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BALANCING WRITTEN AND AUDIO PEER FEEDBACK IN ACADEMIC WRITING: STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITH PADLET

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Abstract
This article explores Macedonian university students' reflections and preferences regarding online peer feedback in academic writing, with a focus on three key factors: the feedback mode (written vs. audio), the students' role in the process (giver vs. recipient), and the writing task type (essay outline vs. fully developed draft). The study was conducted among second-year undergraduates enrolled in an academic writing course that integrated Padlet as a peer review platform. The data were collected through an online questionnaire that examined how students experienced giving and receiving feedback in both written and audio formats across different stages of writing. The study revealed that most students valued participating in feedback sessions across different modalities, although some of them reported feeling less confident when recording and posting their audio comments. Written feedback was preferred for the full drafts, while audio feedback was preferred for the essay outlines. The thematic analysis highlighted that written feedback was associated with comfort, easier navigation, and clarity, while audio feedback was valued for its spontaneity and the non-verbal communicative cues conveyed through the human voice. These findings underscore the importance of offering students diverse peer-review formats so as to encourage more effective peer feedback practices in academic writing instruction.

Keywords: academic writing, audio feedback, digital platforms, peer feedback, written feedback

Introduction
Peer feedback has grown to be an essential component of teaching and learning academic writing, particularly in higher education contexts. Unlike instructor feedback, peer review involves students in collaborative or individual evaluation of their peers' work, promotes critical thinking, stimulates greater awareness of audience and encourages reflection (Liu & Carless, 2006; Taghizadeh Kerman et al., 2024; Wu & Schunn, 2020). Studies have shown that both giving and receiving peer feedback are conducive to the development of writing skills, as students learn how to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own work through analysing their peers' writing (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Nicol, 2009; Nicol, 2010).

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Despite the recognized pedagogical value of peer feedback, student experiences vary depending on whether the feedback is conducted in a traditional in-class setting or online (Cho & MacArthur, 2010; Wu & Schunn, 2020). In the latter case, several factors contribute to the quality of the experience: the platform used, the feedback activity design, and the students' personality traits (Taghizadeh Kerman et al., 2024). While some students appreciate the opportunity to receive constructive comments on their written work, others may have misgivings about the quality of feedback received (Cho & MacArthur, 2010; Liu & Carless, 2006; Wu & Schunn, 2020) or may be reluctant to reveal their own identity in the peer-review process. Therefore, understanding students' preferences and validating their reflections on their peer-review experiences is vital for implementing such practices that actually address the students' concerns.

In the past few years there has been an increase in the integration of digital tools and platforms in the teaching practice, a process accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic (Keržič et al., 2021), as well as the wide accessibility of digital tools offering ever greater possibilities. PeerStudio, Peergrade, Eduflow, Padlet are only some of the online platforms that have recently been used by instructors to streamline the peer-review process in educational settings. Among these platforms, Padlet was selected for the present study because of several reasons. Peergrade and Eduflow have been discontinued. Unlike PeerStudio, which is primarily designed for structured peer assessment, Padlet allows for multimodal feedback (text, audio, video) within a single environment. Its option for anonymous posting was especially relevant in this context, as it could potentially reduce students' anxiety about exposing their identity.

While prior research has emphasized the effectiveness of online peer feedback for improving writing quality (Taghizadeh Kerman et al., 2024; Valero Haro et al., 2024; Wu & Schunn, 2020; Nicol, 2010), yet relatively few studies have examined how students balance written and audio formats, how their preferences differ when acting as givers or recipients, or how these preferences shift across writing tasks (Cavanaugh & Song, 2014; Guardado & Shi, 2007; Sari, 2019). This paper aims to fill this gap by investigating how students perceive their peer-review experiences on Padlet, by focusing on three dimensions: the modes of delivery (audio vs. written), their roles in the feedback process (giver vs. recipient), and the stage in the writing process (essay outlines vs. fully-developed drafts). Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How does the students' role in the feedback process (giver vs. recipient) influence their preferences for feedback format?
2. How does the type of writing task (outline vs. fully developed draft) influence students' preferences for feedback format?
3. To what extent do students value peer feedback in comparison with instructor feedback?

