Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

In this chapter, the researcher revealed the results and discussion of the research. The results presented the data gathered from the respondents, while in the discussion the researcher tried to discuss the data obtained and related it to several theories.

Results

Based on the research question of this study which is "What are the students' perceptions on the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher?" there were 32 questions representing students' perceptions on the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher. The results of the questionnaire were grouped into three broad categories to make its analysis more comprehensive and conclusive. The results were grouped into (a) personal and interpersonal characteristics, (b) subject-matter knowledge, and (c) approach to language teaching. The responses from the respondents are presented in the table below.

Personal and Interpersonal Characteristics

This sub-section demonstrated and discussed the results with aspects of the teacher's personality and attitudes towards the students.

Table 6. Personal and Interpersonal Characteristics					
Rank	An effective language teacher should:	N	Mean	SD	Item No.
1	Be friendly to students	196	3.73	.476	10

2	Treat students fairly regardless of achievement	196	3.72	.502	16
3	Be open-minded	196	3.63	.562	30
4	Encourage students to express and discuss their needs for language learning	196	3.52	.550	4
5	Praise effort	196	3.49	.586	9
6	Take into consideration students' difficulties with the foreign language	196	3.45	.593	21
7	Be eager to help students in and outside the classroom	196	3.40	.612	1
8	Use authority to maintain discipline	196	3.36	.652	33
9	Express confidence in students' language abilities	196	3.26	.623	24

From the table above, the mean score of each item related to students' perception on personal and interpersonal was revealed. All items were rated higher than 3.26 which can be concluded that they belong to very important category. This indicates that such characteristics were highly desirable by EFL university students. Among the nine items, the highest mean score was item number 10 which describes the characteristic of being friendly to the students. The second and the third highest mean score belong to item number 16 and item number 3 which outline the characteristics of treating students fairly and being able to be open minded. These provides evidence that students favors the teacher who are able to show friendliness and fairness to the students as well as being

open minded. Students also view it is important for the teacher to encourage and praises their students' effort. From the data, students also explain the importance of the teacher roles to assess students' needs, to help students with their learning, to maintain discipline, and to express confidence in students' language abilities.

Subject-matter Knowledge

The following sub-section describes the result which focus on the EFL teacher's competence of the target language and the awareness of language learning theories.

Table 7. Subject-matter Knowledge					
Rank	An effective language teacher should:	N	Mean	SD	Item No.
1	Have a broad vocabulary in the FL	196	3.77	.457	2
2	Have a sound knowledge of the English grammar	196	3.63	.553	8
3	Be familiar with language learning theories	196	3.43	.617	14
4	Use English competently	196	3.35	.585	33
5	Be acquainted with the target culture	196	3.09	.717	22

Regarding the second sub-section which implies the characteristics of effective EFL teacher from subject-matter knowledge category as outlined in the table above, the overall mean scores of the responses convey that four out of five items (item number 34, item number 2, item number 8, and item number 14) belong to very important category because the mean scores are more than 3.26.

The mean score of item 2 (3.77) is even slightly higher than the item in previous table (item number 10, mean score 3.73) which may be an indication that the characteristic is more highly valued. The least mean score belong to item 22 (3.09) which means that students view it is less important compared to the other items in the current category. Although the item of being acquainted with the target culture is the last rank in the category, the students states that it is still considered to be important for the teacher to have such characteristic as it can be seen from the mean score which is 3.09.

Approach to Language Teaching

The third sub-section addressed the aspects of an EFL teacher's approach which concentrated on how the new content was introduced, explained and evaluated and how the instructional material and activities can be best used to facilitate learning.

