

## **INVESTIGATING ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT A GOOD ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER**

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### **Abstract**

Teaching is a lifelong learning process and even if a teacher may have years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language, one might not know whether he/she has become a good teacher or not. The perceptions about a “good” English language teacher have been varied among the language learners and the teachers themselves. However, it is important to find out what kind of a “good” English language teacher based on learners’ perceptions in order to discover what they believe and what they expect from their English teachers when they are learning the language. This present study aims at investigating and describing the qualities or the characteristics of a good English teacher based on the learners perceptions. The population for this study are the students of English Department of FKIP LambungMangkurat University Banjarmasin in three batches (batch 2015, 2016, and 2017), and when the time data collected they were at the sixth, the fourth and the second semester. The questionnaire given is in the form of close-ended questions and analysed quantitatively. The findings of this study are expected to help teachers to reflect or evaluate themselves and refresh their teaching practice when necessary, as well as for their own improvement and further professional development.

**Keywords:** students’ perceptions, a good EFL teacher, characteristics, effective teaching

### **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching is not an easy thing to do and not everyone can do this. It needs more than just having good knowledge and competence in some sorts of subject matter, but it also needs intention, perseverance, patience, determination, and passion to never stop learning. Teachers must prepare themselves with all the possibilities that can take place in the classroom; starting from students who have a diversity of attitudes, behaviors as well as intelligence, fluctuating moods, changing materials, or teaching techniques that do not work in some ways and so forth. However, we then find that teaching is also a pleasant job; we can hear the students laughing and see their cheerful faces when we tell something funny, or we find our students improving, or we discover something new and it challenges us to learn more. These bad and good things will go on and on-for a lifetime in our teaching activities.

Since becoming a teacher is a lifetime process, he/she needs to always improve and develop his/her professionalism and this is also the case for English language teachers. There are some evidence that teachers hold a significant position in the process of teaching and learning and they play a main role in directing students to achieve their goals optimally in the study. Some assume that an effective teacher leads to an effective teaching which also resulted in effective learning of the students. Therefore, finding what students belief and perceive about their teachers is important to be acknowledged, especially in the context of English Department in Lambung Mangkurat University as one leading department which accredited A in South Kalimantan. However, the identification of characteristics of good English teachers is not beneficial for students only; it is important for the teachers as well in order to help them to understand how to approach and improve their pedagogical practices,

namely by enhancing their good characteristics and finding ways to overcome those that can impede their students' learning.

Defining "good" teachers has become the subject of many research and this idea is still debatable among researchers since the characteristics or specific traits which constitute effective teachers may very difficult to explain and thus, vary among countries, contexts, and across disciplines. Zhang & Watkins (2007) as in Al-Mahrooqi et al (2015) said that these differences may be influenced by a variety of factors including culture, gender, subject area, school level, and the curriculum used. This perception is also likely influenced by both teachers' and students' values (Saafin, 2005; Sotto, 2011 in Al-Mahrooqi et al, 2015). However, some basic criteria or characteristics have been identified from their findings. In fact, English language teachers are indeed different from teachers of other subjects in some ways. Borg (2006) states that the differences are related to nature of English itself as a subject, the content of teaching, the teaching methodology, teacher-learner relationships, and contrasts between native and non-native speakers. Therefore, despite any differences that this study will discover later on, it is still significant to find out what makes a good teacher in the context of Indonesia where English is learned as a foreign language.

For the purpose of this study, the terms good English language teacher and effective educator are being used interchangeably to mean the same thing, that is an individual or a teacher who teaches English as a foreign language who possess some or all traits of being a good teacher. Additionally, the terms characteristics, attributes, or qualities are also used to refer the same thing, namely marks or traits possessed by good EFL teachers. Meanwhile, the terms perception, attitudes and beliefs are mentioned to state the same thing, that is, "a set of mental constructs that name, define, and describe the structure and content of mental states

thought to drive a person's actions" (Richardson, 1996 in Brown, 2006). In particular, it may be useful to point out that although this study limited itself on finding the characteristics of EFL teachers that fits into Indonesian context, the results may be applicable also for all teachers in all subject matters in other areas. As Brown (2007) suggests that the lists of attributes of good teachers should be seen as reflection to healthy teacher development and then treat them as suggestions, possibilities, and mental prods to stimulate some further growth.

