

A Study of the Characteristics on Effective English Teachers in Primary Schools

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Abstract

In this study, the purposes were as follows: a) to investigate the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school students, b) to investigate the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school English teachers and; c) to investigate the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school administrators. The participants in this study included grade six students, English teachers, and administrators in Chonburi Primary Educational Service Area Office Three: Banglamung Three district, and were selected via purposive sampling. The research tools in this study included a questionnaire with thirty questions on a Five-Point Likert scale, adopted from Faranda and Clarke Iii (2004) and modified by Barnes and Lock (2010) and an interview. The results of this study were as follows: a) primary school students perceived that rapport is the main characteristic on effective English teachers in primary school; b) primary school English teachers perceived that organization and preparation are the main characteristics on effective English teachers in primary school; c) primary school administrators perceived that rapport is the main characteristic on effective English teachers in primary schools. The results of this study could be guidelines of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools and the basis for an intervention plan.

Keywords: Perceptions, Characteristics, EFL Teachers

Introduction

In Thailand, English is a foreign language that is important both academically and professionally (Foley, 2005). Thai Students have learned English in schools for many years since kindergarten to bachelor, master or doctor degree but some people cannot use English even just the basic that to communicate. Therefore, Thailand government

and people who are involved in education field try to solve the problem in English skills for Thai students and there are many researches that have the aims to improve Thai Students in English skills. In actually this problem is not only caused by Thai student but teachers are also the cause of this problem.

Teachers are one of the key factors that will help to improve the quality of education and Unesco (1998) identified that “the quality of education depends on the quality of teachers”. Teachers were one of the key factors that affect students in many areas such as success and success (Koç, 2013). Moreover, teacher’s knowledge about the subject that they teach, and other attributes of the teacher such as skills of teaching, teaching styles and personal behaviors such as the way to speak or the way to dress will also effect to the students’ interesting in learning, encouragements and outcomes. Many researchers studied the characteristics on effective English teachers and then they grouped the characteristics on effective English teachers for example, Faranda and Clarke Iii (2004) identified that the effective English teachers into five attributes: rapport, delivery, fairness, knowledge and credibility, and organization and preparation. Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) also discussed the key points of an effective English teacher, which includes knowledge of English language, pedagogy and personality.

In Thai context, Thai teachers have been expected from the society both in teaching and self-management because of the belief that teachers are the national mold of Thailand. Chen (2012) studied about favorable and unfavorable characteristics of EFL teachers perceived by university students of Thailand. The finding revealed that the effective EFL teachers should be kind, friendly and able to understand students. In addition, they also expected EFL teachers to have the knowledge of English language and ability to teach and transfer content in the effective ways.

From the expecting of society and people who expect that teachers must have the effective characteristics to be a role model. Therefore English teacher was expected to be an effective English teacher to improve students not only the English skill but the morality and ability also. Although there were studies about the characteristics on effective English teachers, the researches on effective English teachers in the Thailand were few, particularly in primary school context. Despite the English teachers in primary school is very important because they can cultivate students in good ways and help primary students to have the potential to learn effectively and have a good basic at English and a good attitude too.

Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the characteristics on effective English teachers as perceived by students, English teachers and administrators in primary

schools. Finally, the result of this study could be a guideline of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools that could be useful to English teachers in primary schools and people who are involved in education field.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To investigate the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school students.
2. To investigate the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school English teachers.
3. To investigate the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school administrators

Research Questions

1. What is the level agreement of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school students by the respondents in terms of a) rapport, b) delivery, c) fairness, d) knowledge and credibility, e) organization and preparation?

2. What is the level agreement of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school English teachers by the respondents in terms of a) rapport, b) delivery, c) fairness, d) knowledge and credibility, e) organization and preparation?

3. What is the level agreement of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school administrators by the respondents in terms of a) rapport, b) delivery, c) fairness, d) knowledge and credibility, e) organization and preparation?

