Teacher Talk: Student's Perception and Expectation in ELT Classroom

[1]Nur Mutmainna Halim
nur_muthmainnah_halim@uim-makassar.ac.id
Universitas Islam Makassar

[2] Yasinta Wulandari
y.wulandari@unupurwokerto.ac.id
Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama, Purwokerto

[3]Abd Halim
abdhalimmhum@yahoo.com
Universitas Negeri Makassar

ABSTRACT
Teacher talk undoubtedly makes a certain factor whether the class will meet objectives of teaching and learning process or not. This research investigated (1) students' perception towards teacher talk that happened during the teaching and learning process, and (2) students' ideal expectations about their English teacher. This was a descriptive qualitative research. One English teacher and one class of first year senior high students were engaged in the research. The data of this research were collected from transcribed-classroom video recording and interview to some students. The results indicated that (1) students' perception towards teaching style, such as teaching method, motivating, giving feedback were almost negative and (2) students' ideal expectations that an English teacher should be more effective, efficient interactive and creative for creating more interesting classroom atmosphere.

Keywords: Teacher Talk, Perception, Expectation

INTRODUCTION

In these past years, teacher talk of EFL classes has been widely investigated by many scholars. One of a crucial factor making a succeed aims in teaching EFL is the role of teacher in creating and facilitating a lively classroom interaction. To motivate and inspire students, teacher needs *'tools'* as a *'companion'* throughout the process. Therefore, it is the job of teacher to create enjoyment as much as possible during the process of teaching and learning. The more happiness created in the class is, the more interested students to learn will be. Certain communication styles, verbal skills, practical strategies are things every teacher needs. Supporting those statements, as it is stated by Yanfen & Yuqin (2010) that the success of one classroom relies upon a large extent on the way teachers talk and interactions that occur between teachers and students. Teacher talk does not only influence the rhythm of teaching and learning process, but more likely, it affects students' behavior to learn. Here, the purpose of teacher talk viewed equals as the stimulus to students in giving response, giving feedback, asking questions, increasing an active participation of students (Afifah et al., 2018; Paramma, 2018). To Lei (2009), a "good teacher talk" should be evaluated by how impressively it was able to assist the progress of learning and promote communicative interaction in the classroom.

What is more, EFL teacher does not only provide and pass the materials on to students. They are expected to give an excellent performance in uplifting classroom's atmosphere. The use of teacher talk in teaching and learning process counts as effective in bringing on education's quality. Giving feedback, constant evaluating, clear instructions by teachers have been shown to have a very strong influence on student outcomes (Halimah & Paramma, 2019). As stated by Jang et al. (2010), feedback, formative evaluation, and clarity demonstrated a positive relationship with student engagement. Some affective or motivational aspects of the ideas that build positive teacher-student relationships were also found, such as teacher comes up with some possible options, attempts to build student's interest into the subject.

However, one very vital in significantly impact the result of teaching and learning is teaching method. It is important for ideal outcomes in learning process. Furthermore, in high school's cases, it is essential to promote the value of teaching by lifting the quality of learning and preparing young for thinking skills disposition (Karami et al., 2012). They also added that the more the teacher builds the designated chances for interaction among learners, the more opportunities for criticism in students' exercises and numerous issues are made and it provides a more proper and relevant context for students' critical thinking disposition. As it comes being the forefront, teaching method is particularly necessary as each current insight is reformed by the individual based on its own experience, by which students are the substantial source in learning and teaching process (Starc et al., 2015). Through this process, teacher can raise the desire to gain new knowledge, increase their know-how, and fortify students' grasp.

In attempts to engage students, some strategies of classroom management have been improved to facilitate teachers for keeping students' participation and diminish disruptions in class. Among the generally suggested strategies of classroom management, established teacher praise is recommended to improve student behavior (White, 2010). As a classroom management strategy, praising supports positive change in social behavior of students. Praise is a form of reward that play crucial role in motivating students if the teachers have adequate information of when and how to use it.

