THE PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF WRITTEN PEER FEEDBACK COMMENTS WITHIN L2 ENGLISH ACADEMIC WRITING COURSES

Roger M. A. Yallop, Djuddah A. J. Leijen

Abstract. At one Estonian university, we have designed a course to support the writing skills of doctorate students who need to write scientific articles for publication in their L2 English. We provide this support by placing these students into small discipline-specific writing groups where they periodically give and receive written feedback on their draft articles. Knowing what may constitute an effective feedback comment will enable us to improve upon current pedagogical practices. In this study, we develop a coding scheme to measure the impact of both affective and non-affective feedback comments on the peer feedback process. We use this scheme in tandem with questionnaires to assess the effectiveness of postgraduate peer feedback comments as perceived by both L1 Estonian doctoral students and expert writing assessors. Within this context, the results suggest that cover letters and the tone of feedback comments have a noticeable impact on the peer feedback process.*

Keywords: language learning and teaching, EFL and ESL writing, L1 Estonian, revision comments, non-revision comments, hedging devices, PhD students, cover letters, writing groups, peer review

1. Introduction

One effective method of supporting academic writing in a social context is to form small discipline-specific writing groups (e.g., Aitchison, Lee 2006). At one Estonian university, we have been developing courses that support postgraduate students. Here, the students periodically give written feedback on their peers' texts (hereinafter 'the reviewers') and receive written feedback on their texts (hereinafter the 'authors'). In this context, it is important for the instructors to help the reviewers write and the authors interpret feedback comments effectively.

This study examines the perceived effectiveness of asynchronous written peer feedback comments as rated in a questionnaire by expert writing assessors and by PhD students who speak Estonian as their mother tongue (hereinafter 'L1 Estonian PhD students'). The L1 Estonian PhD students were further divided into those experienced in giving feedback and those with little or no experience in giving feedback.

The feedback comments were generated by postgraduates participating in five separate academic writing courses for Master's and doctorate students. Each course used various methods for the students to give and receive peer feedback. From within each course, we only collected data from students within the same discipline.

The feedback comments are sorted into analysable units called 'segments'. These segments are then categorised into classes and sub-classes using a coding scheme based upon studies of hedging principles (Salager-Meyer 1994, Crompton 1997), social presence theory (Shea et al. 2010, Yallop 2016), socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky 1978), and the categorisation and effectiveness of feedback comments (Liu, Sadler 2003, Nelson, Schunn 2009, Leijen 2017).

Common features within feedback comments rated consensually as 'effective' by both the expert writing assessors and the L1 Estonian PhD students are identified through the application of the coding scheme. These features are further compared to those reported in the literature. Consequently, this paper addresses the following research question:

What is an effective feedback comment as perceived consensually by both L1 Estonian PhD students and expert writing assessors?

2. Effectiveness of written feedback comments

2.1. Written feedback comments within writing groups

Small discipline-specific writing groups are an effective method of supporting university students writing a text for academic purposes (Rollinson 2004, Murray, Moore 2006). In this procedure, each group member periodically submits sections of his/her draft for peer feedback. Furthermore, and to help the reviewer write useful and critical advice, the author often composes a cover letter stating how his/her text should be assessed. Next, they give written feedback on their peers' drafts, and they receive feedback on their drafts. Finally, the students decide whether to implement these feedback comments in their subsequent drafts. This procedure repeats itself in a cyclic fashion on different sections of their texts until the drafts are ready for submission.

2.2. Effectiveness of revision comments

Many quantitative studies of the effectiveness of written peer feedback comments (Liu, Sadler 2003, Nelson, Schunn 2009, Leijen, Leontjeva 2012, Leijen 2017) segment such comments into either revision or non-revision comments. Revision comments suggest the author make direct changes to his/her text (e.g., "The title is too long."), whereas non-revision comments do not (Liu, Sadler 2003) (e.g., "Great title!"). Then, as explained in Roger M. A. Yallop (2017), the implementation rate

of feedback comments is calculated by inspecting the original and revised texts for evidence of implementation or non-implementation of the segmented revision comments. Finally, the effectiveness of feedback comments is determined by examining which types of comments are more likely to be implemented by the author. These studies report higher implementation rates in comments that are text-specific, offer a solution and include a summarisation. Furthermore, feedback comments at higher levels of studies should focus on global issues (e.g., ideas, structure and organisation) rather than on local issues (e.g., spelling and copy-editing tasks) (Liu, Sadler 2003).

There are, however, different findings regarding revision comments that contain an explanation or justification. Research by Melissa M. Nelson and Christian D. Schunn (2009) found that justified comments were less likely to be implemented than unjustified comments. This suggests that they may have a negative impact on the feedback process. Djuddah A. J. Leijen (2017) in his study noticed that this was true when justified comments had either been made at the local level or had been written impersonally with no reviewer involvement. Conversely, justified comments that offered a specific solution were twice as likely to be implemented as similar but unjustified comments (Leijen 2017). These findings suggest that determining the effectiveness of feedback comments may depend not only on the segmented type of revision comment (e.g., offering a solution), but also on other features such as its scope (text-specific or global), potential effect (local or global), justification, tone and appropriateness (personal or impersonal; direct or indirect), and relevance.

2.3. Hedging and other politeness strategies

It is very common for students to soften the tone of their revision comments through the use of politeness strategies in order to avoid causing offence (Carson, Nelson 1994). Typical examples include the use of comparative forms and hedging devices. There is also much research into how hedging devices are used in academic writing to denote "fuzziness" in the writer's assertions (see Crompton 1997 for concise treatment), and many taxonomies have been developed to measure these hedging devices (Skelton 1988, Myers 1989, Hyland 1994, Salager-Meyer 1994). This suggests that hedging devices within revision comments are prone to misinterpretation by the author. This is because the reviewer could be using hedging devices to mitigate the comment's directness and/or to signal a lack of competency in providing accurate feedback. Thus, the competency of the reviewer and his/her commenting style may also influence how deeply the author engages with the advice.

2.4. Effectiveness of non-revision comments

Other studies (e.g., Cho et al. 2006, Lee 2008) have employed questionnaires and interviews to examine the impact of non-revision comments on the feedback process. The findings suggest that students perceive non-revision comments of praise as useful, motivating and highly valuable (Cho et al. 2006, Kaufman, Schunn 2011: 390). This is supported by Thomas C. Gee's (1972) study in which he found that praise leads to authors making more revisions to their drafts. Conversely, other

studies (Ferris 1997, Nelson, Schunn 2009) suggest that praise has a negligible effect on the process. Praise can also be used to mitigate, or soften, the criticism contained within a revision comment. Although mitigated revision comments may help to build relationships between the author and the reviewer, they can also have a negative effect on the feedback process when the students misunderstand their meaning, and particularly when their English proficiency is low (Hyland, Hyland 2001).

