

## **Qualities of an Ideal English Language Instructor through the Lens of Students**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to characterize and investigate qualities of an effective English language instructor as perceived by Thai English language learners. A scale-ranking questionnaire based on four categories - English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, organization and communication skills, and socio-affective skills - was administered to 99 foreign language learners majoring in Business English at an International University in Thailand. The item-objective congruence (IOC) index of each item ranged from 0.8 to 1.0. Semi-structured focus group interviews were carried out to elicit in-depth responses. The purpose of triangulation was of twofold-confirmation and completeness. The results showed that students expect an effective language instructor to have the ability to read, write, speak, and listen to English proficiently and to use easy language to aid understanding. Language educators may find valuable pedagogical insights from the findings. They can plan and execute practices and lessons that would encourage students to get more involved in the English language learning process and improve language acquisition.

*Keywords:* EFL, ideal language instructors, language instructor qualities, language teacher traits, teaching characteristics

### **Introduction**

A growing mass of research has attempted to identify the qualities of ideal English language teachers from the perspective of the main stakeholders, such as students (McBer, 2000; Witcher, Onwuegbuzie, & Minor, 2001; Saafin, 2005; Minor, Onwuegbuzie, Witcher, & James, 2002) but there seems a scarcity of relevant studies in the Thai context. The present study is an attempt to fill this existing gap by ranking and identifying the quality of an ideal English language instructor as perceived by the Thai students at an International University in Thailand, majoring in Business English.

In addition to the teacher's knowledge about the subject matters, other characteristics of the teacher such as teaching skills, teaching styles and personal traits will also affect the students' learning attitudes, motivation and the learning outcomes to some extent. The outcomes of teacher's inefficiency may promote poor motivation, unfavorable attitudes toward the teacher and the target language on the part of the learners. Therefore, teachers and administrators are in a better position to ensure that all students have appropriate learning opportunities. Prabhu (1990) pointed out that the characteristics of EFL teachers with positive attitudes and enthusiasm strongly correlated with increasing rapport between students and teachers, and appeared to promote productive learning. This indicates that the teacher's characteristics can both encourage and discourage the students' learning. In respect to the classroom atmosphere, this matter may be influenced by the teacher's characteristics as well.

As teacher quality is a crucial factor in promoting effective learning, it would be truly beneficial if teachers could know what students perceive as the characteristics of effective teachers. Moreover, knowing the students' needs and perceptions about an effective teacher might help create an emotionally positive and academically productive atmosphere in the classroom. These perceptions will help the teachers to understand what the students expect from them and enable them to develop themselves accordingly.

Erickson & Shultz (1992) stated, "Teachers can benefit from listening to students' perspectives because if they are to educate a wide variety of students well, they need to understand more about the wide variety of students that enter their classroom (Erickson & Shultz, 1992, as cited in Cohen, 2008, p. 8). It is in this paradigm that this study has been undertaken to document ESL students' expectations and perceptions of ideal language instructors. It is important to understand ESL students' expectations concerning effective teaching and to attempt to address the similarities or differences between those expectations and the actual teaching and support these students get from this specific institution. Therefore, knowing more detail about ESL students' perspectives could be useful in ESL teacher preparation. Specifically, this study aims to help instructors in the Department of Business English at an international university in Thailand to have a clearer understanding of ESL students' perceptions of certain effective teaching characteristics. By considering the ESL students' expectation of effective teaching, educational institutions can assist students in being successful learners.

### **Present Context**

Language instructors at the researchers' institution, through the lens of students, can be classified into three cultural archetypes according to their openness to criticism, power distance, and holistic comprehension of the course purpose. First, the "Traditionalist" archetype are ones with low openness to criticism, having rigidly hierarchical relationships with the students, and low holistic comprehension of course purpose. Language instructors with low holistic comprehension of course purpose already misunderstand the goal of the course, and so from their perspective, any criticism provided is either irrelevant or detrimental to the goals they have in mind for students. These goals are generally characterized by rote memorization and strictly defined answers. Deviation from these answers results in grade or score penalties within the assignment, oftentimes because the instructor fails to see the academic merit in the variant answer. Because of their adherence to strict grading criteria, students are jeopardized by a cookie-cutter methodology that punishes their ability to both think creatively and critically. They may reject constructive criticism by both peers and students.

