

STUDENTS' VS. TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON BEST TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Nihta V F Liando

(nihta02@yahoo.com)

Universitas Negeri Manado, Indonesia

Abstract: This paper discusses the perspectives of students and teachers in a university setting about best teacher characteristics. This is viewed through the perspectives of students and teachers regarding their perceptions of qualities of English teachers, and teachers' immediacy behavior – verbal or non-verbal - as predictors of student academic motivation. In this study, 126 students and 28 teachers in the English department at State University of Manado, Indonesia were involved. From the questionnaire, this study proved that a teacher was an important personnel in EFL teaching. Both teacher and students believed that a good teacher should display personal and academic attitudes. Both parties also considered that there were certain verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors teachers performed which could be the source of motivating as well as demotivating the students. This study is expected to give understanding of how teaching English in a foreign language context can be better.

Key words: teacher characteristics, immediacy behaviors, verbal, non verbal, EFL

Teacher play an important role in the classroom (Macaro, 1997), particularly in the instructional context of language learning such as the Indonesian EFL classroom. Several studies have been able to identify teachers' significant roles in learning second languages. Gardner, Smythe, Kirby and Bramwell (1974) identified teacher and school course of the target language (TL) are among the factors that promoted second language acquisition. Le Blanc (1997) mentioned appropriate curriculum materials, competent and dedicated teachers when discussing the importance of motivating students to learn in relation to the working conditions that are necessary for effective teaching and learning to occur. Laine (1978) in his study intro-

duced teacher competence and orientation as new variables when investigating the motivation of secondary and basic school students in Finnish toward English. One of his findings shows that the teacher was among other variables which proved a powerful factor in increasing student motivation. These studies show that the role of teachers in second/foreign language classroom is important in relation to student motivation. In addition, teachers of second/foreign language could be a good example for students to improve their speaking ability in the target language. Gardner and Lambert (1972) ascertained that "teachers' personalities can certainly affect the attitudes and motivation of students" (p .9). Student motivation and teachers' behaviors were indeed related to each other. Students and teachers were two important figures in the teaching and learning process. In the situation such as Indonesia, less student-centered but more teacher-centered was the common approach applied in the classroom all across subject areas. Despite the efforts of promoting student-centered approach, the practice was clearly showing that teacher still held more dominant role as far as teaching English was concerned. That the teaching and learning activities were still relying heavily on teachers was not entirely the teachers' fault because, in this case, cultural background played its important role in shaping such condition (Dardjowidjojo, 2001). Therefore, when such question was put forward, we could not deny that teacher's behaviors were very much influential to students' motivation in studying, positively or negatively.

Several studies have investigated the relationships between teacher immediacy and student learning. However, most of them only involved university students. Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey (1987) investigated students' perceptions of nonverbal teacher behaviors associated with cognitive learning. They did the study twice and used a questionnaire as the instrument. In the first study, 361 undergraduate students took part and 358 in the second one. Data were analyzed using multiple correlations, discriminant analysis and analysis of variance computations. The results suggested that immediacy behavior of teachers were associated with students' cognitive learning. While Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey (1987) dealt with non verbal immediacy behaviors, Gorham (1988) studied the relationship between teacher's verbal immediacy behavior and student learning by administering questionnaires to 387 undergraduate students. The questionnaire consisted of items on verbal and non-verbal immediacy. Scores of the questionnaire were computed using Pearson product moment correlations with the learning variables such as attitude, behavioral intent, learning loss. Results of the analysis of variance indicated that a significant relationship

existed between verbal and nonverbal teacher immediacy behaviors and learning.

The relationships among teacher immediacy behaviors, student motivation and learning were investigated by Christophel (1988) in two studies. Different numbers of participants ($N_1=562$, $N_2=624$), who were graduate and undergraduate students, teaching assistants and faculty of university participated in both studies in which surveys were administered. The measurements comprised the Trait and State Motivation Scales, which were used to assess how students felt in general about taking classes at the university and about taking a specific course, respectively, the Immediacy Behavior Scale including statements describing teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy behavior. Findings indicated that there was a significant correlation between teacher immediacy and student motivation, subsequent to learning; immediacy appeared to modify the motivation.