### **Good EFL Teacher Characteristics**

English in Indonesia is considered as a foreign language; therefore, not everyone uses the language for communication and sometimes the exposure is limited only in the classroom. This situation makes the English teachers have to work harder since they often become the only partners whom the students have the opportunity to practice their skills in the language. The objective of English teaching is to make students to be able to use English well and correctly both in oral and written form, then effective teaching is critically needed. Since effective teaching comes from effective teachers, a description about characteristics required by those teachers seen from students' perspectives is necessary to define in order to have better understanding on what the students expect as well as providing the teachers with useful information about what they need to cater for. In fact, "having an 'effective' teacher is the fundamental need of an EFL class for efficient functioning of educational systems and for enhancing the quality of learning" (Shishavan&Sadeghi, 2009).

Research measuring effective teaching and effective teachers has gained many findings or results. For instance, Harold B. Allen (1980) as cited in Brown (2007) says that an effective language teacher is a teacher who has a degree in English language teaching, is enthusiast with the

language, has good critical thinking, has the persistence to always improve oneself, self-subordination, cultural adaptability, professional citizenship, and always excites about one's work. Brosh (1996) in Borg (2006:6) and Park and Lee (2006:238) has identified five specific characteristics to be most required by foreign language teachers and students in Israel, namely knowledge and command of the target language, ability to teach, ability to arouse and sustain interest and motivation among students, fairness and justice to each students, and availability to students. Furthermore, Brown (2007) also made some characteristics of good language teachers based on his own observation which include four main areas, namely technical knowledge, pedagogical skills, interpersonal skills, and personal qualities.

Related to the characteristics of effective English language teachers, Park and Lee (2006) distributed a self-report questionnaire on three major categories namely English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills to 169 high school teachers and 399 students in Korea. It is found that the two groups have different perceptions: the teachers ranked English proficiency as the highest, while the students ranked pedagogical knowledge as the first thing that English teachers should have. However, reading and speaking proficiency, arousing students' interest in learning English, and building students' self-confidence and motivation were general characteristics agreed by all groups as important points to be recognized.

Another study conducted by Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) showed similar results as Park and Lee (2006) that Iranian teachers and learners hold different opinions on some qualities of effective English language teachers. The teachers perceived that mastery of the target language, good knowledge of pedagogy, the use of particular techniques and methods, and good personality will make them good teachers. Meanwhile, the students opted on the characteristics related to a teacher's

personality and the way he behaves toward his students. However, there are some characteristics that both teachers and students consider necessary for an effective teacher to have, namely being patient and flexible, caring about students' needs, showing positive attitudes towards learners, and being smart and creative. Zamani and Angahari (2016) also established a study for Iranian English language learners at university level on four categories of an effective teacher including English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, organization and communication skills, and socio-affective skills. The results pointed out that the students expect a good English teacher to have some important qualities such as the ability to develop proper relationships with students, ability to build students' confidence, ability to maintain discipline in the classroom.

Likewise, Çelik, Arikan and Caner (2013) enrolled a survey to 998 undergraduate students at a state university in Turkey by adapting an instrument developed by Yu-Hsin (1999) and Arikan, Taşer and Saraç-Süzer (2008). They noted the importance of pedagogical and content knowledge, personality traits, professional skills and classroom behavior to be possessed by effective EFL teachers. Among those traits, exhibits fairness in decision-making, is successful in reducing students' anxiety, demonstrates enthusiasm, teaches pronunciation well, and teaches speaking skills adequately are the most qualities expected by the learners to have by their teachers. Meanwhile, Al-Mahrooqi et al (2015) found that Omani high school students and teachers generally agree that good EFL teachers should have content knowledge about teaching and learning, pedagogical knowledge about teaching and learning, knowledge about students and classroom management and knowledge about oneself which consist of general characteristics, affective variables, and professional development. Their findings are related to having a high level of English

language proficiency and treating students equally and with respect being of especial importance.

Similar research about what constitute an effective teacher also done in Indonesian context. Sundari (2016) investigated the perception from Indonesian university students and she used two-section questionnaire including close and open-ended questionnaire designed by Shishavan&Sadeghi (2009). The findings cover some areas related to content/language knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, communication and socio-affective skills and personality of English teacher. In other words, most of the students perceive that an effective English teacher should have English proficiency, should know how to teach, should be able to communicate well and be good figures for his/her students. Moreover, her findings also portray the perception of the students learning experiences in English and the expectation for themselves as prospective teachers in the future.