Literature review

Feedback is generally defined as information provided to learners to help them close the gap between their current and desired performance (Gao et al., 2024; Molloy et al., 2019; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Wu & Schunn, 2020). Peer feedback specifically is defined as a process in which students review and comment on their peers' writing or performance, based on a set of predefined criteria (Ardill,

2025; Falchikov, 2001). Although its potential was recognized early (Bruffee, 1984), collaborative peer evaluation was initially rare since it differed profoundly from the traditional classroom education. Today, however, it is widely acknowledged in writing pedagogy, though its effectiveness depends on careful design and/or training (Cho & MacArthur, 2010; Er et al., 2020; Rollinson, 2005; Wu & Schunn, 2020). In this context, Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) proposed seven principles of good feedback practice, including clarifying what good performance entails, encouraging reflection, and stimulating peer and teacher discussions. These principles have become a benchmark for evaluating feedback practices.

Recent research underscores the benefits of peer review in enhancing students' writing skills. Studies show that students improved not only their own texts through receiving peer feedback, but that they also had significant learning benefits as feedback providers (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Wu & Schunn, 2020). Being actively involved in evaluating peer writing helped students adopt assessment criteria, recognize and analyse the qualities and shortcomings in other students' writing, and reflect critically on their own work (Liu & Carless, 2006; Ober & Flores, 2020). These features are closely related to the concept of student feedback literacy, understood as the students' ability to understand and use feedback, as well as to maximize the benefit from the feedback process for their own learning (Molloy et al., 2020). Nowadays feedback is no longer seen only as a unidirectional process, but rather as a dialogue that minimizes misinterpretation, enables negotiation of meaning, and supports joint decision-making in revisions (Er et al., 2021; Nicol, 2010). Thus, peer feedback contributes to independent learning, encourages reflection, and cultivates critical thinking (Stojanovska-Ilievska, 2023), especially in supportive, student-centred environments (Ardill, 2025).

The rapid expansion and accessibility of digital learning environments have led to a massive exploration of various online peer feedback practices by educators worldwide. Systematic reviews show that online peer feedback improves writing quality when comments are specific and students are supported by training, while also developing reflective and critical thinking (Gao et al., 2024; Taghizadeh Kerman et al., 2024; Valero Haro et al., 2024). It is also suggested that the benefits of online peer feedback extend beyond writing itself, as online peer feedback was found to foster cognitive and metacognitive development, strengthen student engagement in collaborative activities, improve students' confidence, and promote learner self-efficacy and autonomy. Participation in asynchronous discussions on online platforms was also found to enhance deeper comprehension and argumentation (Taghizadeh Kerman et al., 2024).

Research suggests that student preferences for peer feedback are shaped by several interrelated factors. In terms of modality, written feedback is valued for its clarity, permanence, and ease of reference, while audio feedback offers nuance and immediacy through tone of voice (Ice et al., 2007). The role of the student in the feedback process also matters: feedback givers often experience greater learning benefits, as they reflect more critically on their own writing (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009), whereas recipients benefit from suggestions for revision, but sometimes question the validity of peers' comments (Rollinson, 2005). Finally, the stage of drafting influences the nature of revisions, with students often making more substantial, global peer-influenced revisions between early drafts and more surface-

level peer-influenced and self-driven changes in later drafts (Paulus, 1999). Together, these studies suggest that students' experiences may differ systematically depending on feedback mode, role, and task type, which are the three dimensions examined in this study.

One of the platforms that are oftentimes used for peer and instructor feedback is Padlet. It is a versatile web-based platform that allows users to share content, including text, images, videos, or links. It offers the possibilities for collaborative work and for multimodal formative feedback by instructors and peers, which means users can post in written, audio or video format, in a synchronous or asynchronous fashion. Another factor that contributes considerably to the appeal of Padlet is the possibility to post and comment anonymously, an option welcomed by introverted or less confident students. This platform is accessible on various digital devices, the only prerequisite being an internet connection. Padlet walls can also function as repositories for all assignments, including all feedback, allowing students to revisit them at their own convenience and to learn from each other's mistakes and achievements. Finally, the platform provides an opportunity for students to ask follow-up questions, thus promoting a two-way conversation. This type of dialogue helps create more interactive feedback cycles, unlike the unidirectional feedback on paper-based assignments.