Research Methodology

Participants

The population of this study consisted of grade sixth student, primary school English teachers and primary school administrators of 7 primary schools in Chonburi Primary Educational Service Area Office Three: Banglamung Three district about 688 people. Considered choosing the sample by size of the schools. Criteria for consideration the size of the schools is

1- 120 students in school is the small school

121- 600 students in school is the medium school

601- 1500 students in school is the large school

1501 up students in school is the extra-large school

In Chonburi Primary Educational Service Area Office Three: Banglamung Three district. There were 2 extra-large schools, 1 large school, 4 medium schools and there was no small school. The sample group came from 1 school in each school size by randomly picking only 1 school in an extra- large school group and a medium school group.

Therefore, the sample group was 345 people who were 328 grade sixth students, 11 primary school English teachers and 6 primary school administrators from all 3 schools representing different sizes of schools that was under the Chonburi Primary Educational Service Area Office Three: Banglamung 3 district

Instruments

The research instruments used to collect the data for this study include modified questionnaires to suite with the Thai context base on related studies characteristics on effective English teachers and semi-structured interview that would be created after analyzing the data from the questionnaire.

Questionnaires

This study used a modified questionnaire as the instrument for collecting the data. The modified effective teachers’ questionnaire was developed by Faranda and Clarke Iii (2004) and modified by Barnes and Lock (2010). Both were based on five attributes: rapport, delivery, fairness, knowledge and credibility, and organization and preparation to measure the characteristics on effective English teachers and made it relevant to the context of this study for investigating the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary school as perceived by primary school students, primary school English teachers and primary school administrators. The Effective English teachers’ questionnaire consisted of 30 items using a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = some how agree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree

Part 1 the questionnaire determined the profile of the respondents in terms of status: student, teacher, administrator, and sex: male, female.

Part 2 the 30 questions were about the characteristics on effective English teachers that based on five categories: a) rapport, b) delivery, c) fairness d) knowledge and credibility and e) organization and preparation.

Table 1 Questionnaire Specification

Category	Item Distribution	Total	Percentage
Rapport	15, 17, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27	7	25
Delivery	10, 11, 12, 16, 28, 30	6	20
Fairness	13, 14, 19, 20, 29	5	15
Knowledge and Credibility	2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 18	7	25
Organization and Preparation	1, 3, 4, 22, 23	5	15
Total		30	100%

Interview

This study used the semi-structured interview with primary school students, primary school English teachers and primary school administrators. The questions created from the result of the questionnaire. Writing and recording were the interview report for data analysis.

Data Analysis

This study was divided into two parts.

Quantitative Phase

For the second research questions in this study described by using weighted mean, S.D. and ranking.

Qualitative Phase

The second part was to get the data from interviews to be qualitatively analyzed and presented it in the form of descriptive writing to support the data from questionnaires.

Findings and Discussions

The level agreement of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school students, primary school English teachers, primary school administrators in term of five categories: a) rapport, b) delivery, c) fairness d) knowledge and credibility and e) organization and preparation.

Table 2 The Questionnaire's Result from Primary School Students, Primary School English Teachers and Primary School Administrators

Questions	Primary School Students			Primary School English Teachers			Primary School Administrators		
	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank
Rapport									
15 Teachers should be patient, check and give clear instructions for correcting student errors. Do not insult students when students make mistakes.	4.53	0.7515	7	4.55	0.6876	6	4.67	0.5774	8
17 Teachers should encourage student motivation and interest and help students to build confidence.	4.31	0.9028	17	4.64	0.5045	4	5.00	0.0000	1
21 Teachers should have good expressions for students and helping students both inside and outside the classroom.	4.52	0.9384	8	4.55	0.5222	6	4.67	0.5774	8
24 Teachers should have flexibility in various matters and can be adjusted as appropriate.	4.12	1.0508	24	4.45	0.6876	16	4.67	0.5774	8

