

TEACHER FEEDBACK AS AN INTERACTIONAL STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN INCLUSIVE EFL CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

This research focused on how teacher feedback influences student participation in inclusive EFL classroom in Palopo, Indonesia. It also investigated how teacher feedback was deployed in classroom interaction, including in relation to patterns of participation, especially relevant for the case of students with special needs. A qualitative two-meeting classroom-based observational case study was carried out at one of Islamic schools in Palopo which involved 9 students (3 with special needs) in meeting 1 and 11 students in meeting 2. Data were gathered from structured classroom observation notes and lesson record including whole-class questioning, worksheet individual completion, word-search task, reading aloud/dialogue activity in the text book, board work and vocabulary check. The coding of the data followed event-based analyses and subcategorized teacher feedback (verbal praise, non-verbal encouragement, prompting and clue-giving, instructional clarification and repetition), as well as pupil behavior. Results indicated that teacher feedback was systematically tied to instructional interaction and was also associated with different types of participation (oral responses, task engagement, peer-checking and public presentation). WLP – Role Assignment & Seeking Clarification. Students with special needs showed high level of role-based participation and clarification seeking in the following indicators for completing structured tasks. The results of this study present teacher feedback as an interactional device of promoting equal participation and offer hands-on approach on how to enhance engagement in inclusive EFL lessons.

Keywords: teacher feedback; student participation; inclusive education; EFL classroom interaction.

1) INTRODUCTION

With an increased emphasis on the need for equitable learning opportunities for all learners, including those with special needs in mainstream classes, inclusive education has become a global imperative. This shift has been grounded in the understanding that the role of educational systems should encompass more than an academic

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focus, but should also involve meaningful participation and social inclusion, and promote learner well-being (Folia & Malisiova, 2025; Singh, 2024; Stalmach et al., 2024, p. 1). In numerous contexts around the world, however not only a policy rhetoric about policies or necessarily being that of written regulations it is also currently beyond becoming aware at what the concept/meant to say: What is practically implemented in classrooms. This is even more critical in the field of language education, where active interaction and communication are at the heart of learning advancement. EFL classes need students to take risks, create language, and respond to classmates and teachers, something that can be intimidating for learners who experience learning challenges, communicative obstacles or low academic self-confidence (Nithideechaiwarachok et al., 2024, p. 6; Raman et al., 2024, p. 137; Sukkaew et al., 2025, p. 491). Thus, participation is not a trivial matter at all but rather one of the relevant questions on how inclusive education actually works in everyday school life.

In Indonesia, inclusive education has become a larger concern as access has needed to be opened and varying learners are accommodated at every level of the educational ladder. However, the practice of inclusion is commonly different between one and another school because it relates to the teacher preparation, learning resource in class, and the complexity of students. (Rahmi et al. 2024: Sunardi Mahaputra Haerudin, MIRADA.3175 ma) In a local context such as Palopo, the classroom dynamics of inclusivity could mean having all types of learners in one class and this may include students with special needs who need more support and encouragement while learning. Evidence from a mainstream English classroom shows how participation is influenced by what goes on during the lesson, including teacher talk (questioning, praise and supportive feedback in student tasks) (D'Elia et al., 2025, p. 2; Q. Wang & Newell, 2025, p. 100894; Y. Wang et al., 2024; Xiao-hui & Kim, 2025). In the presence of supportive, reasonable teachers who explain effectively and reward students with positive feedback, learners may be more likely to speak up in class, answer questions or take risks with work despite lack of certainty. Therefore, the study of teacher feedback in inclusive English classrooms is significant as it provides us with practical understandings about how teachers

can promote equitable participation and learning opportunities for all students, including those who are peripheralized in classroom interaction.

Teacher feedback is a kind of information that describes the learner's performance, understanding or learning behavior given by the teacher with objectives to enhance improvement and facilitate learning progress (Harber et al., 2025, p. 2; Suseno, 2024, p. 26). Feedback may be provided verbally (e.g., "Good job," "Try again," "You can do it") or nonverbally (e.g., thumbs-up, nodding), and instructional scaffolding includes rewording questions and hints. In the inclusive EFL class, feedback can play some roles: it reinforces correct answers by student, reduces anxiety, motivates students and also helps all students to take part without being afraid. On the other hand, students learning involvement can be perceived through what they engaged in classroom activities, such as answering questions, following instruction, participating in discussion, reading aloud and doing an activity (Bergdahl et al., 2024; Suryati et al., 2024). In the context of a group classroom setting serving students with and without disabilities, which in English may simply carry out worksheet activities while their peers silently work alone, more explicit promptings can be provided to children at different levels within each iteration. Supportive feedback may help encourage the student to continue participating in completing a task, volunteer to read dialogue aloud, or interact more confidently with his or her peers when completing a task (Duka et al., 2024, p. 304; Halim et al., 2024, pp. These classroom exchanges demonstrate how feedback from a teacher can influence participation structures and possible closing of the participation gap for students with SEN.

