EFL Students’ Perceptions towards Lecturer's Corrective Feedback in Speaking Class

Happy Kusuma Wardani¹, Lisma Elizatun Nisa², Alina Maciąg³

¹,² University of Qomaruddin Gresik, Indonesia.
³ University of Science and Technology in Bydgoszcz, Poland.

e-mail: ¹ happywarda@uqgresik.ac.id, ² elizalisma@gmail.com,
³ alina.m.maciag@gmail.com

Abstract This article aims to investigate the EFL students’ perceptions and preferences towards the lecturer’s corrective feedback in a speaking class. The method used was descriptive qualitative research design. Twenty-four students from the first semester of English Language Education Program in a private university in Gresik were purposively selected as the participants of this research. They were invited to fill in the questionnaire and participate in the interview session. The findings showed the students’ positive point of view towards the lecturer’s corrective feedback during speaking class. More than 50% students stated that lecturer’s corrective feedback was necessary as the self-reflection to build their self-confidences and to enrich their knowledge in the speaking skill. Most students admitted that lecturer’s corrective feedback brought positive impacts to their speaking performances.

Keywords: EFL; Perceptions; Preferences; Speaking; Corrective Feedback.


Kata Kunci: EFL; Persepsi; Preferensi; Speaking; Umpan Balik.

E-ISSN: 2579-4043
P-ISSN: 2338-8781

* Corresponding Author: happywarda@uqgresik.ac.id.
INTRODUCTION

A foreign language is a language learnt only during formal education (Oxford and Shearin, 1994). English in Indonesia is more likely to be taught and learnt only as a foreign language because it mostly occurs in EFL classrooms rather than during daily communication. Seemingly, EFL students in Indonesia do not have ready access to use English as a tool of communication during their daily lives outside the classroom. Therefore, many of them are struggling in learning English.

It cannot be denied that EFL students in Indonesia are expected to master the four basic language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. However, speaking is considered as the most important skill in learning English. Speaking is important in communication as it is a basis of oral communication among people in a society (Caroline, 2005). In addition, Speaking is also very important while students learn a language because if they want to master the language, they have to learn how to express the statement in the language (Thornbury, 2005).

Not only important, speaking is also considered complicated because the purpose one is to communicate efficiently (Siregar, 2017). As a productive skill, it seems more complicated than the other skills as it involves more than just pronouncing words (Aydogan and Akbarov, 2014). Conversely, to be able to improve their speaking ability, EFL students also need to pay attention to the aspects of speaking. Fulcher and Davidson (2007) mention five aspects of the speaking skill that concerned with comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. Comprehension is related to how a subject responds while speaking to initiate communication. Grammar is a rule to develop perfect sentences in speaking (Purpura, 2004). Vocabulary should be mastered by speakers because it is the key for successful speaking. Pronunciation is the way students produce clear language when they speak. The last, fluency, is the ability to speak easily, smoothly and expressively.

EFL students often find some problems in speaking. The main problem for EFL students in speaking is the lack of motivation due to the lack of confidence (Anggraini, 2018). They might be shy and afraid of making mistakes; therefore they do not want to participate in speaking activities. Another problem for EFL students in speaking is the influence of their first language as they are not accustomed to
use English outside the classroom (Lubis and Suri, 2022). It is in line with Abrorovich (2021) who states that EFL students tend to depend on their background knowledge of their first language to transfer forms and meanings while trying to speak in English.

Similar problems also faced by the EFL students at the University of Qomaruddin. Those speaking problems appear at every level of a speaking course. Thus, the lecturer should provide some ways or strategies to solve the students’ problem in a speaking class. One of alternatives to solve their problems is by giving feedback on the students’ incorrect statement, grammatical errors, and improper vocabulary. The lecturer’s corrective feedback should be essential to build the students motivation in speaking as well as minimize the influence of their first language while attempting to speak in English.

Corrective feedback is described as information given to students about a linguistic error they have made (Loewen & Erlam, 2006). Corrective feedback has been studied by many researchers and presented a positive effect on student language learning. Corrective feedback can be a factor that influences the progress of the students in learning English (Solikhah, 2016). Meanwhile, Laeli & Setiawan (2019) concluded that corrective feedback can help students to improve their speaking.

