

An Exploration of the Characteristics and Factors of Good English Teachers in the Mind of Primary School Teachers and Students

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Abstract

This study employed methods of literature review, questionnaire and interview. Investigating 100 primary school students in the region of Pearl River Delta, covering eight dimensions: teachers' physical appearance, educational and pedagogical competence, teaching methods, language proficiency, engagement to the students, teaching literacy, after-class tutoring, and moral character. This study aimed to understand the characteristics of a good English teacher from the students' perspective and the factors influencing these perceptions. It was found that, according to primary school students, the characteristics of a good English teacher include: 1) outstanding teaching ability, 2) extensive knowledge of English, 3) an engaging English classroom that can stimulate students' interest in learning, and 4) a natural affinity for students, and the ability to proactively care for students' lives. Comparing the students' perspectives with those of the teachers, it was noted that teachers place a higher value on teaching ability. From the results of the study, we can discern the characteristics valued by both teachers and students in a good English teacher, which provides some reference and theoretical basis for the development of excellent teachers.

Keywords

Primary Level, Good English Teachers, Characteristics, Influencing Factors

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Teachers are the key to education. As community attention to building a

high-quality teaching force increasing, higher demands are being placed on the quality of teachers. The overall quality level of the teaching force plays a crucial role in the cultivation of talent and is related to the modernization and sustainable development of education. The Ministry of Education has issued the “Opinions on the Implementation of the Excellent Teacher Cultivation Programme,” which explicitly proposes to comprehensively carry out education on teacher ethics, implement the Excellent Teacher Cultivation Programme, and study and implement high-quality and professional teaching personnel. High-quality teachers are the backbone of the development of high-quality education, and the training of high-quality teachers presents specific requirements. What does a good teacher look like in a specific educational environment? Is the “good teacher” in the eyes of the student consistent with the “good teacher” in the eyes of the teacher? Do good teachers influence students’ learning behaviors? This study will answer these questions.

1.2. Research Significance

Zhao Rongli (2018) believes that primary school students are affected by their teachers’ ethical standards in the formation of personality, the establishment of learning attitudes, and ways of thinking. Understanding the characteristics of good English teachers from the perspectives of both students and teachers can provide a reference for the training of high-quality teachers and promote the quality of education and teaching. Understanding each other’s perceptions of the characteristics of a good teacher from both teachers’ and students’ perspectives can help improve effective communication between teachers and students and promote the implementation of effective teaching.

This study provides an in-depth understanding of the specific characteristics of good English teachers from the perspectives of primary school students and English teachers. It offers directional guidance for the development of English teachers based on the study’s results, enables students to achieve personalized development under the correct leadership of the teacher, and allows school education to better align with students’ learning needs, reflecting the uniqueness of education. Additionally, it provides a reference for national education and teaching, as well as for the cultivation of the teaching force.

1.3. Research Purpose

This paper adopts the literature review method, questionnaire survey method, and interview method to investigate two groups: primary school students and English teachers, respectively. The aim is to understand the specific characteristics of a good English teacher in their minds and the factors that influence these perceptions. By studying the characteristics of a good English teacher from the dual perspectives of students and teachers, the research will provide directional guidance to cultivate good teachers and train a high-quality teaching force, thereby offering students the most scientifically sound educational methods.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of the Concept

“Teacher” is an ancient Chinese title for a senior scholar engaged in teaching. As noted in “The Records of the Grand Historian—Meng Zi Xun Qing Lie Zhuan”: “Tian Pian’s belongings all perished when King Xiang of Qi and Gou Qing were the most revered teachers.” This was a common title for teachers. From the poem “Jin’er Haoqian” (Poem for nephew Sun Bo’an): “Bo’an entered the primary school, an extraordinary child; he had the ability to speak in sentences, and it was said that he shocked his teacher.”

In the Ming and Qing dynasties, “teacher” was a title used by students for school officials and by successful students for examiners (Gu, 1998). In addition to “teacher,” there were many other names for teachers in ancient times, such as sir, husband, master, mentor, professor, assistant professor, doctor, etc. Teachers can be classified into various categories, including tutors, school teachers, and instructors in training organizations. This paper focuses on school teachers, who are full-time educators with formal teaching qualifications, appointed by educational institutions, and included in the financial establishment.