More recently, the role of teachers' feedback on student motivation and engagement has been studied in an increasing number of studies. In one study, researchers wanted to determine the impact of formative feedback on students' tendency to engage in language learning activities, adopting a quasi-experimental design and contrasting feedback-rich teaching with traditional lecturing (Cruz, 2025; Hameed et al., 2025, p. 3; Yang, 2025). Results suggested that students who received solid, constructive feedback tended to be more engaged and participate more in classroom interactions. These findings mean that feedback does serve

not only as an evaluative mechanism but also a motivator that increases classroom participation. Likewise, another research looked into teacher praise and corrective feedback as to students' speaking confidence in the EFL settings observed through classroom observations along with student questionnaires (Khoudri, 2024, p. 241; Liu & Aryadoust, 2024; Nithideechaiwarachok et al., 2024). Findings indicated that positive feedback enhanced the learners' confidence level and reduced their fears of making mistakes, resulting in more students volunteering responses during teacher questioning. This indicates that feedback may help to maintain psychological safety, which is crucial for engagement in a language classroom where participants will inevitably make mistakes.

In broader EFL contexts, inclusion studies emphasize the significance of accommodating teacher practice for students with special needs. In another study, teachers' scaffolding of participation for students with disabilities in regular classrooms was investigated through qualitative case studies, involving video-recorded classroom observations and interviews (Carpenter et al., 2023; Malizal & Rizqi, 2025). Contents The study found that students were most engaged when teachers gave concise prompts, reiterated instructions, used positive affirmations while student was working on a task. The results suggest that the mere grouping of students in one classroom is not sufficient to create inclusive participation and that it must be actively enabled by the teacher. Similarly, a combined study investigated the link between teacher feedback strategies and engagement of special needs learners in inclusive secondary schools (Zhang, 2025). The quantitative results suggested a positive relationship between frequent feedback and measures of engagement, while the qualitative data suggested that the students appreciated specific, encouraging feedback. This suggests the importance of not just feedback frequency but also feedback quality, especially for students who need confidence and understanding.

Conversely, some work also indicates that while feedback may drive increased participation its association is not automatic when the feedback is poorly presented or perceived as judgmental. For example, a study investigated the effect of negative feedback on students' speaking related anxiety through an analysis of survey data and classroom

observations (Azizah et al., 2025; Ross & Stückler, 2025, p. 404). Too much direct or public correction led to increased anxiety in some students and as a consequence their participation decreased in the following speaking activities. This underscores the importance of feedback that calibrates correction with encouragement, even in classrooms that are inclusive and where students may be susceptible to social comparison. Similarly, studies dealing with the patterns of teacher-student interaction revealed that the teacher feedback tends to point towards high achieving students which inadvertently hinders quieter or learners who are falling behind (Karaman et al., 2023; Lademann et al., 2026, p. 2; Nicolay & Huber, 2023). This means that feedback routines should be fair and open, so that all learners can benefit from encouragement and instruction.

Studies have also investigated participation as a fundamental goal in inclusive classrooms. The ethnographic observation was conducted in this study, which questioned how classroom strategies 'inclusify' the teaching process and promoted participation and peer relations (Ainscow & Sandill, 2021). The researchers found that participation was higher when teachers employed functions such as interactive questioning, structured group tasks and supportive feedback; this was the case especially for students who were less inclined to speak. This indicates that the classroom culture and teacher guidance play very important role in participation. In a similar study in EFL, also of mixed-ability learners, classroom talk was analyzed to examine patterns of participation (Nithowthai & Tantisiriroj, 2024; Ross and Stückler, 2025). Results suggested that teacher prompts and feedback sequences helped to determine who participated, when, and how often. What this suggests is that teacher feedback is part of classroom interactional patterns and so available to open (or close) participation spaces for various learners.

Collectively, previous studies have consistently found that teacher feedback is strongly related to learner involvement, confidence and in-class communication, especially in language learning environments. Research in EFL classrooms has shown that constructive feedback can alleviate anxiety and increase motivation to communicate (Nithideechaiwarachok et al., 2024, p. 6; Ross & Stückler, 2025, p. 407), while in inclusive education literature the importance of

feedback as a crucial source of support for students with special needs has long been underscored (Nithideechaiwarachok et al., 2024, p. 6; Ross & Stückler, 2025, p.407). Meanwhile, the evidence also suggests that feedback is not all wonderful though; its effectiveness depends on the manner in which it was given, whether it was fair and if it encourages psychological safety rather than fear of evaluation (Jin et al., 2025, p. 2 (ochukuta@gmail.com et al., 2025; Ross & Stückler, 2025). Therefore, teacher feedback becomes a means for promoting or discouraging participation according to its design and classroom use.