The researchers are interested in raising this issue to investigate the EFL students’ perception towards the lecturer’s corrective feedback in a speaking class. Theoretically, perception is the process of identifying and understanding events or objects by using the sense of sight, hearing, and touch (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Perception is the way stimuli are selected and grouped by a person in such a way that the stimuli can be meaningfully interpreted (Walgito, 2010). Sometimes perception is about action (Nanay, 2013). Moreover, Khoirunnisa et al (2018) define perception as an individual knowledge, belief, and attitude about a certain matter. The perception will be different for particular individuals. It happens because of the differences of feeling, experiences, and thinking.

METHOD

This research employed descriptive qualitative method to identify the students’ perceptions towards the lecturer’s corrective feedback in speaking course. Descriptive Qualitative method uses natural setting and aims to interpret
phenomena that happen to subjects or individuals related to attitudes, motivation, and perception (Moloeng, 2017). The subjects were 24 freshmen from English Language Education Program who enrolled in the “Speaking for Daily Communication” Course at Faculty for Teacher Training and Education in a private university in Gresik, namely the University of Qomaruddin. They were selected based on the purpose of the study. The writer used a purposive sample due to the conviction that the participants can provide relevant information (Ary et al, 2010).

For the primary data collection, a questionnaire was utilized to assess the students’ perception towards the lecturer’s corrective feedback in speaking class. The questionnaire used Likert Scale with four options: SD (Strongly Disagree), D (Disagree), A (Agree), SA (Strongly Agree). There were 15 statements related to students’ perceptions and they had to choose only one from the four options based on what they felt.

The secondary data were gathered from semi-structured interview with the participants. It aims to enrich the data that have been collected from the questionnaire. The researchers prepared the interview guideline with seven questions related not only to students’ perceptions but also preferences towards the lecturer’s corrective feedback in speaking course.

The collected data were analyzed and interpreted qualitatively. The analysis of qualitative data includes attempts to figure out the phenomenon under study, synthesize information, explain relationships, formulate theory of how and why the relationships accomplish, and reconnect the new information with what is already known (Ary, et al, 2010). To ease the data analysis, the researchers used Miles and Huberman model by doing data reduction, data display and drawing the conclusion (Sugiono, 2013).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the results of the questionnaire, the students’ perceptions towards lecturer’s corrective feedback revealed. The detailed results are shown in the following table.
Table 1. Students’ perception towards lecturer’s corrective feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lecturer’s corrective feedback makes me doubt myself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lecturer’s corrective feedback makes me aware of my mistakes.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I always forget the feedback given by my lecturer.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I have difficulties understanding my lecturer’s feedback.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I learned a lot from lecturer’s feedback.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lecturer’s corrective feedback helps me identify my weaknesses.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Every time my lecturer corrects my speaking, I feel motivated to learn more.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lecturer’s corrective feedback is very beneficial to improve my speaking.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lecturer’s corrective feedback increases my knowledge on how to speak English well.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lecturer’s corrective feedback motivates me to speak English better.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I do self-correction as soon as lecturer provides corrective feedback.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I feel interrupted when lecturer corrects me.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I feel nervous when lecturer corrects me as soon as I make errors on speaking.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Lecturer’s corrective feedback can break students’ confidence in speaking.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Lecturer’s corrective feedback in speaking course can lead to lower performance in speaking.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 above shows that overall, the students’ perception towards the lecturer’s corrective feedback was positive. Based on the first statement, it revealed that the majority of students or around 67% students disagreed with the statement that lecturer’s corrective feedback makes them doubt themselves. From the students’ responses on the first statement, it revealed that the
lecturer's provision of corrective feedback during the speaking course did not lead to self-doubt among the students.

The second and third statements also confirm that more than 50% students have positive attitudes towards lecturer's corrective feedback. Majority of students agreed with the second statement which stated that lecturer's corrective feedback makes them aware of their mistakes. Meanwhile, statement number 3 showed that around 54% students disagreed with the statement that they always forget the feedback given by the lecturer and 42% of them agreed with it. The findings indicate that a significant number of students consistently retain the corrective feedback provided by the lecturer during their speaking performances. Based on the students' responses, it is anticipated that their continual awareness of errors and retention of the feedback received from the lecturer will motivate them to avoid repeating similar mistakes in the future.

