

INDONESIAN STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF GOOD EFL TEACHER'S CHARACTERISTICS

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Abstract

This research aims to know from the students' perception regarding the good characteristics teacher: whether English teachers have fulfilled the good teacher characteristic. Besides, it also aims to know the teacher's view on the characteristics of being good EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher. This research also aims to provide anyone concerned with EFL learning and teaching process with an informed view on an EFL teacher's preferred characteristics. This research is conducted in Global Institute and Polytechnic LP3I whose subjects are 7 EFL teachers and 80 students in a certain time or period thus the result will just represent the point of view of the students and their teacher in that specific time. The researchers use questionnaires to gather the data. The result shows that teachers must have four aspects, namely technical knowledge, pedagogical skills, personal, and interpersonal skills.

Keywords: *Teacher Characteristic, English Foreign Language, Teachers perceptions, Students Perceptions.*

INTRODUCTION

It is widely known that English is important because of its status as a global language (Crystal, 1997, p. 4). As such, the influence of English spreads to almost all of the fields of human interests, including a number of important disciplines, such as international commerce, education, and communication. As result, English attracts people worldwide to learn it (Choi & Lee, 2008, p.2).

Kachru (1985, p.12) proposed the spread of English in terms of three concentric circles. They are the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle. The inner circle includes native English-speaking countries, such as the USA, Canada, and New Zealand." The outer circle is where English is used as an official language and used as second language, such as; Malaysia, Singapore, India, and others. The last circle refers to countries where the language is learnt as a foreign language, such as China, Japan, and Indonesia (Wedell & Malderez, 2013, p. 73).

Despite being a foreign language, English still raises demands of proficiency in countries like Indonesia (Zacharias, 2003, p. 56). The importance of English in Indonesia (Madya, 2002, p. 143) is generally driven due to two factors. Firstly, books and media related to technology and information are mostly written and packaged in English. Secondly, as a global language, English is also used for various international communication practices such as education or business. Thus, mastering English for Indonesians must be a prerequisite to participate in the development.

In addition, Madya (2002, p. 146) puts forward that since people are the greatest and most

valuable asset for any country, the development of education which means the development of human beings, should receive the greatest attention. Thus, in order to support the learning process, high-quality teaching is certainly very important given the fact that it constitutes as one of the strong contributing factors which generate learning outcomes (see e.g. Clofelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2007). Specifically, in EFL context, some scholars, take for example, Rido, Ibrahim & Nambiar (2013) have clearly confirmed that good quality teachers play an important role in the classroom especially in EFL.

In supporting view about good quality teachers that they have important role in the classroom, some principles regarding the characteristics of good EFL teachers will come up the result of some scholars' analysis. Brown (2007, pp. 490-491) proposes four main criteria to be met in order to be a good EFL teacher. Specifically, he categorizes several aspects of being good English teacher, such as; technical knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, interpersonal quality, and personal quality.

Technical knowledge is mainly related to a teacher's English skills in teaching e.g. pronunciation, grammar, etc. Secondly, Pedagogical knowledge refers to a teacher's ability in clearly and concisely conveying the learning material. Further, interpersonal quality is closely related with the teachers' ability in getting along with students. While, the last aspect refers to the quality of teacher as a person, a teacher should also have a good character and integrity (Brown, 2007, p. 491).

The importance of the teacher has also been researched by some scholars, e.g. Da Luz, (2015) who find that relationship between students and teacher can significantly affect the students' motivation to learn. Further, Liando (2010) found that students prefer characteristics such as friendliness, patience, and fairness in conjunction with academic talents such as making courses more interesting and challenging students fairly.