Recent studies support integrating Padlet as a tool in EFL writing instruction. A pre-post study by Nguyen and Trang (2023) revealed that Padlet improved students' writing performance and contributed to an increase in enthusiasm and confidence in language learning. By examining the use of Padlet for collaborative tasks with intermediate EFL learners, Rashid et al. (2019) found that peer interaction improved communication and writing accuracy, while alleviating the stress and pressure associated with completing essay assignments independently. Collaborative learning was also explored by Rofiah et al. (2023). Despite being generally content with Padlet's accessibility and convenience, some of their students expressed concerns about making mistakes in their posts that are visible to everyone, which could indicate a preference for anonymity. This was confirmed in a study by Sari (2019), who used the anonymous chatroom feature on Padlet for peer feedback in an EFL class. The research emphasised that students found Padlet convenient and motivating, but they were particularly appreciative of the opportunity to give honest feedback without disclosing their identity. All these studies suggest that Padlet's potential can be harnessed for the development of writing skills through meaningful interaction among students, as well as between students and instructors.

Despite these promising findings, little is known about how students feel about navigating between written and audio feedback on Padlet, how their preferences vary when acting as givers or recipients, and how these preferences differ across different stages of the writing process. Existing studies have primarily emphasized the general benefits of Padlet or focused on its motivational aspects, leaving these specific dimensions underexplored. By addressing this gap, the present study contributes novel insights to peer feedback practices by examining feedback mode, student role, and task type in the context of academic writing instruction.

Method

This study employed a descriptive mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data to explore students' experiences with peer feedback in academic writing. The primary aim was to investigate students' reflections and preferences regarding the mode of feedback (written vs. audio) in relation to their role in the feedback process (giver vs. recipient), and the writing task type (essay outline vs. fully-developed draft).

The participants in the study were second-year students enrolled in an academic writing course at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, where Padlet was integrated into the curriculum as a peer-review tool. A total of 17 students (mean age: 20.7), including 15 females, 1 male and 1 preferring not to disclose their gender, participated in the peer-review activities (Table 1). Over the course of one semester, students were expected to post anonymously their outlines and complete drafts of three types of essays (problem-solution essay, argumentative essay, comparison and contrast essay) on separate Padlet walls. They received technical instructions on giving written and audio peer feedback on Padlet. Before they were asked to supply their feedback, the students were also provided with a set of rubrics (specific for each separate type of essay), which was thoroughly explained and which they were asked to follow. They were also instructed to try to formulate their thoughts in a kind and reassuring manner, while maintaining objectivity. All students had practical hands-on peer-feedback experience in class.

Table 1. Participant demographics

Participants	N	%
Female	15	88.2
Male	1	5.9
Preferring not to disclose their gender	1	5.9
Total	17	100

A questionnaire on the students' experiences with peer feedback on Padlet was designed specifically for this study. It comprised several subtypes of closed-ended questions, including multiple-choice, Likert-scale and yes/no questions, as well as some open-ended questions for qualitative insight into the students' reflections. The form included 20 items in total and took approximately 10–15 minutes to complete. All study participants filled in the survey in the last week of the course, after they had participated in multiple peer-review cycles. The instructor distributed the form link during a Zoom meeting and reiterated that participation was voluntary and would not affect course grades. The research was conducted in compliance with the Code of Ethics of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia. All participants gave informed consent for their anonymized responses to be used for research purposes.

The quantitative responses were analysed using descriptive statistics to determine general trends in student preferences related to peer feedback. Where applicable, comparative preferences were explored, for instance, preferences for audio versus written feedback in relation to task type (outline vs. complete draft) or role in the feedback process (giver vs. recipient). On the other hand, the responses from the open-ended questions were examined qualitatively, by applying thematic coding. As is appropriate for a data-driven approach, the responses were analysed

inductively to identify recurring themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Initial codes were generated directly from the students' responses without imposing previously defined categories. These codes were then grouped into broader themes, such as clarity and organization (for written feedback), or expressivity and emotional nuance (for audio feedback). Recurring themes were identified by clustering overlapping ideas.