Roger M. A. Yallop (2016) developed a taxonomy to measure how praise and other non-revision comments, such as the use of vocatives (e.g., "Dear John,"), may have an impact on the peer feedback process. It is based upon studies grounded in socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky 1978, Garrison et al. 2010, Shea et al. 2010). Socio-cultural theory suggests that students tend to perform better in warm and caring environments, as opposed to cold and impersonal ones (Rourke et al. 1999). This implies that non-revision comments may also be important in forming long-term 'feedback relationships' between the writing group members. For example, the group members can create a supportive learning environment by addressing each other by name and by offering comments of praise and encouragement. However, aside from praise, there is little research into how non-revision comments may influence the implementation of revision comments. This suggests that a more holistic concept is needed to measure how both revision and non-revision comments interact, and how they impact the peer feedback process.

3. Coding scheme for written feedback comments

3.1. Overview

Firstly, all written feedback comments are sorted into units of analysis called segments (see Figure 1). Next, the segments are inspected for hedging devices and other politeness strategies, and placed into classes. Then, dependent on their class, these segments are further divided into sub-classes and examined for dimensional traits and tone. The following sub-sections explain the coding scheme in detail.
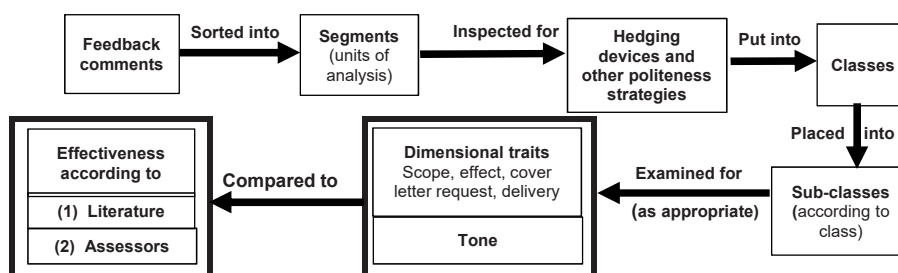

Figure 1. Coding scheme overview

3.2. Toning devices within segmented feedback comments

Reviewers often use hedging devices within feedback comments to distance themselves from their assertions as well as other politeness strategies to appear 'more friendly' (see Table 1, strategies highlighted in bold).

Table 1. Toning devices within segments

Toning device	Definition (adapted from Salager-Meyer 1994: 7)	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)
Shield	An item of language which a reviewer uses to explicitly qualify his/her lack of commitment to the truth of his/her feedback comment.	"You could **probably** leave this in."
Reviewer's personal doubt and direct involvement	A feedback comment presented 'tentatively' or 'coyly' with the reviewer's direct involvement. These include expressions such as 'I believe,' and 'I think,' which express the reviewer's personal doubt and/or 'coyness' and his/her direct involvement.	**"I think** you can go into more technical detail."
Approximator	An item of language which a reviewer uses to explicitly quantify his/her degree of commitment to the truth of his/her feedback comment.	"The wording here is a **bit** confusing."
Emotionally-charged intensifier	A comment word used to project the reviewer's reaction.	"They should **most definitely** be explained."
Toning device	**Definition**	**Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)**
Other politeness strategy	Other politeness strategies not included above such as the use of comparatives, superlatives, (negative) interrogatives, conditional structures, the modals 'would' and 'need to' that signal 'indirectness' or 'coyness'.	**"Shouldn't** this be Wanradt-Koell, in nominatiive**?"** **"I would keep** the discussion part seperate."
Reviewer's conviction	A revision comment presented as fact with the reviewer's direct involvement.	"**I do not understand** the connection of Halonen's research to dialect boundaries."
Combination	Any combination of the above categories within the single topic or within its contiguous comments.	"**I think** that the ideas are in the text, but are **not explicitly** stated."

Furthermore, they use comment words and expressions of personal involvement to project their reactions or beliefs in the veracity of their feedback comments. Thus, all feedback comments are inspected for these indicators, referred to as 'toning devices' in this study, for their segmentation, classification and sub-classification.

3.3. Segmentation and classification

The feedback comments are segmented into revision and non-revision comments (Liu, Sadler 2003) on the basis of 'idea units'. An idea unit is defined as "contiguous comments referring to a single topic" (Nelson, Schunn 2009: 386). Contiguous comments in this study relate to one or more clauses that refer either implicitly or explicitly to a single topic and are often connected by an appropriate cohesive device (e.g., 'but'). The single topic is always the revision comment, if present, as without it the feedback process would be pointless.

Thus, unconnected revision comments (e.g., "This is repetition.") and non-revision comments (e.g., "Greetings, Ann.") are distinct segments. When there is a connection between them which is typical in justified revision comments (e.g., "You can add tables to help people understand this."), the single topic is the revision comment. The related non-revision comment is the contiguous comment. When there are two or more idea units within the same segmented non-revision comment, the single topic conveys the most important meaning.

A segment that does not contain any contiguous comments is classified as either a revision or non-revision comment only. If the segment contains any contiguous comments, then it is classified as a mixed revision or a mixed non-revision comment (see Table 2). To account for text editing operations where the reviewer edits the author's text directly, the single topic is defined as operations made at the word, clause or sentence level with the sentence level taken as the largest linguistic unit. The segments are then placed into sub-classes using the relevant coding scheme.

Table 2. Segmentation and classification of feedback comments

Type of feedback comment	Definition (adapted from Liu, Sadler 2003)	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)
Revision comment	A segmented feedback comment that either explicitly states or clearly implies that the author may need to make a specific change to one aspect or 'idea unit' of his/her text.	"This is repetition." "I like the way you systematically cover the results, but you need to clarify how table 2 was created."
Non-revision comment	A segmented feedback comment that neither explicitly states nor implies that the author may need to make a specific change to one aspect or 'idea unit' of his/her text.	"Greetings, Ann." (closure to feedback letter). "I like the way you write your introduction. It makes it easy to understand the focus of your research."
Comment class	**Definition (adapted from Nelson, Schunn 2009: 38)**	**Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained) and main ideas in bold**
Revision comment only	A revision comment that does not contain a contiguous comment.	"This is repetition."
Mixed revision comment	A revision comment that contains one or more contiguous comments.	"I like the way you systematically cover the results, but **you need to clarify how table 2 was created."**
Non-revision comment only	A non-revision comment that does not contain a contiguous comment.	**"Greetings, Ann."** (closure to feedback letter).
Mixed non-revision comment	A non-revision comment that contains one or more contiguous comments.	**"I like the way you write your introduction.** It makes it easy to understand the focus of your research."

