

## Teacher multimodal feedback: Investigating students' preferences and voices

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### ABSTRACT

This present study highlights the implementation of teacher multimodal feedback provision in speaking classes, especially students' preferences and voices after obtaining teacher feedback. Teacher multimodal feedback was implemented in one semester (14 weeks) in two speaking classes with 36 students majoring English Language Department of a university in Malang, Indonesia. A questionnaire using a 4 Likert scale and an open-ended option was distributed to all respondents, and an in-depth interview was conducted with ten of them where five students represented each class. The data which were analyzed quantitatively indicate that students have different preferences in receiving teacher feedback, and they believe that teacher multimodal feedback is beneficial to improve their L2 oral productions. Direct feedback is the type they like most, but interruption is the mode of feedback they hate most. Some indications also suggest that teachers need to construct positive teacher-student social relationships in the classrooms. Some implications are also discussed.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Making errors in L2 (second language) oral production is something normal, and it is actually only evidence that teaching-learning process is taking place. In oral productions or speaking activities, students are supposed to express their ideas, feelings, or beliefs. Somehow, they often encounter problems in their speaking activities due to a lack of exposure to authentic English language environments allowing them to use English in real communication (Oradee, 2012; Efrizal, 2013). Thus, it is teachers' responsibility to make students speak English well by employing appropriate teaching strategies of speaking (Anjaniputra, 2013).

In this respect, feedback is a common activity (Budianto et al., 2020) that the students need to identify their own potential errors and what teachers must do to help the students (Hartshorn et al., 2020.; Blake, 2020). Feedback is any information that learners receive about their performance, such as corrective feedback, praise, or encouragement (Kerr, 2017). Feedback is commonly divided into different parts: written vs. oral, direct vs. indirect, negative vs. positive, reformulation, or multimodal feedback covering a combination of different forms of feedback in one particular moment. Thus, there is an essential need to find out appropriate ways to deliver feedback properly (Yusuf et al., 2017).

Several researchers have conducted some studies focusing on feedback provisions. A study by Bayat et al. (2020), for instance, found that a teacher's inherent multimodality in his corrective feedback cultivates the learners' attention to their errors and focus on the correct forms. Schneider et al. (2016) revealed that students find the feedback of the presentation trainer to be an excellent complement to the feedback that peers and tutors can give. Ho (2012) indicated that students' different attitudes toward feedback might be affected by the affordance of different communication modes. In addition, Choi & Li (2012) discovered a need for an interactive, situated approach to the study of corrective feedback. Then, Petchpraset (2012) found that feedback is a very necessary activity of language teaching-learning processes affecting students' learning outcomes. In addition, Budianto et al. (2020) proved that direct feedback is more beneficial than

indirect feedback when implemented in the classroom with different students' proficiency in English. The last study implies that teachers need to apply direct feedback to improve students' L2 proficiency frequently.

Despite a large number of the previous studies, the findings of the studies have been mainly limited to cognitive orientations rooted in experimental designs and the verbal discourse of the teacher as the main object of inquiry (Bayat et al.), and few are alarming (Yusuf et al., 2017.). Interestingly, Gue (2007) claims no corrective feedback recipe, but the success of corrective feedback provision depends on classroom situations, kinds of errors produced by students, levels of proficiency, and other variables. A study by Kusumaningrum et al. (2019) demonstrates that the results will be the same regardless of the type of feedback provision. The question arises, then, what are the benefits of feedback provision in L2 learning? Is it essential to find out how to administer feedback provision in language teaching-learning processes? Should feedback provision be given in some types of feedback in order to obtain the maximum benefits? In addition, research on students' preferences and voices when getting corrective feedback are still under-researched and unclear. Accordingly, this present study is an attempt to investigate an issue of students' preferences and expectations after obtaining teacher multimodal feedback in a Speaking course in an Indonesian context based on the following questions:

1. What are the students' preferences in obtaining teacher multimodal feedback in a speaking course?
2. What are the students' voices about teacher multimodal feedback?

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The present study employed a descriptive qualitative design focusing on the students' preferences and perceptions towards teacher multimodal feedback after the students joined the speaking course in one consecutive semester. There were 36 students in the second semester majoring in the English Language Department of a university in Malang, Indonesia. They were divided into Class A (19 students) and Class B (17 students) and acted as the participants of this study. Both classes were treated equally by a lecturer in one semester. They were assigned to do some oral activities, such as individual presentations, working in pairs, and working in small groups with different topics during the course (14 meetings). During the oral productions, the lecturer always provided feedback in different modes depending on the needs and conditions, such as the errors made by each student.

