

## NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS' INSIGHTS ON TEACHER SUPPORT IN EFL CLASSROOMS

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### Abstract

Teacher support (henceforth TS) in EFL classrooms emerges as psychological empowerment for non-English major students (henceforth NEMS), even though not all EFL teachers are aware of such communicative interaction. Grounded on the rationale, this current study investigated how the EFL teachers contributed to the English skill development of students who did not engage with English majors. A total of 279 students from various majors voluntarily participated in an online survey, ensuring that they selected appropriate perceptions. The findings disclosed that the EFL teachers had both positive and negative contributions towards NEMS English learning experiences. However, such imbalanced supports seemed to be randomly performed by different teachers in different contexts, meaning that similar EFL teachers treated students' English learning differently when they were influenced by other factors, such as students' difficulty level or teacher competence. In short, it is believed that TS leads to NEMS positive attitude and understanding towards English skills. A recommendation is highly expected to configure how every EFL teacher determines academic or social support for all NEMS in the current and future EFL classrooms.

**Keywords:** EFL classroom, NEMS, teacher support

### Introduction

It is unquestionable that teacher support (henceforth TS) in English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL) classrooms develops students' skills regarding linguistic, cultural, technical, or psychological understandings (Liu et al., 2023; Zheng et al., 2024). Linguistic skills emerge as the most dominant knowledge resulting from EFL teachers' intensive support for university students, including non-English major students (henceforth NEMS). Kinds of linguistic support comprise strategies to comprehend English grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. TS in linguistic skills also leads to comprehensive learning control, preventing students from academic failure and enhancing their language proficiency levels. EFL teachers with support intend to apply different teaching methods (e.g., roleplay, flipped classroom, presentation) and employ a variety of media (e.g., laptop, smartphone, smartboard, projector)

(Yang & Du, 2023; Zheng et al., 2024). For NEMS, linguistic support must be considered as it helps to determine their levels in using English both theoretically and practically. s

The importance of cross-cultural understanding in successful English learning encourages EFL teachers to actively apply their support for NEMS, whose efforts are more challenging than those of English-major students. Support on English culture requires more practices than concepts since the culture does not belong to either teachers or students (Qian, 2023). Integration of technology, such as online videos, podcasts, news, or movies, can be used as sources of cultural learning (Hwang & Lee, 2024; Peng & Chen, 2023; Suhartini & Ulfa, 2024). EFL teachers' ability to develop the acculturation process in English classrooms may transform students' awareness and understanding towards various English cultures, such as communication strategy, rhetorical style, or paralinguistic features.

Psychologically, TS is a basic abstract assistant, leading NEMS to motivate themselves during an English course. This support must be comprehensively and regularly monitored by teachers as most EFL students find it difficult to engage with English skills, unless they are native English speakers (Gitschthaler et al., 2024). However, students' emotions are challenged when teachers do not actively participate in the learning process. NEMS with their learning weaknesses still need intensive guidance, instruction, and control from EFL teachers. Conversely, support contributes to teachers' active participation as a mentor or counsellor within English classrooms.

A myriad of recent studies has been undertaken regarding TS, including TS and student psychology (Chiu et al., 2023; Hejazi & Sadoughi, 2022; Li et al., 2025), perceived TS (Tao et al., 2022), TS and classroom engagement (Zhou et al., 2024), TS for young learners (Ong & Kawata, 2023; Wang et al., 2021), TS and academic injustice (Radulović et al., 2022), TS and learning self-direction (Morris, 2020), TS and student achievement (Chi et al., 2024; Sincer et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2023). Nevertheless, few studies have been conducted on how academic support from EFL teachers helps students who belong to a non-English major. This study is of higher significance as it reveals insights, strategies, or integration of TS into English classrooms among those who learn English as an additional course. The study also leads NEMS to psychological transformation as they need academic help, assistance, support, or guidance during English learning. Therefore, as a focus, this study addressed a study question, as follows: "How do non-English major students perceive EFL teacher support in encouraging English skills?"

