

## **Exploring The Needs of ESL Students to Improve Their Academic Achievement Through Feedback on Their Learning**

Muhammad Hidayat<sup>1\*</sup>, Hilman<sup>2</sup>, Izza Aisyah Nurmahati<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University Bina Bangsa, Serang, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>English Education Department, Faculty of Islamic Religion, Universitas Al-Khairiyah, Cilegon, Indonesia

Corresponding Email: \*muhammad.hidayat@binabangsa.ac.id.

### **Abstract**

This study investigates the expectations of ESL students regarding feedback provided by lecturers in the learning and teaching process. 67 students at English department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Bina bangsa participated in the survey. They were in the second, fourth, and sixth semester. The stages of this research are instrument test by using validity and reliability test, data collection, and the descriptive analysis was conducted as well to see the percentage/the preference of the respondents. Data analysis was conducted using R Studio. The validity test was performed using Peorson's, the number was 0,6 greater than 0,3, indicating acceptable validity. The reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha resulted in a value of 0,90 greater than 0,2404, indicating acceptable realibilty. The overall response distribution for the 10 items revealed that 77 % of respondents agreed. The results indicate that a significant number of students expect their lecturers to provide feedback on their learning performances. The findings highlight the importance of feedback in terms of the frequency of given, the manner of delivery, the timing, and so on. In addition, the academic setting and underscore the need for lecturers to actively engage in providing feedback. The authors present a discussion the potential of future research as well.

**Keyword:** Feedback, ESL, Learning, Achievement

### **INTRODUCTION**

Feedback is an essential element of the teaching and learning process, significantly influencing the improvement of students' academic performance. Its value lies in its capacity to help students identify their strengths and weaknesses, creating opportunities for growth. Nevertheless, despite the recognized advantages of feedback, students frequently view the feedback they receive as insufficient or ineffective. One of the challenges in providing feedback was inappropriate respond from the students. The challenge was also related to the insufficient time to provide feedback for students. As for the alternative strategies, some teachers believe in three main ideas. First, sharing appreciation towards students' work at first. Secondly, making a clear follow-up session and clear information to students. At last, making a direct comment to students' work and add some notes (Hidayat *et al.*, 2024). This study investigates the particular needs of students regarding feedback in the classroom, with the goal of determining how feedback can be more effectively customized to improve academic results.

In educational contexts, feedback is commonly perceived as a tool for addressing errors, but its function goes well beyond this limited perspective. Effective feedback acts as a means of communication between teachers and students, providing not only corrections but also encouragement, motivation, and guidance for future development. Nevertheless, many students express dissatisfaction with the feedback they receive, pointing to problems such as ambiguity, delays, or a lack of relevance to their actual learning needs (Moscrop, 2022; İstencioğlu, 2022). These concerns reflect a larger issue in educational practice: the mismatch between what teachers or lecturers consider effective feedback and what students find helpful for their academic progress.

The current state of feedback practices in education displays considerable variation in how feedback is delivered, its content, and its overall effectiveness. Studies indicate that although teachers dedicate a significant amount of time and effort to providing feedback, students frequently do not make full use of it (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). This disconnect between the intended purpose of feedback and how it is actually utilized raises several important questions. How many times feedback should be given to the students where they find it most valuable? When feedback can be provided the best? How feedback will be shared to students?

Furthermore, another challenge in feedback practices is timing. Feedback is most effective when given immediately or shortly after the completion of a task (Shute, 2008). When feedback is delayed, it loses its impact, as students may have already shifted their focus to new material or forgotten the task's details. Another challenge relates to the clarity of feedback. Students often find it difficult to make sense of vague comments like "good job" or "needs improvement," as these do not provide specific, actionable guidance for improvement (Ford, 2017). Moreover, feedback that is overly critical or primarily focused on errors can discourage students, particularly when it is not balanced with positive reinforcement (Pirhonen, 2016).

Despite these obstacles, there is increasing acknowledgment of the importance of offering feedback that is centered on the student, addressing their unique needs and learning styles. Feedback, according to the majority of students, is critical in the teaching and learning process. The effectiveness of the teaching and learning process will be determined by how well lecturers communicate with their students. Lecturers can use a variety of teaching styles and methods as long as they first build a positive engagement with their students (Hidayat & Saleh, 2022). However, putting this type of feedback system into practice demands thorough planning and a solid understanding of students' preferences and perceptions.