3.4. Sub-classification of revision and non-revision comments

A segmented revision comment is a feedback comment that either explicitly states or clearly implies that the author may need to make a specific change to one aspect or 'idea unit' of his/her text (adapted from Liu, Sadler 2003). These comments are sub-classified into problem identification, general solution, specific solution and/ or alternative, question, or any combination thereof (adapted from Nelson, Schunn 2009: 38) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Sub-classification of revision comments

Sub-class of revision comment	Definition	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)
Problem identification	The identification of a negative feature of the text.	"This is repetition."
General solution	The identification of an aspect of the text that can be improved upon.	"I think you can go into more technical detail."
Specific solution and/or alternatives	The offering of a solution with an alteration (Liu, Sadler 2003: 202) and/or the identification of one or more possible solutions.	"I would leave it out or rewrite it."
Question	The use of interrogatives or if clauses to seek justification, clarification, expansion, or questioning the appropriateness of one aspect of the text.	"How do you define this?"
Combination of above categories	Any combination of problem identification, solution offered and clarification that relates to the same aspect of the text.	"I think it would be better to use the same tense here: follows/ includes or followed/included."

A segmented non-revision comment is a feedback comment that neither explicitly states nor implicitly suggests that the author make a specific change to one aspect or 'idea unit' of his/her text (Liu, Sadler 2003). These comments are sorted into the sub-classes of affective, open communication, and group cohesion according to Roger M. A. Yallop's (2016: 295) taxonomy (see Table 4).

Table 4. Abridged coding scheme for non-revision comments

Sub-class of non-revision comment	Definition	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)
Affective	The expression of one's own emotions, feelings and mood. This includes the use of humour, conspicuous punctuation such as smileys, and expressions of personal values, beliefs, attitudes and vulnerability.	"Me and my spell-checker." ":-) !!! ???" "I am not sure, but it seems fine to me."
Open communication	Purposeful communication that may help build relationships between the reviewer and the author. This includes the use of praise, empathy, apology and gratitude.	"It was a much nicer read than last time." "I have the same problem myself." "I am sorry for this late submission."
Group cohesion	This indicates how the reviewer identifies with the community and builds and sustains group commitment. This includes the use of vocatives, greetings, closures, emphatic expressions and references to future contact.	"Dear Ann," "All the best, Dave." "I am looking forward to our next group meeting."

To illustrate the coding scheme (see Figure 2), feedback comments have been sorted into two segments. The first segment is a non-revision comment of justified praise (open communication). The second segment is a revision comment asking about the appropriateness of one aspect of the text (question).
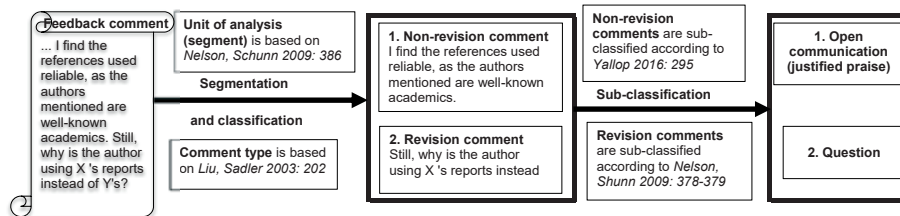

Figure 2. Segmentation and classification of feedback comments (example)

Segments that cannot be classified as a revision or a non-revision comment are labelled as 'other' for the purposes of the analysis.

3.5. Contiguous comments within mixed revision and non-revision comments

A segmented revision comment can contain one or more non-revision comments. In these cases, the single topic is always the revision comment and is coded at the macro-level (see Table 5). All the related contiguous comments are coded at the micro-level. If no revision comment is present in mixed comments, then the segment is classified as a mixed non-revision comment.

Table 5. Contiguous comments

Contiguous comment	Definition	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained) and contiguous comments in bold
Explicit mitigation and/or affective	A contiguous comment that softens the critical nature of the single topic by providing a comment of praise, an excuse for the reviewer's and/or the author's incompetence, or any other contiguous comments that also belong to the sub-class of 'affective'.	"I can't answer this because I'm not that familiar with this concept." "There is a lack of coherence between your paragraphs, but the overall development is logical."
Explicit justification	The reviewer provides an explicit reason or explanation that is not a comment of mitigation to justify his/her reasoning for the single topic in the feedback comment.	"As you mention the precision in a lot of paragraphs, maybe a few works about it would be good." "This short paragraph is easy to read, because it has been written concisely and logically."
Summarisation	"A list of the topics discussed in the paper, a description of the claims the author was trying to make, or statements of an action taken by the author" (Nelson, Schunn 2009: 386).	"You write about senses and …" "The author explains why he chose the indicators and leaves out …" "The author gives several references to support …"

3.6. Dimensions and tone

A segment is coded at the macro-level for the dimensional traits: scope, delivery, position and cover letter request. Delivery refers to how and position refers to where the feedback comment is written. Revision comments are also coded for the effect they would have on the author's subsequent draft if they were to be implemented (see Table 6).

Table 6. Dimensional traits within segments

Effect of feedback comment	Definition (Faigley, Witte 1984)	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)
Local	If the revision comment is implemented, there will be no change of meaning to the text.	"Do you want to write your definitions in the singular (natural obstacle) or in the plural (natural obstacles)?"
Global	If the revision comment is implemented, there will be a change of meaning to the text.	"This seems more like a method section. I would leave it out."
Scope of feedback comment	**Definition (adapted from Ferris 1994)**	**Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)**
Text-specific	The feedback comment applies specifically to the author's paper. This includes all responses given as comment boxes, any reference that could locate the comment albeit implicitly (i.e., through context) to the author's text, and references to the complete absence of something.	"Is this a new section (i.e., 2. Literature Review) or is it an extension of your introduction?"
Generic	The feedback comment could apply to any paper. There is no interpretation, contextual or otherwise, that could locate the comment to the author's text.	"The structure of some sentences are confusing."
Delivery of feedback comment	**Definition**	**Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)**
As comment box	The feedback comment is written as a comment box that highlights one specific aspect of the author's draft.	Case-specific
As text	The feedback comment is written as text that does not highlight one specific aspect of the author's draft.	Case-specific
Text editing	The reviewer edits the author's draft directly.	Case-specific
Other	The feedback comment is delivered using other means.	Some online feedback systems (e.g., MyReviewers) allow the user to select community comments (e.g., wrong word) from a drop down list.

Position of feedback comment	Definition	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained)
In cover letter	The feedback comment is written as text or as an in-text comment within the author's cover letter.	Case-specific
In draft	The feedback comment is written as text or as an in-text comment within the author's draft.	Case-specific
On separate document	The feedback comment is written on a separate document to the author's draft.	Case-specific

Requested feedback comment	Definition	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained) and cover letter response in bold
Requested	The feedback comment is a response to the author's cover letter or to the instructor's prompt.	"Should precision and recall be explained (in cover letter)?" **"As you mention this in a lot of paragraphs, maybe a few words about it would be good."**
Unrequested	The feedback comment is neither a response to the author's cover letter nor to the instructor's prompt, or the author did not provide a cover letter.	"How do you define this?" (unasked for revision comment) "I will expand upon my comments in our meeting tomorrow."

