

## THE IMPACT OF TEACHER'S POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND ENTHUSIASM ON TEACHING EFL

Ratna Dwiyaning Rharjanti

English Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Universitas Tidar

Indonesia

ratnadr.rharjanti@gmail.com

### Abstract

This paper discusses how students' perspective about teacher's positive attitude and enthusiasm on teaching English as Foreign Language. The success of the lesson depends on the teacher's way to teach.. When a difficulty is found on teaching that makes the students feel not enthusiastic, applying positive attitude and enthusiasm will be the solution so that they are encouraged to learn. The purpose of this study is to prove that teacher's positive attitude gives big influence on a learning process. This paper uses qualitative research which involving the author's arguments. The author creates a questionnaire to observe this problem and the result shows that most students need teacher's positive attitude and enthusiasm in supporting their study. Therefore, teacher should consider his attitude while they are teaching.

**Keywords – attitude, enthusiasm, teaching, EFL**

### Introduction

The classroom environment influences the success of the lesson. Teacher, as the instructor, facilitator and also manager of the classroom should build a good environment to study. It can be said that a class will be more conducive and effective when it has informal and relaxed classroom ( Sukarno, 2014 ). Here, the teachers need to have good attitude and always look enthusiastic in order to build a conducive and effective classroom.

In term of teaching EFL, teachers need to have standard whether the teaching goals are achieved or not. One of the ways that can be used to observe the success of the lesson is that when the students are active, interested and they begin to speak English with their friends inside or outside the class ( H. Douglas Brown, 2004 ). Therefore, teacher should give more attention on them.

Teachers have a responsibility to determine the environment of the classroom. But, there will be 2 problems that may arise in the learning process. First, some teachers have not given positive attitude and enthusiasm while they are teaching. Some of them just deliver what they should deliver, yet being a teacher must be able to give knowledge and build good behavior of the students. The second is not all students will like learning English as their foreign language. It becomes the teacher's challenge to keep the class run well. Being a teacher means that he should be taking a hand, being open minded, and touching the heart. The personal principles influence the instructional decision that will be the rules for best attitude so that it guides the teachers (Richard, 1996). Therefore, this paper will discuss both of the problems and how their attitude and enthusiasm will bring the success of the lesson.

The word attitude can be defined as many definitions from some figures. Attitude is an evaluation about something in human's memory (Fazio, Jackson, Dunton & Williams, 1995). Each person must have his attitude that is different each other. Meanwhile, the term enthusiasm can be defined as someone's positive affective such as pleasure, enjoyment and excitement (Keller, Goetz, Becker, Morger, 2014). Besides, according to Kunter et al,



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

enthusiasm is like “habitual, trait like, and recurring emotion. Therefore teacher’s positive attitude and enthusiasm can be concluded as how a teacher is when they are teaching in a class.

Mastering the knowledge is not enough to teach in a class. There is also important thing that sometimes is forgotten by some teachers. Teachers need to build a good environment during the learning process. It is started from themselves first, they must build their positive attitude and enthusiasm. Here are the four guidelines for teachers to build the good environment in the class room :

*Respect to the students.*

A teacher is required to appreciate all ideas in the classroom and make sure that every student has the same right to express his idea and listen to the others as well (Maria Orlando, 2013)

*Make oneself to be enthusiastic, warm, caring, and accessible.*

Teacher must be professional, no matter he is in good condition or not, when he is on his duty, he must perform his best services to the students.

*Positive attitude*

If the teachers have had positive attitude in their life, it will help them to behave well on their work ( Melissa Kelly, 2017 )

*Build a great communication with the students*

Great teacher must have high ability to communicate. They may replace the role of students’ parents in the school so that the students feel comfortable during the learning process ( Derrick Meador, 2013 )

Teacher’s positive attitude and enthusiasm on teaching EFL

*Students feel what the teacher feel in the class.*

Self confidence on teaching EFL is important since not all students like to study foreign language. According to Fernando Guarany, teacher’s confidence determine how his performance is. So, when they see their teacher is not confident, they will underestimate the teacher and the lesson. Teachers only need to act in which they are confident ( Jim Eison, 1990 ).