Gorham and Zakahi (1990) also conducted a similar study. They investigated the perceptions of teachers and students about teacher immediacy and learning with a focus on teacher monitoring the processes and products of learning. In this study, the participants were from the same institution. There were 526 students and 35 teachers participating in this study. The Pearson product moment correlations used in the study indicated that a statistically significant correlation existed between student and teacher perceptions of teacher immediacy behaviors.

A more recent study by Potee (2002) took place in an English as a foreign language classroom setting in Japan. Potee investigated the influence of teacher immediacy behavior, both verbal and non-verbal towards student motivation. The study involved two high school English classes in Japan consisting of 80 students of the third grade. A combination of questionnaires, field notes and interviews were used in this study to find out the immediacy behavior of Japanese and non-Japanese English teachers. Results indicated that students perceived their Japanese teachers as less immediate than their non-Japanese counterparts. It also showed that students preferred more immediate behaviors, in this case, exhibited by non-Japanese teachers.

Garrot (2002) also investigated the relationship between second language college students' perceptions of teacher non-verbal immediacy and learning in the Spanish classroom. Findings show that there was a relationship between teacher nonverbal immediacy and second language learning.

Since findings of studies had shown the correlation between teacher immediacy behaviors and student motivation, Gorham and Christophel (1992) extended their research and examined students' perceptions of tea-

cher behaviors as motivating and de-motivating factors in college classes. Questionnaires were administered to 308 undergraduate students at a south western university. Findings suggested that students perceived teacher behaviors as one factor that contributed to their overall motivation to do their best in college courses, and that negative teacher behaviors were considered central to students' de-motivation. Teachers' perceptions were added in the study done by Gorham and Millette (1997). They compared teacher perceptions of variables that motivated and de-motivated students with student perceptions of those variables. Similar questionnaires to that administered to students in a previous study (see Gorham & Christophel, 1992) were distributed to 224 faculties at an eastern US university. Although findings of this study indicated significant similarities of a range of overall factors that affected motivation, the different location of faculty and student participants might have influenced the results.

So far, these studies have shown the significant role of the teacher, particularly their verbal and non-verbal immediacy behaviors, in increasing students' motivation in language learning. Potee (2002) suggested that "... teachers who lack enthusiasm for the subject or course being taught can have negative effects on their students' motivation to learn that subject" (p. 212). However, although a reasonable amount of studies on verbal and non-verbal teachers' immediacy behaviors have been conducted, most of them highlighted in this section were done in the USA and Canada, and involved tertiary students from communication courses. Therefore, this study adopted Gorham and Christophel's and investigated teachers' verbal and non verbal immediacy behaviors which were considered motivating as well as de-motivating from student and teacher perspectives in an Indonesian EFL context.

For the purpose of this study, the role of teachers is viewed through the perspectives of both students and teachers regarding their perceptions of qualities of English teachers, and teachers' immediacy behavior – verbal or non-verbal - as predictors of student academic motivation. Immediacy in this case refers to "behavior that communicates approachability and closeness between interactants" (Laine, 1978). It includes "greater physical proximity and/or more perceptual stimulation of the two by one another" (Mottet & Richmond, 1998, p. 1). It includes "greater physical proximity and/or more perceptual stimulation of the two by one another" (Mehrabian, 1981, p. 14).

METHOD

This study employed descriptive statistics, in which questionnaire was used as the instrument. The questionnaire was adapted from Thompson, G. L., & Joshua-Shearer, M. (2002) and Gorham and Christophel (1992). There were 14 characteristics of best teacher performance and 29 items of teachers' immediacy behaviors (13 verbal and 16 non-verbal). The participants in this research were the first-year students enrolled in the four year study programs in 2007/2008 academic year and the teachers were from the English department. There were 126 students and 28 teachers involved in this study.

FINDINGS

From students' perspective, out of 14 characteristics of a best English teacher as listed in the questionnaire, 100% participants agreed that the best teacher should be friendly, 99.2% intelligent and able to explain things well, 97.6 % nice, 96% able to make the course more interesting and like humor, 88.9% patient, 88.1% enthusiastic and like to give extra help, 84.9% give rewards. 82.5% give lots of homework. That the best teacher should challenge students academically, or be fair or strict received less than 80% responses.

