

# The Effective English Teacher: Perceptions from Student Teachers and Teacher Educators

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## Article Info

### Article history:

Received 2025-01-11

Revised 2025-02-22

Accepted 2025-02-23

### Keywords:

Content Knowledge

Effective English Teacher

Pedagogical Knowledge

Personal Knowledge

Student Teachers

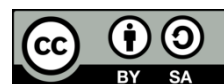
Teacher Educators

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine student teachers' and teacher educators' perceptions of an effective English teacher in terms of content, pedagogical, and personal knowledge in the English study program at Universitas Prima Indonesia (UNPRI). To achieve this objective, this study was designed as a mixed-methods study. To achieve this objective, this study was designed using a mixed method to look for the perceptions of 82 student teachers and 10 teacher educators. Data were collected through a 36-item Likert-type questionnaire and follow-up interviews. The results indicate that both groups agree that combining all the components is important for an effective teacher. Comparing both groups' perceptions, the results showed a statistically significant difference ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) for 11 out of 36 items. It was found that student teachers place higher importance on some effective attributes than teacher educators do and vice versa. Additionally, the study found that pedagogical and personal knowledge was equally, if not more, important than content knowledge in defining an effective English teacher. This study highlights the significance of balancing content, pedagogical, and personal knowledge in teacher effectiveness, particularly in the EFL context of Indonesia, and discusses its pedagogical implications and limitations. This study was small due to a lack of participants. Future research should include more participants for comparison.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Research on teacher effectiveness has been a long-standing topic in educational studies. In early studies, teacher effectiveness only focused on the relationship between teacher classroom behaviours, particularly direct instruction, and the impact on the educational outcomes of classroom teaching [1]. However, the emerging evolution in emphasizing different aspects of teacher effectiveness appeared to have a higher chance of

factors contributing to teacher effectiveness in terms of teacher characteristics, subject knowledge matter, teaching acts, curriculum content, classroom activity, teacher training, teacher professions, and teacher leadership [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [7]. However, in a review of prior research, Kern [8] and Schulz [9] highlighted some arguments about the gaps between teachers' and students' perceptions of an effective teacher dealing with interactions and teaching in the classroom. In that case, they argued that disagreements of adverse perceptions may lead to dissatisfaction with students' feelings toward their studies. Considering this evidence, negative perceptions might affect the student's achievement in language class.

A recent study by Karim [10] found that Indonesian EFL teachers hold diverse beliefs about language learning, including perceptions of talent, challenges, and the nature of teaching. These beliefs, particularly in Indonesia's context of English being a foreign language, influence their teaching practices. Similarly, Quan [11] discovered that both teachers and students agreed that subject matter content knowledge was the most important attribute of effective EFL teachers, along with pedagogical content knowledge and teacher identity. In line with this, Dincer et al. [12] emphasized that an effective teacher should possess a well-rounded knowledge base, which includes socio-affective skills, pedagogical knowledge, subject matter knowledge, and personal qualities. Additionally, Al-Yaseen [13] found that female student-teachers preferred being encouraged to speak in English, corrected for mistakes, given more practice opportunities, and motivated to find correct answers.

Building on these findings, this study seeks to explore how student teachers and teacher educators perceive the attributes of an effective English teacher, particularly in terms of content, pedagogical, and personal knowledge. Based on the background above, the foundations of this present study have led to the development of the following research questions:

1. What are student teachers' and educators' perceptions of an effective English teacher, specifically in content, pedagogical, and personal knowledge?
2. What are the similarities and differences between student teachers' and teacher educators' perceptions of an effective English teacher?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Research measuring teacher effectiveness showed that there is no such thing as generic teaching—it always occurs in a specific context [14]. Teacher knowledge is undoubtedly a component that involves more than just knowledge; however, subject matter, learner, teacher, attitude, and motivations can be interconnected and contribute to the mastery of teaching and learning [15]. According to Clark & Walsh [16], several key features emerged:

- Strong discipline content knowledge.
  - Pedagogical skills suited to both the environment and the specific discipline.
  - Personal knowledge, including forming strong relationships with students, a concern for each student, and a firm moral code.
  - A deep understanding of the context in which they teach.
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They also identify four main categories of knowledge: content (discipline) knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and skills, knowledge of context, and personal knowledge. Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) lies at the intersection of content knowledge and teaching skills. Other key intersections involve the teacher's beliefs about knowledge, their understanding of the curriculum and students, and their relationships with colleagues and students.

