

Dosing Criticism with Praise: E-Feedback in L2 Student Writing

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Abstract

The current study deals with e-feedback delivered to the students in higher education during COVID19 pandemic. The data comes from e-feedback delivered to the students in a departmental compulsory course at the department of English language in a state university. Data analysis is conducted in two stages. First, the e-feedbacks classified into three categories regarding the feedback moves by Hyland and Hyland (2012). In the second stage, the categories coded by the two researchers were transferred to SPSS, with the aim of finding out the frequently employed speech act employed by the instructor while giving e-feedback to students. In addition, chi-square test was also conducted to see whether there are significant differences in speech act groups according to the level of success in the study. The findings indicated that the instructor prefers to give e-feedback to unsuccessful students than successful ones using different groups of speech acts such as praise and criticism. Another finding of the study shows that criticism and praise were the most frequently used feedback patterns in our data while suggestion and other feedback acts did not occur frequently. Overall, the study shows the importance of instructor-based e-feedback for academic writing.

Keywords: e-Feedback, Criticism, Praise, Advice, Feedback Moves.

Öz

Bu çalışma, COVID19 salgını sırasında üniversite öğrencilerine verilen e-dönütü (geribildirim) ele almaktadır. Veriler, bir kamu üniversitesinin İngilizce dil bölümünde bölümün zorunlu dersi olarak yürütülen dersin öğrencilerine ders eğitmeni tarafından gönderilen e-dönütlerden (e-geribildirimlerden) oluşmaktadır. İlk aşama, söz eylemler (eleştiri, öğüt ve övgü gibi) Hyland ve Hyland'ın (2012) dönüt (geribildirim) gruplarına göre sınıflandırılacaktır. İkinci aşamada ise iki araştırmacı tarafından kodlanan kategoriler SPSS'e aktararak ders eğitmeninin dönüt verirken hangi söz eylemi daha çok tercih ettiğini bulmayı hedefleyecektir. Araştırma sonucunda veriler arasında eleştiri ve övgü en sık kullanılan geri bildirim kalıbı olurken, öneri söz eylemi sıklıkla kullanılmamıştır. Çalışmada ayrıca söz eylem gruplarının başarı oranlarına göre farklılıklarının anlamlı olup olmadığına bakılmak için Ki-Kare testi yapılmıştır. Bu analiz sonucunda ders sorumlusunun başarılı öğrenciler yerine başarısız öğrencilere farklı gruptaki söz eylemlerle dönüt verdiği görülmektedir. Araştırma sonuçları veriler arasında eleştiri ve övgünün en sık kullanılan dönüt (geribildirim) kalıbı olduğunu gösterirken, öneri söz eyleminin ise sıklıkla kullanılmadığını göstermektedir. Genel anlamda, çalışma, ders sorumlusu temelli geribildirim akademik yazım açısından önemini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: e-Dönüt (e-Geribildirim), Eleştiri, Övgü, Öğüt, Geribildirim (Dönüt) Adımları.

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Introduction

The recognition of the importance of academic writing in opening gates for admission to universities and gaining success in higher education depends mostly on success in writing in English (Hyland 2013; Altınmakas & Bayyurt 2019). Academic writing becomes an inevitable and pedagogical part of teaching EAP (English for Academic Purposes) regarding the genre, discourse and style (Akbayır, 2010; Aktaş & Gündüz, 2007; Kavcar, Oğuzkağan & Aksoy, 2004). Therefore, the development of student writing becomes an essential and ultimate goal for the L2 instructors. More guidance for the learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) to convey their message in a coherent, organized and explanatory way is a necessity and these learners expect more guidance from the language teachers (Berkant, Derer & Derer, 2020; Brown, 2000). It is obvious that teaching writing skills is one of the most challenging parts for the language teachers as it requires rhetoric, communication and critical thinking. Thus, proficiency in writing is not an easy task and academic writing is an inevitable part of teaching English for academic purposes in the EFL setting at the tertiary level. The students are expected to be able to use the language professionally and academically in addition to general language competence. In academic writing, essays have a crucial role to provide the students' transition from basic forms to more professional way of writing. In the context of EFL effective academic writing is a challenging task for the students because the written discourse cannot solely be acquired unconsciously.

Feedback in language education refers to informing the students about whether they have behaved in accordance with the aims of education and/or whether they have attained the target behaviors (Berkant et al. 2020). This definition senses the teacher's feedback to students' writing though there are studies on peer feedback (Abri, 2021; Corbin, 2019). Feedback is also an important tool for language teachers to make the students write effectively. In the literature there are two types of feedback identified: positive and negative.

