



## HOW STUDENTS PERCEIVE THE IDEAL TEACHER OF ENGLISH: A DESCRIPTIVE-REFLECTIVE STUDY AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN PANGKEP REGENCY

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### ABSTRACT

*The present study is about a study on the characteristics of the ideal English teacher as perceived by students of SMA Negeri 1 Pangkajene and SMA Negeri 2 Pangkajene in Pangkep regency. There were 20 students involved as the participants of the study which were selected purposively from those schools. The study intended to answer the main research question related to the characteristic of ideal English teacher by formulating four sub-research questions about the characteristics of ideal English teacher in the terms of: 1) pedagogical competence, 2) personal competence, 3) social competence and 4) professional competence. The research data were collected by using interview and observation technique. Then the data were analyzed by applying descriptive data analysis since this study aimed at describing how the students perceive the ideal teacher of English. The procedure of analyzing the data involved data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion or verification. The result of the study indicated that the students mostly perceive the ideal English teacher based on the four teachers competence: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competence. However, there were additional characteristics revealed by the students which are related to the physical appearance of the teacher.*

**Key words:** *Ideal, English, Teacher, Student's Perspective, Descriptive-Reflective.*

### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, the teacher-quality improvement has become the centre of attention of the government to produce qualify (should be adjective 'qualified') teachers for the achievement of national education goals. Then, it is certainly related to the important role of

teachers in education. The role of teachers is not only transferring knowledge, but also providing character education. They also become the good model for their students. As stated in Law No. 20, 2003 on National Education System that a teacher is a professional. The position of teachers as

professionals intends to implement national education system and achieve national education goals, namely, the development of the students potential to become faith and fear of the Almighty God, noble, knowledgeable, skilful, creative, independent, and becoming responsible to the citizens, and democracy.

It can be stated that in educational process, teacher is an important element. They are human resources who become the planners, the subjects, and the determinants of the reach of National Education goals. They also become the substitute of the students' parents in school. Therefore, they become a role model for their students. In addition, teachers practically hold fundamental roles in teaching and learning process. They are all who guide, educate, and transfer their knowledge to their students. Therefore, teachers also become the important factor that influences their students' academic achievement and their capability can highly influence student outcomes. (Lasley et al, 2006).

Since the teachers hold the important role in the classroom and influence the students' achievement, they are responsible to be the effective one. Even, they have to be ideal teachers for their students in order that they can carry out their role successfully. This applies to all teachers including English teachers. Therefore, English language teachers are by no means an exception and their key role in effective language learning cannot be overlooked. (Shisavan and Sadeghi, 2009:130)

Several studies have been done and reported by many language teachers and researchers which focus on the teacher quality. This gives a proof that it has been the fundamental issue to be discussed in educational research. Most of the educational researchers investigated this issue with different main objectives and method in order that the result of the study become completing each other. Some of them limited their study to see the qualification of a good English teacher, the characteristic of them, or the students' attitude toward them. Finally, it arrives to the investigation about ideal English teachers, their profile or their characteristic based on some point of views.

Gençtürket.al (2012) conducted a study entitled "*Qualifications of an Ideal Teacher according to Social Studies Pre-service Teachers*". In that study, the researchers tried to investigate the qualifications an ideal social studies teacher with document analysis. The subject of the study was 234 social studies pre-service teachers including 111 female and 123 male at Fatih School of Education, Karadeniz Technical University, Turkey. The results of the study showed that an ideal teacher has some qualifications such as being good communication with students, being successful in education- teaching activities and subject-matters, being compassionate, well-behaved and tolerant.

A study which focuses on an ideal teacher is also conducted by Singh (2012) entitled "A

*Study on Student's Perception of Ideal Teacher: A Survey on Students of Pharmacy Colleges in Punjab*". There were 400 students of Pharmacy degree level as the participants of this study. A survey was conducted with the help of semi structured questionnaire. The findings of this study concluded that the teacher should be lenient while teaching and interestingly, mastery of subject knowledge of teachers, wide experience of teaching, frequently ask questions during lectures and use variety of teaching aids/models but teachers who teach with the help of LCD/Projector were not much appreciated by the degree level students.

Mahmoud and Thabet (2013) conducted a study on the qualities of the good English teacher as perceived by Saudi and Yemeni college students of English. The participants of the study were about 60 students from Yemeni including male and female and 30 male students from Saudi. All of them were chosen purposively. The researchers categorized the findings under four main groups: English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, socio-affective skills and organization and communication.

