Exploring Students' Perception of Lecturers' Teaching Styles in Academic Reading Class

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Abstract: This study examines students' perceptions of lecturers' teaching styles at Esa Unggul University, Tangerang, based on five teaching style framework: Expert, Formal Authority, Personal Model, Facilitator, and Delegator. The objectives of the study are to identify the teaching styles preferred by students, explore the reasons for these preferences, and analyze their perceived impact on learning outcomes in English language learning. A qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach was employed. Data were collected from 11 students of the 2023 Academic Reading class through semi-structured interviews and a closed-ended questionnaire using a Likert scale. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis with the assistance of *Atlas.ti* software. The findings reveal that students most strongly favored a combination of the Expert and Delegator teaching styles. The Expert style was appreciated for lecturers' mastery of content, clarity of explanation, and corrective feedback, which enhanced students' confidence and understanding. The Delegator style was valued for encouraging learner autonomy, critical thinking, and collaborative learning, enabling students to take greater responsibility for their academic progress. Additionally, the Facilitator style supported active participation, while the Formal Authority and Personal Model styles provided structure and clear guidance. Overall, students perceived that a balanced integration of expertise, structure, and autonomy contributed to more effective and engaging learning experiences. This study highlights the importance of flexible, student-centered teaching strategies in English language education and provides pedagogical insights for lecturers in higher education.

Keywords: student perception; English language learning; Grasha's model qualitative research; teaching style

Introduction

The history of teacher teaching styles reflects the evolution of education from ancient times to the present. In ancient times, education was informal and direct, with the teacher as the authority who transmitted knowledge (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In the Middle Ages, education became more structured, but still authoritarian, with an emphasis on memorization. The Industrial Revolution in the 19th century brought changes, with the emergence of methods such as Montessori, which emphasized active learning experiences (Reeve, 2006). In the 20th century, theories such as Behaviorism, Cognitivism, and Constructivism began to influence teaching styles, focusing on reinforcement, thought processes, and active learning. In the 21st century, with advances in technology, teaching styles have become more diverse, integrating online learning and collaborative approaches such as project-based learning(Ma, 2021). Over time, teaching styles continue to adapt to meet student needs and the challenges of the times, creating more effective learning environments and supporting students' holistic development (Furrer & Skinner, 2003).

A teaching style is any systematic accumulation of needs, beliefs, and behaviors that faculty manifest in the classroom (Grasha, 2002). The teaching style adopted by an educator plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of the learning process (A. F. Grasha, 1994). According to Anthony Frans Grasha, there are five main teaching styles: Expert, Formal Authority, Personal Model, Facilitator, and Delegator, each of which reflects a teacher's approach to delivering material and managing interactions with students. Understanding these styles helps teachers adapt methods to students' learning needs and the educational context. additionally, teaching style also outlines a teacher's consistent approach to delivering instruction, engaging with students, and managing the classroom, as described by Grasha's theory in the educational literature reviewed earlier. Also, teaching style can influence how students learn and grasp new ideas, making it an essential part of the learning process in education. Teacher-centered teaching styles (e.g., expert or formal authority) and student-centered styles (e.g., facilitator, personal model, delegator) constitute distinct groups, each with varying impacts on student engagement and performance. A study in elementary school science classes found that facilitator and delegator styles resulted in significantly higher academic achievement than expert or formal authority styles in general science. Furthermore, a literature review in the Indonesian context also revealed that interactive and differentiated teaching styles consistently increased student learning interest compared to traditional lecture-based approaches.

Teachers' teaching styles are related to self-determination theory. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a psychological framework that emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation and the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness(Guay, 2022). Autonomy is the need to feel in control of one's actions and decisions, allowing individuals to act following their values and interests rather than being influenced by external pressures. This sense of self-direction enhances intrinsic motivation, as people engage willingly in activities that resonate with them. Competence refers to the desire to feel effective and capable in one's endeavors, driving individuals to develop skills, overcome challenges, and achieve mastery. When people perceive themselves as competent, they are more likely to embrace new challenges and persist through difficulties, which boosts their self-esteem and confidence. Finally, emphasizes the need for social connections and a sense of belonging, highlighting the importance of meaningful relationships and community. When individuals feel connected to others, they are more inclined to engage in collaborative activities, which enhances their motivation and well-being. Together, the fulfillment of these three needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—promotes intrinsic motivation, personal growth, and psychological health(Deci & Ryan, 2000).