Most recently, Restu, Atmowardoyo, and Akil (2018) tried to find out the profile of effective English teachers from the views of the students in three of the best and the most favorite senior high schools in Gowa Regency. They based the qualities of effective EFL teachers on four competences stated in Permendiknas number 12 year 2007, namely pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competence. At the end, they concluded that an effective English teacher should have all four competencies since they all are interlinked and proponent to each other. It means that, one cannot be said to be an effective teacher if he or she misses one of the competencies.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Participants**

The population for this study was English Department students in three batches, specifically batch 2015, 2016, and 2017. The students are prospective English teachers for junior and high school level

since they are studying in Teacher Training and Education Faculty (FKIP). The researcher employed random convenience sampling and took a half from each batch as the sample. There were 131 sample selected which consist of 38 students from batch 2015, 40 students from batch 2016, and 53 students from batch 2017.

### **Instrument**

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of English Department students in FKIP ULM Banjarmasin of a good English language teacher. A quantitative approach was utilized to evaluate the students' responses through a survey instrument which was adopted from a study conducted by Wichadee (2010) and Zamani and Angahari (2016). There were four categories of characteristics included in the instrument, namely 1) Organization and communication skills: teacher's ability in organizing, preparing, and communicating the subject matter; 2) Pedagogical knowledge: what teacher know about teaching his/her subject; 3) Socio-affective skills: teacher's personality, sociability, and attitudes toward his/her students; and 4) English proficiency: what teachers know about what they teach, in this case, English. Each category accompanied by fifteen statements; therefore, there were sixty statements overall. The respondents were asked to give their choice based on a five-point Likert scale in order of importance (1 = not important at all, 2 = not very important, 3 = neutral, 4 = important, 5 = very important).

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The instrument was randomly distributed to the population in each batch and stopped when the number has reached the quota for the sample. Before the sample answered the questions in the instrument, the researcher briefly explained the nature of the study and asked them to answer it sincerely and honestly. The students were convinced that their responses to the questionnaires would be kept confidential and not be used

for other purposes. In addition, they were told that there were no correct or incorrect answers for their responses. The questions in the survey instrument were in English in regard that the sample understood all items.

To draw a conclusion about the most significant characteristics of a good EFL teacher perceived by the students, the researcher analyzed the data taken from each batch in four categories of the characteristics. The students' responses were changed into a form of frequency and then analyzed descriptively from percentages. This study was not intended to compare or correlate the differences among the three batches in their views on the characteristics, rather than just to explain or describe which characteristics mostly chosen by them. However, the researcher only remarked the highest five characteristics taken from very important and important options within each category of the characteristics, and what characteristics

agreed by all batches to be discussed in the findings and the discussion. Subsequently, the researcher did not attempt to rank which of four categories is thought to be the most important, important or not important since the researcher considered all of them are important to characterize a good EFL teacher.

**FINDINGS**

This study was conducted to describe qualities or characteristics of effective English teacher according to the perceptions of EFL learners at university level as prospective English teacher. There are four categories of a good English teacher being examined in this study, namely English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, organization and communication skills, and socio-affective skills. The findings for each category from each batch are shown in the tables below.

Table 1. Percentages of students' perception on organization and communication skills from each batch

State. No.	5			4			3			2			1		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
1	21	33	32	50	43	42	29	25	25	0	0	2	0	0	0
2	55	40	55	34	43	40	11	18	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	66	40	68	26	43	23	8	18	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	32	28	45	58	48	40	11	25	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	8	23	25	58	43	40	29	35	26	5	0	9	0	0	0
6	16	18	30	26	55	53	58	18	17	0	10	0	0	0	0
7	21	18	47	66	50	40	11	33	13	3	0	0	0	0	0
8	26	23	47	66	53	40	8	25	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	58	45	72	39	35	26	3	20	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	32	33	53	55	48	38	13	18	9	0	3	0	0	0	0
11	26	38	60	61	35	23	5	28	17	8	0	0	0	0	0
12	8	13	9	39	35	45	53	40	42	0	13	4	0	0	0
13	11	8	25	39	43	38	50	43	32	0	8	6	0	0	0
14	18	13	25	50	45	60	32	40	15	0	3	0	0	0	0
15	26	45	47	37	43	40	29	13	9	8	0	4	0	0	0

Part 1 is about organization and communication skills of a good language teacher. It can be seen from Table 1 that a good teacher must have all features mentioned. Batch 2015 perceived their EFL teacher must have ability to make courses interesting and being smart to deviate attention of students from everything else to the topic (66%), ability to analyze students' needs (66%), ability to make/stimulate students to interact/communicate with each other (66%), and ability to prepare the lesson well and use class time wisely (61%). Meanwhile, these three characteristics got the same percentage (58%), namely having good communication skills, having ability to plan and state the objectives of the lesson clearly, and encouraging students to use the English language all the time in class.