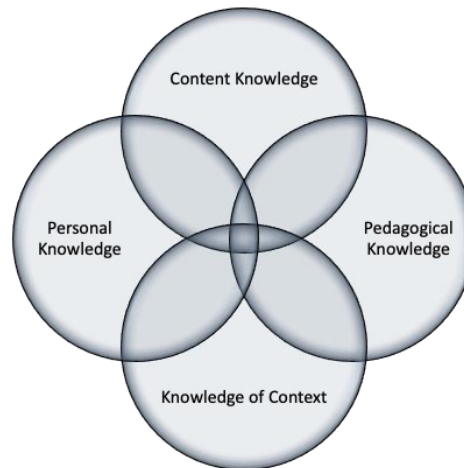


Figure 1. Foundation for a model of effective teachers

Figure 1 illustrates that teachers' knowledge is not isolated; it is intertwined with a larger, shared body of knowledge and practices, constantly evolving through ongoing interaction. Content knowledge is just one element of the broader discipline knowledge, comprising only a small portion. Pedagogical knowledge is closely connected to the community of practice to which the teacher belongs. Contextual knowledge continuously interacts with the specific setting, whether the classroom, school, or community. Personal knowledge is influenced by the relationships the teacher builds with others. All this knowledge operates within the physical, social, intellectual, and emotional contexts that shape teachers' work.

**Content Knowledge:** Discipline knowledge is an essential element in most teaching theories, including traditional transmission models, constructivism, and even behaviourism. This knowledge typically plays a major role in a teacher's education. Research on discipline knowledge in teaching has explored the differences between novice and expert teachers in storing, retrieving, and applying specific discipline knowledge. Girard [17], as cited in Borg [18], presented some characteristics of good English teachers who have sufficient English proficiency, such as making the course more interesting, being able to teach good pronunciation, explaining clearly, speaking English well, showing the same interest in all students, treating them fairly, involving students' participation, and showing great patience. According to Strong [19], an effective English teacher may have subject-specific qualities in English and the language arts to integrate the elements of the English language skills and those skills are being taught in the subject areas to convey enthusiasm for the subjects, create an effective teacher's classroom, and integrate all the key components of the English curriculum. It is further asserted that teachers must not only be capable of defining for

learners the accepted truth in a particular area of the field but also be able to explain clearly that certain knowledge is highly important and worth knowing both in theory and practice.

**Pedagogical Knowledge:** Guerriero [20] discovered that teachers' pedagogic knowledge base is not static. She further brought a critical point of view on investigating how teaching English teachers' pedagogical knowledge might change over time as new knowledge emerges from research. English teachers are expected to teach 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills by interconnecting digital societies in today's classrooms. Research on expert teachers confirms that pedagogical expertise, like expertise in other fields, is a highly sophisticated form of knowledge that is not easily acquired or mastered and is not accessible to everyone who seeks it [21]. For this reason, English teachers may possess firm subject matter and curriculum knowledge. However, they often lack various teaching and learning models [22]. Therefore, adapting instructional strategies and materials is recommended to help learners better achieve the intended knowledge [23].

**Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PKC):** The concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) highlights the intersection of discipline and pedagogical knowledge, focusing on how to represent and explain content effectively to make it understandable. Despite its appeal, PCK has proven challenging to define explicitly because it draws on two separate research areas and is deeply embedded in the long-term teaching and learning process within a community of practice [24]. In English language learning, the study of the discipline of content knowledge, according to Richards and Schmidt [25], defined English teachers' knowledge as the subject matter including knowledge of language skills, grammar, theories, phonetics, etc., and its implementation to transfer that subject knowledge through a teaching plan [26], including curriculum content [27]. Ramos [28] found a positive relationship between teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills enhanced learners' academic performance. Samina and Shamsa [29] revealed an interconnection between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and skills in designing pedagogy capacity.

**Personal Knowledge:** Personal qualities like moral integrity and personal philosophy are key to effective teaching and leadership [24]. These qualities foster trust between teachers and students, addressing the "who" question in expert teaching, which has often been overlooked in research. Van Manen [30] suggests that expert teachers are defined less by specific knowledge or skills and more by how they embody and represent the subject matter, including their enthusiasm, self-discipline, and commitment.

