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**THE CHARACTERISTICS OF  
A GOOD ENGLISH TEACHER:  
HOW TO CREATE ENJOYABLE ENGLISH  
TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS**

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**Abstract**

A teacher plays an important role in classroom activities. It is his/her duty to decide the kinds of learning materials, activities, as well as learning strategies for the students. He/she should have skills to conduct his/her students so they can learn English enthusiastically. An English teacher should be able to create an enjoyable teaching and learning process. Obviously, the most important factor in effective teaching and learning situation is not who the teacher is, but how the teacher acts in the classroom, and how he/she involves his/her students during the process. Therefore, the teacher should give students opportunities to express their opinions, ideas, or feelings during the classroom process.

**Keywords:** teacher, enjoyable learning, effective teaching.

## **A. Introduction**

In the teaching and learning context, the characteristics of teaching of an English teacher can influence the effectiveness of teaching as well as the students' success. Mostly, English teachers do not care about this, because perhaps, they do not realize that their teaching plays an important role in their classroom activities. They think that their only job is to transfer knowledge to the students. That's all. Thus, this teacher-oriented classroom activity leads to monotonous class, which makes students bored and unmotivated. The big question is how the teacher can create an enjoyable teaching and learning process.

This article aims to provide some information about the characteristics of a good English teacher. Based on personal experiences of the writer, and driven from some resources, the discussion in this article mainly falls into three sections. Firstly, it presents the ideas of teaching that has been stated by some educational experts. Secondly, it provides information about the characteristics of a good English teacher, which should be carried out by teacher. And finally, this article ends with conclusion.

## **B. Discussion**

It will be discussed further about the idea of teaching and the characteristics of good English teacher.

### **1. The Idea of Teaching**

Traditionally, teaching is regarded as a conscious attempt of transferring knowledge from teachers to learners. Teachers think that teaching is their authority, in the sense that they are the only responsible persons who have to make decisions on what and how their students should learn. What the

students do is based on the teacher's instructions and wants. The students just follow the instructions with obedience. In short, teaching is considered more important than learning.

In contrast, teaching in modern understanding has radical changes. Learning is understood as more important than teaching. Harmer (2001: 9) says that learning is a partnership between teachers and students. The major responsibility of its success is more on the hands of the students themselves rather than the teachers. Therefore, in deciding the kinds of learning activities as well as strategies, teachers should always take the students needs into their accounts. Teachers should wisely give the student opportunities to propose certain topics or materials to be discussed during the classroom process. By so doing, students have very important roles in the modern view of teaching.

## **2. The Characteristics of a Good English Teacher**

As it is said above, the students' success in the classroom is more on the hands of the students themselves rather than the teacher. It does not mean that the existence of teacher in the classroom worth nothing. His teaching repertoires, such as selecting materials, designing the lesson planning, applying the easy-to do-teaching techniques are also very useful for and needed by the students in their learning process. The students' success is really influenced by the teacher's attitude in the way he/she performs in the classroom. Thus, in short, an English teacher should possess some characteristics of a good teaching, i.e. creative, humorous, patient, encouraging, challenging, mastering, and fair.

a. Creative

A teacher should be creative. It means that he/she should have collection of teaching techniques which can make the teaching and learning process more interesting, fun, effective and more enjoyable (Arwiyati, 2000: 1). Teaching is not just book-oriented. It is not only the case of opening a book page by page, doing exercises and explaining, but also using some other techniques, such as media, songs, games, role playing, or other communication activities that can create more positive learning environment. Such a teaching is then expected to be able to develop the students' interest and motivation.

Planning for suitable technique and step-by-step procedures of teaching will make the directions of teaching clear for the students. The teacher is the person who knows the needs and potentials of their students. Thus, as a professional, he/she should be able to select the most suitable techniques that are appropriate with the students need and potentials. Nation (1984) states that there are some characteristics of good teaching techniques:

- 1) They interest and challenge the learners. Effective learning takes place when the students are interested in what they are learning. However, when the activities are too easy or too difficult to do, the students will get bored eventually.
- 2) They give learners a lot of useful language work. Grouping and pairing, for example, can be useful for students in discussing a certain problem, for producing a short dialogue, for

doing grammar exercises, and many other language activities.

- 3) They provide plenty of opportunities for repetition. The use of songs and games for example, naturally calls for repetition of words, phrases, and even certain structures.
- 4) They do not give the teacher too much to do in preparing, presenting or marking. Designing and making costumes for drama performance, for example, would not be a good technique for daily lesson because it would need a lot of time, energy and money.
- 5) They are both relevant to the students and the place within context. Role-playing a dentist treating a patient using English would not only be relevant and out of the students' immediate context, and causes frustration.

b. Humorous

A teacher should be able to add humors to his/her classroom activities. The humors inserted during the process of teaching could reduce the students' nervousness and tense. It is an effort for the teacher to make a good rapport with the students. The class will be relaxed and learn better when they are not under pressure.

Laughs at the end of hard work will enhance the students' memory, and the lesson stay longer in the memory. Teachers should not be afraid to lessen seriousness in classroom activities by humors, as long as the humors are still contextual and relevant with the lessons. In such a situation, the students feel free and are not afraid to ask questions. They are not afraid of making

mistakes to express themselves. The class will be free from frightening situation.

c. Patient

A teacher is supposed to be patient during the classroom process, especially in correcting the students' mistakes. They should never show the displeasure face if the students' answers are incorrect. A good teacher will let his face be animated by showing positive reactions when students give correct answers, and use a question face when the answers are wrong.