Analysis of the students' responses to the fourth statement revealed that 71% of the students did not encounter any difficulties in comprehending their lecturer's corrective feedback. Only 29% of the students, specifically 7 out of 24, reported difficulties in understanding the meaning of the feedback. These findings lead to the conclusion that the corrective feedback provided by the lecturer was generally easy to understand, as the majority of students found the language used in the feedback acceptable.

Furthermore, statements 5, 6, and 7 provided further evidence of the overwhelmingly positive attitudes of the majority of students towards the lecturer's corrective feedback. Statement 5 indicated that 79% of students agreed and 17% strongly agreed, reflecting the substantial number of students who acknowledged the valuable lessons gained from the lecturer's feedback. Similarly, statement 6 revealed that 62% of students agreed and 25% strongly agreed, demonstrating that a significant proportion of students recognized the corrective feedback's role in identifying their weaknesses during speaking performances. These findings were consistent with statement 7, where 54% agreed and 33% strongly agreed, confirming that a considerable number of students acknowledged the benefits of the lecturer's feedback. The majority of students expressed that they experienced increased motivation to learn whenever
the lecturer provided corrective feedback on their speaking performances. The findings from the students' responses to the three aforementioned statements lead to the conclusion that the lecturer's corrective feedback facilitated multiple learning opportunities, aided students in recognizing their weaknesses, and served as a source of motivation for their learning endeavors.

The next three statements are related to the significances of the lecturer's corrective feedback for the students' improvement in their speaking performances. The analysis of the students' responses to these statements revealed that only one student disagreed with all three statements. Regarding statement number 8, around 63% of students agreed and 33% strongly agreed that the lecturer's corrective feedback was highly beneficial for improving their speaking performances. Similarly, for statement number 9, approximately 54% of students agreed and 42% strongly agreed that corrective feedback increased their knowledge of how to speak English proficiently. Additionally, in statement number 10, about 54% of students agreed and 42% strongly agreed that the lecturer's corrective feedback motivated them to enhance their English speaking abilities. These results indicate the significant role of the lecturer's corrective feedback in improving students' speaking performances, enhancing their knowledge of effective English communication, and fostering motivation for better English speaking skills.

The subsequent statement focused on self-correction. Analysis of the students' responses to statement number 11 revealed that 83.3% of students agreed and 13% strongly agreed that they promptly engaged in self-correction upon receiving corrective feedback from the lecturer. Only one student disagreed with this statement. These results showed that the majority of students recognized the substantial impact of the lecturer's corrective feedback on their speaking performances. Consequently, they actively engaged in self-correction in order to improve their speaking abilities in response to the feedback provided by the lecturer.

Finally, the last four questions are related to the negative impacts of lecturer’s corrective feedback. Statement number 12 received agreement from only six students, representing 25% of the participants, who expressed feeling
interrupted when the lecturer corrected their speaking. However, a significant majority of students, with 54% disagreeing and 21% strongly disagreeing, did not feel interrupted by the corrective feedback provided by the lecturer. Moving on to statement number 13, about 54% of students agreed that they felt nervous when the lecturer corrected their errors in real-time during their speaking. In contrast, 33% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed with this statement. Similarly, in statement number 14, around 58% of students disagreed and 29% strongly disagreed with the notion that the lecturer's corrective feedback was harmful and could undermine their confidence in speaking performance. The majority of students disagreed (71%), with an additional 8% strongly disagreeing, with the statement in the last item, indicating that they did not believe the lecturer's corrective feedback in the speaking course would result in a decline in their speaking performance. In conclusion, while the majority of students did not feel interrupted by the lecturer's corrections, they often experienced nervousness when corrected for errors during their speaking performances.

Overall, the result of the questionnaire indicated that the majority of students held positive perceptions towards the lecturer's corrective feedback and did not view it as detrimental. Instead, they acknowledged the value of the feedback in enhancing their speaking performances. The students expressed that the lecturer's corrective feedback was helpful and played a crucial role in their improvement.

Simultaneously, the interview session was conducted at the English Department of University of Qomaruddin to verify and reevaluate the students' perceptions regarding the lecturer's corrective feedback in the speaking course. Additionally, the researchers sought to ascertain the students' preferences concerning the lecturer's style of delivering corrective feedback for the students. The researchers' prepared 7 questions for the students in the interview guideline.