To address the issues surrounding feedback practices, this research proposes several strategies aimed at bridging the gap between teacher expectations and student needs. First, it advocates for a more interactive approach to feedback, where students are actively involved in the feedback process. This also emphasizes the importance of timely feedback on students' point of view. This will help lecturers to better understand what is expected of the students and how lecturers can meet those expectations.

The main goal of this study is to investigate the particular feedback needs of students in the classroom and how feedback practices can be refined to improve academic outcomes. The research aims to determine the types of feedback that students consider most helpful for their learning and to identify how many times do students expect to get feedback on their learning.

By pursuing these objectives, the study seeks to add to the ongoing discussion on educational feedback practices, offering insights that can shape future teaching methods and policies. The anticipated outcomes of this research are twofold. Firstly, the study is expected to offer a clearer insight into students' specific feedback needs in the classroom. By identifying the types of feedback that students find most beneficial, the research can help develop more effective feedback practices tailored to individual learning preferences. Secondly, the study aims to identify the obstacles that hinder students from fully engaging with feedback, providing strategies to address and overcome these challenges.

The benefits of this research extend beyond the classroom setting. Improved feedback practices can result in greater student satisfaction, enhanced motivation, and ultimately, better academic performance. Additionally, by fostering a more personalized and interactive feedback approach, teachers can cultivate a culture of continuous learning and improvement. This aligns

with the broader educational goal of developing independent, self-regulated learners who possess the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and competitive world.

In conclusion, this research fills an important gap in the current understanding of feedback practices in education. By investigating student needs and proposing methods for improvement, it aims to boost the overall effectiveness of feedback in fostering academic success.

## METHOD

This research employed a survey-based approach to investigate students' feedback preferences and engagement. A structured questionnaire consisting of ten items was developed using a Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Likert scale was chosen for its ability to measure attitudes and perceptions in a quantifiable manner, which is widely supported in educational research (Abbitt & Boone, 2021). The survey aimed to assess students' views on the effectiveness, the frequency, and timing of feedback. Moreover, a questionnaire of a survey based research contains a set of questions also called items used for solving an identified research problem. These questions are developed with an aim at collecting different types of data related to demographic information, personal opinions, facts and attitudes, etc (Aithal & Aithal, 2020).

The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms, a reliable tool for collecting data efficiently in academic research. The participants consisted of 67 students from the English Department, Faculty of Teaching Training and Education, Universitas Bina Bangsa. Data analysis was conducted using R Studio, an open-source statistical software, to perform descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. The results from the analysis were used to identify patterns in students' feedback preferences and to propose strategies for improving feedback practices in the classroom.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is a quantitative analysis that is calculated using R Studio, measuring frequency, mean, and standard deviation (S.D). The students preference level towards the feedback provided by lecturer in teaching and learning setting. The analysis used a likert-scale questionnaire by applying a rating guide as follows: 0% - 19,99% = Strongly Disagree (SD), 20% - 39,99% = Disagree (D), 40% - 59,99% = Neutral (N), 60%-79,99% = Agree (A), 80%- 100% = Strongly Agree (SA).

The study findings were elaborated under the following sections:

### *General Information Data*

Most students participated in the survey were female which is 53 (79,10%) and male 14 (20,89%) out of 67 respondents. It was identified that the respondents were those who are studying at second semester, fourth semester, and sixth semester.

Table 1. Lecturer gives feedback on students' learning at the end of each session/ each meeting

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer gives feedback on students' learning at	SD	4	5.97
	D	3	4.48
	N	13	19.4
	A	20	29.9
	SA	27	40.3

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
the end of each session/ each meeting			

For item 1, 5.97% respondents strongly disagree, while 4.48% disagree with the statement. Furthermore, the other respondents remain neutral (19.40%). The majority of respondents agree (29.85%), with 40.30 % strongly agree. In total, 70.15% of the students have a positive expectation towards feedback from their lecturer everytime whenever the lecturer end the session/meeting. Only 10.45% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with it.