In order to collect the data needed, there were two instruments applied: a questionnaire consisting of 14 items using Google Form and an in-depth interview right after the questionnaire was done. The questionnaire used 4 Likert Scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree) and also open-ended items where students expressed their perceptions towards teacher oral multimodal feedback. The questionnaire was distributed to all participants (N=36). Meanwhile, the in-depth interview was given to 10 students taken from two classes where each class was represented by 5 students selected randomly. The interview was given to obtain more detailed information related to their perceptions and expectations. The data, then, were analysed qualitatively (see Figure 1).

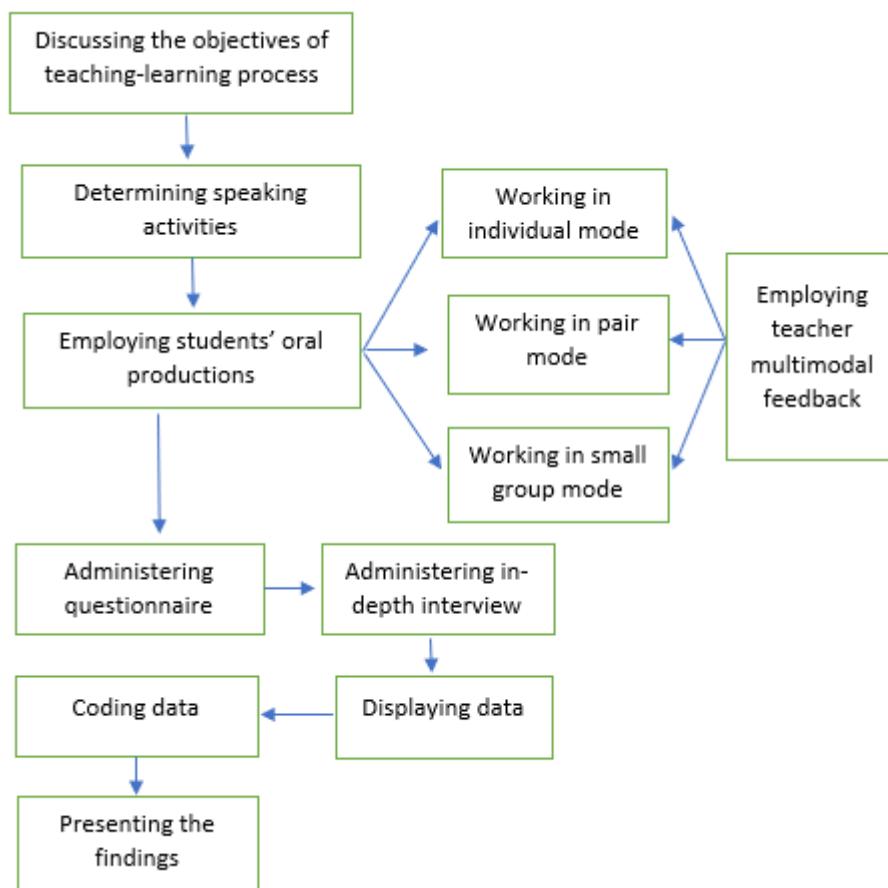


Figure 1. The steps of conducting the present research

### 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The first aim of this study is to find out the students' preferences in obtaining teacher multimodal feedback. It was found that most of the students believe that speaking classes are fundamental to improving their English, as indicated by their responses. There were 27 students (75%) who answered strongly agree, 8 students (22.2%) chose agree, and 1 student (2.8%) responded disagree. It is clear that they are aware of the importance of improving their English-speaking skills through speaking classes. It is in harmony with the idea of Oradee (2013) that speaking is the most important and essential skill, and the teaching of speaking has a high concern in many language programs (Anjaniputra). Efrizal (2012) claims that English speaking ability is very crucial for people interaction. Understanding the importance of speaking skills, they usually have motivation in joining the courses they like and believe. Motivation is very important in influencing the learning outcomes. It is in harmony with the findings of a study by Alizadeh (2016) that states motivation has a crucial impact in learning English covering positive attitudes and enjoyment of learning. Babaei (2012) claims that motivation increases students' L2 competence and performance. Thus, it is really important to empower students with motivation in L2 teaching-learning activities because teaching-learning activities will be more meaningful if the students like the course and have individual motivation (Shen, 2017).