A study by Wichadee (2010), similarly, researches both students and teachers in one school with regard to the characteristics which are considered as favorable in teaching English. The result shows that students and teachers favor different qualities; students value organization and communication skills the most, while teachers deem English proficiency as the most important trait

The last notable research is the one conducted by Mahrooqi et al. (2015) conducted a study in order to see which traits are associated with being a good EFL teacher. They use questionnaire to the Omani students and teachers in order to find out some ideas on the important characteristic of being good EFL teacher. The research shows that there are some similarities and differences for instance having English proficiency and treating students equally are the ones considered the most important points by the students.

From the above studies, the researchers believe that there should be a study researching more aspects regarding the characteristics which are viewed as the ideal figure of EFL teacher. There are several factors which have yet to be discussed such as; inter-personal qualities and personal qualities. The mere research regarding some traits such as; being friendly, or being able to communicate in English very well, will be insufficient in describing the teacher's characteristics in order to be classified to be a good teacher. For instance, the teacher's personal quality (such as; integrity, flexibility, curiosity, ethics and moral standard) are among important personal qualities which will significantly contribute to the students' learning process, thus being inseparable to be studied if the research is to be more reliable (Brown, 2007). In sum, researching partially just like what the above scholars have done, despite its importance, might fail to provide a more comprehensive picture toward the ideal figure that should be adopted by those wishing to be good EFL teacher.

By adopting into Brown's theory (2007, p.491), it is expected that everyone involved in EFL context (in this particular teacher) might be able to introspect toward their capacity and their qualities so that they can continuously improve in order to be a good EFL teacher. The researchers want to see these characteristics which can be found in Indonesia teacher. Besides,

the researchers want to know the results from the students' perception regarding the good characteristics teacher whether English teachers have fulfilled the good teacher characteristic. This research aims at providing anyone concerned with EFL learning and teaching process, with a much better view so that there will be a more understanding toward the ideal figure that should be possessed by the teacher. The researchers ask the following research questions:

1. Which characteristics do students perceive as essential in an EFL teacher?
2. What do teachers perceive as characteristics of a good EFL teacher based on Brown's theory?

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are some definitions related to the teacher in an EFL context. Cambridge dictionary online (2016) defines a teacher as the one who teaches in schools or colleges. Secondly, according to Queensland College of Teacher (n.d.) a teacher is "a person who delivers an educational program, assesses student participation in an educational program, and/or administers or provides consistent and substantial leadership to an educational program". Williams and burden (1997) define teachers as a reflective practitioner. If they want to be effective in whatever approach they decide to take, they are expected to act consistently in accordance with their expressed belief.

From the above idea, we can loosely define that teachers are the ones in charge to lead the learning process while involving their students in acquiring their knowledge through their learning experience.

The role of teacher in EFL.

The importance of teachers in EFL classes has been voiced by many, take for example: Al-Darwish (2012, p.76) who confirms that teachers play an integral role in the second language classroom, and they often have several inter-related tasks when it comes to the teaching process. More specifically, Al-Mahrooqi, et al. (2015) forward that the existence of good quality English teacher is important to facilitate a proper EFL learning process. Harmer (2001), categorizes some important roles related to the teachers' existence in the classroom as the followings (pp. 57-67): (a) Teacher as controller: In this role, a teacher is responsible for managing the learning process so that the learning process can run smoothly. Some of the things that the teacher might do are; calling the students' name, checking the students' work, managing the students, etc.; (b) Teacher as organizer: In relatively different sight, Harmer (2001) claims that the difference between a controller and organizer is the use of authority; controllers put heavy emphasis on using authority for class management, while organizers simply let teachers motivate students to be more active in class. Just as what Harmer (2001, p. 58) that "the first thing the teacher should be aware of when organizing students is to make them get engaged", thus implying the active role of students as the main essence of being an organizer, instead of being a mere controller who shows more leadership in learning process; (c) Teacher as assessor: Upon completing the learning process, the teacher should evaluate the students' work or progress so that the teacher can find out the things their students have done, or things that might be needed to be improved; (d) Teacher as source: Teacher as source means that he or she must also become a model either to provide the way to pronounce a newly learned word by the students or explain some difficult words that the students might encounter.

