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Evaluating the Implementation of English Language Teaching in Higher Education Based on Students' Perceptions

Nurlaila Husain

Universitas Negeri Gorontalo
Corresponding Author: nurlailahusain@ung.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the implementation of English language teaching in higher education based on students' perceptions by integrating instructional interactivity, clarity of instruction, feedback quality, and learning barriers within a unified analytical framework. A descriptive quantitative approach was employed, involving 40 fifth-semester students in the 2025–2026 academic year. Data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores, standard deviations, and agreement percentages. The findings indicate that students generally perceive the instructional structure and feedback practices positively, reflecting the application of constructive alignment principles, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and formative assessment. However, the consistency of interactive teaching practices and transparency in assessment still require further strengthening. Infrastructure limitations and restricted access to learning technology emerged as the primary barriers. These findings suggest that improving the quality of English language teaching requires a holistic approach that integrates sound instructional design, reflective assessment practices, and adequate institutional support systems.

Kata Kunci : English Language Teaching, Student Perception, Instructional Interactivity, Formative Assessment, Higher Education

Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengevaluasi implementasi pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di perguruan tinggi berdasarkan persepsi mahasiswa dengan mengintegrasikan dimensi interaktivitas, kejelasan instruksi, kualitas umpan balik, dan hambatan pembelajaran dalam satu kerangka analisis terpadu. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif dengan melibatkan 40 mahasiswa semester 5 tahun akademik 2025–2026. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket skala Likert dan dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa memersepsikan struktur pembelajaran dan kualitas umpan balik secara positif, yang mencerminkan penerapan prinsip constructive alignment, Communicative Language Teaching, dan formative assessment. Namun, konsistensi praktik pembelajaran interaktif serta transparansi penilaian masih memerlukan penguatan. Hambatan utama yang teridentifikasi berkaitan dengan keterbatasan infrastruktur dan akses teknologi pembelajaran. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa peningkatan mutu pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris memerlukan pendekatan holistik yang mengintegrasikan desain instruksional, asesmen reflektif, dan dukungan ekosistem pembelajaran yang memadai.

***Kata Kunci**: pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, persepsi mahasiswa, interaktivitas pembelajaran, asesmen formatif, pendidikan tinggi*

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of instructional implementation in higher education serves as a strategic indicator of institutional excellence and graduate competitiveness in an increasingly globalized environment. In the context of English Education Study Programs, teaching is not solely directed toward linguistic competence but also toward the development of pedagogical competence, digital literacy, critical thinking, and communication skills aligned with twenty-first-century demands. Therefore, evaluating the effectiveness of English language teaching at the tertiary level must extend beyond learning outcomes and examine the instructional processes that foster active student engagement.

Research consistently demonstrates that the quality of higher education instruction is strongly influenced by instructional clarity, classroom interactivity, and effective feedback mechanisms (Harrison et al., 2022; Børte et al., 2023). In language education, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach emphasizes meaningful interaction and authentic language use as the core of the learning process (Savignon, 2018). Meanwhile, formative assessment theory highlights the importance of specific and timely feedback as a mechanism that supports students' self-regulation and academic development (Nicol, 2021; Panadero et al., 2018). Furthermore, the principle of constructive alignment within the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) framework requires coherence among learning outcomes, instructional activities, and assessment strategies (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

Although numerous studies have examined active learning, feedback practices, and technology integration in language classrooms, most tend to focus on individual dimensions separately. Research on classroom interactivity emphasizes student participation (Zhang et al., 2024), while other studies concentrate on strengthening formative assessment systems (Carless & Boud, 2018). Meanwhile, investigations into technological barriers reveal that infrastructure limitations can affect students' learning experiences (Bond et al., 2020). However, comprehensive studies that integrate instructional interactivity, clarity, feedback quality, and structural barriers into a unified evaluative framework—particularly in the Indonesian higher education context—remain limited. This gap calls for empirical research that is both contextual and systematic.

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer three central questions: How do students perceive instructional interactivity and clarity? How do they evaluate the quality of feedback provided by lecturers? What barriers influence their engagement in English language learning? By addressing these questions, this study aims to identify strengths and weaknesses in instructional implementation and provide an empirical foundation for improving teaching quality in a more integrated manner aligned with OBE principles.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative design to evaluate the implementation of English language teaching based on students' perceptions. The participants consisted of 40 fifth-semester students enrolled in the English Education Study Program during the 2025–2026 academic year. A total sampling technique was used, as all students in the cohort were invited to participate.

Data were collected through a closed-ended Likert-scale questionnaire ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), distributed online. All statements were formulated negatively to reduce response bias toward agreement. The instrument was developed based on principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), formative assessment theory, and constructive alignment within the OBE framework. Content validity was reviewed by experts, and reliability testing produced a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.80, indicating high internal consistency.