In an educational context, a teacher's teaching style can significantly influence student motivation, either by supporting or undermining these needs. Teachers who adopt an autonomy-supportive style encourage students to make choices and take initiative in their learning, leading to higher levels of intrinsic motivation(Reeve, 2006). Furthermore, when teachers provide constructive feedback and set appropriately challenging tasks, they can enhance students' sense of competence. Relatedness, or the sense of connectedness students feel in the classroom, is also crucial; teaching styles that foster. Research indicates that autonomy-supportive teaching styles are positively associated with self-regulated learning behaviors, while controlling teaching styles can lead to decreased motivation among students. For instance, Wang found that teachers who help autonomy support students satisfy their psychological needs, which enhances self-regulated learning and academic performance(Chia, Liu Woon, Keng, John Wang Chee, Ryan, 2016). Similarly, Cheon emphasizes that training teachers to adopt autonomy-supportive styles fosters intrinsic motivation and self-regulated behaviors in students (Cheon et al., 2020). A systematic review by Reeve also summarizes empirical studies showing that autonomy-supportive teaching behaviors—such as listening, providing meaningful rationales, and encouraging student questions—strengthen students' intrinsic motivation and self-regulated learning (Reeve, 2006). Ultimately, the teaching style not only influences immediate learning outcomes but also has long-term implications for students' attitudes toward learning, as those who experience autonomy and support are more likely to develop a lifelong love of learning (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Educators should strive to balance structure and autonomy in their classrooms by providing choice and encouraging collaboration (Reeve, 2006).

Professional development programs ought to underscore the significance of implementing SDT principles to augment students' motivation and educational experiences(Admiraal et al.,

2024). All of the theories above are about figuring out what teaching styles student like best, why they like them, and how they think this teaching style can affect their learning. The theories mentioned above all stress how important it is to know how students like to learn. They look at the different things that affect the preferences and try to figure out why students like some teaching styles more than others. The teacher's preferred teaching style can have a big effect on how well students learn. By learning about what students like, teachers can change how they teach to better fit each student's learning style, which will improve the overall learning experience. This alignment not only makes the learning environment more interesting and effective, but it also helps students do better and be happier with their education. To help all kinds of students succeed in the classroom, it is important to know how different teaching styles affect learning outcomes.

In the context of the English Education Program, one of the major challenges in academic reading classes is the mismatch between lecturers' teaching approaches and students' preferred learning styles. Previous studies have shown that while the concept of learning styles is widely recognized among educators, the empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of aligning teaching with students' preferred learning styles remains limited (Pashler et al., 2008). However, in practice, many students still perceive that differences between their learning preferences and lecturers' teaching styles can hinder their engagement and comprehension in academic reading classes(Cuevas, 2015). Another issue is that the lack of alignment between learning strategies and students' individual styles often creates barriers in academic reading(Naimie et al., 2010). For example, reflective learners may prefer to read slowly and take notes, while active learners may learn more effectively through discussion and group work. When reading classes are designed without considering these variations, students struggle to apply appropriate strategies, which affects their ability to analyze academic texts critically. This highlights the importance of understanding not only the complexity of academic texts but also the diverse ways in which students approach them.

Furthermore, motivation and confidence in academic reading are strongly influenced by whether students feel their learning preferences are acknowledged. Learners whose styles are supported in class tend to engage more and perform better, while those whose preferences are overlooked often view academic reading as tedious or overly difficult(Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011). For instance, kinesthetic learners may find it challenging to remain motivated during passive, text-heavy tasks but may thrive in interactive or task-based activities(Shanti Manipuspika, 2020). These issues suggest that difficulties in academic reading are not caused solely by the linguistic complexity of texts but also by the extent to which lecturers' teaching styles accommodate students' learning styles(Reid, 1987). Considering these challenges, it becomes essential to explore how lecturers' teaching styles influence students' experiences in academic reading(A. F. Grasha, 1996). Since students have diverse learning preferences, identifying which type of lecturer's teaching style is most preferred can provide valuable insights for improving classroom practices(Fleming & Mills, 1992). Therefore this research is

going to answer this question: *What type of lecturer's teaching style is preferred by students in academic reading classes?*

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is the research's main objective, a statement that explains what the researcher aims to achieve. The aim of the study serves as the general direction of the research and forms the basis for determining the problem formulation, research questions, methods, and data analysis. The aim of the study describes the overall focus of the research, not the detailed steps. The aim of this study is to explore students' perceptions regarding different teaching approaches and to understand how these preferences may influence their motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes in academic reading.