Gonzalez *et al* (2003) also conducted a research with the title "*Tomorrow's EFL teacher educators*". The participants of this study were thirty-one EFL teachers from private and public schools from the Metropolitan Area of Medellin, Colombia. The findings of the research concentrated on the ideal characteristics of an EFL teacher educator by

analyzing the testimonies of teachers from public and private schools. The results suggest that issues such as knowledge of *local realities*, *broad experience in teaching EFL*, *command of the language*, and *experience in research* are identified as the most desirable characteristics of EFL teacher educators

Kadha (2009) conducted a study entitled "*What Makes a Good English Language Teacher*". The purpose of the study was to find out the teachers and students viewpoints about the qualities of a good English teacher. The study involved fourth level students of English in three faculties of education and arts affiliated to Hodeida University. The data were collected by conducting interview and spreading questionnaire. There were no a real difference between students and teachers concerning to the qualities of good English teachers except in some aspects. The results of the questionnaire reveal that high percentages of students and teachers alike regard the preparation and presentation of materials, planning a lesson, making it interesting and stating its objectives as well as motivating students and analyzing their needs to be the most important criteria in a good EFL teacher.

Another study which more related to this research is the study conducted by Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009). They conducted a study entitled "*Characteristic of an Effective English Language Teacher (EELT) as perceived by Iranian Teachers and Learners of English*". The finding of the study also suggests that that

teachers perceived that mastery of the target language, good knowledge of pedagogy and the use of particular techniques and methods as well as a good personality are those which make an EELT, whereas, learners thought that the characteristics relating to a teacher's personality and the way she/he behaves toward her/his students are the crucial characteristic of EELTs.

Therefore, at least there were three main reasons why this research was necessary to be conducted. First, it was crucial to have the students' perspective about the characteristics of ideal English teachers realizing that the students as the object of teaching also have their own perspectives to their teachers, it means they become the one side who could give their voice to the standard of ideal English teachers. The second reason was the characteristics or qualities of ideal English was mostly based on the government side, and the English teachers or English pre- service teachers side without looking at the students perspectives as some previous findings of several studies like a study conducted by Korompot (2012) which revealed the standard of good English teachers from Indonesian English teachers (IETs)' perspective. Then, also the studies related to this topic in other countries such as studies conducted by Shisavan and Sadeghi (2009) in Iran, Mahmoud and Tabhet (2013) in Saudi and Yemeni which may have different result since the different condition and context. The last, there was still

no documented standard of ideal or good English teachers based on the students' perspective in Indonesia. Therefore, this study was the researcher effort in order to make it present. Relating to the need of ideal English teacher, it was crucial to know the characteristics of ideal English teacher as perceived by the students.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Participants**

The subjects of this research were taken from two senior high schools in Pangkep Regency, SMA Negeri 1 Pangkajene and SMA Negeri 2 Pangkajene, Pangkep, South Sulawesi. The researcher took 20 students from the second grade students as the participants of this research since the researcher needed sufficient data in this case the students' perspective of their ideal English teacher. Those participants were chosen by using purposive sampling technique in order to get relevant data.

### **Instruments**

In this research, there were some instruments used to collect and analyzing the data. The instruments were camera, video and audio recorder to take pictures, videos and audio recording during observation and interview; field notes to write down what the researcher saw, heard and felt related to the research held; interview notes as the complement of the transcription of the interview record; and stationary to write down

any important information or situation related to this research.

### **Procedure of Collecting Data**

To investigate how the students perceived the ideal English teacher, the researcher used semi-structured interview. This kind of interview is sometimes called focused interviews. In this research, the semi-structured interviews were conducted face to face using a prepared interview guide. Participants were encouraged to talk freely and to tell their perspectives about ideal English teacher using their own words. During the interview the researcher took audio recorder and then transcribed the conversation of the interview. The researcher also wrote down some important information including the background, the opening, the body, and the closing of the interview on interview notes. Moreover, the observation was also held as the supporting technique of collecting data in this research. In this part, the researcher directly observed the interaction between the teacher and students in teaching and learning process. The researcher then wrote down some important information relating to the interaction process on the field notes and took some pictures and videos.

### **Data Analysis**

The procedure in analyzing the data in this research was based on Miles and Huberman (1984) theory which included data

reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion or verification.

#### *Data reduction*

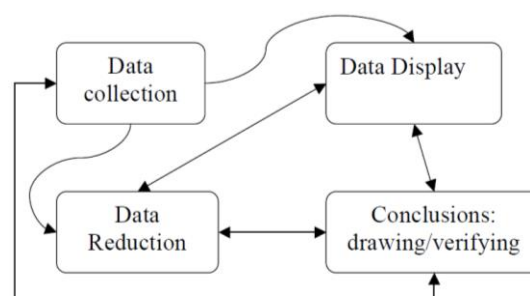
Data reduction was the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the 'raw' data that appeared in written-up field notes and the transcription of the interview. It occurred continuously as the part of analysis.