Descriptive statistics—including mean scores, standard deviations, and agreement percentages (scores 4–5)—were used for data analysis. Because all items were negatively worded, mean scores below 3 were interpreted as indicating positive perceptions of instructional implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the research findings based on the three research questions formulated earlier. The findings are accompanied by critical analysis and international comparisons in order to situate the results within the broader global discourse on the quality of language teaching in higher education. This approach is intended to demonstrate both the theoretical and contextual contribution of the study to the development of OBE-based English language teaching in Indonesia.

1. Students' Perceptions of Instructional Interactivity and Clarity

Instructional interactivity and clarity represent foundational dimensions in evaluating the quality of English language teaching in higher education. These dimensions reflect not only how lessons are delivered, but also how coherently learning objectives, teaching strategies, and assessment practices are aligned within the broader curriculum framework. In outcome-based learning environments, clarity of instruction ensures that students understand what is expected of them, while interactivity fosters meaningful engagement and active participation in the learning process. Examining students' perceptions of these aspects therefore provides essential insight into whether pedagogical principles such as constructive alignment and Communicative Language Teaching are effectively translated into classroom practice.

Table 1. Students' Perceptions of Instructional Interactivity and Clarity

No	Statement	Mean	SD	% Agreement
1	The syllabus is unclear	2.38	0.74	10.0%
2	Assignments are not aligned with learning outcomes	2.15	0.77	5.0%
3	Classes are dominated by lectures	2.62	0.81	17.5%
4	There is little variation in teaching methods	2.35	0.83	12.5%
5	Teaching does not support diverse learning styles	2.38	0.67	5.0%
6	The pace of instruction is inappropriate	2.50	0.64	5.0%

Statistically, all mean scores fall below the midpoint of the scale (3), indicating that students generally hold positive perceptions regarding instructional clarity and classroom interactivity. These findings indicate that the instructional structure demonstrates a coherent alignment between learning objectives and classroom practices, reflecting a deliberate effort to operationalize communicative and outcome-based principles in practice. Within the framework of constructive alignment, coherence between learning outcomes, classroom activities, and assessment is considered a key indicator of instructional quality (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Recent studies conducted in the United Kingdom have shown that clarity of learning objectives and transparency in course structure significantly enhance student engagement and perceptions of teaching quality (Harrison et al., 2022). Therefore, the findings of this study suggest that instructional implementation has begun to align with international pedagogical standards that emphasize coherence in course design.

However, the mean score for the item regarding lecture dominance (M = 2.62) indicates that some students still experience teacher-centered approaches in certain courses. This phenomenon is not unique to this context. Børte et al. (2023), in their study in Norway, found that although active learning is widely promoted at the policy level, classroom practices often remain dominated by traditional methods due to entrenched pedagogical habits and resistance to change. These findings imply that the implementation of interactive pedagogy is influenced not only by curriculum design but also by institutional culture and lecturer readiness.

From the perspective of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), interactivity should be understood not merely as methodological variation but as meaningful interaction that enables students to use language authentically and reflectively (Savignon, 2018). Zhang et al. (2024) further demonstrate that meaningful classroom interaction significantly contributes to the development of communicative competence and intrinsic motivation among EFL students. Thus, although students' perceptions in this study are generally positive, strengthening dialogic engagement and ensuring consistent student-centered practices remain essential to achieving transformative and globally oriented language learning.

2. Students' Perceptions of Feedback Quality

Feedback plays a central role in shaping students' academic development and sustaining learning momentum. In higher education, particularly in language learning contexts, feedback functions as more than corrective commentary; it serves as a formative tool that guides reflection, supports skill development, and promotes self-regulated learning. The quality, clarity, and transparency of feedback determine whether students perceive assessment as developmental or merely evaluative. Therefore, exploring students' perceptions of feedback quality allows for a deeper understanding of how assessment practices contribute to—or potentially hinder—the achievement of intended learning outcomes within an OBE framework.

Table 2. Students' Perceptions of Feedback Quality

No	Statement	Mean	SD	% Agreement
1	Feedback is slow or not specific	2.22	0.73	7.5%
2	Assessment lacks transparency	2.52	0.91	15.0%

The mean score for the feedback item (M = 2.22) indicates that students generally perceive the feedback provided by lecturers as sufficiently clear and timely. Within formative assessment theory, feedback functions as a reflective mechanism that enables students to identify gaps between their

current performance and expected standards (Nicol, 2021). Black and Wiliam (2018) argue that effective formative assessment enhances self-regulation and promotes deeper learning. These findings indicate that assessment practices within the program are increasingly aligned with reflective and developmental models of formative assessment observed in international higher education contexts.