Students' perceptions of English teachers' personalities can be understood through how they structure their classroom learning [31]. However, Kell [32] offers a different perspective, suggesting that teachers' traits are not always feasible to be the most powerful predictors of their effectiveness, as individuals may have varying interests in their personality traits. Therefore, it is challenging to determine whether personality traits directly enhance student learning, as they are not the only factors; teaching strategies and the teacher's interaction styles also play a significant role in influencing student achievement [31].

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**Knowledge of Context:** A teacher's effectiveness is influenced by the classroom, school culture, community, and the educational system. Clark & Walsh [24] emphasized that the importance of different components of teacher knowledge may vary depending on factors like the environment, discipline, school culture, and student backgrounds. It is further suggested that an effective English teacher must be aware of and possess specific knowledge and skills, including who they teach, where they teach, and what they teach [33]. The research found that teachers simultaneously draw on multiple domains of knowledge in the classroom and must consider these areas to adapt their teaching successfully [34].

## 2. METHOD

The purpose of this study was to find out the perceptions of student teachers and teacher educators regarding content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and personal knowledge that define an effective English teacher. This study used a mixed method, which involved collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting. The rationale for using a mixed method was to enable the researcher to answer the research questions by understanding their perceptions that make up an effective English teacher. The participants, selected through purposive sampling, were student teachers and teacher educators from an English education program. According to Creswell and Clark [35], purposive sampling identifies individuals with relevant knowledge or experience related to a specific phenomenon. Therefore, this study aimed to explore their perceptions based on their learning experiences within the language program.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participating Student Teachers (n = 82)

Participants	Frequency	Per cent
Gender		
a. Female	50	61%
b. Male	32	39%
Studying grade		
a. Freshman	22	27%
b. Sophomore	25	30%
c. Junior	20	24%
d. Senior	15	18%
General predicate average		
a. 1.0 -1.9	0	0%
b. 2.0 -2.9	2	2%
c. 3.0 -3.9	79	96%
d. 4.0	1	

**Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Participating Teacher Educators (n = 10)**

Participants	Frequency	Per cent
Gender		
a. Female	7	70%
b. Male	3	30%
Years of teaching experience		
a. 0-4 years	1	10%
b. 5-10 years	3	30%
c. More than 10 years	6	60%
Teaching course		
a. English for young learners	3	30%
b. Introduction of education	3	30%
c. Syllabus and lesson plan	3	30%
d. Classroom management	1	1%
e. Microteaching	1	10%
	2	20%

### **Instruments**

This present study used a questionnaire to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire was adapted from existing instruments [36], [37]. After selecting the questions from previous studies, then it was reviewed with the adviser of the researcher concerning the materials of the research topic in terms of content knowledge (7 items), pedagogical knowledge (15 items), and personal knowledge (14 items) regarding the attributes of an effective English teacher. A semi-structured interview was conducted to obtain in-depth information about their perceptions.

### **Participants**

Based on the observation before the study, the researcher found out that 82 student teachers of English major (50 of the student teachers were females and 32 of them were males) and 10 teacher educators (seven females, three males) participated in filling out the questionnaire. Meanwhile, 10 student teachers and five teacher educators were involved to volunteer to take part in this interview for about 30-40 minutes.

### **Piloting**

Ten student teachers and one teacher educator completed the questionnaires before the main study. They were briefed on the piloting process and asked to review the questions, providing feedback on any confusion. The researcher took notes on their feedback and revised any questions that were confusing or too complex; they were reworded for clarity. Finally, questions with unclear intent were rephrased to ensure they aligned with the study's objectives.

### **Data Analysis**

After collecting the questionnaire results, the 5-point rating scale questionnaire items were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. In addition to the interview, the data collections were transcribed through categorization and coding

techniques. Furthermore, the results from statistical software of the questionnaires, which the researcher developed to analyze the means of both groups to see the similarities and differences, can be regarded as high for this study. Then, the participants' means were imputed into the statistical analysis using GraphPad Prism software and calculated at the 0.05 levels of significance. Finally, it took the action done to do interviews to find out the differences of their perceptions between the two groups.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. RESULTS

Due to limited space, the author does not include the complete interpretation of the questionnaire items or all interview quotes from participants, focusing instead on the most significant findings.

