) proposes an effective practicum feedback session, including five stages; firstly, self evaluation where trainees reflect upon their own performances to highlight the strong and weak points in his/her lesson; secondly, mentor teachers’ comments on the student teacher’s performance by providing them with both positive and negative sides of the performance and also suggestions for future work; thirdly, the student teacher reflects upon their performance again by considering mentor’s comments in a dialogic way; fourth, the mentor asks them to evaluate themselves by posing questions about particular sections of their performances, and finally the student teacher and the mentor come together to clarify their expectations from each other for the next time. As Feiman-Nemser (2001) suggests in her study that feedback in teacher preparation would help pre-service teachers “visualize their evolving style, clarify what they need to work on, and concretize their own vision of good teaching” (p.23).

Research studies related to student teachers’ and mentors’ views about feedback put forth remarkable results. A study carried out by Pence and Macgillivray (2008) examines the effect of practicum on pre-service teachers’ professional development. The study shows that all of the participants expressed their positive feelings concerning the significance of feedback and support they got from their supervisors during practicum. In a similar vein, Beck and Kosnik’s (2002) study with pre-service teachers revealed that student teachers considered getting support and receiving feedback from their mentor teacher as the vital elements of their practicum experience.

Investigating a small group of student teachers’ practicum experiences in New Zealand, White (2007) conducted a study and collected relevant data through a questionnaire, which was administered four times throughout the practicum year. The participants were asked about what they understood by the concept of feedback, how they expected to be given feedback, what they hoped to gain from the feedback they received, what they found useful, and what their expectations were from an effective feedback session. The study revealed that although participants appreciated both oral and written types of feedback, they found oral feedback more beneficial and useful. They indicated that mentor teacher’s suggestions were of vital importance for their future professional teaching practice. The study also showed that students received a wider variety and range of feedback than they had expected

and indicated that it had met their expectations more than they had expected and made them aware of their strengths and weaknesses in-depth.

Conducting an ethnographic study for four years with 95 countries from nine different countries, Brandt (2008) interviewed both teachers and trainees, and asked them to keep journals and respond to questionnaires. The most striking finding of this study was trainees preferred to be given authentic feedback, rather than feedback, which was felt to be overly lenient or critical, for whatever reason. This means that trainees quickly became aware that tutors were capable of manipulating feedback. For example, tutors were found to give positive feedback, even when not easily justified, when they felt that a trainee might not be able to cope with more negative feedback. In a similar vein, Copland (2010) conducted an ethnographic study and examined the tension that rooted in a difference in expectation amongst trainers and trainees about the purpose and performance of feedback. This study showed that trainees rejected the feedback because they did not internalize them or because they wished to challenge them as adults.

Tülüce and Çeçen (2016) examined pre-service teachers' practicum experiences and found that student teachers could not benefit from practicum as a result of receiving no constructive feedback from their mentor teachers and supervisors which led to unmotivation in teaching. Likewise, Akcan & Tatar (2010) carried out a study seeking to understand how university supervisors and mentor teachers approached giving feedback to pre-service English language teachers during practicum. i. Their findings indicated that supervisors encouraged reflection during post-lesson conferences and helped pre-service teachers to evaluate their performances critically. It was also found that mentor teachers' feedback was more situation-specific by focusing on certain instances that occurred in the classroom.

Brooks et al. (2019) conducted a research study with 28 students in one of the state schools in Australia to examine what type of feedback is efficient in English classes. They found that clarification of criteria and standards at the beginning of the feedback session is of vital importance to provide purposeful feedback to students and receive meaningful reactions from them. In a similar vein, Makgakga & Ngubane (2021) explored teacher educators' views on feedback sessions after student teachers' micro-teaching performances. The study suggests that there is a need to define clear and specific criteria and outcomes for assessment. It is also claimed that a self-assessment rubric should be provided for pre-service teachers in order to avoid conflicts between teacher educators and teacher candidates. Hadjistassou et al. (2020) examined the reflective process of pre-service teachers and their instructors during geographically distant feedback sessions. The relevant data were gathered through an online questionnaire and online focus group interviews. The study showed that teacher educators support the use of online platforms to provide feedback to student teachers in order to overcome the tensions of face-to-face feedback sessions. In addition, teacher educators stated that they prefer formative assessment for student teachers since formative assessment allow student teachers to monitor their transformation.

