



## Teachers' Perceptions of the Effective EFL Teachers at Junior and Senior High Schools in Padang

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### Abstract

*The importance of being an effective EFL teacher becomes a crucial issue because in Indonesian educational curriculum, English is taught as a subject matter at junior and senior high schools. English teachers, hold significant roles inside of the classroom in order to meet the objectives of curriculum. This study aimed to investigate the teachers' perception toward the characteristics of effective EFL teachers at junior and senior high school in Padang, from the aspects of pedagogical competency, English language pedagogical competency, personal competency, social competency, and professional competency. The data were collected by using two-section questionnaire which consisted of close and open-ended questions distributed to 26 English teachers of junior and senior high schools in Padang. The results showed that the stakeholders emphasized on pedagogical competency, such as preparing English lesson well ( $M=4.88$ ) and managing class time well ( $M=4.81$ ) as the most important characteristics of an effective EFL teacher. As a whole, teachers perception are at good category.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Teaching-learning process cannot be separated from the teachers and students as the participants of education. The successful of teaching learning process is supported by many aspects, but the most affected aspect is the quality and proficiency of teachers as they hold the control towards their students in the classroom. "Good and qualified teachers are essential for efficient functioning of educational systems and for enhancing the quality of learning" (Shishavan and Sadeghi, 2009, p.130). That is why a good and effective teacher needs to be regarded as a fundamental factor in order to bring the better development in education.

In addition, the fact that English is a foreign language in Indonesia, and English is a subject in school curriculum, so that language is not exposed much outside the classroom that made the role of English teacher is significantly in the class. Hence, teachers hold an essential role to run their work effectively in order to achieve English

language learning objectives. However, based on many researchers who conducted their research of teaching English as foreign language (TEFL) in Indonesia, it reported that related to TEFL, it found there are still sense of failure regarding teaching English as foreign language. It implied that although English is taught and used as a foreign language in Indonesia, the outcomes are unsatisfactory (Lie, 2007). The previous study also have implied the factors affected are including large class sizes, less qualified teachers and low English proficiency, a lack of teaching facilities, and low salaries for teachers (Sulistiyo, 2016). The data showed that the effectiveness from many English teachers is still on low level and it needs to be further investigated.

To investigate the characteristics of an effective EFL teachers, a researcher can conduct a research through testing the teacher itself or doing survey related to students achievement of EFL teaching learning. However, teacher' perception cannot be neglected. Teachers, as the part of stakeholders, are the person in a school who are responsible and involved actively in developing, implementing, and revising a particular subject on what is needed to improve, revise, or stop an implementation of things related to achieve an effective teaching program (Kwangsawad, 2017). In term of teaching English as foreign language, English teachers are the main figure that mostly responsible in improving and implementing things related process of English teaching and learning, because they know exactly their roles. So, the perception of English teacher are regarded to have a better assessment to features that teachers should have in order to run their work effectively.

An effective teacher could be defined as a combination of competencies, characteristics, and behavior that will take a teacher as educator to assist the students to achieve their learning outcomes. The characteristics of effective English teachers are varied by some qualities. Brown (2007) stated that a checklist of good language-teacher characteristics, is divided into four categories: technical knowledge, pedagogical skills, interpersonal skills and personal qualities. The good qualities that teachers have in teaching english, will lead to a successful EFL teaching and learning. A successful EFL teacher claimed to be someone who has a larger knowledge base for she/he will present foreign language and its cross culture proficiency which include understanding, awareness, expertise, and skills. Also they are required to be able to organize and utilize those knowledge efficiently. (Rahimi and Pourshahbaz, 2019; Huang, 2010). Based on the statement above, a good teacher is required to have the qualities such as, pedagogical knowledge, personal traits and teaching style, in order to achieve an effective and successfull EFL teaching in EFL class.

In Indonesian context, many researchers also have done their studies regarding an effective EFL teachers which mostly compared the perception from both teacher and students in junior and senior high schools level. (Siyami, 2014; Virgiyanti, Widiawati, & Suharmanto, 2016; Nontin, 2016). Only few studies which focused on English teacher's personal perspective. Based on that fact, this study intends to

investigate the characteristics of an effective EFL teachers perceived by English teacher of junior and senior high schools in Padang based on the category of effective English teacher stated in Regulation of Minister of National Education in the 2007 number 16. It is believed that the teachers' perspective on the effective language teachers in EFL teaching is important to be studied because it is relevant to their expectations of the course as well as their commitment to provide the opportunity to be successful and satisfied with their role as a teacher to run their teaching program. Since these teachers have been experienced in educational areas for years, and based on their experiences, their perception toward an effective language teaching may be beneficial and contribute for a better education.

