

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study explores secondary school students' perceptions of good and effective English teachers, with a focus on gender differences. This chapter includes a detailed explanation of the study's background, identification of the problem, research questions, objectives, significance, and the overall research framework.

1.1 Background of the Study

Teachers play an important role in shaping the effectiveness of the learning environment in the classroom, because their actions significantly influence the success of the overall teaching and learning process. Teachers are the main subjects that play a major role in transferring knowledge to students, as well as planning, directing, and implementing learning activities based on efforts to impart a certain amount of knowledge to students at school. Ardiyanto et al. (2019) state that a teacher is responsible for assisting students in acquiring knowledge, competence, and life values. A teacher can be defined as a profession that distributes knowledge, such as someone who works in schools or educational institutions (Naibaho, 2019). As the main subject in the learning process, teachers must be good and effective to succeed in their daily encounters. While good and effective teachers may have some common characteristics, certain qualities vary based on their subject matter. Each teacher holds subjects that are mastered and according to their abilities. Becoming a proficient and effective English teacher is different from teaching other subjects because English is taught as a foreign language in primary and secondary schools in Indonesia. Due to its status as a foreign language,

Indonesian students rarely use English for practical language application (Lauder, 2008). Therefore, teachers must have competencies and qualified teaching skills to be able to become successful teachers in providing learning, especially in learning English.

In a detailed way, according to Brown (2004), a successful and effective teacher possesses a combination of technical expertise, pedagogical skills, social abilities, and personal qualities. In education, technical expertise pertains to subject-matter competence. Velez-Rendón (2002), as cited in Aydın et al. (2009), defines subject matter knowledge as the understanding teachers have of the material they instruct. This knowledge enables teachers to guide students in learning methodologies, teach topics suited to students' proficiency levels, and monitor and discuss students' progress in language learning. Baysal (2010) emphasizes that effective teachers must have the subject-matter expertise to design effective lesson plans and utilize appropriate resources for content delivery. Greater subject-matter expertise among teachers leads to more effective learning and better student outcomes.

Along with technical expertise, pedagogical knowledge is essential for teachers. Vélez-Rendón (2002), as cited in Aydın et al. (2009), describes pedagogical knowledge as the understanding teachers have of how to teach their subjects. He asserts that without this knowledge, teachers cannot effectively communicate their subject matter or instructional methods to their students. Additionally, Stronge et al. (2007) emphasize that these abilities and skills help students acquire information and competencies across various learning areas,

including social abilities—the capacity to understand others' beliefs, feelings, and motivations. This underscores the significant role teachers play in students' holistic development, encompassing knowledge, skills, and character. Effective teachers need pedagogical knowledge to guide students, organize and clarify material, spark and maintain interest, motivate learners, provide positive reinforcement, dedicate ample time to preparation and delivery, and integrate technology into teaching (Arikan et al., 2008). Moreover, effective teachers must possess practical classroom management skills to create an environment conducive to the teaching and learning process (Stronge, 2018). The primary goal of classroom management is to establish a stress-free learning environment that boosts motivation. Such environments allow students and teachers to engage willingly in the learning process and reduce the fear of making mistakes.

Professional educators need to have essential social skills to interact with students and manage the educational process effectively. These skills encompass various aspects, including motivating individuals, providing time for assistance when requested, expressing excitement about their work, maintaining positive dispositions towards students, and addressing their needs (Cheung, 2006 in Shishavan and Sadeghi, 2009). These skills, which are included in social skills, are categorized as good teachers. The purpose of social skills for teachers is to comprehend the experiences and emotions of their students, enabling them to address any related issues during the learning process. Emotions like anxiety and fear are normal and inevitable aspects of this process. Consequently, teachers must establish a learning environment that allows students to focus on their cognitive and emotional development simultaneously.

Therefore, in addition to technical expertise, pedagogical knowledge, and social skills, teachers should also possess key personal qualities to teach effectively and succeed in their profession. Malikow (2006) identified several essential personal characteristics teachers need to be effective and successful in their profession. These characteristics displaying a sense of humor, and demonstrating enthusiasm and creativity. Additionally, being a good and effective teacher requires tolerance, patience, kindness, sensibleness, open-mindedness, flexibility, optimism, enthusiasm, and positive attitudes toward new ideas. Furthermore, caring for students is a crucial characteristic for a teacher to be successful in their profession (Cheung, 2006 in Shishavan and Sadeghi, 2009).

Furthermore, effective teachers have the qualities to influence student learning and achievement. As stated by Brophy and Good (1986), Witcher et al. (2001) in (Zamani & Ahangari, 2016), teachers must be able to motivate students to learn, inspire students to love learning, facilitate students to learn optimally, apply appropriate instructions, good time management, teach according to students' need, supervise students' learning, concern about student' progress, give opportunities to students to learn concept in context, give opportunities to do many practices. Mastering the application of these strategies and knowledge is essential to effectively implementing them and attaining learning goals. On the other hand, a good teacher should focus more on implementing fun learning strategies to achieve the learning objectives so that students enjoy or do not feel burdened during learning activities. Characteristics of good teachers according to Thompson, Greer, and Greer (2004) in (Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009), Teachers are considered effective instructors when they exhibit certain teaching traits, such as demonstrating

fairness, maintaining a positive outlook, thorough preparation, employing a personal approach, possessing a sense of humor, fostering creativity, acknowledging errors, showing forgiveness, respecting students, upholding high expectations, displaying compassion, and enhancing students' sense of belonging.