In a recent study Nel & Marais (2021) collected data from senior year students in a teacher education program via semi-structured interviews and a short survey. They found that constructive dialogue between the teacher educator, mentor teacher and the student teacher is they key factor to improve prospective teachers' teaching practices. In addition, sparing time for self-reflection before the feedback session is very critical for student teachers to utilize the feedback provided by the mentor teacher and the teacher educator.

The present study aims to investigate pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' views about feedback practices in practicum courses. Moreover, this study aims to investigate the problems they face during practicum in terms of receiving feedback from mentor teachers, university supervisors and course instructors. To achieve these aims, this study was conducted in one of the English Language Teaching departments in Turkey and attempts to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the views of pre-service EFL teachers about effective feedback?

2. How do pre-service EFL teachers reflect on the feedback they received in practicum courses from their mentor teacher and the university supervisor in terms of its effectiveness?

METHOD

This study was designed as a case study which is “studying the same single case at two or more different points in time” in order to “specify how certain conditions change over time, and the desired time intervals to be selected would reflect the presumed stages at which the changes should reveal themselves” (Yin, 2003, p.42). To this end, this study was designed as an exploratory case study due to the fact that it aims to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of pre-service teachers regarding receiving effective feedback in teacher education programs.

Participants and Research Setting

ELT departments in Turkey function as part of the Faculties of Education. All the ELT departments in Turkey share the same programme with only minor differences. Students who pass the English language Proficiency exam in English-medium universities can start their education in their department right away. Those who cannot, need to attend a one-year English Language Preparatory School and if successful in the English Language proficiency exam, they continue their education in their department. In the ELT programme, students are required to take language skills courses in the first year and ELT methodology, Literature, Linguistics and school-based practicum courses in the upcoming years. In the methodology courses, students do not only learn about the theoretical aspects of ELT methodology but also given a chance to do microteaching in which they teach mini lessons to their classmates. The first school-based course they take after completing the methodology courses is the School Experience course which they take in the first semestre of their final year. This course involves four hours of observation every week and tasks on several aspects of ELT as well as some teaching experience. The number of the lessons they will teach are decided by their mentors in the schools. When student-teachers complete this course, they take the practice teaching course in their final semestre. This course, mainly referred to as ‘the practicum’ involves 6 hours of observation every week for a 12-week period and at least 4 hours of teaching all of which are jointly assessed by the mentor teacher and the supervising teacher.

Our participants in the study are pre-service teachers enrolled in the ELT department of a state university. The participants are ten senior year ELT students who completed all ELT courses in the department and are currently taking the practicum course. Since participating in this study is voluntarily, written consent was taken from the participants and numbers were given to each participant in order to ensure the anonymity.

Data Collection Tools and Procedure

In this study, the relevant data were collected through two focus group interviews and a survey. The survey was comprised of three sentence completion and two open-ended questions. It was administered at the very beginning of the semester in order to learn the participants’ initial views about the feedback they expect to receive throughout the semester. Focus group interviews were conducted after the first and the second teaching practices of participants. These interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the interviewees and were transcribed by the researchers. The survey and focus group questions were prepared by the researchers. After that, an expert view was taken in order to ensure the validation of items.

Data Analysis

In this study, the data analysis was comprised of several steps suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994). First of all, the audio-recorded focus group interviews were transcribed verbatim. Focus group interviews were conducted in Turkish in order to make the participants more comfortable while expressing themselves in their native language (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The vignettes taken from interviews were all translated into English by one of the researchers, since she is a graduate of the Department of Translation and Interpreting. Then, the researchers developed a system to retrieve codes and themes from the raw data and they also benefited from in-vivo coding (Strauss, 1987, p.33).