The study employed methodological triangulation by combining quantitative data from Likert-scale and multiple-choice items with qualitative data from open-ended responses. This allowed for cross-validation of findings, as patterns in numerical trends could be explained and enriched by students' written reflections.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The majority of the students reported that their experiences with Padlet as a peer feedback platform were highly favourable. Nearly all respondents rated their overall experience as either "very positive" (47.1%) or "positive" (47.1%), with only a single student remaining neutral, and no students reporting a negative experience. Figures 1-5 present students' perceptions of Padlet and their preferences across the three investigated dimensions: feedback format, role in the feedback process and task type.

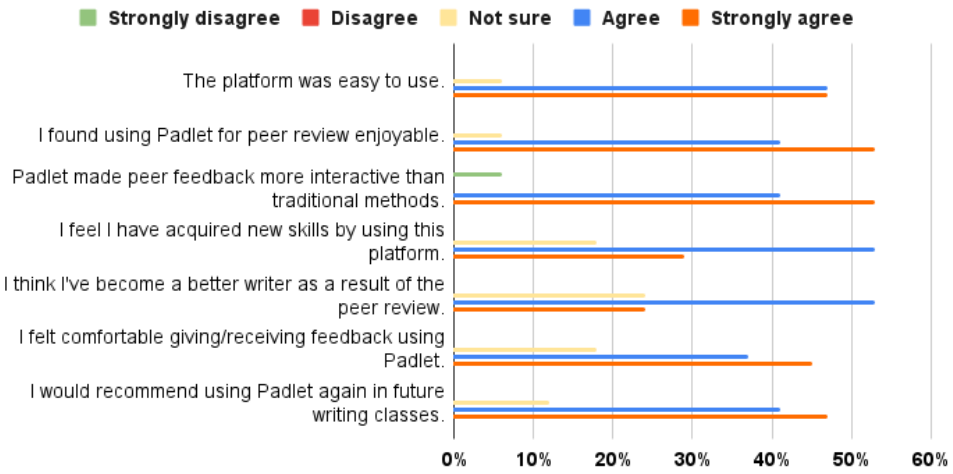


Figure 1. Student perceptions of Padlet as a peer review platform

As Figure 1 demonstrates, in terms of its ease of use, 47.1% of the students agreed and another 47.1% strongly agreed that Padlet was simple to navigate. A combined 94.2% either agreed (41.2%) or strongly agreed (52.9%) that using Padlet was enjoyable, and the same percentage reported that Padlet made the peer feedback process more interactive than traditional methods. Regarding their writing skills, 76.4% of the students believed they had become better writers due to the peer feedback experience, while according to 82.4% of the participants, the platform facilitated the development of new skills, not necessarily related to their writing abilities. In terms of psychological comfort, 82.4% of the respondents reported feeling comfortable using the platform to give and receive feedback, with 17.6% being neutral. Finally, 88.2% of the students indicated that they would recommend the use of Padlet as a peer-review platform in the future.

Interplay between feedback format and participant role

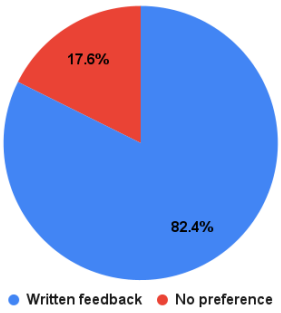


Figure 2. Student preferences for feedback format as feedback givers

The majority of the students (82.4%) expressed a preference for the written format when giving feedback, while the remaining students (17.6%) had no preferences (Figure 2). No student preferred audio feedback exclusively.

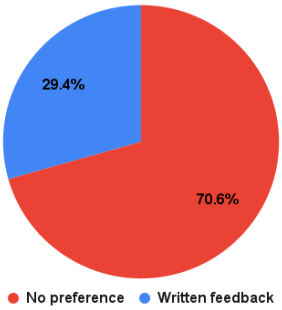


Figure 3. Student preferences for feedback format as feedback recipients

In contrast, preferences concerning receiving feedback were more ambivalent. Only 29.4% of the respondents favoured written feedback when receiving comments, while the remaining students indicated no preference (Figure 3). No student expressed an exclusive preference for audio feedback.

