

## Teachers' classroom instruction reinforcement strategies in english language class

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### ABSTRACT

In the context of this study, reinforcement is an act of teachers to strengthen students' positive behaviour in learning English in the classroom. This qualitative case study was a classroom discourse which employed necessary quantification. The aim was to investigate the use of classroom instruction reinforcement strategies by two English language teachers and their perceptions at a state secondary school in Semarang in the academic year of 2019. The two English teachers were observed in five different lessons. The teachers were interviewed to explore their perceptions of using reinforcement in the classroom. The instruments of this study were observation sheet, interview guideline, and audio-video recordings. The findings showed that the teachers reinforced the students in three types of classroom instruction reinforcement. The three types of reinforcement strategies were: praise or other verbal reinforcement, tangible rewards, and token rewards. The reinforcement strategy mostly used was praise, followed by tangible rewards and token rewards. Based on the interviews, the teachers perceived that giving positive reinforcement to the students was important. The findings suggest the teachers implement the reinforcement strategies fairly to increase teacher-students interaction.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers are responsible for the effectiveness of classroom management. Teachers need to have effective classroom management strategies (henceforth, CMS). To have an effective classroom management, teachers are required to have a good relationship with students. Wubbels, et al. [1] stated that effective classroom management is generally based on the principle of establishing a positive classroom environment encompassing effective teacher-student relationships. There should be a good interaction between teachers and the students so as to create a good teacher-student relationship. An interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more persons, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other [2]. Without interaction, the teaching learning process will not occur as good as expected. Because interaction is the main key in the teaching learning process.

Not only can teachers manage the class, but teachers should also be interactive in the classroom. One of the interactive principles is giving the students motivation. Highly motivated students will enjoy the lesson and get better understanding. Harmer [3] claimed that motivation is some kind of internal drive which

pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something. So, teachers should concern the students' motivation, because a teacher is the clear major factor in the continuance of students' motivation.

Basically, motivation can come from inside and outside an individual, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. An intrinsic motivation, as stated by Harmer [3], comes from within the individual. Thus, a person might be motivated by the enjoyment of learning process itself or by a desire to make himself feel better. In contrast, Harmer [3] pointed out that the extrinsic motivation is caused by any number of outside factors, for example the need to pass an exam, the hope of financial rewards, or the possibility of future travel. It means that the person is motivated because there are some things to be pursued or because the person is provoked by some things.

In this regard, reinforcement is an example of the external motivation that can help students to learn English. Reinforcement is any consequence that strengthens behavior [4]. In the operant conditioning theory guide and analysis, reinforcement is a term constituting a process of increasing the probability of behavior, in the form of response delivered shortly after performing the behavior. Reinforcement can be praise, symbolic rewards, token rewards, tangible rewards, or activity rewards. It is called as an instructional reinforcement. Instructional reinforcement can be defined as a strategy used for desirable academic performance or efforts at the classroom level [5].

A number of researchers have investigated the use of reinforcement in the classroom [4-8]. They found a similar result that in the teaching learning process, the type of reinforcement mostly used was the verbal reinforcement. They reported that using reinforcement could improve the students' motivation in learning English. In a study conducted by Kinyangjui, Aloka, Mutisya, Ndeke, and Nyang'ara [4], the types of instructional reinforcement strategies used by the English teachers during teaching learning process in Kikuyu District, Kenya and the factors that influence the implementation of reinforcement strategies are investigated. The study reported that praise was the most popular reinforcement strategy used in the classroom followed by tangible items, activity and tokens in that order.

Reinforcing students in the classroom is important, because it can improve students' achievement. Some studies investigated the impact of using reinforcement strategies on the students' achievement in the classroom [8-14]. A study from Rumfola [12] focused on how positive reinforcement positively helps the students to achieve the goals of the lesson. Students who are acknowledged for their effort are more willing to put in efforts for future assignments [12]. It means that if students are given praise from the teacher for their effort to do something, they will strive in the next assignments, so that they are keen to get a better score. When teachers consistently provide students with reinforcement, students' achievement in the classroom will be better time by time.

Notwithstanding the importance of reinforcement, a teacher might have his own perception of giving reinforcement to the students. Some researchers have gone into the teachers' perception of the reinforcement use in the classroom (e.g. [15-17]). A study from Corbett, et al. [17], was conducted concerning teachers' perception of positive reinforcement. The result of the study indicated that the teachers in the study viewed reinforcement as the positive experience in teaching, which allowed them to reach their goals. Furthermore, the teachers stated that they thought reinforcement works as it helps them communicate, motivate, teach, and control the students.

A similar study in Kenyan primary schools [4] triggered us to analyze various types of reinforcement strategies. However, there are also some differences between the previous studies and the present study. In the present study, an analysis of classroom instruction reinforcement strategies is portrayed based on the theory of Cotton [5]. Besides, the definition and also some examples of each type of reinforcement strategies are presented, and the teachers' perceptions about the use of classroom instruction reinforcement strategies are examined. In other words, this study provides a detailed analysis of types of reinforcement strategies and contributes something new to the development of research vis-à-vis analyzing the use of classroom instruction reinforcement strategies. Thus, this study is aimed at investigating the use of classroom instruction reinforcement strategies and teachers' perceptions of the reinforcement strategies used in the classroom.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative case study involved two Indonesian teachers who taught English language at different grades in a state secondary school in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. The data were collected by observing the teaching learning processes, making field notes during the observations, taking photos, video-recording the lessons, and interviewing the teachers after the lessons. Classroom observations were conducted five times, 3 times for the first teacher, Mrs. Ema, and 2 times for the second teacher, Mrs. Desi, whose names were pseudonyms.