#### *Data Display*

After the data was reduced, then the next step was displaying the data. As the other qualitative research, the data presentation of this research was done in the form of narrative text.

#### **Conclusion Drawing/Verification**

The third stream of analysis activity was conclusion drawing and verification. From the beginning of data collection, the researcher was beginning to decide what things mean. Final conclusions were appeared until data collection was over.



### **FINDINGS**

The students' perspectives about the ideal English teachers were categorized into five main themes. They view the Ideal English

teachers from, “pedagogical competence”, personal competence”, “social competence”, “professional competence”, and “physical appearance”.

### ***Pedagogical Competence***

Based on the result of interview, most of the participants answered that the ability of the

teacher in teaching is the one of important aspects in which they viewed their ideal English teachers. The characteristics of the ideal English teachers mentioned by the students were listed in table 1.

Table 1 The Characteristics of Ideal English Teachers in Pedagogical Competence

No	The Characteristics of Ideal English Teachers	Category
1	Conducting effective teaching method	Pedagogical Competence
2	Mastery the students' characteristics	
3	Teaching based on the curriculum and students' need	
4	Applying the teachers' roles ( good motivator and giving solution)	
5	Giving Clear Explanation	
6	Paying attention to the learning goals	
7	Using information and communication technology	
8	Facilitating the students to actualize their English potential	
9	Conducting appropriate learning evaluation and assessment	
10	Using the result of assessment and evaluation	
11	Making reflection to improve the quality of learning	
12	Positive reinforcement (giving reward)	
13	Teaching English with Indonesian and English	

The above table showed that the first sub-theme was “conducting effective teaching method (appropriate, clear, interesting, and creative”. The students perceived that the teachers who mostly impressed them were the teachers who were able to conduct effective teaching method. In this case the teachers used teaching method which made the students easy to understand the material given. One of the students' statements considered one of their English teachers as the ideal teachers because of having this characteristic. She said,

*Because of her teaching method could be understood by the students well. Then, providing very extremely comfort to the students they teach”.*

The second sub-theme was related to the ability of the teachers in mastering the students' characteristics. A female student said,

*... by knowing the students, the teacher is able to be close to the students and able to know the students' difficulties in learning*

*because not all the students have the same academic achievement.*

The third sub-theme showed the students' expectation to their English teachers. Generally, the students' expected their English teacher teach based on the curriculum considering the curriculum was stated by the government and become the orientation of national examination. However, they also expected their teacher to develop the curriculum with their innovation and considering the students' need. A male student said,

*Teacher should be based on the curriculum..., but does not need to be set to a curriculum For example, teachers can look for other learning that may not exist in the curriculum."*

The next characteristic which had mentioned by the students was the ability of the teacher in applying the teachers' roles. The teachers' role mentioned by the students were becoming good motivator and giving solution to the students. One of student's statements:

*I think that the teacher could be said the ideal was the teacher who can blend with students, can provide a solution to the students' problems both in school and outside of school.*

Other sub-themes were "giving clear explanation", "paying attention to the learning goals". "using information and communication technology", and "facilitating the students to

actualize their English potential". Therefore the ideal English teacher should be the one who give clear explanation before giving assignment to the students. Then, any creative as a teacher, he should consider the learning objectives to be achieved. One student stated,

*The way of teaching is not too firma lot, more playing game but it achieves the learning goal."*

The students also perceived that English teachers would be better if they know how to used information and communication technology and use it in teaching and learning process. Then, the students also preferred the English teachers who facilitated the students to actualize their English potential. One of students said,

*I'm happy if the English teacher was holding some sort of activity to improve the students' English language e.g. English day or something like that.*

The next sub competences were related to evaluation and assessment. This involved "conducting appropriate learning evaluation and assessment", "using the result of assessment and evaluation", and "making reflection to improve the quality of learning". In this term, the students required their English teachers to conduct appropriate evaluation in order they could easy to meet students' ability level. After conducting appropriate assessment and evaluation the teacher should use the assessment and evaluation result to give

further treatments. The students also admitted that the teacher should make reflection to the teaching and learning which have been taught. A male student emphasized the importance of reflection to do by the teachers.