The term 'praise' is derived from the *latin* verb *pretiare*, which means to value highly (Shepell, 2000). As its meaning to give a high value, Brophy (1981) stated that praising is one of the spoken honor that has been exceptionally suggested as an influential reinforcement method to accelerate self-esteem and, undoubtedly, strengthen bonding between students and teacher. Abundance of studies showed the relevance of the use of teacher praise or approval and its effect on student behavior (Flora, 2000; Walker et al., 2004; Wheldall, 2005). Finley (2017) has stated that on-task comportment, engagement, effort, and even participation, praising accelerated them all. For both giver and receiver, praise amends the sensibility. It boosts students in plenty practices, such as guide students to pay more attention to details and yield them impetus to attempt better (Szendroi, 2010).

Feedback is counted as one of the most dominant impacts on learning and its attainments, as it is noted by John Hattie in visible-learning.org. Furthermore, the type of feedback depends on the objectives of that feedback itself. There are two types, formative and summative feedback. Formative feedback aims to instruct the process of learning, whereas summative feedback sets sights on how to examine student learning at the end of a learning cycle. An example of summative

feedback is grades. However, the use of formative feedback has been shown to be more useful and efficient. In giving impacts towards students' learning and growth, feedback is crucial to help students as learners. Many ways to response students' performance or behavior, namely verbal, written, or gestural. To sum up, feedback ought to increase students' self-awareness, eagerness, and determination.

As it has been mentioned, teaching method, praising and giving feedback take part as an essential factors of effective learning. Foremost, these three major factors help students understand the subject being studied and, thus, improve their learning.

In measuring the effectiveness of teacher talk in teaching and learning process, we can see the students' perception toward teacher talk. Just after the students give the positive response toward the teacher talk, it means that the teacher talk used by the teacher is categorized as effective language use. Also, it is needed to see students' expectation to set the better process of learning.

However, this research is qualitatively investigated on the students' perception and expectation of teacher talk throughout the process of teaching and learning in EFL classroom context. Some research questions are: (1) How do the students perceive their English teacher? (2) What do students expect from their English teacher?

METHOD

This research was a descriptive qualitative research. This is a method where data is originated coming from exposed behavior of one or some targeted participants. As it is stated by Mohajan & Mohajan (2018), qualitative research is a form of social action that emphasized on the way of how people portray it. This is a natural process that needs in-depth understanding to the phenomena within its natural settings. Some most common qualitative methods are observations, interviews, surveys, etc. Also, it is involved in people's belief, experience, and meaning systems from the views of the people.

Related to previous statement, here the researcher focused on how to explore students' both perception and expectation that occurred during the process of teaching and learning. An English teacher and one class of first year students of SMA Negeri 9 Makassar were subjects of this research. The data were taken by doing interview to some students and observing the class by using video recording. Later, the data of video recording was reduced and transcribed to make it easier when interpreting it. Subsequently, the result of the research was qualitatively presented.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Why is teacher talk considered to be so important in the process of teaching and learning? After years, even decades, the essence of teacher talk has been seriously studied. Nunan (1991) wrote a pivotal root about teacher talk:

> "Teacher talk is of crucial significance, not only for the management of the classroom but also for the series of action of acquisition. Furthermore, it is necessary for the organization of the classroom because it is by language that teachers either accomplish or unsuccessful in carrying their teaching plans out. In terms of acquisition, teacher talk is important because it is likely the notable source of comprehensible target language input the learner is presumably to earn."

The actuality of teacher talk significantly impacts students. Its entities is seen as a system runs for one whole management. Teacher is responsible for creating the social behavior in the classroom. This behavior is primarily a reflection of the teachers' actions and the environment they set. An environment set by the teacher can be either positive or negative. So, by constructing an affirmative atmosphere into the classroom, it is believed that the positive relationship between teacher and students will grow and expand. As a result, it will led to a long-lasting impact on academic and social matter of students' lives. However, after doing observations and conducting interviews to some students, the researcher made notes to some points dealing to students' perception and expectation towards teacher talk that happened.