Carless and Boud (2018) introduced the concept of feedback literacy, emphasizing students' ability to interpret and use feedback productively. Their research shows that dialogic feedback enhances student participation and responsibility in learning. Similarly, Panadero et al. (2018) found in studies conducted in Spain and New Zealand that reflective feedback practices significantly improve academic performance. The findings of this study are consistent with this body of literature, as students perceive feedback as a supportive element in their learning process.

Nevertheless, the mean score of 2.52 on assessment transparency signals that a segment of students continues to experience ambiguity regarding the criteria used to evaluate their performance. Such ambiguity may weaken students' perceptions of fairness and diminish their confidence in the integrity of the assessment process. Within an Outcome-Based Education (OBE) framework, clearly articulated and consistently applied assessment criteria are not optional components but structural requirements that ensure coherence between intended learning outcomes, instructional activities, and evaluation practices (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Consequently, the institutionalization of transparent, rubric-based assessment systems aligned with learning outcomes is imperative—not only to satisfy procedural standards, but to reinforce academic legitimacy, strengthen accountability, and cultivate students' trust in the credibility of higher education evaluation practices.

3. Learning Barriers Affecting Student Engagement

While pedagogical design and assessment strategies are crucial, the broader learning environment also significantly influences instructional effectiveness. Student engagement in English language learning is shaped not only by classroom interaction but also by structural conditions such as technological access, classroom facilities, and institutional support systems. In contemporary higher education, where digital tools increasingly mediate teaching and learning, infrastructural readiness becomes an essential component of quality assurance. Investigating the barriers experienced by students therefore helps reveal the contextual constraints that may limit participation, communicative practice, and overall learning achievement.

Table 3. Learning Barriers Affecting Student Engagement

No	Statement	Mean	SD	% Agreement
1	Limited opportunities for language practice	2.30	0.79	10.0%
2	LMS frequently experiences technical problems	2.48	0.75	12.5%
3	Digital materials are difficult to understand	2.22	0.70	7.5%
4	Classroom equipment is not optimal	2.82	0.93	30.0%
5	Audio/video quality is poor	2.38	0.70	7.5%
6	Learning media are not interactive	2.33	0.57	2.5%
7	Limited internet access or personal devices	2.92	1.19	37.5%

The barrier dimension indicates that the primary challenges relate to infrastructure limitations, particularly internet access and classroom equipment. This finding aligns with the concept of the digital divide in global higher education. Bond et al. (2020) argue that technology integration does not automatically enhance learning quality unless supported by adequate facilities and students' digital literacy. Xu and Jaggars (2019) found in the United States that students with limited internet access demonstrate lower levels of participation in online learning environments.

In the context of English language learning, audio-visual resources play a crucial role in developing listening and speaking skills. Without adequate technological support, communicative practices grounded in CLT may not reach their full potential. Without adequate infrastructural support, even well-designed communicative and student-centered approaches risk being reduced to procedural compliance rather than transformative pedagogical practice.

Comparatively, the findings of this study reflect global trends: pedagogical quality may be relatively strong, yet consistency of implementation and infrastructural support remain persistent challenges. In developed countries, barriers often relate to pedagogical transitions and technological

adaptation. In contrast, in the Indonesian context, infrastructure limitations and access disparities remain more dominant concerns. Thus, this study offers a contextual contribution by demonstrating that strengthening English language teaching quality requires a holistic approach—integrating instructional design grounded in constructive alignment, standardized formative assessment practices, and sustainable infrastructural investment. Such a comprehensive strategy would enable English language teaching in Indonesian higher education not only to meet national standards but also to align with international practices.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of English language teaching in the English Education Study Program generally aligns with modern pedagogical principles, including constructive alignment, Communicative Language Teaching, and formative assessment. Students perceive instructional clarity and feedback practices positively, indicating sound instructional design. However, consistency in interactive teaching implementation and assessment transparency requires further improvement. Additionally, infrastructure limitations—rather than pedagogical weaknesses—constitute the primary barriers to effective learning.

To enhance instructional quality, institutions should strengthen interactive teaching consistency through ongoing pedagogical training and standardized rubric-based assessment practices. Developing digital feedback systems may also improve evaluation effectiveness. Moreover, sustained investment in technological infrastructure is essential to support communicative and technology-enhanced language learning. Future research employing mixed-methods approaches or cross-institutional comparisons is recommended to deepen understanding and broaden generalizability. This study contributes to the literature by integrating pedagogical and infrastructural dimensions within a single evaluative framework in the Indonesian higher education context.

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