The second archetype has been coined by the researchers as "clerk". It is defined by low openness to criticism, rigidly hierarchical teacher-student relationship, but higher holistic comprehension of course purpose. These instructors are still rigidly adherent to protocol and hierarchy but are so out of inertia. These instructors are more likely to recognize the value of variant answers and understand that the purpose of the course is to imbue the student with skills rather than to evaluate retention of phrases in a given book. They are more able to understand criticism and evaluate its merits, but do not incorporate this criticism into future improvements. This archetype is less detrimental to the development of students because they do acknowledge and encourage students to creatively work, but make the grading criteria clear when it comes to graded assignments and examinations. Lastly, the "Progressive" archetype has high openness to criticism, closer relationships to students, and a holistic comprehension of course purpose. These instructors generally treat syllabi as guidelines rather than strict rules and keep in mind the

underlying purpose of education instead. These instructors do not focus on examinations as goals, but as one of the many tools to imbue students with skills and knowledge.

### **Literature Review**

Identifying the qualities of an “effective teacher” is not an easy task, since the term “effective” can be interpreted differently by different people. Literature suggests that, depending on the criterion used to judge effectiveness, an “effective teacher” can mean a teacher who always produces a class of high-achievers, or a teacher who generally receives positive evaluations from supervisors and administrators (Stronge, 2002).

### **Role of English in Thailand**

According to Anurit, Selvarajah and Meyer (2011), unlike its neighboring countries, Thailand has never been colonized. Hence, as Wiriyachitra (2003, p.1) puts it, “Thailand has always been a country with only one official language which is Thai. He further explains that as Thailand needs to progress in terms of business, education, and tourism industries, Thais need to be able to demonstrate high proficiency for communication and negotiation with those who cannot speak Thai in today’s globalized world. As a result, English has become a necessity in Thai schools and universities. Also, Wongsothorn, Sukamolson, Chinthammit, Ratanothayanonth, and Noparumpa (1996) found that 97% of Thai students started their English education at the elementary level. It is also required in national entrance examinations. However, its status in the country is still a foreign language. The reason is because; English does not serve as an official language and people are not required to know the language for everyday functions.

The effects of globalization, world trade, and technology have encouraged the Thai government to reform its education policy. Under the National Education Act of B.E. 2542 (1999), which aims to promote a knowledge-based society and a competitive economy for sustainable development of the country (Ministry of Education, 2004a), English language instruction has been to improve language proficiency of Thai students (Wongsothorn, 2003; Wongsothorn, Khiranburana, & Chinnawongs, 2003) and equip students with useful learning processes and strategies to enhance the use of English for academic and social purposes (Ministry of Education, 2004b). The policy reformation has put pressure on English instruction particularly at a higher education level, as it is highly expected to prepare students before entering job markets. The changes are aimed to equip them with English knowledge as well as language and study skills before entering to the real-world industry (Wiriyachitra, 2003; Wongsothorn, Khiranburana, & Chinnawongs, 2003).

However, as mentioned by Wongsothorn et al. (1996, p.89) even though Thailand does not officially claim to be having second language, the most vital foreign language used as a means of international communication is English. This is also confirmed by Foley (2005) who stated that English has been added to the curriculum as a required subject in the majority of schools and all universities. Unlike other languages such as Japanese, Chinese or French which are offered in Thailand, English is the only language, according to Wongsothorn, that is taught in most language classes at all levels. In the business sector, English is often used alongside Thai. Many business documents are in both Thai and English (Wongsothorn et al., 1996).

### **Previous Studies**

Additional studies concerning the characteristics of effective English language teachers have been carried out in a variety of contexts. For example, Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009), in their examination of the opinions of English language teachers and learners, found that English language teachers believed that preparing lessons well, using

appropriate lesson plans and assessing what students have learned in a reasonable fashion are most important. On the other hand, the students who participated in the study expressed that the ability to teach English using the learners' mother tongue was the leading quality of an effective language teacher. Furthermore, while mastery of the target language, having accurate pedagogical knowledge, and being able to use specified techniques and methods were important for the teachers, the students opted for a teacher's positive personality. In a similar study carried out in Iran, Ghasemi and Hashemi (2011) investigated students' views of the characteristics of effective English language teachers under three main categories, including subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills. According to their findings, certain teacher characteristics such as reading and speaking proficiency; ability to arouse students' interest in learning English; and building students' self-confidence and motivation were seen as universally desirable. Moreover, many of their participants emphasized listening ability and grammatical proficiency as especially important.