## **METHOD**

In this research, the researcher employed descriptive research design with qualitative method based on survey research. The population involved was all the English teachers who teaches at Senior and Junior High School in Padang. The researcher used simple random sampling, so the researcher invited 26 English teachers who teach at SMPN-SMAN in Kota Padang. There were 15 Senior High School teachers and 11 Junior High School teachers, consist of 21 female and 5 male teachers in totals. The data collected through a set of questionnaire which adapted from Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009). The researcher rearranged the closed-ended questions with some changes and grouping them into five categories, that the qualities of an effective English teacher referred to the four competencies stated in Regulation of Minister of National Education in the 2007 number 16 of the standard academic qualification and competence of teachers. Then, the researcher analyzed the data based on the score adapted from Likert Scale items.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Research Finding**

#### *1.1 Finding of Close-Ended Questions*

The researcher presented the data from teachers' perception to answer the following research question: 1) What are teachers' perception about characteristic of effective EFL teacher and 2) What characteristics of EFL effective teachers are perceived to be most important by the English teachers at junior and senior high schools in Padang.

The data about stakeholders peception regarding to the characteristics of an EFL Teacher should has in teaching English as Foreign language are showed on the table below.

**Table 1.** Teachers' perception about EFL Teacher Pedagogical Competency

Pedagogical Competency	F	Strongly Agree (%)	F	Agree (%)	F	No Idea (%)	F	Disagree (%)	F	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Prepare the English lesson well	23	88.5%	3	11.5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.88	0.33
2. Manage the class time well	23	88.5%	3	11.5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.88	0.33
3. Use various materials including video, audio, an multimedia	18	69.2%	8	30.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.69	0.47
4. Follow syllabus and use lesson plans tightly	6	23.1%	15	57.7%	3	11.5%	2	7.7%	0	0%	3.88	0.91
5. Asses what students have learned rationally	11	42.3%	15	57.7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.42	0.50
6. Maintain good classroom atmosphere using authority, if necessary	3	11.5%	20	76.9%	2	7.7%	1	3.8%	0	0%	3.96	0.60
7. Provide opportunities to use English through meaningful activities	12	46.2%	14	53.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.46	0.51
8. Provide activities that arouse students' interest in learning English	12	46.2%	14	53.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.46	0.51
9. Teach English tailored to students' English proficiency levels	21	80.8%	5	19.2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.81	0.40
10. Be-up-to-date (e.g. use internet and recent technologies in teaching)	8	30.8%	17	65.4%	0	0%	1	3.8%	0	0%	4.23	0.65
11. Set activities which require students to interact with each other in English	16	61.5%	10	38.5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.62	0.50

From the findings above, regarding pedagogical competency, all teachers mostly agreed to the characteristics mentioned. Moreover, they perceived the most important features of an effective EFL teacher is someone who *has the ability to prepare the English lesson well and manage class time as well*. This result in line with the previous findings by Sundari (2016) and Park & Lee (2006). Sundari (2016) reported that teachers perceived preparing the lesson and manage the class well as the most important characteristics. In contrast, *follow syllabus and use lesson plans tightly and maintaining classroom atmosphere through authority* seemed to be the least important features of an effective EFL teachers. This finding is also supported what

Sundari (2016) and Kourieous & Evripidou (2013) that an effective teacher should not be use authorian role in maintaining classroom atmosphere.

**Table 2.** Teachers' Perception about EFL Teacher English Language Pedagogical Competency

English Language Pedagogical Competency	F	Strongly Agree (%)	F	Agree (%)	F	No Idea (%)	F	Disagree (%)	F	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
12. Have a high level of proficiency with English vocabulary	11	42.3%	14	53.8%	0	0%	1	3.8%	0	0%	4.35	0.69
13. Understand spoken English well	13	50%	13	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.50	0.51
14. Read and write English well	16	61.5%	10	38.5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.62	0.50
15. Speak and pronounce English well	16	61.5%	10	38.5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.62	0.50
16. Have a native-like accent	2	7.7%	14	53.8%	4	15.4%	6	23.1%	0	0%	3.46	0.95
17. Be fully familiar with English grammar	11	42.3%	15	57.7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.42	0.50
18. Know English culture well	2	7.7%	18	69.2%	3	11.5%	3	11.5%	0	0%	3.73	0.78