The other scholar who also terms the teacher's role in sustaining interactive class is Brown (2007) whose concept categorizes teacher based on several roles, such as: (a) the teacher as controller. As a controller, the teacher is in charge of controlling every moment in the classroom, enforcing tenets such as house rules and spoken language; (b) the teacher as director, Brown points out that directors operate like conductors in an orchestra; the emphasis is not on authority, but on arranging those involved in the learning process; (c) the teacher as manager, the teacher as a manager is the one who leads the learning process thus requires the teacher to motivate the learners in order to achieve the learning objectives; (d) the teacher as facilitator. Facilitating is

related to the teacher's ability to help struggling students, demanding technical knowledge and pedagogical knowledge from the instructor; (e) the teacher as resource. The use of teacher as resource in learning is certainly important since the students might frequently face lots of problems thus posing the teacher in an important position regarding the sources to be accessed by the students without which the students might have been troubled by their insufficient information when they are learning. From the above elaboration, both scholars (Brown, 2007 & Harmer, 2001) have a relatively similar view on the teacher's existence in the learning process, in which those scholars categorize into some specific tasks to be accomplished by the teacher when performing the learning process.

In order to support the above roles, Brown (2007, p. 491), further proposes some important characteristics which can be categorized as a good EFL as follow:

1. Technical knowledge
 - a) Has a working knowledge of the English phonology, grammar, and discourse linguistic systems.
 - b) Fully comprehends the essential ideas behind learning and teaching languages.
 - c) Has command of the English language in speaking, writing, listening, and reading.
 - d) understands how it is to learn a foreign language, such as English.
 - e) attends regular reading and conference/workshop
2. Pedagogical skill
 - a) has a thoughtful, educated approach to teaching languages.
 - b) efficiently creates and puts into action a lesson plan.
 - c) understands in using several techniques.
 - d) makes effective mid-lesson alterations.
 - e) knowing the linguistic and personal requirements of the pupils as well as their various preferences, styles, and strengths and weaknesses.
 - f) Gives highly feedback to students.
 - g) Gives simulation for interaction, cooperation, and teamwork in the classroom.
 - h) Conducts a proper principles of classroom management.
 - i) Uses effective, clear presentation skill.
 - j) adapts textbook information, as well as other auditory, visual, and mechanical aids, in a creative way.
 - k) Develop new materials in a creative manner as necessary.
 - l) creates efficient tests using interactive, intrinsically motivating methodologies.
3. Interpersonal skill
 - a) Recognizes cross-cultural distinctions and is sensitive to the cultural traditions of the students.
 - b) Has a positive outlook on life, is upbeat, friendly, and humorous when necessary.
 - c) Values the insight and aptitude of the students.
 - d) Tolerant when working with students of lower academic standing.
 - e) Provides exceptionally gifted kids with difficulties.
 - f) Works cooperatively and honestly with coworkers, including by looking for opportunities to share opinions, concepts, and methods.
4. Personal qualities
 - a) Being well-organized, reliable, and responsible for keeping promises; B) Being adaptable when things don't go as planned.
 - b) Regularly reflect on one's own teaching methods and make an effort to learn from those reflections.
 - c) Keep an open mind when experimenting with different teaching techniques.
 - d) Specifies both immediate and long-term objectives for ongoing professional development.
 - e) Upholds and serves as an example of high moral and ethical standards.

The other researchers such as Al-Mahrooqi et. al. (2015, p. 6) propose a different view on the characteristics ideally possessed by a good EFL teacher. They categorize some aspects as follows: (a) awareness of one's general personality traits; (b) understanding of classroom management; (c) self-awareness of affective factors; (d) understanding of students; (e) pedagogical expertise on instruction and learning; (f) self-awareness and professional development; (g) expertise in teaching and learning content.

