

MOODY TEACHER RUINS MY MOTIVATION: STUDENTS' VOICE ON EFFECTIVE EFL TEACHERS

Yuly Krisdayanty¹⁾, Muhamad Taufik Hidayat²⁾, Sinta Dewi³⁾

¹Institut Pendidikan Indonesia

Email: yulykrisdayanty@gmail.com

²Institut Pendidikan Indonesia

Email: mtaufikhidayat637@gmail.com

³Institut Pendidikan Indonesia

Email: sintadew1ea@gmail.com

Abstract

Several problems appear in the educational field, one of which is teachers' personality. Teacher's personal trait is considered to be essential because it can affect students' motivation in learning. However, some teachers remain unaware of its significance. It was evident in the students' statements stating that they often had to learn with moody teachers who, as a result, ruined their learning motivation. The present study aims to explore the students' perspectives on the EFL teacher's personalities that influence the students' motivation. To achieve the objective, the study utilized a case study design in which the data were collected through semi-structured interview conducted to six senior high school students. The data were analyzed by following Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework. The results showed that all respondents shared agreement on the teacher's personalities that they preferred. They felt happy and motivated when they learned with humble, friendly, kind, caring, patient, and humorous teachers. The results of this study may help the EFL teachers consider their personality as one of the vital aspects that could affect the students' learning motivation. EFL teachers should pay more attention to their attitudes towards the students. In addition, the results suggest that policy makers should formulate rules that encourage teachers to not only focus on their hard skills but also their soft skills such as good personalities.

Keywords: *teachers' personality, moody teachers, effective EFL teachers*

Background

EFL teacher's personality is considered to be one of the essential aspects of language learning. It is in line with Trice and Harris (2001) who state that personal qualities of EFL teachers are an important element in language learning process.

In the literature, it has been widely discussed that EFL teacher's good personalities or qualities are preferred by the students. Sehgal (1994) states that who are mentally healthy, stable, warm, and nurturing teacher are preferred by the students. Mc Dermott and Rothenberg (2000) claim that the students enjoy learning with an EFL teacher who has a good sense of humor since such a teacher enables them to feel at ease and relaxed in the

classroom. Moreover, Chen (2012) states that the students are active and motivated when they learn with EFL teachers who are calm, not moody, and with a good temper.

From this, it is clear that the personality of a teacher plays a pivotal role in motivating the students to learn better (Rockoff, 2004). Therefore, it is essential for teachers to show good personalities so that a safe learning atmosphere that encourages the development of their student's motivation can be created.

Teachers' good personalities are required if the teachers want to be effective in their teaching. Effective teachers should be optimistic, humorous, communicative and appreciative to the students (Walker, 2008). Good teachers should be friendly, patient, nice, and polite (Khang, 2016). In addition, teachers

are encouraged to be motivational, easy-going, humorous, humble, respectful, and attentive in order to be a good teacher (Suparman, Hidayat, Ilyas, & Apriliani, 2019). Hence, personality is the main key to become an effective EFL teacher.

However, most of the EFL teachers are still unaware of the importance of their personalities. They focus more on teaching materials than paying attention to their personality in the classroom. In fact, some of the teachers underestimate the impact of their personality on the students' motivation and achievement (Dost & Hafshejani, 2017).

As a result, many students lose their motivation because of the teacher's personality. The students often complain about the teacher's negative personality such as being moody in the classroom during teaching and learning process (Baloğlu, 2015).

The study concerning personal orientation (rapport) of the EFL teacher in-depth and its impact on students' motivation in learning, to the researchers' best knowledge, is few. The gaps encouraged the researchers to conduct the study that explores the student's perspectives on the EFL teacher's personality that are influential on the students' learning motivation. This study is guided by the following research question "What teacher's personalities are influential on students' learning motivation?"

Research Methods

The present study used qualitative approach under the frame of case study design, since the aim of this research is to explore the students' perspectives on the EFL teachers' personalities that are influential on the students' learning motivation.

1.1 Participants

The participants of this study were six senior high school students. There were three categories of participants: low achievers, middle achievers, and high achievers. Each category consists of two students.

1.2 Instrument

The instrument of this study was interview. Creswell (2012) defines interview as an appropriate instrument to get deeper information in qualitative research. Semi-structured interview or open-ended

questions was used to collect the data. The interview was carried out in the participants' spare time. The interview which asked seven principal questions lasted for the average of fifteen minutes for each participant. It was conducted on March 14th 2020. When the participants answered the questions and explained their opinions, the researchers audio taped the interview to ensure the answers when analyzing the data.