The segment is also coded at the macro-level for the tone of its delivery through the inspection of toning devices (see Table 7). Tone is measured by how much doubt, coyness or certainty the reviewer expresses in the veracity of his/her comment.

Table 7. Tone of single topic within segments

Reviewer's tone	Definition	Examples in data (verbatim, mistakes retained) and toning devices in bold
Doubt	**The underlying meaning is reviewer's doubt.** This is typified by the use of shields and the absence of all other toning devices.	**"Maybe** 'in particular' instead of 'Thus.'"
Doubt and coyness	**The underlying meaning is reviewer's doubt and/or coyness.** This is typified by the use of shields in conjunction with weak approximators and/or other politeness strategies.	"I **think** you **could** elaborate **a bit** more on the motivation of the paper."
Coyness	**The underlying meaning is reviewer's coyness.** This is typified by the use of other politeness strategies and/or weak and medium approximators and the absence of shields.	"I **would** add **some** more conjunctive adverbs in the first paragraph."
Certainty	**The underlying meaning is reviewer's certainty.** This is typified by the use of emotionally-charged intensifiers and/or strong approximators and/or reviewer's conviction and the absence of shields.	"The introduction is **much easier** to read now." "**I liked** your comparison of different coefficients."
Impartial certainty	**The underlying meaning is reviewer's certainty presented as fact.** There is a complete absence of all toning devices.	All text editing operations. "Don't split text into several rows."

4. Research design

4.1. Overview

The perceived effectiveness of written feedback comments is determined by analysing the segments using two different approaches (see Figure 3).

In the first approach, the segments are sorted into class, sub-class and related contiguous comments, and examined for their dimensional traits and toning devices at the macro-level (see Tables 1–7). The different characteristics of these segments are depicted in a tabular form in the results section.

In the second approach, these same segments are rated for their 'effectiveness' by three different assessor groups: expert writing assessors, intermediate PhD assessors and novice PhD assessors. Expert assessors are deemed to be writing instructors educated to doctorate level, or who hold a relevant Master's degree and have taught L2 English academic writing courses at university level for a minimum of five years. Intermediate PhD assessors are L1 Estonian PhD assessors who have given written peer feedback regularly within an L2 English writing group for a minimum duration of three months. Novice assessors are L1 Estonian PhD students who have no, or minimal, experience in giving written feedback.
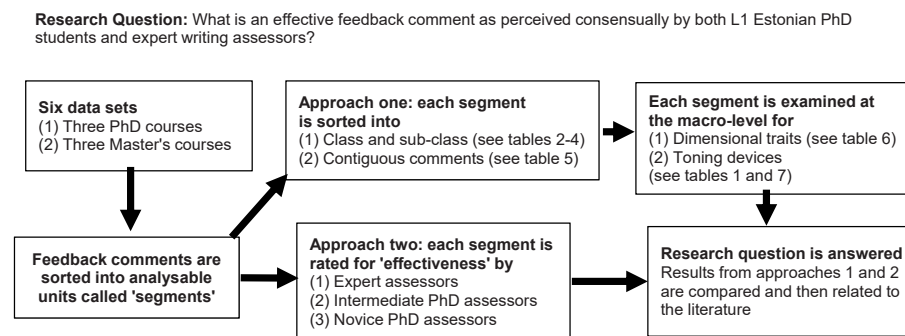
Research Question: What is an effective feedback comment as perceived consensually by both L1 Estonian PhD students and expert writing assessors?

Figure 3. Overview of research design

Next, the results of the assessors' perceived effectiveness of the segmented feedback comments (approach two) and their analysis using the coding scheme (approach one) on the same segments are combined. This is presented in the results section. Finally, the results from both approaches are examined to determine which common characteristics within the segments are consistently rated as 'effective' by the assessors. These inferences are compared to the literature in order to establish what the assessors perceive to be an effective feedback comment within this context.

4.2. Data sets and selection

Written feedback comments were obtained predominantly from native Estonian students. They participated in five different postgraduate academic writing courses conducted at one Estonian university (see Table 8).

Table 8. Attributes of the data sets used in analysis

Variables	Data sets					
Level	**Master's 1**	**Master's 2**	**Master's 3**	**PhD 1**	**PhD 2***	**PhD 3***
Discipline	Political Science	Political Science	Information Technology	Humanities	Information Technology	Humanities
System	MyReviewers	MyReviewers	MyReviewers	MsWord	MsWord	MsWord
Delivery	Writing group	Writing group	Anonymous	Writing group	Writing group	Writing group
Size	4 students	4 students	4 students	4 students	4 students	4 students
Prompt	Cover letter + prompt	Cover letter + prompt	Cover letter + prompt	Cover letter	Cover letter	Cover letter
Nationa-lity	Estonian and neigh-bouring countries	Estonian and neigh-bouring countries	Estonian and Europeans	Estonian and neigh-bouring countries	Estonian	Estonian
Rounds	Three	Two	Two	Seven	Five	Five
Length	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months	3 months
Genre	Research report	Research report	Literature review	Scientific article	Scientific article	Scientific article

* denotes that the data sets were taken from the same academic writing course.

The Master's students gave feedback within their writing groups (Political Science) or anonymously (Information Technology) using the online peer feedback system MyReviewers. They gave two or three rounds of feedback using both the author's cover letter and the instructor's prompt for assessment guidance. Their task was to write a research report (Political Science) or a literature review (Information Technology) for assessment by their course professor.

The PhD students gave feedback within their writing groups using the track changes function within MS Word over five or seven rounds of feedback. Each reviewer used only the author's cover letter for assessment guidance. The author's task was to write a scientific article for publication following loosely the IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion) structure.

From each of the six data sets, all the written feedback comments one student received from his/her other three group members over selected feedback rounds were selected for analysis. Using the Master's courses as an example, if student A's drafts were selected as the research object in a group consisting of three other participants (students B, C and D), then the feedback comments students B, C and D had given to student A in feedback rounds one, two and three (if used) were analysed. The same procedure was used for the PhD data sets, except that the comments were collected from three feedback rounds only: one from the beginning, one from the middle and one from the end of the course.

No feedback comments were discarded and this resulted in a total of 333 segments being used in this study.

4.3. Method one: application of coding scheme

The 333 segments were sorted into classes (see Table 2), sub-classes (see Tables 3, 4 and 5) and coded at the macro-level for their dimensional traits (see Table 6) and tone (see Table 7). The percentage distribution of these features within the 333 segments is presented as a table on the basis of both class and sub-class in the results section.

The coding scheme was devised by two experts with data sets not used in this study. In the current data sets, the two experts coded the feedback comments separately, and then discussed and agreed upon any differences. This ensured the accuracy of the segmentation and categorisation of the feedback comments.

4.4. Method two: assessors' rating of segments

Each of the 333 segments from the six data sets was rated using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from one (harmful) to seven (very effective) on an online survey (see Figure 4). Apart from the wording contained in the questionnaire, the assessors were given no other criteria to evaluate what an 'effective' feedback comment might entail nor were they given the opportunity to discuss their rating process with the other assessors.

