



## The Effect of Peer Coaching on Teachers' Digital Storytelling Based Teaching Practices<sup>1</sup>

### Meslektaş Koçluğunun Dijital Öykülemeye Dayalı Öğretim Uygulamalarına Yansımaları

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**ABSTRACT:** The research aims to explore the influence of peer coaching on the lesson planning and implementation processes based on the digital storytelling method. The case-study research involved 12 week peer coaching initiative focused on lesson planning and implementation based on the digital storytelling method with two teachers. In the research, data were collected through interviews, meeting reflection forms, lesson-planning rubrics and lesson observation forms; content analysis was used in the analysis of the data. The overall conclusion drawn from this research suggests that the implementation of peer coaching positively influences the lesson planning and implementation process. Furthermore, the peer coaching process can serve as an effective strategy for facilitating professional development and providing the emotional support that is essential for teachers. Given the research outcomes, it is suggested that more extended periods of peer coaching cycles, reiterated more than once, should be implemented, and the impact of these practices on student learning should be further explored.

**Keywords:** Teacher professional development, peer coaching, digital storytelling

**ÖZ:** Araştırma, meslektaş koçluğunun dijital öyküleme yöntemini temel alan bir dersin planlanma ve uygulama sürecine etkisini belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Durum çalışması ile yürütülen araştırmada, iki öğretmenle 12 hafta

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süresince dijital öykü yöntemine dayalı bir dersin planlanması ve uygulanması konusunda meslektaş koçluğu uygulaması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada veriler, görüşme formları, toplantı yansıtma formları, ders planı puanlama anahtarı ve ders gözlem formu ile toplanmış ; verilerin analizinde içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada ulaşılan sonucun, meslektaş koçluğunun bir dersin planlanma ve uygulama sürecine olumlu etkisi olduğuna, yaklaşımın bir mesleki gelişimi sağlama yolu olarak kullanılabileceğine ve özellikle öğretmenlerin ihtiyaç duyduğu duygusal desteği sağlamada önemli bir katkı sağlayacağına işaret ettiği söylenebilir. Araştırmada ulaşılan sonuçlardan hareketle meslektaş koçluğu döngüsünün birden fazla kez tekrarlanması, daha uzun süreli uygulamalar yapılması, bu uygulamaların öğrenci öğrenmelerine etkisinin incelenmesi önerilebilir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Öğretmen mesleki gelişimi, meslektaş koçluğu, dijital öyküleme

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education systems undergo continual transformation, reflecting the era and social structure in which they operate. For example, since the 1970s, initiatives have been made to align teaching practices with scientific norms. These were succeeded in the 1980s by significant educational reforms with a primary focus on curriculum changes. The 1990s witnessed a shift toward emphasizing school management and quality within the context of international comparisons (Nóvoa, 2013).

As exemplified, although the underlying factors driving transformation may shift with time, the agents facilitating these changes remain constant, the teachers. In other words, teachers serve as instrumental catalysts in effectuating any change initiative. Evidently, any reform that fails to be embraced and internalized by teachers tends not to succeed or manifest within the classroom environment (MoNE, 2017). Considering this observation in conjunction with Guskey's (2000) statement, that "it is a constant finding in the research literature that none of the remarkable developments in education can be realized without the professional development of teachers" (p.4), it underscores the fundamental role of teacher professional development in facilitating any form of educational progression efforts.

For several years, teacher professional development has primarily been conducted via seminars (Hendriks, Luyten, Scheerens, Slegers, & Steen, 2010) or short-term courses (Bümen, Ateş, Çakar, Ural, & Acar, 2012). This approach, referred to as traditional professional development, significantly limits educators' learning opportunities by continuously transmitting new information without integrating it into practice (Guskey, 2000). This method not only hampers improvements in education but also prevents teachers from effectively implementing new teaching strategies in their classrooms (Showers & Joyce, 1996). However, recent studies (DuFour, 2004; DuFour & Eacker, 2008; Hord, 1997, 2009; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Rosenholtz, 1989) suggest that collaborative support among colleagues enhances teacher effectiveness, signaling a shift in perspective within teacher professional development. This novel viewpoint perceives schools as learning communities (Myers, 1996), where teachers operate as collaborative teams who meet frequently, share their acquired knowledge, and act upon their learning (Hord, 1997). One promising strategy that encapsulates this collaborative approach and facilitates its practical implementation is peer coaching.

Presented as a solution to teachers' struggles with implementing new teaching strategies in their classrooms (Showers & Joyce, 1996), peer coaching is a professional development approach in which two teachers collaboratively exchange knowledge and experience, assisting one another in refining their teaching abilities (Richards & Farrell, 2005). A review of the literature shows that peer coaching is defined as a collaborative process in which teachers help each other in mastering a teaching method (Anderson, Barksdale, & Hite, 2005), purposefully share their pedagogical practices (Richards & Farrell, 2005), and collaborate to learn from each other (Showers & Joyce, 1996). Engaged in a cyclical structure, the process of peer coaching involves teachers working together to develop necessary teaching skills, observing each other in the classroom, and reflecting upon these observations for pedagogical improvement (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). From this perspective, peer coaching can be considered an approach that directly targets the enhancement of classroom teaching. Research on peer coaching also emphasizes the positive outcomes associated with this process. Some of the studies shed light on its emotional outcomes, indicating that the peer coaching process bolsters teachers' professional self-confidence (Alsaleh, Alabdulhadi, & Alrwaished, 2017; Whipp & Pengelley, 2017), fosters an inclination towards implementing commendable teaching practices (Chapman, 2008), and mitigates feelings of loneliness (Pollara, 2012; Slater & Simmons, 2001). The majority of studies emphasize the constructive impact of peer coaching on teaching practices. Within this scope, it is underlined that the

peer coaching process helps in the preparation of better quality lesson plans (Amalia & Imperiani, 2013; Sabilah, Abidasari, & Husamah, 2021), facilitates the learning of teaching methods and the development of teaching skills (Ash, 2010; Murawski, 2019; Rincon, 2020), and the increased teaching quality resulting from peer coaching contributes to improved student learning (Hsieh, Lin, Liu, & Tsai, 2021; Lyke, 2002; Sparks & Bruder, 1987). In scrutinizing the impact of peer coaching on teaching practices, technology-based teaching practices emerge as a significant area of research. These studies stated that the experience of peer coaching significantly improves teachers' competence in utilizing technology (Giles, Baker, & Willis, 2020) and amplifies their technological pedagogical content knowledge competencies (Jang, 2010; Karakaya Cırt & Aydemir, 2020), in other words, the positive effect of peer coaching on learning and implementing of technology-based practices is underlined.