Based on teachers opinion of language pedagogical competency, the stakeholders perceived that an effective EFL teacher should has high proficiency on the four English skill; read and write, speak and pronounce English well and understand spoken language well. This confirmed the finding found by Virgianti et al. (2016) that the ability to *pronounce English well and speak English well* was the most characteristics that students preferred from an EFL teacher. To avoid misunderstanding in teaching the students, the teachers need to be able to understand spoken English well (Virgiyanti 2016). However, have native-like accent and know English culture well was the least important skill that an EFL teacher should has. English teacher of junior and senior high schools in Padang thought that an EFL teacher should not speak like native and imitate their accent for the case students might have difficulties in following the teaching learning process. In English language class, it is important for a teacher to consider the English sentences and instructions used in order to make students understand the information that has rendered to them.

**Table 3.** Teachers' Perception about EFL Teacher Personal Competency

Personal Competency	F	Strongly Agree (%)	F	Agree (%)	F	No Idea (%)	F	Disagree (%)	F	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
19. Has a good sense of humor	10	38.5%	15	57.7%	1	3.8%	0	0%	0	0%	4.35	0.56
20. Be helpful to students in and outside the classroom	11	42.3%	13	50%	2	7.7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.35	0.63
21. Alleviate students' anxiety in English class	11	42.3%	15	57.7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.42	0.50
22. Help students to develop self-confidence in order to learn English well	14	43.8%	12	46.2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.54	0.51
23. Be patient and friendly to students	15	57.7%	10	38.5%	1	3.8%	0	0%	0	0%	4.54	0.58
24. Not discriminate between students and treat them fairly	19	73.1%	7	26.9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.73	0.45
25. Be neat and tidy in appearance	20	76.9%	6	23.1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.77	0.43
26. Show interest in students (by remembering students' names) and their learning	12	46.2%	14	53.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.46	0.51
27. Pay attention to the personal needs of students	3	11.5%	13	50%	8	30.8%	2	7.7%	0	0%	3.65	0.80
28. Be polite and respect the personality of the students	14	53.8%	12	46.2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.54	0.51
29. Be discipline and stick to administrative rules and regulations	9	34.4%	15	57.7%	2	7.7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.27	0.60
30. Be flexible and open to criticism	11	42.3%	15	57.7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.42	0.50
31. Not lose temper and get angry	14	53.8%	12	46.2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.54	0.51

From teachers' perception, there were some item of personal competency that posit to be crucial and most important. They were *be neat and tidy in appearance and not discriminate between students and treat them fairly*. Besides, they also list some items as the most qualities of an EFL teacher, such as be helpful to students, be patient and friendly, be polite and respect the personality of students, and not lose temper and angry.

**Table 4.** Teachers' Perception about EFL Teacher Social Competency

Social Competency	F	Strongly Agree (%)	F	Agree (%)	F	No Idea (%)	F	Disagree (%)	F	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
32. Ask question or encourage students to talk	12	46.2%	14	53.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.46	0.51
33. Will have discussions about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole	7	26.9%	13	50%	3	11.5%	3	11.5%	0	0%	3.92	0.93
34. Uses variety of vocal expressions when talking to the class	6	23.1%	18	69.2%	2	7.7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.15	0.54
35. Calls on students to answer the questions even if they have not indicated they want to talk	3	11.5%	15	57.7%	4	15.4%	4	15.4%	0	0%	3.65	0.89
36. Ask how students feel about an assignment, due date, or discussion topic	5	19.2%	18	69.2%	3	11.5%	0	0%	0	0%	4.08	0.56
37. Gets into discussion based on something a student brings up even if this does not seem to be part of the English teacher lesson plan	0	0%	16	61.5%	6	23.1%	3	11.5%	1	3.8%	3.42	0.86
38. Often give rewards	3	11.5%	19	73.1%	3	11.5%	1	3.8%	0	0%	3.92	0.63
39. Arouse students' motivation for learning English	17	65.4%	9	34.6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.65	0.49
40. Provide feedback on individual work through comments on paper, oral discussion, etc.	13	50%	13	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.50	0.51

Based on the respondents perception, they deemed *arouse students motivation for learning English and provide feedback on individual work through comments on paper, oral discussion, etc.*, as the the most important features in term of social competency. Despite that fact, the respondents perceived that an effective EFL teacher should not *gets into discussion based on something a students brings up to even if this does not seem to be part of the English lesson plans.*