Meanwhile, the students in batch 2016 supposed that their teacher must stress the most important points and providing detailed explanations while reading/listening (55%), have ability to analyze students' needs (50%), and have ability to make students to interact/ communicate with each other (53%). Additionally, having ability to plan

and state the objectives of the lesson clearly, and having ability to prepare appropriate material got the same percentage (48%), as well as having good communication skills, and providing opportunities to use English through meaningful tasks and activities which got 45%.

Likewise, for batch 2017, having good communication skills (72%), using easy language to aid student understanding (55%), having ability to make courses interesting and being smart to deviate attention of students from everything else to the topic (68%), and preparing the lesson well and using class time wisely (60%) are considered very important to be possessed by their English teacher. In the meantime, providing opportunities to use English through meaningful tasks and activities (60%) is considered important as well.

From the findings, it can be said that in organization and communication skills category, the students from each batch ranked having good communication abilities as the first important criteria that must be retained by a good EFL teacher.

Table 2. Percentages of students' perception on pedagogical knowledge from each batch

State. No.	5			4			3			2			1		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
1	5	8	9	33	35	38	50	53	45	8	5	4	0	0	4
2	18	23	51	58	43	32	20	30	17	0	5	0	0	0	0
3	13	25	40	68	48	51	15	28	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	30	35	43	48	50	49	10	15	8	8	0	0	0	0	0
5	20	33	43	40	40	38	25	28	19	10	0	0	0	0	0
6	15	25	23	45	40	55	35	35	23	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	8	13	23	78	38	34	10	43	38	0	8	6	0	0	0
8	0	10	19	45	33	38	50	53	42	0	5	2	0	0	0
9	25	15	17	30	53	51	33	33	30	8	0	2	0	0	0
10	8	18	38	50	38	28	38	45	26	0	0	6	0	0	4
11	43	33	38	50	43	47	3	20	15	0	5	0	0	0	0
12	25	33	36	43	23	38	28	40	26	0	5	0	0	0	0
13	25	18	30	45	53	45	25	30	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	25	20	57	53	60	36	18	20	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	28	33	45	58	45	42	10	23	13	0	0	0	0	0	0

Next, Part 2 talks about pedagogical knowledge. There are also fifteen statements

to be chosen by the participants. The results can be seen in Table 2. The students from

batch 2015 claimed that it is important for an effective teacher to be able to use various materials in teaching the language (58%), promote communicative language learning (68%), develop students' language skill (78%), explain vocabulary and grammar through real world examples (53%) and set tasks with clear outcomes (58%).

Furthermore, batch 2016 chose some important points of an effective teacher, namely able to promote communicative language learning (48%), motivate students by supporting their self-efficacy (50%), encourage the students to learn English outside the classroom (53%), provide constant feedback (53%), and able to explain vocabulary and grammar and use relevant real world examples in lessons (60%).

Table 2 also shows that the students from batch 2017 believed that a good language

teacher must be able to use various materials in teaching the language (51%), promote communicative language learning through activities and discussion in the classroom (51%), assess what students have learned rationally (55%), encourage the students to learn English outside the classroom (51%), and explain vocabulary and grammar through relevant real world examples in lessons (57%).

For pedagogical knowledge, the three batches of students agreed that it is important for an effective EFL teacher to have abilities in promoting communicative language learning through activities and discussion, and explaining vocabulary and grammar through relevant real world examples in lessons.