2.2. Current Status of Research on “Good Teachers” at Home and Abroad

2.2.1. Current Status of Foreign Research

Most foreign studies on “good teachers” have focused on the differences in definitional standards of “good teachers” among various groups. Western scholars have been studying the qualities of a good teacher since the 1960s. Research in the United States is the earliest and most fruitful. The most representative studies include Dr. Witty’s from the perspective of students and Ryans’ from the perspective of teacher characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These studies explored the qualities and standards of “good teachers” and provided various criteria for evaluating good teachers (Xu, 1997; Xu, 1999). Mariam Qureshi (2013) focused on Asian parents, investigating and analyzing the characteristics of good teachers from their perspective: whether they are skilled at teaching, and whether their teaching will help their children achieve high social status in the future. Mamie Diane Rooks James (1982) argued that students, teachers, and social groups have different perceptions of the characteristics of “good teachers.” In Mary Anne Coppola’s (1990) survey, third, fifth, and seventh-grade students were interviewed about their favorite and least liked teacher characteristics, and whether different students followed the same criteria in evaluating their teachers. Some researchers, such as Baier et al. (2019), have used textual descriptive essays from primary and secondary school students and teachers to explore preferences for personality traits and competencies of a good teacher through textual analysis. Maddamsetti, Flenbaugh, and Rosaen (2018) explored the process of becoming a good teacher through methods such as teachers’ coursework and field trips. Cortazzi, M. & Jin, L. (2020) explored col-

lege students' perceptions of "good teachers" using metaphorical analysis.

However, there are fewer studies on the characteristics associated with good teachers in a specific subject, and even fewer studies that consider the characteristics of "good teachers" from both the teacher's and the student's perspectives.

2.2.2. Current Status of Domestic Research

Domestic research on the characteristics of good teachers has only begun in recent years, driven by an interest in improving the overall quality of the teaching community. This research primarily focuses on teachers' and students' perceptions of what makes a good teacher and the specific ways to cultivate "good teachers." The topic has garnered extensive attention within domestic academic circles. Studies on the evaluation criteria and definition of a "good teacher" include those by Wang Mingshuai (2012) and Zhou Chunliang (2014). Zhao Jinguo and He Qingqing (2022) analyzed the definition of a "good teacher" from the perspectives of teachers and students in colleges and universities, concluding that both groups share similar perceptions of the characteristics of a "good teacher." However, they noted deficiencies such as insufficient attention to ideal beliefs, poorly targeted moral character, and an imbalance of solid knowledge, along with a lack of a heartfelt approach to teaching. They propose targeted cultivation measures accordingly. Based on the grounded theory method, Li Fang'an and Chen Xiangming (2016) focused on college teachers and concluded that a "good teacher" should exhibit moral and artistic excellence, prioritize morality, and uphold fairness and justice. Currently, people's general understanding of the "good teacher" standard is influenced by traditional culture. Liu Wan and Yang Junquan (2018) studied the evaluation standard of a "good teacher" mainly in terms of teachers' character, knowledge, and behavior. Wang Xinqing (2021) focuses on the cultivation of "good teachers" in the new era, arguing that the construction of a high-quality teaching force is supported by the basic policies of teacher ethics construction and relevant national laws and regulations.

From the existing research on "good teachers," most studies aim to improve the quality of the overall teaching force. There are fewer studies exploring the characteristics of "good teachers" from specific disciplines; the primary research subjects are teachers, college students, and other adults. There are not many studies focusing on the characteristics of "good teachers" with lower-grade students as the research subjects, and even fewer studies systematically examining the characteristics of "good English teachers" from both the teacher's and student's perspectives.