Positive feedback is used to affirm the students' path followed and to encourage them to go on with their study while negative feedback guides them to the correct path (Aloud, 2022; Nunan, 1999). In the literature, for teaching writing skills, written corrective feedback is also defined as a tool for language teachers to guide their students accurately and effectively in the target language (Aloud, 2022; Corbin, 2019; Ferris, 2010). However, feedback in essay writing is not bounded to the structural aspects of the language but also content and organization should be regarded in the development (Kencana, 2020; Ferris, 2010).

It was in 1980s and early 1990s that the effects of teacher feedback started to be questioned (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). In most of the studies carried out in L2 writing, providing feedback seemed to assess errors rather than the quality of writing (Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1995, 1997; Lalende, 1982; Cohen, 1987; Truscott, 1996, 1999). The task of the L2 instructor is to consider the background of the student, his/her needs, preferences and even the relation he/she has with the student to provide an effective feedback (Ferris et. al. 1997; Hyland, F. 1998, 2003). Thus, providing feedback is offering advice to students on how to gain better skills in academic writing and has been enormously important in the foreign language writing process to encourage and strengthen learning skills of the students. However, teacher feedback emerging as a pedagogical advice genre encompasses comments of praise, advice and criticism as well. Feedback production does not simply focus on grammar or content but there can be several commenting strategies (i.e. praising, criticizing, advising) as well when teachers respond to texts produced by students (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, 2012). In addition, teacher is interacting personally with the students when giving feedback. This causes them to feel more motivated and encouraged to write more when they receive positive guided feedback. Nevertheless, correcting all the mistakes in writing is not helpful for them (Corbin, 2019; Kencana, 2020).

In addition, Hyland and Hyland's (2012) study showed the metadiscursive aspects of teacher's

feedback writing. The feedback moves in that study were formed from praise, criticism and advice. Feedback seen as a form of advice is realized positively and the teachers were trying to give advice in a balanced manner while at the same time they were focusing on both the positive and negative aspects of the student's writing. In that study, praise was the most frequently employed act as a reflection of positive feedback followed by criticism while suggestion was the least frequently used feedback act. When the teachers were using criticism, they were mitigating the force of the speech act by hedges such as modal lexical items, imprecise quantifiers (i.e. fairly, a bit, somewhat, really) and modals (i.e. should, could) and *usuality* devices (i.e. often, sometimes). In another study, Hyland and Hyland (2001) examined written feedback delivered to the students of English as a second language (ESL). While they state that criticisms and suggestions were mitigated through hedges with the aim of enhancing teacher student interaction, they also point to the fact that hedges could cause incomprehension and miscommunication with the undergraduate students as well.

In Turkish foreign language education context, the teacher feedback is the most preferable (Demirel & Enginarlar 2016) though the teacher feedback is scarcely given and when given, it concentrates on grammar and vocabulary rather than content, fluency or organization of ideas. According to the results of a study conducted by Altınmakas and Bayyurt (2019), students who received feedback from teachers thought that teachers did not understand the intended meaning of the essays they have written. Another significant issue was the lack of consensus between the teacher and the student. Concerning the problems arising from feedback, it is possible that feedback delivering can be related to the feelings of the students. Therefore, the task of the instructor becomes harder considered from this perspective. The teacher must make effort for the student to receive his message about the feedback he has formulated. What is more, feedback could trigger the anxiety of the student. Furthermore, Bayrakçı (2009) indicated that teacher education programs in Turkey lacks in provision of feedback.

As an effective part of the learning system with the emergence of distance education, e-feedback (electronic feedback) delivering became more important than ever in higher education in a student's academic life during COVID-19. As a result of this, teachers who were aware about the rules of establishing face to face communication orally, started faceless communication (Simmons, 1994; Harb, 2016; Harb, 2020) via different online platforms. E-feedback was used effectively to communicate properly in a digitalized world (Akbulut, 2020). Considering the benefits of e-feedback such as reduction in paper work, Tuzi (2004) argues that e-feedback could be more useful than oral feedback. However, Abri (2021) found out that accuracy was more emphasized in the comments than content and organization. Despite the ease of communication, that medium of communication has its shortcomings. There can be face threatening acts in such faceless contexts (Simmons, 1994). When trying to establish faceless contact, one should be aware that one could be misunderstood or could produce vague feedback which is not understood properly by the student. Recognizing the importance of face, Hyland (2013) advises teachers to form interaction through conferencing with students.