#### Data from Student Teachers

The results of the questionnaires presented the frequencies, the mean, and the standard deviation from the highest to the lowest means for each item below.

Table 3. Student Teachers' Questionnaire Results (Content Knowledge)

No	Content Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	English proficiency	0	0	0	2	80	4.97	.15
2	Pronounce English well	0	0	0	10	72	4.87	.32
3	Speak English well	0	0	1	9	72	4.86	.37
4	Well-prepared lesson plan	6	0	0	10	66	4.58	1.06
5	Be knowledgeable (Reading, Writing, Speaking)	0	0	16	8	58	4.51	.80
6	Have good knowledge of vocabulary	0	3	60	4	15	3.37	.82
7	Have good knowledge of grammar	2	6	60	7	7	3.13	.76

1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: So-so, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly Agree, n=82

As seen in Table 3, the results showed the highest ranking in the questionnaire, with 80 student teachers identifying it as a crucial attribute for an effective English teacher. The overwhelming consensus highlights the importance of English proficiency in ensuring successful language teaching. This could be a key point for the journal, emphasizing how English proficiency directly influences teaching effectiveness and student outcomes.

The results in Table 4 showed that 50 student teachers disagreed with teaching English exclusively in English, expressing that they were not confident in their English ability. They expected it was inappropriate for English teachers to use only English in the classroom because they expected teachers to be at least bilingual.

Table 4. Student Teachers' Questionnaire Results (Pedagogical Knowledge)

No	Pedagogical Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	Be creative to use a variety of teaching methods	0	0	0	2	80	4.97	.15
2	Teach English adapted to students' English proficiency levels	0	0	7	14	61	4.65	.63
3	Be up to date (e.g., use the internet and recent technologies in teaching)	0	0	0	36	46	4.56	.49
4	Tell students the lesson objectives before each lesson	0	2	10	10	60	4.56	.80
5	Provide activities that arouse student's interest in learning English	0	0	0	36	46	4.56	.49
6	Make learning fun	3	4	7	2	66	4.51	1.08
7	Manage class time efficiently	0	0	1	41	40	4.47	.52
8	Present contents in a meaningful way	0	0	9	34	39	4.36	.67
9	Provide clear instructions for tasks	0	0	9	34	39	4.36	.67
10	Give a reasonable amount of homework	2	6	6	15	53	4.35	1.05
11	Alleviate students' anxiety in class	0	0	20	37	25	4.06	.74
12	Diagnose learners' problems	1	3	6	67	5	3.87	.61
13	Facilitate learners' responsibility and autonomy	55	12	8	7	0	1.59	.97
14	Integrate group activities in class	48	23	11	0	0	1.54	.72
15	Teach English in English	50	22	10	0	0	1.51	.70

1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 So-so, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly Agree, n=82

Table 5. Student Teachers' Questionnaire Results (Personal Knowledge)

No	Personal Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	Be creative to use a variety of teaching methods	0	0	0	2	80	4.97	.15
2	Be disciplined and punctual	0	0	0	7	75	4.91	.28
3	Do not lose your temper and get angry	0	0	0	13	69	4.84	.36
4	Arouse students' motivation for learning English	0	0	0	40	42	4.51	.50
5	Be neat and tidy in appearance	0	0	13	19	50	4.45	.75
6	Build a positive relationship with students but focus on retaining a professional distance	0	7	5	36	34	4.18	.89
7	Have a good sense of humor	0	0	7	59	16	4.10	.52
8	Treat students fairly	0	0	22	30	30	4.09	.79
9	Help students develop self-confidence to learn English	0	0	11	58	13	4.02	.54
10	Be helpful to students in and outside the classroom	0	0	33	30	19	3.82	.78
11	Show interest in students by remembering students' names and their learning	8	9	60	0	5	2.81	.84
12	Be friendly to students	0	52	11	14	5	2.65	.97
13	Pay attention to the personal needs of students	8	63	10	0	1	2.06	.57
14	Be flexible	57	12	0	0	13	1.78	1.44

1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 So-so, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly Agree, n=10

The results in Table 5 above show that 79 student teachers strongly agreed that being passionate was desirable for an English teacher. Passionate teachers were believed to inspire students and increase their motivation to learn. Meanwhile, item 7 highlighted a negative perception where most student teachers seemed to view giving personal attention to students as unnecessary or undesirable. It suggests that they may believe more attention should be directed toward other aspects of teaching rather than individual student needs.