Besides that, motivation also influences the success of the lesson. So, when a teacher teaches in a class, he must have a big motivation. When he looks like enthusiastic, the students will feel enthusiastic as well yet they do not like English at all, they are still encouraged to learn.

*Build a deep teacher-student relationship*

It must be realized that not all of students will perform like what the teachers expect as an English teacher. They may be good in other subject, but not in English. Therefore, if the teacher has applied the positive attitude and enthusiasm, teacher-student relationship is going to be



deeper. Self-belonging is an important thing of a deep teacher-student relationship that is critical to students' success in learning ( Gablinske, 2014 ).

After the teacher has a good relationship with the students, he can build their character easily. When the students have a high respect to the teacher sincerely, they will practice what he is asked with a pleasure. Teacher could not force the students for being great in English at all since it is their foreign language. At least, the teacher makes sure that the students receive what should they get in English course. They may find their own field to be success in the future.

### Methodology

This research focused on the students' perspective about teachers' positive attitude and enthusiasm on teaching English as Foreign Language. The author used qualitative research in observing this problem. It showed how the students think about their teacher especially their attitude and enthusiasm while teaching. Students had right to get the best service from the teachers, not only the given material but also the warm treatment that could motivate them.

It was kind of interesting issue to be observed due to many teachers who acted like what they wanted to act. Sometimes, they ignored the impacts of it. To collect the information, the author used questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 5 statements which the respondents should answer "YES" if they agreed with the given statement and "NO" if they did not, they also needed to elaborate their reasons. This research was situated at University of Tidar, Magelang in June 2018. The author spent 3 days to share the questionnaire and get the respondents' answers. Here was the questionnaire:

1. The success of learning EFL is mostly influenced by how the teacher teaches.  
Yes/No. Reason :
2. Teacher must be enthusiastic, warm, care and accessible in order to make the students encouraged.  
Yes/No. Reason :
3. Students tend to underestimate teachers who are not confident.  
Yes/No. Reason :
4. Teacher is inspiring the students by his positive attitude although the students have difficulties in learning EFL.  
Yes/No. Reason :
5. A deep teacher-student relationship can motivate students to like English.  
Yes/No. Reason :

The number of respondents were 20 students male and female aged 19-22 years old. They were students of English Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, University of Tidar. To get various answers, the author chose the respondents randomly from the second up to sixth semester. It was important to vary the respondents because each student had different environment situation, perspective and also experience about learning EFL.

After the author spread the questionnaire and got the respondents' answer, the author analysed and drew the conclusion. The result of the study was analysed based on the theories mentioned above whether the result was in line with the expert's theory or not. Besides, the author also gave her opinion toward the result of the study.



Due to the focus issue of this research was the students' perspective about teachers' positive attitude and enthusiasm while teaching, the author constructed the questions as specific as possible. It was about whether the success of the lesson was mostly influenced by the teacher or not, whether teachers' positive attitude and enthusiasm made students encouraged or not, whether students would underestimate teacher who was not confident while teaching or not, whether teachers' attitude was inspiring the students or not, and whether a deep teacher-student relationship could motivate students to like English or not.