Interplay between feedback format and task type

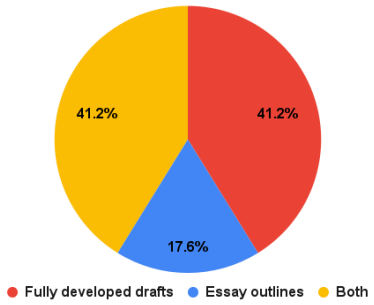


Figure 4. Student perceptions of written feedback suitability by task type

When asked which tasks are better suited for written feedback, 41.2% of the students selected full-length drafts, another 41.2% believed both full-length drafts

and outlines are equally suited, while only 17.6% favoured essay outlines (Figure 4).

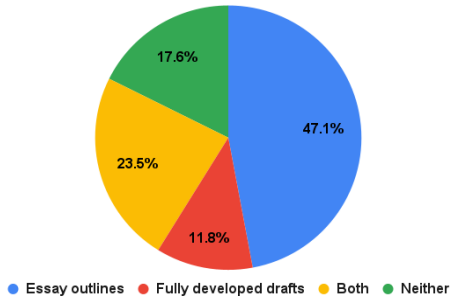


Fig.5 Student perceptions of audio feedback suitability by task type

In contrast, 47.1% of the students considered audio feedback more appropriate for essay outlines, while 23.5% felt it was equally suited to both task types. Only 11.8% selected full-length drafts, and 17.6% believed neither task particularly benefits from audio feedback (Figure 5).

Feedback preferences: Peer vs. instructor

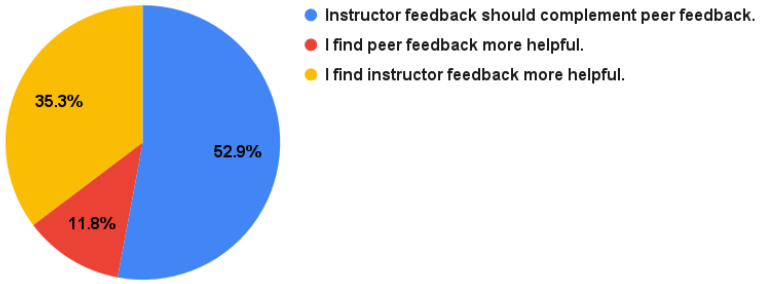


Figure 6. Perceived helpfulness of instructor and peer feedback

Despite the fairly positive impressions of the peer-review process overall, 52.9% of the students still reported that instructor feedback should complement peer feedback, while 35.3% found instructor feedback more helpful (Figure 6).

Thematic insights from open-ended responses

The qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses indicated that the preference for giving written feedback was rooted in several recurring themes: clarity and organization, a greater sense of comfort and confidence when providing feedback, the possibility of maintaining anonymity, the absence of technical difficulties, and the advantage of being able to revisit comments during revision. Written feedback was seen as providing more time to reflect and compose well-structured comments. One student wrote:

> *I preferred giving written feedback because it allowed me to express my thoughts clearly, take my time to reflect, and give more thoughtful, organized responses without the pressure of speaking*. (S14)

The students also reported feeling a greater sense of comfort and confidence when writing since they could focus on content rather than delivery. Some practical advantages, such as avoiding technical problems and maintaining anonymity, also contributed to the appeal of the written format. Many respondents appreciated being able to navigate easily through the written comments, as expressed in comments like:

> *Written feedback provides a clear record that I can refer back to, helping me process and apply the feedback more effectively*. (S13)

A smaller subset of students noted that they concentrated better when reading than listening, making written feedback cognitively easier to absorb. Finally, several participants noted that preparing written comments helped them reflect more critically on the criteria for effective writing.