### **Data from Student Teachers' Interview**

In the first question, they were asked to answer attributes they prefer of an effective English teacher. Most of the respondents answered this question with similar perceptions. It was obtained that having a high level of English proficiency focused on content knowledge, as indicated by the student teachers that define an effective English teacher as she mentioned:

*"I believe that to be an effective English teacher, it needs a strong level of proficiency in the language. The higher the teacher's proficiency, the more they can positively impact students' learning outcomes and create better opportunities for language development."*

However, other student teachers have different answers about their English teachers. They expected their English teachers to give more chances for students to ask questions. For instance, they suggested:

*"I wish that all English teachers encourage their students to ask questions and provide more opportunities to give them feedback on what we have learned at the end of the class. I see that not every teacher does this thing. Sometimes, I could not follow up on the lesson well. I also feel shy to raise my hands when I am confused about something"*.

On the other hand, the second question focused on what makes an English teacher more effective, as most student teachers suggested that English teachers should possess a passion for teaching.

*"In my view, a teacher likes teaching first. That is very important. They want to be an English teacher because they are passionate about their subject. I think teachers like that will also inspire students because students are interested in the way the teachers are teaching as they teach from the heart, and they become memorable teachers"*.

### **Data from Teacher Educators**

After the questionnaire had been distributed to them, the results were presented with the frequencies, the mean, and the standard deviation for each item in the following section.

As can be seen from the results in Table 6, all teacher educators firmly believed that having a high level of English proficiency was very influential in improving students' learning outcomes, as they felt that English teachers must have a firm understanding of the language to convey comprehensive learning. They also emphasized that English teachers could not convey substantial learning to their students without a strong language understanding.

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Table 6. Teacher Educators' Questionnaire Results (Content Knowledge)

No	Content Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	English proficiency	0	0	0	2	8	4.97	.15
2	Speak English well	0	0	0	1	9	4.90	.31
3	Pronounce English well	0	0	2	0	8	4.60	.84
4	Be knowledgeable (Reading, Writing, Speaking)	0	0	2	1	7	4.50	.84
5	Have good knowledge of vocabulary	0	0	2	1	7	4.50	.84
6	Have good knowledge of grammar	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	.52
7	Well-prepared lesson plan	1	1	0	8	0	3.50	1.08

1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 So-so, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly Agree, n=10

Table 7. Teacher Educators' Questionnaire Results (Pedagogical Knowledge)

No	Pedagogical Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	Be creative to use a variety of teaching methods	0	0	0	2	8	4.97	.15
2	Be up to date (e.g., use the internet and recent technologies in teaching)	0	0	0	1	9	4.90	.31
3	Facilitate learners' responsibility and autonomy	0	0	0	2	8	4.80	.42
4	Give a reasonable amount of homework	0	0	0	2	8	4.80	.42
5	Integrate group activities in class	0	0	1	2	7	4.60	.69
6	Present contents in a meaningful way	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	.52
7	Provide clear instructions for tasks	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	.52
8	Manage class time efficiently	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	.52
9	Provide activities that arouse student's interest in learning English	0	0	2	4	4	4.20	.78
10	Alleviate students' anxiety in English class	0	0	3	4	3	4.00	.81
11	Diagnose learners' problems	0	3	0	7	0	3.40	.96
12	Make learning fun	0	9	1	0	0	2.10	.31
13	Tell students the lesson objectives before each lesson	2	8	0	0	0	1.80	.42
14	Teach English adapted to students' English proficiency levels	6	4	0	0	0	1.40	.51
15	Teach English in English	6	4	0	0	0	1.40	.51

1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 So-so, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly Agree, n=10

