Good and effective EFL English teachers: the exploration of male and female students' perceptions

Professores de Inglês EFL bons e eficazes: uma exploração das percepções de alunos do sexo masculino e feminino

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to find out how male and female students perceive the characteristics of good and effective English teachers in Bali. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The sample comprises 70 female students and 77 male students. The data were collected through questionnaires and focus group discussions (FGD). The findings from the questionnaire show that both male and female students consider that a teacher who is a good friend for students is the most important characteristic of a good English teacher, and one who prepares lessons well and controls class time wisely as the most important characteristic of an effective English teacher. However, based on the data for good English teachers from the open-ended questionnaire and FGD, it seems male students are more realistic in giving their perceptions and tend to like learning that involves active discussions in class, while female students are more likely to like learning that requires them to only listen to teacher explanations in class. Both male and female students perceive an effective English teacher in the same way; they prefer teachers who can prepare lessons well, control class time wisely, and use interesting learning media such as pictures and videos to teach because it can maintain students motivation to learn English.

Keywords: perceptions, good English teacher, effective English teacher, male and female students.
RESUMO
Este estudo tem como objetivo descobrir como estudantes do sexo masculino e feminino percebem as características de bons e eficazes professores de inglês em Bali. Este estudo utiliza um método descritivo qualitativo desenvolvido por Miles e Huberman (1994). A amostra é composta por 70 estudantes do sexo feminino e 77 estudantes do sexo masculino. Os dados foram coletados por meio de questionários e discussões em grupos focais (FGD). As conclusões do questionário mostram que tanto os alunos como as estudantes consideram que um professor que é um bom amigo dos alunos é a característica mais importante de um bom professor de inglês, e que alguém que prepara bem as aulas e controla o tempo das aulas com sabedoria é a característica mais importante. De um professor de inglês eficaz. No entanto, com base nos dados do questionário aberto e do FGD sobre bons professores de inglês, parece que os alunos do sexo masculino são mais realistas na apresentação das suas percepções e tendem a gostar de uma aprendizagem que envolva discussões ativas nas aulas, enquanto as alunas são mais propensas a gostar aprendizagem que exige que eles apenas ouçam as explicações dos professores nas aulas. Tanto os estudantes do sexo masculino quanto do feminino percebem um professor de inglês eficaz da mesma maneira; eles preferem professores que possam preparar bem as aulas, controlar o tempo das aulas com sabedoria e usar mídias de aprendizagem interressesantes, como fotos e vídeos, para ensinar, porque isso pode manter a motivação dos alunos para aprender inglês.

Palavras-chave: percepções, bom professor de Inglês, professor de Inglês eficaz, alunos e alunas.

1 INTRODUCTION

The teacher in the learning process is the main subject and a source of knowledge. In learning English, teachers must not only be able to motivate students but also increase their enthusiasm for learning English. Teachers' routines in the classroom not only have a great impact on students' learning achievement and enthusiasm for learning English, but also on their positive psychological state (Deporter, 2005). To be successful in their daily encounters, teachers need to be both good and effective, the former referring to all the qualities that make students happy and enthusiastic about learning, and effective in the sense that they have the pedagogical ability and competence to plan, implement, and assess their lessons so that learning outcomes can be optimally achieved (Brown, 2004). While there is no clear distinction between good and effective, there are some reasons to believe that the notion of a 'good' teacher may refer to a teacher's personal and social values that result in an attractive, comfortable, and conducive learning environment where students feel excited and motivated to learn. Meanwhile, being an effective teacher is likely to be related to teachers' success in teaching and learning, where teachers use their knowledge and skills to support students to achieve desired learning goals. Thus,
being a good teacher tends to be subjectively assessed by students, whereas being effective is more likely to be measurable as it is linked to the achievement of learning objectives and expected competencies.

In more detail, Brown (2004) states that good and effective teachers are successful teachers because they possess all the characteristics related to technical expertise, pedagogical ability, social ability, and personal qualities. Good teachers can refer to a teacher's personal and social values, while effective teachers can refer to a teacher's technical expertise and pedagogical ability. In addition, Stronge (2007) points out that these abilities and skills help students acquire information and skills relevant to different areas of learning, including social skills, which are the ability to understand what others believe, feel, and are motivated by. This suggests that teachers play a major role in the all-round development of students' knowledge, skills, and character.