In the first question, regarding the students' perspective on the benefits of corrective feedback in the Speaking Course, the majority of students expressed a strong belief in its significance. They highlighted that corrective feedback was highly valuable as it facilitated their understanding of specific errors that
required improvement, allowed them to learn from previous mistakes, and supported their personal growth to enhance their performance in subsequent lessons.

“In my opinion, the feedback from the lecturer is very important as it helps us improve ourselves and enhance our speaking skills.”

Furthermore, one respondent emphasized that while the feedback itself is undoubtedly crucial, the way the lecturer delivers corrective feedback holds even greater significance.

“It is significantly important, even crucial. Therefore, corrective feedback is essential for our learning process. Without feedback, we would continue to make the same mistakes, making it difficult for us to learn. However, the challenge lies in how the feedback is provided. In my opinion, the way the feedback is delivered is more important than the feedback itself.”

Moving on to the next question, concerning the frequency of the lecturer’s corrections, most students indicated that the lecturer frequently provided corrections, particularly during presentations. They appreciated the proactive approach of the lecturer in correcting their errors, particularly since it was early in the semester and they deemed it essential to receive substantial feedback to enhance their speaking skills.

“As first-year students, both my friends and I frequently receive corrective feedback from the lecturer. It's normal because we are still in the early stages of our studies. We often make mistakes. I appreciate the lecturer’s feedback.”

The third question related to the types of errors that the lecturer corrected in the speaking course. According to the majority of students, the lecturer frequently addressed errors related to grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation during their speaking activities.

“The lecturer often corrects any grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation mistakes I made during my speaking performance.”
Additionally, a respondent stated the lecturer emphasized the importance of speaking in English throughout the class, as some students occasionally relied on Bahasa Indonesia for communication.

“I am grateful for the lecturer's corrections, particularly when it comes to errors in vocabulary usage and frequent transitions from Bahasa Indonesia during the speaking class.”

The next question focused on the way the lecturer provided corrective feedback to the students. Several students mentioned that the lecturer typically offered corrections after they had completed their speaking performances. Other students noted that the lecturer placed particular emphasis on highlighting their speaking errors. Additionally, it was observed that the lecturer consistently employed English while delivering corrections, accompanied by illustrating the correct terms or expressions.

“Usually, the lecturer takes note of some mistakes made by the students during the speaking performances. At the end of the lesson, he writes them on the board then explains how the correct versions should be.”

Additionally, all of the students expressed a positive appreciation for the lecturer's approach to providing corrective feedback.

The fifth question explored the students' feeling regarding the lecturer's corrective feedback, with the majority expressing satisfaction with the feedback provided by the lecturer. They assumed that by receiving corrective feedback from the lecturer helped them remember their mistakes and encouraged them to avoid making similar errors in future lessons.

“I can personally feel the benefits of receiving feedback, as it has helped me in learning from my mistakes, ensuring that I don't repeat the same errors. The corrective feedback provided by the lecturer has had a positive impact on my speaking skills.”

Furthermore, some students acknowledged feeling slightly nervous when receiving corrective feedback, but they expressed a positive appreciation for the opportunity to improve by receiving feedback during the lesson.
“The feedback from the lecturer motivates me to strive for further improvement. However, sometimes, I feel slightly embarrassed when the lecturer corrects me. It's a mix of nervousness and happiness.”

The sixth question related to the students' reactions upon receiving corrective feedback. The students expressed their happiness when the lecturer corrected their mistakes as it helped them recognize and acknowledge their errors. Consequently, they readily accepted the correct utterances provided by the lecturer.

“I am very happy because I know my mistakes directly and fix them right away.”

Additionally, some students mentioned feeling slightly nervous, but they still appreciated receiving corrective feedback whenever they made mistakes during the lesson.

“Sometimes I feel a little bit embarrassed. There is a slight fear or nervous, but I realize that receiving immediate feedback allows me to understand my mistakes.”

The final question focused on the students' preferences regarding the lecturer's style of providing corrective feedback. Some students expressed a preference for immediate correction in a kind and gentle manner. They expect the lecturer provides feedback without lessening their pride and self-esteem.