**Table 8. Teacher Educators' Questionnaire Results (Pedagogical Knowledge)**

No	Pedagogical Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	Be creative to use a variety of teaching methods	0	0	0	2	8	4.97	.15
2	Be up to date (e.g., use the internet and recent technologies in teaching	0	0	0	1	9	4.90	.31
3	Facilitate learners' responsibility and autonomy	0	0	0	2	8	4.80	.42
4	Give a reasonable amount of homework	0	0	0	2	8	4.80	.42
5	Integrate group activities in class	0	0	1	2	7	4.60	.69
6	Present contents in a meaningful way	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	.52
7	Provide clear instructions for tasks	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	.52
8	Manage class time efficiently	0	0	0	5	5	4.50	.52
9	Provide activities that arouse student's interest in learning English	0	0	2	4	4	4.20	.78
10	Alleviate students' anxiety in English class	0	0	3	4	3	4.00	.81
11	Diagnose learners' problems	0	3	0	7	0	3.40	.96
12	Make learning fun	0	9	1	0	0	2.10	.31
13	Tell students the lesson objectives before each lesson	2	8	0	0	0	1.80	.42
14	Teach English adapted to students' English proficiency levels	6	4	0	0	0	1.40	.51
15	Teach English in English	6	4	0	0	0	1.40	.51

1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 So-so, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly Agree, n=10

**Data from Teacher Educators' Interview**

In the first question, the teacher educators were asked to share which of the following elements affects teachers more effectively in teaching. Obviously, all the teacher educators believed that integrating all the elements is required to be an effective English teacher. For instance, one teacher educator explained:

*“From my perspective, those elements are integrated into the teaching-learning process. Understanding content knowledge would effectively select teaching approaches of multiple ways to represent the materials to students and deliver the lessons by combining positive attitudes throughout personal characteristics for continued successful learning”.*

In the second question, apart from the attributes mentioned above, teacher educators were asked to share their experiences with what makes them more effective in teaching. Most teacher educators believe that the combination of all the elements is essential. They also had other perceptions of how to treat students as human beings:

*“I believe that the most important of all is the combination of the elements in teaching. However, on top of that, a teacher should realize that he/she treats students as humans who deserve value as individual of human beings because I believe that an effective English teacher not only makes every student knowledgeable but, more than that, creates a better human being with all the moral values”.*

### Comparison of Similarities and Differences between Student Teachers and Teacher Educators in Their Perceptions

Both student teachers and teacher educators held some overlapping views towards the items of an effective English teacher. The findings showed that student teachers and teacher educators' perceptions overlap regarding the highest p-value items and the lowest p-value items of the attributes of an effective English teacher. The results revealed that some items of student teachers and teacher educators held statistically significant perceptions on 11 out of 36 items. These 11 items within the highest p-value emphasized that student teachers and teacher educators showed different perceptions and attached greater importance to a teacher's effectiveness.

Table 9. The Average Scores of Students Teacher and Teacher Educators in the Comparison Section

No	Content Knowledge	Student Teacher (Mean)	Teacher Educator (Mean)	P-value
1	Have good knowledge of vocabulary	3.37	4.50	0.0001
2	Have good knowledge of grammar	3.13	4.50	0.0001
3	Well-prepared lesson plan Pedagogical Knowledge	4.58	3.50	0.0031
4	Teach English adapted to students' English proficiency levels	4.65	1.40	0.0001
5	Tell students the lesson objectives before each lesson	2.65	1.80	0.0001
6	Facilitate learners' responsibility and autonomy	1.59	4.80	0.0001
7	Make learning fun	4.51	2.10	0.0001
8	Integrate group activities in class Personal Knowledge	1.54	4.60	0.0001
9	Arouse students' motivation for learning English	4.51	3.50	0.0001
10	Have a good sense of humor	4.10	3.50	0.0009
11	Pay attention to the personal needs of students	2.06	3.40	0.0001

#### Have good knowledge of grammar

In this interview, the researcher explored the perceptions of student teachers and teacher educators regarding the importance of learning grammar. Student teachers highlighted their concerns about grammar, with some feeling that focusing too much on grammar rules hindered their speaking ability and led to anxiety. They expressed that grammar was often unnecessary for everyday communication as long as their message was understood.

*“Learning grammar does not help me speak because it only makes me concerned about grammar, and sometimes it can make me hesitate to speak in English because I am worried about making mistakes.”*

However, they acknowledged its importance in formal settings like writing. In contrast, teacher educators emphasized the importance of mastering grammar for written and spoken communication, aiming to avoid errors and improve clarity, especially in academic contexts.

