

Students' Perception on Female Teachers

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Abstract

As one of the pedagogic activities, teacher plays important roles to make students learn directly from their teachers in order to develop their cognition, affection, and psychomotor. In this case, there are some competencies have to be performed by all teachers, namely pedagogic, professional, personal, and social competencies as the requirements to teaching and learning activities. The facts show that many female teachers perform teacher competencies better than male teachers because of the meekness and good appearance of female teachers. This study was conducted to know the students' perception on male teachers in English Education Department of Unismuh Makassar. The data were collected through interview, and analyzed descriptively in qualitative way. The findings indicated that the students mostly like female teachers because they perform almost all teacher competencies better. Therefore, it was concluded that female teachers are better than male teachers in English Education Department of Unismuh Makassar.

Keywords: male and female teachers, pedagogic, professional, personal, and social competencies, performance, appearance

1. Introduction

Teaching is an art, a teacher is an artist. Because being an artist, a teacher should be able to perform an interesting teaching in order to make his/her students interested, happy, and enjoy the teaching during the class. If the students are happy and enjoy the teaching during the class, it will be easy for them to understand and master the materials presented by the teacher. On the other hand, if the teaching is not interesting, the student will not be happy, and enjoy the teaching. In this case, Harmer (1998: 2) says that a good teacher is an entertainer (in a positive sense, not in a negative sense) who can make the students enjoy being entertained and amused during the teaching and learning process.

The term "teacher" and "student" here are used to represent not only teacher and student at school but also "lecturer" and "student" in university. The question will next appear is what can make the teaching presentation interesting for the students? The answer of the question will be variously given by different students.

Based on the previous research results, teaching presentation is interesting when the teaching techniques are effective, the teacher has pedagogical competence and professionalism to apply the teaching techniques, the materials presented are really needed by the students, the facility is provided, the media are suitable with the materials, etc. Those answers come from different students with different level and cultural backgrounds (Harmer, 1998: 1-4)

Some students say that a teaching presentation can be interesting when it is done by female teachers, and this answer come from so many students in all levels of educational institutions. This answer can be rational because one of the natural characteristics of woman in general is "meekness". Woman is usually meek and tender-hearted. Woman is also identified as a patient creature of God. Therefore, when a woman plays her role as a teacher, she can make students very happy, interested and curious to learn seriously, and this accelerate the success of the students. In addition, the appearance of male teachers is very attractive, nice, and interesting from their beautiful face, nice dresses, good voice and intonation, and their way of walking and talking.

However, this answer is not always true because it depends on the person individually. Some women do not have this character, but they are so uncouth. In other side, male teachers or men in general are not always so uncouth like people think and experience. There are some men (male teachers) who are very meek and tender-hearted. Therefore, it is important to investigate which one is more meek and tender-hearted between man and woman.

In relation to the teaching activities performed by male and female teachers, the performance of both kinds of sex is very influential to the students' achievement. In this case, students are usually interested in the good and nice appearance like the one usually performed by female teachers. Talking about teaching and teacher, it is important to elaborate effective teaching and effective teacher. In this study, they are elaborated separately in different section although they are closely related.

Effective teaching is idealism by every teacher that has to be dedicated in his or her career as an effective and professional teacher. Most of the great dedication is usually given in the form of effective teaching as an effort to improve the students' ability in certain subject matters. However, what the teacher dedicates in his teaching is sometimes far from what is expected. This is the major problem usually faced by most teacher s. They want to give their best to their students but could not do it. They want to present an effective teaching but

their teaching is not effective. They want to teach effectively but they are not familiar with effective teaching. They do not know what kind of teaching is categorized as an effective teaching. That is why, the writer is going to present the characteristics of effective teaching (Omagio, 1986:41-56).

The following is the characteristics of effective teaching as suggested by Blum (1984) as quoted by Richards & Renandya (2002:21). First, instruction is guided by a preplanned curriculum. The curriculum has to be adapted to the work place in order to provide and produce the competence and skilful output of the educational institution. Second, there are high expectations for student to learn many things from the curriculum designed by the educational institution. Third, instructional groups formed in the classroom fit instructional needs. Fourth, the students are carefully oriented to the lessons that can construct their basic knowledge, skills, and experiences because the curriculum and syllabus are designed based on the need of the students, the society, and the work place. Fifth, instruction is clear and focused on certain topic in order to make the students professional based on their talents and interest (Gebhard, 2000:21-46).