This study focuses on primary school students and teachers, exploring from both teacher and student perspectives the characteristics of a "good English teacher" and the factors influencing these characteristics in their educational and learning experiences. It conducts comparative analyses, attempts to interpret the educational significance, and provides theoretical references for teachers' self-improvement and development.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The study is conducted in the year of 2023 among the Chinese primary school students (the second-, third-, fourth-, fifth and sixth-year) as well as their teachers from ordinary primary school in the region of Pearl River Delta. Out of a total of 200 students across five classes (A, B, C, D and E), 100 students who are interested in and willing to participate in the research are selected for the questionnaire survey, including 50 males and females respectively, who are from the five grades. All the students are learning the current courses of each grade respectively at the time of the study, who had at least one experience of participating in such investigation. They have been learning English as a second language. Meanwhile, ten teachers from the English subject groups of Grade Two to Grade Six, who have been teaching English as a second language for more than ten years which relatively enriches their understanding on a good teacher, four males and four females are involved.

3.2. Research Questions

The study focuses on the characteristics of “good English teachers” and its influencing factors in the teaching and learning experiences of teachers and students. It conducts comparative analyses to provide theoretical references for the self-improvement and development of both teachers and students. The research questions are as follows:

- 1) What are the characteristics of a “good English teacher” in the minds of teachers and students in primary school?
- 2) Why are these characteristics important to teachers and students?
- 3) What effects do these characteristics have on the teaching behavior of teachers and the learning behavior of students?

3.3. Instruments

The methods of the study were mainly questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The questionnaire is designed based on the questionnaire used in the thesis for a Master degree on the research of “The survey of Good Teachers in the mind of college students” from the author of LeiPei in Yunnan University, which is composed of two parts. The questionnaire has good reliability and validity through testing. The statistical software SPSS22.0 was used to analyze and organize the data of the recovered questionnaires.

3.3.1. Method of Documentary Analysis

Through the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) as the main channel, more than 5000 pieces of related research literature were obtained by searching with the keywords “good teacher”, “English teacher” and “excellent teacher”. Read and sort out the current research literature related to the theme,

which mainly focuses on the national policy of excellent teacher team building and the construction of excellent teachers. By reviewing the existing literature, the related research findings and issues identified by Chinese and foreign scholars on the theme of good teachers are studied as well as the characteristics of good English teachers and their influence from the dual perspectives of students and teachers, in line with the Ministry of Education's Excellent Teacher Cultivation Programme.

3.3.2. Method of Questionnaire

The questionnaire adopted in this study consisted of 31 questions divided into two parts. The first part served as a basic introduction to the content of the "good teacher" survey, providing respondents with an understanding of the survey's direction before they began. The second part, the main body of the questionnaire, included 31 questions across seven dimensions: outward appearance, knowledge level, teaching ability, language ability, moral quality, charisma, and professionalism. The questionnaire employed Likert's five-point scale for its design. Respondents were provided with five options for each question—very unimportant, unimportant, average, important, and very important—and chose only one based on their agreement with the statements.

In this study, the questionnaire was distributed to participants to collect their views on the characteristics of a good English teacher. The students selected the option that best matched their opinions from the five available choices in response to the questions. The questionnaires were uniformly collected and tabulated based on the students' responses. The survey targeted 100 primary school students from Grade Two to Grade Six and was conducted using 100 paper questionnaires. A time limit of 30 - 60 minutes was set for the students to fill out the questionnaires together. The questionnaires were collected on the spot after completion, and 94 valid responses were ultimately obtained.

3.3.3. Method of Interview

In order to have more authentic and reliable results of questionnaire analysis, the method of interview is also included. Twenty out of 100 students were randomly drawn in 5 classes in the study, with each 4 students from the five grades. And ten English teachers were randomly selected from ordinary primary school in the region of Pearl River Delta for interviews to find out the characteristics of good English teachers.

The interviews were conducted separately with teachers and students. Interviewers developed a semi-structured interview outline in advance based on the research questions. The teacher interview outline included questions about the teachers' teaching experience, classroom management, and English teaching habits, totaling ten questions. The student interview outline asked students about their favorite teachers and to describe their teachers' characteristics, totaling eight questions. The dialogues with the interviewees were conducted on a one-on-one basis. Participants expressed their opinions and ideas in response to

the questions. With the participants' consent, the interviewer collected data by taking notes and recording the conversations.