The results showed that characteristics of teachers who displayed more personal attitudes received higher votes than academic elements. Being friendly and nice was more preferred than making the course more interesting, or giving lots of homework. Challenging the students academically received the lowest rate compared to being friendly which was voted as high by all participants. Details of students and teachers' responses on best teacher performance are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of Frequency Data of Best Teacher Performance

Variables	Students	N=126	Teachers	N=28
	Count	%	Count	%
Patience	112	88.9	28	100
Friendliness	126	100	28	100
Niceness	123	97.6	28	100
Explain things well	125	99.2	28	100

Table continued

Enthusiasm	111	88.1	28	100
Humour	121	96.0	28	100
Fairness	93	73.8	28	100
Strictness	99	78.6	20	71.4
Challenges students academically	100	79.4	28	100
Gives rewards	107	84.9	23	82.1
Gives extra help	111	88.1	24	85.7
Makes the course more interesting	121	96.0	28	100
Gives lots of homework	104	82.5	13	46.4
Intelligent	125	99.2	28	100

It can be seen from the table that, when the teacher participants were asked for their opinion regarding characteristic of best teachers, all of them agreed 100% on 7 items, that is a teacher should be 'patient', 'nice', 'friendly', 'able to explain things well', 'enthusiastic', 'humorous', and 'fair'. 98% agreed that a teacher should challenge students academically, make the course more interesting and be intelligent. 89.8% believed that a teacher should give extra help to students, 87.8% agreed that a teacher should give rewards to students. Two items received the lowest scores, strictness and gives lots of homework, were voted by 65.3% and 61.2% of the participants, respectively.

Regarding teachers' immediacy behavior, students were asked to identify if their English teachers showed any of the verbal and nonverbal items. Out of 13 items of non-verbal immediacy behavior, only 4 items were rated by more than 70% of participants. According to the students, the teacher they observed 'Has a very relaxed body position when talking to the class (97.8%), 'Looks at the class when talking' (87.6%), 'Smiles at the class as a whole, not just individual students' (87.3%), and 'Moves around the classroom when teaching' (73.8%). The other 9 items received less than 50% of students' votes, from higher to lower scores. These items were 'Sits behind desk when teaching' (49.8%), 'Looks at board or notes when talking to class' (48.7%), 'Smiles at individual students in the class' and 'Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to class' (36.7%), 'Gestures when talk-

ing to the class' (35.6%), 'Touches the students in the class' (34.5%), 'Stands behind podium or desk when teaching' (30.2%), 'Sits on a desk or in a chair when teaching' (26.9%). According to students it was rare to see teacher with 'a very tense body position when talking to the class' (10.2%).

Regarding teachers' non verbal behavior in the classroom, there were several noticeable differences among the variables in non verbal teacher immediacy behaviors. A more-detailed description is shown on Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency Data of Non-verbal Teacher Immediacy Behaviors

Variable Students N=126	Ticked		None	
	Count	%	Count	%
Sits behind desk when teaching.	83	65.9	43	34.1
Gestures when talking to the class.	45	35.7	81	64.3
Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to the class.	51	40.5	75	59.5
Looks at the class when talking.	113	89.7	13	10.3
Smiles at the class as a whole, not just individual students.	109	86.5	17	13.5
Has a very tense body position when talking to the class.	17	13.5	109	86.5
Touches students in the class.	20	15.9	106	84.1
Moves around the classroom when teaching.	86	68.3	40	31.7
Sits on a desk or in a chair when teaching.	36	28.6	90	71.4
Looks at board or notes when talking to the class	65	51.6	61	48.4
Stands behind podium or desk when teaching.	52	41.3	74	58.7
Has a very relaxed body position when talking to the class.	121	96.0	5	4.0
Smiles at individual students in the class.	41	32.5	85	67.5