Questions		Primary School Students			Primary School English Teachers			Primary School Administrators		
		Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank
25	The teacher should have a good personality or appearance.	4.15	1.1570	22	4.27	0.7862	20	4.33	0.5774	18
26	Teachers should be open to listen to students' opinions.	4.75	0.8103	2	4.64	0.9244	4	4.67	0.5774	8
27	Teachers should listen to students, do not be easily upset and teachers should be magnanimous.	4.73	0.8511	3	4.27	1.1909	22	5.00	0.0000	1
Delivery										
10	Teachers should use English as a tool for communication.	3.73	1.1820	28	4.27	0.6467	22	4.33	0.5774	18
11	Teachers should use Thai language only when necessary.	3.60	1.3660	29	3.91	1.0445	28	2.67	1.5275	30
12	Teachers should give examples in the daily lives of students that are related to the lesson.	4.04	1.0292	25	4.36	0.6742	19	4.00	0.0000	25
16	Teachers should organize activities that are interesting and meaningful for student learning.	4.62	0.7267	4	4.55	0.6876	6	4.67	0.5774	8

Questions		Primary school students			Primary School English Teachers			Primary School Administrators		
		Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank
28	Teachers should promote group work and student participation.	4.34	1.0647	14	4.27	1.1909	22	4.67	0.5774	8
30	Teachers should organize the meaningful and fun activities for students and do not make the content to be difficult. Teachers should be optimistic and have sense of humor.	4.82	0.7530	1	4.55	0.6876	9	5.00	0.0000	1
Fairness										
13	Teachers should assign homework to review lessons.	3.53	1.4040	30	4.09	0.7006	27	4.00	1.0000	25
14	Teachers should give students to take a test to review the lesson.	4.14	1.2436	23	3.82	1.1677	30	4.00	0.0000	25
19	The teacher should follow the rules and regulations. Try to raise the moral level of students, awareness of illegal behavior and cheating.	4.23	0.9825	18	4.45	0.9342	12	5.00	0.0000	1
20	Teachers should be fair. (In giving suggestions, scoring, giving attention to individual differences).	4.38	1.0503	12	4.45	1.2136	12	5.00	0.0000	1
29	Teachers should not separate students and should treat all students equally.	4.41	1.1146	10	4.73	0.4671	2	5.00	0.0000	1

Questions		Primary School Students			Primary School English Teachers			Primary School Administrators		
		Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank
Knowledge and Credibility										
2	Teachers have to understand and have clear concept of the content of lesson, objectives, scoring and evaluation.	4.57	1.8151	5	4.45	0.9342	12	4.33	0.5774	18
5	Teachers should use a variety of teaching materials and technology in classroom such as audio/ visual media.	4.55	0.7178	6	4.45	1.2136	16	4.67	0.5774	8
6	The teacher should have a high level of English ability in listening, speaking, reading and writing.	4.40	0.8731	11	4.27	0.6467	20	4.67	0.5774	8
7	Teachers should have the skills to explain English grammar rules clearly.	4.32	0.8098	16	4.27	1.0090	25	4.33	0.5774	18
8	Teachers should have the skills to pronounce English as close to the native speaker.	4.19	0.9261	20	4.55	0.6876	9	4.33	0.5774	18
9	Teachers should know about the culture of native speakers.	3.94	1.0029	27	3.91	1.1362	28	4.00	0.0000	25
18	Teachers should have ability to answer the difficult questions.	4.03	1.0908	26	4.09	1.2210	26	5.00	0.0000	1

Questions		Primary School Students			Primary School English Teachers			Primary School Administrators		
		Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank
Organization and Preparation										
1	Teachers should have the ability to prepare lessons to be effective.	4.48	0.7561	9	4.82	0.4045	1	4.67	0.5774	8
3	Teachers should allocate time in teaching effectively and systematically.	4.37	0.8661	13	4.73	0.4671	3	4.00	0.0000	25
4	Teachers should clarify the purpose of learning, methods for measuring and evaluating learning clearly to students.	4.34	0.8344	15	4.55	0.6876	11	4.33	0.5774	18
22	Teachers should give quick feedback about tasks assigned to students.	4.17	1.1369	21	4.45	0.9342	12	4.67	0.5774	8
23	Teachers should provide supplemental material	4.19	1.2621	19	4.45	0.6876	16	4.33	0.5774	18

