

Chapter One

Introduction

This introduction covered the description of the research. The background of the research revealed the reasons of the researcher's interest in investigating the problem based on the title being chosen. Statement of the problem identified the problem that would be investigated clearly. The limitation of this research is explained in the limitation of the problem. Then, the research question described the specific object that would be investigated. The significance of the research included the benefits of this research, and the last was the outline of the research which conveyed what the researcher would explain in each chapter.

Background

For many years, the topic of teacher effectiveness has drawn numerous educational researchers' attention. It is widely acknowledged that the quality of teaching that a teacher possesses will give influence to the improvements of students' learning outcomes (Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009; Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011; Hajizadeh & Salahshour, 2013). To conduct an effective teaching, a teacher should possess a set of abilities in order to help the students to keep engaged in learning and to improve their learning outcomes. This was supported by Chen and Lin (2009) who defined an effective teacher as someone who is helpful for students' learning. In the context of the foreign language teaching, Borg (2006) reported that there are differences among foreign language teachers and teachers of other subjects especially in the content and methodology of teaching, the issue about native and non-native speaker, and the interaction between teacher and students. Teachers who teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia

came from various backgrounds in which not only native speakers involved, but also non-native speakers who have joined language training for a certain period of times. In this case, the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher could not only be defined by native language and nationality of the teacher.

As each of the students has the right to get the most effective education, there was a direct relationship between teacher and student that exists in the classroom. The effectiveness of a teacher was considered something that was fundamental for enhancing learning. Some studies revealed that teacher effectiveness was a crucial factor affecting the students' achievements. An effective teacher was the key factor in the teaching and learning process. The performance of a teacher can influence the students' progress.

Although there have been studies conducted to explore behaviors and characteristics of foreign language teachers, there are still relatively few studies which addressed the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher in Indonesia (Liando, 2010; Khaerati, 2016; Abu & Halim, 2017; Said, 2017). More studies are important to be carried out to provide suggestions and guidance for the current EFL teachers as well as for the future. Thus, this study is aimed at investigating the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher in Indonesian contexts especially in post-secondary or university level students based on several characteristics among many that have been investigated previously.

Statement of the Problem

In relation to the background of the problem above, the students who are currently studying English in the university may have different perceptions in identifying the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher. This can be related to

their experience in taking numerous courses which were taught by diverse teachers. The differences in perceiving effective EFL teacher will influence the students' preference on several related points such as their beliefs about the knowledge a teacher should possess to be called an effective teacher, the methods and materials chosen by the teacher, and how the teacher should deliver the lesson. This will then lead to the condition where students may consider that some teachers are considered effective but some others are not.

As the one who is in charge of helping the students in improving their learning, the teacher should be aware of the importance of the students' perspectives of an effective EFL teacher. Each student may hold their own beliefs regarding to the issue and identifying the students' perspectives may help the teacher in understanding what the students expect from them and how the teacher can provide ways to meet the students' needs in the learning process. Thus, this research is intended to find out the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher as perceived by the students.

Limitation of the Problem

The research focused on identifying the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher as perceived by the students of a private university based on the following three broad categories namely personal and interpersonal characteristics, subject-matter knowledge, and approach to language teaching. The researcher intended to find out how the respondents view these three broad category as researcher personally believed they covered the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher in general. Those characteristics were also considered to be suitable to the context of the study. It is because the researcher assumed that some teachers in the university

where the study was investigated, have the characteristics to be called effective. The other reason was because of the time limitation that the researcher had to complete her education at the university. Thus, the researcher only took account on those three characteristics.

Personal characteristics were related to the teachers' personal beliefs in teaching. In order to create a good learning atmosphere, a sensitivity to appreciate the differences of the students and to show the enthusiasm and supportive personality to the students was important in the learning process. The ability to develop relationships with the students was what it was called by interpersonal characteristics. Interpersonal characteristics were important because it can influence the learning environment. The positive relationship between the two parties namely the teacher and the students would then lead to the way that can encourage the students to keep engaged in the teaching and learning process.

As the questions about subject-matter knowledge being raised, the teachers needed to find out what they really need to know about the subject they teach. This included the contents of the knowledge that the teachers need to possess. By knowing the contents related to the subject they teach, the teachers would be able to build up ideas and deal with the facts in order to form various relationships among the contents. Thus, the teachers could decide the approach to be used in delivering the contents.

Identifying the approaches to language teaching that suit the students best was considered important especially when it comes to teaching English as a foreign language. Instead of adopting just a single option namely traditional approach, there were chances for the teacher to employ more than one approach as

nowadays the introduction of new approaches is widely spread. Comparing the traditional one with the relatively newest approach can help the EFL teacher in choosing the best approach to be applied. The combination of those approaches might lead to the more effective teaching.

Research Question

This research is intended to answer the question about “What are the students’ perceptions on the characteristics of an effective English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher?”

Objective of the Research

The objective of the research focuses on answering the problem in the research question above. Thus, this research is aimed to find out the importance of the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher based on students’ perceptions.

Significance of the Research

This research is expected to extend some benefits for the researcher, the students, the teachers, and the other researchers.

Researcher. This study will help the researcher in developing understanding about the characteristics of an EFL teacher in an Indonesian context. Thus, as a pre-service teacher, the researcher will be able to learn and improve her skill in order to be an effective EFL teacher. This study will also help the researcher in developing skills in conducting a research, especially on quantitative approach.

Students. This study will be able to help the students to broaden their knowledge about an effective EFL teacher. As a students, this study can be beneficial for them in evaluating the teaching and learning process. The finding of

the study can help students to evaluate the teacher's teaching quality from the teaching and learning process. Students themselves are also prospective teachers. Thus, the results of the research can become the basis for them to address which aspect they should develop when they are about to teach their students.

Teachers. This study aims to explore the characteristics on an effective EFL teacher from the students' perspective. Thus, the study will enable the teachers to adjust the competencies they possess and the students' expectation of an effective EFL teacher. This study can also be an indication for the teacher to be aware of their quality of teaching. Thus, this study will be a reflection for them to improve their skills to become an effective EFL teacher.

Other Researchers. This study could be a fundamental hint for other researchers especially those who have the same interest in investigating about the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher.

Outline of the Research

This study consisted of five chapters. Chapter one discussed the background of the study, statement and limitation of the problem, research question, objective and significance of the research. Chapter two of this study reviewed the literature of the research which consists of theories related to the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher. Chapter three explained the methodology of the research which was concerning on the research method used by the researcher, research design, data gathering instrument, data analysis, and participants of this study. Chapter four talked about results of the research followed by discussion. Finally, chapter five included conclusion of the research and recommendation for some parties.