However, despite these understanding there are still important gaps in the literature. First, a number of these researches focus on feedbacks and interaction in mainstreamed classrooms rather than inclusive EFL ones with SN learners learning together with regular ones. Therefore, little is known how feedback operates within the temporal context of real-time inclusive classroom events using English, especially during task-based learning such as worksheet fill-in, reading aloud and teacher-led questioning (Ross & Stückler, 2025). Secondly, empirical work is frequently dominated by relatively coarse survey measures of engagement as opposed to the analysis of classroom interaction per se which can render invisible interactional detail around non-verbal feedback, scaffolding moves and in-the-moment teacher responses that collectively structure participation minute by minute (Bergdahl et al., 2024). Third, studies in the Indonesian context – such as this study conducted in a local community setting distant from a large urban center—tend to be underrepresented in international publications although there might be differences between local and global contexts in terms of teacher resources, student diversity and classroom interactional practices (Akmal et al., 2024, p. 1191). Overcoming these barriers is important because adopting inclusive education requires practical strategies in the classroom, and teacher feedback is among the most proximal and changeable of a teacher's practices.

Accordingly, the study seeks to investigate how teacher feedback affects student participation in inclusive English classroom activities as practiced by Teachers in Palopo Indonesia. More specifically, the research aims to explore how teacher feedback - both verbal

and non-verbal feedback - scaffolds learner engagement in interactive English lessons (including those for special learners). The research is guided by the following questions: (1) What types of teacher feedback are given during inclusive English classroom activities? (2) What is the role of teacher feedback in students' participation patterns in lesson interaction? (3) What are the responses of students with disabilities to teacher feedback during classroom activities? Predicted by the previous findings on the beneficial effect of supportive feedback on engagement, we also propose that teacher feedback which is supportive, specific and scaffolded would be positively related to student participation including students with special needs (Hamzah & Ishak, 2024).

Methodologically, this study adopts an observational in-class design to access the real-life teacher-learner interactive and participative behaviors. Observational data for classroom instruction should be acquired by structured observation notes and lesson transcripts on teachers' feedback moves (e.g., praise, prompts, clarification request), readership response behaviors (e.g., response offers, asked and answering questions, reading aloud) and task engagement in spoken interaction. The reason for this design is our theoretical stance that participation should be regarded not as a classroom memory-based attitude but, lean to understanding it at contextual moment developed through interactions. According to this hypothesis, teacher feedback should result in obvious changes in student participation - e.g. increased frequency of responding to teachers' questions and greater readiness to perform behavior publically. For example, it was predicted that when teachers give clear instructions, repeat explanations and support the effort by giving supportive feedback, students with special needs are hypothesized to have higher levels of engagement and lower levels of T-L than seen in other groups.

This research adds to the body of knowledge with context-specific information about how teacher feedback serves as an inclusion support in EFL classroom. Its originality is that it looks at feedback-participation interactional relations within a real inclusive English classroom in Palopo Indonesia, and where teacher moves become one of the focus on what sustain student engagement. Pragmatically, results may be used to support teachers'

professional learning about effective feedback practices that facilitate equitable participation for students with disabilities and other students who have fallen behind. In theoretical terms, the analysis deepens understanding of participation as consequential interaction and how it is shaped by teacher talk and scaffolding practices (Erickson, 2007) providing a view into what inclusion looks like not only in policy but also instruction as practice in Nithideechaiwarachok et al. (2024, p. 4). Finally, in explicating how teacher feedback motivates participation for inclusive English classroom activities, the study serves in promoting teaching practices that are more sensitive and humanistic to English teachers than none is left behind.

2) METHODS

Research Design

To achieve this purpose the present study utilized a case study design in a classroom setting that involves: qualitative directional analysis and observation Teacher feedbacks effects on students' participation during activities in inclusive English class. This design was selected because participation is an interactive process that is best observed in real time taking place between the teacher and students in a genuine classroom (Luo, 2023; Rasmitadila et al., 2021, p.8)

Participants

The targeted population was the students in a mainstream English classroom at one of Islamic schools in Palopo, Indonesia. Convenience purposive sampling was applied in this study by identifying one intact control room that (a) used EFL instruction and, (b) included special needs students in the same classroom. The class that the study focused on took place in two meetings. According to classroom record, during meeting 1, 9 students were in attendance with three of them having special needs and for the meeting 2 there were 11 students in attendance. Also, variation in attendance was considered a natural aspect of the classroom environment and did not result in replacement of participants. Participants were included if they: were in the observed class, attended the observed lesson, partook in one or more classroom activities (e.g., responding to a question, reading aloud presenting work etc.).

The following students were excluded from analysis: those who did not attend the meeting observed and therefore do not appear in any recorded interaction segment, who were absent that week, or who participated passively.