In the EFL context, the students have numerous books and articles to facilitate their writing process; however, providing them with relevant feedback to consider their own development in writing is very limited. This is a strong need for EFL students at tertiary level. Taking these into account, this study aims to identify feedback act patterns online to present a detailed analysis of the types and frequencies of feedback acts in COVID-19 period and to evaluate the pragmatic functions of feedback patterns in EFL writing.

This study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are the feedback moves patterns used by the L2 instructor in the e-feedback in the online learning environment in COVID-19?
- 2) Does the mitigation as a strategy differ according to success level of the students in COVID-19?
- 3) Do the pairs in feedbacks differ according to the success level of the students in COVID 19?

Method

This study aims at examining the instructor's e-feedbacks on academic essays written by the freshmen students in a language department. The instructor was supposed to give e-feedbacks on the argumentative essays through the platform of "Google Classroom" during COVID-19. These e-feedbacks were the data for this study. The data was analyzed by the researchers according to the pedagogic purpose of praise, criticism, or suggestion corresponding to three broad speech acts as compliments, criticisms and advice (Hyland & Hyland,2012).

Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

The e-feedbacks given by the instructor to the argumentative essays belonging to 98 freshmen were examined to identify *praise*, *criticism* and *suggestion*. They all were written from 2020 to 2022, i.e during COVID-19. These essays were submitted to the instructor via the "Google Classroom" platform when the classes had to be fully online in those times. These essays were the compulsory assignments of the departmental compulsory course in a department of English language in a state university. The students took 10% of the total grade from this assignment in the course.

The writers of these essays were freshmen students attending in a language department in the university. They all passed the proficiency test administered by a language school affiliated to the university. The students were all Turkish so their native tongue was Turkish but English was their foreign language. They were aged from 17 to 20. From the beginning of the academic year, these students were exposed to academic writing skills as a part of the course. Before the argumentative essay, they were instructed on academic paragraph writing, parts of an essay and four different essays as cause-effect, classification, compare-and-contrast. The topics for all types of writing were assigned by the instructor based on the themes of the units delivered in the instruction. The argumentative essay was assigned as the last

assignment since the students were thought to be ready to write the well-organized, coherent and unified essays. For the argumentative essays two topics were assigned as below:

- "Art, music, and physical education courses are not necessary in the school curriculum." Do you agree or disagree?
- "Children under 15 should not have any social website account." Do you agree or disagree?

These essays were evaluated by the course instructor and they were assigned a score out of 10.

The instructor of this course gave individual e-feedback to all the writings administered to the students. The e-feedbacks were given through the same platform as "Google Classroom". The students and the instructor interacted through this platform and the students were supposed to revise their writings after they got their related e-feedback. These focused on the content, organization and language use. Specifically, for the organization of the essay, the feedback was given considering three main patterns in the content of writing an argumentative essay in the course syllabus. In terms of the content, how the topic was employed was delivered, what the supports and details were used to explain the topic sentence and how unity and coherence were established. In addition, the students were delivered e-feedback on language use such as grammar and the choice of the lexis. The data for this study were based on these e-feedbacks administered to the students by the instructor herself. Regarding the ethical issues in the study, there was no concern based on three reasons: Firstly, the study did not collect data from students because the e-feedbacks were the statements by the instructors. In addition, the study makes a textual analysis on the instructor's own e-feedback as data. Lastly, the e-feedbacks were not person-identifiable.

All the feedback comments given by the instructor were gathered in a document. They all were identified and coded according to the pedagogic purpose of praise, criticism, and advice or suggestion (Hyland & Hyland,2012). For this coding process, the researchers examined the key expressions such as "I suggest" "Well-done!" and

“However, ...should” in order to identify suggestion, criticism and praise. Also, the frequency for the categories was calculated and then these data were analyzed via SPSS. Moreover, the paired feedback categories were also identified as praise-criticism, praise-criticism and criticism-suggestion while transferring to SPSS.