A good and effective teacher uses methods and strategies that suit students' learning needs, learning styles, and learning conditions and situations to be able to increase students' enthusiasm and motivation to learn. Other studies have shown that if students are involved in learning and are motivated to learn, they will be happier to learn and retain information well (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). The real challenge that teachers face in their profession is how to deal with various individual differences that include motivation, attitude, interest, learning style, character, and behavior. Each student has his or her own characteristics and learning preferences, so a quality teacher is one who can accommodate learning differences in the classroom (Taniredja & Abduh, 2016) and work effectively to achieve targeted competencies for their students. It is simple to see how important a role teachers play in determining the standard of education. Because of this, the quality of educators and teacher preparation programs is the primary issue raised in regard to the standard of education (Zamroni, 2001:51). According to Park & Lee's (2006) study, the primary quality that teachers should possess is teacher competence or pedagogical skill. In order for students to feel more motivated during the process of learning, teachers are expected to be able to comprehend their students.

Students' perceptions of teachers impact their motivation and enthusiasm for learning (Wichadee Orawiwatnakul, 2012). This is consistent with Walgito's (1990) statement that perception is the act of arranging and analyzing the information that an individual receives in order to make sense of what they see, hear, and so forth. Perception is the process of organizing and interpreting sensory data to gain knowledge about the environment and oneself (Davidoff, 1987). Furthermore, according to Rakhmat (2002),
perception is the process of synthesizing information and interpreting clues about an item or event. Student perception is the way learners perceive a situation that occurs during the learning process. As a result, students' perception is how they interpret what they have learned or done (Sidhu, 2003). Every student must have different interpretations of each other, let alone the differences in interpretations of male and female students.

Numerous studies have revealed a number of obvious differences between male and female students, including differences in learning outcomes, learning methods, and engagement in the learning process. Males typically have convergent learning styles, which are characterized by good problem-solving skills and a preference for assignments that are relevant to their lives. Females typically have a cognitive learning style that prefers information-gathering tasks. They might imagine seeing real-world problems from a variety of points of view and then connecting those perspectives to build a whole (Arief et al., 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to talk about how students' perceptions of their teachers, whether male or female, relate to the learning outcomes or levels they achieve in school because, by knowing what students need, teachers can develop and prepare learning needs to improve students' learning achievements in the classroom. Currently, there are not many studies that specifically examine students' perceptions of their teachers. Moreover, research that analyzes student perceptions based on gender differences. Thus, this study aims to describe male and female students' perceptions regarding the characteristics of good and effective English teachers based on gender differences in Indonesia, especially in Bali, and how the students' perceptions of good and effective English teachers differ based on gender differences.

Perception is the process of taking in information through the five senses, processing it, and interpreting it to form a view (Mulya & Almah, 2020). Hamzah and Nasri (2020) mention that perception is influenced by several things, such as personal effect, which refers to differences in the perceptual ability of each individual that influence the perception that will be issued; cultural effect, which refers to a person's place of residence where the culture of the environment will affect the person's perception of seeing something; and physical effect, which refers to the natural conditions of an environment. Furthermore, perception is divided into two types, namely positive perception and negative perception (Mola, 2021). Both are formed by three main components, namely selection, interpretation, and rounding. Individuals' descriptions of their complete knowledge about an observed object determine whether they have a positive or negative perception. As a result, both positive and negative perceptions will
always influence someone's decision to do anything. Given that perception is reinforced by one’s cultural background, past experiences, embedded values, and growing information, it is understandable that every individual student develops his or her own perceptions about the meaning and characteristics of a good and effective English teacher. It is then very important to explore what’s on the mind of the individual student with regard to what makes an English teacher good and effective.