In light of related research, it can be asserted that peer coaching has positive effects on improving teaching practices (Truesdale, 2003), one such influence being the facilitation of technology integration in instructional delivery (Chapman, 2008). Given the contemporary era's burgeoning interest in digital technologies within learning-teaching processes (Nóvoa, 2013), it becomes increasingly crucial for teachers to employ technology-based teaching methodologies and develop technology-centric educational materials, and it is postulated that peer coaching practices can serve as an effective way to achieve this. One such wide-ranging, technology-based method is the digital storytelling method. Digital storytelling, characterized as the amalgamation of multimedia elements such as images, audio, and video with traditional storytelling (Robin, 2006), is perceived as a tool that empowers students and teachers to convey their personal stories to others via computer media (Bull & Kajder, 2004). Doğan (2007) posits that integrating digital storytelling into lessons augments students' technical skills, presentation skills, research skills, organizational skills, and writing skills along with their motivation and engagement. Moreover, it is said that students have a positive effect on their 21st century skills. Teachers who aspire to leverage the digital storytelling method, acclaimed for its benefits in the pedagogical process, are expected to possess comprehensive knowledge of this method's intricacies. Therefore, it is evident that teachers should be afforded educational opportunities detailing the content and characteristics of the digital story method. However, as Dağ (2016) highlights, despite the abundance of in-service training programs organized by the Ministry of National Education, their execution as disjointed and independent practices obstruct their anticipated impact on the enhancement of teachers' technological competencies. In this respect, it becomes imperative for teachers to participate in learning communities where they can collaborate on the efficacious implementation of innovative approaches such as digital storytelling (Gözen, Cırık, Çolak, & Yabaş, 2018). In this regard, as underscored in the literature (Giles et al., 2020; Jang, 2010; Karakaya Cırt & Aydemir, 2020), peer coaching can be considered a viable solution. Within this framework, premised on the notion that peer coaching can be an effective way for teachers to plan and implement a lesson employing the digital storytelling method, the research question "What is the effect of peer coaching on the planning and implementation process of a lesson based on the digital storytelling method?" was identified as the problem of the study. The sub-problems intended to be addressed in accordance with this objective are as follows:

- 1) What are teachers' views on peer coaching?
- 2) What are the teachers' views regarding the effect of peer coaching on the planning and implementation process of a lesson based on the digital storytelling method?

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Research Model

In this study, the case study method, commonly employed in qualitative research, was utilized to ascertain the effect of peer coaching on the planning and implementation process of a lesson based on the digital story method. A case study is defined as a method used to explore a current phenomenon using multiple data collection tools, particularly when the boundary between the phenomenon and its context is unclear (Yin, 1994. as cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

### 2.2. Study Group

Qualitative research is often conducted in detail with small, purposefully selected groups. The rationale behind purposive sampling is to focus on situations that will provide a deeper understanding of the research objective (Patton, 2014). In this study, typical case sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used. Typical case sampling involves selecting and using a representative situation from numerous possibilities in the population (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2020). The selected school in the study is a middle school that does not exhibit unusual characteristics in terms of size, physical facilities, and equipment. Similarly, the teachers included in the study group portray a typical teacher profile such as pre-service training and in-service training they received. Participation of teachers in the study was based on voluntarism. During this process, the researcher announced to the teachers who had not been previously involved in any professional learning community, that peer coaching study would be conducted at their school and that they could voluntarily participate. Six teachers initially expressed their willingness to participate. Following the informational briefing, three teachers opted out, believing the study would be too time-consuming, and one teacher transferred to another school. Therefore, the study proceeded with two teachers, a math teacher and a science teacher. A review of the literature (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Neubert & McAllister, 1993) indicates that peer-coaching studies can be conducted with two people as in this study and that teachers from different disciplines can coach each other (Hohensee & Lewis, 2019). The first participant, T1, a 39-year-old male science teacher, has 15 years of teaching experience. T1, who holds a master's degree, expressed that he participated in the study to learn new things, having only participated in professional development programs presented as seminars by experts previously. The second participant, T2, a 28-year-old female math teacher, has been teaching for 5 years. T2, who holds a bachelor's degree, joined the study to improve herself professionally, having also previously attended professional development programs delivered by an expert in seminar form.

### 2.3. Peer Coaching Process

Diaz-Maggioli (2004) arranged the peer coaching cycles into a spiral that can be infinitely repeated and listed the stages as needs assessment, preparation for observation, reflection and assessment of coaching. This sequence was adhered to in this study. The needs assessment phase was conducted before the case study. During this phase, the two participating teachers were asked to identify their shared teaching challenges. The primary concern they articulated was “creating a technology-supported learner-centered process in the distance education process”. The researcher proposed the digital storytelling method to aid in addressing this issue. The teachers agreed to collaborate in crafting a lesson plan, developing materials, and implementing this method in the classroom.

Both participant teachers and the researcher attended all meetings held during the peer coaching process. In addition to the teachers and the researcher, a third meeting included an expert with a bachelor's degree in computer education and instructional technology, who is also an educational technology teacher in a school, to provide digital storytelling training. Furthermore, a teacher holding a master's degree in curriculum and instruction attended 12 meetings and lesson observations as an independent observer. This was done to offer an external perspective on the research, ensuring consistency, and to foster researcher diversity within the context of the study's credibility.

The peer coaching process consisted of 12 meetings and two lesson observations. The process is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Peer Coaching Process**

MO	Topic	Time	P	MO	Topic	Time	P
1	Peer coaching training	90	T1, T2 R, IO	8	Preparation of lesson plan, informing the principles of lesson observation	105	T1, T2 R, IO
2	Creating group dynamics, planning the working process	110	Ö1, Ö2 R, IO	9	Digital story assessment, pre-observation session	45	T1, T2 R, IO
3	Digital story preparation and digital story programs training	120	T1, T2, E R, IO	-	Observation week	30	T1, T2 R, IO
4	Determining lesson plan format, digital story preparation	90	T1, T2 R, IO	10	Post-observation meeting	15	T1, T2 R
5	Preparing digital stories together	40	T1, T2 R, BG	-	Observation week	60	T1, T2 R, IO
6	Digital story review, lesson plan preparation	75	T1, T2 R, BG	11	Post-observation meeting, discussion the observations	30	T1, T2 R
7	Preparing lesson plans together	90	T1, T2 R, IO	12	Discussion of the whole peer coaching process and facilitator role	50	T1, T2 R

MO: Meeting Order, P: Participants, R: Researcher, E: Expert, IO: Independent Observer,

As presented in Table 1, the first nine meetings occurred during the preparation for observation (PO) phase. Throughout the PR, the researchers and subject experts provided training, planned the process in terms of date and content, created digital stories and lesson plans, and established the principles of lesson observation. During the observation (O) phase, the peer coaches observed each other's lessons. No meetings were held during this phase, as it was dedicated solely to lesson observations. Reflection (R) occurred after the observations in both the tenth and eleventh meetings, where discussions about the observed situations were held, and feedback was received from the peer

coaches. The assessment of coaching (AC) phase took place in the twelfth meeting, where teachers shared their thoughts on the entire coaching process.

## **2.4. Data Collection Tools and Data Collection Process**

To expand the researcher's perspective, qualitative studies should utilize a variety of data collection tools (Creswell, 2013). In this study, different data collection tools were employed that align with the research objectives.

During the development process of the data collection tools, input was sought from two experts in the field of curriculum and instruction, and another expert from measurement and evaluation for all the tools presented below. A Turkish teacher also reviewed them for linguistic appropriateness, and revisions were made based on the feedback received. The revisions are noted in the respective measurement tool titles. Then, before the implementation, a teacher who was not in the study group reviewed the prepared forms as part of a pilot application and found them understandable. Following this process, the forms were finalized. The data collection tools used in the research are detailed below.