Table 3. Percentages of students' perception on socio-affective skills from each batch

State No.	5			4			3			2			1		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
1	13	15	36	43	33	32	33	33	32	8	15	0	0	5	0
2	23	8	30	45	45	26	28	48	38	0	0	6	0	0	0
3	35	45	66	58	45	30	3	10	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	30	23	43	30	40	36	30	33	21	5	5	0	0	0	0
5	28	43	49	60	38	38	8	20	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	53	43	55	30	38	34	13	20	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	40	45	62	43	38	23	13	18	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	48	53	62	33	30	23	15	18	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	20	33	47	60	45	38	15	23	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	15	40	40	53	35	30	28	25	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	20	30	36	50	38	45	25	28	19	0	5	0	0	0	0
12	38	38	49	45	45	32	10	18	19	3	0	0	0	0	0
13	28	38	38	33	40	36	28	13	25	0	8	2	8	3	0
14	28	20	45	38	45	26	23	30	26	8	5	2	0	0	0
15	20	20	49	63	60	26	13	13	23	0	8	2	0	0	0

Table 3 shows the results of socio-affective skills category of a good EFL teacher. For batch 2015, it is very important to have an approachable and friendly teacher (53%). Then, it is important to make courses interesting and motivate students (58%), to listen to students' points of view and opinions and let them express themselves

(60%), be punctual (60%), be polite and respect the personality of the students (63%).

Meanwhile, the students from batch 2016 decided that be polite and respect the personality of the students (60%) as the highest criterion they wanted from a teacher. Next, treat students fairly and equally is the second highest very important criteria (53%).

However, there are some criteria which got the same percentage (45%), such as a teacher must neat and tidy in appearance, able to make courses interesting and motivate students, patient, punctual, able to build students' confidence, as well as flexible and open to criticism.

Subsequently, batch 2017 as sophomore in the Department said that a good English teacher must have ability to make courses interesting and motivate students (66%), patient (62%), treat students fairly and equally (62%), approachable and friendly (55%). While listening to students' points of view and opinions, building students' confidence, be polite and respect the personality of the students are the next characteristics they selected (49%).

Lastly, the students from each batch considered that ability to make courses

interesting and motivate students, and polite and respect the personality of the students are the most important characteristics from socio-affective skills category that must be owned by a good EFL teacher.

The last part of a good EFL characteristics is related to English proficiency. Table 4 shows that 68% of the students in batch 2015 said that a good teacher must give them some control and decision-making over what they do. It is very important for the teacher to be able to read, write, speak, and understand spoken English well (63%). Next, having ability to make the subject of the lesson interesting (60%), good knowledge of English grammar (58%), able to maintain discipline in the classroom (55%) are important as well for the teacher.

Table 4. Percentages of students' perception on English proficiency from each batch

State. No.	5			4			3			2			1		
	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
1	63	58	60	28	30	26	5	13	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	43	40	60	50	43	30	3	18	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	30	40	62	58	45	32	8	15	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	23	15	32	43	43	42	30	43	26	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	35	30	40	43	45	45	18	25	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	28	20	38	50	60	45	15	20	17	3	0	0	0	0	0
7	18	18	28	48	45	60	23	38	8	8	0	4	0	0	0
8	18	25	30	45	35	47	33	40	23	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	23	20	38	45	40	30	25	40	30	3	0	2	0	0	0
10	25	23	40	48	48	42	23	30	15	0	0	4	0	0	0
11	28	25	34	55	38	47	13	35	19	0	3	0	0	0	0
12	15	18	21	50	43	51	30	33	21	0	5	4	0	3	4
13	23	28	53	60	58	34	10	15	8	3	0	6	0	0	0
14	20	23	26	43	43	60	33	33	11	0	3	2	0	0	0
15	8	23	30	68	28	49	20	50	21	0	0	0	0	0	0

Batch 2016 chose differently from their senior. 60% of the students highlighted that being able to be flexible and vary techniques according to students' level and the teaching/learning situations is important criterion for a good teacher. Additionally, able to read, write, speak, and understand spoken English well (58%), able to make the subject of the lesson interesting to learners (58%), and able to create an entertaining atmosphere (48%), have good knowledge of English grammar (45%), have correct accent and pronunciation (45%), and emphasis error correction (45%) are other characteristics wanted by the students for their teacher to have.

In the meantime, batch 2017 emphasized that it is very important for English teacher to have knowledge on the language such as able to read, write, speak, and understand spoken English well (60%), know English vocabulary well (60%), and have good knowledge of English grammar (60%). Next, it is important to emphasis error correction (60%) and to help the learners become autonomous (60%).

To conclude, the students from each batch wanted an English teacher to have good knowledge on spoken English and grammar in term of English proficiency.