Data Analysis

In this study, the data analysis conducted according to the research questions. For the first research question “What are the feedback moves patterns used by the L2 instructor in the e-feedback in the online learning environment in COVID-19?”, the e-feedbacks were examined regarding the feedback moves based on Hyland and Hyland’s definition (2012) as advice, suggestion, praise, and criticism. These can be explained as below:

- *Advice* refers to making general or specific suggestions like “You might want to include an example here.” (Tuzi, 2004, p. 225)
- *Praise* is an act which attributes credit to another for some characteristic, attribute, skill positively valued by the writer (Holmes 1995). As an example for this feedback “This is an excellent beginning to your essay!”
- *Criticism* is defined as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction or negative comment’ on a text (Hyland, 2004, p.44). An example for criticism is ‘Your first sentences don’t fit the rest of the paragraph at all.’ (Tuzi, 2004, p. 225)
- *Suggestion* differs from criticism in involving an explicit recommendation for remediation, a relatively clear and accomplishable action for improvement and embodying advice deemed to benefit the recipient. As an example for suggestion “You might want to include an example here.” (Tuzi, 2004, p.225)

For the analysis, *advice* and *suggestion* are grouped together as their frequency is so low that the statistical analysis could not be conducted. Also, in the nature of the data, *advice* and *suggestion* do not differ much. All the expressions in the feedbacks are transferred into SPSS and the findings are presented and discussed in Table 1 and Table 2 in the next section.

For both the second and the third research question, Chi-Square Test was conducted to find out the differences. The alpha level is 0.05. The second question focuses on whether the mitigation as a strategy differ according to the success level of the students while the third question concerns whether the pairs in the feedbacks differ according to the success level of the students. The findings are presented and discussed in Table 3 and Table 4 in the next section.

Findings and Discussion

The Findings for The First Research Question

Regarding the first research question “What are the feedback moves used by the L2 instructor in student feedback in online communication?”, the distribution of feedback moves is identified. Considering three main feedback moves (n=330), *praise* is 35%, *criticism* is 53% and *advice* or *suggestion* is 7% in the total number. (Table 1). *Praise* and *criticism* make up approximately 95% of the total feedback moves, while remaining %5 consists of other feedback moves (i.e. suggestion, illocutionary act, personal contact, alternatives, statement, questions, requests, quick fixes).

Table 1. Distribution of feedback categories

Feedback moves	Frequency	Percentage
Criticism	173	53
Praise	109	35
Advice/Suggestion	23	7
Others	25	5
Total	330	100

According to Table 1, among the feedback moves criticisms were the most frequently used forms. They formed 53% (n=173) of the data. The finding contradicts the study by Hyland and Hyland (2012) since teachers in that study thought that criticism could be detrimental to face, they preferred to use praise in forming positive feedback to their students. In a study conducted by Tuzi (2004) the ratio of advice, alternatives and criticisms are equally employed both by L2 writers and instructors. Despite the difficulty of criticizing, the instructor employed criticism in COVID19 period as a reflection of directness and being precise.

In the data, the second most frequently used feedback is *praise*. It formed 35.0 % (n=109) of the data. This finding contradicts with the study conducted by Connors and Lunsford (1993). Their findings show that positive acts like praise is not frequent in the feedback contexts; however, *praise* is extensively used in feedback contexts (Bates, Lane, & Lange, 1993; Hyland & Hyland 2001, 2012) as a reflection of the approval. Considering the studies in education, *praise* is regarded as a positive feedback to empower the students' motivation for writing. According to Corbin (2019) and Ferris (2010), the instructor's positive feedbacks arise their enthusiasm for writing in the target language. In Tuzi's study (2005), *praise* was the second frequently used component by L2 writers but it was the fourth frequently used component by the instructors which may mean that L2 writers were easily using praise to other students, while the instructors were not that at ease in engaging with students through praise forms.

The third component *suggestion* is the least frequent one in this study. It formed 5 % (n=25) of the data. This can be due to the cultural context in which the teachers do not think advice or suggestion could guide the students to write better in Turkish educational contexts. Moreover, Bayraktaroğlu (2001, p. 205) stated that in Turkish language advice giving is suitable among friends who are intimate; therefore, this is not relevant to the scope of the study since there is a hierarchical distance between the teacher and the students, advice is scarcely preferred in this type of the context. This finding is also consistent with the findings of the study by Hyland and Hyland (2012). According to them, while praise and criticism are *expressives* that state positive feelings and emotions, suggestions are directives that are directing the recipient to do something. Therefore, praise and criticism seem to be less intruding than suggestion or advice. Thus, in this study, the L2 instructor does not prefer to direct the university students to take some actions. In addition, since advice or suggestion refers to some future action (Locher 2013, House & Kadar, 2021), the L2 instructor solely evaluates the written essays and delivers feedback to students to improve their

writing skills. The example e-feedback in this category can be as follows:

Dear X,

This **is not** an argumentative essay. It **does not have** counterargument (s)and refitting them. This **is** an essay explaining the reasons behind supporting these courses. Also, the supports and details for the pro-arguments are **weak**.