Table 2. Lecturer gives feedback on students' learning every three or four sessions/ meetings

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer gives feedback on students' learning every three or four sessions/ meetings	SD	4	5.97
	D	5	7.46
	N	15	22.4
	A	26	38.8
	SA	17	25.4

For itme 2, 5.97% respondents strongly disagree, while 7.46% disagree with the statement. In addition, the other respondents remain neutral (22.4%). Most of the respondents agree if they obtain feedback every three or four sessions (38.9%), with 25.4 % strongly agree. This percentage indicates that most respondent have a positive expectation towards feedback from their lecturer provided every three or four sessions, with 64.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing, compared to only 13.43% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Comparing to the first item, the data shows that most the students prefer feedback provided by lecturer every session/meeting (70.15%) than every three or four meeting (64.2%). The fact is in line with the previous research where intervention was expected to provide educators with information on their contributions to growth in student achievement (Garet *et al.*, 2017).

Table 3. Lecturer gives feedback individually

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer gives feedback individually	SD	2	2.99
	D	6	8.96
	N	22	32.8
	A	18	26.9
	SA	19	28.4

For item 3, 2.99% respondents strongly disagree, while 8.96% disagree with the statement. In addition, the other respondents remain neutral (32.8%). Most of the respondents agree if they obtain feedback individually (26.9%), with 28.4 % strongly agree. This percentage

indicates that most of the respondents prefer feedback by their lecturer provided individually, with 55.3% agreeing or strongly agreeing, compared to only 11.95% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Table 4. Lecturer gives feedback in groups

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer gives feedback in groups	SD	3	4.48
	D	4	5.97
	N	12	17.9
	A	20	29.9
	SA	28	41.8

For item 4, 4.48% respondents strongly disagree, otherwise 5.97% disagree with the statement. Furthermore, the other respondents remain neutral (17.9%). Most of the respondents agree if the students obtain feedback in groups, (29.9%), with 41.8 % strongly agree. This number shows that most of the respondent expect that feedback delivered in groups, with 71.7% agreeing and strongly agreeing. On the contrary, only 10.45 % disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

The data indicates that students prefer feedback in groups (71.7%) compared to feedback individually (55.3%). This is contrast with another research related to writing in second language (L2) learning. One to one conference feedback enabled the student to use the grammar correctly when they write in english (Bitchener *et al.*, 2005)

Table 5. Lecturer should allocate the time to provide feedback in students' learning

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer should allocate the time to provide feedback in students' learning	SD	1	1.49
	D	5	7.46
	N	14	20.9
	A	21	31.3
	SA	26	38.8

For item 5, 1.49% respondents strongly disagree, and 7.46% disagree with the statement. Furthermore, the other respondents remain neutral (20.9%). The majority of respondents agree (31.3%), with 38.8 % strongly agree. This indicates that most respondent have a positive response if lecturer allocate the time to provide feedback in their learning, with 70.1% agreeing or strongly compared to only 8.95% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Table 6. Lecturer is able to use time-allocated for session/meeting to provide feedback

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer is able to use time-allocated for session/meeting to provide feedback	SD	2	2.99
	D	5	7.46
	N	13	19.4
	A	18	26.9
	SA	29	43.3

For item 6, 2.99% respondents strongly disagree, otherwise 7.46 % disagree with the statement. Then, the other respondents remain neutral (19.4%). Most of the respondents agree if the lecturer uses the allocated-time for session/meeting to provide feedback, (26.9%), with 43.3 % strongly agree. This percentage indicates that most respondent have a positive perceptions if lecturer used the time-allocated for session to provide feedback, with 70.2% agreeing and strongly agreeing. On the contrary, only 10.45 % disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

In terms of the timing, there is a similar number of the total response by the students. 70.1% agree if the lecturer allocate the time to provide feedback and 70.2% agree if the lecturer used time-allocated for session/meeting to provide feedback.