### ***EFL teacher support for non-English major students***

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction for non-English major students offers distinct problems that necessitate individualized assistance measures from instructors. One key difficulty is a lack of enthusiasm among these students, which might impair language learning. According to Zhou (2011), many Chinese college English teachers neglect the relevance of student motivation and its crucial determinants, resulting in passive learning practices. To counter this, Zhou promotes the use of cooperative learning (CL) approaches, which emphasize active and responsible learning through interpersonal contact. An empirical study conducted over 15 weeks found that CL significantly improves motivation among

non-English majors, implying that collaborative techniques can generate a more engaging learning environment.

In addition to motivation, EFL practitioners must increase their methodological competence. Matsnieva (2018) highlights the special professional requirements of potential EFL practitioners who teach non-English major undergraduates. The study emphasizes the need to use functional approaches to EFL acquisition, including computer-assisted learning, and to adopt differentiation tactics to accommodate diverse student groups. Furthermore, it emphasizes the need of practitioners to engage in self-education, develop a positive attitude about students' disciplines, and work with subject teachers to create good course content (Mudra, 2024). This comprehensive approach guarantees that EFL practitioners are well prepared to fulfill their students' different demands.

Vocabulary acquisition is another important area where non-English major students frequently struggle. Li's (2025) work addresses these issues by taking a multimodal approach to vocabulary instruction. A quantitative survey was conducted first, followed by a practical intervention aimed at engaging students with a variety of content, interactive approaches, and bespoke activities. The results show that using multimodal theory in EFL vocabulary teaching improves vocabulary acquisition by increasing interest and participation among non-English major students. This implies that combining several styles of learning can successfully aid in vocabulary acquisition.

Teacher support goes beyond educational approaches and includes emotional and social aspects. Li and Zhang (2023) investigated the association between EFL learners' perceived social support from teachers and peers, interaction engagement, and academic burnout. According to the findings, higher levels of perceived support are associated with more interpersonal engagement and lower levels of academic burnout. This emphasizes the necessity of providing a supportive learning atmosphere in which students feel appreciated and encouraged, ultimately improving their entire learning experience.

Furthermore, teacher care behavior plays an important role in reducing EFL learning anxiety. Wang et al. (2023) investigated the impact of teacher care behavior on EFL learning anxiety, emphasizing the mediating roles of learning engagement and learning techniques. The results indicate that teacher care behavior has a direct negative predictive influence on learning anxiety and can indirectly lower anxiety through increased engagement and improved learning strategies. This suggests that teachers who show caring and support can considerably reduce anxiety, resulting in a more positive learning environment.

Finally, helping non-English major students in EFL settings necessitates a multidimensional strategy that considers motivational, methodological, emotional, and social issues (Gao et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023). Implementing cooperative learning tactics, increasing methodological competence among practitioners, using multimodal teaching methodologies, and cultivating supportive teacher-student relationships are all necessary components. By implementing these tactics, educators can improve the EFL learning experience for non-English major students, resulting in increased language competency and academic success.

## Method

### Participants

This study invited 279 students from several Indonesian universities to participate in a survey study. The participants were not English students; rather, they studied math, biology, Islamic religion, law, psychology, physics, economics, chemistry, nursing, tourism, and computer. Most of them were female (69.9%) students, while 30.1% were male students. They were NEMS of public (62%) and private (38%) universities. Several of them were undergraduate students, while 71% of them were postgraduate students (29%). All of them registered and studied English for Specific Purposes (henceforth ESP) based on their majors (i.e., English for Tourism) (see Table 1). Their participation was voluntary, meaning that they attended the survey due to academic awareness and sufficient experience regarding learning English, based on EFL teacher support.