The example e-feedback above is formed from *criticism* acts only. The L2 instructor criticizes the student directly by using negative forms such as 'This is not', 'it does not have' which state that the essay is not an argumentative one. She goes on further to say that there is something wrong in the essay supporting her claims. In addition to these, the instructor strengthens her ideas by adding the adjective 'weak' with an emoji that is not smiling to the students face so that the student can understand why the essay is a low rated one.

An example of *praise* act from the data is as the following:

Dear X, This is really **great!** You have **improved** your writing **a lot**.

In this example, the teacher praises the student's writing by the positive words such as great, improve, a lot and uses emoji to contact with the student even visually. When the instructor only uses praise to the student, this means that everything related to writing is all right and the essay is a high rated one. By doing so, she shows that she approves their composition and the way they write their composition. In the other example below, the instructor gives advice to the student with advice form 'I suggest'.

I suggest you study the document on the argumentative essay in the platform (the institutional system in the university).

In this study, mitigation, as a strategy to give e-feedback to the students, was identified in 75 feedback comments (Table 2). The e-feedbacks start with the positive aspects of the student essays but are followed by the negative aspects of them which seem to appear in feedback pairs. In terms of the pairs, criticisms were stated in the e-feedbacks just after the praise. Another example of *praise* combined with *criticism* from the data is as the following:

Dear Y,

This essay has an organization of CON+REF+PRO in each body paragraph. **However**, the supports and minors **needs** stronger in the argumentative essay so the expert opinion, the researches or a news **would** make this persuasive.

In this example, the instructor first uses praise to indicate that the student followed the pattern taught in the lesson. The second sentence starts with the contrastive conjunction; however, that follows the criticism with what is required and how can the composition become a persuasive one. When *praise* is used in combination with *criticism* as Hyland (2000) states it mitigates the criticisms to come up (Halliday, 2000). They expressed that praise mitigates the criticisms to come up. Similarly, in the study, the *criticism* was used frequently used with the *praise*, which forms *pairs*. This pair is meaningful regarding the study by Hyland and Hyland (2012), which revealed that the teachers wanted to sound less direct so they more preferred to use *praise* and *criticism* than *suggestion*. However, in this study, the findings indicated that the instructor wanted to give her message in a direct manner where faceless communication was a necessity for COVID-19. Another reason for this could be the ease of communication in such a period did not require any redressive or polite action on the part of the instructor giving feedback. Therefore, it can be said that faceless communication reduces interpersonal relations (Kohl, Newman & Tomey, 1975, cited in Chesebro and Bonsall, 1989, p.123).

Table 2. Mitigation of Feedback

Feedback comments	Number	Percentage
Feedback formed from praise only	18	24
Feedback formed from criticism only	9	12
Feedback pair as praise and criticism	48	64
Total feedback comments	75	75

In conclusion, in this study, other feedback acts (i.e. suggestion, illocutionary act, personal contact, alternatives, statement, questions, requests, quick fixes) were rarely identified (n=17; 5,3%). It is clearly observed that praise and criticism takes more than suggestion in this learning environment in Turkey in COVID-19. Also, this e-feedback was

given online learning process where the students and teachers had to have faceless communication and they had an online platform to interact with each other. Besides, these findings indicate that *praise* and *criticism* forms were seen as beneficial pairs to transfer the message so clearly that the students could take actions and make necessary improvements in their essays.

The Findings for The Second and Third Research Questions

For the second question, a chi-square test was performed to examine whether the e-feedbacks involving mitigation differ in terms of the success level of the students. The score for the assignment is 10 and the students scored 10-8 are successful and the students 7-1 are unsuccessful According to the results, there is a significant relation between these two variables (X= 55.048, p<.000). More e-feedbacks having mitigated statements were written for the unsuccessful students. This finding is relevant because in the educational context, the instructors are required to give the direct feedback so that the students could modify and improve their writings. According to Hyland and Hyland (200, 194), mitigation is used as a strategy by the teachers as “criticism can represent a direct challenge to a writer and undermine his or her developing confidence”.