* 41. Language Use and Paper Design: Also, citing is correct, but I would suggest next time, when using footnote references, put full information about cited material/URL or other source.

	Very	Somewhat		Somewhat		Very
Harmful	ineffective	ineffective	So and so	effective	Effective	Effective
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 42. Forecasting: It would be interesting to understand, what stands behind the topic "real life" practices, which, to my mind, would analysis of real action, did new regulations took place or not and how has the issue developed so far.

	Very	Somewhat		Somewhat		Very
Harmful	ineffective	ineffective	So and so	effective	Effective	Effective
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Figure 4. Excerpt from online survey

For the rating procedure, the assessors were given a written briefing in which they were asked to imagine that they were the author of the text. Next, they read the author's first draft and cover letter, and the assessment grid on the online feedback system, MyReviewers, if applicable. Then, they rated the effectiveness of each segment given by the first peer on the survey using the seven-point Likert scale. After this, and if provided, the assessors rated the feedback comments from the second peer and then from the third peer on the same author's draft. The same assessor continued this procedure on the author's subsequent drafts until all the segments had been rated. The assessors could also revise their ratings at any point throughout

the procedure to allow for the influence of the cumulative effect of the feedback comments that were presented in chronological order.

Each of the 333 segments was rated separately by six assessors, two each from the expert, intermediate PhD and novice PhD assessor groups, respectively. The expert writing assessors were based at universities in Estonia, Finland, Sweden and Germany. Every assessor rated two data sets, and the data sets were then selected to include as many different assessors from within each assessor group as was practically possible.

4.5. Method two: analysis of assessors' ratings

We analysed the Likert scale on an interval basis as this treatment is more logical for our analysis. Furthermore, to account for central tendency bias, where participants avoid answers at the extreme of the scale, we recalibrated the Likert scale to a five-point scale with equal weighting for the possible responses.

The data was examined on the basis of the unit of analysis. One unit of analysis was deemed to be the six ratings given on the effectiveness of one segmented feedback comment (hereinafter 'segment'). The highest and lowest rating values were discarded to allow for any inconsistencies or errors made by the assessors. Then, the remaining four rating values were summed and the rating score per segment was recorded (see Table 9). This resulted in a minimum rating score of four and a maximum score of 20. This procedure was followed on each of the 333 segments.

Table 9. Determination of assessors' group rating points for one segment

Original Likert scale	Weight	Revised Likert scale	Weight
Harmful	1	Ineffective or harmful	1
Very ineffective	2		
Somewhat ineffective	3	Somewhat ineffective	2
So and so (neutral)	4	So and so (neutral)	3
Somewhat effective	5	Somewhat effective	4
Effective	6	Effective	5
Very ineffective	7		
Example for calculating the rating score of one unit of analysis *(The rating by six assessors on one segmented feedback comment)*			
Assessor group responses	**Weight**	**Revised assessors' responses**	**Weight**
Assessor A	2	Assessor A (discarded)	1
Assessor B	5	Assessor B	4
Assessor C	6	Assessor C	5
Assessor D	6	Assessor D	5
Assessor E	7	Assessor E	5
Assessor F	7	Assessor F (discarded)	5
Rating score for segmented feedback comment = 19 (4 + 5 + 5 + 5) **This segment is deemed to be an effective comment.**			

The segments were placed into one of the five effectiveness categories according to their rating points, and further sub-categorised as either an effective or non-effective segment in subsequent analysis (see Table 10). Categories were always sorted downwards in the event of an even distribution of assessors' ratings at the boundary. For example, the minimum criterion for a segment to be deemed 'effective' would be three 'effective' ratings and one 'somewhat effective' rating.

Table 10. Effectiveness categories of segments

Rating Points	Effectiveness category	Sub-category
19–20	Effective segment	Effective segment
15–18	Somewhat effective segment	Non-effective segment
10–14	Neutral segment	
7–9	Somewhat ineffective segment	
4–6	Ineffective segment	

4.6. Perceived effectiveness of segments by classification and sub-classification

The coding scheme calculated the percentage distribution of the 333 segments and their related features on the basis of class and sub-class. These are the benchmark values used to compare the relative perceived effectiveness of each of these variables to their equivalent distribution in their effectiveness category. For example, the class of revision only had a distribution of 31.6% in the category of 'effective' on the basis of 56 out of 333 segments being deemed effective. Its actual percentage distribution in all segments was calculated as 38.7%. Thus, the ratio of these percentage distributions (hereinafter 'relative effectiveness coefficient') is 0.83. If the value of this coefficient is lower than one, as in this case, then this variable is comparatively less prevalent than the other variables within the same effectiveness category. If the value of this coefficient is higher than one, then it is comparatively more prevalent. Significantly high or low coefficient values highlight variables that warrant further investigation. The relative effectiveness coefficients for the classes and sub-classes, and their respective percentage distributions within each effectiveness category, are presented in a tabular form in the results section.

4.7. Perceived effectiveness of revision and non-revision comments

Revision and non-revision comments are analysed separately as two distinct groups due to their differing properties. For comparison purposes, the number of effective segments and their respective features (e.g., scope and tone) within each group are scaled up to be of the same amount as segments not rated as 'effective'. Features that are distributed significantly higher in the effective segments, as compared to the other four segments (hereinafter 'non-effective segments'), could provide indicators of desirable features in feedback comments. These features were inspected firstly by class and then by sub-class. Only classes and sub-classes that contain a sufficiently large enough number of effective segments were considered in the analysis.

5. Results

5.1. Characteristics of the segments

The 333 segments are classified according to their distribution by percentage and key figures are denoted in bold (see Table 11). The largest classes, comprising two-thirds of all segments, are revision only (38.7%) and mixed revision (27.9%). The classes of non-revision only and mixed non-revision, containing collectively a little over a quarter of all segments, are fairly evenly distributed. Segments that could not be classified (hereinafter 'other') occurred in 6% of the overall distribution. The largest sub-class is open communication (22.5%), followed by specific solution (21.9%), combination (15%), problem identification (11.1%) and general solution (10.5%). Individual sub-classes that have a low distribution (less than 10%) are represented as a combined total under the heading of 'other subclasses' (18.9%).

The vast majority of segments are text-specific with a slightly higher quantity containing global, as compared to local, effects with respect to the revision and mixed revision comments. Most comments are either positioned within the author's text or on a separate document and delivered as text within comment boxes or plain text. There are a smaller number of segments (10.8%) where the reviewer edited the author's text directly. There are slightly more segments that are not a response to the author's cover letter (56.8%) as opposed to being requested (43.2%). One-third of all segments contain an overwhelming tone of coyness, followed at 29.7% by an absence of toning devices (impartial certainty). Hedging devices are contained within 25.7% of segments (doubt, doubt and softener) and author certainty within 11.4% of segments.