Although no students favoured audio over written comments either for giving or receiving feedback, they still recognized several benefits of audio feedback, such as: greater expressivity and emotional nuance, and efficiency for quick responses. The theme that occurred most consistently was that audio comments felt more personal and genuine. The students enjoyed hearing their peers' tone of voice and interpreting their emotions, as they helped minimize misunderstandings. One student explained:

> *It can sound more genuine as it conveys our tone of voice and emotion. With audio feedback there's a smaller chance of misunderstandings*. (S4)

Others noted that hearing a "real person behind the screen" gives the peer-review experience a more human dimension. In addition, the audio mode was perceived as a faster and more efficient feedback mode:

> *Audio feedback delivers all the relevant analysis in seconds, making it easier to process for those who prefer audio insights*. (S2)

Finally, some students reported feeling shy or unprepared to speak fluently when recording audio comments, which is why they preferred giving written feedback.

Regarding the overall usefulness of peer feedback, responses revealed several overlapping themes, such as the importance of constructive comments and the value of exposure to new perspectives and overlooked mistakes. The students who had no format preference oftentimes emphasized the importance of respectful, useful and constructive comments regardless of the manner of delivery. Some respondents said:

> *As long as the feedback is polite and useful, it makes no difference.* (S6)

> *Everyone should give feedback in the way they feel most comfortable and prepared.* (S16)

Other key benefits of peer feedback shared by the majority of the participants were the exposure to new perspectives and pointing to mistakes that the authors themselves had missed, making it vital for revision and learning. As one participant put it:

> *Peer feedback was quite helpful because it showed me how others understood my work and gave me new ideas. It also helped me see mistakes I didn't notice myself*. (S11)

Discussion

The study findings demonstrate that the students' digital literacy was not a barrier for them to participate in peer feedback activities and that the Padlet platform design is intuitive enough to enable its smooth integration into these activities. These positive impressions are consistent with previous studies (Nguyen & Trang, 2023; Rofiah et al., 2023), which reported that Padlet-mediated feedback fostered students' perceived improvement in writing performance, enhanced their motivation and confidence in EFL writing, and was valued for its ease of use, accessibility, and engaging, collaborative nature.

Interplay between feedback format and participant role

The preference for written feedback when giving comments may be attributed to students' belief that this format gives them an opportunity to take their time to structure and articulate their thoughts more carefully and more precisely. In addition, by requiring from students to formulate evaluations, explanations, and suggestions with clarity, giving written feedback fosters the development of higher-order cognitive processes in students (Wu & Schunn, 2020), which might also be perceived as beneficial by the students. As a matter of fact, Lundstrom and Baker (2009) demonstrated that students who provided feedback made greater gains in their own writing than feedback recipients, as the act of critically evaluating peers' texts at the global level of content and organization strengthened their own ability to detect flaws, refine arguments, and transfer these abilities to their own compositions, all of which are necessary skills for academic advancement. Another possible explanation for the preference of the written modality when providing feedback is that anonymity is better preserved in the written mode, and some students reported feeling self-conscious about improvising during audio recordings and uneasy about disclosing their identity.

While clearly favouring the written mode for giving feedback, the students were more receptive to diverse feedback formats as recipients. Such openness may stem from the perceived benefits of audio feedback, such as its ability to convey valuable non-verbal cues through the expressiveness of one's voice. These findings are consistent with Ice et al. (2007), who report that audio feedback is more emotionally nuanced than written feedback, and Voelkel and Mello (2014), who found that teacher-delivered audio feedback was perceived as more personal, more detailed, and more motivational. In a study by Cavanaugh and Song (2014), most students preferred teacher-delivered audio feedback to written feedback even though such feedback rarely addressed micro-level issues (grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.). Yet, in the present study, no student expressed a preference exclusively for the audio feedback format, regardless of their role in the feedback

process. This difference may be explained by the educational context. In the study by Cavanaugh and Song (2014), the audio format could have been more readily accepted as it was delivered by an instructor, whose authority and experience lent additional weight to the feedback. On the other hand, Macedonian students in this study may have felt less confident improvising in the audio mode with peers as this was their first encounter with audio feedback. That students do not favour the audio mode *per se*, but often prefer a combination of audio and written instructor feedback, was also shown by Oomen-Early et al. (2008) and Ice et al. (2010).