In the Thai context, Wichadee (2010) explored the qualities of effective English language teachers and the results of the investigation suggested that teachers communication skills were of greatest significance to students. In contrast, the teachers surveyed in this study ranked English proficiency as the most important quality in effective language teaching. On the other hand, Chen and Lin (2009) found that junior high school students in China generally perceived teachers' personality and teacher-student relationships to be more important than their instructional competence; the teachers surveyed similarly believed that being enthusiastic, friendly, open-minded, respectful, and caring were the leading characteristics of effective English language teachers.

Moreover, a number of researchers have attempted to delineate the traits of exemplary foreign language teachers (Schulz, 2000), focusing on both the teaching practice and the personal attributes of successful classroom instructors. In terms of methods and approaches used, for instance, Brown (2009) found that American students favored a grammar-based approach, whereas their teachers preferred a more communicative classroom. This suggests that teachers and students may hold different perceptions and expectations with respect to the characteristics of an effective foreign language teacher. This theory is supported by Park and Lee (2006); their research revealed that, while English language teachers in Korea ranked pedagogical knowledge as more important than English language proficiency, Korean EFL students prioritized teachers' English skills over their instructional approach and socio-affective characteristics.

Generalizations are always problematic but it seems that in its traditional conception – by which is meant the commonly held perception of the nature of education and of teacher–student relationships – education in Thailand is transmissive and authoritarian in nature. Teachers are expected to impart knowledge to their students, with most classes being teacher-fronted and controlled. The predominant teaching style tends to be expository, with translation from English to Thai very common (Chayanuvat, 2003)

### **Research Question**

1. What are the qualities of an Effective English Language Teacher as perceived by the students?

**Methodology**

In order to yield more useful results through examining the data from a different angle, this study included a triangulated methodology. According to Merriam (1998) "...triangulation strengthens reliability as well as internal validity" (p. 207).

The ranking questionnaire was adapted from Yu-Hsin's(1999) inventory and adapted by the researchers with minor changes. Besides, to assure the researcher and the participants of the appropriateness and correctness of the instruments, the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) was applied. "The content validity of a measurement instrument for a theoretical construct reflects the degree to which the measurement instrument spans the domain of the construct's theoretical definition" (Rungtusanatham, 1998, p. 11). The chosen questionnaire item was based on the result of IOC from five experts which was no less than 0.8. The ones that were lesser than .8 were excluded from this study. Based on the experts' comment and suggestions some new questions were created. Also, the researchers piloted the questionnaire in order to examine its reliability and validity, at this stage the researchers eliminated and changed some parts of the questionnaire to improve its quality and readability.

Interviews are among the most frequently used research methods in applied linguistics (Block, 2000), one of the main reasons is because they can help researchers investigate phenomena that are difficult to retrieve from questionnaire alone. In this case, interviews were used to investigate students' beliefs and attitudes towards ideal language instructors to supplement and clarify questionnaire responses. Finally, semi-structured focus interviews were qualitatively analyzed for salient themes. According to Dörnyei (2007, p. 99), where an important criterion of sample selection is the convenience of the researcher then the members of the target population are selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria, hence, due to practical reasons, the participants for interview in this study were based on convenience sampling technique. Semi-structured interview, according to Dörnyei (2007), leaves room for respondents to answer without fix restrictions. To elicit in-depth responses, the interviews which were carried out with 30 students in a rather informal manner, were conducted in both language-English and Thai- as the students preferred. Ultimately, the responses were transcribed in a light of salient themes and patterns based on inductive analysis (Brice, 2005). The data was grouped into categories that reflected major themes.

**Findings and Discussions**

To answer the research question the researcher used tables of frequency distribution and mean. Table 1 shows the participants' demographic factors.