5.2. Relative percentage of each segment by class

On the basis of the relative distribution of segments, mixed revision comments are perceived as the most effective feedback comments, followed by mixed non-revision comments (see Table 12). Revision comments only are perceived as slightly less effective as compared to their distribution. There are no non-revision comments only perceived as effective.

More than half of the segments are perceived as somewhat effective, followed by neutral (24%) and effective (17%). There are only rare instances of somewhat ineffective feedback comments, and virtually no instances of ineffective comments.

5.3. Perceived effectiveness of revision and non-revision comments

The distribution of effective segments within each sub-class is compared to the benchmark figure of the distribution of effective segments within their categorisation (see Table 13). This relationship is expressed as the relative effectiveness coefficient (ReC) with figures above one expressing a higher distribution of effective segments within the sub-class.

Table 11. Segment distribution (%) by class and sub-class

Features		Distribution by class (%)					Distribution by selected sub-classes (%)						Total features (%)
		Revision only	Mixed revision	Non-revision only	Mixed non-revision	Other	Problem identification	General solution	Specific solution	Combination	Open com-munication	Other sub-classes	
Distribution of 333 segments		**38.7**	**27.9**	**14.1**	**13.2**	**6.0**	**11.1**	**10.5**	**21.9**	**15.0**	**22.5**	**18.9**	**100.0**
Contiguous comments	Mitigation	0.0	13.5	0.0	1.5	0.9	3.9	1.8	2.4	4.2	1.5	2.1	**15.9**
	Justified	0.0	17.7	0.0	10.5	0.3	3.0	4.5	3.3	5.1	10.5	2.1	**28.5**
	Summary	0.0	5.4	0.0	1.8	0.3	1.2	0.9	0.6	2.7	1.8	0.3	**7.5**
Scope	Generic	1.2	0.6	1.5	0.3	0.6	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.6	**4.2**
	Text specific	37.5	27.3	12.6	12.9	5.4	9.3	10.5	21.9	15.0	20.7	18.3	**95.8**
Effect	Global	15.3	18.3	0.0	0.0	4.5	4.8	7.2	5.7	11.1	0.0	9.3	**38.1**
	Local	23.4	9.6	0.0	0.0	1.5	6.3	3.3	16.2	3.9	0.0	4.8	**34.5**
	Not applicable	0.0	0.0	14.1	13.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.5	4.8	**27.3**
Position	In cover letter	3.3	2.4	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.6	3.6	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.6	**6.9**
	On separate document	6.9	13.8	9.3	10.8	5.4	6.6	3.3	2.4	7.2	18.9	7.8	**46.2**
	Text	28.5	11.7	4.5	2.1	0.0	3.9	3.6	18.9	6.9	3.0	10.5	**46.8**
Delivery	As comment box	20.7	13.2	4.5	1.8	0.6	4.5	7.2	8.4	6.9	3.0	10.8	**40.8**
	Other	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	**1.2**
	As text	6.0	14.7	9.6	11.4	5.4	5.4	3.3	2.7	8.1	19.5	8.1	**47.1**
	Text edit	10.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	**10.8**
Cover letter request	No	23.4	6.9	12.0	10.2	4.2	6.0	3.0	12.6	4.5	17.7	12.9	**56.8**
	Yes	15.3	21.0	2.1	3.0	1.8	5.1	7.5	9.3	10.5	4.8	6.0	**43.2**
Tone	Doubt	1.8	1.5	0.0	1.8	4.2	1.5	0.6	0.3	0.9	1.8	4.2	**9.3**
	Doubt and softener	4.8	7.8	0.9	2.1	0.6	1.2	4.8	1.5	4.8	3.0	0.9	**16.2**
	Softener	14.4	14.1	3.3	1.5	0.0	2.4	3.6	8.1	6.9	1.8	10.5	**33.3**
	Certainty	1.2	3.6	3.9	2.7	0.0	2.1	0.6	0.0	1.8	4.8	2.1	**11.4**
	Impartial certainty	16.5	0.9	6.0	5.1	1.2	3.9	0.9	12.0	0.6	11.1	1.2	**29.7**

Table 12. Relative effectiveness of segments by class and type

		Effectiveness category								
Comment class	**All segments**	**Effective**		**Somewhat effective**		**Neutral**		**Somewhat ineffective**		**Inef-fective**
	Distribution (%)	**Distn (%)**	**Coeff**	**Distn (%)**	**Coeff**	**Distn (%)**	**Coeff**	**Distn (%)**	**Coeff**	**Distn (%)**
Revision only	**38.74**	**5.41**	**0.82**	24.02	1.11	8.11	0.87	1.20	1.15	0
Mixed revision	**27.93**	**8.41**	**1.76**	12.91	0.83	5.71	0.85	0.60	0.80	0.3
Non revision only	**14.11**	**0**	**0**	7.51	0.95	6.01	1.77	0.60	1.57	0
Mixed non-revision	**13.21**	**2.40**	**1.06**	8.11	1.10	2.70	0.85	0	∞	0
Other	**6.01**	**0.90**	**0.88**	3.30	0.98	1.50	1.04	0.30	∞	0
Total distribution	**100%**	**17.10%**		**55.90%**		**24%**		**2.70%**		**0.30%**
Comment type	**Distribution (%)**	**Distn (%)**	**Coeff**	**Distn (%)**	**Coeff**	**Distn (%)**	**Coeff**	**Distn (%)**	**Coeff**	**Distn (%)**
All revision comments	**66.67**	**13.81**	**1.21**	36.94	0.99	13.81	0.86	1.80	1	0.3
All non-revision comments	**27.33**	**2.40**	**0.51**	15.62	1.02	8.71	1.33	0.60	0.81	0
Other	**6.01**	**0.90**	**0.88**	3.30	0.98	1.50	1.04	0.30	∞	0
Total distribution	**100%**	**17.10%**		**55.90%**		**24%**		**2.70%**		**0.30%**

Distn = Distribution; Coeff = Relative effectiveness coefficient

Table 13. Perceived effectiveness of segments

Classes and sub-classes selected for further investigation					
Revision comments	**Revision comments**	**Effective (n)**	**Non-effective (n)**	**RC coefficient**	**Scaling factor**
Class	All revision comments	46	176	1.00	3.83
Sub-class	General solution	11	24	1.75	2.18
Sub-class	Combination	17	33	1.97	1.94
Non-revision comments	**Non-revision comments**	**Effective (n)**	**Non-effective (n)**	**NC coefficient**	**Scaling factor**
Class	Mixed non-revision comments	8	83	1.00	10.38
Classes and sub-classes not selected for further investigation					
Revision comments	**Revision comments**	**Effective (n)**	**Non-effective (n)**	**RC coefficient**	**Scaling factor**
Sub-class	Problem identification	3	34	0.34	not applicable
Sub-class	Specific solution	14	59	0.91	not applicable
Sub-class	Question	1	26	0.15	not applicable
Non-revision comments	**Non-revision comments**	**Effective (n)**	**Non-effective (n)**	**NC coefficient**	**Scaling factor**
Class	Non-revision only	0	47	not calculable	not calculable
Sub-class	Emotive	0	4	not calculable	not applicable
Sub-class	Group cohesion	0	12	not calculable	not calculable