Findings & Discussion

The present study investigated the students' perspectives on the teachers' personalities that influence students' motivation in learning. Thus, this section presents the findings related to the research objective and discuss those findings from the perspectives of the existing literatures and other empirical studies.

Obtaining the data from the interview, the study bears several findings. The results showed that all students shared agreement on the importance of the teacher's personalities in classroom. They even confirmed that teachers' personalities are more important than the teachers' knowledge. The plausible explanation for this finding is probably the importance of security and comfort in the process of learning. When the students learned with nice teachers, they admitted that they felt happy to receive learning materials. A fun and calming learning atmosphere can increase their willingness to learn and their understanding of the materials. It is supported by Connell and Wellborn (1990) who stated that students who feel emotionally secure with classmates and teachers are more likely to be active participants in the class and to exert more effort in their work thus maintaining or enhancing their academic achievement.

Moreover, the results indicated that there are some personalities of the EFL teachers that the students consider to be able to motivate them to learn. The students answered that "teacher should be wise",

‘kind, friendly, humble’, *‘caring, humorous, and patient’*, *‘never angry’*, *‘always appreciate the students’*. All of the students believed that those types of teacher’s personalities give positive impact on their motivation in learning and hence make the learning effective.

It is reasonable considering the fact that when teachers have the criteria that students expect, students become more comfortable in the learning. For instance, the students stated that they understood the materials well when the teachers were fun, and they felt confident when the teacher were respectful. The finding indicates that such personality makes the learning more effective. This finding supports Barnes and Lock (2010) who asserted that EFL teachers who appreciated students’ efforts, respected students, and called them by names were considered effective teachers.

The results of the study indicated that teachers’ personalities are influential towards the students’ language learning motivation. The findings can be explained by taking into account the nature of the motivation itself which, according to the literature, can be influenced by two factors; intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Hamalik, 1992). Language learning motivation can arise due to the intrinsic factors which are in the form of the desire to succeed and the drive for learning needs and hopes for ideals. Moreover, the motivation can also be triggered by the extrinsic factors such as appreciation, a conducive learning environment, and interesting learning activities.

In case of the present study, the extrinsic factor comes from the teacher’s personality. Teachers who are not humorous and always serious make the students feel bored and fearful during the teaching and learning. Moreover, when the students learned with a moody teacher, they felt even less enthusiastic. This is in line with Chen (2012) who states that the students showed their distaste to the teacher who was too strict and serious.

The findings indicate that teacher’s personality supports the success of the teaching and learning. By having good personalities, the teachers become a good example and role model which may arouse student’s learning motivation and encourage good achievement (Saudagar & Idrus, 2009). Similarly, Prabhu (1990) and Murray (1991) confirmed that the characteristics of EFL teachers with positive attitudes to their students would increase rapport between students and teachers, which might promote productive and successful learning.

This signifies that the personal aspect of the language teachers cannot be neglected. It is the basic capital for teachers, especially in daily behavior (Samani, 2006). It is a necessary part to a sensible and effective teaching (Trice & Harris, 2001). Therefore, according to the results, to be an effective EFL teachers, the teachers should display good personalities such as subtle emotion, good temper, calm demeanor, a good mood, and less annoyance.

Conclusion

The study investigated the students’ perspectives on the teacher’s personalities that are influential toward their learning motivation. The results showed that English teachers who have a pleasant personalities make them feel more enthusiastic in learning. The data indicated that students enjoyed learning with teachers who are humorous, kind, friendly, and caring. The most important thing is an English teacher should have a stable emotional condition; they should be patient and have a good mood, to make the students actively participate during the teaching and learning process. A good English teacher’s personality can have a good influence on students. One of them is on student motivation. Students claimed that their learning motivation increased when their teacher taught them in a fun way.

Considering the crucial role of the personal qualities of the teachers on the students' learning and motivation, this study offers some suggestions. For both teachers and policy makers, it is essential to start taking into account the essential role of the personal aspect of teaching and learning. Successful teaching does not only encompass hard skills like good teaching methods, but also soft skills such as good personalities and attitude. For future research, the study suggests that similar investigation be done to different levels of students in order to gain comprehensive understanding on how students in different levels of education view the role of teacher's personalities on their learning.

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