Based on the above characteristics, the researchers can conclude that the classification of good EFL teacher characteristics proposed by Brown (2007) is more definite since it clearly separates between different subdivision, e.g. the knowledge about student, classroom management, and pedagogical knowledge should be classified into the same area, namely as pedagogical knowledge (see Brown's division on pedagogical knowledge, 2007, p.491). On the other hand, Al-Mahrooqi et. al. (2015) divides it into different area which is actually inter-related. The quality of teacher as personal entity is also not specifically classified (see Mahrooqi et.al., 2015), in fact in Brown's view (2007) it is clearly categorized as personal quality (e.g. the quality of being honest, morally ethical, etc.), due to its importance in supporting the good relationship with the students. It is in line and supported by other scholar, Thompson (2008), who mentions that being a good teacher requires a combination of strong teaching skills and positive personality. Therefore, because of its comprehensiveness, the researchers choose to adapt Brown's definition good EFL teacher's characteristics in this study in order to acquire a more comprehensive picture on what should it be like to be an ideal figure called as a teacher.

METHOD

Indonesian Students' and Teachers' Perception of a Good EFL Teacher's Characteristics. This research is quantitative nature. According to Dornyei (2007, p. 24), quantitative research is the one which concerned with one important aspect emphasizing data collection procedures using numerical to be analyzed using data analysis statistical methods. Indonesian Students' and Teachers' Perception of a Good EFL Teacher's Characteristics. The subject of this research consists of 21 classes in Global Institute and Polytechnic LP3I and seven English teachers. The total number of the subjects in this study is 80 students.

This study used questionnaires as the instrument as stated by Dornyei (2007, p. 101), that "the results of a questionnaire survey are typically quantitative, although the instrument may also contain some open ended questions that is required a qualitative analysis". The questionnaire consists of 4 sections, students' view toward the characteristic of English teacher which consist of (technical knowledge) which constitutes the skills related to the teacher's basic ability in certain field (e.g. phonology, grammar, etc.), while (pedagogical skills) are certain skills pertaining to the teacher's expertise in teaching and learning process (e.g. the ability to master teaching method, motivating the students, etc.), (interpersonal skills) are related to the teacher's ability to socialize with the students, and personal qualities of teacher are the teacher's qualities as a person (e.g. honesty, ethics, etc.).

This questionnaire was given to both students and teachers so that there are more comprehensive information or point view which given by them. The questionnaire given to different subject of research, in order to provide more varied information and much more comprehensive point of view regarding the characteristics of teacher deemed ideal in supporting the learning process. Just as what Follman (1992, in Stronge, 2006) bposits that students can provide more comprehensive information due to their experience with their teachers.

The researchers design a pilot study in order to measure that the content of the questionnaire can be easily understood by the students and the teacher and leading to the success of research (Frankel & Wallen, 2006). Specifically, Shah (2015, p.132) points out that a good piloting should cover selecting a sample, negotiating access, delivering the instrument, calculating response rates and analyzing the results in the same way as aimed for the final study. Further, Shah (citing from Gorard, 2003) claims that in order to assure the questionnaire's effectivity, should be selected randomly. Data collection procedures will be conducted through the

following activities, e.g.; The researcher conducts pilot study to the school. He points out that pilot study was to measure the questionnaire that could be easily understood by the students and participants. After that, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the students and teachers then the researcher collected the data. The last, the researcher analyzed the data.

In this research, the researchers used Likert scale. The scale was be used to measure the level of agreement or disagreement of the respondents' students and teachers toward each statement in the questionnaire. The range of the scales were 1-4 range which 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research questions that the researchers proposed, the results area as follows:

1. Which characteristics do students perceive as essential in an EFL teacher?

Table 1. Students' view of the characteristic of good EFL teacher.