Benefits of the Study

Two categories benefit from this research, namely practical and theoretical. The benefits of this study are evident both practically and theoretically. Practically, the findings are expected to provide valuable insights for lecturers in academic reading classes by identifying the type of teaching style most preferred by students, allowing lecturers to adjust and improve their instructional methods to create a more engaging and effective learning environment. By aligning their teaching style with students' needs, lecturers can enhance students' motivation, participation, and comprehension in reading activities, which may also lead to better academic performance. The results may further serve as a useful reference for curriculum developers and educational institutions in designing professional development programs that focus on strengthening lecturers' ability to employ teaching strategies suited to students' preferences. Theoretically, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge regarding teaching styles and learner perceptions, particularly in the field of academic reading. It adds empirical evidence that supports or refines established frameworks such as Grasha's Teaching Styles Theory, while also extending its application to language education contexts. Moreover, the study can be a foundation for future researchers who wish to investigate the interplay between teaching styles, student engagement, and learning outcomes, not only in academic reading but also in other skill-based courses within higher education.

Methods

Research Design

In this study, the research approach employed was a qualitative methodology. Quoting from (Creswell & Creswell, 2018)Qualitative methods are defined as research procedures for collecting original data by examining books, articles, and social media texts. Research that investigates and offers a deeper understanding of real-world issues is known as qualitative research(Moser & Korstjens, 2017). However, case study designs are valuable for exploring a bounded system over time, using multiple sources. Together, the use of interviews and the case study method supports the goal of providing a detailed, nuanced understanding of the research

topic. This design makes it possible to explore both the personal and contextual dimensions of the phenomenon, offering insights that are grounded in real-world experience(Hayden, 2023). Ultimately, the descriptive qualitative design enables the researcher to present the voices of participants authentically and respectfully, while also highlighting key themes and patterns that contribute to a deeper understanding of the issue at hand.

Location and Time of Research

This study would examine how the teacher's teaching style is applied by lecturers at the Faculty of English Education. Distributing questionnaires and interviews at the research location, carried out at Esa Unggul University, especially during face-to-face meetings and meeting schedules with lecturers, aims to facilitate the analysis of phenomena in the study. In addition, the research process would be carried out from June to August 2025, with the terms and conditions that apply and are agreed upon by various participants. This aims to ensure that the research runs according to the plan that has been prepared and meets the quality standards that have been set. By determining a specific location and time, it is hoped that this research can be carried out efficiently and effectively to produce findings that are valuable and relevant to the learning methods provided by lecturers to students in the English Education Department.

Research Subjects

This study focuses on the teaching styles of lecturers at Esa Unggul University, focusing on students, with the aim of analyzing the research questions. Participants in this study will be selected based on their major and year. This aims to obtain specific and detailed research answers regarding how students perceive the teaching styles of lecturers on campus and what teaching styles are preferred by students at Esa Unggul University. The selection criteria include active students currently studying at Esa Unggul University, students in the English Faculty who are willing to be interviewed. The students are from the academic reading class, class of 2023 at Esa Unggul University, located in Tangerang. There are 11 participants in this reading class. Participants are still active students at the university, so their insights are very valuable in understanding the lecturers' teaching styles. Informed consent was obtained directly from all participants who will be involved before the study began; this is intended to ensure that participants fully understand the purpose and procedures of the study. Participant involvement in this research was completely voluntary and without any coercion, thus allowing for in-depth data collection while maintaining a thorough understanding of the feasibility of the problem at hand.

Research Instrument

Research instruments would be essential for gathering accurate and reliable information to address research questions. This part focuses on the interview guide and the researcher would be using the closed-ended questionnaire, which covers how it was developed, its structure, its purpose, and how to maintain construct validity. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method, with in-depth semi-structured interviews as its primary instrument. method with

complementary quantitative instruments and Close closed-ended Questionnaire as the supporting. Triangulation data involves utilizing multiple data sources to examine a phenomenon from different perspectives, enhancing the depth and validity of the research findings(Denzin, 1979).

In-depth Semi-structured Interview

The interviews are designed to be flexible, allowing a predetermined set of questions to guide the conversation while also providing space for the researcher to explore new themes and gain deeper insights (Ruslin et al., 2022). This instrument is important because it will be used to answer the "why" and "how" questions behind participants' experiences, providing rich contextual data that cannot be captured through a simple survey. This framework emphasizes conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews to gather rich qualitative data. Using this method provides a clear structure for exploring the interviewee's personal experiences, opinions, and feelings(Adams, 2015). It highlights building rapport with participants, asking open-ended questions, and allowing the conversation to flow naturally while staying focused on the research topic(Hyman & Sierra, 2016). This process will be defined in appendix to shows the relationship between student perception with the type of teacher teaching style that the student like.