Discussing good and effective English teachers, students have criteria about the characteristics of good and effective English teachers based on their perceptions. To be a good and effective teacher for students, a teacher needs to know the students' character. Knowing each student's character differences made it easier for teachers to create a suitable learning. According to Hamzah B. Uno in (Hanifah et al., 2020), student characteristics include individual factors like interests, motivation for learning, preferred learning approaches, attitudes, cognitive capacities, and existing knowledge. These characteristics can vary widely, influenced by factors such as gender and age. It is crucial for educators to understand these diverse learning traits, as students of different ages and genders possess unique learning characteristics. This understanding allows educators to tailor their learning strategies effectively, ensuring that students can achieve their learning objectives.

Gender differences are a notable characteristic of students that can be observed during the learning process. Research has shown that male and female students often differ in participation, learning styles, and outcomes. According to a study by Masruri et al. (2014), these differences are evident in active learning environments. Male students in a class are generally more active, frequently speaking up and expressing opinions. Conversely, female students typically exhibit greater

involvement in listening to the teacher's explanations. Male students frequently demonstrate a Converger learning style, marked by robust problem-solving skills and a preference for hands-on activities. Female students, on the other hand, typically display a Diverger-type learning style, favoring tasks that involve gathering information and imagining real situations from multiple perspectives to form a comprehensive understanding (Arief & Ulfa, 2018).

Additionally, Hafidz (2019), found that female students tend to achieve higher average grades compared to male students, indicating superior academic performance. This aligns with the observation by Hafidz (2019) that female students are more engaged with academic material, pay closer attention in class, strive to be more active academically, and participate more than their male counterparts. Both male and female students have distinct perspectives on what they consider the qualities of a good and effective teacher. This difference in perspective shows that each student has the criteria that a teacher should have to become an effective and good educator.

Currently, not many studies specifically examine students' perceptions of good and effective teachers, especially analyses based on differences in gender, one of which is at SMP Negeri 4 Petang. From existing records, research at this school has never been carried out related to this topic. Studying the characteristics of good and effective teachers from a learner's point of view can indirectly be used as a reference to understand what students expect from them and enable them to increase their potential or adjust to what is expected of students. It can also assist English teachers, especially at SMP Negeri 4 Petang, in improving the quality of their teaching to

meet students' needs. Therefore, in this study, the researcher focused on examining good and effective teachers more deeply through the perspective of male and female students at the secondary school level. Next, the researchers conducted a study entitled "Students' Perceptions about Good and Effective English Teachers in SMP Negeri 4 Petang: A Gender-Based Study".

1.2 Problem Identification

There are no specific criteria for becoming a good English teacher. Good or not good, a teacher involves a subjective view. An effective teacher can be identified through various indicators, which collectively contribute to their competency in guiding students to achieve learning objectives in a structured and systematic manner. Therefore, there is a possibility that an assessment of an effective teacher is more objective than an assessment that involves 'good' or 'not good'. Becoming a good and effective English teacher is undoubtedly challenging for students' English learning. Knowing students' perceptions about the characteristics of a good and effective English teacher helped them improve their learning strategies.

Perceptions regarding the qualities of a good and an effective English teacher may vary based on gender.. These two variables allow male and female students to perceive the characteristics of a good and effective English teacher differently. Therefore, knowing how males and females perceive good and effective English teachers is important. Based on the above research background, it is necessary to investigate more deeply about good and effective teachers through the perspective of male and female students at the junior secondary school level. This research involves students at SMP Negeri 4 Petang who are surveyed using questionnaires

and focus group discussions about how good and effective teachers are according to their perceptions.

1.3 Research Limitation

This study examines how students perceive the characteristic of good and effective English teachers in junior high schools, with consideration to gender differences.. Students' perceptions of teacher competence involve their assessments of the English teacher's ability and authority in the teaching process, particularly in English studies. The research examines students' views on the teacher's teaching style, approach to students, mastery of the subject matter, and personality during classroom activities. Male and female students have distinct opinions on what constitutes a good and effective English teacher. To gather relevant data, the researcher involved junior secondary school students from SMP Negeri 4 Petang in Badung Regency.

1.4 Research Questions

Three research questions were investigated as part of the background study. The research questions are as follows:

1. How are the perception of female and male students about good English teachers in SMP Negeri 4 Petang?
2. How are the perception of female and male students about effective English teachers in SMP Negeri 4 Petang?
3. How are female and male students different their perceptions about good and effective English teachers in SMP Negeri 4 Petang?

1.5 Research Objectives

Regarding to the research questions above, the research objectives are as follows:

1. To explore female students' views on what constitutes a good and effective English teacher at SMP Negeri 4 Petang.
2. To investigate the views of male students on what constitutes a good and effective English teacher at SMP Negeri 4 Petang.
3. To analyze and explain any differences in students' perceptions of good and effective English teachers based on gender at SMP Negeri 4 Petang.4 Petang.

1.6 Research Significance

Research on the characteristics of effective English teachers has been predominantly conducted in foreign countries, leaving a significant gap in Indonesia. Understanding the ideal teacher characteristics as perceived by students is crucial to align teaching practices with students' expectations and achieve learning goals. The following theoretical and practical benefits of this research include:

1. Theoretical Significant

Understanding students' perspectives on the ideal teacher helps define the characteristics of an ideal teacher within the Indonesian context, particularly in Bali.

By considering gender variables, the research enhances the scientific contribution to the field of English language pedagogy.

2. Practical Significant

- a) For teachers

Teachers can use the results of this study as a reference in the process of becoming good and effective English teachers.

b) For further researches

This research aims to offer empirical evidence for future studies on students' perspectives regarding the characteristics of good and effective teachers, considering gender differences. It is also expected to provide data or information for further research and enable future researchers to improve the research.