Sixth, learning progress is monitored closely by the teacher. By monitoring the students, the lecturer can help the students solve their problems. In addition, the teacher can also have *authentic assessment* as the evaluation for the students and the feedback of the teacher's success in managing teaching-learning process. Seventh, when students do not understand, they are retaught by providing *remedial teaching* to ensure the success of teaching-learning process. Eighth, class time is used for learning. All the time provided has to be maximized to empower the students in many kinds of classroom activities and outdoor activities. The students have to be given many tasks to improve their understanding (Gebhard, 2000:21-46).

Ninth, there are smooth and efficient classroom routines. The class is managed in enjoyable and relax situation by implementing many effective teaching strategies. Tenth, standards for classroom behaviour are high by focusing the instructional activities to the students. Eleventh, personal instructions between lecturer s and students are positive. In this case, the teacher has to give stimulus to the students in various ways, situation, and condition. Twelfth, incentives and rewards for students are used to promote excellence. Appreciation from a teacher to the students for their achievement and success is mostly important in order to motivate the students to learn more outside the classroom (Gebhard, 2000:21-46).

By recognizing the characteristics of effective teaching, a language teacher can do a reflection of teaching to know whether his or her teaching is effective or not. Then, he can do an exploration of teaching. Finally he can do some efforts to improve his performance towards an effective teaching.

As explained above that effective teaching and effective teacher are very closely related, and they cannot be divorced one another. They are two dependent variables that are always performed in one moment. Therefore, the researcher thinks it that is important to briefly describe the concept of effective teacher and what should be done by an effective teacher dealing with dedicating effective teaching in order to improve high quality of education and the graduates of educational institutions.

An effective teacher has to perform the four teacher competencies namely pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies. The performance of an effective teacher has to be reflected in his/her daily teaching activities as the main dedication to the improvement of the quality of education. The competencies performed by the teacher have to be measured and enjoyed by the students. In this case, the teacher has to make his/her teaching interesting and enjoyable for the students in order to accelerate the students' academic achievement consisting of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Shortly, it can be stated that a teacher is categorized as effective when he/she can perform an effective teaching that can be interested and enjoyed by the students. In other words, the teacher has to be able to act like an artist who enjoys his/her teaching. He/she has to be able to make the students enjoy his/her teaching as well. In order to get this level of teacher's performance, it is important for a teacher to do apply some tips.

Firstly, the teacher should always do a reflection of teaching to evaluate whether his or her teaching is good or effective and enjoyable or not. The reflection of teaching can be done by asking some information from the students who are taking his course or joining his class. The information from the students can be gained through the students' test results, questionnaire, and interview done by the teacher himself, or helped by another teacher. Secondly, the teacher should do an exploration of teaching. The exploration of teaching can be done by a teacher by applying some steps, namely collecting samples of teaching, analyzing the samples of teaching, appraising teaching based on the analysis, and deciding on changes in teaching behavior (Gebhard, 1996: 21-26). Thirdly, the teacher should always be innovative and creative to find, produce, and apply some new strategies of language teaching. To find, produce, and apply the new strategies, the teacher can do some ways. One of them is conducting classroom action research (CAR) (Latief, 2003: 102-104).

Dealing with gender, the above performance is usually easily apply and performed by female teachers because they have natural characteristics that can make people more interested. Although it is depends on the person (teacher individually) but most of female teachers deal with this characteristics.

Based on the preliminary study through informal observation and interview done by the researcher as a teacher, he found that many students like female teachers better than male teachers. This preliminary study

encourages him to conduct a research dealing with the students' perception on the female teachers. Because the researcher also teaches at Muhammadiyah University of Makassar, so he conducted the research in this campus.

2. Method

This study deals with a qualitative research designed that aims at getting information about teachers' appearance and performance based on the students' perception in English Department, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar. It means that all data collected are analyzed and described qualitatively. The instruments of data collection are also set in this way.