Table 8. Approach to Language Teaching					
Rank	An effective language teacher should:	N	Mean	SD	Item No.
1	Use activities which draw learners' attention to specific grammatical features	196	3.58	.535	17
2	Simplify his/her classroom language to facilitate comprehension of what is being said	196	3.57	.546	12
3	Make frequent use of other material	196	3.44	.592	4
4	Design or select material according to students' major	196	3.43	.555	30

5	Address error by immediately providing explanation as to why students' responses are incorrect	196	3.40	.596	18
6	Set activities which expose students to the target culture	196	3.35	.602	32
7	Provide opportunities for students to use English beyond the classroom setting	196	3.34	.625	11
8	Use English as the predominant means of classroom communication	196	3.34	.648	7
9	Thoroughly explain new grammar rules before asking students to practice relevant structure	196	3.31	.616	19
10	Not grade language production (speaking/writing) primarily for grammatical accuracy	196	3.30	.532	15
11	Set activities which require students to interact with each other in English	196	3.29	.601	23
12	Expose students to real life topics	196	3.28	.606	20
13	Correct students immediately after making a grammar mistake during communicative activities	196	3.28	.727	13
14	Set activities which require students to work individually	196	3.14	.641	29

15	Set activities which require students to work in pairs or small groups	196	3.13	.632	28
16	Grade written assignments predominantly for effort and content	196	3.03	.686	27
17	Integrate computer-aided instruction into FL teaching	196	3.01	.612	6
18	Grade written assignments predominantly for grammatical and accuracy	196	2.28	.668	26

As shown in the table above, thirteen out of eighteen received a mean score higher than 3.26 which indicate that the items belong to very important category. The other five items namely item number 29, item number 28, item number 27, item number 6, and item 26 received lower score and were still categorized be important. From the data, the mean scores of the thirteen item which belong to very important category could be arranged in order of importance as follows: use activities which draw learners' attention to specific grammatical features, simplify his/her classroom language to facilitate comprehension of what is being said, make frequent use of other material, design or select material according to students' major, address error by immediately providing explanation as to why students' responses are incorrect, set activities which expose students to the target culture, provide opportunities for students to use English beyond the classroom setting, use English as the predominant means of classroom communication, thoroughly explain new grammar rules before asking students to practice relevant structure, not grade language production (speaking/writing)

primarily for grammatical accuracy, set activities which require students to interact with each other in English, expose students to real life topics, correct students immediately after making a grammar mistake during communicative activities. The other five item categorized into "important" reveal that set activities which require students to work individually, set activities which require students to work in pairs or small groups, grade written assignments predominantly for effort and content, integrate computer-aided instruction into FL, and teaching grade written assignments predominantly for grammatical and accuracy were at the bottom of ranking list.

The following is the table that summarizes the total mean scores of each category.

Table 9. Total Mean Scores for Each Category		
Category	Mean	Rank
1. Personal and Interpersonal Characteristics	3.51	1
2. Subject-matter Knowledge	3.33	2
3. Approach to Language Teaching	3.28	3

The total mean scores of the questionnaire items were 3.51 related to personal and interpersonal characteristics, 3.33 related to subject-matter knowledge, and 3.28 related to approach to language teaching. All of them belong to "very important" category. By looking at the mean scores, it was found that the total mean score on personal and interpersonal characteristics was considered the

highest among those three. This implies that students perceive their teacher to have such desirable characteristics to become effective, especially the attributes of personal and interpersonal qualities.

Discussion

The research question of the study was "What are the students' perceptions on the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher?" Therefore, the purpose of this study was to find out the characteristics of an effective EFL teacher as perceived by the students. After the full report of the results, some important points needed to be further emphasized and discussed.

Data collected in this study revealed that the students attached the importance to EFL teachers' personal trait-related characteristics. Most of the students perceived that it is essential for the EFL teacher to have good personal and interpersonal characters. Some other studies in the same field also shared the similar discovery that most of the students preferred the EFL teachers with good personal and interpersonal characters (Brosh, 1996; Sishavan & Shadegi, 2009; Lee, 2010; Chen, 2012; Kourieous & Evripidou, 2013). From the result, the issue of friendliness, fairness, and open mindedness are highly appreciated mainly by the respondents. This means that students prefer to be taught by teacher who can create good atmosphere, treat the students fairly and equitably, and teacher who are able to be open minded. This result is in accordance with Chen and Lin (2009) in which reveal that being friendly and being open-minded are among the top five characteristics of effective EFL teacher. Penner (1992), Liando (2010), and Chen (2012) also have similar results on their studies. Being able to praise students for their effort, being eager to help students in and outside classroom, as well as

taking care of students' difficulties are also important. This is in line with Chen and Lin (2009) which reveals that being enthusiastic in teaching is the most important characteristics for effective teacher. They also mention the importance of showing respects and caring is important in order to help students with their learning process. The availability and the willingness to sustain interest and motivation among students are also desirable characteristics that can promote effective learning as those can create such good atmosphere in the classroom (Penner, 1992; Borg, 2006; Zamani & Ahangari, 2016).