3.4. Data Collection and Analysis

The survey was carried out in September of the year of 2023. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed and all were returned, achieving a 100% response rate. The survey aimed to explore the perceptions of primary school teachers and students regarding the traits and influencing factors of effective English teachers. Six questionnaires were excluded for not addressing these characteristics, leaving 94 valid responses. The distribution of the questionnaire was centralized; participants assembled in one classroom where the survey's objectives and instructions were explained by the researcher. Participants were then asked to fill out the questionnaire on the spot within 30 - 60 minutes and to do so diligently to ensure the accuracy of the results. After completion, the questionnaires were collected by the researcher. To further understand the participants' actual perspectives, 20 students and 10 English teachers were randomly chosen from the initial group for interviews. These interviews, conducted one-on-one, lasted a total of 5 hours, with each interview averaging 10 minutes or so. With participants' permission, besides notes-taking, the interviews were recorded and transcribed into texts for analysis. All gathered data were inputted into a computer and analyzed using SPSS 22.0 for the frequency and percentage of students' as well as teachers' description on the characteristics on good English teachers.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1. Analysis of the Questionnaire

4.1.1. Dimension of Teachers' Physical Appearance

As can be seen from **Table 1**, students overall have different views on the looks, dress habits, and overall appearance of teachers in the learning process. For teachers' physical appearance, more than 60% (61.7%) of the students do not think that a teacher's physical appearance attractiveness is a component of being a good teacher. Only 29.78% of the students give average importance and 8.51% give great consideration on it. During the classroom English learning, 57.44% of the students do not attach much importance to the teacher's clothes, and think it is not important. Regarding to the teacher's behaviors and figure, the vast majority of students (45.74% to 57.44%) believe that these aspects do not affect the teacher's image in their minds. All together, about 12.5% of the students averagely believe that a teacher with a good physical appearance and outlook image is an important component to be a good teacher.

4.1.2. Dimension of Teachers' Educational and Pedagogical Competence

From **Table 2**, we can see that in the process of English learning, 97.86% of the students believe that English teachers with higher academic qualifications are

good teachers. Additionally, teachers' professionalism (79.79%) and creativity (93.61%) in teaching are considered important components of being a "good teacher". Moreover, more than half of the students (52.12%) are concerned about whether the teacher has published research articles or been the sponsors of research projects, and believe that the teacher's academic research ability is also one of the criteria for the judgement of being a "good teacher".

Table 1. Dimension of teachers' physical appearance.

Dimension	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Countenance	very unimportant	32	34.04
	unimportant	26	27.66
	usual	28	29.78
	significant	8	8.51
	very important	0	0.00
Teachers' dress style	very unimportant	30	31.91
	unimportant	24	25.53
	usual	32	34.04
	significant	8	8.51
	very important	0	0.00
Behaviors	very unimportant	24	25.53
	unimportant	19	20.21
	usual	34	36.17
	significant	17	18.08
	very important	0	0.00
Figure	very unimportant	28	29.78
	unimportant	26	27.66
	usual	26	27.66
	significant	14	14.89
	very important	0	0.00

Table 2. Dimension of teachers' educational and pedagogical competence.

Dimension	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Education experience of Master's or Doctoral degree	very unimportant	0	0.00
	significant	0	0.00
	usual	2	2.13
	significant	77	81.91
	very important	15	15.95
Teaching management ability	very unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	15	15.95
	unimportant	4	4.26
	significant	49	52.13
	very important	26	27.66
Academic research ability	very unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	28	29.78
	unimportant	17	18.08
	significant	34	36.17
	very important	15	15.95
Innovation ability	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	6	6.38
	significant	47	50.00
	very important	41	43.61

4.1.3. Dimension of Teachers' Teaching Methods

As is shown from **Table 3**, the majority of students attach great importance to the teacher's teaching methods (95.74%), the amount of information conveyed in the classroom (86.17%) and the teacher's reflection on teaching (86.17%). They believe that these three elements play an important role in determining whether a teacher is a good one. The questions related to these three dimensions indicate that students have high expectations for teachers who are highly skilled and competent, as well as for classrooms that facilitate effective teaching.

Table 3. Dimension of teachers' teaching methods.