Table 1  
*Demographic Factors*

Profile Factors	Particulars	n	%
Sex	Male	28	28
	Female	71	72
Nationality	Thai	90	91
	Non Thai	9	9
Age	18 ≥	1	1
	19-21	16	16
	22-24	72	73
	≥25	10	10

International students form only 9% of the participants in the study, and are likely heterogeneous with all the divergent cultural and educational contexts that implies. As the vast majority of participants are EFL Thai university students, findings from this study should be interpreted with caution when applied in other contexts. The findings are also based on the preferences of students, but these preferences may not translate directly into better learning outcomes.

Table 2  
*Organization and Communication Skills Ranking*

Organization and Communication Skills	Ranking
Use easy language to aid understanding	3.19
Ability to plan the lessons clearly	4.08
Ability to make courses interesting	4.54
Ability to guide and train students towards independent learning	5.17
Ability to prepare appropriate material	5.73
Ability to analyze students' needs	5.75
Encourage students to use the English language at all times in the classroom	5.82
Be helpful to students in and outside classroom	6.20
Maintain good classroom atmosphere using authority, if necessary	6.71
Using the students' native language when necessary	7.79

Table 2 shows the average rank of importance that students assign to certain traits or characteristics, with a lower rank denoting greater importance and a higher rank denoting lesser importance. From the results, students most prefer that professors use simple language within a classroom setting. This does not mean that professors should forego advanced vocabulary in all situations, only that professors should be aware that students may not have the lexical breadth required to understand complex explanations, and that additional care should be taken to make sure students are satisfied with the answers to their queries and are not discouraged from asking other questions.

Students strongly prefer that lessons are planned clearly. An explanation for this within the local university context is that many professors do not plan classes clearly. Some professors loosely stick to schedules and can seldom provide a concrete answer on what the class plan is two weeks from the present. Students are negatively impacted as they are unable to determine how best to allocate their time or create plans in advance. Students also prefer that professors make courses interesting. While this finding is fairly intuitive, many professors still adhere to the traditional model of sitting in front of class and lecturing, oftentimes reading the exact words off the PowerPoint slides shown on the projector. Student retention of material taught in this manner is likely lower than activity-based learning, or any other method of teaching with involves the active engagement of students.

The findings are similar to the findings from Brown (2007). In her descriptive-correlation study, which consisted all undergraduate students within the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) at the Ohio State University during

Spring Quarter 2007, the students rated communicating Clearly as the most important component that they perceived contribute to effective teaching (p.84). Also, Guskey (1988), Dunkin and Barnes (1986), and Sherman, et al. (1987) noted that “explain clearly” is one of the most important characteristic in effective teaching.

Table 3  
*Pedagogical Knowledge*

Pedagogical Knowledge	Ranking
Develop students’ language skill through working in pairs or group	4.64
Be flexible with grading	4.78
Avoid direct criticism of students when language errors are made	4.81
Focus on learning outcomes and growth, not content taught	4.82
Praise students for their effort	5.35
Let students have some control over the learning process	5.53
Use various materials including video, audio, and multimedia	5.96
Encourage students to learn English outside the classroom	6.26
Provide constant feedback	6.37
Vary his/her delivery methods	6.43
Develop students’ language skill through working in pairs or group	4.64

With regards to pedagogical knowledge (table 3), students strongly prefer to work in groups which may reduce the pressure on students to perform well independently, and allow students to share knowledge bilaterally without social consequence. This is partly supported by students’ aversion to direct criticism. These factors may play an important role for learning outcomes in strongly hierarchal cultures where students may fear giving the wrong answer in front of their peers and their professors and from their perspective, suffer humiliation. Group and pair work also allows a greater breadth of skills to be used that are not simply limited to direct language skill and afford students greater flexibility in applying these skills, increasing student engagement and therefore retention.

Students also strongly prefer flexibility with grading. Many EFL professors follow the syllabus rigidly or believe that there is only one right answer. While this may hold true for certain disciplines, it is certainly not true for a language education. Language acquisition relies more on immersion and exposure to varying types of literature and media to gain a more complete understanding. This is not to say that professors should lower their standards of what a right answer should be, but rather that professors should understand that there are multiple valid ways to answer a question that cannot simply be divined from EFL textbooks. This perspective chimes strongly with students’ preferences for professors to focus on learning outcomes and growth over content taught. Students may be dissatisfied when they provide an answer which may be valid for a real-life situation, which the professor may not accept as it may go beyond the professor’s framework of validity. Ultimately professors should question whether every activity effectively provides an avenue for students to improve their language skills, or whether it’s simply an activity to complete for mark allocation.