Instruments

The instruments included observation, reflective notes, lesson materials.

a. Observation

For the observation, a structured procedure was developed specifically for this study to collect data. The protocol was composed of lesson metadata (date, time, topic, number of attending students), classroom activity type (review, explanation, worksheet practice reading aloud and quiz), teacher feedback categories (praise prompts scaffolds correction instruction clarification) and student participation indicators (response volunteering reading aloud task completion). Further the protocol was used sequentially across meetings to capture feedback and participation events.

b. Reflective Observation Notes

Two series of observational notes served as primary data sources including meeting 1 note on inclusive classroom discourse during conditional sentence lesson and worksheet completion, and above-mentioned behaviorist observation in individual level and meeting 2 note that documented narrative text instruction, questioning student interactively, word-search activity, vocabulary checklist. These notes included specific teacher actions (e.g., praise, prompts, non-verbal feedback) and forms of student participation (e.g., answering questions, reading aloud, going to the chalkboard).

c. Lesson Materials

Materials observed during teaching learning process were English lesson subject of Conditional Sentences (Meeting 1) and Narrative Text (Meeting 2), worksheets worked in pair, word-search sheet work and vocabulary exercise, PPT through LCD on screen at Meeting 2.

Procedure of Data Collection

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a. Timeline

The data were collected during two classroom sessions with meeting 1 on Monday, 25 August concerned with lesson (starting at 13:13) of conditional sentences review and worksheet activities); and meeting 2 on Monday, 8 September referred to narrative text lesson supported by the PPT, as well as wordsearch activity and vocabulary checking.

b. Step-by-Step Data Collection Procedure

In all meetings, the following practice was adopted. Step 1: entering the classroom and recording context. The observer arrived to the classroom before the lesson starts and noted: lesson metadata —date, time of beginning, topic taught; number of students attending; and presence or absence of special needs students. Step 2: Observation of lesson opening. The observer recorded the opening routine (welcome, prayer, checks of who was present) and videotaped first teacher questions going over old material. Step 3 was to monitor teacher feedback in the lesson. The observer recorded teacher explanation and questioning episodes. Every teacher feedback occurrence was categorized as an "event" that involved: the type of teacher feedback (praise/prompt/correction/scaffold), the immediately preceding student action (response/hesitation/ incorrect response) and whether or not it took place in the context of a review, explanation or reading aloud or task teaching. Observed examples of feedback actions were teacher praise (verbal and non-verbal), request for applause, and direct assistance to special needs students in task doing. 4th step is to observe how students participate in activities. In each activity segment (worksheet, reading dialogue, vocabulary), the observer noted participation markers such as: students asking teacher questions, students raising their hands and being called on or volunteering to answer questions, students going up to board/front of room at teacher's request or as volunteers; pairs or whole-class interaction where students seemed engaged. For any of these parameters, time or sequence ordering of participation events were captured if possible. Step 5: Explicit documentation of being inclusive. During students with disability interactions with the teacher, the observer noted how many times each of: teacher scaffolding behavior (approaches, repeats instructions, gives clues), student response patterns (attempts, follows up by questioning and remains

persistent), and teacher encouragement/reinforcement was observed. This focus was necessary because inclusive classrooms could manifest distinct participation dynamics between students. And the final, Step 6 was lesson close. The observer took field notes on wrap-up activities and last teacher talk, authored reflection following the lesson to minimize recall bias.

c. Data Management

Observation notes were consolidated into a single data set organized by: identification number, meeting number, activity segment, feedback event codes and participation event codes. To facilitate study replication, descriptive statistics for the dataset aligned with the order in which results would be presented: (1) feedback types, (2) indication of participation, (3) feedback–participation sequence by illness type and 4 inclusive participation episodes.

Data Analysis

Data analysis: Preparing and coding, analytic approach, software and reliability checks method.

a. Preparation and Coding

Analysis proceeded in a systematic manner following qualitative coding: Familiarization The researcher read and re-read the entirety of Observation Notes for both meetings multiple times to become familiar with patterns of feedback and participation that were consistent across these observations. For segmentation, the notes were segmented into interaction episodes around episode boundaries (e.g., teacher questioning, worksheet instruction, read aloud). During initial coding, the following categories were used to code for each instance of teacher feedback: praise/affirmation; non-verbal encouragement; prompting/clue giving; instruction clarification/repetition; corrective feedback, scaffolding support for students with special needs.

In addition, in participation coding, student participation events were coded into the following categories: oral response to teacher question, voluntary participation, reading aloud, task completion attempt, board/front of room participating and student question to teacher

b. Analytic Strategy

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The analysis proceeded iteratively through the data in line with the planned structure of a results section: 1) identification of the most frequent, and key teacher feedback types across meetings; 2) a description of participation patterns across activities (review, worksheet, reading aloud,, word-search); 3) mapping feedback–participation sequences; 4) investigating immediate participation following feedback (promptness); and finally, focused analysis on inclusive participation episodes for students with special needs.

c. Software

Coding and data management conducted by hand in tables, or Qualitative Analysis Software (e.g., NVivo, ATLAS.). If summaries are necessary (e.g., counts of frequencies), then each category's sums and percentages can be computed in a spreadsheet application such as Microsoft Excel.

d. Reliability Checks

In order to improve reliability, coding guidelines were developed before the full analysis. For replication studies, a second coder can code a random sample of episodes and measure inter-rater agreement (e.g., Cohen's kappa) (O'Connor & Joffé, 2020)..