Dimension	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teaching methods	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	4	4.26
	significant	30	31.91
	very important	60	63.83
The amount of information taught in the classroom	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	13	13.83
	significant	30	31.91
	very important	51	54.26
Teaching Reflection Habits	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	13	13.83
	significant	47	50.00
	very important	34	36.17

4.1.4. Dimension of Teachers' English Language Proficiency

From the three dimensions in **Table 4**, it is evident that students greatly value teachers' English language expression ability in English learning. This includes aspects whether the teachers' spoken English is fluent and accurate (93.61%) and whether the intonation is standard (86.17%). These two factors directly determine whether students can understand the content and the message being conveyed by the teacher. Currently, most classrooms are equipped with microphones, and about half of the students (26.59%) think that the loudness of the teacher's voice does not significantly affect the learning outcomes in the classroom. However, the others (45.74%) believe that a loud voice is very important for students' listening comprehension. This is considered one of the criteria for the judgement of being a good teacher.

Table 4. Dimension of teachers' English language proficiency.

Dimension	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Spoken language skills	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	2	2.13
	usual	4	4.26
	significant	28	29.78
	very important	60	63.83
Tone of voice	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	4	4.26
	usual	8	8.51
	significant	32	34.04
	very important	49	52.13
Audible	very unimportant	6	6.38
	unimportant	19	20.21
	usual	26	27.66
	significant	19	20.21
	very important	24	25.53

4.1.5. Dimension of Teachers' Engagement to the Students

As can be seen from **Table 5**, students have a very high demand for teachers' attention to both life and psychological aspects, with 100% of the students believing that teachers who care about these aspects are good teachers. In contrast, the demand for teachers' concern for academic aspects is relatively low, at only 45.74%. This indicates that primary school students do not place a high priority on teachers' attention to academics and do not necessarily think that teachers who only focus on learning outcomes are good teachers.

Table 5. Dimension of teachers' engagement to the students.

Dimension	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Concern for students' learning	very unimportant	6	6.38
	unimportant	19	20.21
	usual	26	27.66
	significant	19	20.21
	very important	24	25.53
Concern for the living conditions of students	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	0	0.00
	significant	32	34.04
	very important	62	65.96
Care for the psychological situation of students	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	0	0.00
	significant	30	31.91
	very important	64	68.08

4.1.6. Dimension of Teachers' Teaching Literacy

As is shown from **Table 6**, students place significant emphasis on the teaching quality of teachers. For example, whether the teacher can conduct standardized exams (97.88%), whether the teacher's lectures are efficient (81.91%), and whether he or she holds high expectations for students' work (96.81%). However, students do not want their teachers to focus excessively on their grades. The distribution of students' choices on this question in the survey was relatively even: very unimportant (18.08%), unimportant (15.96%), average (31.91%), important (18.08%), and very important (15.96%). It can be reasonably inferred that students do not want their teachers to be "score-oriented." Therefore, teachers should not focus solely on students' academic performance, but rather adopt a more holistic approach in teaching.

Table 6. Dimension of teachers' teaching literacy.

Dimension	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Examination norms	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	2	2.13
	significant	41	43.62
	very important	51	54.26
Requirements of students' work	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	2	2.13
	significant	53	56.38
	very important	38	40.43
Completion of teaching content on time	very unimportant	4	4.26
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	13	13.83
	significant	43	45.74
	very important	34	36.17
Focus of grades	Very unimportant.	17	18.08
	unimportant	15	15.96
	usual	30	31.91
	significant	17	18.08
	very important	15	15.96

4.1.7. Dimension of Teachers' After-Class Tutoring

Table 7 focuses on students' perceptions of teachers' after-school schedules. The survey shows that students consider it important for teachers to mark after-school assignments (100%) and provide after-school instructions (94.69%). In addition to class time, after-school time is also an important part of a teacher's work. Similarly, the students also considered it important for teachers to give

feedback on students' learning in time (93.61%). Therefore, a teacher's ability to complete the teaching content within the allotted time is also one of the criteria for assessing a teacher's competence.

Table 7. Dimension of teachers' after-class tutoring.