This stage enabled the researchers to group similar content under categories. For the analysis of the survey, the researchers followed the same strategy proposed by Miles & Huberman (1994). Similar to the analysis process of focus group interviews, the researchers eliminated the irrelevant codes obtained from the survey. Then, results of the survey were presented by using tables as suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994).

Establishment of Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the results, strategies suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) for qualitative studies were followed. First, data were triangulated by using multiple data collection tools. Then, an external audit was included. This person was not involved in the research process but examined both the process and product of the study. Finally, the external audit, who was a doctoral student with research experience in the same department, checked the study in order to assess the adequacy of raw data and preliminary results.

RESULTS

The findings of this study have been separated into themes emerged from the data. In addition, the findings will be presented according to the data collection tools.

Results of the Survey

The participants were asked to complete the sentences in the survey. Answers given by the participants are demonstrated in Table 1, 2, and 3 below:

Table 1. “For me, a feedback means...”

A critical comment on a work	Guidance for students for professional development	Defining students' strengths and weaknesses by an expert	Being aware of your own weaknesses	A helpful device to achieve your best
A necessary or unnecessary comment on a task	A road sign	An assessment	Necessity to find out your best	Constructive criticism

Table 2. “The aim of receiving feedback is...”

Improving students	Learning experts' comments	Improving teaching	Practicing more to reach the best	Being aware of weaknesses
Showing students their strengths and weaknesses			Guiding students for improvement	

Table 3. “An ideal feedback session for teacher candidates should be like...”

Face to face and oral	Systematic and sustainable	Providing constructive comments rather than criticizing	Providing suggestions to fix students' weaknesses	Encouraging not distracting
Constructive	Allocating enough time in a private place		Not judgemental but friendly and kind	

Answers given by the participants clearly show that pre-service teachers need to receive constructive, guiding and solution-oriented feedback from their mentors and instructors. According to them, feedback should be provided in order not to criticize the student but to improve their teaching skills. Also, they indicated that feedback sessions should be systematic and sustainable. In addition to

sentence completion part, the survey included two open-ended questions. The answers given by the participants are demonstrated in Table 4 and 5 below:

Table 4. How should mentor teachers and teacher trainers prepare for feedback sessions?

Being competent in the task that s/he will give to the students	Being well-prepared to communicate well in the feedback session	Monitoring students throughout the semester thoroughly	Focusing on students' progress	Observing students and taking notes
Mastering guidance skills		Being highly sensitive to students' psychology in order not to hurt their feelings		

Table 5. What are your expectations from the university supervisor and the mentor teacher in terms of feedback sessions in practicum?

Receiving sustainable and systematic feedback in a real teaching context	Face-to-face and constructive feedback in an authentic way	Receiving suggestions to fix their weaknesses rather than being harshly criticized	Receiving feedback as a persistent activity	Organizing individual feedback sessions in a private place on a weekly basis
Receiving detailed feedback on teaching skills, not on the personality traits				

It is crystal clear that pre-service EFL teachers expected to receive feedback from well-prepared and competent mentor teachers. Also, they thought that mentor teachers should observe pre-service teachers during the semester in order to focus on their progress rather than criticizing them for what they did during a short teaching session. Besides, they expected receiving weekly, sustainable and constructive feedback from their university supervisor. Finally, they did not want to be criticized because of their personality traits.