Finally, the students mentioned that “giving positive reinforcement (reward”) and “teaching English with Indonesian and English”. The students sometimes need appreciation by the teacher. This appreciation can be applied by giving reward to the students. Then, realizing that English in Indonesia is foreign language teachers, this characteristic become the students’ point of view to consider their ideal English teacher. A male student said,

*But it shouldn’t speak English all the time, should be combined because not all the students master English...”*

### **Personal Competence**

Based on the interview conducted, the researcher found that the teacher personality is one of the students’ points of view to see the Ideal of English teacher. There were several teacher personalities which had been mentioned by the students relating to the characteristics of their English teachers who mostly impressed them in the past and were considered as the Ideal English teachers. These characteristics are listed in table 2.

Table 2 The characteristics of Ideal English Teachers in Personal Competence

No	The Characteristics of Ideal English teachers	Category
1	Showing good nature (friendly, kind, patient, and gentle)	Personal Competence
2	Being understanding to the students	
3	Having a good sense of humor	
4	Having spiritual intelligence (religious/faithful )	
5	Being strict and discipline	
6	Being Fair	
7	Loving	
8	Caring	
9	Behaving based on norms and value	
10	Being authority	
11	Having a good confidence	
12	Being wise	
13	Upholding the ethics code of teachers	

The first characteristic of Ideal English teachers was about the good nature of the teachers. The teachers should show their good personality by showing their good nature like

friendly, kind, patient, and gentle because most of the students make them as the reason to consider the ideal English teachers. The statement of one student,



*I think in terms of personality she has been ideal, friendly, understand the situation we as students do not often get angry and upset.*

Besides having good natures, based on the students' expectation, the teachers should also understand to the students, they have to consider the students' condition in order the students were easy to receive the learning given. They also need to have a good sense of humor to make their class being active. The students also revealed that the teachers should have spiritual intelligence. They have to be faithful in order that they could educate their students. A male student said,

*...here we are not supposed to only intellectual intelligence but should be coupled with spiritual intelligence. The teacher must also*

*have good knowledge of religion, in my point of view.*

However teachers were still needed to be strict and discipline, in order the students could be the discipline the teachers should show their discipline first, even they could show their strict if needed.

Besides, the teachers also needed to be fair, have loving nature, and care to their students. These characteristics were easy to be recognized by the students since they are the object of teaching. Therefore teachers should try and keep this personality.

### **Social Competence**

In the third category of findings, the students' perspective about the ideal English teacher in terms of teachers' social competence can be seen in table 3.

Table 3 The Characteristics of Ideal English Teachers in Social Competence

No	The Characteristics of Ideal English teachers	Category
1	Being not discriminatory	Social Competence
2	Developing Effective Communication with Students	
3	Being polite	
4	Adaptable to various kinds of social environment	
5	Developing communication with their professional association as well as with other professions	

Participants of the study revealed that an ideal English teacher should not be discriminatory. It was indicated from the student's statement when he talked about his ideal English teacher, he said, *"She had never discriminated the children of teachers, official and the students from poor family"*. Therefore

teachers should be fair and teach the students equally without any differentiation that make students feel ignored or offended.

The teachers should also develop effective communication with students in order to have good socialization.

Being polite also becomes the requirement of the ideal teacher. The teachers must be careful in speaking and interact with the other people around them in order not to offend the students. One student stated,

*In my point of view, the ideal teacher I've found has a good way of talking, polite; not cornering the student should do this task with abusive words and smile.*

Besides the characteristics above the ideal English teachers should also be adaptable to various kinds of social environment and develop good communication not only with the students, but also with their professional association as well as other professions.

### **Professional Competence**

In the fourth category of findings, the senior high school students perceived some characteristics of ideal English teachers as shown in table 4.

Table 4 The Characteristics of Ideal English Teacher in Professional Competence.

No	The Characteristics of Ideal English teachers	Category
1	Being Knowledgeable	Professional Competence
2	Selecting interesting Material	
3	Having good academic qualifications	
4	Master the material, the structure and the concept of the subject taught	
5	Master deeply of competency standards and basic competencies of the subject taught.	
6	Develop their own professionalism	

The participants of the study claimed that the teachers should be knowledgeable. They have to be the main input of their students. They have to be able to select interesting material by considering the students need and ability level. Then as an English teacher, she or he should be able to master English well such as having good pronunciation, mastering English vocabulary and grammar, speaking English fluently. One of female students' stated,

*An English teacher whom I expected is a strict teacher and fluent on English language teaching....*

In terms of professional competence, the ideal English teachers should master the learning objective that the students have to be achieved. The teachers are also required to improve their competence. They should add their knowledge in many ways. Relating to this the students also gave their comment

*...teachers must learn with the purpose to improve their*

*professionalism back in order to add more insight into the English language if necessary to Master degree (S2), Doctor Degree (S3) until she really proficient.*

### **Physical Appearance**

Physical performance is also the one that students view to see the ideal English teachers. It was shown in table 5.