Dimension	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Review (homework, exam scripts etc)	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	0	0.00
	significant	32	34.04
	very important	62	65.96
Feedback on Learning Results	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	6	6.38
	significant	32	34.04
	very important	56	59.57
Teachers' after-school guidance	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	4	4.26
	significant	38	40.43
	very important	51	54.26

4.1.8. Dimension of Teachers' Moral Character

Table 8 focuses on students' perceptions of teachers' moral dimension. Moral qualities of teachers are important factors in the judgement on a good teacher. In the questionnaire, 100% of the students want to be treated fairly by their teachers, 95.74% want their teachers to be a man of integrity, 100% want their teachers to be responsible, and 95.46% want their teachers to be upright and unbiased in dealing with their students. Teachers' sense of humor in communicating with students is also valued by students (74.46%). Additionally, 97.87% of the students want their teachers to be approachable and kind. Furthermore, 88.29% of the students want to be influenced by their teachers' optimistic and cheerful personalities.

Table 8. Dimension of teachers' moral character.

Dimension	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Equitable and just	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	0	0.00
	significant	32	34.04
	very important	62	65.96
Not accept gifts	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	2	2.13
	significant	32	34.04
	very important	60	63.83
Strong sense of responsibility	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	0	0.00
	significant	26	27.66
	very important	68	72.34
The teacher is a man of integrity	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
	usual	4	4.26
	significant	28	29.78
	very important	62	65.96
The teacher is witty and humorous	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	4	4.26
	usual	19	20.21
	significant	36	38.29
	very important	34	36.17

Continued

	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	0	0.00
Teachers are approachable	usual	2	2.13
	significant	45	47.87
	very important	47	50.00
	very unimportant	0	0.00
	unimportant	2	2.13
The teacher is optimistic and cheerful	usual	8	8.51
	significant	47	50.00
	very important	36	38.29

4.2. Analysis of Interview**4.2.1. Student Interview**

The results of the interviews conducted with 20 randomly selected students and 10 teachers are as follows: Due to time limitation, the 20 students were interviewed over multiple after-school sessions. Most of the interviewed students entered the interview room unsure of exactly what to expect and appeared slightly restrained, but they gradually relaxed during the dialogue. To ensure authentic interview data, the interviewer briefly introduced the main content of the interview to ensure that the interviewees understood the basic direction before starting. Following the prepared interview outline, the interviewer asked the respondents questions one by one according to the outline. The respondents answered based on their own ideas, and the interviewer recorded the answers (the recording was informed to the respondents in advance and obtained their consent). After the one-on-one interviews with the 20 students, their responses were summarized, and nine keywords that appeared frequently in their responses were extracted. The summary is shown below (see [Table 9](#)).

According to the data, when it comes to the characteristics of a good teacher, 100% of the students think that a good teacher is one who can transfer knowledge to the students effectively. Regarding classroom atmosphere, 66% of the students prefer a classroom with a good sense of humor and a relaxing atmosphere, while 33% of the students said they can accept a teacher who is very strict in class as long as they can learn new knowledge. Concerning the daily relationship between teachers and students, 80% of the students appreciate a teacher's gentle character, and 53% want the teacher to be fair and impartial. When asked whether they would be happy if cared for by the teacher, 100% of the students gave an affirmative answer. Compared to patience (66%) and kindness (40%),

teachers who are good at using encouragement are more popular with students, with 93% of students saying they are eager to receive praise from teachers when they make progress or achieve goals.

Table 9. Data of student interviews.

Interviewer	Interview questions	Key words	Frequency
Students	1) Which is your favourite teacher at school? Why?	Classes are fun and humorous	66%
	2) What kind of teachers do you like and what kind of teachers do you dislike? Please describe them.	Tenderness	80%
	3) If a teacher is particularly harsh in class, would you dislike that teacher?	Care and concern for students	100%
	4) What would you like your teacher's style in class to be like? You can give examples.	Be patient	66%
	5) Would you feel happy if your teacher usually took the initiative to care for you?	Teaching new knowledge	100%
	6) What do you like your teacher to do if you are doing great?	Kindness	40%
	7) What would you like your teacher to do if you made a mistake?	Equitable and just	53%
		Good at praising and encouraging	93%
		Draconian	33%

4.2.2. Teacher Interview

There are identity and age differences between teachers and students, which may impact their definitions of a “good teacher” differently. Therefore, in this study, we developed interview questions from the teachers’ perspectives, created an outline for the interview, and selected ten teachers from the English department to conduct one-on-one interview to explore the characteristics of a “good teacher” from the perspective of English teacher (see **Table 10**). Before the interview, we confirmed the availability of the interviewed teachers in the office of the English department and scheduled meetings with each of the teachers. The teachers were given an outline to familiarize themselves with the content of the interview in advance. Once the interview began, the teachers were asked questions according to the outline, and their answers were recorded (the recording process was explained to the teachers in advance and obtained their consent).