3) RESULTS

The Observed Lessons at a Glance

The research reporting in this study is based on two observations of a classroom practice in inclusive English Class. Meeting 1 took place on Monday the 25th of August 2025 and commenced at around thirteen minutes past one. The subject of the lesson was Conditionals and the attendants were 9 students, three of them with special educational needs. Opening: The session began with a greeting, prayer, and attendance taking; then 5 minutes of review occurring with the teacher who utilized whole-class questioning. Finally, students worked independently on a worksheet with teacher assistance and support. Meeting 2 was held on Monday, 8 September and concentrated on Narrative Text. There were 11 students in the class, and definitions, functions and examples of narrative text through LCD/PPT presentation by teacher. The primary learning activities during the two meetings were whole class question and answer, complete worksheet, find-the-word game, reading aloud/dialog

performance, and vocabulary check or memorization.

Types of teachers' feedback observed

In these two lessons that were observed, the teacher used a range of feedback strategies to enable student involvement and engagement with tasks. First, classroom interaction was often characterized by verbal praise and positive feedback. Praise words, like “Good job,” and confirmation statements, such as “Correct,” were given following students’ responses to questions or their completion of tasks. Furthermore, the teacher occasionally encouraged learner participation by asking for a round of applause; especially after learners completed reading tasks or participated orally in front of classmates. Second, nonspeech movement feedbacks were available in the form of supporting gestures (e.g., thumbs-up) for maintaining the flow of lesson while acknowledgment of student responses was fulfilled without speech (Allwood, 2006). Third, questions and clues were provided when students encountered difficulty in responses. When students were not able to explain the word “entertain,” for instance, a clue that connected it to familiar real-world environments was given by the teacher before students themselves presented the target meaning. Fourth, instruction reminders and repetition were provided to help guarantee that students understood the task procedures. The teacher reiterated instructions on how to complete worksheets and rules for word search and matching tasks. Finally, corrective linguistic feedback was suggested at times during which learners provided inaccurate responses (twelve instances) such as misstep with story examples or vocabulary items, and the teacher offered immediate correction for the sake of accuracy in lesson delivery.

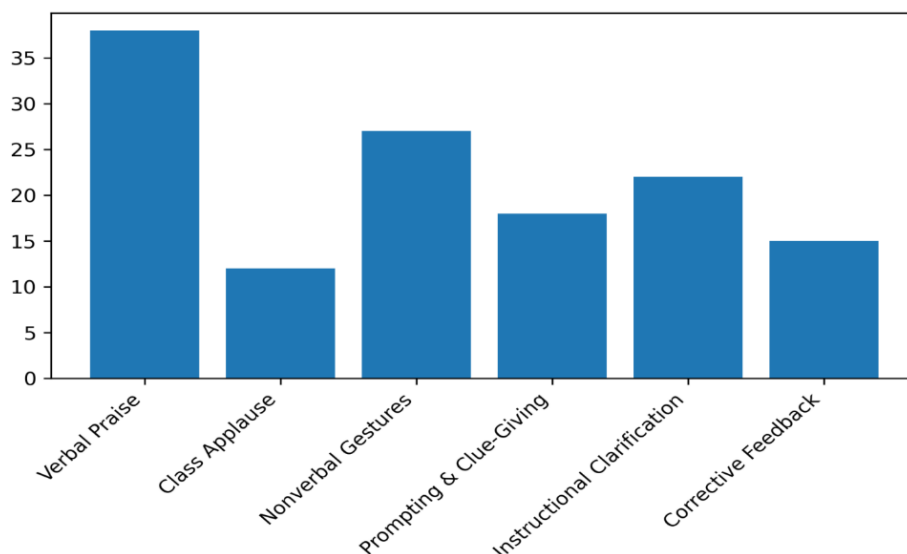


Figure 1. Frequency of teacher feedback types

Student Participation Behaviors for Various Classroom Activities

There were a number of types of student participation in the two lessons. Participation in whole-class discussions Firstly, whole class interaction was demonstrated during question and answer sessions of the teacher. They responded to questions with long answers, and they did so when called by the teacher's use of their names in review exercises and vocabulary checks. This dialogue took place in all two lessons as students provided brief responses such as examples and definitions, during teacher-fronted discussion. Second, involvement in task-based activity was documented by whether a given participant completed their task. In the first lesson, material was completed individually, drawing on a dialogue to answer questions. For Lesson 2, students completed a word search by finding the vocabulary and shared their answers during class review. Third, participation in public performance was the case when students were required to present before the class. This involved speaking dialogues by means of taking roles and doing board work as answering questions, finding words or presenting task outcomes. Fourth, there were examples of peer participation through a worksheet exchange activity. Students exchanged their work with a partner to perform peer-

checking after finishing the worksheet at which point the teacher conducted whole-class correction. This exercise was to check other student's answers and confirm the correct ones as a group.