## Findings and Discussion

Based on the focus of this research about students' perspective related to teachers' positive attitude and enthusiasm on teaching EFL, the questionnaire consisted of 5 specific statements. There were various answers and reasons from the respondents with their different environment, perspective and experience on learning EFL. Here is the result of the questionnaire :

No	Statements	YES	NO
1	The success of learning EFL is mostly influenced by how the teacher teaches	90 % (18 Students)	10 % (2 Students)
2	Teacher must be enthusiastic, warm, care and accessible in order to make the students encouraged	95 % (19 Students)	5 % (1 Student)
3	Students tend to underestimate teachers who are not confident.	95 % (19 Students)	5 % (1 Student)
4	Teacher is inspiring the students by his positive attitude although the students have difficulties in learning EFL	95 % (19 Students)	5 % (1 Student)
5	A deep teacher-student relationship can motivate students to like English.	95 % (19 Students)	5 % (1 Student)

Those 5 statements and the answers would be discussed below :

### Statement 1: The success of learning EFL is mostly influenced by how the teacher teaches

The author wrote this statement because teacher had a bigger role in conducting a classroom activity than the students. It could not be said that the success of learning EFL was 100% influenced by teacher, but the students also had their role in determining whether their study would be success or not. Based on the observation, 90% respondent or 18 students agreed with this statement. Indirectly, they agreed that teacher played a bigger role in conducting a classroom because by a good teacher, the students whose the abilities were under the average would feel encouraged to learn and develop their abilities gradually. It was different with the students whose the skill and ability are very good but they were taught by a not competent teacher, automatically their knowledge and skill would be stuck or developed but not as expected.



Here were 7 of 18 respondents' reasons who agreed with statement 1 :

"Teacher is really influence." ( student 1 )

"Teacher gives big impact of students' learning." ( student 6 )

"Whether student is smart or not, it depends on the teacher." ( student 11 )

"Teacher has the biggest role in conducting learning activity." ( Student 12 )

"Teacher is a model and manager in a class." ( student 13 )

"The way they teach will affect students' enthusiasm and make the students to do their best." ( student 16 )

"Teacher is like a captain who brings the ship of his students." ( student 17 )

Based on those reasons, it could be seen that they had same perspective about how they perceived a teacher in classroom activity. They placed teacher as a captain who has responsible where he would bring the class. These opinion were same with Hamilton's theory who stated that many factors were influencing students' academic result but research suggested that related to many factors, teachers matter most.

Although 18 of 20 students agreed with statement 1 and had been proven that it was in line with a certain theory, there were 2 students that did not agree. They had different perspective on how they perceived teacher's role in class. They thought that the success of the lesson was not mostly influenced by the teacher, but it depended on the students.

"Sometimes it depends on the learner's motivation." ( student 5 )

"Students' effort plays more." ( student 19 )

There were possibilities that might make those two students had different choice. They might believe that a success came from the internal motivation first. A student who wanted to be success, especially on learning EFL, he must have their own motivation, spirit, target and effort to make his dreams come true. After they had them, the second factor came from the environment, especially teacher. They might think that teacher here was standing as facilitator and motivator, not a person who gave big influence in achieving the success.

### **Statement 2 : Teacher must be enthusiastic, warm, care and accessible in order to make the students encouraged.**

This statement had correlation with the topic of this research. Teachers' positive attitude and enthusiasm could be said as a teacher who acted enthusiastic, warm, care and accessible in order to make the students encouraged. The answers from the respondents showed a good mindset. For about 95% or 19 students agreed with statement 2 and 5% or 1 student was not really sure. Here are 7 reasons from the students who agree with statement 2 :

"If students have spirit, they will be spirit to learn." ( student 2 )

"If teacher is not like that, student will be passive and affraid." ( student 4 )

"Students don't like studying under pressure." ( student 5 )

"Teacher's attitude will be imitated by students." ( student 12 )

"Most of students prefer teachers who care, warm, accessible to teachers who are cruel." ( student 16 )

"It's important for teacher to be accessible so that the students can consult their problem better." ( student 19 )

"If the teachers are enthusiastic , so are the students." ( student 20 )

Those answers proved that students really wanted a teacher who was enthusiastic, care and accessible when he was teaching. Those belonged to teacher's positive attitude. After the teacher had those attitudes, they would enjoy their work so that could give the best



services for the students. That result was in line with Melissa Kelly's theory that teacher who had had positive attitude, it would help them to behave well on their work.