In the course of communication with the teachers, it became known that English teachers focus on two main aspects of education and teaching: the first is the ability to teach the subject of English, and the second is the cultivation on students’ moral character. Teaching ability is one of the important criteria for judging “good English teachers”. Therefore, when it comes to the criteria of a good teacher, the first aspect mentioned by the participant teachers is teaching ability. When discussing teaching ability, the teachers mentioned that they should be adept at controlling the pace of the classroom and ensuring order, especially when facing various emergencies. This is also a test of a teacher’s ability to manage the classroom. Teachers’ teaching skills need to be honed through

learning, practice, and reflection. When addressing the issue of students who are slightly behind in their grades, the teachers maintain a positive attitude. Teachers are expected to know how to view students from a developmental perspective. Temporary lagging in performance is a common issue that students may encounter in their learning process. Teachers should not be “score-oriented,” but should focus on the students’ character and the cultivation on their moral qualities instead.

Table 10. Data of teacher interviews.

Interviewer	Interview questions	Key words	Frequency
Teachers	1) Have you ever had a “good teacher” in your past schooling? What was this teacher like?	Excellent English teaching skills	100%
	2) What kind of students do you like best? Why?	Good control of the classroom	100%
	3) How do you feel about students who don’t listen when they show up in class? How do you usually handle the situation?		
	4) What do you usually do if one of your students regularly breaks discipline? What is the purpose of doing so?	Timely reflection on teaching and learning	100%
	5) What do you usually do if a student is doing well?	Valuing the moral character of students	100%
	6) Do you usually have a habit of reflecting on your teaching? What do you usually do after reflecting?		
	7) Do you think a teacher who lacks English teaching skills but has excellent character and cares for his or her students is a good teacher? Why?		

5. Discussion

5.1. Major Findings

Based on the analysis, we can see most students’ attach great importance to teachers’ educational experience, teaching competence, professional proficiency, engagement to students’ learning and life, and moral literacy, putting less emphasis on teachers’ physical appearance, research outcomes. And the characteristics of good English teachers in the mind of primary school students keep accordance with the ones of good teachers of teaching other subjects. Two difference preferences are teachers’ spoken English skills and tone of voice.

From the students’ point of view, excellent English teachers should be well-educated and well-behaved first, who are teachers possessing a higher education degree with higher teaching ability, along with strong proficiency in the field of English language and cross-cultural knowledge in comprehensive fields. Additionally, students think teachers should demonstrate good moral characters and be willing to care for as well as love students in and after class to foster a harmonious teacher-student relationship. Teachers’ teaching competence and moral integrity are crucial to promote students’ learning. In-time feedback and guidance are helpful for students’ to adjust their learning plan as well as learning target. Scientific and efficient teaching methods in the classroom are valued

most by students which help students learn new knowledge actively and effectively. A harmonious teacher-student relationship enhances daily interactions between teachers and students. In such an atmosphere, the teacher's instruction is most effective, and the students' learning is maximized.

From a teacher's perspective, teachers emphasize the development of their own pedagogical skills. Teaching ability plays the most important role for judging a "good teacher", then comes teachers' attention to students' moral education. Teaching and educating go hand in hand in the profession, and English teachers need focus on students' morality development in addition to English teaching proficiency, and students' moral character is more important than test scores in teachers' eyes.