There are five items which were chosen by more than 50% students. 'Has a very relaxed body position when talking to the class' was chosen by 96% students and 'Has a very tense body position when talking to the class' was the least chosen item with only 13.5% students vote. In the teachers' verbal immediacy behavior scale, 7 out of 16 items were voted by more than 70% of the participants. 'Ask questions or encourages students to talk' was chosen by 94.5% participants. Students also noticed that the English teachers 'Use a personal examples or talks about experiences they had outside class' (87.6%), 'address students by name' (87.3%), 'Provide feedback on students individual work through comments on paper, oral discussions, etc' (84.4%), 'Call on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated that they want to talk (80.7%), 'Ask questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions' (77.8%), and 'Uses humor in class' (76.4%). Eight items were voted by 50 to 70% participants, for example 'Gets into conversations with individual students before or after class' (66.9%), 'Praises students' work, actions or comments' (65.1%), 'Uses a variety of vocal expressions when talking to the class' and 'Criticizes or points out faults in student's work, actions or comments' (63.3% each), 'Asks how students feel about an assignment, due date or discussion topic; (58.5%), 'Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something (56.4%), and 'Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan' (55.6%). The item that received the lowest score of 25.8% was 'Will have discussions about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole'. Students' responses on teachers' verbal immediacy behaviors were depicted in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency Data of Teachers' Verbal Immediacy

Variable Students N=126	Ticked		None	
	Count	%	Count	%
Uses a variety of vocal expressions when talking to the class.	73	57.9	53	42.1
Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside class.	103	81.7	23	18.3
Asks questions or encourages students to talk.	123	97.6	3	2.4

Table continued

Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan.	59	46.8	67	53.2
Uses humor in class.	92	73.0	34	27.0
Addresses students by name.	103	81.7	23	18.3
Gets into conversations with individual students before or after class.	85	67.5	41	32.5
Provides feedback on my individual work through comments on papers, oral discussions, etc.	106	84.1	20	15.9
Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated they want to talk.	93	73.8	33	26.2
Asks how students feel about an assignment, due date or discussion topic.	75	59.5	51	40.5
Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something.	99	78.6	27	21.4
Asks questions that have specific, correct answers.	80	63.5	46	36.5
Ask questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions.	102	81.0	24	19.0
Praises students' work, actions or comments.	67	53.2	59	46.8
Criticizes or points out faults in students' work, actions or comments.	64	50.8	62	49.2
Will have discussions about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole.	22	17.5	101	82.5

Twenty-eight university lecturers participated in responding to the questionnaire with 22 male and 27 female respondents. 51% of the lecturer participants earned between 1 to 2 million rupiahs, 28.6% earned between 2.01 to 3 million rupiahs per month, 14% earned less than 1 million rupiahs, and only 6% earned more than 3 million rupiahs per month. All of the teachers spoke Manadonese at home and half of them spoke one of the local languages.

Regarding teachers' immediacy behaviors, the teachers were asked to reflect and rate the frequency of those behaviors occurring in the classroom, from **1 (almost always)** to **5 (almost never)**. Basic descriptive statis-

tics were computed to see the distribution of each item in each scale. Based on the nonverbal immediacy behavior data, 51% of the participants mentioned that as teachers they almost always ‘look at the class when talking’ and 46.9% usually do that. 38.8% almost always ‘smile at the class as a whole, not just the individual students’ and 53.1% said that they usually do it. ‘Has a relaxed body position when talking to the class’ was claimed by 44.9% who almost always do that in class and 51% said they usually do it. In the classroom when teaching 51% of these teachers sometimes ‘use gestures when talking to the class’, almost always or usually ‘smile at individual students in the class’, and 57.1% either usually or almost always ‘move around the classroom’. 65.3% of the participants said they seldom or almost never ‘sit behind desk when teaching’, ‘use monotone/dull voice when talking to class’ (79.6%). None of the teachers said that they almost always ‘have a very tense body position when talking to the class’, ‘sit on a desk or in a chair when teaching’, looks at board or notes when talking to the class’, or stand behind podium or desk when teaching’.