Results of the Focus Group Interviews

The focus group interviews were conducted after participants completed their teaching practices in the cooperating school for the practicum. For the teaching task, the participants prepared a 40-minute lesson plan as a group of two or three and delivered this lesson in the cooperating school in front of a real classroom. After conducting the focus group interviews, the following results emerged:

“We need feedback before our teaching task”

During the first focus group interview, all the participants indicated that receiving feedback after completing their teaching tasks did not much contribute to their teaching practices and motivate them for the upcoming teaching task. They clearly stated that receiving feedback before teaching task would be more beneficial for them in terms of improving teaching practices and revising their lesson plans. For instance, P6 thought that their mentor teacher should have prepared them for the dynamics of a real classroom context, since it was the first time that they taught in front of real students. She expressed herself as:

Before our first teaching task, we had assumed that everything would have gone well like our microteachings in methodology courses. After starting our teaching, we suddenly realized that we were in a real classroom because things did not go well. At that moment, I thought that we need feedback before our teaching practice, not after. We need feedback from our mentor teacher on classroom realities, dynamics, tips, clues, and so on. Nothing went well in the teaching session, then, our mentor teacher came and criticized us. What good does that do me!

“Whose feedback?”

During the focus group interviews, participants were asked about from whom they would like to receive feedback most. The results showed that they had different opinions about this. While P8 and P2 stated that they would like to receive feedback from their peers as they became ‘fellows’ throughout the semester in the cooperating school, P1 and P7 stated that they preferred to receive feedback from their mentor teacher, since they found their mentor teacher more objective than their peers. P1 thought that peers were extremely kind in feedback sessions without criticizing each other but just providing suggestions. However, P1 preferred to receive feedback from an ‘objective ‘source:

We do not break our friend’s heart, so we try to be so kind while giving feedback to our peer. Thus, I cannot believe in my peer’s appreciations. I know she or he tries to be nice and does not want to hurt me, but I must hear my weaknesses to improve. I must learn the reality. So, I prefer mentor feedback.

From a different perspective, P8 thought that peers were more sympathetic towards one another especially when they had problems in the cooperating school; that’s why, she preferred to receive feedback from her peer:

Since I did not receive enough feedback during my university life, I cannot make a clear distinction between the efficiency of peer feedback and mentor feedback. So, I do not know whose feedback is more efficient. However, I prefer peer feedback because my peer can easily understand my anxieties and problems. We can do brainstorming to make suggestions for each other’s weaknesses and I think peers support each other very effectively in practicum. Sometimes mentors or supervisors make harsh criticisms, but your peer can understand you and soften his/her comments because s/he is in the same position.

“An ideal feedback session is like...”

During the focus group interviews, participants were asked to describe an ideal feedback session for prospective teachers. They provided various suggestions to improve the feedback sessions. Firstly, the participants indicated that instructors and mentor teachers should have empathy for pre-service teachers. Secondly, they strongly believed that mentor teachers and instructors should not only criticize pre-service teachers but also provide solutions and suggestions for their weaknesses. They stated that if they are not provided any solutions, feedback sessions turn into *criticism sessions*. In addition, student teachers indicated that feedback sessions should be provided face-to-face and detailed in a private place. Some of the participants also proposed that instructors and mentor teachers should prepare a rubric and share it with pre-service teachers before the feedback session. P6 expressed her thoughts about the privacy issues as follows:

Our mentor teacher gave us feedback just after our teaching task in front of the students. I felt myself very uncomfortable at that moment. She listed all my negative sides in the classroom. I do not find it proper. Besides, I realized that our mentor teacher compared me with my peer.

Another participant, P5, stated that feedback sessions should be systematic and sustainable in order to inform student teachers about their progress:

Feedback sessions should inform us about our progress. Feedback sessions should be constructive and well-organized. We should do brainstorming with our mentors about our progress. She should enlighten us with her experience. Feedback does not mean criticizing your students.

Another point was receiving peer feedback to improve the feedback sessions which was mentioned by two of the participants during the interviews. P4 indicated that organizing peer feedback sessions is very beneficial for student teachers:

I think peer feedback is very important for us. It would be very beneficial to receive comments on our teaching from our class mates. Most of the time we forget what we do in the classroom, so I wonder how my class mates see me and, I wonder their reactions.