Students' Perception

Since many researchers were interested in investigating how teacher talk undertaken in one class, this study wanted to focus on the response of students during the process of teacher talk. Three things were being focused here, they were: teaching method, praising and giving feedback. However, there were 5 students randomly chosen as the interviewee in this research. Points below will explain much further about the result of the research.

Teaching Method

From six meetings of observation and the result of the interview, most of the subjects stated that the flow of classroom conversation overruled by teacher. Teacher did not give enough opportunity for the students to use their target language in the classroom interaction. They also gave negative responds to teaching method. During the observations, teacher seemed to provide materials in Bahasa and did use less English in explaining things. After that, the teacher only asked them to do some exercises in book.

After looking at the actual situations above, the researcher then asked students what they think about teacher talk in their class. Here some examples below:

"It was not effective (referring to teacher's way in explaining material), *since we expect to speak. The fact is, teacher only explained things and ordered us to finish the assignment*" said one student.

"I wanted to sleep. I wanted to do but did not understand things" one student added.

"I hope our teacher could design a task to allow us speaking"

Furthermore, Otukile-Mongwaketse (2018) noted that students are more curious in learning exercises when they are able to communicate by each other, likewise eagerly engage in their learning. Affecting from teacher dominant methods may boost educators to move into the ideological realm of liberal humanism which attest to the idea of attending each individual child. The presence of various learners in our classrooms this day constrain teachers to afford access and equivalent quality education for everybody by utilizing approaches that are learner centered in order to empower all learners to take part in their learning as much as it is achievable. In line with him, Nunan (1991) wrote, *"success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language".* As it can be concluded, teacher should provide a suitable classroom

atmosphere where teaching and learning process will run in a lot of fun. Students must get some chances where they could practice their skills. Chances for them to speak English freely yet under supervision and control of teacher. Otherwise, in the long run, if this keeps on happening, students may soon lose interest in learning.

Praising

Another perception emerged is inequality. Being praised is also a matter for students. When the researcher asked about this, their English teacher only biased for particular students. One-sidedness affection of teacher to clever students has been noticed and become serious matter for other students. Brophy (1981) studies have shown some statements of praise to lower students' confidence in themselves. Ineffective praise could restrain students' real concern and desire to study by aiming their awareness on extrinsic rather than the intrinsic rewards that occur from the task itself.

"I know I am not that good. But seeing and listening praises to her/him (referring to clever students) *made me jealous"*

"Seeing them who were praised by answering questions correctly made me insecure. Sometimes I want to try harder, but sometimes I give up"

As they were randomly picked as an interviewee, some students, in fact, have an average English score, while some got low. They reacted that their teacher seemed more comfortable when asking opinion to those who categorized as clever ones. Those students answered teacher's questions freely and correctly. As the reward, they got praises for the effort. However, on the other hand, for those who do not really reply well, would be ignored.

Praise is one of the easiest, simplest, yet most authoritative weapons to motivate and influence your students. If it is effectively used, praise can turn behavior challenges and positively reform students' mindset about learning. Those who discover, learn, and understand differently often earn negative feedback as an outcome of their battles. (Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010) stated that students occasionally refuse to speak although they know what to answers, feels scared of making faults, the fear of losing face and losing self-esteem, etc. The silence of EFL students is a common phenomenon, which often breaks down the communication during the class. Else ways, when teachers underestimate their students, it influences not just the ties of student-teacher, though the whole self-concept of students as well as more concrete standards like students' achievement.

The faith of teacher to their students' academic competency is a fundamental factor for student success and has been connected to students' own beliefs in how far they will improve in school, their attitudes toward school, and their academic performance. On the other hand, students who learn and think differently may struggle to finish exercises or assignment. In fact, it may certainly take several endeavor for students to complete it. As it is stated by Morin (2010), students may feel dispirited when they are working hard, but it feels like their work still is not good enough. You can give your students encouragement by presenting specific praise about their progress and process as they work, letting them know they are on the right track. Goes along with it, Wright (2012) stated that effective teacher should praise effort and accomplishment, not ability. What matters is this will help students to see a direct link in the effort they invest in a task and the

improved academic or behavioral performance. As the conclusion, teachers underestimating their students' abilities actually potentially or more even produces students to get lower academic expectations of themselves; in another words, teachers assume students would achieve less school.