In order to get the students' perception about the appearance, performance, and professionalism of their teachers concerning with gender, the researcher interviewed students giving information orally. The researcher recorded the students' information (talks), and then he analyzed the information in qualitative way to be described as clear as possible. The students' genuine information were presented descriptively in order to take a final conclusion about the importance and influence of male and female teachers in performing their teaching.

The research was conducted at the English Department, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar in academic year 2015/2016. This setting is chosen based on his observation and experience in teaching TEFL course in the institution.

The subjects of the study were the students of the English Department, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar. The idea of the study is the perception of the students on the appearance and performance of the English teachers concerning with pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies. There were 40 (forty) students interviewed to get their ideas and comments about the appearance and performance of the teacher, both male and female teachers. The students were chosen randomly from the first semester until seventh semester. Each semester were only 10 (ten) students, 5 (five) are male students and 5 (five) are female students. So, the number of the students is balanced (fifty-fifty). The data were taken from December 2015 to January 2016 through interview.

In conducting this research, the researcher applied some procedures. Firstly, The researcher enter their classrooms and gave a brief description about the study. Then, asked them make a lottery set to be chosen and taken randomly 10 (ten) students consisting of 5 (five) male students and 5 (five) female students for each class (semester). Secondly, the researcher asked questions to the students orally based on the script of interview guide, and then the students answered the questions based on their perception on their teachers' appearance and performance in terms of pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies. The students' answer or comments were recorded by using tape-recorder and documented using camera. Thirdly, after getting the data from the respondents, the researcher synthesized, sorted, analyzed, and described in qualitative way. The results of the data analysis are used as the judgement to conclude and to state that female teachers met the indicators of teacher competencies and they are better than male teachers or not. The results can be used as the consideration of the decision makers of Muhammadiyah University of Makassar to recruit more female teachers or male ones in the next process of new teacher recruitment.

The researcher collected data from the respondents by interviewing them using some questions. The questions were contained in the interview guide. The students were asked detail questions orally based on their experiences and their perceptions on their teachers, especially male teachers. All questions and answers were recorded as well as the students' brief personal data.

After obtaining the data, the researcher synthesized, sorted, and analyzed them qualitatively. The results were described clearly in qualitative way. Data reduction was also done in the process of analyzing data in order to avoid repetition of explanation.

3. The Findings of the Study

This section covers the students' comments as their perception on the female teachers in English Department, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar. Their comments deals with the teachers' appearance and performance concerning with pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies. Discussion part elaborates the data presentation. They become the consideration of the research to take a final conclusion about the appearance and performance of their teachers and male teachers particularly. The followings are quotations of interview between the researcher and the respondents:

“Actually I like all teachers (male and female teachers) but if I am asked to choose one of the two kinds of gender, I like female teacher better than male teacher because female teacher is very meek. In addition, female teachers are better than male teachers in material mastery” (BU, MA, MAI, MZBZ Nas).

Based on the comment above, it can be stated that many students like meek teacher, and the meekness is usually performed by female teachers. Most of female teachers master the materials they are teaching. Here are some more comments of the students:

“I mostly like female teachers because they usually meek and they high feeling in teaching, they

understand the students much more” (MA and MZBZ)

The comment above indicates that besides the meekness, female teachers usually understand the students’ situation, condition and their contexts.

In other words, the students mostly like female teachers because they are full of understanding. By understanding the students, interaction between teacher and students will run well. This mostly interests and motivates the students to learn without hesitation, anger, and handicap. Some students also gave their comments as follow:

“I like female teachers but it depends on the situation because sometimes male teachers are angry with us and sometimes female teachers are too” (Nas, MAI, Na, RIR, AQB, UHC, and DPR)

The above comment indicates that not all female teachers are meek, sometimes they are angry with the students like male teachers. It depends on the individual of particular teacher.

In relation to pedagogic and professional competencies, most of the students said that generally male teachers are more professional than female ones. Male teachers have higher discipline than female teachers although they mostly like female teachers. Male teachers have higher frequency in the classroom meeting than female ones. Female teachers have more intelligence and mastery on the materials than male ones although it depends on the individual of the teacher. That is why, most of the students like female teachers very much. Here are some comments from the students:

“Female teachers master more materials than male teachers”. (KA, NS, RN, BU, MAI, MA).