The range of standard deviations for the rankings range from 2.54 to 3.21. It is interesting to note that both ranking and deviation coincide for students' preferences for working in pairs and groups. This contrasts with the students' preference for flexible grading, which students strongly prefer on average but has the highest deviation out of all pedagogical knowledge categories. One possible explanation for this sheer difference in opinion amongst the student population could be that some students may provide answers they view as valid in contrast to the instructor's opinion, whilst other students see no need for flexibility as they are able to regurgitate the exact prescribed answer to the question.

Table 4  
*Socio-affective Skills Ranking*

Socio-affective Skills	Ranking
Treats students fairly	4.12
Listen to students' points of view and opinion	4.56
Be polite and patient	4.93
Be flexible and open to criticism	5.13
Be approachable and friendly	5.31
Ability to build students' confidence	5.63
Ability to make courses interesting and motivate students	5.77
Provide opportunity for students to express themselves	5.93
Have an interest in students	6.49
Be neat and tidy in appearance	6.96

According to data from table 4, students strongly prefer to be treated fairly. This applies to both fair treatment by instructors across different individuals, and fair treatment from the perspective of individual dignity. Fair treatment is likely systematic and symmetrical treatment of students by professors regardless of their relationship with individual students with regards to classroom manner and grading. Indeed, multiple other studies suggest that perceived fairness has a large impact on satisfaction.

Many of the highly ranked categories within socio-affective skills are synonymous with preference to be treated with respect. As such, students prefer to be listened to, have their opinions valued, for these opinions to be evaluated according to their merits, and to be treated with kindness, patience, and respect. Whilst this may be intuitive for people in less hierarchal cultures, Thailand has strong social and organizational hierarchies evidenced in both language structure and in practice. Professors are less likely to respect the wishes or opinions of students, and students are less likely to raise any complaints that the same professor might engender in a less hierarchal environment. It is then no surprise for the student bodies in higher education institutions that are meant to foster skill development and critical thinking to chafe from inequitable treatment.

Students place little value on opportunities for expression, for professors to have an interest in their affairs, or for the neat and tidy appearance of professors because it does not impact on their fundamental need to be treated with respect and for their opinions to be taken seriously. None of the bottom three metrics within the socio-affective skills category address the serious evaluation of students' ideas and completely miss the mark on what the student values as demonstrated with these results. These results are consistent with

Çubukçu (2010) which indicated that successful teachers must embrace the ideal of caring about students and their learning. In addition, language instructors must have the ability to use a variety of instructional methods in their classrooms, create a relaxing environment, and adapt to the needs of students regarding language learning motivation and interests.

Besides, although not directly related to the field of English language teaching, a study conducted by Yilmaz (2011) explored the perceptions of pre-service teachers enrolled in various majors at a Turkish university. His findings revealed that the majority of the participants expressed preference for warm, kind, sincere, friendly, sociable and familiar teachers who were enthusiastic, excited about teaching, dynamic, and motivating.

Table 5  
*English Proficiency Ranking*

English Proficiency	Ranking
Ability to read, write, speak, and listen to English well	1.82
Explains the subject matter in English clearly	2.67
Possess extensive culture comprehension and provide cultural information about target language's culture	3.39
Have a good knowledge of English grammar	3.44
Emphasis on error corrections	3.68

According to table 5 students place the most importance on their professors having a strong command of the English language and for professors to explain the subject matter in English clearly. This is likely due to the desire to have reputable professors that are experts within their field, otherwise students would have to individually evaluate the merits of the course content for themselves. This preference may be symptomatic of students' experiences with professors that lack expertise and so become dissatisfied with the quality of education.

Besides, 91% of respondents answered yes when asked whether they believed the professors cared about their development, while 9% reported otherwise. When asked if they thought that professors have knowledge on the subject matter, 95% answered yes and 5% answered no. When asked if they thought professors knew how to teach, 95% answered yes and 5% answered no. When asked whether they thought professors provide qualified feedback, 93% of respondents answered yes, and 7% answered no. When asked whether they feel they have been graded unfairly on an English course, 39% answered yes and 61% answered no.