Participants' selection began from the researcher's initiative to intentionally offer informed consent for every target participant. 293 NEMS were asked to read, agree or disagree, sign the form, and submit it via online apps (i.e., *Google Form*). They were given one week to consider their voluntary participation in the study, but those who met the deadline were considered to disagree with the offer. Eventually, the researcher received 285 forms, consisting of 279 students who agreed, 6 students disagreed, and 8 students failed to submit their responses. Notably, the current number of participants was believed to represent a variety of non-English majors, allowing the researcher to analyze rich data and yield valuable findings.

Table 1. Demographic description of the NEMS ( $n=279$ )

Aspects		<i>n</i>	Percentages
Gender	Female	195	69.9%
	Male	84	30.1%
University	Private	106	38%
	Public	173	62%
Age	18-21	135	48.4%
	22-25	93	33.3%
	Above 25	51	18.3%
Major	Math	23	8.2%
	Biology	27	9.7%
	Islamic Religion	20	7.2%
	Law	31	11.1%
	Psychology	25	9%
	Physics	36	12.9%
	Economy	38	13.6%
	Chemistry	9	3.2%
	Nursing	18	6.5%
	Tourism	22	7.9%
	Computer	30	10.8%
Level	Undergraduate	198	71%
	Postgraduate	81	29%

### Instrument

The main instrument for this survey study refers to the Foreign Language Teacher Support Scale (henceforth FLTSS) developed and constructed by Sadoughi

and Hejazi (2022). FLTSS consists of four factors, including emotional, instrumental, appraisal, and informational teacher supports. Its scoring standard uses a five-point Likert-type scale for 25 items. Referring to the level of Cronbach's alpha, which ranges between .81 to .91, it indicates that FLTSS has higher consistency and is a reliable instrument to measure EFL teacher support in the classrooms.

### **Data collection**

Collecting survey data in this study commenced with an intentional consent form offered to 279 NEMS via online apps (e.g., *WhatsApp*, email). Luckily, all participants agreed with the data collection process by signing and resubmitting the forms online. Having collected the informed consents, the researcher sent a questionnaire (i.e., FLTSS) to every participant online, allowing them to deal with the flexibility of time and chance. They were given two weeks to complete the questionnaire and resubmit it. The researcher's expectation was recognized as 279 participants resubmitted their responses by the due date.

### **Data analysis**

Descriptive analysis was selected to analyse survey data from the questionnaire. The first step was to check if all items had been completely marked and responded to by the participants. Raw data in the form of Likert scores were reread and rechecked in the Excel app. When the researcher ensured that all data were clear and structured, the next step was to transfer the data into SPSS software, enabling the analysis to receive an automatic statistical process. Based on participants' responses from the questionnaire, the software helped to determine means and percentages for each item. This descriptive analysis is simple, but a proper selection of such survey data, leading the researcher to provide detailed estimation towards each item of the questionnaire without any fraction of scale factors.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **Findings**

The study findings reveal a variety of responses to teacher support in EFL classrooms perceived by NEMS. Grounded on FLTSS, the participants completed the survey, which managed their perceptions towards the four factors, including emotional, instrumental, appraisal, and informational TS. Means and percentages were statistically determined to consider participants' academic experiences in an English course. Descriptive results of each factor are disclosed in a table respectively.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of emotional TS factor ( $n=279$ )

Item	Statement	Responses (%)				
		SD	D	N	A	SD
1.	My English teacher really understands my feelings.	7.8	-	11	43.5	37.7
2.	My English teacher does not take my feelings seriously. (R)	35	2.9	9.3	22.7	30.1
3.	My English teacher carefully listens to my concerns about learning English.	28.2	12.4	5.7	10.2	43.5

Item	Statement	Responses (%)				
		SD	D	N	A	SD
4.	My English teacher cares for my progress in learning English.	36.8	21.5	23.4	-	18.3
5.	I feel that my English teacher is friendly.	36.7	1.6	2.4	43	16.3