### **2.4.1. Semi-structured Interview Form**

The interview form, applied at the beginning and end of the study, was prepared by the researcher. In creating the form, a question pool was developed in the light of the relevant literature, with questions grouped under two main categories: the definition of peer coaching and the effect of peer coaching on the planning and implementation process of a course. These categories aligned with the study's purpose. After the questions were drafted, they were presented to the experts for feedback as mentioned in the previous section. During this process, a recommendation was made by the Measurement and Evaluation expert to combine two separate questions "What obstacles do you think you will face in the peer coaching process?" and "What difficulties do you think you will experience in the peer coaching process?" which were asked separately in the form. After incorporating this suggestion, a pilot study was conducted. At this stage, the forms were finalized once they were deemed understandable. Under the category of defining peer coaching, "teachers were asked about their definitions of peer coaching, their feelings about peer coaching, the characteristics that a coach should have, the contributions and difficulties of the peer coaching process". Under the category of the effect of peer coaching on the planning and implementation of a lesson, "the effect of peer coaching on the planning of a digital story-based lesson, the effect of implementation of the lesson, teachers' opinions about their feelings and thoughts about lesson observations" were asked. In the pre-interview process, teachers responded to the questions based on their expectations and in the post-interview process, they answered according to their experiences. All interviews were conducted face-to-face by the researcher in a comfortable, outdoor setting. The pre-interview lasted 28 minutes with T1 and 30 minutes with T2, while the final interview spanned 35 minutes with T1 and 42 minutes with T2. The interviews were recorded with the teachers' permission.

### **2.4.2. Lesson Observation Form**

This form was prepared by the researchers for participant teachers to use while observing each other's lessons. The form includes three sections: "learner-centered activities, student participation and technology use". In the learner-centered activities section, teachers were asked to observe "whether the activities implemented in the classroom are compatible with the prepared plan, whether the activities are

structured in a way to connect with the content, whether a structure is established to trigger students' thinking process”, in the student participation section, “whether students' active participation in the lesson is supported, whether students are given opportunities to express themselves with questions, whether student participation is connected with the content”; In the technology use section, they were asked to make their observations by considering “how the use of digital stories affects the lesson process, students' interaction with the digital story, the teacher's competence in the use of technology during the presentation of the digital story, and the support of the materials used for teaching”. Teachers documented their observations in an open-ended manner under these headings. This form was utilized by the participant teachers (T1, T2) during the lesson observation process. In the process of lesson observations, T1's lesson was observed by T2 in the 10th week and T2's lesson was observed by T1 in the 11th week. Teachers shared their observations with each other in post-observation reflection meetings. The observed lesson of T1 lasted 30 minutes, while T2's observed lesson spanned 60 minutes.

### **2.4.3. Meeting Reflection Form**

During the peer coaching process, participants were asked to write their reflections about each meeting. In the form, they were prompted to reflect on the topics of “meeting discussion topics, what I learned in the meeting and how I felt in the meeting”. Teachers individually filled out the forms after each meeting and submitted them to the researcher before the next meeting.

### **2.4.4. Lesson Plan Rubric**

The lesson plan rubric developed by Çolak (2017) was adapted and used to evaluate the plans developed during the peer coaching process. In this process, performance criteria were listed, performance levels were determined and level definitions were made. The lesson plan rubric consists of 26 criteria under the categories, namely, technical structure (2 criteria), holistic structure (4 criteria), introductory activities (4 criteria), process activities (12 criteria), and closing activities (4 criteria). These were rated by the participants and the researcher as 5=Sufficient, 4=Partially sufficient, 3=Medium, 2=Partially insufficient, 1=Inadequate. The Technical structure refers to the structure provided at the beginning of a lesson plan, offering information about the purpose and scope of the lesson plan. Holistic structure pertains to the coherence between the elements of the lesson plan. Introductory activities involve the quality of the activities designed to attract students' attention, inform them about the objective and motivate them. Process activities address the nature of the activities undertaken for learning outcomes, while Closing activities refer to the characteristics of the stage where the lesson is summarized and students' learnings are determined. As part of the study, the participants and the researcher used this rubric to assess the lesson plans prepared by the teachers during the peer coaching process. Teachers individually filled out the lesson plan rubrics during the eighth meeting of the observation preparation sessions and handed them to the researcher. The researcher then evaluated the lesson plans after the meeting using the same form.

## **2.5. Data Analysis**

Content analysis was utilized to analyze the data in the study. Data analysis in qualitative research encompasses preparing and organizing the data, coding the data, consolidating the codes into categories and ultimately presenting the data in figures, tables or a discussion (Creswell, 2013). Yıldırım and

Şimşek (2018) state that when interpreting qualitative data via content analysis, four stages should be followed: coding the data, identifying categories, organizing and defining codes and categories, and defining and interpreting the findings.

In this framework, all data from the study were transcribed and digitized. The transcribed data were shared with the participants and included in the dataset after obtaining their approval. Two researchers separately read all of the data ready for coding from beginning to end several times. Initially, the primary researcher performed a broad coding and shared the codes with the second researcher. While comparing the codes, the data believed to contribute to the resolution of the research problems were marked and identified. Then, detailed coding was initiated. During this detailed coding, in line with Creswell's (2013) approach, the entire dataset was read multiple times from start to finish and divided into meaningful parts. Appropriate codes were generated for these meaningful sections and repetitive codes were consolidated. The codes were grouped under suitable categories. After displaying the codes and categories in tables, two researchers reconvened for final checks. Following this, the interpretation of the findings commenced. A sample data analysis of the teachers' responses to lesson observations during the interview process is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** A Sample Data Analysis

<b>Raw data</b>	<i>I think it is necessary to learn something new, at least to see new teaching methods. I think it will be useful. (T1, Pre-interview)</i>
<b>Code</b>	Learning opportunity, seeing different instructional practices
<b>Category</b>	Contributions of the observation process

## 2.6. Validity and Reliability of the Study

Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018) propose the alternative terms used in research to replace those of reliability and validity found in quantitative research: credibility (instead of internal validity), transferability (instead of external validity), consistency (instead of internal reliability), and confirmability (instead of external reliability). To enhance credibility for this study, the researcher attended all of the meetings and conducted the research during the second half of the semester. To triangulate data sources, participants with diverse perspectives and past experiences were preferred, and multiple tools such as interviews, observations, and reflection forms were used for methodological diversity. To provide researcher diversity, an independent observer attended each meeting, and two distinct researchers independently analyzed the data before comparing findings. For expert review, support was received from an individual with a PhD in curriculum and instruction who possessed broad knowledge of the research topic and specialization in qualitative research. Within the scope of participant confirmation, the videotaped interview process was transcribed and then read to the participants. Moreover, once the initial analysis was complete, findings were shared with the participants to obtain their confirmation. To ensure transferability, the entire process from start to finish of the research was described in detail. This aimed to enhance the potential applicability of the research to different studies. In the consistency review, an independent observer was allowed to attend the meetings and all sessions were recorded to verify the consistency of the researcher's activities throughout the research. For the confirmation review, data collection tools, raw data, coding carried out during the analysis and all notes that formed the basis of the report were retained in a format that could be submitted for review as needed.