Closed-Ended Questionnaire

Similar to interviews, this closed-ended questionnaire was designed to answer questions that align with the theoretical framework according to Grasha's theory (2002). The scale from this theory was used to determine responses to the five types of teacher teaching styles. Of all the interview questions I've adapted into the questionnaire, I will use only those that address the key points of each teaching style. Using this method, developed by Rensis Likert, it will provide a systematic way to measure attitudes or opinions by asking respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements(Likert, 1932).

In this study, data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed through a manual data tabulation process. Data tabulation is the process of organizing raw data into tables to make them more systematic, concise, and easy to understand(Kothari,2014). Manual data tabulation is the process of organizing and calculating research data into simple tables to facilitate further analysis. This process does not use specialized statistical software, but is carried out manually with the help of simple tables and basic calculations in Microsoft Excel. In qualitative research, data processing often involves manually calculated tabulation techniques to analyze information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. This process begins with systematic data collection, followed by grouping data into relevant categories, thus facilitating inductive analysis and drawing conclusion(Creswell, 2018). Thus, manual tabulation techniques are an effective tool for systematically processing and presenting qualitative data.

To measure students' level of agreement with each statement in the questionnaire, a five-point Likert scale will be used: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5

= Strongly Agree. This scale will allow for data collection and will encourage comparison of student responses.

Table 1

Focused question for the questionnaire

No.	Type of Teaching Style	Focused Question	Code
1.	Expert Style	Achieve Learning Objectives	Exp5
2.	Authority	1. High Standard Assessing 2. Structured Teaching Approach	Au 2 & Au3
3.	Demonstrator	Demonstrates how to read and analyze complex texts	Dem1
4.	Delegator	The lecturer encourages me to manage my time and work independently	Del3
5.	Facilitator	1. Lecturers provide additional resources 2. Lecturers guide me in improving my reading comprehension	Fa5 & Fa1

Data Collection Techniques

For data collection, the researcher used semi-structured interviews and a closed-ended Questionnaire. To maintain focus and consistency in research, researchers often develop a predetermined list of questions. This carefully crafted set of questions, created before data collection, directly reflects the purpose of the study. By using these pre-planned questions, the researcher ensures that each participant addresses the core topics of interest, allowing for more efficient and comparable analysis of the collected data. For this data collection, the researcher also used a homogeneous sampling. This homogeneous sampling focused on English Department students at Esa Unggul University, Tangerang. This emphasis minimized external factors to focus on the shared teaching experience. I will interview students to gain their opinions on how their lecturers teach in pedagogy classes to reduce bias and maintain consistency in the research(Shaheen et al., 2018).

Data Analysis Techniques

This research used thematic analysis methodology to investigate the data. Thematic analysis is a common way to discover patterns and themes in qualitative research data. This method is easily adaptable and can be applied to a variety of theoretical approaches and research settings (Naeem et al., 2023). The thematic analysis process has several steps: identifying the data,

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coding it, formulating research questions, reviewing the data repeatedly, and then demonstrating what the data indicates. Some methods use frameworks or structured diagrams to help build or refine theory within existing research. Braun and Clarke's method emphasizes explicit and implicit meanings, using coding to guide interviews toward emerging themes and assessing each student's readiness for independent learning(Braun & Clarke, 2006).

First, there is an instance in which audio or recording sessions are converted to written text or scripts that incorporate research data. Step two is to read through the transcripts multiple times to arrive at a rich understanding of the answers given by each student or interviewee. Finally, key points are identified and arranged to emphasize salient topics related to the subject. Then, codes are categorized into categories and subcategories, which constitute the main themes and subthemes of the data. This process includes six stages: becoming familiar, coding, searching for themes, reviewing, naming themes, and reporting the findings. The researcher also employed Atlas in this study. Atlas. ti is a software to analyze the qualitative data from the interviews and documents. Atlas. ti software includes features for conducting the storage and analysis of non-numeric data, as well as for detecting significant patterns and themes(Lewis, 2017).