Giving Feedback

Along with two points above, the researcher also took notes of effective feedback. According to students' responses, their English teacher did not answering their questions effectively. When a student asked something that they did not quietly understand, their teacher gave undetailed explanation or sometimes asked another students to answer.

"to be honest, I did not understand the concept of conditional sentence type 3 (referring to class' material) *until now."*

"sometimes I got a clear explanation, but sometimes it is left unclear"

"I don't feel unfair if Mrs.xxx (referring to their teacher) *directly asked us to do exercises in book. Those people who are sitting in front obviously understand, how about us who are sitting at the back?"*

Feedback recognizes as the correction of learners' error and positive reinforcement. Providing feedback is seen as the positive reinforcement to uplift student's confidence and, more further, aim to make students to talk more. Ratnah (2013) stated that rather than assessing the students' contributions, he or she should ask for additional information from the students, formulate or build on the concepts that they expressed in their contributions. Thus, from the perspective of teachers, it counts critical and influential to choose the right verbal feedback. Why so? Because its contact precisely toward positively or negatively on the student's participation.

Teacher's feedback has two predominant objectives. First, to allow students know how well they have performed. It is much dealing to a teacher focuses on the correctness and adequacy of a student's contribution. Besides, the second objective, to increase students' interests and motivation to talk far more. According to Verplaetse, L.S. & Hall (2000), giving feedback is seen as interaction in the classroom that allows students to broaden academically, socially, and communicatively. Also, this kind of interaction affords students the opportunity to share the knowledge they acquire. To conclude this, by stimulating simple feedback, the bonding of teacher and students will provocatively emerged.

Student's Expectation

Besides digging out what students' perception were on teacher talk, the researcher also wanted to know some expectations of students to their English teacher. It counts important to appreciate students' thought about what kind of English teacher do they expect in an effective classroom. During the interview sessions, most of students said that they wanted some changes in teaching process method. They needed more speaking practice, playing English games to create classroom to be more fun, expecting materials to be not so bored. They wanted their English teacher class to be livelier when delivering the material.

Student 1: *"I think we should do more oral practices in our English class".*

Student 2: "Rather than doing things in our handbook like always, maybe Ms. Xxx can give us playing games related to the materials.

Student 3: "For me, I need more and detail explanation before we do the practices".

Student 4: "In some materials, I do it happily. In others, I feel bored. Maybe some methods should be added or changed".

Looking at the facts above, it is important to know that not only teacher has set some expectations for what things will go during the process of teaching and learning, but teacher also need to be opened to understand what students expectations are. When teacher listen and understand what students really want, no doubt that one line of boundary has dismissed. They unconsciously have created a bonding between them.

In the context of teaching and learning progress, teacher as a doer of vital role shall comply to key principles in order to counter the plethora of guidelines, which can change the classroom effectiveness from one focused on learning and academics to one focused on customs and requirements (Williams et al., 2019). It is indeed obviously essential that the classroom expectations are accurate, specific, and approachable. Also, a feasible, appropriate, well-defined expectations count as fundamental to ensure that classroom expectations are properly compatible with school's academic aims. The omission of clear expectations will construct practical problems and uneasiness settings in the class that will drive to confusion, frustration and aggression when expectations crash. If the lack of clear expectations appear, the teacher-centered class will inherently manifest and attempts at student centered management will descend. In the end, looking from a general matter, good teachers should maintain good actions to provoke learning process effectively and efficiently.

CONCLUSION

As the conclusion of the research: (1) most students negatively perceived the teacher talk, especially teaching method, praising and giving feedback; (2) students expected that their English teacher should be more creative and detailed in delivering the materials. Teacher was also needed to provide more games and innovative ways to practice the materials. They wanted their English class to be more fun to avoid being bored.