Regarding the second thematic area, which focuses on the EFL teacher's competence of the target language and awareness of language learning theories, the results show that having broad vocabulary in the FL and having a sound knowledge of the English grammar are the highest among the items to the theme discussed. Similar to this results, studies conducted by Brosh (1996), Park and Lee (2006), as well as Wichadee and Orawiwatnakul (2012) view that a sound command of foreign languages gave teachers the linguistic freedom necessary to personalize lessons according to students' proficiency levels and learning styles. It is such interesting to note that these two items were perceived as more important than the ability to familiarize with the language learning theory and to use the language competently. In relation to this, Kourieous and Evripidou (2013) assumed that the respondents' previous language learning experiences might influence their beliefs in the conceptions of effective language teaching. From the language experiences, the background of language education focused on the instruction of the formal aspects of the language, which emphasized on grammar

and vocabulary development are contrast to the reference limitation to the target culture.

The last category is approach to language teaching. This addresses aspects of an EFL teacher's approach which concentrate on how the new content is introduced, explained and evaluated and how the instructional material and activities can be best used to facilitate learning. From the results, there are several issues which are interesting to further discuss.

The first issue is the use of other materials than the use of textbooks or course book. The use of textbooks can make students feel bored and due to the content of the textbook which is uninteresting or repetitive, sustaining the motivation of the students will be problematic for the teacher no matter how hard they may try (Harmer, 2007; Kourieous & Evripidou, 2013). This indicates that instead of following the textbook rigidly, the students prefer their teacher to provide more authentic materials which will enable them to use the language in more meaningful contexts. The respondents also pointed out that they expected their teacher to use activities which draw learners' attention to specific grammatical features, make frequent use of other materials, and design or select materials according to students' major. Thus the teacher should be more creative in order to successfully draw students' attention (Thompson, Greer, & Greer, 2004).

Error correction during communicative activities is the next issue. The responses in this study regarding error correction during communicative activities are expected to provide a better understanding of how students seem to benefit from different approaches to error correction. From the data, the respondents

viewed the importance of error correction in communicative activities especially by adding immediate correction and providing explanation after making mistakes. Azar and Molavi (as cited in Kourieous & Evripidou, 2013) indicated, in order to have a successful learning and teaching process it is necessary to consider EFL learners' reactions and feelings towards oral error correction and to understand that they have different preferences in the way they like to be corrected.

The next issue is interaction among students in the target language. The results revealed that respondents saw the importance on communicative activities which require them to interact with each other using the target language. The importance on the use of group work in the EFL classroom was also perceived by respondents as it can promote greater degree of students' involvement. The importance of classroom interaction and group work reported by the participants of this study is supported by some other relevant studies in the field which also highlighted the functions of classroom interaction and the importance of working in group for the students (Bell, 2005; Lee, 2010; Barnes & Lock, 2010).

From these results, it could be concluded that second, third, and fourth year students of English Language Education Department at a private university in Yogyakarta viewed it was very important for the teacher to have characteristics that were included in the three categories namely personal and interpersonal characteristics, subject-matter knowledge, and approach to language teaching. Taking the most prominent characteristics noted by the respondents into account, the profile of an effective EFL teacher can be established as the one who has broad FL vocabulary, exhibits friendliness, fairness, and open-mindedness, has a sound knowledge of the English grammar, provide activities that can grab

students' attention, simplifies the classroom instruction, encourages and praise students' efforts, and takes into consideration about students' difficulties in learning foreign language.

These results can be used as a means for an EFL teacher to do reflection on their teaching performance. The teacher can also use them to have a better understanding on the enhancement of the learning process as well as to know more about themselves and the students' needs (Kourieous & Evripidous, 2013).