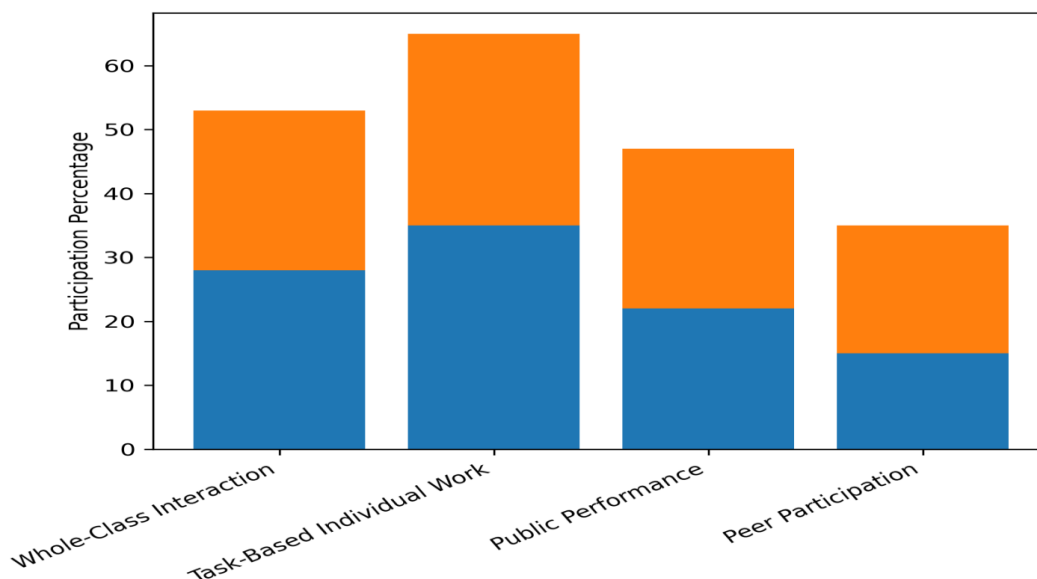


Figure 2. Stacked participation patterns across two meetings

The Participation of Special Needs Students

There was visible participation in several aspects by the students with special needs, including both meetings in the classroom. First, 'active participation' classes were described to have students assigned some specific roles or being directly asked to participate. This entailed reading aloud in class, responding to teacher questions during whole class exchanges, and coming to the front of class to work through tasks or offer responses publicly. For instance, students interacted in reading dialogue while they were demonstrating a task in lesson activities. Second, there was a high level of request for clarification behavior. SWD would repeat questions for clarification on directions, specifically times when the task was structured (i.e., completion of a worksheet, classroom activity with multiple steps). In a few cases, the teacher answered by repeating instructions or going toward the student to give clarifications. Third, interactive memory was discovered to be a unique type of participation. One student

repeatedly brought up the teacher's whereabouts outside of class and asked whether the teacher had been seen at certain places. These interactions took place in the context of a lesson, and were included as part of the student's oral interaction with the teacher. In all patterns, participation of students with SEN took place in academic engagement (e.g., task performance and responses) and social interaction (e.g., asking questions or initiating conversation), observed during the observation phases.

4) DISCUSSION

Concise Summary of Main Findings

The present study looked into the ways in which teacher feedback influenced the participation of students with disabilities concerning their inclusive English classroom activities in Palopo, Indonesia. Results reveal that the teacher consistently employed verbal praise, nonverbal encouragement, prompting, repeated re-formulation, and corrective feedback in two lessons. Student responses were in the form of answering questions, caring out tasks individually, crossing publicly onboard work and individual reading aloud and mutual checking. Students with special needs were engaged when directly invited with very structured roles and frequent explanations. Variation 5 Other than patterned interaction, the classroom was also characterized by spontaneous student exchanges and humor related ones as well as participation occurring in non-instructional turns showing that participation extended beyond planned instructional turns.

Interpretation besides “More Participation” and for the Research Question/Hypothesis

The results imply that teacher feedback in a natural setting of inclusive EFL classrooms has not been reduced to an evaluative mode, but it is applied as its pragmatic tool which construes interactional access and participation outcomes. That is, feedback functioned as a control shell of the classroom and a self-esteem of learners, keeping active engagement across tasks. ‘Participation’ in this sense was not restricted to speaking turns, but encompassed task engagement, clarification-seeking or public performance, consistent with a broader

understanding of participation as behavioral involvement in learning events.

In relation to research question 1, there is evidence that different types of feedback were used during the observed lessons such as praise, prompting, clarification, nonverbal reinforcement and correction. This also demonstrated that teachers' feedback in this classroom was multi-dimensional and not focused on correct/incorrect judgement.