REFERENCES

Afifah, N., Yusnilita, N., & Resiani, V. R. (2018). An Analysis of Teacher Talk in English Classroom Interaction of the Seventh Grade Students of SMPN 23 Oku. *ETERNAL (English Teaching Journal)*, *8*(2), 2–12. https://doi.org/10.26877/eternal.v8i2.2825

Brophy, J. (1981). Teacher Praise: A Functional Analysis. *Review of Educational Research*. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543051001005

Finley, T. (2017, November 22). *Making Sure Your Praise Is Effective | Edutopia*. https://www.edutopia.org/article/making-sure-your-praise-effective

Flora, S. R. (2000). Praise's magic reinforcement ratio: Five to one gets the job done. *The Behavior Analyst Today*, *1*(4), 64–69. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0099898

Halimah, S., & Paramma, M. A. (2019). Attitudes and approaches of the EFL teachers on scientific approach in Indonesian school context. *Asian EFL Journal*, *23*(3).

Jang, H., Reeve, J., & Deci, E. L. (2010). Engaging Students in Learning Activities: It is Not Autonomy Support or Structure but Autonomy Support and Structure. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *102*(3), 588–600. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019682

Karami, M., Pakmehr, H., & Aghili, A. (2012). Another View to Importance of Teaching Methods in Curriculum: Collaborative Learning and Students' Critical Thinking Disposition. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *46*, 3266–3270. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.048

Lei, X. (2009). Communicative Teacher Talk in the English Classroom. *English Language Teaching*, *2*(1), 323–326. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v2n1p75

Mohajan, H., & Mohajan, H. K. (2018). Munich Personal RePEc Archive Qualitative Research Methodology in Social Sciences and Related Subjects Qualitative Research Methodology in Social Sciences and Related Subjects. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, *7*(85654), 1.

Morin, A. (2010). *The power of effective praise: A guide for teachers*. https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/for-educators/classroom-management/the-power-of-effective-praise-a-guide-for-teachers

Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology* (Vol. 192). New York: Prentice Hall.

Otukile-Mongwaketse, M. (2018). Teacher centered dominated approaches: Their implications for todays inclusive classrooms. *International Journal of Psychology and Counselling*, *10*(2), 11–21. https://doi.org/10.5897/ijpc2016.0393

Paramma, M. A. (2018). Teachers' Perspectives on Scientific Approach in Indonesian Educational Context. In *Asian EFL Journal* (Vol. 20, Issue 5).

Ratnah. (2013). Feedback expressions used by an english teacher of tour and travel department. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *3*(1), 53–67. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v3i1.190

Shepell, W. (2000). *The Power of Praise*. http://www.warrenshepell.com/W

Starc, J., Rodica, B., & Konda, I. (2015). *The significance of teaching methods/forms and organizational forms as important elements for the professional development in the education and training of managers involved in tourism*. *48*, 48–61.

Szendroi, I. (2010). Teacher Talk in the ESP Classroom - The Results of a Pilot Observation Study Conducted in the Tourism Context. *WoPaLP*, *4*(Szendrői), 39–58. http://langped.elte.hu/WoPaLParticles/W4Szendroi.pdf

Verplaetse, L.S. & Hall, J. K. (2000). *Second and Foreign Language Learning Through Classroom Interaction*. Routledge.

Walker, H. M., Ramsey, E., Gresham, F. M., & (Firm), W. L. (2004). *Antisocial Behavior in School: Evidence-based Practices*. Thomson/Wadsworth.

Wheldall, K. (2005). When will we ever learn? *Educational Psychology*, *25*(6), 573–584. https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410500344639

White, R. (2010). *Demonstration of the Effects of an Increased Praise Ratio on Student On-Task Behavior*.

Williams, J. M., Cera Guy, J. N. M. T., & Shore, B. M. (2019). High-Achieving Students' Expectations About What Happens in Classroom Group Work: A Review of Contributing Research. *Roeper Review*, *41*(3), 156–165. https://doi.org/10.1080/02783193.2019.1622165

Wright, J. (2012). *Teacher Praise : An Efficient Tool to Motivate Students*. 1–4.

Yanfen, L., & Yuqin, Z. (2010). A study of teacher talk in interactions in English classes. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *33*(2), 76–86.