Responding to the next question whether their lecturer gives them feedback in the speaking class, most of them answered always (N= 16 or 44.4%), usually (N=16 or 44.4%), rarely (N=4 or 11.1%), and nobody answered never (see Figure 2). It shows that the lecturer is used to providing oral feedback in the speaking class. It seems that he is aware of the importance of oral feedback provision because, according to Carless (2006), feedback is central to the development of effective learning. Attali (2011) also proved that

feedback allows students to identify their errors in English production so that they can revise their answers or products.

3. My lecturer gives me oral feedback on my speaking performance  
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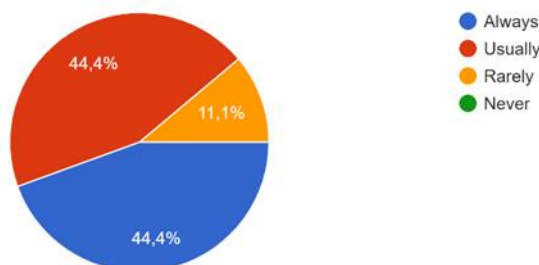


Figure 2. Oral teacher feedback frequency.

Feedback provision in language learning proves to improve students' proficiency in using the language properly. Thus, it is a must for teachers to provide appropriate modes of feedback in the teaching-learning process. Smith et al. (2007) revealed that the clinical practice of providing feedback remains a vital component of conducting an assessment. In addition, Lewis (2002) proposes some advantages of feedback provision, such as information resources, advice for students about their learning, language input provision supports, a form of motivation, and learning autonomy. The act of feedback provision is a part of language teaching-learning processes supporting students to improve their speaking ability.

Regarding the students' belief about the feedback provision, the students claim that teacher feedback is beneficial to improve their English by selecting strongly agree (N= 22 or 61.1%) and agree (N=14 or 38.9%), but nobody chose disagree or strongly disagree (see Figure 3). It seems that they realize the importance of teacher feedback in improving their competence in speaking English. This finding is in harmony with some previous research. Kusumaningrum et al. (2019) claim that feedback provision leads to the improvement of students' performance. Zacharias (2007) revealed that teacher feedback contributes greatly to students' emotional states, particularly their motivation and attitudes. Students tend to believe that they need teacher feedback provision to understand their performances or errors in oral productions and are aware of the areas they have to improve.

5. I believe that my lecturer's feedback is beneficial to improve my English  
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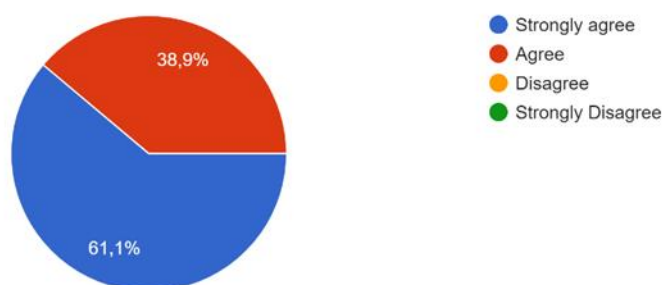


Figure 3. Students' belief about feedback provision.

Figure 3 proves that students need teacher feedback provision during or after teaching-learning processes in their attempts to improve their speaking skills. It makes sense that learners can obtain immediate teacher feedback on potential errors, and their teachers no longer feel obliged to check for common genre-

specific errors (Blake, 2020). Thus, teacher feedback provision allows students to be aware of their errors and attempt to improve their speaking skills.

Then, the questionnaire asked the students about the kinds of teacher feedback they got during the Speaking course. Figure 4 shows teacher multimodal feedback given when students presented their oral productions during the course. The students chose more than one option in responding to the item of the questionnaire.