Table 4. Lecturers’ Responses for Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors

Variable	1=almost always (%)	2=usually (%)	3=some- times (%)	4=seldom (%)	5=almost never (%)
Sits behind desk when teaching.	0	0	32.1	39.3	28.6
Gestures when talking to the class.	10.7	28.6	46.4	7.1	7.1
Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to the class.	3.6	0	7.1	57.1	32.1
Looks at the class when talking.	42.9	57.1	0	0	0
Smiles at the class as a whole, not just individual student.	28.6	71.4	0	0	0
Has a very tense body position when talking to the class.	0	0	10.7	32.1	57.1
Touches students in the class.	0	7.1	21.4	25.0	46.4

Table continued

Moves around the classroom when teaching.	7.1	28.6	50.0	7.1	7.1
Sits on a desk or in a chair when teaching.	0	0	0	32.1	67.9
Looks at board or notes when talking to the class	0	7.1	21.4	46.4	25
Stands behind podium or desk when teaching.	0	7.1	28.6	35.7	28.6
Has a very relaxed body position when talking to the class.	35.7	64.3	0	0	0
Smiles at individual students in the class.	0	53.6	25	17.9	3.6

There were several things to highlight. For example, 57% of university lecturers perceived that they usually looked at the class when talking. 71% of university lecturers said they usually smiled at the class as a whole, not just individual of the students. 67% of university lecturers claimed that they almost never sat on a desk or in a chair when teaching. 64% percents university lecturers said stated that they almost always had a very relaxed body position when talking to the class. 89% of university lecturers admitted that they seldom or almost never used a monotonous voice when talking to the class and 50% university lecturers believed that they sometimes moved around the classroom when teaching. 21% university lecturers admitted that they sometimes touched students in the class, and other 71% lecturers said that they seldom or almost never did that.

Table 5. Lecturers' Response for Verbal Immediacy Behaviors

Variables	Almost always (%)	Usually (%)	Sometimes (%)	Seldom (%)	Almost never (%)
Uses a variety of vocal expressions when talking to the class.	21.4	57.1	17.9	0	3.6
Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside class.	0	35.7	50.0	7.1	7.1

Table continued

Asks questions or encourages students to talk.	25	75	0	0	0
Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan.	0	32.1	42.9	7.1	17.9
Uses humor in class.	0	50	46.4	3.6	0
Addresses students by name.	21.4	57.1	14.3	7.1	0
Gets into conversations with individual students before or after class.	14.3	25	53.6	7.1	0
Provides feedback on my individual work through comments on papers, oral discussions, etc.	32.1	60.7	7.1	0	0
Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated they want to talk.	17.9	42.9	35.7	3.6	0
Asks how students feel about an assignment, due date or discussion topic.	17.9	46.4	21.4	14.3	0
Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something.	25	35.7	25	14.3	0
Asks questions that have specific, correct answers.	14.3	71.4	14.3	0	0
Ask questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions.	14.3	64.3	21.4	0	0
Praises students' work, actions or comments.	60.7	32.1	7.1	0	0
Criticizes or points out faults in students' work, actions or comments.	14.3	28.6	32.1	25	0
Will have discussions about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole.	7.1	7.1	46.4	14.3	25.0

DISCUSSION

Students' Vs. Teachers' Perspectives on Best Teacher Characteristics

There were 14 characteristics of best English teacher listed in the questionnaire. All of them were voted by all student participants with range from 76% to 100%. The variation lied on the types of characteristics. Characteristics of teachers who displayed more personal attitudes such as friendliness, niceness, humor, received higher votes than academic elements such

as giving lots of homework and challenging students academically. Students favored more on personal attitudes because they perceived the teacher as a human being just like them. The fact that being friendly received 100% votes reflected what the students wanted from their teacher. This was another way of saying that 'our English teacher was not that friendly if not at all'. English teacher was characterized as a 'tough and strict person'. Reflecting back to my own experience, I remember many of my classmates in junior high school addressed our English teacher as 'a killer', possibly because they found English as a difficult subject. This assumption might still be true to many students nowadays. There were several reasons why English was considered 'tough' and not too friendly. Because of lack of English teachers, the school often had to recruit other teachers whose major were not English to teach the subject. Teachers with other backgrounds who had insufficient knowledge of English have less confidence to teach the subject. Lacking confidence made the teachers appear tough or sometimes 'harsh' to students to prevent them from answering questions they did not know the answer. In the case when there were English teachers in the school, they usually had heavy load of teaching. Their teaching schedule was usually more than what a teacher could afford. This made them feel stressful not just in terms of preparing the material for teaching but also to fulfill the administrative requirements which they had to report to the principal of the school then on to the senior in the education department in a regular basis. This condition influenced their performance in the class, in particular, in their social relationships with the students.