As for the start, Table 2 reveals the first factor, emotional teacher support, which describes participants' perceptions about their EFL teachers' emotional development during an English lesson. This factor not only challenged teachers' emotions but also impacted how NEMS believed about the positive impact of such support for their English learning success. The first item showed that EFL teachers had higher social, emotional, and empathic feelings regarding students' learning conditions. It was indicated by more than 70% participants who believed that teachers' understanding towards students' feelings is tangible. In line with that, the second item supported the first, as about 35% students were aware of EFL teachers' seriousness in understanding what they felt during an English lesson. Notably, the third item appears to be an example of how the teachers consider students' feelings. More than 50% NEMS had a similar experience, stating that the teachers provided a particular time to discuss students' concerns about EFL lessons.

Nevertheless, the fact that listening to students' feelings was not in line with any regular control over their progress. It is because 58.3% participants did not receive any convincing attention regarding their learning process and progress. Such carelessness was derived from EFL teachers' lack of attention to controlling students' learning development. Interestingly, although many participants did not consider that their teachers encouraged positive emotions, 59.3% of them found that they were friendly, indicating that the students had two different perceptions about EFL teachers' emotional support towards their English learning.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of instrumental TS factor ( $n=279$ )

Item	Statement	Responses (%)				
		SD	D	N	A	SD
6	My English teacher gives extra help when I need it.	29	31.3	10.6	16	13.1
7.	My English teacher gives me opportunities to express opinions.	14.6	32	3.3	17.4	32.7
8.	My teacher devotes enough time to talk about issues related to learning English.	8.6	25.6	-	35.8	30
9.	My English teacher makes English learning very fun.	20.3	11.4	28.8	19.4	20.1
10.	My English teacher facilitates group and pair work.	15	15.7	6	45.3	18
11.	My English teacher devotes sufficient time to check my answers.	31	9.3	12.2	21.4	26.1
12.	My English teacher is available when I need his/her assistance.	44.2	-	25.5	23.5	6.8

While emotional TS remains abstract, instrumental TS seems to be more practical, allowing EFL teachers to devote their help, assistance, or sacrifice to ensure that NEMS has progressive learning development. However, a contrary fact was found after analyzing the statistical data. For example, items 6 and 12 reveal

teachers' lack of full assistance in solving students' English learning drawbacks. Many participants (60.3%) did not get any impactful help from their teachers when they needed learning direction. Another similar perception emerged when 44.2% participants cannot benefit from EFL teachers' availability and readiness to help them with learning difficulties. A balanced number of participants consisted of those who did not experience any considerable opportunity to share feelings (46.6%), but 50.1% had much time to express opinions in front of both teachers and other students.

Teacher support in EFL classrooms cannot be defined as compulsory duties where every teacher is socially asked to act as an instrumental person. Fortunately, the participants received much attention to discuss their English learning issues from teachers (65.8%). In the EFL classroom contexts, the teachers had many academic and social responsibilities that led them to fully engage with a variety of teaching skills. One of them was to create an interesting EFL classroom atmosphere (20.1%), even though not all teachers were able to do such an icebreaker (20.3%). Learning and teaching drawbacks in the classroom hindered the teachers from engaging with learner tasks, such as checking answer sheets (31%). At least, the EFL teachers managed students into either pair or group work, determining that classroom discussion was properly achieved (45.3%).

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of appraisal TS factor ( $n=279$ )

Item	Statement	Responses (%)				
		SD	D	N	A	SD
13.	My English teacher tells me about how well I am doing in class.	11	21.4	4.4	3.2	60
14.	My English teacher gives me feedback on my strengths and weaknesses.	39.3	9.1	22.4	23.1	6.1
15.	My English teacher talks about my progress with me.	27.5	37.9	9.3	17	8.3
16.	My English teacher provides me with valuable feedback on my performance.	12.5	22.4	30.2	6	28.9
17.	My English teacher talks with me about factors relating to my success or failure in learning English.	32.6	39.9	12	-	15.5
18.	My English teacher helps me identify my weaknesses and strengths.	42.1	15.6	3.3	16.7	22.3