Figure 4. Oral teacher feedback modes

It is clear that direct feedback was the most frequent mode applied by the lecturer (N=20 or 55.6%), then repetition (N=16 or 44.4%), metalinguistic feedback (N=15 or 41.7%), indirect feedback (N=13 or 36.1%), and interruption (N=9 or 25%). It seems that the lecturer conducted direct feedback in the classroom. He probably believed that it was essential to provide direct feedback due to the classroom conditions. It is in line with a study revealing that direct correction is best for producing accurate revisions, and students prefer it because it is the fastest and easiest way to revise their performance (Chandler, 2003). The implementations of multimodal feedback, somehow, seem to be essential to be implemented. Macknish (2019) depicts that integrating multimodal projects in ESL courses strengthens learner autonomy, motivation, self-confidence, and language skills. (Lamb (2018) found that multimodal feedback provides implications and some deep-rooted assumptions around language-based representations of academic knowledge. Thus, it is reasonable that the lecturer needs to consider some possible modes of feedback in the course to help students be aware of their errors and make some efforts to improve their speaking performances.

In addition to the intervention of the teacher feedback in the speaking course, the questionnaire asked further about the students' perceptions dealing with their preferences and voices. Figure 5 highlights the mode of teacher feedback the students like most. It indicates that direct feedback is the mode the students like most when receiving teacher feedback. Direct feedback was chosen by 12 students (33.3%), followed by metalinguistic feedback (N=8 or 22.2%), repetition (N=6 or 16.7%), indirect feedback (N=6 or 16.7%), and interruption (N=4 or 11.1%).

## 8. Among the types of feedback in No. 7, I like best

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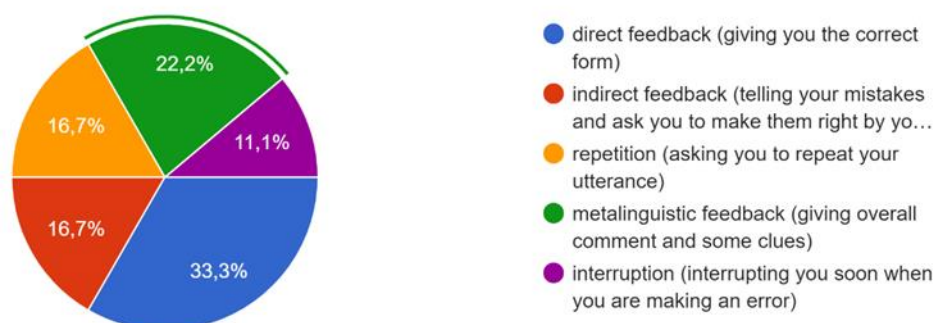


Figure 5. The mode of feedback the students like most

In the majority, students chose direct feedback for some reasons, such as understanding their errors and getting the correct forms immediately, thus avoiding confusion. This preference can be based on their experiences and quick problem-solving. Some studies indicate that direct feedback is more powerful than indirect feedback (Budianto et al., 2020.; Chandler, 2003; Bitchener, 2008). Somehow, direct feedback is commonly given when it deals with accuracy, such as grammar, pronunciation, or word choice. It will not work with students' oral presentation contents, as indicated by some research (Lee and Schallert, 2008). Then, (Ferris, 2007) found that students prefer direct feedback to indirect feedback because they may forget what they have learned. The students prefer direct feedback to others due to their need to apply correct forms in their speaking performances.

Somehow, surprisingly, some tend to select metacognitive feedback because it helps them understand their performances as a whole. They want to have self-reflection as a process of their journeys to make their speaking performances improve gradually. This kind of student commonly has self-efficacy and motivation in their performance, allowing them to do their best. Self-efficacy refers to beliefs in students' capability to accomplish a specific task (Genç, 2016) which becomes a valid predictor of students' performances in different language skills and tasks (Raofi et al., 2016.). Then, Alizadeh (2016) discovered that motivation has a crucial impact in learning English in covering positive attitudes towards the L2 community, the enjoyment of learning, and reducing external pressures. Thus, teachers must empower their students with self-efficacy and motivation in language learning regardless of different feedback modes given by teachers.

The next question deals with the mode of feedback the students hate most. In response to the item, students stated their perceptions as indicated in Figure 6. Interruption is the mode students hate most (N=15 or 41.7%), followed by none of the modes (N=9 or 25%), direct feedback (N=7 or 19.4%), metalinguistic feedback (N=2 or 5.62%), repetition (N=2 or 5.62%), and indirect feedback (N=1 or 2.8%). The students choosing interruption claimed that interruption is annoying, demotivating, and helpless since they may lose their ideas when interrupted. Teachers should avoid this demotivating perception. They need to understand how to encourage students with valuable feedback. However, surprisingly, 25% of them believe that there is no mode they hate. Some of them confessed that feedback is essential to improve their speaking skills, whatever the mode they get. It is supported by a study revealing that students who perceive teacher feedback have a level of behavioral engagement in the classroom (Monteiro et al., 2021).