“Who should be the authority?”

It is clearly seen from the focus group interviews that pre-service teachers perceived the feedback they received from mentor teachers and university supervisors with different point of views. For instance, P10 thought that he could not see his mentor teacher as an ‘authority’ to provide him feedback, since he found her unskilled during the lessons. He explained his thoughts as:

During my school experience, I always thought that who should be the authority to evaluate me and give feedback to me. I have observed that our mentor teacher cannot be an authority because she is not successful in the classroom. She gave me feedback in front of the students. She is not a professional. So, her feedback does not make any sense.

Likewise, P2 indicated that her mentor teacher appreciated her ‘too much’ instead of allocating time to comment on her weaknesses and make suggestions for them. She said:

Our mentor teacher always praises me by saying “You are good in the general sense”. I do not understand what ‘in the general sense’ means. I would like to hear detailed comments on my weaknesses and strengths. I think that she does not want to allocate time to discuss our performances with us. This is not a feedback.

“We need more collaboration between schools and universities”

According to the findings, student-teachers need to see more collaboration between the cooperating school and the university during practicum. They implied that university supervisors should be in touch with mentor teachers in order to follow pre-service teachers’ progress throughout the semester. P10 indicated that the university supervisor and the mentor teacher should follow the same evaluation and feedback system in order to provide efficient and systematic feedback from different sources and make contributions to their teaching skills. He summarized his thoughts with the following statement:

I know that it is very hard for our university supervisor to come our cooperating school and observe us every week due to her own heavy workload; however, we feel ourselves abandoned in the cooperating school. I think that our mentor teacher and university supervisor did not talk about our progress and situation during the semester. We need more collaboration between schools and universities.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, and RECOMMENDATIONS

This exploratory case study set out to investigate the perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers about effective feedback they expect to receive in the ELT department. Also, this study sought to explore the effectiveness of feedback pre-service teachers received in practicum courses from their mentor teachers and university supervisors.

It is remarkable that participants did not receive feedback regularly even in the courses which are mainly based on practice. They also implied that receiving feedback in practicum courses may provide them with opportunities to improve their weaknesses and raise their awareness about their deficiencies as pre-service teachers. However, most of the participants implied the fact that feedback they received in practicum courses did not motivate them, since they were not constructive. In a similar vein, Tülüce & Çeçen (2016) proposed that receiving no constructive feedback from mentors and supervisors led to student teachers’ losing their motivation for pursuing teaching as a career. In addition, the survey put forth that feedback means a critical comment, guidance for professional development, an expert view of strengths and weaknesses, and constructive criticism. Besides, they indicated in the survey that the aim of receiving feedback is improving teacher candidates’ teaching, encouraging them to do their best, and providing them with guidance for their professional development. The participants stated that the feedback they received in practicum courses would be beneficial if they were face-to-face, oral, systematic, sustainable, and friendly. They also added that feedback sessions should provide constructive comments rather than criticizing. Similarly, Brooks et al. (2019) and Makgakga & Ngubane (2020) found in their studies that feedback sessions should be systematic and a set of criteria should be defined before the feedback session.

In a similar vein, White (2007) underpins the importance of constructive practicum feedback which encourages prospective teachers to think about their teaching selves with a critical stance. According to the participants feedback sessions should be conducted in a dialogical way rather than a monological way. This result is in line with Carless et al.'s (2011) and Nel & Marais's (2021) claims, which imply that an effective feedback session should be interactive and dialogical. Also, the participants implied the importance of course instructors' suggestions in feedback sessions for their professional development. They also added that feedback should be given in an authentic way rather than mentioning stereotyped criticisms and it should be given by considering professional characteristics rather than mentioning personality traits.