Students seemed not too pleasant if their teacher gave too much homework, therefore 'giving lots of homework' was not considered as best characteristics of teacher by many students. They also did not like if their teacher was too strict. They wanted their teacher to be intelligent and make the course more interesting. Explaining things well was also one aspect students wanted the teacher to perform. When we related this with discussion above, it could be said that due to the difficulties teachers were facing, they sometimes did not explain thing well enough to fulfill students' curiosity and to satisfy them.

Teachers' responses to items on best teacher characteristics were in overall similar to students' responses. There were only two items that received less than 65% votes. They were strictness and giving lots of homework. This result showed that teachers did not like giving too much homework to their students because lots of homework means lots of work to do the checking and correction of the homework. Many of the teachers, in overall would like to appear strict to their students. However, 71% of the

university lecturers would like to be stricter than the high school teachers, but they were less likely to give their students rewards and offer extra help.

The result shows that both students and teachers had an agreement on the characteristics of what best teacher should be. Apart from the variation that occurred, all agreed that characteristics of quality teacher should have consisted of both personal attitudes and academic elements.

Teacher Immediacy Behaviors

The study of teacher immediacy behaviors was originated in a Western context which was different from most Asian situation. Indeed, disparity existed in the communication style between these contexts as it has greater degree of social cultural variation. Hall's (1977) theories of cultural pattern put these contexts in a continuum where high-context (referred to western) was described as practicing value direct speech, individual, competitive, equality, low power distance and close between teacher and student while low-context (referring to Asian) was described as having high attention to contextual issues, focus on group goal, feeling a great deal of responsibility to group's values and rules, indirect communication and greater distance between teacher and students. Therefore, an attempt to understand the impact of teacher immediacy behaviors when teaching to students must also consider the cultural context that embraced them.

The issues of teacher immediacy behaviors have not received any attention in education, not to mention in English teaching as far as the Indonesian context was concerned. Since teaching EFL involved a lot of direct contact between teacher and students, teacher immediacy behaviors, whether verbal or nonverbal, were considered essential. Therefore, investigation into this matter was conducted initially to alert and raise awareness of students and teachers. Further research would allow an in-depth investigation.

Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors

From the 13 items in the nonverbal immediacy behaviors category, only four items that received more than 50% votes from the student participants. These four items were identified easily by the students from their observation to their teacher. More than 97% students recognized that their teacher was having a very relaxed body position when talking to the class compared to only 10% who said the opposite. Being either relaxed or

tensed when teaching was depending on various factors. First time teacher tend to be more tense when talking to students in the classroom, teachers who were not well-prepared when teaching their students would also appeared the same. The English teachers who participated in this study, in particular those whose classes were chosen for the observation were not first time teachers because they have been in teaching profession for more than 15 years and they were all major in English. Therefore, the students described them as more relaxed, looking at the class when talking and smiling to all students in the class as a whole. There was no right or wrong in teachers' behaviors in the classroom whether to sit down or stand up or move around when teaching. It depended upon the topic of teaching or the kind of activities the students were engaging in class. For university students, they noticed the occurrence of teacher touching students in class as a way of encouraging or giving appraisal more often than the teachers in high school did to their students. The kind of relationships between teacher and students in a university level was slightly different from what happened in high school. In high school, teachers had a big responsibility of the students because they were still considered as 'big kids' who needed to be reminded of all things most of the times, the relationships tended to be slightly more formal. In university, teacher and students relation were less formal and the students were expected to be more independent, so the responsibility was shifting more to the students' side.