Interplay between feedback format and task type

Written feedback, being a more conventional type of feedback, is perceived by students as a more reliable format for fully-developed drafts. Such drafts require more elaborate commentary than outlines alone and therefore appear to benefit more from written feedback, which is perceived by students as more detailed, more meticulously structured and more easily navigable. While not specifically discussing task types, other studies also confirm that written comments focus more on local issues, including grammar, spelling, and choice of vocabulary (Cavanaugh & Song, 2014) and that students prefer to receive more specific instructor comments concerning grammar or argumentation in a written format (Ice et al., 2010).

By contrast, the students associated audio feedback with essay outlines, indicating that shorter, less detailed tasks may benefit from spoken commentary. The lower figures in support of the audio format for complete drafts may reflect concerns about the lack of structural clarity and detailed, systematic treatment of all detected mistakes, which may occur in spontaneous spoken comments. Audio feedback seems to be better suited for shorter pieces of writing since it is generally perceived as more effective for conveying the reviewer's overall impression of the work, as well as their emotional inclination. It has been previously documented that audio comments tend to convey the instructors' global impressions of a piece of writing, such as topic, organization, and structure (Cavanaugh & Song, 2014), and that students actually prefer audio comments for an overall impression of the quality, structure and organization of their writing (Ice et al., 2010)

Feedback preferences: Peer vs. instructor

The results suggest that some students perceive peer comments as less valid than those from instructors. Similar hesitations about the validity of peer comments have been noted in other contexts, where the students often continue to view teacher input as more authoritative (Cho & MacArthur, 2010; Rollinson, 2005; Sari, 2019) and "rate it more highly" than peer feedback (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p.87). That students prefer a combination of peer and instructor feedback has also been attested in other studies (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). For students to become more receptive of peer feedback, it seems that training and ample opportunities should be provided for them to practise both the roles of feedback givers and recipients.

Thematic insights from open-ended responses

The preference for written feedback is closely tied to the themes of clarity, organization, comfort and confidence, as well as the ability to maintain anonymity and produce a permanent record of comments. The importance of anonymity in encouraging more honest evaluations without worrying about hurting fellow

students' feelings was also stressed by Ardill (2025), Gao et al. (2024) and Sari (2019). While the anonymity feature was valued by Macedonian students, other studies have shown that learners were actually motivated to improve their writing before posting it on Padlet precisely because it would be visible to others (Nguyen & Trang, 2023). In the Macedonian context, anonymity was perceived as protective, particularly for more introverted students, whereas in other settings, visibility and exposure fostered a sense of accountability and encouraged students to produce their best work, all of which highlight the role of the sociocultural and educational contexts in shaping students' perceptions of online peer feedback. At the same time, the appeal of Padlet's ease of use, and the students' sense of comfort and confidence were echoed by Rofiah et al. (2023), and Nguyen and Trang (2023).

Although the students did not select audio as their preferred feedback mode, they still acknowledged its value. Audio feedback often reduces the social distance between the feedback giver and the feedback recipient and feels more encouraging and supportive than written feedback (Ice et al., 2007). Other studies also resonate with these findings of audio feedback being more personal, expressive and emotional (Oomen-Early et al., 2008; Sari, 2019; Voelkel & Mello, 2014). Although audio comments may not take less time to produce as is sometimes believed, their efficiency lies in the greater amount of feedback generated per unit of time compared to written comments (Voelkel & Mello, 2014).

Overall peer feedback was found particularly useful because it offered constructive comments and exposure to new perspectives. For several students, the quality of feedback outweighed its format. This statement resonates with Gao et al. (2024), who claim that effective feedback depends less on the mode of delivery than on the clarity of criteria and the extent of prior training. Other studies also confirm that students appreciate receiving diverse peer reactions to their own writing (Ardill, 2025; Guardado, 2007). The students' focus on the content of the comments rather than their form reflects a mature and supportive learning mind-set, whereby students validate each other's preferences and comfort zone.

Summary

Taken together, the findings reveal both similarities with and differences from studies conducted in other EFL contexts. As in other international studies, written feedback was associated with clarity, organization, permanence of records and easy navigation, while audio feedback was valued for its personalized and affective dimension. The learning benefits reported by students align with Lundstrom and Baker's (2009) claim that engaging in both giving feedback and acting upon received feedback fosters the development of valuable cognitive skills. Digital literacy was not a barrier for the students and Padlet's multimodal functionalities were readily embraced. Hesitations about peer feedback validity persist and reflect concerns identified by Cho and MacArthur (2010), and Rollinson (2005), suggesting that teacher involvement remains crucial for the credibility of feedback.