2 METHOD

This study investigates the characteristics of an effective and good English teacher based on how students perceive them based on their gender using a descriptive-qualitative methodology. In the opinion of Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative data is the basis of a thorough and well-supported description and explains local processes. Using the descriptive qualitative method, data were collected using a self-rank questionnaire in which the students filled in a rank of importance and through focus group discussion to explore in-depth information about the perceptions of male and female students regarding good teachers and effective teachers. In the self-rank questionnaire, students were asked to rank a list of values, and in the open-ended questionnaire, they were asked to write a description of each value. In the focused group discussion, randomly selected subjects were guided in a discussion regarding their perspectives on the values of good and effective teachers.

The effective teacher self-rank questionnaire was developed based on Neil (1991), where an effective teacher is competent in what to teach (professional competence) and how to teach (pedagogical competence). These two components are detailed in the three main stages of teaching and learning: planning, implementation, and assessment. The questionnaire for good teacher values follows: Brown (2004) states that good teachers should have social and personal competencies that include: (1) the ability to build good relationships with students; (2) building students' confidence; (3) having the ability to maintain classroom order; (4) having the ability to provide a pleasant environment for classroom activities; (5) motivating students to voice their thoughts and views by paying attention to them; (6) having the ability to engage students in lessons and the ability to maintain their attention; (7) having the ability to know the characteristics of students in the classroom.

The subjects of this study were the 11th grade male and female students at SMA Negeri 2 Singaraja, with a total of 77 male students and 70 female students for the self-
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rank and open questionnaire. And there were 10 male and 10 female students chosen randomly by the researcher to be the participants in the FGD. The data were analyzed using interactive qualitative data analysis, which mainly comprises data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data from the self-rank questionnaire, open questionnaires, and focus group discussion were triangulated for a more trustworthy result.

3 FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The following are the results of the self-rank questionnaire, the open-ended questionnaire, and the results of focus group discussion data analysis.

a) Male and Female Students’ Perceptions about a Good English Teacher

Data from the self-rank questionnaire shows that most students consider teacher personality to be the most important determining factor for good English teachers, as seen in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank of importance as perceived by the male students</th>
<th>The Values of a Good English Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 1 (m = 39 or 50.6%)</td>
<td>RANK 1 (f = 27 or 38.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 3 (m = 12 or 15.6%)</td>
<td>RANK 3 (f = 12 or 17.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 4 (m = 5 or 6.5%)</td>
<td>RANK 7 (f = 1 or 1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 7 (m = 0 or 0%)</td>
<td>RANK 6 (f = 2 or 2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 5 (m = 5 or 6.5%)</td>
<td>RANK 4 (f = 7 or 10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 8 (m = 0 or 0%)</td>
<td>RANK 8 (f = 1 or 1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 9 (m = 0 or 0%)</td>
<td>RANK 9 (f = 1 or 1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 10 (m = 0 or 0%)</td>
<td>RANK 10 (f = 1 or 1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 6 (m = 2 or 2.6%)</td>
<td>RANK 5 (f = 5 or 7.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 2 (m = 14 or 18.2%)</td>
<td>RANK 2 (f = 13 or 18.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the data findings above, it was found that both female and male students equally positioned “can be a good friend for students” as the most important characteristics of good English teachers. From the numerical data above, it was found that 50.6% of male students and 38.6% of female students chose ‘can be a good friend for students’ as the first rank or the most important characteristic for a good English teacher.
This is in line with the theory of Brown (2004), Thompson, Greer, and Greer (2004), which says that a good teacher is one who can show a positive outlook; one example is by being a good friend for their students. In addition to this, this is also in line with the results of research by Chuyun Hu (2020) and Ramazani (2014), who found that a good teacher must be a good friend to students both in the classroom and outside the classroom. A friendly teacher made the students feel so close to the teacher, which made them comfortable learning English and brave enough to ask something related to the lesson (Pratiwi, 2013). And as revealed in the open-ended questionnaires as well as focus group discussions, male students gave a description of what it means to be a good friend for their students in their opinion, and the students said that a good friend for them is someone who must talk and listen to complaints from all students, must be friendly to all students, and must be relaxed in teaching and not too serious. On the other hand, female students also gave the description that a good teacher is one who must understand the needs of students, should be friendly to all students, and should help students who need help.