*“Grammar is for scholars, including English major students. Generally, the purpose of studying grammar is to avoid errors while communicating and writing, such as making clear communication and doing academic writing”.*

They also noted the significance of cultivating a positive attitude toward grammar to increase motivation, as student teachers often lacked interest in learning grammar. Ultimately, while grammar was considered essential by educators, student teachers were more concerned with its practical application and communication effectiveness, often viewing it as less relevant in informal speech.

### **3.2. DISCUSSION**

The study examined student teachers' perceptions of an effective English teacher, focusing on content, pedagogical, and personal knowledge. Quantitative results showed that student teachers valued content knowledge, such as English proficiency, vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, and speaking skills, aligning with prior research [19], [38]. They also emphasized key attributes such as lesson planning, creativity, passion, discipline, and punctuality. However, attributes like teaching English in English and fostering learner autonomy were considered less important, likely due to Indonesia's cultural context and learning environment.

Furthermore, qualitative data revealed that pedagogical and personal knowledge were valued more than content knowledge. Student teachers emphasized the importance of passion, creating fun learning environments, using technology, and being friendly. These findings support previous studies [39], [40], which indicate that personal and pedagogical qualities are often considered more critical than content expertise in defining an effective teacher. Overall, student teachers focused more on how teachers interact with students, facilitate learning, and create engaging classroom environments than on content knowledge alone.

Meanwhile, teacher educators similarly identified attributes such as high English proficiency, creativity, discipline, and punctuality as essential for effective teachers, aligning with Metruk [36]. They also highlighted the importance of up-to-date technology, alleviating student anxiety, diagnosing learner problems, and managing class time effectively. However, while teaching English in English and focusing on students' proficiency levels were considered less important, knowledge of reading, writing, speaking, pronunciation, and vocabulary was highly valued. These findings echo Yağcıoğlu's [39] and Metruk's [36] perceptions. This may be partly because English is treated as a foreign language in Indonesia, where students often have limited exposure to English outside the classroom.

Additional obstacles include local teaching styles in Indonesia, which are typically teacher-centered and focus on clear explanations and structured lessons. This influences student teachers' perceptions of an effective teacher, often prioritizing content knowledge over interactive, student-centered methods. Similarly, this linguistic context highlights the

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challenges of English language acquisition in Indonesia. It suggests a need for teacher training programs to support gradual shifts toward more English-only instruction while considering the linguistic barriers students face.

Equally important, teacher educators also stressed the need for teachers to help students develop self-confidence, address individual learning needs, and maintain positive professional relationships, consistent with Metruk's [36] [41] studies. Qualitative data indicated that an effective English teacher must balance professional, personal, and social qualities, supporting Shikalepo's [42] and Dincer et al. [43] views.

Several similarities and differences emerged when comparing the perceptions of student teachers and teacher educators. Both groups agreed on the importance of English proficiency, knowledge in reading, writing, speaking, pronunciation, and the ability to use diverse teaching methods, integrate technology, and provide clear instructions [19], [36], [39], [44]. They also recognized the importance of effectively alleviating anxiety, creating engaging activities, and managing class time.

However, student teachers emphasized vocabulary instruction, grammar motivation, and receiving lesson planning support [45]. They were less supportive of group activities due to class balance issues. In contrast, teacher educators emphasized learner autonomy, adapting teaching to students' proficiency levels and explaining lesson objectives beforehand [46]. Teacher educators also placed less importance on motivating students or using humour [47]. These differences reflect varied priorities in how both groups define effective teaching.

In conclusion, the study found that pedagogical and personal knowledge were equally, if not more, important than content knowledge in defining an effective English teacher. The balance between these three areas is crucial for effective teaching and learning, particularly in an EFL context like Indonesia. Additionally, the study underscores the significance of professional development in teaching, suggesting that continuous growth in all areas—content, pedagogy, and personal qualities—is key to enhancing teaching effectiveness.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Both groups agreed on the importance of high English proficiency, creativity in teaching, and fairness. Student teachers valued passion, technology use, and fun learning, while teacher educators emphasized a balance of professional, personal, and social characteristics. Both groups recognized the significance of precise instructions, classroom management, and fostering student self-confidence. The findings show some differences in priorities, with student teachers focusing on practical skills and motivation, while teacher educators emphasized a mix of pedagogical expertise and personal qualities. This study further highlights the importance of professional development in teaching, underlining that continuous development in both pedagogical and personal aspects is crucial for effective teaching and the holistic growth of educators.