## 2.7. Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the role of the researcher must be clearly defined. In this study, the first researcher assumed the role of facilitator in all meetings. Within professional learning communities, the facilitator is the individual who undertakes responsibilities such as informing members about the meeting agenda, steering the meeting, ensuring the meeting progresses in alignment with the goals, and enabling all participants to express their ideas (Leon & Raude, 2018). During the research, the role of the researcher as facilitator was more directive in the initial two meetings, while in later meetings, a more guiding approach was prevalent. This can be attributed to the researcher giving more instructions to establish the system during the first meetings and presenting an informative session about the meeting topic in the first meeting. From the start to the end of the peer coaching process, the researcher was present at every meeting and facilitated the participants' work when necessary. Throughout the study, researcher supported the participants not only during the meetings but also outside the meetings, ensuring they remained accessible at all times.

## 2.8. Research Ethics

The study was conducted in compliance with scientific research and ethical principles. This study received approval from the Ethics Committee of the Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, on the date of 20.04.2021, under the reference number 12402. The institution where the research was to be conducted was informed about the details of the research, and permission was obtained from the Provincial National Education Directorate with a letter dated 20/05/2021, reference number 25336334. Participants were informed prior to the commencement of the research, asked to complete a voluntary consent form, and were reassured they could withdraw from the research at any time.

## 3. FINDINGS

The findings are presented in line with the research problems. For the first problem, findings from the interviews and meeting reflection forms were considered, while for the second problem, findings from the lesson plan rubric and lesson observation forms were additionally included.

### 3.1. Findings related to the First Sub-Problem of the Research

The first sub-problem of the study was: "What are teachers' views on peer coaching?" Findings were obtained from pre- and post-interviews as well as meeting reflection forms and are presented below. Frequency (f) is indicated for opinions expressed more than once.

#### 3.1.1. Findings from the Interviews

To discern teachers' views on peer coaching, they were asked about their definitions of peer coaching, their feelings towards it, the characteristics a peer coach should have, and the contributions and challenges of the peer coaching process.

The findings regarding the teachers' definitions of peer coaching from the pre and post-interviews are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Codes and Categories related to Definitions of Peer Coaching

Categories	Pre-Interview Codes	Post-Interview Codes
<b>Colleague Interactions</b>	Teachers' room chats, Planned professional discussions, Knowledge sharing (f=2)	Professional discussion, Teamwork (f=2) Interaction with facilitator, Learning communities, Knowledge sharing, Professional cooperation
<b>The Way to Improve Teaching Process</b>	-	Creating instructional materials together, Preparing lesson planning together
<b>The Way to Provide Professional Motivation</b>	-	Intrinsic motivation (f=2)
<b>The Way to Conduct Professional Evaluation</b>	-	Self-evaluation, Peer assessment (f=2), Planning professional development process

As evidenced in Table 3, the category that emerged in both the pre and post-interviews was colleague interaction. In the last interview, the categories of the way to conduct professional evaluation, the way to provide professional motivation, and the way to improve the teaching process were also formed. The views of one teacher are given as an example:

*“Peer coaching is when another teacher shares his/her knowledge with me, and I share my knowledge with him/her.”* (T2, pre-interview)

*“Peer coaching is actually a community where one gets support from the other person and improves his/her work by helping each other. If peer coaching were a constant in my life, I think I would be less tired and do better quality work.”* (T2, post-interview)

To deepen the understanding of teachers' views on peer coaching, teachers were also asked about their feelings regarding peer coaching. Table 4 presents the categories and codes created based on the teachers' responses about their feelings concerning coaching a teacher and being coached by a teacher.

**Table 4:** Codes and Categories related to Feelings about Peer Coaching

Categories	Pre-Interview Codes	Post-Interview Codes
<b>Pride and Respectability</b>	-	Feeling of respectability (f=2), Feeling valuable, Pride of having completed the study (f=2)
<b>Satisfaction</b>	Happiness of having participated in the study, Happiness of professional sharing (f=2), Happiness for professional development (f=2)	The joy of a positive communication atmosphere, The happiness of learning (f=2), The enthusiasm of cooperation with the coach
<b>Anxiety</b>	Anxiety about the communication process (f=2), Anxiety about being criticized and supervised, Anxiety about professional incompetence	Sense of relief (f=2), Sense of self-confidence (f=2)
<b>Curiosity and Excitement</b>	Curiosity about the peer coaching process, Excitement to learn, Excitement to teach (f=2), Enthusiasm to participate voluntarily	Excitement of learning (f=2), Excitement of receiving and giving feedback (f=2), Enthusiasm for professional development

As presented in Table 4, the categories present in both the pre and post-interviews are satisfaction, anxiety, curiosity and excitement. Additionally, the category of pride and respectability emerged in the post-interview. One teacher's views are given as an example:

*“I wonder what kind of practice it will be. I also like the idea of observing the other side. I wonder if there will be new things.” (T2, pre-interview)*

*“In the end, I had a justified sense of pride in having finished something. Because here, I was able to express my opinion and he shared his. This made me feel happy.” (T2, post-interview)*

In the study, teachers' views were obtained regarding the expected benefits of peer coaching in the pre-interview and experienced benefits in the post-interview. The findings are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Codes and Categories related to the Contributions of Peer Coaching

Categories	Pre-Interview Codes	Post-Interview Codes
<b>Contribution to Knowledge and Skills Acquisition</b>	Contribution to the quality of classroom practices, Contribution to effective time management, Contribution to planning teaching, Contribution to student learning	Contribution to learning new methods (f=2), Contribution to the development of communication skills (f=2), Contribution to self-expression skills (f=2)
<b>Contribution to Teaching Practices</b>	Contribution to the quality of classroom practices, Contribution to effective time management, Contribution to planning teaching, Contribution to student learning	Contribution to the quality of classroom practices (f=2), Contribution to applying new methods (f=2), Contribution to reflecting on teaching (f=2)

As shown in Table 5, during both the pre and post-interviews, views were expressed regarding the contributions of peer coaching to knowledge and skill acquisition and teaching practices. One teacher's views are given as an example:

*“I can definitely learn new things about new teaching and learning methods or I can see different perspectives on approaching students in the classroom.” (T1, pre-interview)*

*“I will use these techniques in my class in the upcoming processes. At the same time, I realized what some of the pros and cons of my teaching approach were thanks to the observers.” (T2, post interview)*

During the pre-interview, teachers were asked about the difficulties they expected to encounter in the peer coaching process, and in the post-interview, they were asked about the difficulties they actually experienced. The findings are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Codes and Categories for Difficulties related to Peer Coaching

Categories	Pre-Interview Codes	Post-Interview Codes
<b>Difficulties Related to Time and Space</b>	Long coaching time	Difficulty in planning meeting times (f=2), Long product development process, Lack of a fixed meeting room
<b>Difficulties Related to The Teaching Method Learned</b>	Preparing lesson plan, Applying the teaching method in the classroom	-
<b>Difficulties Related To Peer Assessment</b>	-	Difficulties in making objective assessments (f=2)