EFL teachers were expected to assess students' English learning progress comprehensively. Table 4 was specifically organized to reveal to what extent the teachers encouraged themselves in appraisal supports, allowing them to interact with students more communicatively. It is needed to determine both negative and positive issues in the TS. To begin, several negative responses were found regarding teachers' appraisals. Many participants, for instance, did not receive sufficient feedback regarding their learning development, including their strengths or weaknesses (39.3%). Another drawback refers to more than 55% participants believing that EFL teachers lack attention towards their English learning progress. Similarly, more EFL teachers did not discuss how failure reduced students' transformative English skill development (72.5%). The last negative issue is that

the teachers did not lead NEMS to detect what they already knew or did not know (67.7%).

Meanwhile, EFL teachers were not absent with appraisal supports inside or outside the classrooms. First, most participants (60%) confirmed that their teachers preferred to talk about students' potential learning development. In line with that, the EFL teachers also provided them with positive feedback regarding their performance during an English lesson (34.9%). Although there are not many positive issues found in this study, it is worth stating that each EFL teacher had different preferences in terms of attitudes, skills, or competencies that may impact students' successful performance in English lessons.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of informational TS factor ( $n=279$ )

Item	Statement	Responses (%)				
		SD	D	N	A	SD
19.	My English teacher provides me with more examples/explanations when I do not understand a point.	23.5	-	5.9	56.2	14.4
20.	My English teacher tells me what I need to do to learn English better.	-	28	15.5	23.6	32.9
21.	My English teacher tells me how to use extra resources to improve my English.	5.4	44.5	9	23.3	17.8
22.	My English teacher provides me with sufficient information about the application of English in academic and professional settings.	30	12.3	3.5	33.2	21
23.	My English teacher gives me a clear picture of the English language learning process.	20.3	9.2	12.5	44.6	13.4
24.	My English teacher gives me information on how to successfully learn English.	39	30.5	8	19.4	3.1
25.	My English teacher provides me with valuable information on how to use different teaching materials (e.g., electronic dictionaries, websites, audio and video clips).	37.6	12.2	12.9	23	14.3

As for the last TS, Table 5 shows how NEMS perceived their EFL teachers when giving information about English learning. The first important information is that the participants were informed about what they should do to be better English students (56.5%). Another expectation refers to teachers' intention to share about the comprehensive process when NEMS intended to learn English (58%). For senior students, they receive prospective information about how to use proper English use and usage in either professional and academic contexts (44.2%), but a similar number of participants (42.3%) were not informed about the application of English for different purposes. However, not all information was supported by EFL teachers. For example, the participants were not orally supported to use a variety of learning materials or resources (49.8%). Many of them (69.5%) did not get valuable direction about how English should be mastered properly and meticulously. In addition, 49.9% participants had a lack of information about to access various resources both in printed or online version.



### ***Discussion***

As the findings revealed different NEMS perceptions regarding the EFL teacher supports, it is noticed that many contexts, factors, or rationales contributed to shedding light on the variety of responses, leading the researcher to clearly discuss each theme. Referring to the first type of TS, emotions in EFL classrooms seem to be an influential factor that may greatly help NEMS to encourage their English skills. Since every EFL teacher has a different emotional process during a lesson, it is important to note that NEMS who learn specific English must adapt to both their own and their teachers' emotions. In fact, this issue cannot be easily managed by NEMS, as they do not directly move from a basic English environment. Fortunately, the study of Merga et al. (2020) confirmed that students with struggling efforts have comprehensive opportunities to develop English skills more practically than those who only rely on teacher feedback. In line with that, teachers are believed to be reasonable communicators who encourage students' motivation over negative learning emotions (Giurastante, 2024). Positive learning emotions (PLEs) are expected by both teachers and NEMS before and after they deal with a lesson, indicating that those with positive emotions have a higher intention and aim to manage learning emotions purposefully. On the other side, EFL teachers with negative emotions may challenge many unexpected teaching results, ranging from students' lack of enthusiasm, disrespect to teachers' attitudes, or problems with task completion.

