

The Students' View on the Impact of Teacher Overcorrection on Their Confidence and Motivation in the EFL Classroom

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Abstract. This study investigates the effects of teacher overcorrection on student confidence and motivation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking classrooms in Indonesia. Despite its importance, the relationship between error correction, student anxiety, and linguistic development remains understudied in Indonesian contexts. This research explores the perceived impact of teacher overcorrection on student self-confidence and motivation, with a focus on the 12th-grade students of SMAN 1 Alalak. The study adopts a qualitative case study approach, triangulating data from teacher interviews, student reflective journals, and preliminary questionnaires. The findings reveal a paradox between teacher intentions and student experiences, with overcorrection undermining student confidence and fostering a fixed mindset. The study highlights the need for teacher training in emotionally intelligent correction practices, balanced assessment methods, and student-centered feedback approaches to promote a growth mindset and enhance fluency development in Indonesian EFL learners.

Keywords: Teacher overcorrection, EFL classroom, student confidence, student motivation, feedback practices

1. LATAR BELAKANG

Overcorrection refers to a phenomenon in which the amount or intensity of correction exceeds what is pedagogically necessary. In English language learning, this often occurs in teacher-student interactions. Excessive correction may lead to negative effects on learners, such as reduced confidence, increased anxiety, or reluctance to participate. This phenomenon aligns with concerns raised by Krashen (1982) and Truscott (1996), who argue that excessive corrective feedback can discourage learners by triggering defensive reactions, embarrassment, or inhibition.

The ongoing tension between accuracy and fluency in the pedagogy of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) remains a significant challenge for educators and researchers worldwide. Although error correction is undeniably important for language development, excessive application can lead to a counterproductive outcome known as overcorrection. This practice is widespread in numerous educational systems and has generated considerable debate due to its potential to diminish learner confidence and impede communicative competence (Hartono et al., 2022). This issue is particularly evident in Indonesia, where traditional pedagogical approaches that prioritize grammatical accuracy often take precedence over the promotion of meaningful interaction. Almohawes (2025) notes that Truscott (1996) argued written corrective feedback “is not only ineffective for L2 students but also harmful,” a claim

that sparked decades of research into error correction, with most subsequent studies concluding that well-structured feedback can be beneficial for learners, though the debate persists.

Since the late 20th century, the global emergence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has significantly altered the landscape of language education by prioritizing meaningful interaction. Brown (2007) notes that CLT advocates for the application of language in real-life situations, establishing communication as both the objective and the method of language acquisition. Likewise, Krashen (1982) contends that the most effective language acquisition transpires in low-anxiety settings, where mistakes are managed in context rather than being subjected to incessant correction. Supporting Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Namaziandost, Nasri, and Ziafar (2019) found that EFL learners who received input at the 'i+1' level (slightly above their current proficiency) "significantly outperformed the 'i-1' group ($p < .05$) on the post-test," reinforcing the importance of comprehensible input in language learning.

In a classroom investigation conducted by Triwinarsih et al. (2018) at a bilingual elementary institution in Semarang, it was found that explicit correction was the predominant type of corrective feedback, representing 24.14% of total feedback occurrences, followed by recasts at 17.24% and various other forms, each comprising 13.79%. While the primary objective of explicit correction is to enhance grammatical accuracy, its excessive application may unintentionally heighten students' anxiety or hinder their willingness to engage in spoken communication, thereby diminishing opportunities for spontaneous language use—a vital element in the development of fluency.

This research explores the phenomenon of teacher overcorrection within Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Through our roles as students and observers, we have noted that while excessive correction of errors aims to enhance linguistic accuracy, it frequently undermines students' confidence to such an extent that they become mute. This disparity between educational objectives and psychological repercussions raises significant concerns. Although educators prioritize grammatical accuracy to align with national examination requirements, many learners experience profound anxiety regarding potential mistakes, leading to a complete withdrawal from speaking activities. This form of avoidance consequently hampers the development of fluency and genuine communication skills—an ironic situation in a nation committed to improving English language competency.

These insights and their broader implications have emerged as a primary focus for our research, stimulating a thorough investigation into this issue and the subsequent formulation of pertinent research questions,

1. What are students' views on the impact of EFL teacher overcorrection on their self-confidence and motivation in the EFL speaking classroom?
2. What is the teacher's view on the impact of EFL teacher overcorrection on students' motivation in the EFL speaking classroom?

2. KAJIAN TEORITIS

This research utilizes four pivotal theoretical frameworks to investigate the psychological, linguistic, and sociocultural effects of teacher overcorrection within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. While these theories do not specifically address the concept of overcorrection, they provide insightful perspectives on how it impacts learner motivation, confidence, interaction, and overall development.

1. Dweck's Mindset Theory (2006)

Dweck distinguishes between a fixed mindset, where students equate mistakes with failure, and a growth mindset, which views errors as integral to the learning journey. In classrooms focused on exam performance, excessive correction may inadvertently convey a sense of inadequacy, prompting students to shy away from risks, limit their verbal expression, and prioritize accuracy over fluency. This theory emphasizes the necessity of cultivating a growth-oriented classroom climate in which mistakes are normalized as part of the educational experience.

2. Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1996)

Long argues that meaningful interaction significantly enhances language acquisition, particularly as learners negotiate meaning and modify their language in response to feedback. He advocates for recasts—subtle, non-intrusive corrections—over overt disruptions. Intrusive overcorrection can obstruct natural communication, dissuade output, and ultimately impede the development of fluency.

3. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985)

Krashen contends that emotional factors—such as anxiety, fear, and diminished self-confidence—serve as barriers that hinder language input. Frequent and public corrections may exacerbate stress levels, thereby activating the affective filter and obstructing effective language processing. Consequently, even accurate corrections may yield limited educational benefit if presented in a way that causes emotional distress.

4. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978)

Vygotsky's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) posits that learners achieve optimal progress when supported with appropriately tailored scaffolding. Feedback must be sensitive, responsive, and congruent with a learner's current developmental stage. Overcorrection could violate these principles, overwhelming students or disregarding their communicative purposes. Vygotsky's framework underscores the necessity for corrective feedback that nurtures rather than inhibits learner advancement.

This investigation is founded on two interconnected assumptions regarding the context of SMAN 1 Alalak:

Firstly, it is presumed that teachers' frequent corrections arise from a genuine desire to assist students in fulfilling exam criteria, especially in grammar-centric assessments. However, a lack of engagement with affective pedagogical strategies, coupled with systemic pressures, may result in a correction-oriented methodology that inadvertently neglects students' emotional reactions.

Secondly, it is posited that students often interpret frequent corrections—particularly in the presence of peers—as criticism rather than constructive support. This interpretation may amplify anxiety (Krashen), reinforce a fixed mindset (Dweck), and inhibit active participation. As a result, students may resort to relying on memorized answers or altogether refrain from speaking.

3. METODE PENELITIAN

This study takes a qualitative case study approach, with a focus on phenomenology, to investigate the impact of teacher overcorrection on students' confidence and motivation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking classes. The qualitative method was chosen for its effectiveness in capturing detailed insights that are rooted in context, allowing for an exploration of students' experiences and perceptions in the dynamic environment of classroom interactions. The research centers around SMAN 1 Alalak, a public high school in South Kalimantan, which provides a specific context for examining how institutional pressures, teacher beliefs, and student responses intersect.

The research was carried out at SMAN 1 Alalak during the 2024/2025 academic year. This school was chosen for its exam-driven culture that prioritizes grammatical accuracy, alongside its diverse student population, representing urban, suburban, and rural backgrounds. This environment reflects the broader challenges faced in EFL education across Indonesia. The study involved one English teacher with over a decade of teaching experience and five 12th-

grade students, specifically selected for their reported experiences with frequent overcorrection, as indicated by an initial questionnaire.

Data were gathered over a three-week period using several key methods: a semi-structured interview with the teacher, a questionnaire for the 12th-grade students, and reflective journals written by the five selected students. Ethical considerations were prioritized, ensuring informed consent and maintaining anonymity by using pseudonyms. The data collection unfolded sequentially, starting with the teacher interview, followed by the student questionnaire, and concluding with the journal entries.

For data analysis, descriptive thematic analysis was employed, concentrating on emotional, behavioral, and motivational trends. The transcripts from the teacher interviews were examined for recurring correction strategies and their underlying reasons. The students' journal entries were analyzed to identify emotional reactions (such as anxiety and encouragement), changes in behavior (like decreased participation and simplified language), and variations in motivation. The questionnaire responses were also utilized to spot broader patterns and to validate findings through triangulation. A comparative analysis of teacher and student viewpoints shed light on any similarities or discrepancies in their perspectives on correction practices, enriching our understanding of how overcorrection influences language learning behaviors.

4. HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

4.1 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are students' views on the impact of EFL teacher overcorrection on their self-confidence and motivation in the EFL speaking classroom?

Findings from Student Reflective Journals (SRJ):

1. Emotional Responses to Correction a. Negative Emotional Impact:

- a. Student A: Neutral but embarrassed/nervous. Described discomfort: "My face feels hot when the teacher interrupts me."
- b. Student C: Frustrated. Felt dismissed by teacher. Resulted in silence: "Now I just smile and stay quiet to avoid being humiliated again."
- c. Student D: Nervous and afraid of making mistakes. Drew a crying emoji to show shame.
- b. Positive Emotional Impact:
- d. Student E: Felt happy when corrected. Saw correction as growth: "Correction = improvement!"

2. Perceived Teacher Intentions Behind Correction

a. Helpful Guidance:

Students A, B, D, E believed corrections aimed to help improve performance.

b. Grade-Oriented Criticism:

Student C felt teacher corrected mainly to get good grades, not for real learning.

3. Behavioral Adaptations to Avoid Correction

a. Risk-Aversion:

- Memorization: Students A, E memorized perfect sentences.

- Silence: Students B, C avoided speaking.

Selective Participation: Student D spoke minimally; Student E spoke with caution.

b. Confidence Trajectories:

- Increased Confidence: Students A, B, E.

- Withdrawal: Student C.