As seen in Table 6, the common category in both the pre and post-interviews relates to difficulties associated with time and space. In the pre-interview, the categories of difficulties connected to the teaching method were noted, while in the post-interview, the category of difficulties related to peer assessment also emerged. One teacher's comments are given as an example:

*"I thought I would have difficulty in creating and planning a story, but it was not so. Initially, I struggled when working alone, but learning through doing and experiencing with my coach during the meeting eased my work. However, during the implementation phase, I had difficulty conveying my thoughts and observations accurately to my peer coach. The bond that formed between us made it slightly challenging for me to accurately convey my observations."* (T2, post-interview)

Teachers were also asked in both the pre and post-interviews about the characteristics a peer coach should have. The findings are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7:** Codes and Categories related to Characteristics of Peer Coaches

Categories	Pre-Interview Codes	Post-Interview Codes
<b>Personal Characteristics</b>	Critical, Constructive (f=2), Positive communicator	Critical, Constructive, Curious, Able to communicate positively (f=2), Cooperative, Patient, Able to express their feelings correctly, Value the opinions of others (f=2), Unprejudiced, Friendly, Selfless
<b>Occupational Characteristics</b>	Critical, Constructive (f=2), Positive communicator	Disciplined, Open to sharing (f=2), Having passion for profession, Researcher (f=2), Open to innovations, Planned, Open to development

As presented in Table 7, the categories of personal and professional characteristics were identified in both the pre and post-interviews. Here is an example from one teacher:

*"A peer coach must first be patient. This is required both due to the length of the process and because he/she will face some challenges. He/she should have good communication skills and be able to articulate what he/she wants concretely."* (T1, post-interview)

### 3.1.2. Findings from Meeting Reflection Forms

The first, second and twelfth meetings of the study were focused on structuring and evaluating the peer coaching process. The findings from the analysis of the meeting reflection forms of these meetings, in relation to the first sub-problem of the research, are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8:** Findings from Meeting Reflection Forms

Meeting	Discussion Topics	What I Learned?	Feelings
<b>First Meeting</b>	What are the views on how the coaching process will take place?	The structure and functioning of the coaching process (f=2), The importance of communication in teamwork (f=2), The importance of planning in the coaching process (f=1), The importance of trust between coaches (f=1)	Excitement of learning, Happiness
<b>Second Meeting</b>	What are the expectations about what will happen in the coaching process?	Principles of the teamwork process (f=2), The importance of identifying goals and values in colleague coaching (f=1)	Feelings of self-worth, Happiness, Belonging to a group
<b>Twelfth Meeting</b>	What could be the vision, mission, and group values of the work? What should be our rules as a team?	5E model, Digital story creation, Lesson planning, Peer coaching practices	Freedom, Happiness, Comfort of being judged, Pride

As seen in Table 8, teachers came to each meeting with discussion questions directly related to the peer coaching process and left at the end of the meeting with tangible suggestions for the peer process. It is also evident that teachers left the meetings with positive feelings. Here is an example from one teacher's perspective at the last meeting:

*"I told my coach that I was pleased to be in the peer coaching process. I stated that I was able to accomplish tasks, which would have taken me longer on my own, in a much shorter time by exchanging ideas with my coach in meetings. I felt happy and proud." (T2)*

### 3.2. Findings Related to the Second Sub-Problem of the Research

The second sub-problem of the study was determined as "What are the teachers' views regarding the effect of peer coaching on the planning and implementation process of a lesson based on the digital storytelling method?" The findings were derived from interviews, meeting reflection forms, lesson observation forms, and lesson rubrics, and are presented below.

#### 3.2.1. Findings from the Interviews

In order to determine teachers' views on the contribution of peer coaching to the planning and implementation process of a lesson based on the digital storytelling, teachers were asked about the effect of peer coaching on planning a digital storytelling lesson, its effect on the implementation of the method in the classroom, and teachers' feelings and thoughts about lesson observations.

The findings regarding the views of the teachers on the effect of peer coaching on planning a digital story-based lesson in the pre and post-interviews are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9:** Codes and Categories Related to the Effect of Peer Coaching on Planning a Digital Story-Based Lesson

Categories	Pre-Interview Codes	Post-Interview Codes
<b>Facilitating Planning</b>	Contribution to lesson planning, Contribution to learning new methods, Contribution to applying new methods	Contribution to writing teaching activities (f=2), Contribution to writing stories, Shortening planning time (f=2), Contribution to learning the method better (f=2), Contribution to sustaining motivation for planning (f=2)
<b>Contribution to Technological Competence</b>	Contribution to story digitization, Contribution to technological competence	Contribution to solving hardware and software problems, Contribution to digitizing the story (f=2), Contribution to technological competence (f=2)

As presented in Table 9, both in the pre-interview and post-interview, the categories of facilitating planning and contribution to technological competence were identified. Here is an example from one teacher's perspective:

*“If I were to try digital storytelling on my own, I would have quit halfway through, but with coaching, we progressed in a planned manner. You know, I have to prepare and show up, my coach is always ready, you witness the commitment, you sense the dedication, you feel obliged to work. At times when nothing comes to mind, when the other person suggests a different idea or method, the process accelerates. We opened up and examined each other's plans, we visualized them, we put them into practice and I learned.”* (T2, post-interview)

In the post-interview, teachers were asked about their opinions on the effect of peer coaching on the implementation of the method in the classroom. The findings are presented in Table 10.

**Table 10:** Codes and Categories Related to the Effect of Peer Coaching on the Classroom Implementation

Categories	Codes
<b>Contributions For the Teacher</b>	Knowledge in the subject area, lesson planning skills (f=2), Learning how to use the method, Creating an active learning environment, Developing technology skills (f=2), Solving technology problems in the classroom
<b>Contributions For the Students</b>	Attracting students' attention (f=2), Increasing student motivation, Ensuring students' active participation in the lesson, Increasing the quality of lesson learning (f=2)

As evidenced in Table 10, teachers did not express any opinion on this matter in the pre-interview. In the post-interview, the opinions were categorized under the categories of contributions for the teacher and contributions for the students. The views of one teacher are given as an example:

*“Thus, we realized that digital storytelling can be utilized at every stage of the lesson. During the implementation, it piqued the children' interest, but we observed that larger screens should be used to effectively narrate the story.”* (T1, post-interview)

Teachers were asked about their feelings and thoughts regarding lesson observations, a critical component of peer coaching, in the pre- and post-interviews. The findings are presented in Table 11.