Table 7. Lecturer will give feedback only for students who experience difficulties in learning

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer will give feedback only for students who experience difficulties in learning	SD	15	22.4
	D	7	10.4
	N	20	29.9
	A	15	22.4
	SA	10	14.9

For item 7, 22.4% respondents strongly disagree, otherwise 10.4% disagree with the statement. Furthermore, the other respondents remain neutral (29.9%). The respondents agree if the lecturer gives feedback only for those who experience difficulties in learning, (29.9%), with 14.9 % strongly agree. The number is quite similar between students who expect feedback only for those who feel difficult in learning and vice versa. Respondents who agree and strongly agree with this was 37.3%. In contrast, it was about 32.8 % disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Table 8. Lecturer will give feedback to all students (both difficult in learning and not)

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer will give feedback to all students (both difficult in learning and not)	SD	3	4.48
	D	1	1.49
	N	14	20.9
	A	20	29.9
	SA	29	43.3

For item 8, 4.48 % respondents strongly disagree, but 1.49 % disagree with the statement. Then, the other respondents remain neutral (20.9 %). Most of the respondents agree if the lecturer gives feedback to all students ( both difficult in learning and vice versa), (29.9%), with 43.3 % strongly agree. This percentage indicates that most respondent have a positive perceptions if lecturer provide feedback all students, with 73.2% agreeing and strongly agreeing. But, only 5.97 % disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Comparing to item 7, the data shows that most of the students prefer that the lecturer provide feedback to all students (73.2%) than feedback only for those who experience difficulties in learning (37.3%).



Table 9. Students really need feedback from their lecturer related to their learning performances

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Students really need feedback from their lecturer related to their learning performances	SD	2	2.99
	D	2	2.99
	N	8	11.9
	A	18	26.9
	SA	37	55.2

For item 9, 2.99% respondents strongly disagree, and 2.99% disagree with the statement. Furthermore, the other respondents remain neutral (11.9%). The majority of respondents agree (26.9%), with 55.2 % strongly agree. This indicates that most respondent have a significant expectation toward feedback from their lecturer related to their learning performances, with 82.1% agreeing compared to only 5.98% disagreeing.

Table 10. Students really need feedback on their weaknesses and the area they are strong at regularly

Item	The Likert - Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Students really need feedback on their weaknesses and the area they are strong at regularly	SD	1	1.49
	D	3	4.48
	N	9	13.4
	A	21	31.3
	SA	33	49.3

For item 10, 1.49 % respondents strongly disagree, but 4.48 % disagree with the statement. Then, the other respondents remain neutral (13.4 %). Most of the respondents agree (31.3%) and strongly agree (49.3%). This percentage indicates that most respondent really need feedback on the area where they already good at and they are still struggle with, with 80.6%. In contrast, only 5.97% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

The data from item 9 shows that students prefer feedback on their learning performances in general ( 82.1%) than feedback on the specific aspect like their weaknesses and the area where students are already good at (80.6 %). Here, feedback is really essential for all students. Also, students' will not get any insight of their academic performances if teachers or lecturers do not provide any feedback for them (Hidayat & Mursyid, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

This research highlights the importance of understanding students' needs regarding the feedback they receive from their lecturers. In terms of the frequency of providing feedback in teaching and learning process, the findings indicate that students prefer feedback provided every meeting rather than feedback provided after three or four meetings. In addition, in relation

to manner of delivery, most students prefer feedback provided in group than feedback given individually. Furthermore, there was a similar number in terms of feedback allocate the particular time to provide feedback of the lecturer used the time-allocated for meeting. In relation to the target for giving feedback, most students prefer feedback given to all students than given only for those who experience difficulties in learning. Finally, the data indicates that many students prefer feedback on their learning performances in general than feedback on the specific aspect like their weaknesses and the area where students are already good at.

This findings will help educators/lecturers to be more aware in this issue. Feedback provided by lecturers value specific guidance that helps them to improve academically teaching and learning and appreciate feedback that balances criticism with encouragement.

Moving forward, future research will explore how different types of feedback, such as written, verbal, or digital, impact students' academic performance and motivation. Additionally, further studies can also investigate the role of student-lecturer dialogue in enhancing feedback effectiveness, aiming to foster a more collaborative approach to the feedback process that encourages continuous learning and reflection.

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