10. Among the types of feedback in No. 7, I dislike most  
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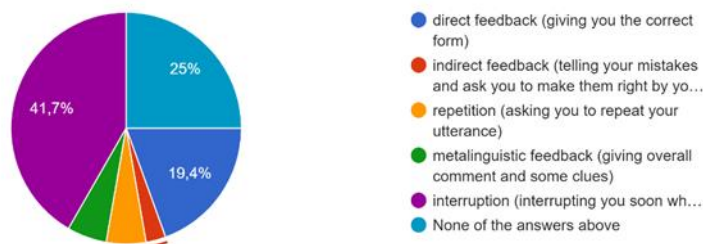


Figure 6. The mode of feedback the students hate most

Teachers need to apply variations in feedback provision to avoid students' negative perceptions of one particular feedback. According to Kerr (2017), there is a continuing debate among researchers, and there is a piece of evidence to indicate that all feedback can be effective. Everything depends on the particular context in which the teachers provide the feedback. It implies that no feedback is superior to others, and teachers must select appropriate feedback so that the students can take the potential of feedback.

Last of all, the questionnaire focuses on the students' perceptions towards the student-teacher relationship (Figure 7). In the majority, students chose strongly agree (N= 19 or 52.8%), followed by agree (N=16 or 44.4%), and disagree (N=1 or 2.8%) with the importance of student-teacher relationship in the classroom when the teacher provides feedback. According to them, having a good relationship with the teacher makes them feel relaxed, unafraid of joining the class, free to discuss their difficulties. One student answered that better relations could make better things in every condition, including feedback. It seems that they need to feel free in the classroom to have positive behaviors when getting feedback. A study shows a relation between specific multimodal (speech and body) behaviors and the different communicative situations and cultures in which they occur (Navaretta and Lis, 2011). It implies that teachers need to understand the expectations of the students when providing feedback because the teacher-student relationship is affected by a plethora of factors, including personal (of both the student and the teacher) and contextual (Hershkovitz, 2018).

12. Student-teacher relationship is important in feedback provision  
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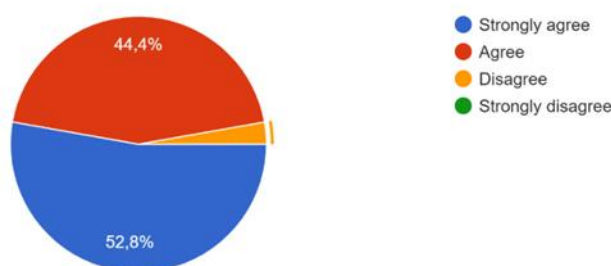


Figure 7. Student-teacher relationship in feedback provision

The student-teacher relationship must be conducted in acceptable manners so that the students are motivated and free of fears when joining a class. It is in line with a study claiming that supporting student-teacher relationships might promote students' feelings of safety, security, and belongingness and may eventually lead to higher academic achievements (Hershkovitz, 2018). Also, a caring relationship (caring,

support, trust, and respect) is the valuable factor affecting students' learning (Al Nasser et al., 2014), so they are motivated to learn harder.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Providing different kinds of feedback leads to students' engagement in speaking classes, but teachers need to be aware of possible preferences and needs of the students when providing feedback. Direct feedback is the mode the students like most since it provides precise and quick linguistic forms. However, interruption is the mode they hate most since it is annoying, demotivating, and helpless, potentially distracting students' ideas. , the decision to provide different kinds of feedback, thus, should be conducted wisely depending on some factors, such as kinds of errors, students' preferences, and the quality of student-teacher relationships. It implies that regardless of the students' preferences, teachers need to construct positive student-teacher relationships in the classroom to feel free from fears and motivated to join the class.

This present study might have some limitations, such as the number of participants, so a promising task for future research is to discover further the power of multimodal feedback involving more participants and variables on students' oral production and engagement in the classroom

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