No	Statements	Score
	Technical Knowledge	
1	My teacher pronounces English words well	.302
2	My teacher teaches well	.493
3	My teacher is fluent in English ability.	.302
4	My teacher recognizes the strong relationship between language and culture.	.576
5	My teacher regularly attends teaching-related conference/workshop	.576
6	My teacher teaches efficiently based on the lesson plan they made	.302
	Pedagogical Skills	
7	My teacher understands and uses various teaching techniques	.745
8	My teacher monitors my study and usually make adjustments on the lesson plan based on it	.359
9	My teacher gives makes optimal feedback	.359
10	My teacher stimulates interaction, cooperation and teamwork in the classroom	.302
11	My teacher manages the classroom well	.302
12	My teacher has effective and clear presentation skills	.493
13	My teacher creatively adapts textbook material and other audio, visual and mechanical aids in teaching activities	.302
14	My teacher creates innovative brand-new materials when needed	.219
15	My teacher uses interactive, intrinsically motivating techniques to create effective tests	.576
	Interpersonal skills	
16	My teacher likes to socialize with us	.302
17	My teacher enjoys people; shows enthusiasm, warmth, rapport, and appropriate humor	.745
18	My teacher values my opinion and abilities	.359
19	My teacher is patient in working with me or lesser ability students	.302
20	My teacher offers challenges to students of exceptionally high ability	.302
21	My teacher works cooperatively and honestly with coworkers, including by looking for opportunities to share opinions, concepts, and methods	.302
	Personal Qualities	
22	My teacher is the can be trusted	.493
23	My teacher is flexible when things go awry	.302
24	My teacher engages in regular reflection on one's own teaching practice and strives to learn from those reflective practices	.219

25	My teacher maintains an inquisitive mind in trying out new ways of teaching	.576
26	My teacher sets short-terms goals for continued professional growth	.302
27	My teachers maintains and exemplifies high ethical and moral standards	.745
28	My teacher always follow up on students' work	.359

From the data above, the following principles take out from the deep analysis in the form of questionnaires from the students and to consider the characteristics of an effective English language teacher as follow: teachers monitor students work and they usually make adjustment on the lesson plan based on it , and also teachers engages in regular reflection on their own teaching practice from those reflective practices, the last mostly students chose that their teacher understand the close connection between language and culture and used various teaching techniques.

2. What do teachers perceive as characteristics of a good EFL teacher based on Brown's theory?

In related to research question on students' opinions about good teachers' characteristic was in based on questionnaires that researcher gave to the teachers. according to the data were gained from questionnaire at Junior High School students in Jakarta, they were some similarities and perspectives point from students' view about characteristic of good English teacher from four categories technical knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, interpersonal quality, and personal quality. Explanation from the first catagory is technical knowledge, in this catagory researcher proposed that students communicate in English fluently and relatively accurate, are the students comprehensively grasps basic principles language learning and teaching, do students have fluent competence in speaking, writing, listening to, and reading English, do the students know through experience what it is like to learn a foreign language, do the students understand the close connection between language and culture and do the students keep up the field through regular reading and conference/workshop attendance. the findings showed that mostly the teacher answered agree in keeping up the field through regullar teaching and conference/workshop. It is line with Al-Mahrooqi (2015) that both students and teachers tend to agree about the importance of all seven questionnaire category areas, with characteristics related to having a high level of English language proficiency and treating students equally and with respect being of especial importance.

In line with Brown (2007, p. 491) that the important characteristics as a good EFL teacher, the result showed that the correspondent mostly concurred with these characteristics being essential for EFL teachers. It means that the catagorized of good EFL matched with their result in the questionnaire. For instance, the statement of "I keep up the field through regular reading and conference/workshop attendance" from teachers questionnaire is 79,7% who answered agree and "Your teacher regularly attending conference/workshop" of students questionnaire is 71,4% who answer agree. It means that those result is consistent and line up well with each others.

Table 2. Teacher perspective on the characteristicc of food EF teacher.