The researcher collected data with inputting the transcript interview and entered it into an Atlas. ti project to start analyzing. After the data was collected, the researcher sorted the information with codes that highlighted the important themes. This coding assisted in ordering the data and in the identification of relationships between the themes across the data set. The researcher wrote a report that highlighted the important results of my analysis when the researcher was done. Atlas. ti helped me code and analyze, and make a nice, clear report with data citations to back up my points. Atlas. ti greatly enhanced the richness and depth of the qualitative analysis by providing more detailed sharing of the content of the material under study. Using Atlas.ti to enhance the analytical quality of the data and academic rigor of the findings will increase the meaningfulness of the findings of this research(Payambarpour, 2013).

Results

Figure 12 presents the types of teaching styles preferred by students. The data from the chart shows that the Expert teaching style emerged as the most frequently selected and favored by the students. This finding is supported by qualitative data obtained from interviews, which further reveal that students did not favor a single teaching style in isolation. Instead, they predominantly preferred a combination of the Expert and Delegator teaching style.

Figure 1

Type of teacher teaching style that students like
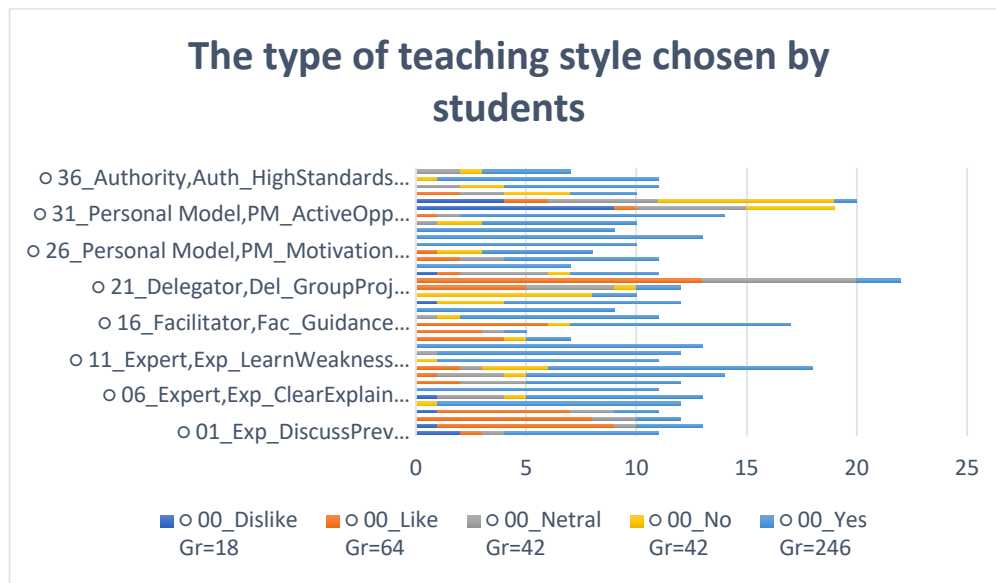
The data from the chart clearly indicates that the Expert teaching style is the most frequently chosen and preferred by students. Based on the qualitative interview data, students predominantly preferred and valued a teaching approach that effectively combines two styles: the Expert and the Delegator.

1. Expert Style (The "Guide")

Why they chose it: Students expressed a strong need for a lecturer with deep mastery of the subject. This expertise was crucial because it translated into clear, step-by-step explanations that made complex material manageable. It built trust and credibility, reducing their anxiety. They also highly valued the lecturer's role in providing accurate corrective feedback, ensuring they learned the correct information.

2. Delegator Style (The "Facilitator")

Why they chose it: Students appreciated opportunities to apply knowledge themselves. They found value in group discussions and projects that fostered collaboration and deeper understanding. Furthermore, tasks that required them to analyze articles and provide evidence promoted critical thinking and independence, skills they recognized as essential for their academic future.

In conclusion, the students did not see these as separate choices. They preferred a blended approach where the lecturer's expert knowledge provided a secure foundation (*what to learn*), and delegator methods allowed them to actively develop skills through practice (*how to use it*). This combination effectively built both their competence and their confidence.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore students' perceptions of lecturers' teaching styles and to understand which styles were considered most effective in supporting learning in an Academic Reading class. Overall, the findings indicate that students prefer a balanced teaching approach that integrates strong academic expertise, clear instructional structure, and opportunities for learner autonomy. This combination reflects students' expectations of lecturers not only as sources of knowledge but also as facilitators of independent learning.