**Table 11:** Codes and Categories for Lesson Observations

Categories	Pre-Interview Codes	Post-Interview Codes
<b>Feelings About the Observation Process</b>	Curiosity (f=2), Excitement to learn new things, Anxiety about the observer's behavior	Excitement (F=2), Anxiety (F=2), Self-Confidence, Professional satisfaction
<b>Thoughts on Feedback Quality</b>	-	Insufficient negative feedback (f=2), Superficial feedback (f=2), Insufficient number of feedback (f=2)
<b>Contributions of the Observation Process</b>	Providing learning opportunities (f=2), Contribution to improving teaching practices, Contribution to developing empathy among teachers, Opportunity for self-evaluation, Making comparisons about my teaching	Contribution to teaching practices (f=2), Providing professional development (f=2), Contribution to self-evaluation (f=2), Contribution to identifying areas of development (f=2)

As seen in Table 11, categories regarding feelings about the observation process and the contributions of the observation process were identified in the pre-interview. In the post-interview, the category of thoughts on feedback quality was added. The views of one teacher are given as an example:

*“I thought he would use more negative expressions, but he did not use too many negative expressions. He provided me feedback on more constructive and actionable issues. When they asked how I would do it if it were me or how it could be corrected regarding the negative aspects, we discussed these issues between us.” (T1, post-interview.)*

### 3.2.2. Findings from the Meeting Reflection Forms

In the study, activities including digital story creation, lesson planning, lesson implementation and lesson observation took place from the third to the eleventh meeting of the peer coaching process. Analyzing the meeting reflection forms from these meetings yielded findings related to the second sub-problem of the research, which are presented in Table 12.

**Table 12:** Findings from the Meeting Reflection Forms

Meeting	Discussion Topics	What I Learned?	Feelings
<b>First Meeting</b>	Are digital stories engaging for students? Can they be applied at every grade level? Which software can we use?	Elements to make stories interesting, Powtoon, Storyjumper, Powerpoint, Storyboard programs	Feeling valued
<b>Fourth Meeting</b>	At which stage of the lesson plan should we use the digital story? Which software should we use?	Embedding a digital story in a lesson plan, Adding visuals to a story, Storyjumper features	Like a researcher-learner, A sense of freedom
<b>Fifth Meeting</b>	How can we make visual illustrations in the story?	Drawing visuals in Paint, Storyjumper program	The relief of finding answers, Feeling valued
<b>Sixth Meeting</b>	Does the structure of the stories make sense? How can the duration be shortened? What are the evaluations about the digital stories? What should we discuss about the plan?	Stages of the 5E model, Aspects of the digital story that need to be developed	The relief of finding answers to my questions, Feeling valued
<b>Seventh Meeting</b>	At which stage of the plan should the digital story be used? Are the plans suitable for the duration of the lesson?	5E stages, Placing the digital story in the lesson plan, Time adjustment in the plan, Aspects of my plan to be	Sense of relief, Feeling valued

Meeting	Discussion Topics	What I Learned?	Feelings
	What are the shortcomings of the plans? What are the benefits of preparing plans together? Are the activities suitable for the 5E model?	improved, Alternative assessment methods	
<b>Eighth Meeting</b>	What changes should be made to the plans? How will lesson observations work? How will we fill in the observation forms? How will we share the feedback?	What to pay attention to while making lesson observations and how the feedback should be after the observation	Like someone learning new things, happiness, freedom
<b>Ninth Meeting</b>	What are the changes to be made to digital stories? How prepared are we for lesson observations? Which classes will be observed?	How to determine the classes to observe	The happiness of completion, Excitement
<b>Tenth Meeting</b>	What are the positive and negative feedbacks about the lesson observation? Were we able to use the digital story according to its purpose? Were we able to conduct the lesson according to the planning?	Listening and sharing feedback	Nervousness, Worry that the coach might be offended when giving feedback, Feeling valued
<b>Eleventh Meeting</b>	What are the feedbacks directed to me as a result of the observation of my lesson? What are the negativities experienced during the observation? What could have been done better about the lessons?	Listening and sharing the feedback	Comfort of completing the process, Feeling important and valuable

As evidenced in Table 12, teachers came to the meetings with discussion questions about the digital story development process, and they generally reported feeling positive emotions at the end of each meeting. The views of a teacher in the 10th meeting serve as an example:

*"I congratulated my coach. I mentioned that the lesson started late due to adjusting the desks and maintaining social distancing, that the lecture lasted exactly 30 minutes. However, the children were distracted because the bell rang during the extension part. I felt slightly nervous during the meeting. I was afraid of saying something wrong and offending my coach."* (T2)

### 3.2.3. Findings from the Lesson Observation Forms

The notes taken by the teachers during the lesson observations were classified as positive and negative feedbacks within the scope of the dimensions specified in the observation form and presented in Table 13.

**Table 13:** *Post-Observation Feedback Notes According to the Lesson Observation Forms*

Observer	Categories	Learner Centered Activity	Student Engagement	Use of Technology
T1	Strengths	Managing small group work well, Teaching a lesson in accordance with the plan	Ensuring student participation, giving their own example	Using the digital story at the right stage of the lesson
	Weaknesses	Time management problem, Lack of activities for students to make self-assessment, Few solved problems		Problem with the digital story password, Inability to read the story from the back rows, Loss of time due to not opening the digital story before the lesson
T2	Strengths	Student-centered teaching of the lesson, Teaching the lesson according to the lesson plan	Student participation in group work, Student involvement in answering questions	Not losing control of the class in technology-related problems
	Weaknesses	Delay in organizing the environment, Continuing the lesson despite the bell, Completing the lesson in a hurry	Distracted students in the last minutes of the lesson	-

As seen in Table 13, both teachers expressed their views on lesson observations within the dimensions of learner-centered activities, student participation and use of technology. According to the opinions expressed during the observations, the observed lessons exhibited both strengths and weaknesses.

### 3.2.3. Findings from the Lesson Plan Rubrics

The lesson plans prepared by the teachers were evaluated by both the coaching teacher and the researcher. The ratings made by the coaching teacher and the researcher using the lesson plan rubric are presented in Table 14, according to the respective dimensions.

**Table 14:** *Findings from the Lesson Plan Rubrics*

Dimensions	T1's Lesson Plan		T2's Lesson Plan	
	Ö2	A	Ö1	A
Technical Structure (2 questions)	10	10	10	10
Holistic Structure (4 questions)	20	20	20	20
Introductory activities (4 questions)	19	20	20	20
Process Activities (12 questions)	59	59	59	59
Closing Activities (4 questions)	20	20	19	20

Upon analysis of Table 14, it appears that the evaluations made by both the teachers and the researcher are broadly similar. As per this analysis, the scores given to the lesson plans across various dimensions were primarily “Partially Sufficient” or “Sufficient”.

#### 4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Peer coaching, an approach allowing two teachers to collaboratively enhance their teaching in a non-judgmental environment, has emerged as a means for facilitating professional development for teachers. Showers and Joyce (1996) noted that teachers engaged in a coaching relationship implement new skills and strategies more frequently and effectively than their solo-working peers. Studies within this framework have offered theoretical insights into fostering teacher collaboration, but a gap remains in examining the impact of these initiatives on real teaching-learning processes (Ostovar-Nameghi & Sheikahmadi, 2016). This study, recognizing this need, explores the peer coaching process in a middle school setting, assessing teachers' perspectives on this process, and examining the impact of peer coaching on the planning and implementation of a lesson.

In order to answer the first sub-problem of the study, "What are teachers' views on peer coaching?", the findings gleaned from the interviews and meeting reflection forms were discussed collectively.