Primary school administrators ranked 6 characteristics as the most important characteristic on effective English teachers in primary schools (Mean= 5). Those were “Teachers should encourage student motivation and interest and help students to build confidence.”, “Teachers should have ability to answer the difficult questions.”, “The teacher should follow the rules and regulations. Try to raise the moral level of students, awareness of illegal behavior and cheating.”, “Teachers should be fair. (In giving suggestions, scoring, giving attention to individual differences).”, “Teachers should listen to students, do not be easily upset and teachers should be magnanimous.”, “Teachers should not separate students and should treat all students equally.” and “Teachers should organize the meaningful and fun activities for students and do not make the content to be difficult. Teachers should be optimistic and have sense of

humor.” On the other hand, they ranked “Teachers should use Thai language only when necessary. (Mean= 2.67)” as the least important characteristic on effective English teachers in primary schools.

The level agreement of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school students, primary school English teachers, primary school administrators in term of five categories: a) rapport, b) delivery, c) fairness d) knowledge and credibility and e) organization and preparation.

Table 3 The Questionnaire’s Result in Term of Five Categories

	N	Students Mean	Teachers Mean	Administrators Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Rapport (Item: 15, 17, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27)	345	4.39	4.48	4.71	2.71	5.00	4.39	.48
Delivery (Item: 10, 11, 12, 16, 28, 30)	345	4.16	4.32	4.22	2.50	5.00	4.16	.54
Fairness (Item: 13, 14, 19, 20, 29)	345	4.09	4.31	4.60	1.60	5.00	4.10	.66
Knowledge and Credibility (Item: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 18)	345	4.27	4.29	4.48	2.29	5.00	4.27	.51
Organization and Preparation (Item: 1, 3, 4, 22, 23)	345	4.26	4.60	4.40	1.00	5.00	4.28	.56

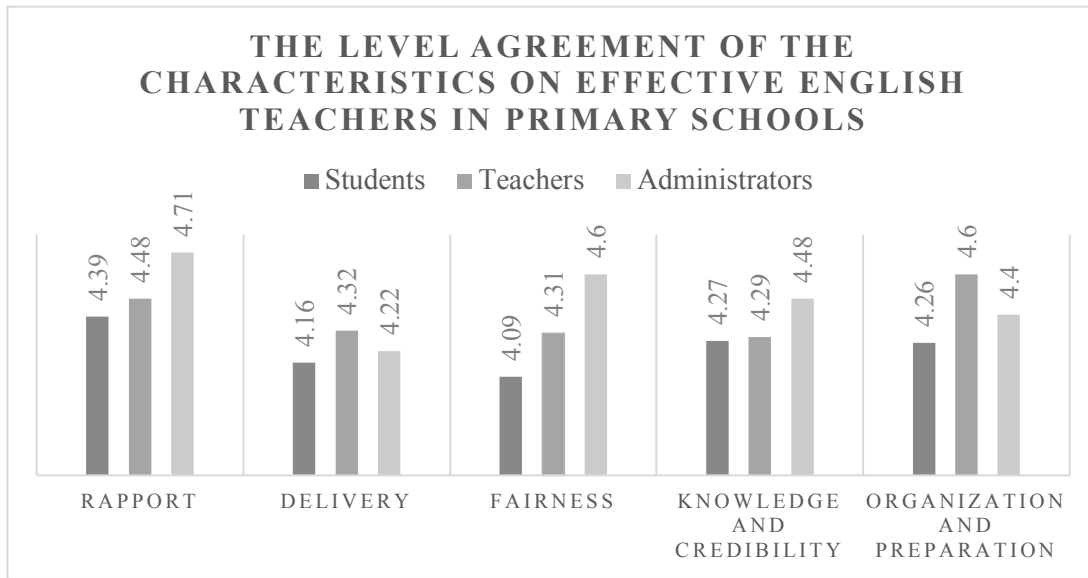


Figure 1 The Level Agreement of the Characteristics on effective English Teachers in Primary Schools

For primary school students, they ranked the Rapport (Mean= 4.39) as the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary school and following by Knowledge and Credibility (Mean= 4.27), Organization and Preparation (Mean= 4.26), Delivery (Mean= 4.16) and the last characteristic was Fairness (Mean= 4.09).