All the participants indicated that receiving feedback after completing the teaching tasks did not contribute much to their teaching practices and motivate them for pursuing teaching as a career. They clearly indicated that receiving feedback before teaching would be more beneficial for them in terms of improving their teaching skills and providing them an opportunity to redesign their lesson plans and activities. The participants indicated that they would like to receive feedback from their peers, since they became fellows and shared the same atmosphere throughout the semester. It is clearly stated by the participants that the feedback they received in practicum did not meet their expectations due to the several reasons. First of all, they indicated that their mentor teachers did not provide any solutions or suggestions for their weaknesses about teaching. They called these feedback sessions as *criticism sessions*. In addition, they believed that they would benefit from feedback sessions if they were organized by the mentor teacher in a private place rather than allocating only one minute to list their weaknesses in front of the students.

According to the participants, mentor teachers should get prepared for feedback sessions by designing a rubric and also following pre-service teachers' progress throughout the semester in order to make contributions to their professional development. In a similar vein, Copland (2011) and Hadjistassou et al. (2020) stated that well-organized, progress-oriented and sustainable feedback given by the mentor teacher played a crucial role in prospective teachers' professional development. One of the salient comments made by the participants was the benefit of receiving peer feedback in feedback sessions. They suggested that peer feedback is very beneficial for reflecting upon their own teaching selves and being aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, in her study, Copland (2011) drew attention to the importance of receiving peer feedback about their teaching performances and also coming together with classmates to clarify their comments for the upcoming teachings.

Moreover, the data showed that pre-service teachers did not see their mentor teacher as an authority, since they found them unskilled. Copland (2010) found exactly the same result in her study indicating trainees' rejection of the feedback received from mentor teachers because they did not internalize their authority. The results also, put forward that participants felt uncomfortable when their mentor teachers appreciated them too much as a result of their unwillingness to allocate time to provide detailed feedback. They also added that mentor teachers provided superficial feedback after the teaching experience. Brandt (2008) found similar results implying that mentor teachers' manipulating and superficial feedback. In his study, it was stated that mentors manipulated feedback sessions by appreciating pre-service teachers without mentioning their weaknesses and providing solutions.

The participants also indicated that schools and universities should collaborate more in order to make remarkable contributions to professional development of pre-service teachers. Furthermore, in this study, participants experienced many times that their mentor teachers did not allow them to talk during the feedback sessions. They saw themselves just as the 'listeners' of long monologues. Likewise, Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick (2006) found that feedback sessions should help pre-service teachers take control of their own learning through providing pre-service teachers a proactive role in feedback sessions. Similarly, Beaumont et al. (2008), Hattie & Timperley (2007) and Brinko (1993) drew attention to the necessity of dialogic and interactive feedback sessions in teacher education.

In conclusion, this study puts forward that feedback plays a key role in professional development of pre-service EFL teachers. In addition, it has an important impact on reshaping the teaching practices of pre-service teachers and their views about the teaching profession. This study suggests that both

mentor teachers and university supervisors should work collaboratively in order to provide feedback from multiple sources and make contributions to professional development of pre-service teachers. It also reveals that feedback sessions should be well-designed, sustainable and objective without criticizing prospective teachers, but focusing on the strengths and also weaknesses with possible solutions.

This study may provide several implications for mentor teachers and teacher educators. Firstly, since practicum is a critical period for prospective teachers in terms of shaping their decisions about their career path, providing them with efficient and solution-oriented feedback sessions is of vital importance. Secondly, the implications of this study may raise the awareness of teacher educators about the importance of providing feedback for pre-service teachers, since feedback may help pre-service teachers enter the profession more in a more confident and well-prepared way. Lastly, this study also indicates that the collaboration between mentors and supervisors plays a key role in training professional teachers for their field. In that sense, more attention should be attached to feedback, which may help prospective teachers to evaluate their own teaching practices with a critical stance.

Lastly, this study was conducted in one institution with a limited number of participants. Therefore, conducting this study in different institutions may provide researchers with a deeper understanding of the issue. Apart from that including mentors and supervisors to the study would provide valuable insights for the reader and may help us gain more insights into the issue.

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