Students largely have a positive attitude towards professors, with the vast majority believing that professors care about their development, that professors have both educational expertise and subject matter expertise, and that professors provide qualified feedback. However, a minority of students believe that they have been graded unfairly in an English course. This supports the view that professors are too inflexible in their grading schemes as answers that would be valid in more reputable institutions are viewed as wrong because they did not originate from the book or does not conform with the lecturer's thoughts.

Based on the interview result, major themes- rapport, delivery, fairness, knowledge and credibility, and language proficiency- were the top five attributes a language instructor must possess according to the students. Rapport attributes indicate that students appreciate lecturers and teachers who take an interest in their students and in developing classroom atmosphere. Delivery attributes were generally discipline specific, with studies from ELT

contexts producing useful data about the mode and content of instruction. Fairness emphasized lecturer impartiality of classroom interaction and grading, and transparency of curricula and methodology. Knowledge and credibility attributes revealed that students wanted language instructors to be competent scholars or experienced practitioners in their subject area. Finally, language proficiency attributes indicated that students wanted lecturers to have good command of both written and spoken English. On the other hand, the “opposite of an ideal teacher” can be summarised as a person who is disorganised, has lack of attention to students, gives lots of criticism, is suspicious about students’ work, and who behaves inconsistently.

As Pettis (1997) notes, professionally competent English teachers are profoundly knowledgeable in language, and in line with the findings of Park and Lee (2006), Brosh (1996), and Kalabic (2005), most of the participants in this investigation perceived knowledge of language to be a vital factor in characterizing an effective English language instructor. This also confirms the findings of Calabria (1960), Feldman (1976) and Feldman (1988) who had found mastery of subject matter as a characteristic of an effective teacher.

This investigation established what the students felt were the attributes of effective EFL instructors. The explanations of why such attributes were identified and how they could be implemented were also quite informative and useful for gaining deeper insights into the motivations behind the students’ perceptions. These findings have specific pedagogical implications for existing and prospective EFL lecturers and teachers.

### **Limitations**

Students may assess various aspects of teaching, from course content to specific teaching practices and behaviours.; although students have the most contact with their instructors and are the direct consumers of teachers’ performance delivery in teaching, their ratings may be susceptible to bias because they lack adequate knowledge about the full context of teaching. However, studies validate that student rating to be considered as part of teacher performance evaluation method but never as the primary evaluation benchmark.

Furthermore, the instrument might also be considered limited. Specifically, the validity of responses might have been affected by the fact that the students’ perceptions were collected through a short self-report survey. The number of survey questions might not been sufficient for students to express their views of effective teachers. Also, students may have been reluctant to report behaviors because they were still have classes with the instructors.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

When the beliefs of students and their instructors align and students agree with the teaching approach, effective learning is enhanced. To achieve this alignment, lecturers and students must first understand student beliefs so that they can identify possible areas of discord and then take action either to amend their own instruction or change erroneous student perceptions. Unfortunately, there is very little literature about student perceptions of effective teaching and lecturing in Thai EFL contexts. The researchers hope that other researchers from diverse EFL contexts will carry out similar studies and add to the small pool of knowledge that currently exists about this topic. This knowledge will help lecturers, teachers, and student teachers to understand their students better and become more effective lecturers and teachers. Gordon and Stuecher (1992) stated that students must not fear payback based on their evaluation or they will not be willing to be honest in their feedback. Surveys in the future research on this particular topic conducted by a third-

party (neither the students' current instructors nor staff at the program) should be carried out in order to have a better understanding of students' expectations on the characteristics of an ideal language instructor.

Also, the significance of the interpersonal relationship between students and teachers for students' successful school adjustment has been widely recognized in research addressing kindergarten, primary and secondary education (Bernstein, Yamashiro & Noam, 2013; Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011). To date, little is known about how interactions are perceived, evaluated and experienced by students and teachers in the Thai context. Therefore, future research should attempt to establish the importance at the University level, especially in Thai context. Many universities in Thailand have relatively large student drop-out rates, with high human and financial costs hence, it is relevant if enhancing students' perception can help to reduce this negative trend. Another equally important factor is that the need to belong also affects university teachers. Thus, the researchers conclude that research on students' perception of their instructors in higher education should be an integral part of the larger body of future research and discourse on the quality of teaching and learning in higher education.

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