No	Statements	SD
	Technical Knowledge	
1	I communicate in English fluently and relatively accurately.	.535
2	I am comprehensively grasps the basic principles of language learning and teaching	1,069
3	I am competent in speaking, writing, listening to, and reading English	.378
4	I know through experience what it is like to learn a foreign language	.535
5	I understand the close connection between language and culture	.488
6	I keep up with the field through regular reading and conference/workshop attendance	.378

	Pedagogical Skills	
7	I understand some teaching theories and their implications regarding the teaching of English.	.000
8	I efficiently design and execute lesson plans	.488
9	I understand and appropriately use a variety of techniques	1.000
10	I monitor lesson, as they fold and make effective mid-lesson alterations when necessary	.000
11	I am effectively perceive my students linguistic and personal needs, along with their various styles, preferences, strengths, and weaknesses.	.900
12	I provide students with the best feedback; I encourage group work, collaboration, and	1.069
13	I ingeniously rework textbook content and additional auditory, visual, and mechanical	.535
14	When necessary, I ingeniously construct entirely new materials, and I design	.900
15	I provide students with the best feedback; I encourage group work, collaboration, and	.535
16	I ingeniously rework textbook content and additional auditory, visual, and mechanical	.535
17	When necessary, I ingeniously construct entirely new materials, and I design	.488
18	I provide students with the best feedback; I encourage group work, collaboration, and	.378
	Interpersonal skills	.488
20	I enjoy being with people; I show enthusiasm, warmth, rapport, and appropriate	.000
21	I value the opinion and abilities of my students	.000
22	I am patient in working with students with lesser ability	.488
23	I offer challenges to students of exceptionally high ability	.535
24	I cooperate harmoniously and candidly with colleagues, including seeking opportunities	.900
	Personal Qualities	
26	When things go wrong, I can be adaptable.	1.069
27	I regularly reflect on my own pedagogical approaches and make an effort to absorb what	.000
28	I continue to be curious about trying out new teaching methods, and I make short-term	.378
29	I uphold and model high moral and ethical standards.	.900
30	When things go wrong, I can be adaptable.	.488

According to Dincer (2013), He contends that teachers cannot teach their students what they know if they lack pedagogical skills. According to his studies, students choose teachers who are adept at dealing with affective components of learning. Based on the report of questionnaire, statement of “I understand some theories and their implication regarding the teaching of English quite well” is 100% all teachers answer agree for this statement. In line with students questionnaire “My teacher understands and uses various teaching techniques” is about 84% answer agree for this statement. Furthermore, some students choose agree answerd for teachers gives an optimal feedback for their students in the class. It covered browns theory that teacher must has a well thought out, informed approach to language. another results are, there are 76,3 % students thought that their teacher managed classroom well. It was mentioned by browns (2007) that in pedagogical knowlegde teacher rmust monitor lessonas thet unfold and make effective mid-lesson alterations. More over, Almost all students valued that their teacher always give feedback to them well, it was similar with teachers that 100% they always give feedback to their students in the learning process.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the explanation above, teacher are also supposed to have some skills, there are technical knowledge, pedagogical skills, interpersonal skills and personal qualities to build their ability in teaching more effective and interactive so that they are able to covered what students want in learning. Besides that, being skillful in four aspects proposed by Browns (2007) are genuinely importat in establishing characteristic of good teachers. In this research, some students valued that their teachers are quite well in teaching them regarding to their teaching competence

(has fluent competence in speaking ,writing, listening and reading English), they are creative to adapt textbook material and other audio, visual and mechanical aids. For interpersonal skill, teachers must have sense of humor, show enthusiasm, patient to their students and aware of the difference of their cultures. The last, for personal qualities, teacher is expected to be well organized in learning process, they are flexible when things go unappropriated or awry and also engage students when teaching learning process. In addition, there have been many research related to the characteristic of teacher that mostly teachers must have, the key point stated by them is that being a good characteristic teacher must have all aspects including technical, pedagogical, interpersonal and interpersonal skills.

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