- Neutral: Student D.

Research Question 2: What is the teacher's view on the impact of EFL teacher overcorrection on students' motivation in the EFL speaking classroom?

Findings:

1. Prioritization of Grammar Over Fluency:

Teacher emphasized grammar over pronunciation. Corrections were public and used as examples.

2. Awareness of Emotional Impact:

Teacher tried to use humor to reduce tension. Some students felt it backfired (e.g., Student C).

3. Evolution of Correction Practices:

Teacher admitted to changing from harsh to more explanatory methods. Student data suggest inconsistency.

4. Disconnect Between Intent and Perception:

Teacher believed corrections were constructive. Students like A, C, D felt anxiety and preferred private feedback.

Theoretical Implications:

a. Krashen (Affective Filter): Anxiety blocks learning. Public corrections increased student anxiety.

b. Dweck (Mindset): Overcorrection can cause fixed mindset. Student E's positive response shows growth mindset.

- c. Vygotsky (Scaffolding): Student E improved with private, constructive feedback.

4.2 Description of Research Results

A. Teacher Correction Practices

1. Grammar vs. Fluency Focus:

- a. Teacher said grammar > pronunciation.
- b. Students memorize to avoid mistakes. Fear of correction reduced fluency.

2. Correction Timing & Method:

Teacher claims delayed correction. Students perceive interruptions and public correction.

3. Emotional Impact:

- a. Teacher uses humor.
- b. 35% students felt embarrassed. Student C felt mocked.

B. Student Responses to Correction

1. Avoidance Strategies:

- a. Silence and memorization to avoid mistakes.
- b. 60% avoid speaking due to correction fear.

2. Emotional Consequences:

A: Neutral but embarrassed

B: Neutral

C: Frustrated, felt ignored

D: Nervous

E: Happy and motivated

4.3 Discussion

The analysis derived from students' reflective journals and teacher interviews indicates a notable tension: although correction practices are implemented with good intentions, they frequently produce negative psychological outcomes. The teachers' strong emphasis on grammatical accuracy—motivated by historical and exam-related pressures—often impedes effective communication and increases students' reluctance to take risks in their language use.

Reports from students highlight several recurrent patterns. Instances of public correction sometimes resulted in embarrassment for students (Student C), prompting others to adopt strategies such as memorizing "perfect" sentences instead of engaging in creative language use (Students A and E). Some students reacted by becoming more withdrawn or concealing their anxiety with smiles (Student B), aligning with Krashen's affective filter hypothesis, which posits that stress inhibits learning opportunities. On the other hand, one student (Student E) experienced positive outcomes when feedback was personalized, specific, and encouraging, indicating that the impact of correction can be either beneficial or detrimental depending on its delivery.

Teachers' efforts to integrate humor or provide examples during instruction occasionally failed to connect with students, illustrating a disconnect between the intended teaching approach and the students' reception. Furthermore, systemic issues complicate the possibility of change: assessments that are heavily exam-focused promote a culture of aggressive correction, while insufficient training in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) leads many educators to revert to traditional corrective practices.

The practical implications of this analysis underscore the necessity for straightforward yet effective modifications: prioritizing supportive and individualized feedback (scaffolded); designing assessments that value participation and risk-taking rather than merely flawless execution; and fostering a dialogic, student-centered approach to correction where improvement arises from collaborative negotiation rather than authoritative supervision. Implementing these strategies can mitigate anxiety, enhance fluency development, and transform correction into a genuine pedagogical tool rather than an obstacle to learning.

5. KESIMPULAN DAN SARAN

This study explores the impact of excessive teacher correction on students' confidence and motivation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking classes at SMAN 1 Alalak. The findings indicate a significant discrepancy between teachers' intended purposes in providing corrective feedback and students' perceptions of that feedback. While teachers generally perceive their feedback as constructive and limited in frequency, many students report feeling excessively corrected—particularly when feedback is delivered publicly in front of peers. This mismatch appears to be influenced by a school culture that places greater emphasis on grammatical accuracy and examination performance than on communicative

competence. Consequently, numerous students adopt avoidance strategies, such as memorizing "safe" responses or refraining from participating in class discussions. These behaviors may contribute to the development of a fixed mindset and heightened anxiety. However, the study also reveals that when feedback is provided privately and in a supportive manner, students tend to respond more positively and are more inclined to engage in classroom activities. Based on these findings, it is recommended that teachers adopt feedback practices that are more sensitive to students' emotional well-being, such as delivering corrections in private settings and balancing critical comments with positive reinforcement. Schools should support these practices through targeted professional development programs and by revising current assessment criteria, which often overprioritize grammatical accuracy. Encouraging students to reflect on their preferred modes of receiving feedback may also contribute to a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment. This study acknowledges several limitations, including its confinement to a single school, the short duration of data collection, and the lack of long-term impact assessment. Future research could address these limitations by incorporating longitudinal designs, cross-cultural comparisons, or intervention-based approaches to evaluate the effectiveness of various feedback strategies. Ultimately, attending to the emotional dimensions of corrective feedback is essential for fostering more communicative and supportive EFL learning environments.

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