For primary school English teachers, they ranked Organization and Preparation (Mean= 4.60) as the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary school and following by Rapport (Mean= 4.48), Delivery (Mean= 4.32), Fairness (Mean= 4.31) and the last characteristics was Knowledge and Credibility (Mean= 4.29).

For primary school administrators, they ranked Rapport (Mean= 4.71) as the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary school and following by Fairness (Mean= 4.60), Knowledge and Credibility (Mean= 4.48), Organization and Preparation (Mean= 4.40) and the last characteristic was Delivery (Mean= 4.22).

The Interview of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school students, primary school English teachers, primary school administrators based on the results from the questionnaire

The Interview of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school students.

The primary school students chose Rapport as the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools and following by Knowledge and Credibility, Organization and Preparation, Delivery and the last characteristic was Fairness. There were some speeches from students who gave the opinion about why Rapport was the most important characteristic on effective English teachers in primary schools?

"I always enjoy learning English with kind teachers because I feel very comfortable to ask questions when I don't understand the lesson"

"I like to see the smile on the face of the teacher more than the fierce face."

"I think that the teacher's attention is very important because it made me feel that teachers care students"

"I believe in all English teachers' competence in teaching English but what I want the most is the teacher motivated me to learn English language willingly."

"Some English teachers have caused me to be prejudiced about learning English."

"Some teachers speak very well and be good speakers but whenever students want to speak, some teachers rarely to listen. I want to study with an English teacher who is willing to listen to the questions even though it may be a stupid question"

"I think that most students think that Rapport as the most important characteristics because nowadays teachers focus only on teaching and grading. Teachers do not have the motivation to love learning English for students."

"I like learning English with kind, non-aggressive teachers who help and answer questions when I don't understand."

"English is fun especially when studying with a modern teacher who understand the teenagers"

"I don't like learning English but studying with a kind teacher makes me feel comfortable to study. Don't make me feel tense and scared"

The Interview of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school English teachers

The primary school teachers thought the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools was Organization and Preparation and following by Rapport, Delivery, Fairness and the last characteristics was Knowledge and Credibility. There were some words from teachers who gave the opinion about why Organization and Preparation was the most important characteristic on effective English teachers in primary schools?

“Classroom management, design of every teaching and preparation before teaching are very important for teachers. They can help teachers to plan and narrow the teaching direction. Moreover, they can help to improve academic performance and student performance.”

“I am not surprised that most teachers think Organization and Preparation is the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools because we have learned to be a teacher who can transfer knowledge and plan the effective teaching and learning of students.”

“I believe that students will learn well if the teacher has a good teaching plan, teaching techniques and classroom management. In addition, teachers need to give score or grade clearly and can be check.

“The warrior must have a sword. Teachers should also have a lesson plan.”

“Teaching planning and preparation help teachers to engage students in the same direction, step by step and help learners understand the lesson. Therefore, Organization and Preparation is very important for those who are called teachers.

The Interview of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school administrators

The primary school administrators ranked the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools was Rapport as the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary school and following by Fairness, Knowledge and Credibility, Organization and Preparation and the last characteristic was Delivery. There were some words from administrators who gave the opinion about why Rapport was the most important characteristic on effective English teachers in primary schools?