## **DISCUSSION**

From the findings, it can be concluded that there are differences and similarities of the characteristics of a good EFL teacher within category chosen by the three batches of English Department students. Taking the most prominent qualities noted by the participants into account, from organization and communication skills category, the profile of an effective English language teacher is someone who is able to make courses interesting and being smart to deviate attention of students from everything else to the topic, able to analyze students' needs, able to make/stimulate students to interact/communicate with each other, able to prepare the lesson well and use class time wisely, have good communication skills, able to plan and state the objectives of the lesson

clearly, encourage students to use the English language all the time in class, stress the most important points and provide detailed explanations while reading/listening, able to prepare appropriate material, provide opportunities to use English through meaningful tasks and activities as well as use easy language to aid student understanding.

From these categories, the three batches agreed that a good EFL teacher must have good communication abilities. In fact, the result is contradicted with Zamani and Ahangari (2016) in which they found that this characteristic obtains the lowest mean score, while ability to develop proper relationships with students gains the highest mean score. However, this finding approves the findings from Wichadee (2010) and Barnes and Lock (2013) in which the students in their study considered effective communication or delivery (communication skill and teaching method) as the most important category for an effective EFL teacher. Restu, Atmowardoyo, and Akil (2018) states that by having good communication skills, the teacher can develop good and close relationship with the students. By doing that, the students expect to consult their difficulties and needs in learning the language without having any fear of discouragement.

Additionally, the students also marked the importance of teacher's preparation in teaching such as planning the lesson carefully and using interesting and appropriate materials accompanied by meaningful tasks and activities that encourage communication among students in English. In line with the findings from Borg (2006), Park and Lee (2006), and Al-Mahrooqi et al (2015), this study confirms that being prepared for the class as well as able to arouse and sustain interest among students are desirable for an effective teacher. Then, having ability to use or make interesting materials or activities is most important to teaching since it stimulates students' attention and motivation which led to students' learning and this is vital to L2 acquisition (Dörnyei, 1998 in Park and Lee, 2006).

Similarly, the students in this study demanded their teacher to use English all the time in class as the medium of instruction and communication since it is the only opportunity to practice the language. Though in English, the teacher is required to elaborate and give detailed explanations in order to make the students understand about the subject matter. These findings are relevant with Wichadee (2010) and Celik, Arikan, and Caner (2013) study in which they found the students in Turkish context wanted their teachers to have well-developed English skills and content knowledge (vocabulary and grammar), such as a high level of communicative competence, and the ability to explain the lessons in a clear and confident manner. They also believed the teacher should be a loving person who can reduce students' anxiety in the classroom and make the learning easy and enjoyable. However, Sishavan and Sadeghi (2009), Celik, Arikan, and Caner (2013) and Sundari (2016) findings also revealed that the participants in their study noted the use of first language or mother tongue in explaining difficult topics. Sundari (2016) argues that Indonesian students tend to have both languages to be used in the classroom due to some reasons. Meanwhile, the participants in Park and Lee (2006) study perceived the usage of English is not very important due to the absence of an oral proficiency test in the KSAT for the students and teachers lack of fluency.

The second category is pedagogical knowledge. The students in this study believed that an effective English teacher is someone who can use various materials in teaching the language, promote communicative language learning through activities and discussion in the classroom, develop students' language skills, explain vocabulary and grammar through real world examples, set tasks with clear outcomes, motivate students by supporting their self-efficacy, encourage the students to learn English outside the classroom, provide constant feedback, and assess what students have learned rationally. In this category, the students stressed out the importance of

promoting communicative language learning through activities and discussion in the classroom and explaining vocabulary and grammar through real world examples for a good EFL teacher.

Related to the previous characteristics, the students under the present study favored their teacher to use English and communicative language learning approach in their activities and discussion in the classroom despite the differences they have in language proficiency. However, Barnes and Lock (2013) found the students with high proficiency tended to have communicative language learning with much exposure to English compared to low proficiency students since they were not afraid of losing face when they use incorrect English. Related to grammar instruction, the students in Barnes and Lock (2013) study were not supportive of explicit grammatical instruction though they expect teachers to have a good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar while the students in this study preferred to have vocabulary and grammar explanation through real world examples. In line with these findings, Brown (2007) says that in CLT, grammar is not taught separately; it is incorporated under various functional categories of communicative competence and a great deal of use of authentic language is encouraged for meaningful purposes.