Effective = number of segments rated as effective
Non-effective = number of segments not rated as effective (i.e., segments rated as somewhat effective, neutral, somewhat ineffective or ineffective)
RC coefficient = relative effectiveness coefficient based on the number of all segmented revision comments
NC coefficient = relative effectiveness coefficient based on the number of all segmented non-revision comments
Scaling factor = the factor by which all effective segments, and their respective characteristics, are increased by for comparison with non-effective segments

Concerning revision comments, the sub-classes of general solution (ReC of 1.75) and combination (ReC of 1.97) have a much higher relative percentage of segments rated as effective than the sub-classes of problem identification, specific solution offered and question. Overall, the most effective segments are in the sub-classes of combination (17 instances), specific solution (14 instances) and general solution (11 instances). There are only a few effective segments in the sub-classes of problem identification and question.

For non-revision comments, there are eight effective segments within the sub-class of open communication. There are no effective segments within the sub-classes of affective and group cohesion (e.g., use of vocatives).

5.4. Perceived effectiveness of selected groups

The relative distribution between the features within effective segments and the same features within the segments not rated as effective (non-effective segments) in each selected group is denoted in digits (see Table 14). Cells containing digits higher than one or marked with the word 'all' or 'infinity' denote a higher distribution in the effective segment and vice-versa for cells containing digits lower than one or marked with the word 'none'. Cells containing the words 'incomparable' or 'not applicable' apply to the features that cannot be compared. Unusually high or low distributions are highlighted in bold.

Table 14. Perceived relative effectiveness of selected classes and sub-classes

Features	Dimensional traits or tone (coded at the macro-level)	Class	Sub-class	Sub-class	Class	Sub-class
		All revision comments	General solution	Combination	Mixed non-revision	Open communication
Contiguous comments	Mitigation	**1.7**	1.1	**3.5**	**2.6**	**2.1**
	Justification	**1.8**	**0.8**	1.4	**3.1**	**2.5**
	Summary	**6.0**	***infinity**	3.9	*incomparable	*incomparable
Scope	Generic	*none	*incomparable	*incomparable	*none	*none
	Text-specific	***all**	*incomparable	*incomparable	***all**	***all**
Effect	Global	**1.8**	**1.8**	1.2	*not applicable	*not applicable
	Local	0.4	*none	0.6	*not applicable	*not applicable
Position	In cover letter	**2.8**	**2.2**	**1.0**	*incomparable	*incomparable
	On separate document	1.3	**0.5**	1.4	1.2	1.0
	In draft	0.7	**0.7**	0.7	**0.5**	0.9
Delivery	As comment box	1.0	1.3	0.7	**0.5**	0.9
	As text	1.4	**0.5**	1.3	1.2	1.0
	Text editing	**0.5**	*not applicable	*not applicable	*not applicable	*not applicable
Cover letter request	Unrequested	**0.3**	0.2	0.7	**1.1**	1.1
	Requested	**1.8**	**1.5**	1.1	**0.6**	0.6

Table header top row: "Digits below represent the relative distribution of effective segments as compared to non-effective segments"

Tone	Doubt	1.4	**2.2**	***none**	**10.4**	**8.4**
	Doubt and coyness	**2.1**	**1.7**	**1.5**	1.2	0.9
	Coyness	1.1	0.7	1.0	0.7	**1.7**
	Certainty	**0.5**	***none**	1.0	**0.5**	**0.6**
	Impartial certainty	**0.4**	***none**	***none**	**0.6**	**0.5**
Number of segments rated 'effective' out of the total number of segments		46 out of 222	11 out of 35	17 out of 50	8 out of 91	8 out of 75

Key
*all = this feature is present in all effective segments, but it is not present in any non-effective segments
*incomparable = this feature cannot be compared between effective and non-effective segments
*infinity = this feature is only present in effective segments
*not applicable = this feature does not apply
*none = this feature is not present in effective segments, but it is present in one or more non-effective segments
*no sample = this feature is neither present in effective nor in non-effective segments

Overall, only the segments for both revision and non-revision comments that are text-specific were rated as effective feedback comments. Furthermore, revision comments have a higher relative quantity of contiguous comments (e.g., mitigation) in the effective segments. They contain more global and, conversely, fewer local comments as compared to the non-effective segments. There are comparatively more effective segments positioned directly in the author's cover letter or on a separate document and fewer segments written in the author's text. There is no discernible difference between effective and non-effective segments when the delivery is attained through a comment box. Effective segments are comparatively more frequently written as text, with text editing operations occurring less frequently. A higher proportion of effective segments address the author's cover letter, whereas a larger relative distribution of non-effective segments is unrequested. Regarding the tone of feedback comments, effective segments contain more hedging devices (doubt, doubt and coyness) and less author certainty than non-effective segments. Non-effective segments, however, are delivered with more author or impartial certainty. Both categories of segments use a similar proportion of softening devices. Differences between this general trend for the sub-classes of general solution and combination are detailed below.

The sub-class of general solution has a relatively lower amount of justification in the effective segments. There are fewer effective comments written on a separate document and delivered as text. Concerning the sub-class of combination, there are relatively fewer effective comments written as comment boxes. There is also no difference between the distribution of effective and non-effective comments written in the author's cover letter. Text-editing operations do not apply to either of these sub-classes.

For non-revision comments, the class of mixed non-revision comment and the sub-class of open communication follow a similar trend. There are higher relative quantities of mitigation and justification in the effective segments than in the non-effective segments. There are no contiguous comments of summarisation, nor are there comments written directly in the cover letter. There is a slightly higher relative distribution of effective comments positioned in a separate document than written directly in the author's text. Concerning the delivery, there are proportionally

fewer effective comments contained in comment boxes and slightly more written as text. Text editing operations do not apply to non-revision comments. In contrast to revision comments, there are relatively fewer effective segments that are a response to the author's cover letter. Comparatively, the effective segments contain a much larger quantity of hedging devices (doubt, doubt and coyness) whereas the non-effective segments contain more softeners (coyness) and are presented with certainty. However, this distribution of toning devices is different in the sub-category of open communication. The effective segments in this sub-category contain a higher proportion of softening devices (coyness) as compared to non-effective segments.

6. Discussion

This section discusses the results from the two approaches that were used to determine common features of effective postgraduate written feedback comments in response to the research question:

> What is an effective feedback comment as perceived consensually by both L1 Estonian PhD students and expert writing assessors?