From a scientific perspective, the preference for the Expert teaching style highlights the importance of lecturers' mastery of content in shaping students' learning confidence and academic security. Rather than merely receiving information, students rely on lecturers' expertise to clarify complex material and provide accurate guidance. This suggests that, in academically demanding courses such as Academic Reading, students prioritize cognitive clarity and instructional reliability over interpersonal factors. The emphasis on direct corrective feedback further reinforces the role of expert knowledge as a foundation for effective learning.

The positive perception of the Formal Authority style indicates that instructional authority, when applied through clear standards and procedures, is not perceived as restrictive. Instead, it contributes to a structured learning environment that reduces uncertainty and supports student focus. This finding suggests that authority in teaching functions most effectively when it provides academic direction and consistency rather than control, especially in higher education contexts.

Regarding the Facilitator and Delegator styles, students valued opportunities to participate actively, think critically, and take responsibility for their learning. However, autonomy alone was not considered sufficient. Students expected guidance, feedback, and clear expectations alongside independence. This indicates that effective learner-centered teaching involves a balance between freedom and support, allowing students to develop academic skills while maintaining confidence in their learning process.

Overall, the findings are largely consistent with existing perspectives on student-centered teaching, yet they also reveal a contextual difference. In this study, students emphasized academic dimensions—such as clarity, expertise, and structured guidance—more strongly than relational aspects. This suggests that perceptions of teaching styles may be influenced by course type and academic demands. Consequently, this study underscores the need for lecturers to adopt flexible teaching strategies that align academic rigor with opportunities for autonomy, thereby enhancing students' engagement and learning effectiveness in English language education.

Conclusion

This study indicates that students' perceptions of teaching styles in English language education are shaped by the balance between academic rigor and participatory approaches. While students respected the clarity, structure, and reliability offered by the Expert, Authority, and Demonstrator styles, they also emphasized the importance of participation, autonomy, and critical thinking encouraged by the Facilitator and Delegator styles. These findings suggest that effective teaching should not rely on a single style but instead combine structured explanations with opportunities for interaction, collaboration, and independent exploration. To achieve this balance, lecturers are encouraged to adopt concrete, student-centered strategies such as organizing group discussions, posing open-ended questions, providing approachable communication channels, and offering constructive feedback. By integrating these practices, lecturers can create a classroom environment that maintains academic discipline while also fostering confidence, motivation, and active engagement among students.

Limitations

Despite these valuable insights, this study has several limitations. Despite these valuable insights, this study is not without limitations. First, it was conducted within a single English language education program, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other institutions or academic settings. Second, the data were collected exclusively through interviews and questionnaires, without incorporating classroom observations or teacher perspectives that could have offered additional triangulation and validation. Third, the study relied on students' self-reported perceptions, which may be influenced by subjectivity and personal bias. These limitations indicate that the results should be interpreted with caution and within the specific context of this research.

In addition, the suggestions for future research could be strengthened. Future studies are encouraged to examine how teaching style preferences may vary across semester levels, or between male and female students, in order to capture more nuanced patterns of perception. It would also be valuable to include teacher perspectives and classroom observations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how teaching styles are enacted and received in practice. Furthermore, future research could explore how students' preferences for certain teaching styles relate to their academic performance, confidence, or motivation, thereby offering insights into the practical implications of aligning teaching strategies with learning outcomes. Such efforts would not only enhance the validity of findings but also contribute to more contextually grounded recommendations for effective teaching in English language education.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, several recommendations emerge for research, teaching practice, and institutional development. For researchers, future studies should expand to multiple institutions and employ diverse methods such as classroom observations, teacher reflections, and longitudinal tracking of learning outcomes to provide deeper insights into how teaching styles affect students over time. For lecturers, it is recommended to adopt a balanced teaching

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approach that combines structured guidance, clear instructions, and academic rigor with opportunities for autonomy, interactive engagement, and approachable communication. For teachers in training, flexibility should be emphasized, encouraging them to adjust their styles to meet students' diverse needs and levels of independence. Finally, for institutions, teacher training workshops should prioritize flexible and student-centered teaching strategies, alongside continuous professional development programs and mentoring initiatives that equip educators to respond effectively to classroom dynamics. Together, these efforts can foster higher student motivation, deeper engagement, and improved learning outcomes.

Author Contribution Statement

Sumdari Uli Arta Siska: Conceptualization and Research Design; Data Curation and Investigation; Methodology; Project Administration; Writing - Original Draft; Writing - Review & Editing**. Hardianti:** Methodology; Writing - Review & Editing; Validation.

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