For research question 2, results show that patterns of participation often solved temporally with feedback-rich moments. Students were also more visibly participating in teacher-directed activities and interactional sequences where the teacher provided directions, cued responses, and praised student contributions. Although observational design precludes any causal claims, it provides fairly clear evidence that feedback practices and participation episodes are highly related across lesson activities.



Figure 3. Students working on tasks

For steps 3 and 4, the results suggest that students with disabilities participated in a variety of classroom formats and were more actively engaged when provided with structured roles or repeated instructional support. Their engagement, however, did comprise of clarification seeking establishing that participants can engage via questions and confirmations as well as correct responses.

In short, the study's working hypothesis that supportive feedback will be reactive to children with SEND as well as others is supported by the interactional patterns found here. Such support is evidenced in recurrent patterns where feedback was succeeded by student contribution, task-continued work or public engagement.

Underlying Mechanisms and Explanatory Frameworks

Explanation for Relationship Between Observed Feedback and Effective Participation
Many theoretical frameworks account for why feedback observed was related to patterns of participation in this inclusive English classroom.

There are also theoretical perspectives that support the role of teacher support in fostering participation and challenge beyond independent tasks, such as sociocultural theory, which theorizes that learning occurs within social interaction (Eslit, 2025; Medina & Espinoza, 2024; Xiao-hui & Kim, 2024). For the purposes of our study, prompting and providing clues were viewed as scaffolding moves that allowed students to continue participation when they encountered difficulties with vocabulary or content questions. For instance, the teacher gave a hint based on contextual knowledge when students were not able to define “entertain” meaning that children depended on cues to arrive at an answer. This example shows how scaffolding can turn reluctance into engagement.

The second reason is a formative assessment point of view; feedback must not only evaluate but provide guidance for improvement (Hoe et al., 2024, p. 15; Rodriguez et al., 2025, p. 32). The teacher’s reiteration of instructions during work-sheets and structured tasks suggests that feedback was serving an instructional purpose clarifying tasks, reducing confusion, and guiding task completion. This is particularly important in inclusive classes where students might need extra scaffolding to enable them to fairly access learning tasks.



Figure 4. Teacher providing guidance to SEN

The third is self-determination theory, which treats the participation as motivated by goals and psychological needs such as the need for competence and relatedness (Heikkinen et al., 2025). Compliments, applause requests, and nonverbal encouragement would have worked to increase students' perceptions of competence and social recognition as well as enable them to build their confidence for responding and performing in public. This possibility is potentially critical with SNNs, where students with disabilities may require more explicit support and encouragement in heterogeneously grouped contexts.

Fourth, based on classroom discourse, teacher talk prescribes how interactional structures such as turn-taking and nomination can be managed (Indrariyani et al., p. 903). The teacher established predictable points of entry into participation when calling students by name, assigning reading roles, and directing board work. For students with disabilities, this predictability can minimize the unknown and maximize willingness to participate.

Last, the surprising participation patterns jokiness, laughter and informal interaction hint at classroom climate. Humour and casual interaction can break the affective barriers that inhibit students from participating even when they are not sure. Though these were not always purely academic experiences, they encouraged students to actively engage and vocally participate through transitions between lessons.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The current results are consistent with previous research (Máñez et al., 2025) that there is a relationship between feedback, engagement, and class participation in EFL environments. It has been suggested that praise and encouragement may alleviate anxiety and foster willingness to communicate, which were also evident in this study when the verbal reinforcement and gestures following students' responses were considered (Khoudri, 2024:243; Zhong et al., 2024:330). Similarly, the emergence of prompting and clues accords with other findings that scaffolding feedback maintains engagement in challenging tasks (Feng et al., 2025; Khoudri, 2024, p. 243; Mu & Schunn, 2025).

The implications are also consistent with the inclusive education literature that students with special needs will be more likely to be involved when teachers providing scaffolding, offer repetitive instruction, and observe effort (Zhang, 2025). The current study contributes to this literature by

demonstrating inclusive participation within a range of task types—worksheet fill-in, word search, dialogue reading, and vocabulary activities—in an Indonesian secondary school environment.

On the other hand, some researches reveal corrective feedback may negatively impact participation rates if students consider it as threat or embarrassing gesture (Afreilyanti & Kuswandono, 2024; Michaud et al., 2025, p. 26; Zuraída & M.R., 2025). In this classroom, however, corrective feedback did not seem to mute interaction; there was some participation alongside laughter and peer responses. One conjecture is contextual: the teacher's reformulation was not isolated from a generally affirming classroom atmosphere and students reacted to it by staying engaged rather than disengaging. A second potential explanation is that in the classroom environment, teachers may have become used to correction, where it is expected and accepted as part of learning.