Being bad tempered during the lessons would only discourage the students and make the classroom process boring. The students have no more motivation to learn. It is not wise for a teacher to show his/her anger to the students when they make mistakes. As everyone knows that the students' making mistakes is an unavoidable part of learning.

d. Encouraging

Encouraging students to learn harder and never discouraging them both in and out of the classroom are keys for the success of teaching. Giving rewards or praises, prizes, or suggestions is a kind of providing external motivation and encouragement for students to learn better.

Consciously or unconsciously people need rewards or praises from others because of their cleverness, kindness, or good achievement. In educational context, reward is really needed to motivate and encourage students. Teachers should give praises or rewards to students and show their pleasure at the students' success.

Usually praise, such as ‘good’, ‘very good’, ‘well done’, or ‘clever boy/girl’ is given when the students are able to answer the teacher’s questions correctly. In fact, the praise is a good tool to create the students’ interest to learn. When the students fail, it is wise to say, ‘It’s ok’, ‘It’s alright’ or ‘Try again’. As a good teacher, he/she should never discourage his/her students. He/she should always give encouragement to them, even though they make mistakes or errors during the lesson.

e. Challenging

An English teacher should challenge his/her students. One of the ways to challenge them is that teachers should speak in English with their students in or out of the classroom. By so doing, teachers provide examples and exposures of the language use. Thus, students are expected to acquire the language. This will build the students’ confidence and challenge them to speak English. If the teacher does not want to start to speak, the students will keep silent forever. However, the teacher should maintain the level of difficulty, not so high or so low, so that the language is good enough to challenge the students, not to discourage them.

The task from the teacher should challenge the students to express their ideas, feeling or opinions using their own words, of course in English. By so doing, the objective of the teaching program, i.e. to enable students develop their understanding and ability to use the target language as a means of oral and written communication, could be achieved, and this is in line with the objective of teaching stated in the English curriculum.

f. Mastering

An English teacher should master the relevant academic knowledge thoroughly. First, he/she should have a strong will to read and understand the English curriculum. He/she should know that the ultimate goal of teaching is to develop the students' communicative competence (Canale and Swain, 1980).

Secondly, a teacher should master the materials to be discussed with the class. He/she should also provide enough information to clarify the materials, so that the students can catch the idea clearly, even for the very complicated ones. The four skills (reading, listening, speaking, writing) and the language components (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and spelling) as well as the language functions should be developed and presented to students in the classroom process. It is necessary for the teacher to select the materials listed in the curriculum according to what the students really need.

Thirdly, a teacher should be well-prepared. In order to run the class, the teacher should make some preparations before coming into the classroom. The preparation includes selecting the materials, designing a lesson plan and also preparing a set of instrument for testing or evaluation to measure how far the students are able to grasp the materials that have been presented and to know the effectiveness of the teaching program or technique.

Four, a teacher should be able to handle the class well. The teacher is suggested to state the objectives of teaching before the lesson, and write them on the black/whiteboard. Clarity of the



purposes can motivate students and create trust in teachers. Teachers should always connect the lesson with the previous ones. He/she should begin the class with warm attitude by creating joy and a good atmosphere of learning.

g. Fair

An English teacher should be able to treat the students equally. It is very important for the teacher regardless the students' status in sex, race, financial or economical background, intelligence or any other status of them. Usually students with low intelligence and weak-financial background are not openhearted in learning. So, the teacher has to encourage and motivate them to learn better during the classroom activities.

The teacher should try hard to memorize the students' names. Calling students by names during the class will help teachers maintain discipline and increase the students' motivation. The class will become enjoyable and alive.

Questions should be delivered to the whole class. Nobody should be left behind. The teacher must be fair in giving the students' marks. The marks should reflect the real achievement of the students. If possible, the teacher takes a minute or two to give students relevant advice after the class. By so doing, all students feel that they have the same treatment from their teacher.

### **3. The Roles of a Teacher**

The role of the teacher is considered to be very essential. Tomlinson (1985) states that the roles of the teacher in class are as follows:

a. Motivator

There are many things that the teacher can do to motivate students during the process of teaching, such as giving praise to the successful students, never discouraging the weak students, creating a good and enjoyable learning atmosphere (by using songs, games, etc), never showing a displeasure face to the students or many other activities that can increase the students' interest and motivation.

b. Organizer

The teacher is responsible for his/her classroom management. Activities to be carried out should be well-planned, whether in the form of group, pair or individual work. As a good teacher, he/she should never leave the class during the lesson. It shows the students that the teacher is not interested in helping them. Therefore, it is wasting an excellent chance to help students while they are busy trying to solve their language problems.

c. Monitor

During the discussion, the teacher should monitor the students. It is a very essential activity because by monitoring, the teacher will be able to know whether the students understand the task to be done or not, and who needs help. Eye-contact is important. It makes students feel that the teacher is interested in them. The teacher should walk around the class so that he/she can see more of the students. He/she will be able to motivate passive students to be more active so he/she can reduce problems or discipline.

d. Facilitator

Identifying students who need help during the discussion is also the teacher's job. He has to give the students time to read and discuss the tasks in their groups. While going around and monitoring the groups or pairs, the teacher should help them facilitate relevant solutions. It means that the teacher should show his/her care about them.

e. Evaluator

Evaluation is an inseparable part of teaching. Teaching and evaluation are always interrelated and considered as the main issues in English language teaching. It is the teacher's duty to test or evaluate his/her students before, whilst and after the process of teaching. Evaluation or testing should be given to the students in order to know what the students really need, to provide feedback about the effectiveness of teaching, and to measure the students' achievement and progress in the teaching program. At the end of particular period, the function of evaluation is to show the result of the whole teaching program to determine the degree of its success.

## C. Conclusion

The students' success and the effectiveness of teaching are so much influenced by the teacher's performance in conducting the class. A good English teacher should possess such characteristics in his/her performance. He/she has to try to apply the characteristics as well as possible.

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