When responding to immediacy behaviors, teachers were asked to rate the frequency of those behaviors as they re-visited their action in the classroom. In the nonverbal immediacy behaviors, teachers' responses have been reflected in the students' responses. More than 90% admitted that when talking to students in class they had a very relaxed body position, they looked at the class and they smiled at the class as a whole, not just individual student. None of the teacher acknowledged that they were usually sitting on a desk or in chair when teaching. However only about 50% of the teacher respondents admitted that they were moving around the classroom when teaching.

Despite some differences in the degree of responses toward nonverbal immediacy behaviors, both teacher and students had been in agreement about the occurrence of the following nonverbal teacher immediacy behaviors in classroom: looking at the class when talking, smiling at the class a whole, not just individual student, having a very relaxed body position when talking to the class. These nonverbal immediacy behaviors performed in the classroom were deemed positive and students requested the teachers to perpetuate these behaviors while teaching in class.

Verbal Immediacy Behaviors

Compared to nonverbal immediacy behavior responses, students' responses to verbal immediacy behaviors were higher in terms of percentage. This could happen because students probably found it easier to identify or recall something verbal than nonverbal as far as teaching English in the classroom was concerned. Among the 15 items in this category, there were several highlighted items in which students were able to identify from their teacher in the class. More than half of the students identified that their teacher was using a variety of vocal expression when talking to the class. The students found it interesting and attracting their attention if teachers varied their voices and expression while teaching. More than 70% teachers, on the other hand, admitted they were using a variety of vocal expression when teaching or talking to the students. They also found it interesting not just for the students but also for themselves when varying their vocal expression. This helped the teachers to keep getting students' attention towards themselves.

Both students and teacher considered addressing students by name as important. For students, when the teacher addressed them by name, they felt that the teacher knew them and recognized their existence and possibly contribution in class. They felt positive and encouraging to do better in the subject. They did not like when the teacher addressed them by 'you', showing that the teacher did not know them as individual. For teachers, addressing students by their own name gave them more confidence not only for the sake of teaching but more importantly for being able to be familiar with their own individual ability.

Most of the students noticed that their teacher liked to ask questions or encourage them to talk in their English class. This, they said, helped them to practice their English speaking skill while mastering the topic of their English lesson. Nearly 100% of the teachers, regardless their teaching subjects, acknowledged that they also liked to encourage students to talk or ask them questions. They considered these activities as important in their class to give the students confidence in the subject they were learning. Providing feedback, whether it was in the form of criticism or appraisal to students individually through comments on papers, oral discussion, or other activities in class was also regarded positive by students. This behavior was able to be identified by students from their teacher and they appreciated it because it supported them in their study and brought along improvements to their learning process. None of the teacher has ever done this. Everyone was in line with the importance of giving feedback to students' individual

work because every student was different and therefore, should be treated differently. Although they also agreed that providing group or class feedback was no less important. It was dependent on the activities that took place in the class.

Students also noticed their teacher using personal examples or talking about the experiences they have had outside class. They regarded this as positive as long as it was still related with topic or activities they were having in class. The teachers also admitted that they sometime talked about the experiences outside class when it was worth mentioned in their class session. Using own experiences helped them to personalize more abstract topic into something more comprehensible for the students or merely to attract students' attention to the topic. When the students were attracted to certain topic or activities they would feel encouraged to participate in the tasks. Frymier (1993) said that "getting students attention is often considered the first step in motivating students to a particular task" (p.456).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The fundamental values and tradition in the society like Indonesia resulted in the beliefs such as teachers can do no wrong and the principles of total obedience. The actions teachers performed while teaching in class would give impact on the students. These impacts could be either positive or negative. They could either motivate or de-motivate the students. Moreover, teachers' behaviors and their responsibility could go beyond school walls. Teachers were often considered as role models and were highly respected figures in the society. In fact, it gave much pressure on to the teachers in carrying out their duties.

Based on the responses of the characteristics of best teachers, students mentioned the best teachers should show personal attributes such as being nice, friendly, patience, and fair as well as academic elements like making the course more interesting and challenging students academically. Although teachers were aware and in fact, were in agreement with students in regards to these best characteristics, they have to be reminded of the importance of practicing those attitudes in their teaching activities. Every teacher who has a good intention to teach and educate the students would certainly make efforts to fit into these characteristics.