Table 3 . Chi-Square Results

Variable	Chi -Square	df	p value
Statements with Mitigation and Success Level	55.048	1	.000
Paired Feedback and The Success Level	45.908	1	.000

Moreover, a chi-square test was performed to examine whether the e-feedbacks having pairs differ in terms of the success level of the students, which is the third question. The score for the assignment is 10 and the students scored 10-8 are successful and the students 7-1 are unsuccessful. According to the results, there is a significant relation between these two variables (p<.000). More feedbacks having the pairs were written for the unsuccessful students. This finding is relevant because in the educational context, the language instructors tend to give detailed feedbacks to the

students to be a clear guide them for their review process (Hyland & Hyland, 2001).

Regarding the paired e-feedback in mitigation, this study has more e-feedback pairs ($n=47$) beginning with *praise* and following on *criticisms* (Table 4). Moreover, Vattoy and Smith (2019) stated that teacher's feedback is a tool to build up the self-efficacy and self-confidence on the students to move on; therefore, the feedback pairs with praise and criticism is relevant. Considering the context of this study, this pair is meaningful since there is an online platform the students interact with the instructor. Thus, the instructor wanted to clearly express what the students should revise after these e-feedbacks.

Table 4. The Distribution of E-Feedback Pairs

Pairs	Number	Percentage
Praise-Criticism	47	72
Praise-Criticism-Suggestion	13	20
Criticism-Suggestion	5	8
Total	65	100

As a result, these findings signify that the teacher's or instructor's feedbacks are not ordinary statements but they serve the needs of the students to write better essays. *Criticism* is followed after *praise*, which is meaningful in the pedagogical contexts since *criticism* and *praise* are two ends of the continuum.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper focused on feedback moves delivered to students by the instructor. Among the feedback moves, *criticism* was the most frequently employed act followed by praise and suggestion. In the literature, criticism was considered as a feedback move that causes the demotivation of the students in the language learning environment; however, the teachers and instructors see them as an opportunity for reinforcing the writing skills (Yunus, 2020; Biber, Nekrasova & Horn, 2011). Thus, the teachers do not only act as the authority but as a facilitator, guide and even proofreader or editor. Regarding this study, sharing the feedback between the instructor and the students had to be conducted online during COVID-19, which means the faceless communication. Hence, the instructor

had a pressure to facilitate and guide the students about their writing manners only by this online platform and this can be one of the main cause to deliver the e-feedback in *criticism*.

Regarding *praise* and *advice* or *suggestion* as the feedback moves, the findings showed that praise was the second move and *advice* or *suggestion* was the third move used in this e-feedback giving. The reason behind could be the cultural context. The participants of the study were Turkish learners of English and the instructor was also Turkish. Therefore, though English was the medium of the instruction, the instructor wanted to share her comments in a detailed way considering lacking points of the feedback. In other words, Turkish students would like to see their mistakes so that they could make necessary changes and improvement (Berkant, Derer and Derer 2020; Yücel and Ataç 2019). In addition, the study indicated that pairing the feedback moves have significant differences between the successful and unsuccessful students. This finding is meaningful in this study as the unsuccessful students are required to have more detailed feedback to identify the errors in their writing. Thus, the instructor would like to meet this expectation of these students and make them comprehend their errors in COVID-19.

In terms of mitigation, this study signified that the mitigation strategies are not meaningful to in this context. This can be the result of the online communication which the instructor has almost little contact with the students so there is a strong requirement to transmit the errors to be corrected directly. Moreover, Turkish context of this study could be another reason for this. Since mitigation strategies involve indirect and hidden messages, these learners are expected to have straight forward feedback expressing what they need to revise or rewrite in their writing materials.

In conclusion, the significance of this study is the exploration of feedback moves in writing in EFL setting. Moreover, it helps the experts understand what feedback in the writing courses acts regarding the linguistic features of the target language in EFL learning environment. However, the study has some limitations. The scope of the

study focuses on the limited the students' feedbacks in Turkish advanced learners of English so there could be further studies having extensive data on feedback moves. Furthermore, the data comes out of the e-feedback comments of the instructor. Thus, the future research will deal with the views of the instructors and the students on feedback giving processes. Besides, the speech acts *praise*, *advice* or *criticism* should be evaluated pragmatically in different contexts. The combination of these speech acts has different functions in feedback context in Turkish which needs to be further studied in different languages. Also, online education needs to be scrutinized in terms of feedback processes in future studies.

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