**Table 5.** Teachers’ Perception about EFL Teacher Professional Competency

Professional Competency	F	Strongly Agree (%)	F	Agree (%)	F	No Idea (%)	F	Disagree (%)	F	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
41. Have good communication skill	18	69.2%	8	30.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.69	0.47
42. Able to use technology well (e.g. computer and internet)	14	53.8%	12	46.2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.54	0.51
43. Mastering and understanding any kind of educational administration (RPP, Silabus, KKM)	13	50%	12	46.2%	1	3.8%	0	0%	0	0%	4.46	0.58
44. Be active in developing his/her teaching ability (for example join KKG, Diklat, etc)	13	50%	13	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.50	0.51
45. Be interested in his/her career	12	46.2%	14	53.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.46	0.51

From teachers opinion, an EFL teacher should has all the professional features mentioned. Moreover, having good communication skills was regarded as the most important one. It received the highest rank among the five features served. Besides, the least important features fall into the features *interested in his/her career and mastering any kind of educational administration such RPP, syllabus, and KKM*, that received the same value by the respondents.

**Table 6.** The Summary Score (Mean) of the Five Categories of an Effective EFL Teacher Characteristic

Categories	N	Mean
<b>Professional Competency</b>	5	4.53
<b>Pedagogical Competency</b>	11	4.48
<b>Personal Competency</b>	13	4.43
<b>English Language Pedagogical Competency</b>	7	4.24
<b>Social Competency</b>	9	4.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>4.35</b>

Which: *N= total of questions in each category*

As can be seen on the table 6, the summary score for the five categories of an effective EFL teacher, teachers perceived ‘professional competency’ to be the first

important category of EFL teacher effectiveness because it received the highest value (M=4.53). The second categories fall into 'pedagogical competency' (M=4.48). The third is personal competency (4.43). The fourth rank fall into 'English language pedagogical competencies (M=4.324). The least important category is social competency (M=4.09). So, from the stakeholders' perspective, teachers more emphasize on pedagogical competency and professional competency rather than the personal, English language proficiency, and social competency of a teacher. This finding contradict with the previous finding who more emphasized on personal competency and English proficiency (Park & Lee, 2006; Syiyami, 2014).

**Table 7.** Top 3 the most important characteristic of an Effective EFL Teacher  
Characteristic

Characteristics	Mean	Std.Deviation	Rank
<b>Prepare English lesson well</b>	4.88	0.33	1
<b>Manage class time well</b>	4.88	0.33	2
<b>Provide activities that arouse students' interest in learning English</b>	4.81	0.40	3

As can be seen in table 7, the top three characteristics of EFL effective EFL teachers perceived by the teachers to be the most important were prepare English lesson well, manage class time well, and provide activities that arouse students' interest in learning English (M= 4.88, 4.88, 4.81). These three characteristics were belong to pedagogical knowledge. So, meaning that from the English teachers at junior and senior high schools in Padang perspective, an effective EFL teacher is someone who are good and qualified pedagogically.

## 2. Finding of Open-Ended Question

Open-ended question was intended to gather the data on characteristics of an effective EFL teacher other than mentioned on the likert scale items. The questions served was meant to be complete the idea about an effective teacher from the point of view of teachers who teach English at junior and senior high schools. The respondent responses are discussed in the following paragraph.

Regarding to a particular characteristics that asked to the respondents other than the characteristics mentioned, 46.2% respondents agreed that an EFL teacher must posses any particular characteristic. As a teacher wrote *"In order to make the English subject effective, teacher must apply English for communication both with other English teacher and students, inside and outside the classroom"*. Most of respondents who agreed with this statements reported that particular characteristics that an effective teacher should has besides the features mentioned is English teacher should apply the use of English language and give students chance to use language not only for English subject, but also as communication. Then, related to the gender of an EFL teacher more

than half respondents reported the gender of an EFL teacher did not affect their efficacy. Evenly, as they wrote *“In my concern both male or female just the same. It depends on how they teach. They will be liked by student if they can serve the lesson attractive.”* So, gender is no longer to be the affected point of an EFL teacher, but how do they carried the teaching learning process is matter. In term of which characteristics that represent a best EFL teacher, respondents’ answer is variously, some agreed that all characteristics matter. Some of them thought that personality of teacher is the strong element of EFL teacher. But, most of them perceived that English pedagogy and pedagogical competency are the strongest element that make an EFL teacher the best. This result is consistent with the result of close-ended question which the highest and the most important features falls into pedagogical competency.