As far as teachers immediacy behaviors were concerned, discussion in the previous section has shown that several behaviors of teachers, verbal or nonverbal, influenced students who were studying English. Since students had indicated that from the list of teachers' immediacy behaviors, some

were considered positive and some others were negative. The behaviors that were considered negative would give negative influence to students. In the long run, if the teachers maintained these negative behaviors, they could discourage or de-motivate students in learning English. On the other hand, the behaviors that were considered positive, if maintained by the teachers would eventually boost student motivation. Teaching is a modeling behavior and teachers who lack of enthusiasm for the subject being taught can have negative effects on their students' motivation to learn the subject (Brophy, 1987; Butler, 1994; Patrick, Hisley, & Kempler, 2000). Thus, student motivation and teachers behaviors could be said as having significant relationships in the process of teaching and learning English.

This study proved that a teacher was important personnel in EFL teaching. Both teacher and students believed that a quality teacher should displayed personal as well as academic attitudes. Both parties also considered that there were certain verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors teachers performed which could be the source of motivating as well de-motivating the students.

The study uncovered that both students and teachers believed that there were certain verbal and nonverbal behaviors teachers perform in class which could be the source of motivating as well as de-motivating for students in learning. Since teachers' roles were still dominant in the Indonesian context of teaching and learning, these matters were in need of attention to maximize the learning outcomes.

REFERENCES

- Brophy, J. E. 1987. On Motivating Students. In D. C. Berliner & B. V. Rosenshine (Eds.), *Talks to Teachers*. New York: Random House.
- Butler, R. 1994. Teacher Communication and Student Interpretations: Effects of Teacher Responses to Failing Students on Attributional Inferences in Two Age Groups. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 64:277-294.
- Dardjowidjojo, S. 2001. Cultural Constraints in the Implementation of Learner Autonomy: The Case in Indonesia. *Journal of Southeast Asian Education*, II (2):309-322.
- Frymier, A. B. 1993. The Impact of Teacher Immediacy on Students' Motivation: Is it the Same for All Students? *Communication Quarterly*, 41:454-464.

- Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. 1972. *Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Gardner, R. C., Smythe, P. C., Kirby, D. M., & Bramwell, J. R. 1974. *Second Language Acquisition: A Social Psychological Approach* (No. Research Bulletin No. 32). Ontario: Ministry of Education.
- Gorham, J. S. 1988. The Relationship between Verbal Teacher Immediacy Behaviours and Student Learning. *Communication Education*, 37:40-53.
- Hall, E. T. 1977. *Beyond Culture*. Garden City, NY: Anchor.
- Laine, E. J. 1978. *Foreign Language Learning Motivation: Old and New Variables*. Paper presented at the 5th Congress of L'Association Internationale De Linguistique Appliquee, Montreal.
- LeBlanc, J. C. 1997. The Fundamentals of Second-Language Teaching. *Mosaic*, V (1):3-8.
- Macaro, E. 1997. *Target Language, Collaborative Learning and Autonomy*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Mehrabian, A. 1981. *Silent Messages: Implicit Communication of Emotion and Attitude*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Mottet, T. P., & Richmond, V. P. (1998). An Inductive Analysis of Verbal Immediacy: Alternative Conceptualization of Relational Verbal Approach/Avoidance Strategies. *Communication Quarterly*, 46 (1): 25-41.
- Patrick, B. C., Hisley, J., & Kempler, T. (2000). 'What's Everybody So Excited About?': The Effects of Teacher Enthusiasm on Students Intrinsic Motivation and Vitality. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 68:217-237.
- Potee, N. (2002). Teacher Immediacy and Student Motivation. In D. M. McInerney & S. van Etten (Eds.), *Research on Socio Cultural Influences on Motivation and Learning* (Vol. 2, pp. 207-223). Greenwich: Information Age Publishing.
- Richmond, V. P., Gorham, J. S., & McCroskey, J. C. (1987). The Relationship between Selected Immediacy Behaviours and Cognitive Learning. In M. McLaughlin (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook 10* (pp. 574-590). Beverly Hills: Sage.