Emotional TS and NEMS's successful learning process is interrelated. For example, EFL teachers can support students by discussing how their English development is or what they encounter when learning specific English materials. Such simple attitudes have greater impacts on NEMS performance and achievement. Lee and Lee (2018) and Ngo et al. (2015) stated that students whose English is not their major need to be treated differently compared to English major students. The reason is that NEMS have limited interaction with EFL classrooms and teachers. Some of them do not have sufficient access to English resources in online or printed modes. Such drawbacks require teachers' positive emotions that lead the students to receive various feedback or attention from their teachers, either inside or outside the EFL classrooms.

If EFL teacher emotions can be either positive or negative, instrumental TS emerge to be a tangible process where teachers must perform academic or social action to promote English skills to NEMS. This support enables EFL teachers not only to understand students' feelings but also to ensure that every student is served appropriately without any complaint (De Ruiter et al., 2019). In this case, Gao et al. (2023) believed that teacher assistance in EFL classrooms improves students' English skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The instrumental support must represent every skill needed by ESP students, and it is a fundamentally transformative factor that directly links with students' drawbacks, indicating that it becomes a true solution for various English learning problems. NEMS expects teachers with a clear intention, structured preparation, and practical implications. The findings of Nurie Bogale and Wale (2024) identified that effective EFL teachers manage classrooms through tangible assistance, which is beyond theoretical or conceptual thoughts. Such ideas can be recognized by organizing EFL classrooms using practical norms.

Supports in the EFL classrooms must be based on how far teachers interact with students during the assessment process. Appraisal TS, as the term implies, is currently conceptualized as teachers' psychological attitudes to help students succeed on their personal or group assessment. Basically, the assessment is not a mere evaluation of what has been learned (Demirboken & Mutlu-Gülbak, 2025), but it includes every NEMS work or thought. It consists of advice, suggestions, feedback, or reviews on students' learning preparation, progress, or results. Appraisal TS plays a significant role in leading the students to organize their own development under teachers' regular support. However, this support cannot always motivate the EFL teachers, as different teachers have different approaches, strategies, or even styles during an English lesson. Some EFL teachers may focus on process, but others rely on results. Not many of them support students from both the process and the result. Applying appraisal TS in EFL classrooms requires strong teachers' consistency and commitment to be academic and social supporters for their students who are not registered in English courses every semester.

Lastly, informational TS transforms EFL teachers to be highly informative in terms of pedagogical issues in the EFL classrooms. Teachers not only teach students literally but also communicate with students interactively as a strategy to encourage their English skill development. The study of Jiang et al. (2021) is convincing that information is always important for every student who relies on teachers' direction. Conversely, many students may work alone to succeed in learning English under their majors, but EFL teachers' support that continues to be informative will be a transformative motivation for them. It can be stated that students need teachers to help them grow better academically, and the teachers rely on students when implementing a comprehensive plan and action.

## Conclusion

Academic, social, and psychological supports initialized by EFL teachers play a positive role in shaping NEMS's successful English learning. Several rationales contribute to this manifestation. It is noted that teachers' emotional, appraisal, instrumental, and informational supports help to encourage NEMS enthusiasm through a variety of teaching approaches, direct interaction, regular communication, and discussion regarding English learning development. The EFL teachers emerge as the main actors who transform valuable knowledge or materials to those who have not been learning English as their major. Once the teachers manage most learning difficulties experienced by the NEMS, they have achieved comprehensive transformation in non-English major classes. Therefore, teachers' responsibility, empathy, and understanding towards students' English learning challenges are highly demanded, as NEMS students have different learning experiences due to self-competence, discipline, comprehension, and self-management.

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