This comment was stated by the above with the same reasons. They know this because of the treatment given by the teacher during their study there. In addition to learning, they also evaluated their teachers, so their gave comments about their teachers’ performance, especially female teachers. The following comments focuses on the discipline of the female teachers especially in their regular meeting during the semester..

“Female teachers have higher discipline and high frequency of teaching in the classroom” (KA, MZBZ, RIR, Su, Na).

“Female teachers have higher discipline and their meeting of teaching in the classroom is more than male teachers” (MA, RN, MZBZ, BU).

The above comments have the same ideas although they are different in sentences. The main points of the comments above are the number of the male teachers’ regular meeting in the classroom and other view of discipline performed by the teachers. The following comment was stated by 4 (four) students about their scores of certain subjects that they have got from the female teachers.

“I mostly like the scoring of male teachers” (MZBZ, KA, Su, WR).

The comment above indicates that female teachers usually give high scores to the students for many subjects. Based on this scoring system, most of the students like female teachers. However, it depends on the individual of the teacher. Sometimes this way was performed by the male teachers, and vice versa.

Dealing with social competence, female teachers were more competent than male teachers because they were easier to approach and get the sympathy of the students.

“The number of classroom meetings in teaching is male teachers, but I like female teachers because they were easier to get the sympathy of the students, we are interested in their way of making relationship with us” (AC, BU, RAR, KA, Na).

Another statement were also given by students as follow:

“I like the human relation of male teachers. They are easy to approach us and make us interested in their teaching. Therefore, we are very happy to be taught by them” (KA, Nu, SU, RN, WR).

Some students also gave their comments that are almost similar to the above statements, but theirs are shorter than above. Although more than one the student gave comments but they have the same statement, so they are combined into one short comment, namely:

“I mostly like human relation of female teachers” (MZBZ, WR, Na, KA, Nu, RIR).

Based on the above comments, it can be concluded that good and professional teachers are those who easily approach and build a good human relationship with their students. The criteria are performed by female most teachers in English Education Department, faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar.

4. Discussion

It has been obvious that effective teaching requires effective teachers. It means that effective teaching atmospheres can be easily done by effective teachers. Effective teachers must have been able to perform the four teacher competencies consisting of pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies. Based on the research findings, the criteria and indicators of effective teachers have been performed by female teachers in English Education Department, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar.

Almost all of the students agreed that female teachers are better than male teachers both in their appearance

and performance of the four teacher competencies. Most of the students gave the same comments as their perception that they mostly like female teachers. Not only senior students, junior ones (first semester students) gave the same statements as well. They students gave the statements although they have not been taught by male teachers. It means that they have got information about the performance of male teachers so they compared these two kinds of gender as their teachers.

Based on the students' comments, the pedagogical and professional competencies covering the way of teaching, female teachers are intelligent and good at teaching. They master the materials to be taught and they always implement effective teaching strategies in the process of teaching and learning. However, there are some comments stating that male teachers are more professional, but they say they like female teachers very much. They also gave "good scores" to the students, but they did not explain in what case and context the phrase "good scores" is. There was no comment whether they mean objective or subjective scoring the female teachers gave, but the most important thing is the students' statement about one of the reasons of their sympathy is the system of scoring.

In relation to personal and social competencies, the students' comments indicated that they like female teachers very much because they easily approach the students and make good relationship with the students. Most of the female students like female teachers by reasoning that they are not reluctant to approach female teachers because they have the same kind of sex. Other students gave their comments about their sympathy to the female teachers because of their meekness. Based on these comments, it can be concluded that most of the students like female teachers because they can perform personal and social competencies well.

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

After analyzing the data of the research qualitatively, it is concluded that most of the teachers in English Education Department, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar are women. Their appearance is good and attractive. They perform teacher competencies better concerning with pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies. Based on the comments from the students on their performance, most of the students like female teachers with their own reasons. The reasons cover the four teacher competencies. However, almost all of the students' comments are similar, so the comments are not displayed all in the research findings section.

In addition, the students' comments dealt with not only with teacher competencies but also out of the teacher competencies like their appearance. The students also said that they absolutely like female teachers and expected to have more female teachers for the new recruitment. Therefore, it is judged that female English teachers are really ideal and accepted by the students.

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