Moreover, some literature has pointed to unequal participation opportunities, with feedback and attention being more focused on high achieving students (Lipnevich et al., 2025; Nithideechaiwarachok et al., 2024: p. 6; Ochôa et al., 2024: p. 248). In the current study, teachers interacted regularly with students with disabilities through clarification and assigning roles, implying purposeful integration in participation structures. This discrepancy could be attributed to the setting of an inclusive classroom and teacher's teaching concern.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This study offers insights for theory by framing teacher feedback as a participation-shaping affordance in inclusive EFL settings. In contrast to the view of feedback simply as performance evaluation, findings in this study indicate that while at its core feedback is a lever that regulates access to interaction (Järvelä, 2013; Krakowiak & Newswander, 1990), it also serves to keep learners engaged across tasks and provide support for learners with differing needs. Participation also appears to be multidimensional (which functions should it include and which should not—it includes verbal responses, task engagement, public performance and clarification seeking), meaning that the notion of inclusive participation could possibly exceed speaking rate.

For teachers, they suggest useful techniques to encourage equitable participation: affirmation (both verbal and non-verbal) that can provide sustained motivation, prompts and clues that stem engagement during difficulty, repetition and simplification of instructions when engaged on a multi-step

task, class teachers facilitate structured roles (such as reading dialogue) so pupils are able to predict when they will be required to contribute. 2) tendency maintains elements of correction for the participants themselves but aims to balance this with encouragement; it fosters accuracy without disallowing children from contributing additional contributions. In addition, for schools and policymakers, professional development should be directed at inclusive feedback practices emphasizing the role of feedback as instructional scaffolding and participation support simultaneously especially in mixed-ability classrooms.

Limitations

Several limitations should be considered. First, the research was conducted in a qualitative observational design and data were collected during two sessions only so findings on development of participation over time remained restricted. Second, it was a one-classroom/one-school study and generalizability to other contexts is limited. Thirdly, only notes taken from observations and documentation of lessons were used in the study without triangulated data from interviews, surveys or video recordings. Fourth, participation was assessed in terms of overt behavior, which may underrepresent silent participation or internal learning. Last, observer presence and documentation of reflexive notes may have led to bias or impact classroom behavior.

Future Research Directions

To better understand the process in an EFL context, further research could explore inclusive EFL classrooms for a longer duration to examine how participation evolves. Multi-site study of other regions in Indonesia will enhance generalizability and provide opportunities for comparisons. A study using mixed-methods design such as observation in combination with interviews and questionnaires would help us gain a better understanding of how students experience feedback and why they do or not engage. Additionally, attention could be given to a more fine-grained analysis of the quality of feedback (general praise versus specific feedback) and investigation into how correction style influences participation for students with different backgrounds. New research questions could be: How is feedback strategy related to WTC among special needs students?

Significance and Contribution

In summary, the study shows that teacher feedback is one of the most important factors influencing participation in an inclusive English lesson. On the basis of how praise, prompting, clarification, nonverbal encouragement and correction are dovetailed by teachers over sequence-relevant units of pupil intake to provide responsive learner support, findings illustrate that inclusion is achieved through quotidian teaching practices that facilitate learner engagement and access. The results add more context-specific evidence from Palopo, Indonesia and consolidate the conceptualization of participation as an interactional outcome mediated by feedback and classroom climate. Finally, this study highlights teacher feedback as an effective, flexible tool to foster equitable participation and a more inclusive language learning experience for all students who have special needs.

5) CONCLUSION

Drawing insight from the Slavin (1991) model of cooperative learning, this article explores how teacher feedback influences student participation in an inclusive English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in Palopo, Indonesia, taking into account the special needs learners' participation. Specifically, the purposes were to (a) account for the types of feedback provided by teacher and (b) describe how teacher's feedback practice was related to students' participation in classroom activities.

Generally, results indicated that the teacher employed several feedback types including verbal praise and reinforcement, non-verbal encouragement, prompting and clue giving-instructional clarification and repetition-and corrective feedback. Students were seen engaging in a variety of activity formats, including whole class question and answer interaction, individual work-sheet completion, word search activity, reading aloud/dialogue performance, board work and peer-checking. Also, students with SEN were actively involved when assigned specific tasks and extended an invitation to participate as well as when they sought clarification during multistep activities. These findings validate the assumption that teacher feedback serves not only as a response to performance, but also as an interactive device for equalized participation in inclusive EFL teaching.

This study brings theoretical value by deepening understanding of participation as a multidimensional classroom outcome that is constructed through teacher–student interaction and practical value by raising feedback to the level of an actionable step to enhance engagement in mixed-ability classrooms. Educators are prompting to give consistent reinforcement, using directional cues, repeating directions when necessary, and affording meaningful roles to encourage everyone's participation. Educational leaders and policy makers must encourage teacher training around inclusive feedback practices. Further studies should broaden the observations to more lessons and schools by involving students' and teachers' perspectives, in order to provide deeper insight into feedback–participation processes in the inclusive EFL setting.

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