By situating Macedonian students' preferences against the backdrop of existing research, this study contributes novel insights into how multimodal peer feedback can be integrated into different academic writing contexts. With regard to the three studied dimensions, the findings reveal that the preference for a particular format depends not only on the giver–receiver distinction, but also on the type of the task. When acting as givers, students strongly favoured the written feedback

because it allowed them to organize their thoughts carefully, preserve their anonymity, and develop new skills through evaluation and explanation. As recipients, however, students were more open to diverse modes of feedback, appreciating the expressivity and personal tone of audio feedback. This discrepancy between students' strong preference for written feedback when giving comments and their openness to multiple formats when receiving feedback constitutes a novel finding, revealing that modality preferences are role-dependent. Task type further shaped preferences: written feedback was seen as more suitable for fully-developed drafts requiring detailed, systematic commentary, while audio feedback was viewed as better suited for outlines, where conveying overall impressions and encouragement mattered more. This represents an important contribution of the present study, as, to the best of my knowledge, students' preferences regarding feedback format have not previously been examined in relation to both outlines and fully developed drafts. Finally, while students found peer feedback valuable for offering new perspectives, they still considered instructor input necessary and often preferred a feedback combination from both sources.

The findings from this study suggest that the peer-review activities conducted on Padlet in the course of one semester met five of the seven criteria for good feedback defined by Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), including specifying what good performance implies, encouraging reflection on the students' own work, enhancing motivation through positive tone and encouraging comments, fostering teacher-student learning-centred interaction, and providing information to the instructor that could guide their future teaching practice. There is still room for improvement in terms of the quality of the peer feedback, which was not consistently timely or specific enough. In addition, the instructor could take steps to ensure that the students actually make use of the opportunities to bridge the gap between their current and desirable performance through entering into dialogues with their reviewers and producing revisions of their work.

Conclusion

This study explored Macedonian university students' reflections and preferences regarding Padlet-mediated peer feedback in an academic writing course, focusing on the interplay of feedback mode, students' role in the feedback process, and task type. Students expressed overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards Padlet concerning its ease of use, interactivity, and the overall enjoyable experience it provided during the peer feedback process. Most participants reported that the peer-review process contributed to their development as writers, thus underscoring the importance of student-centred, collaborative learning approaches. Although participants valued access to both audio and written feedback formats, students' preferences varied. Some students could more easily relate to the audio comments due to their expressivity, whereas others preferred the clarity and ease of reference of the written comments.

The study also identified some challenges, including inconsistencies in feedback specificity and timeliness among students. These findings point to a need for more structured guidance or peer feedback training to familiarize students better with the rubrics and the instructor's expectations of them. The relatively small sample size is another limitation which makes it impossible to draw large-scale generalizations. Future research could therefore involve a larger and more diverse

sample, examine if an organized prior training might improve the students' ability to deliver high-quality feedback (Hyland & Hyland, 2006) and investigate how Padlet-mediated feedback translates into the quality of the subsequent revisions. Such studies could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of peer-review practices in multiple modalities.

This study gives rise to several important pedagogical implications. Firstly, teachers can maximize the benefits of online peer feedback by offering students multiple modalities: written for detailed comments on full drafts and audio for more spontaneous reflections on outlines. Secondly, providing training and clear rubrics before the actual peer review would help students feel more confident and responsible in giving feedback. Thirdly, providing a balance between peer and instructor feedback can help validate the peer review process. Finally, offering the option of anonymity, together with opportunities for follow-up dialogue, can make online peer feedback both supportive and effective.

All in all, Padlet was perceived to be a highly useful tool for peer feedback, supporting not only the development of writing skills, but also promoting student involvement, student reflection, and inducing a sense of enjoyment and comfort in an academic writing class. The insights from this study also highlight the need for flexible and multimodal peer-review practices that would accommodate the varied needs and preferences of EFL students.

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