Besides that, the male and female students also perceive that a good teacher must be able to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each student and care about all students in the class. This is in line with research from Quiet and Nanni (2022), who discovered that having an in-depth knowledge of students—including their needs, interests, and weaknesses—is the most crucial quality that makes a good teacher. As a good teacher, the teacher should be able to understand the characteristics and traits of each individual or student. To find out the characteristics of each student, teachers can apply a special method directly to learning so that they know the differences among their students and how to overcome them (Nidawati, 2018). By understanding what students need, students will feel that they are cared for by their teachers, so they will be motivated to learn and enthusiastic about participating in learning activities. As revealed in the open questionnaire as well as the focus group discussion, male students gave their opinion that a good teacher must be able to know the abilities and conditions of each student because every student must have their own abilities, their own strengths, and their own weaknesses. In addition to this, female students also gave the description that a good English teacher must be able to understand the weaknesses of students and not compare them with other students, because if teachers compare students' strengths and weaknesses, it can reduce students' motivation to learn.

On the other hand, the characteristics that students find least important from both male and female students are providing opportunities for students to explore their own
creative thinking, respecting the ideas of all students without discrimination, and remembering the names of the students in class. Numerical data shows that these three characteristics were only chosen by 0% of male students and only 1.4% of female students who chose them as the most important criteria for a good English teacher. This is in line with the research of Chen and Lin (2009), who found that students are not in favor of teachers who provide opportunities for students to explore their own creative thinking and can remember their names, but prefer teachers' personalities and teacher-student relationships as more important characteristics, such as being able to be a good friend and providing motivation to students. This is because students prefer English teachers who teach in a relaxed manner and do not force students to argue in class.

However, from the results of the open-ended questionnaire as well as the FGD, male and female students gave their opinion about the criteria, remembering the names of the students in class differently. According to male students, by having the teacher remember the students' names, they will feel closer to the teacher and can increase their enthusiasm for learning, so according to them, this characteristic is also actually important to be possessed by a good English teacher. In contrast to male students, female students argue that they do not want teachers to remember their names for fear of being pointed at during learning, so instead of feeling motivated to learn because the teacher knows their name, it reduces their learning enthusiasm in the classroom for fear of being pointed at, so according to them, being able to remember students' names is not so important for a teacher to be said to be a good English teacher.

This shows that there is a difference between male and female students' perceptions of good English teachers, where male students are more realistic in giving their perceptions and tend to like learning that applies active discussions in class, while female students are more reliant on emotions in giving their perceptions and are more likely to like learning that only listens to teacher explanations in class. This is in line with the results of research by Masruri et al. (2014), who found that the characteristics between male and female students can be distinguished from how they respond to learning activities in class, in which male students are more likely to be active in discussion activities with their friends and other oral activities, while female students are more likely to listen to explanations given by the teacher in class.

b) Male and Female Students’ Perceptions about an Effective English Teacher
The data from the self-ranked questionnaire shows that most students consider teacher professionalism to be the most important determining factor for effective English teachers, as seen in the following table.

### Table 2: Male and Female Students’ Perceptions about an Effective English Teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank of importance as perceived by the male students</th>
<th>The Values of an Effective English Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 1 (m = 31 or 40.2%)</td>
<td>RANK 1 (f = 29 or 41.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 8 (m = 2 or 2.6%)</td>
<td>RANK 7 (f = 2 or 2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 9 (m = 2 or 2.6%)</td>
<td>RANK 9 (f = 0 or 0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 10 (m = 2 or 2.6%)</td>
<td>RANK 10 (f = 0 or 0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 6 (m - 3 or 3.9%)</td>
<td>RANK 8 (f = 1 or 1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 7 (m = 3 or 3.9%)</td>
<td>RANK 5 (f = 3 or 4.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 3 (m = 9 or 11.7%)</td>
<td>RANK 3 (f = 11 or 15.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 4 (m = 6 or 7.8%)</td>
<td>RANK 6 (f = 3 or 4.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 5 (m = 3 or 3.9%)</td>
<td>RANK 4 (f = 6 or 8.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANK 2 (m = 16 or 20.8%)</td>
<td>RANK 2 (f = 15 or 21.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: By the author