Table 5 The Characteristics of Ideal English in Physical Appearance.

No	The Characteristics of Ideal English Teachers	Category
1	Being Knowledgeable	Physical appearance

When student talked about her ideal English teacher, she stated this characteristic, she said, *"She is clean, neat, beautiful and young"*. This is proved by the English teacher who said that in order to become the ideal teachers especially in the students' point of view the teachers should pay attention to their physical performances. The teacher gave aphorism *"from eyes to heart"*. It means that the first view of the students is from the physical performance of the teachers then the interaction has just built.

### **DISCUSSION**

The main research question of this study was about the characteristics of ideal English teachers based on the students' perspective. Then to answer it, the researcher formulated four specific research questions including what are the characteristics of the ideal English

teacher in terms of: 1). pedagogical competence, 2 personal competence, 3) social competence, and 4) professional competence. Then, relating to the main and specific research questions stated, it was found that ideal English teachers' characteristics as students perceived covers all the teachers' competence, namely pedagogical competence, personal competence, social competence and professional competence, with additional category that was physical appearance. Generally this result confirms the standard of ideal English teachers set by the Indonesian government which stated on The Ministerial Rule of National Education No. 16, 2007. The additional characteristic is only in physical appearance category. Besides this result also mostly in line with the findings of Mahmoud and Thabet (2013) in which they found that characteristics of ideal English teacher can be seen in four categories including English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, socio-affective skills and organization and communication. Then, the study conducted by Mirjam (2009) that revealed that the exemplary teachers who become the subject of her study fulfil four competences, namely subject matter, social and personal competence.

The ability of the teachers to conduct effective teaching method is one of the requirements to become the ideal teacher of English. This characteristic also confirms the study conducted by Shisavan and Sadeghi (2009) which revealed that one of an effective

English language teacher was the use of particular techniques and methods.

The teachers also have to become good motivators for their students. They have to know the way to encourage the students in learning English. This is in line with study conducted by Mahmoud and Thabet (2013) which is found that one of the characteristic of good English teacher was the ability to encourage the students. According to Moreno (2009), students see the effective teacher as a motivational and a leader when the teacher encourages them to be responsible for their own learning.

The characteristics of ideal English teachers in personal competence involves loving, caring, behaving based on norms and value, being authority, having a good confidence, upholding the ethic codes of teachers. This result is substantial agreement with Genturk (2012) detection that an ideal teacher should be full of love, well-behaved, tolerant and perspective, respectful and idealist, equitable, patient, helpful, responsible, genial, modern and hardworking.

It is also in line with some research results which had mentioned the ability of the teachers to socialize with the other students as the characteristics of ideal English teachers such as Genturk (2012) mentioned that an ideal teacher should be active and social.

Therefore the students also appreciated to the teachers who knowledgeable, selecting interesting material, have good academic

qualification, master the material, the structure and the concept of the subject taught, master deeply of competency standards and basic competencies of the subject taught, develop their own professionalism. This gives agreement to the result of the study conducted by Shisavan and Sadhegi (2009) which revealed that mastery the target language was one of the features of good English teachers although it was based on the teachers' perspectives.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Relating to the main research question of this study and the findings above it can be concluded that the students view the ideal characteristic of English teachers mostly in four teachers competencies: 1). Pedagogical knowledge which consists of conducting effective teaching method; mastery students' characteristics; teaching based on the curriculum and students' need; applying teachers' roles; giving clear explanation; paying attention to the learning goals; using information and technology; facilitating the students to actualize their English; conducting appropriate assessment and evaluation; using the result of assessment, making reflection, positive reinforcement, teaching English using Indonesian and English. 2). Teacher personality which includes showing good nature (friendly, kind, and patient, gentle, and polite); understanding; being fair; having a good sense of humour; having spiritual high spiritual intelligence, being strict and discipline; loving, caring, behaving based on norms and value,

being authority, having a good confidence, upholding the ethic codes of teachers. 3) Social Competence that is the ideal teacher is the one who being indiscriminative, developing effective communication with students, being polite, adaptable, develop communication with the others. 4). Professional competence in which the ideal teachers should be knowledgeable, have a good academic qualification, able to select interesting material, master English subject, master the competency standards and basic competence, develop their own professionalism. However there is additional category that students considered as the characteristics of ideal English teacher that is physical performance. 5) Physical Performance in which the teacher should clean and neat or the teacher physical appearance in the sense of artificial.

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