Meanwhile, there was a student who was not really sure about statement 2.

"Better for teacher to know the students deeper." (student 7)

He did not sure that teacher should be warm, enthusiastic, caring and accessible in order to encourage students. In his opinion, teacher should know the students well to make them encouraged.

### **Statement 3 : Students tend to underestimate teachers who are not confident.**

As a student, the author had experienced a phenomenon that there were students that did not pay attention in the class and tended to underestimate the teacher. It was mostly caused by the teacher that was not confident while teaching. Actually all the students in class could respect the teacher and gave attention to him when he stayed confident and prestigious. Therefore, the author gave this statement to be answered by the respondents. The result shows 95% respondents or 19 students agreed and 1 student did not.

"How students will respect teacher if teacher don't respect teirself." (student 12 )

"The unconfident teacher will cause the doubt of students to the teacher, then the teacher will be disparaged." (student 17 )

"Students will think that the teachers are not able to teach hence they are not confident." (student 20 )

Those samples of respondents' answers had proved that from the students' perception, teacher who was not confident tended to be underestimated. It was in line with Jim Eison's theory that teachers only needed to act in which they were confident.

Meanwhile, there was one student who answered "NO", it showed that he did not really agree with the statement.

"There are bad students who don't care about the teacher." (student 7 )

Based on the author analysis, student 7 perceived that not all students in a class really cared how the teacher was. He meant there were bad students who did not study seriously in class would not think about the teacher.

### **Statement 4 : Teacher is inspiring the students by his positive attitude although the students have difficulties in learning EFL**

It could be said that not all students in a class would like English. There were some students who were not really good in English, but they were good in other subjects. In this term, teacher could not blame the students because they had their own way to be success. Being a teacher was not only delivering the material, but teacher should build students' character by inspiring them with his positive attitude. So, when the students did not get their best score in English, at least they found a person with good attitude who was inspiring them.

The result of this statement showed a good response. For about 95% or 19 students agreed with this statement. They believed that teacher's positive attitude was inspiring them.

"Attitude is the most important lesson." ( student 3 )

"Teacher stands as motivator." ( student 4 )

"Although the lesson is difficult, students still love it due to their positive attitude." ( student 16 )





“Students will feel more comfortable and suitable with teacher who has positive attitude”  
( student 17 )

Based on the respondents' answers, they could be analyzed that 19 of 20 students liked the teacher who gave motivation or inspiration. Teachers might replace the role of students' parents in the school so that the students felt enjoy during the learning process ( Meador, 2013 ). Although the students got difficulties in learning EFL, when the teacher was motivating and inspiring them, they would feel enjoy and followed the teacher's positive attitude.

Moreover, there was one student who did not agree with this statement.

“Students are difficult to assess the whole character of teacher due to the limited time.” ( student 19 )

Based on his reason, it could be analyzed that student could not judge how the teacher was, because student and teacher only met for few hours when they were in school. Students needed much more time to know the teacher well. This problem actually could be solved by strengthening teacher-student relationship.

#### **Statement 5 : A deep teacher-student relationship can motivate students to like English**

It was difficult to make all the students in a class to like English since it was a foreign language for most of Indonesian students. It became teacher's challenge to motivate the students. One of the ways to motivate them was by having deep teacher-student relationship. The answers from respondents showed that 95% respondents or 19 students agreed to have deep relationship with the teacher in order to increase their motivation in learning EFL.

“It makes students want to share their difficulties so that they can like English.” ( student 11 )

“Student likes to study more when they feel good in their teacher.” ( student 13 )

“The more teachers care, the more students excited with the material.” ( student 15 )

“It will be needed if the students are losing the motivation.” ( student 19 )

“They will feel comfortable and when they love the teacher, they will love the lesson too.” (student 16)

“Great bonding between them makes the students more confident while learning, afterwards they'll enjoy learning English.” (Student 20)

Based on those reasons, it could be analyzed that students needed a deeper relationship with their teacher. By having such relationship, learning a difficult subject would be easier for the students. A deep teacher-student relationship meant they had self-belonging which was important for students' success in learning ( Gablinske, 2014 ).