From the data above, both female and male students' perspectives reveal that the most important value for an effective English teacher is to prepare lessons well and control class time wisely. From the numerical data, 40.2% of male students and 41.5% of female students chose to prepare lessons well and control class time wisely as the number 1 or most important characteristic for an effective English teacher. From the data, it can be seen that most male and female students ranked prepare lessons well and control class time wisely as the most important criteria compared to other criteria. From the data of open ended questionnaire and FGD, it was also found some reasons regarding prepare lessons well and control class time wisely from both male and female students. Male students gave the reason that an effective teacher is a teacher who uses interesting learning media such as pictures and videos to teach and checks students' attendance one by one. On the other hand, female students gave reasons that effective teachers are teachers who are able to control class time, not waste time, and use video media in the learning process.
Similarly, in the numerical data of both male and female students, students perceive an effective English teacher as an educator who has the ability to provide motivation to encourage students' enthusiasm for learning as the second important characteristic. 20.8% of male students and 21.4% of female students considered the ability to provide motivation to encourage students' enthusiasm for learning. According to the data from the open-ended questionnaire and FGDs, male students gave reasons that motivation provided by teachers is an important factor in increasing students' enthusiasm for learning in the classroom, because students will be more enthusiastic to learn English if the teacher encourages them by giving encouraging words to learn. On the other hand, female students will be more enthusiastic to learn English if the teacher motivates them by not comparing students, explaining the importance of learning English, and motivating students to learn by using interesting and not monotonous learning media.

On the other hand, the characteristics of an effective teacher that male and female students consider least important are informing the assessment procedures in the classroom and teaching students according to the lesson plan. Numerical data shows that only 2.6% of male students and 0% of female students chose these two statements as the most important criteria for an effective English teacher. This was revealed by male and female students through open-ended questionnaires and FGDs: that male and female students prefer teachers who do not rely too much on lesson plans and can adjust the teaching materials to be taught to students according to their needs, so that learning will run smoothly, be interesting for students, and prepare a lesson that is not boring.

From this, it can be concluded that male students and female students have the same perspectives regarding effective English teachers. This is shown by the similarity of their perceptions that effective English teachers are teachers who prepare lessons well, control class time wisely, and use interesting learning media such as pictures and videos to teach, which is also one of the standards of effective teachers according to Neil (1991). Effective English teachers are teachers who have pedagogical competence, such as being able to prepare lesson plans well, understanding the material being taught, and being able to adapt teaching materials to the needs of students in the classroom. This is in line with Goddard and Hoy (2000), who state that effective English language teachers are those who can adapt their instruction based on what their students are learning.
4 CONCLUSION

Teachers have an important role in educating students at school. To be able to educate students successfully, teachers must be able to be good and effective teachers for their students. Every student can be expected to develop their own perception of what a good and effective English teacher is. Based on the findings and discussion, male and female students perceive that a good English teacher should become a good friend for students and understand the strengths and weaknesses of each student. Interestingly, they value teachers’ abilities in providing opportunities for students to explore their own creative thinking, respecting the ideas of all students without discrimination, and remembering the names of the students in class as the least important characteristics of a good English teacher. However, there is a difference between male and female students’ perceptions of good English teachers during open-ended questionnaires and focus group discussion, where male students are more realistic in giving their perceptions and tend to like learning that applies active discussions in class, while female students are more reliant on emotions in giving their perceptions and are more likely to like learning that only listens to teacher explanations in class.

The most important characteristics that male and female students perceive in an effective English teacher are the ability to prepare lessons well, control class time wisely, and provide motivation to encourage students' enthusiasm for learning. And for the least important characteristics of an effective English teacher, male and female students perceive ‘inform the assessment procedures in the classroom’ and ‘teach students according to the lesson plan’ as the least important. So there is no difference between male and female students perceptions regarding the characteristics of an effective English teacher. This is shown by the similarity of their perceptions that effective English teachers are teachers who prepare lessons well, control class time wisely, and use interesting learning media such as pictures and videos to teach.
REFERENCES