When considering the definitions of peer coaching from the interviews, it appears that teachers initially characterized peer coaching simply as sharing with colleagues. However, by the final interview, they had incorporated terms including professional evaluation, fostering professional motivation, and enhancing the teaching process to their definitions. This evolution towards a broader understanding of peer coaching by the end of the process can be seen not as surprising, but rather as a natural outcome for the teachers who have experienced peer coaching. When the literature (Anderson et al., 2005; Showers & Joyce, 1996) is examined, it is apparent that the definition of peer coaching aligns with the teachers' final understanding in this study, suggesting that the teachers correctly interpreted coaching. The discussions and exchanges during meetings throughout the process may have contributed to teachers' deepened understanding of peer coaching. This insinuates that the coaching process should not be confined to lesson observations alone, and that prioritizing the preparation process before the observation may be key to ensuring a correct interpretation of the practice. Diaz-Maggioli (2004) also underscored the importance of pre-observation meetings in aiding teachers to understand the objectives, prepare lesson plans and strategize the process. In this respect, it can be said that the effective implementation of the peer coaching process is tied to the effective execution of the pre-observation process.

Teachers' feelings concerning the peer coaching process were also examined. The findings from the interviews show that the fact that initial apprehensions, likely due to the novelty of peer coaching, were gradually replaced by feelings of relief as teachers became more acquainted with the process. Notably, by the end of the process, teachers expressed feelings of pride and respect. This could be indicative of the satisfaction teachers derived from their work throughout the process. The findings from the meeting reflection forms corroborate this conclusion. While feelings such as curiosity and excitement were prevalent during initial meetings, feelings such as pride and self-worth dominated the final meeting. Considering the findings collectively, it can be inferred that peer coaching elicited positive emotional responses from teachers. This outcome is in line with existing literature (Avan, 2021; Burkhart, 2004; Kohler, McCullough, & Buchan, 1995; Lyke, 2002) in which teachers who participated in peer coaching practices expressed positive feelings at the end of the process.

Teachers also highlighted the benefits of the peer coaching process. In discussing these benefits, teachers stated that the process improved their understanding of teaching methods and communication skills, aided the implementation of new methods and techniques, fostered reflections and improving classroom practices. When the related studies are examined, it is stated that peer coaching improved teaching skills (Ricon, 2020), positively affects the learning of teaching methods and classroom practices

(Murawski, 2019), and helps teachers enrich their teaching activities by fostering communication among them (Chapman, 2008). Studies in the national literature also emphasize the positive effects of peer coaching on professional development (Arslan Dönmez, 2020; Yalçın Arslan, & İlin, 2013; Yoğun, 2020). Alongside the benefits offered by the process, teachers also pointed out the difficulties they faced. They highlighted difficulties related to time and space. This issue is also addressed in the literature (Anderson et al., 2005; Mom, 2012; Rincon, 2020). The reasons for these challenges can be attributed to the lack of a dedicated space for such studies in schools and the absence of shared times in the curriculum to promote collaboration among teachers.

Based on their experiences, teachers also expressed opinions about the qualities an effective peer coach should possess. These qualities were discussed under the categories: personal and professional characteristics. Within the personal characteristics category, traits related to positive communication were emphasized, with descriptions such as “being cooperative, being able to express feelings accurately, valuing the opinions of the other person, being unbiased, being good-humoured”. Regarding professional characteristics, both affective dimensions such as a passion for the profession and the technical dimensions such as being well-planned and disciplined were included. In their study, O'Connor and Ertmer (2006) assert that teachers list trust, understanding group dynamics, strong interpersonal communication and leadership skills, flexibility and reflection as the keys to success as a coach. Similarly, Richards and Farrell (2005) argue that a coach should be reliable and trustworthy, capable of providing constructive feedback in a positive and supportive manner, and able to work collaboratively. Accordingly, it can be inferred that the traits of a peer coach in the literature and those identified in this study align, signifying that the qualities a peer coach should possess during this process is a dimension that deserves attention.

To answer the second sub-problem of the study, “What are the teachers’ views regarding the effect of peer coaching on the planning and implementation process of a lesson based on the digital storytelling method?”, the findings from the interviews, meeting reflection forms, lesson observation forms and lesson plan rubrics were collectively discussed.

In this study, teachers developed their own digital stories, prepared lesson plans and implemented them in the classroom. From the reflection forms related to this activity, it is clear that teachers shared feelings such as the comfort of asking each other questions during the digital story development, the satisfaction of giving and receiving help, and the happiness they experienced throughout the activities. In the interviews, teachers also highlighted the contributions of peer coaching to the lesson planning and implementation process, stating that it helped with technological competencies and addressing technology issues in the classroom. This underscores the positive contribution of collaborative work to the digital story development process. The fact that existing literature reveals a statistically significant difference in pre-service teachers’ technology usage competencies before and after the peer coaching experience (Giles et al., 2020), and that peer coaching increases teachers’ technological pedagogical content knowledge competencies (Jang, 2010; Karakaya Cirit & Aydemir, 2020), suggests that peer coaching practices could serve as an effective means to foster technology use and the development of technology-based materials.

Teachers also stressed that the peer coaching process eased the lesson planning procedure. The evaluations of the lesson plans, conducted using rubrics showed that the lesson plans were adequate, corroborating the teachers’ views. This can be attributed to the fact that the teachers shared mutual evaluations and suggestions for rectifying the lesson plans and incorporated these suggestions into their plans. Coaching activities offer more opportunities for information exchange and discussion, and the

feedback that coaches provide each other is considered instrumental in preparing higher quality plans (Amalia & Imperiani, 2013). In addition to the benefits of the informative presentations they received during the plan preparation process, teachers also noted the emotional contributions of peer coaching in their meeting reflection forms. They mentioned that they were able to solve issues regarding how to plan and where to use the digital story with their coaches' assistance, and that they managed to accomplish the planning which they would have struggled to do on their own. Regarding the emotional contribution to this process, teachers also stated that they felt valued when their opinions on lesson plans were considered. In this framework, the presence of a coach during the lesson planning process appears to mitigate the loneliness that teachers often experience. It helps solve teachers' problems, alleviates feelings of loneliness, fosters a sense of worth through mutual sharing, and collectively leads to the creation of more refined plans. Similarly, Showers (1985) also emphasizes the importance of the coaching process in facilitating the development of lesson plans collaboratively. In addition, the literature also underscores the positive effect of the peer coaching process on preparing more remarkable and high-quality lesson plans (Amalia & Imperiani, 2013; Sabilah et al., 2021). In this direction, it can be inferred that peer-coaching practices could be viewed as an effective way for teachers to prepare lesson plans and learn new teaching methods.