For the purpose of this discussion, a desirable class, sub-class or feature of a feedback comment is deduced when the relative effectiveness coefficient of the comparable classes is over 1.2 (see Table 14). This value represents a significantly higher distribution of this characteristic within the segmented feedback comments rated as effective as opposed to those rated as non-effective.

From the amalgamation of the results, revision comments are perceived to be more effective than non-revision comments. This is as expected because without revision comments the peer feedback process would be ineffective. However, non-revision comments comprise over a quarter of all the segments and are clearly valued by the postgraduates giving feedback within their writing groups. Concerning these comments, the assessors consistently rated justified non-revision comments, mainly praise, as effective comments. This is in line with other researchers' findings into the positive impact of non-revision comments (Cho et al. 2006, Lee 2008). In addition, and as pointed out by Roger M. A. Yallop (2016), non-revision comments may also have an important function in the peer feedback process, in conjunction with revision comments, in helping to build trust and confidence within the writing groups.

The assessors perceived effective revision comments to be text-specific and their effect to be global as well as often containing contiguous comments of summarisation. This is in accordance with the findings cited in the literature review (Liu, Sadler 2003, Nelson, Schunn 2009, Leijen 2017). In contrast to previous findings (i.e., Hyland, Hyland 2001, Nelson, Schunn 2009), the assessors also deemed revision comments containing mitigation and justification as effective.

The results suggest that the cover letter may also play a prominent role in the impact of revision comments on the feedback process. The assessors consistently rated revision comments that answer the author's written request for advice as well as comments being placed directly in the author's cover letter as effective. The cover letter is an important means for the author to convey to the reviewer which aspects of his/her text to comment on. Without it, the reviewer can only speculate

on what critical comments the author expects. The significance of the position and delivery of the feedback comments for non-revision comments is, however, unclear from this analysis.

Another interesting finding is that effective revision and non-revision comments both contain a significant amount of hedging and softening devices. This suggests that the way in which the comment is written may impact on how the feedback is interpreted by the author. Moreover, the significance of the tone of feedback comments may be more important in writing groups where the members know each other, as opposed to feedback given anonymously. In this context, the results suggest that effective feedback comments should, on the whole, be presented indirectly with coyness and/or uncertainty.

To summarise, the assessors tended to perceive an effective revision comment as one that is text-specific, global, requested by the author and is presented with doubt and coyness within the author's cover letter (see Table 15). Furthermore, an effective revision comment is likely to offer a general solution and contain contiguous comments of mitigation and/or justification and/or summarisation. Similarly, the assessors perceived an effective non-revision comment to be text-specific and justified within the sub-class of open communication (e.g., praise). Furthermore, an effective non-revision comment is often presented with author doubt and contains contiguous comments of mitigation.

Table 15. Perceived desirable traits of written feedback comments

Class, sub-class, feature or tone	Comparable class(es)	Desirable class, sub-class, feature or tone
Class	Revision and non-revision	Revision comment
Sub-class	Revision	Combination
		General solution
	Non-revision	Open communication
Contiguous comments	Revision and non-revision	Mitigation
	Revision	Summarisation
	Revision and non-revision	Justification
Scope	Revision and non-revision	Text-specific
Effect	Revision	Global
Position	Revision	In cover letter
	Non-revision comment	Unclear
Delivery	Revision and non-revision	Unclear
Cover letter request	Revision	Requested
	Non-revision	Unclear
Tone	Revision	Doubt and coyness (hedging and softening devices)
	Non-revision	Doubt (hedging devices)
The desirable class, sub-class, feature or tone is deduced when the relative effectiveness coefficient of the comparable classes is above 1.2.		

7. Conclusion

This study has examined the perceived effectiveness of written peer feedback comments from the combined perspectives of L1 Estonian PhD students and expert writing assessors located in Estonia, Finland, Sweden and Germany. The findings should help researchers and writing instructors incorporate a more principled pedagogy into their academic writing courses that employ similar practices within comparable contexts. Future studies should concentrate on further developing the understanding of what constitutes effective written feedback. There are two areas identified in the discussion section that have previously been under-investigated. Firstly, the study suggests that a draft containing a cover letter is more likely to generate more effective revision comments than one that does not. Secondly, the assessors rated feedback comments that contain hedging and/or softening devices as being more effective than feedback comments presented with author or impartial certainty. Thus, the impact of both cover letters and the tone of feedback comments on the effectiveness of peer feedback comments warrants further investigation. This could be examined from the perspective of writing instructors and L1 PhD students separately by incorporating this methodology into a larger-scale replication study.

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TAGASISIDEKOMMENTAARIDE TAJUTUD EFEKTIIVSUS INGLISE KEELES KUI TEISES KEELES TEADUSARTIKLITE KIRJUTAMISE KURSUSEL

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Oleme ühes Eesti ülikoolis välja töötanud kursuse, mille eesmärk on arendada doktorantide kirjalikku väljendusoskust ning toetada neid teadusartiklite kirjutamisel inglise keeles kui teises keeles.

Kursus on korraldatud nii, et üliõpilased on jagatud väikestesse erialapõhistesse kirjutamisrühmadesse, mille liikmed annavad ja saavad regulaarselt oma artikli mustanditele tagasisidet. Teadmised selle kohta, millised tagasisidekommentaarid on efektiivsed, aitaksid praeguseid õpetamismeetodeid parendada. Käesolevas uurimuses esitatakse kodeerimisskeem, mille abil mõõta parandussoovitustega ja parandussoovitusteta tagasisidekommentaaride mõju kaasõppijate vastastikuse tagasisidestamise protsessis. Parandamissoovitusega kommentaar (nt "sissejuhatus on liiga lühike") suunab autorit oma teksti muutma. Parandamissoovituseta kommentaar (nt "väga hea pealkiri!") ei suuna autorit teksti muutma ja on olemuselt pigem afektiivne. Kõnealuse kodeerimisskeemiga paralleelselt kasutame küsimustikke, millega uurida, kuidas tajuvad doktorantide vastastikuse tagasisidekommentaaride efektiivsust eesti keelt emakeelena kõnelevad doktorandid ning Eesti, Soome, Rootsi ja Saksamaa ülikoolide kirjutamiseksperdid.

Tulemused näitavad, et vaadeldud faktoritest mõjutavad vastastikuse tagasiside protsessi kaaskirja olemasolu ja tagasisidekommentaari toon.

Uuringu tulemused võimaldavad teadlastel ja praktikutel, kes õpetavad võrreldavas kontekstis sarnasel metoodikal põhinevaid kursusi, võtta kasutusele täpsemad, uurimistulemustel põhinevad õpetamismeetodid.

Märksõnad: keeleõpe, kirjutamisoskuse arendamine, inglise keel võõrkeelena, inglise keel teise keelena, eesti keel emakeelena, parandussoovitustega kommentaarid, parandussoovitusteta kommentaarid, pehmendamine, doktorandid, kaaskiri, kirjutamisrühmad, kaasõppija tagasiside