However, there was one student who did not agree that a deep teacher-students' relationship would motivate students.

“The motivation comes from their self.” ( student 8 )

Based on his reason, it could be analyzed that he was kind of student who had high motivation and liked to build his own motivation. He was kind of person who was not depending on the others.



## Conclusion

It was going to be difficult to teach a foreign language, so as the inspiratory and motivator, teachers had to perform their best related to the self-confidence, enthusiasm, respect, positive attitude, motivation and communication in order to complete the learning goals. Based on the research that had been done, more than 90% respondents agreed with the statements made (questionnaire ). It showed that teachers' positive attitude and enthusiasm were absolutely needed in order to motivate the students in learning English. The previous statement was in line with Simran Khurana's theory that a great teacher was not just delivering material but also inspiring the students in term of learning. Therefore, it could be concluded that teacher's positive attitude and enthusiasm brought a big impact for the students which was same with Mouilia who said that teacher's positive attitude and enthusiasm that influence the students are actually helping them to build a good personality for language learning.

## References

- Brown, H. Douglas. (2004). *Language assessment principles and classroom practice*. United States of America : Longman
- Eison, J.A. (1990). Confidence in the classroom: *Ten maxims for new teachers*. College Teaching, 38 (1) 21-25
- Fatiha, Mouilia. (2014). *Attitude and motivation in learning English as a foreign Language*. 07(03)117-128
- Dunton, B.C., Fazio, R.H., Jackson, J.R., & Williams, C.J. (1995). *Variability in automatic activation as an unobtrusive measure of racial attitudes : a bona fide pipeline?* Journal of personality and social psychology, 69(6), 1013.
- Gablinske, Patricia Brady. (2014). *A case study and teacher relationships and the effect on students' learning*. Open access dissertations. Paper 266. Retrieved from [http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/oa\\_diss266](http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/oa_diss266)
- Guarany, Fernando. (2011). Increasing your confidence as a language teacher. Retrieved from <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/blogs/fernando-guarany/increasing-your-confidence-a-language-teacher>
- Kelly, Melissa. (2017). Retrieved from <http://712educators.about.com/od/teachingstrategies/tp/sixkeys.htm>  
<http://712educators.about.com/od/teachereducation/tp/Top-Qualities-Of-a-Great-Teacher.htm>
- Keller, M melanie, Goetz, Thomas, Becker, Eva S. (2014). *Feeling and showing : A new conceptualization of dispositional teacher enthusiasm and its relation to students' interest*. Erschienen in : Learning and Instruction ; 33 (2014). – S.29-38
- Khurana, Simran. (2017). Quotes about good teachers: good teachers are rare breed. Retrieved from <http://quotations.about.com/bio/simran-khurana-9119.htm>
- Kunter, M., et al. Students' and mathematics teachers' perceptions of teacher enthusiasm and instruction. Learning and instruction, 18(5), 468 482.
- Meador, Derrick. (2013). Retrieved from <http://teaching.about.com/od/pd/a/Qualities-of-an-effective-teacher.comhttp://teaching.about.com>
- Orlando, Maria. (2013). Nine characteristic of a great teacher. Philosophy of teaching. Retrieved from <http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/philosophy-of-teaching/nine-characteristicsof-a-great-teacher>.





- Richard, Jack.C. (1996). *Teacher's Maxims in Language Teaching*. TESOL Quarterly, 30 (2) 281-296. Retrieved from <http://www.citeulike.org/user/jonathanpiano/author/Richard:JC>
- Sukarno. (2014). *Cross cultural understanding: a literary based approach*. Surabaya : FBS UNESA PRESS