“I believe in the abilities and potential of every English teachers but being an effective English teachers, abilities and potential are not the answer. An effective teacher may not necessarily be the best ability or potential. But the teacher who must understand the nature of the child is the best teacher”

“Many people are lost in the education system, teaching and learning. They focus only on student achievement, ignoring the inspiration for studying, living and applying knowledge. English teachers need to be aware of it because English is still a distant matter for some students. Therefore, motivating and inspiring students to learn English is very important”

"The teacher, in my sense, is not just the person who gives knowledge but is someone who cares about students too. The ability of teachers is important but in today's society, students need teachers who are more than just educators. They want the teacher who can be a person who gives advice and creates motivation for learning"

Both the primary school students and administrators ranked the Rapport as the most important characteristics of effective English teachers in primary schools. The same as the research results of Zamani and Ahangari (2016) The result showed that Azad University of Tabriz students believed that the effective English teachers should have the ability to develop relationship with students, build students 'confidence and maintain discipline in classroom. Moreover, the result of the study from Chen (2012) showed that students at Vongchavalitkul University thought that the effective EFL teachers should be kind, friendly and able to understand students. According to Plook Teacher (2018) stated that Suan Dusit Poll surveyed on "What kind of teacher do children want?" which were the comments from students in kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and the vocations. Primary school students were mainly focus on the expression of the teachers to the learners for example teachers who don't look fierce, don't beat and don't complain. The first thing that they expected to teachers was good habits, good smiles, and finally, good and fun teaching.

The primary school English teachers ranked Organization and Preparation as the most important characteristics as same as the result from Meksophawannagul (2015). The result in quantitative data of this study showed that the most important attribute was Organization and Preparation such as effective teaching methodology.

Conclusion

The result obtained from the quantitative and qualitative analysis indicated the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools as perceived by primary school students, primary school English teachers, and primary school administrators in term of five categories: a) rapport, b) delivery, c) fairness d) knowledge and credibility and e) organization and preparation.

The primary school students ranked the Rapport as the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools and following by Knowledge and Credibility, Organization and Preparation, Delivery and the last characteristic was Fairness.

The primary school English teachers ranked that the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools was Organization and Preparation and following by Rapport, Delivery, Fairness and the last characteristics was Knowledge and Credibility.

The primary school administrators ranked that the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools was Rapport as the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary school and following by Fairness, Knowledge and Credibility, Organization and Preparation and the last characteristic was Delivery

Regarding the same result from primary school students and primary school administrators, they ranked the Rapport as the most important characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools. They also thought that the effective English teacher was not the teacher who was the best in potential in English language and teaching but the effective English teacher in their opinions was a teacher who could motivate and encourage the students to learn English and opened mind to listen and willing to answer the questions. English teacher were the main part for students to study and got the knowledge from. Therefore, it was very important to have the effective in potential and teaching of English teachers as well as the effective in motivation and encouragement of English teachers. It could be assumed that primary school students and administrators mostly focused on how English teachers acted more than how English teachers taught.

On the other hand, primary school English teachers mostly focused on the Organization and Preparation. They believed in the planning process and the preparation for teaching. They thought that good preparation for teaching would affect the effectiveness of students' English language learning. However, primary school English teachers also gave the attention to Rapport because Rapport was ranked as the second characteristics. It could be assumed that primary school English teachers believed in the teaching and learning process. If the teacher had to prepare well, the result would occur with students well too.

Recommendation

For English teachers in primary schools

1. Primary school students and primary school English teachers have the differences perceptions toward the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary schools. Therefore English teachers should aware of the differences of students and need to be opened mind to change something to suite the students.
2. Having good relationship with students is also important for English teachers. Primary students have expectations of closeness, trust, and friendliness from teachers. Therefore, English teachers should be aware of the posture and good relationships with students.
3. In addition to the good teaching and learning arrangements, English teachers should create an environment that is conducive to student learning and organize activities that are fun and meaningful to students

For researchers

It is important to acknowledge the limitation of the study.

1. Some participants of this study were interview, not all of them. Moreover the information from the interview is not in-depth information.
2. There are some studies about the views on characteristics on effective English teacher in Thailand but only occurred on high schools or universities context. This was the first study which aimed to investigate the perceptions from students, teachers, and administrators of the characteristics on effective English teachers in primary school context.
3. There are 328 primary school students, 11 primary school English teachers and 6 primary school administrators are not the representative of all primary schools in Thailand. Therefore, I hope that the other researchers will investigate of characteristics on effective primary school English teachers on a large scale

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