Next, the students of English Department in socio-affective category would like to have an English teacher who is approachable and friendly, able to make courses interesting and motivate them, listen to students' points of view and opinions and let them express themselves, punctual, polite and respect the personality of the students, treat students fairly and equally, neat and tidy in appearance, patient, able to build students' confidence, flexible and open to criticism. In this category, the students in all batches emphasized on the importance to make the courses interesting and motivate them as well as be polite and respect the differences of students' personality. The same finding also revealed by Ghasemi and Hashemi (2011) in

Celik, Arikan, and Caner (2013) and Zamani and Angahari (2016) in which they found that some characteristics of effective teachers are universally desirable by the students under the study, namely reading and speaking proficiency; ability to arouse students' interest in learning English; and building students' self-confidence and motivation.

Nevertheless, if we traced back the characteristics chosen by the students in this study in the previous categories, it can be seen that all points are related to teacher's ability to make courses interesting and motivate students. The same results also found by Brosh (1996) in Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009), even though the teachers and the students' perceptions under the study were slightly different, they also emphasized the prominence of developing motivation and making lesson interesting. Based on this, it is necessary to point out that ability to make the courses interesting and give the students motivation to learn are important for a teacher to be considered as an effective one.

Meanwhile, related to English Department students' wish to have a teacher who is polite and respect the differences of students' personality, this finding is a little bit contradicted with Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009), Wichadee (2010), and Al-Mahrooqi et al (2015) study. In their study, the participants would like to have a teacher who can treat them equally and with a great deal of patience and care. Additionally, they underlined some other constructive characteristics on teacher's personality such as being patient, flexible and caring about students' needs, optimist, not bad-tempered, fair, friendly, and having positive attitude toward the students, and being smart and creative. The result comes up as the highest demand from the students is probably related to teacher's incapability to recognize students' needs and personality as the consequence of there are so many students to be remembered one by one.

The last category is English proficiency. The students from each batch chose highly some characteristics such as giving the learners some control and decision-making

over what they do, able to read, write, speak, and understand spoken English well, make the subject of the lesson interesting, good knowledge of English grammar, maintain discipline in the classroom, flexible and vary techniques according to students' level and the teaching/learning situations, create an entertaining atmosphere to carry out the class activities, have correct accent and pronunciation, emphasis error correction, know English vocabulary well, and ability to help the learners become autonomous learners. In comparison among the three batches in term of English proficiency, to be able to read, write, speak, and understand spoken English well and have good knowledge of English grammar are important characteristics noted by them. The result is consistent with the findings from Park and Lee (2006), Wichadee (2010), and Celik, Arikan, and Caner (2013). The result might be due to the assumption that someone is considered to have good proficient in English if he/she can master all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and express both spoken and written grammatically correct. Wichadee (2010) says that having full competent in English language is very important for the job, as "English is the only subject where effective instruction requires the teacher to use a medium the students do not yet understand."

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

As the findings in this study revealed, the English Department students from batch 2015, 2016 and 2017 agree that a good English teacher must have ability in organization and communication skills, pedagogical knowledge, socio-affective skills, and English proficiency. Regarding the characteristics in all category chosen by the students from each batch, there are differences and similarities. Despite the differences, the students emphasized more on teacher's communication ability, ability in using communicative language learning through activities and discussion in the classroom, ability in explaining vocabulary and grammar through real world examples,

ability in making the courses interesting and motivate them, polite and respect the differences of students' personality, able to read, write, speak, and understand spoken English well and have good knowledge of English grammar. These results may support or contradict with the previous research about students' perception of a good EFL teacher since it could change over time. However, this study may enrich our knowledge about what our students belief in foreign language learning especially in Indonesian context.

The results in this study inform English teachers particularly about what students expect from their teachers. Accordingly, it would be beneficial if the teachers use the results to reflect or evaluate their teaching practice to meet the students' needs, as well as for their own improvement and further professional development.

It should be pointed out that this study has limitations. Therefore, for further research, it is suggested to make clear some statements/characteristics in the questionnaire that ambiguous or even overlapped in meaning. Similarly, it is also necessary to include EFL teachers as participants in the study and then compared the results with the students' both in quantitative and qualitative methods. Finally, since this study is limited to the perceptions of students taken at one point in time and in one university only, it is advisable to include more students at across different levels and at schools to gain more validity results.

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