“The lecturer should remind us directly when we make mistakes in a kind and gentle manner, as it is important for maintaining a supportive atmosphere. The lecturer should prioritize giving feedback without weakening our self-confidence. It will prevent any negative impact on our confidence and help us continue to learn and improve.”

On the other hand, other students preferred receiving clues from the lecturer, enabling them to identify their mistakes on their own. However, if the students couldn’t identify the errors, they appreciated the lecturer's guidance in helping them improve their mistakes.
“I appreciate how the lecturer allows me to finish speaking without interrupting. After that, he provides clear explanations regarding what exactly needs to be corrected, whether it's related to intonation, pronunciation, or other aspects. He also provides guidances to help me reconsider and reflect on whether something is accurate or not. This kind of feedback encourages me to have critical thinking rather than just asking for a simple explanation.”

Based on the result of interview, it can be said that students had positive perceptions towards the lecturer’s the corrective feedback in speaking. The majority of students believed that the lecturer's feedback had a positive impact on their grammar and vocabulary, enhanced their overall speaking abilities, instilled confidence, and served as a motivational factor to improve their performance. They recognized the importance of the lecturer's corrective feedback in helping them avoid repeating similar mistakes in subsequent lessons. Furthermore, the students acknowledged that the lecturer consistently provided corrective feedback during their speaking performances. They also noted that the feedback encompassed various aspects and was delivered either directly or at the end of the lesson.

Additionally, it appears that all of the students expressed enthusiasm when receiving corrective feedback from the lecturer. From the interview session, it also revealed that the students expressed a preference for the lecturer to deliver corrective feedback directly in English. They appreciated the lecturer's practice of allowing them to complete their speaking performances before providing corrections and feedback. Overall, the students held deep appreciation for the lecturer's efforts in offering corrective feedback that significantly contributed to their improvement in speaking ability.

Discussion

The results of this study definitely support some other studies which have a similar objective. Previously, Muslem, Zulfikar and Astila (2017) discovered that English Department students of ArRaniry State Islamic University perceived a lecturers' corrective feedback as a vital part in improving the
students’ speaking performance. The present study also supported the preceding study conducted by Mulyani, Ningsih and Setiyaningrum (2022) in the English Department of Institut Parahikma Indonesia. They also claimed that although a lecturer’s corrective feedback made students feel nervous, they felt some benefits including increasing knowledge, improving students’ speaking ability, and giving positive impacts on students’ learning.

In terms of students’ preferences towards a lecturer’s corrective feedback in an interview session, the result showed that the lecture applied one out of four types of corrective feedback from Lyster & Ranta (2013) who argued that the lecturer most likely uses recast and clarification request to correct the students’ errors in speaking. Majority of students preferred to receive explicit correction because they thought that explicit correction was more helpful for them in fixing their error and realize the part of their error, so they could avoid the same error in their next performances. This result strengthens a study from Laely and Setiawan (2019) which claimed that the students preferred to get explicit correction as the feedback in the speaking class. Moreover, Muslem, Zulfikar and Astila (2017) also reported that the students preferred explicit feedback in order to find out their error directly thus they would be able to easily remember the corrective feedback given by the lecturer.

In addition, students preferred to be corrected immediately after their speaking performances. They expected the lecturer to wait until they had finished speaking before providing feedback, as it allowed them to maintain their flow and avoid interruptions during their performances. Similar result also occurred in a study conducted by Mulyani, Ningsih and Setiyaningrum (2022). They reported that the English Department students of Institut Parahikma Indonesia preferred corrective feedback to be provided after their speaking performances, as it allowed them to avoid feeling interrupted during their speaking activities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions, several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the students showed a positive perception towards the lecturer’s corrective feedback in the speaking class. This feedback had a significant impact on raising
their awareness and improving their speaking performances. Secondly, the students expressed a preference for immediate and explicit feedback, as it proved to be helpful in avoiding confusion regarding their errors during speaking performances. Consequently, corrective feedback held importance for both students and lecturers. For students, it contributed to their self-awareness and increased confidence during speaking performances, while for lecturers, it served as a means to prevent the recurrence of similar errors among other students.

REFERENCES