Teachers also stated that the peer coaching process contributed to the implementation of the digital storytelling method in the classroom. The benefits for teachers were expressed as clarifying the usage of the teaching method and resolving technology issues in the classroom, while for students, the advantages included captivating student attention and boosting student motivation. These statements align with the findings derived from the lesson observation forms that showcased student participation in the lessons. This result is meaningful when considering that teachers prepared the lesson utilizing the digital story method collaboratively and jointly structured the discussion process about its implementation. It can be inferred that teachers, who initially had no idea about the digital storytelling method, gained all the details about how to use digital stories in the classroom from the information gained during the coaching and from being included in an environment based on sharing information. Truesdale (2003) contends that peer coaching has a substantial impact on teachers' ability to incorporate the methods they have learned into classroom practice. Chapman (2008) also reported the impact of peer coaching as a change in teaching style, willingness to apply effective teaching practices, learning to adapt to a challenging student profile, transitioning from isolation to collaboration, and the integration of technology into instructional delivery. In this context, the benefits stated by the teachers align with the advantages of the peer coaching process expressed in the literature. The interactions during coaching enhance teaching activities (Ostovar-Nameghi & Sheikahmadi, 2016), and students stand to benefit from the improved quality of education (Anderson et al., 2005; Hsieh et al., 2021).

Another critical component of the coaching process is lesson observations. Teachers discussed their feelings about the observation process, the benefits of the observation process and the quality of the feedback they received afterwards. Teachers expressed feelings of excitement and anxiety during lesson observations. The fact that the anxiety induced by the observation process has been examined in the literature (AL-Balushi & Mat Saad, 2021; Castañeda-Londoño, 2017; Hendry & Oliver, 2012) suggests this aspect should be given more consideration during lesson observations. In addition, in both the interviews and the meeting reflection form, teachers similarly mentioned that the observation process was professionally gratifying, boosted their self-confidence, and made them feel valued. Literature indicates that peer coaching practices offer teachers a sense of professional fulfillment, improve their self-confidence, and make them feel valued and special when teachers express their positive opinions towards each other (Jao, 2013; Kohler, Crilley, Shearer, & Good, 1997; Prince, Snowden, & Matthews,

2010; Sparks & Bruder, 1987; Whipp & Pengelley, 2017). Teachers also highlighted the contributions of the lesson observation process to their teaching practices, self-evaluation, identification of areas for improvement, and professional development. In his study, Jao (2013) stated that through lesson observations conducted within the framework of peer coaching practices, teachers had the opportunity for self-evaluation and observations created opportunities to witness the teaching practices of others. Similarly, Vacilotto and Cummings (2007) showed that lesson observations in peer coaching practices support the development of coaches' teaching skills and enable participants to reconsider their own teaching methods and styles. In this respect, it can be stated that teachers' views are in line with the literature.

In the final interview, teachers highlighted the importance of feedback given in post-observation meetings following lesson observations, pointing out the scarcity of negative feedback, lack of detail in the feedback, and insufficient feedback overall. Similarly, in the reflection forms from the meetings, although they noted a mutual sharing of ideas and a productive discussion environment while giving feedback on the observation process, it is seen that they underlined the deficiencies they expressed in the interview regarding the feedback they received. In fact, as can be seen in the findings obtained from the lesson observation forms, the teachers indicated both strengths and weaknesses in the lessons they observed. In their observations, they mentioned both positive aspects such as student participation and negative aspects such as problems with the use of technology or time management. Although they expressed all their observations, including negative feedback to each other in the meetings, it can be said that negative feedback was expressed more superficially, and more emphasis was placed on positive feedback. However, the teachers' statements show that they expected to discuss these weaknesses in depth. The perception among teachers that negative feedback was not sufficiently addressed could be a result of the strong bond between the coaches, who collaboratively found solutions to each other's problems during the peer coaching sessions. In other words, teachers tended to avoid giving negative feedback. In their meeting reflection forms, they mentioned that they felt nervous and worried that they might offend their coach while giving feedback, which confirms the avoidance tendency. In the study conducted by Smith (2016), it was stated that teachers had difficulty in giving negative feedback to their coaches. In the same study, a teacher who chose not to give negative feedback to their coach explained that this was due to concerns that such feedback could be perceived as personal, potentially offending the other person, and it wouldn't be beneficial for others to hear negative feedback. Another teacher mentioned that receiving feedback was undesirable. It is believed in this study that teachers acted with a similar mindset. However, this could be viewed as a finding that underscores the need for more careful construction of the feedback process in coaching. In another study, it was reported that in the first year of a coaching study implemented for two years, teachers complained that they did not receive enough feedback and that the feedback they received was not actionable, and that this problem was eliminated by establishing a more systematic framework in the second year (Keiler, Diotti, Hudon, & Ransom, 2020). This suggests that the importance of feedback in teacher development can only be realized by establishing an effective system for the feedback process. This aspect could be seen as an area needing improvement. In addition, although it was stated that feedback on weaknesses was not sufficiently addressed, these weaknesses were documented in the lesson observation forms. Considering these weaknesses as areas needing improvement, it can be emphasized that the peer coaching cycle should be repeated, taking into account the aspects requiring improvement.

The overall results of the study suggest that peer coaching has a positive effect on lesson planning and implementation. Furthermore, the peer coaching process could be emphasized as a means of

fostering professional development, especially in offering the emotional support that teachers require. Based on the results of the study, the following suggestions can be made for researchers and practitioners:

- Based on this study's results, further research could be conducted to better understand peer coaching. Notably, considering this study was limited to a single cycle of 12 sessions, future studies might benefit from repeating the peer coaching cycle multiple times, undertaking more long-term and longitudinal studies, and examining the evolution of teachers' views over time. Given that the participants of this study taught in various disciplines, future research could conduct comparative analyses of peer coaching experiences between teachers from different and the same disciplines. Based on the finding that peer coaching practice helped teachers feel valued and experience professional satisfaction, the relationship between teacher collaboration-based practices and professional motivation might also be explored in future studies. The impact of the peer coaching process on the academic achievement or attitudes of the students in the classes of the participating teachers was not included in this study. Thus, it is recommended that future studies examine the effect of peer coaching practices on student learning. It may also be beneficial to compare the strengths and weaknesses of different professional learning community practices, contributing further to the literature.
- In this study, participants mentioned experiencing problems related to the scheduling and location of the peer coaching meetings. Based on this feedback, it might be beneficial to organize teachers' schedules prior to similar studies, set fixed times in the curriculum for such studies, and arrange the venue in advance. The Ministry of National Education's adoption of the Professional Development Communities approach to teacher development represents a significant stride forward. Considering the critical role of school leaders in this process, regular sharing and discussion meetings could be organized by the District Directorates of National Education to promote school principals' development on this matter. In the study, teachers reported difficulties in sharing negative feedback, which may stem from their lack of experience in self-assessment and peer assessment processes. On platforms like Teacher Information Network (ÖBA) and Education Information Network (EBA), teacher diaries or discussion rooms that allow teachers to reflect on their practices' strengths and weaknesses could be structured. To propagate this understanding, good practice conferences might be organized to share experiences of peer coaching or different professional learning communities. Finally, teachers highlighted the emotional support provided by peer coaching and its ability to alleviate social isolation. Transforming the school culture into one that can counteract the loneliness experienced by teachers is essential. Workshops could be arranged to develop solution suggestions to effect change in the school culture in the specified direction.

### **Author Contributions**

First Author: Contributed to conceptualization, review, analysis, revision, and editing. Contribution rate to the research was 50%

Second Author: Contributed to conceptualization, review, analysis, revision, and editing. Contribution rate to the research was 50%

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declared that they have no conflict of interest.

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