## Discussion

As the finding above showed, according to the respondents of this study, most of them highly valued each characteristics which categorized into 5 competencies as presented previously. It means that an effective teacher is perceived as someone who has a good balance of teachers competency, skills, and behavior. Casting back to the theory of teachers competencies, as stated in the UU No 14 year of 2005 about teacher and lecturer an effective or ideal teacher is regarded as the professional one, in which a professional teacher should have competencies. From the findings of current study, it can be inferred that most of the English teachers in junior and senior high schools Padang perceived professional competence which received high vote and to be the most important categories of an effective EFL teacher. This finding is quite different from the research conducted by Syiyami (2014) who found that from teachers’ perception, having both good personal and good competence must be had by an effective English teacher. It also different from Nontin (2016) who found that good English teachers is emphasized on cognitive aspect.

On the whole, the teachers assigned that the most important features relating to teachers’ pedagogical competency, such as prepare English lesson well, manage class time well, and provide activities that arouse stuedents’interest in learning English. This result confirm the previous research findings (Park and Lee, 2006; Wichadee, 2010). They similarly report that on the perspective of teachers, preapring lesson and providing interesting activities are the most imprtant characteristics.

Based on the findings of the present study, it can be conclude the most important features that an effective EFL teacher should has in teaching EFL based on English teachers at junior and senior high schools in Padang are: *1)Prepare English lesson well, 2)Manage class time well, 3)Provide activities that arouse stuedents’interest in learning English, 4)Be neat and tidy in appearance, and 5)Not discriminate between students and treat them fairly.* Whereas, the least important features in the view of stakeholders are: *1)Gets into discussion based on something a*

*students brings up even if this does not seem to be part of the English teacher lesson plan, 2)Have a native-like accent, 3)Pay attention to the personal needs of students, 4)Call on students to answer the question even if they have not indicated they want to talk, and 5)Know English culture well.*

Finally, from the respondents' perception on the effective EFL teacher, it is believed that an effective teachers should consider this five competencies as important as their expectation toward the assesment they had given as the stakeholders of English subject.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusion**

This research is intended to study the characteristics of effective EFL teacher as perceived by English teacher of Junior and Senior high schools in Padang. There are two purposes of the study: to see the teacher perceptions regarding characteristics of an effective EFL teacher and to find out the most important characteristics and also the most important category within the five categories of characteristics of effective English teachers perceptions in general. The list of characteristics was traced from two section questionnaires (Open and Close-ended Questions). The characteristics listed in the questionnaire itself were developed based on the category of effective English teacher stated in Regulation of Minister of National Education in the 2007 number 16. Characteristics such as “prepare English lesson well”, “manage class time well” and “provide activities that arouse students interest in learning English” become the most important characteristics ranked by the stakeholders in Pedagogical competency category. These characteristics are ranked as the top three most important characteristics of effective English teachers based on the perception of English teachers at junior and senior high schools in Padang.

Overall, the findings lead to a final conclusion that English teachers who teach in junior and senior high school in Padang expect that English teacher to have competence in professional and pedagogical primarily to become an effective English teacher. However, having a good personal, proficiency in English, good relationship with students (social competency) in run their job as an English teacher are also important. Finally, it come to a conclusion that with a good balance between the five categories of characteristics, English teacher can make an evaluation toward their job in running teaching learning process. They have assessed and seen how an effective EFL teacher look likes. As a result, teachers become more effective and able to do some changes or improvement in order to get a better result in teaching English as a foreign language.

### Suggestions

From the conclusion stated above, researcher provides some suggestions. Firstly, for the English teachers, because the pedagogical competency of teachers were significantly to be the most important qualities of an effective EFL teacher in this study, English teachers should enrich their knowledge and understand towards students' need and managing educational and dialogical learning. Then professionally, as teachers perceived having good communication skill also the crucial features, the improvement on communication process will enhance students' achievement and motivation in learning English. Secondly, for the next researcher, it is better to conduct investigation with a larger size of participants and variety of survey methods. The current study is limited to teachers' perception as a part of stakeholders which focus on English teachers who teach at junior and senior high School only. Investigating the other element of stakeholders such as school leaders, the students, parents and schools committee, would add depth of knowledge and finding because these people are contributed on the education roles. It also might be strengthen the result of the current study.

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