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### **Pedagogical Implications**

Drawing from the study's findings, teacher training programs should prioritize addressing perception gaps by integrating pedagogical and personal qualities into their curricula. This program should also provide practical experiences that nurture the development of these qualities in student teachers. Educational policies should, therefore, advocate for reforms that embed these essential skills into teacher preparation, ensuring future educators are better equipped to meet the evolving needs of English language teaching in Indonesia while improving overall teacher effectiveness. Moreover, the study highlights the critical importance of ongoing professional development, urging continuous growth in content knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and personal attributes to ensure educators remain adaptive and responsive to the diverse needs of their students.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Future research should incorporate components such as knowledge of context (Clark & Walsh, 2002; 2005). Additionally, exploring perceptions of effective English teachers across various educational settings—such as different schools, regions, or countries—would provide a more comprehensive understanding. This approach would offer a broader perspective on what defines an effective English teacher in diverse educational environments.

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### **Appendix A. Interview Questions for Student Teachers**

1. Which attributes of an effective English teacher do you prefer? Why?
2. How do you look at your English teachers in your university class? How effective do you think about them in teaching?
3. To your mind, what makes an English teacher more effective? (Why)
4. Can you share your experience learning English and whether you have a positive role model of an English teacher in the past who possesses good qualities or characteristics that represent an effective English teacher?
5. Do you think you are going to be an effective English teacher?

### **Appendix B. Interview Questions for Teacher Educators**

1. Can you please share with me which of the following elements affects teachers more effectively in teaching? Content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, or personal knowledge? Please explain why.
2. Apart from the list of attributes mentioned above, what are the important attributes of an effective English teacher you may have in your teaching? Please explain why.
3. Do you think the English language program of UNPRI helps students grow and succeed in becoming effective English teachers?
4. From your personal standpoint, should teachers be trained to be effective English teachers?
5. In your opinion, should teachers obtain a teacher certification to become an effective English teacher?

### **Appendix C. Interview Questions for Student Teachers and Teacher Educators about Differences in Their Perceptions in the Comparison Section**

No	Interview Questions for Student Teachers	No	Interview Questions for Teacher Educators
1	What is your experience learning vocabulary? Do you think your teacher always uses appropriate teaching strategies in the classroom?	1	How do you teach vocabulary? What is the most effective way of teaching vocabulary? Why?
2	How important is it for you to learn English grammar?	2	Why do your students have to learn grammar?
3	As a teacher educator, what do you think about writing lesson plans? Do you think it is too difficult for you?	3	Why is it important to write lesson plans? What are the important elements of a lesson plan? How to implement lesson plans well in teaching?
4	Do you think your teachers teach English in your class adapted to students' English proficiency levels?	4	Do you teach English based on your students' English levels?

No	Interview Questions for Student Teachers	No	Interview Questions for Teacher Educators
5	Do you expect your teachers to tell you the learning objectives before each class? Why?	5	Do you think it is necessary to tell your students the lesson objectives before you start teaching? Why?
6	Do you agree that teachers should facilitate your responsibility and learning autonomy? What makes you feel unready?	6	Do you agree that your students should have their own responsibilities and learning autonomy? What should it be?
7	Do you enjoy fun learning? What makes you feel positive about it?	7	Do you agree that teachers should make learning fun? Is it necessary for teachers to have fun learning? Do you think making learning fun a part of the lesson plan?
8	Do you enjoy working in groups? What makes you feel happy or not about working in groups?	8	Do you assign your students to work in groups? What are the good things about working in groups?
9	Do you feel that your teachers always arouse your motivation to learn English? If not, why?	9	Do you think is it necessary for teachers to arouse students' motivation to learn English? If yes, how?
10	Do you think having a sense of humor is important in the classroom? What makes you think it is important?	10	Do you agree that having a sense of humor in teaching is important?
11	Do you feel accepted when your teachers' pay attention to your personal needs in terms of your learning? If not, why?	11	Do you think paying attention to the personal needs of students in learning is important? If yes, why? What makes you feel that paying attention to students who are in need both academically and socially is not a part of teachers' responsibility?