5.2. Suggestions

5.2.1. Suggestions for Teachers

1) English teachers need focus on maintaining a professional image

In this study's survey, students did not place significant emphasis on teachers' appearance. However, on campus, when interacting with students, teachers always play the role of "teaching by example." Therefore, in the classroom, teachers should set a good example for students in terms of personal image management. When interacting with students, a teacher's attire should be appropriate and professional, facilitating physical movements during class and projecting a positive demeanor. Besides the influence of their external appearance, a teacher's inner charisma also impacts students. Therefore, teachers should focus on inner development and cultivate personal charisma.

2) English teachers need focus on enhancing their professional competence in language teaching

Teachers often serve as mentors to students in school. From this study, it is evident that students are primarily concerned with their teachers' ability to make classes engaging and comprehensible, and to explain knowledge in an easy-to-understand manner. From the students' perspective, a good English teacher should be proficient in the English language and culture, innovative, flexible, and diverse in teaching methods, and should have rich teaching content and fluent spoken English. According to the students' assessment, to meet the standards of a "good English teacher" in their minds, teachers must continually enhance their knowledge and teaching skills in English. In one-on-one interviews with teachers, it was clear that, in their view, the ability to teach should take precedence. Although students do not place heavy demands on teachers regarding academic research, teachers still need to possess a certain level of academic research ability, study the classroom dynamics, focus on teaching strategies, and improve their teaching skills through academic research.

3) English teachers need possess a strong work ethic

Teachers, who spend the most time with students in school, inevitably encounter situations where they need to manage student relationships. From the

questionnaires filled out by the students, it is evident that students consider it very important for teachers to uphold high moral standards. Students expect teachers to be honest, responsible, and to treat everyone fairly and impartially. Therefore, as an English teacher, it is crucial not only to continuously improve one's subject knowledge but also to maintain a high moral standard and provide positive moral guidance to students. In education and teaching, teachers can innovate their teaching methods to integrate educational values into the English curriculum, thus achieving the goals of humanistic education and fostering the development of students' core qualities.

4) English teachers need be attentive to the physical and mental health of students

Apart from acting as guides in students' studies, teachers should also provide appropriate care in their lives. As reflected in the questionnaire survey and interviews with students, students are very pleased when they receive care from teachers. If teachers take the initiative to care for students both inside and outside the classroom, they can strengthen their relationships with students, reduce students' feelings of alienation and distance towards the teacher, and gain students' recognition more easily. For teachers, gaining students' recognition and fostering closer relationships can, to some extent, enhance their effectiveness in the classroom.

5.2.2. Suggestions for Students

The students in the survey did not place particular importance on the teachers' attention to students' performance. As a student, regular examinations to test learning effectiveness are very necessary; of course, occasionally lagging behind is inevitable. Therefore, students should view examination results correctly, understanding that they are merely a stage in the learning process. They should not feel excessive pressure in response to these results, but neither should they take them lightly.

5.2.3. Suggestions for School Administrators

Becoming a good teacher cannot be achieved through the efforts of the teacher alone. Schools, as managers of the teaching community, should develop a reasonable training mechanism for the teaching staff, provide teachers with opportunities for both internal and external exchanges and learning, and conduct regular appraisals of teachers.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Summary

This paper employs literature research methods, questionnaire surveys, and interviews to investigate the specific characteristics and influencing factors of effective English teachers from the dual perspectives of primary school students and teachers. From the survey, we can glean specific views on what constitutes a good English teacher from different perspectives. According to students, a good

English teacher should possess strong English language skills, a high level of teaching proficiency, and demonstrate care and concern for students. From the teachers' perspective, to be a good English teacher, one must first continuously improve their teaching abilities to ensure the most scientific and efficient English classroom. Secondly, a teacher should exhibit good moral character and charisma, setting a positive moral example for students through their interactions. Students should also treat teachers respectfully and take the initiative to communicate with them. Furthermore, schools, as managers of the teaching staff, should provide training for teachers to facilitate more opportunities for self-development.

6.2. Suggestions for Future Study

Due to the limited time available for the study, the sample size, while sufficient for drawing valid research conclusions, has some limitations. For convenience, only primary school teachers and students were selected for the study. Given the young age of the interviewed students, there may be a lack of thorough understanding of the interview questions, resulting in data that is not comprehensive. This aspect can be optimized in future research to provide a more comprehensive reference for English teaching and learning.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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