The data were gathered from the observation sheets, semi-structured interviews, and audio and visual materials. Classroom observations were conducted to take data about how the English teachers used the classroom instruction reinforcement strategies in the teaching and learning process. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two English teachers to get more information about the research problems. In the interviews, a list of questions, or an interview guide, was prepared but the researchers did not necessarily ask them all, or touched on them in any particular order, using them instead to guide the conversation. A semi-structured interview, according to Bernard in Cohen [18], is best used when a researcher won't get more than one chance to interview someone. Semi-structured interviews are often preceded by observation, informal and unstructured interviewing in order to allow the researchers to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions. To support the data collected through classroom observations and interviews, the researcher used audio and visual materials which were then triangulated.

The data were analysed based on Creswell [19] who points out that a qualitative research has six steps in analyzing the data. First, the researchers organized the data from observations and interviews. Second, the researchers read and examined all of data. Third, transcribing, in this case, the researchers transcribed the data from classroom observations and interview recordings to help the researchers to classify the problems faced by the English teachers in using classroom instruction reinforcement strategies in the classroom. Fourth, the researchers identified the observation sheets and interview results. Fifth, the researchers classified the classroom instruction reinforcement strategies used by the teachers based on the description and themes. Sixth, the researcher made the description and interpretation of the findings. In this study, the researchers used methodological triangulation, that is, the use of more than one set of data collection [20]. Different sources of the data in this study were obtained from classroom observations, video recordings, teaching documents, and interviews. Therefore, the application of triangulation (multiple sources of data) can enhance the reliability of the study results [21].

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents findings of the research and comprehensive discussion accordingly. The results are depicted in figures, tables and extracts to promote the ease of thorough understanding of the data.

#### 3.1. Types of reinforcement strategies used by the English teachers

In the classroom observations, it was found that the teachers almost used all of the types of classroom instruction strategies in the teaching learning process. The types of classroom instruction strategies used by the teachers were categorized based on Cotton [5]. There are five types of instructional reinforcement, encompassing: praise or other verbal reinforcement, symbolic rewards, tangible rewards, token rewards, and activity rewards.

##### 3.1.1. Praise (and other verbal reinforcement)

Praise belongs to verbal reinforcement. According to Turney [22], verbal reinforcement is used by a teacher uttering good words in order to maintain students' behavior in the classroom. Extracts 1, 2, and 3 are the examples of using praise in the teaching learning process in Mrs. Ema's class:

Extract 1

- a. Mrs. Ema : "Okay, would you please read this text loudly?"  
b. Student : "Yes." (Student read a text).  
c. Mrs. Ema : "It's good. Very good. Good pronunciation."  
(Meeting 1, Thursday 9 May 2019, Mrs. Ema's class)

Mrs. Ema praised the student after he finished reading the whole text without any mistakes in pronouncing words as seen in line 3 extract 1.

Another appraisal was given by Mrs. Ema to another student when he tried to answer the question, and the answer was correct (line 3 extract 2).

Extract 2

- a. Mrs. Ema : "Okay, number 4. When did Jane arrive?"  
b. Student : "Me, Ma'am. An hour ago."  
c. Mrs. Ema : "Okay, it's good to try to answer. An hour ago, okay, that's good."  
(Meeting 1, Thursday 9 May 2019, Mrs. Ema's class)

The use of appraisal was also found in Mrs. Desi's class. Lines 3 and 5 of Extract 3 show that Mrs. Desi praised her student after he could answer the meaning of the word 'climb' in the Indonesian language.

Extract 3

- a. Mrs. Desi : "What is climb in bahasa?"  
 b. Student : "Memanjat."  
 c. Mrs. Desi : "Memanjat, good. What is bark? What animal can bark?"  
 d. Student : "Dog."  
 e. Mrs. Desi : "Dogs, good."

(Meeting 4, Monday 13 May 2019, Mrs. Desi's class)

From Extracts 1-3, it can be seen that teachers praised the students after they could do the teachers' instruction correctly, such as answering a question, reading a text, and translating a word.

### 3.1.2. Symbolic rewards

Cotton [5] points out that symbolic rewards can be in the forms of gold stars stickers, having one's picture on a bulletin board, or name in newsletter, etc. The prize (gold stars stickers) seems to have no significant material value but may be valuable to a person receiving it. After analyzing the classroom observation notes supported with the video of the lesson, it showed that there was no symbolic rewards used by the teachers during the teaching learning process.

For not using symbolic rewards, one of the teachers stated that she would need more time to make the stuffs. She explained that she was too busy for the preparation of the school's national examination (Mrs. Desi, interview, 15 May 2019). Therefore, she could not prepare symbolic rewards. This might also result from the teachers' perceptions that making symbolic rewards not only takes too much time but also costs money. The absence of this reward is likely to be associated with the teachers' preference to reinforcement strategies which are more meaningful for students, such as praise or tangible rewards. If students get the benefits of learning, their motivation will escalate. Although verbal rewards is one extrinsic motivation, it in turn improves students' intrinsic motivation [23]. Hence, the absence of symbolic reward is sufficiently replaced by the presence of more meaningful rewards.

### 3.1.3. Token rewards

According to Cutton [5], token rewards could be points or chips, which are valueless in themselves, but which can be redeemed for things valuable. Some of the students might not realize when the teacher gave this type of reinforcement, like the example of using the token rewards in extract 4:

Extract 4

*"I give you scores not from your written test only, but also your activity in the class. If you choose to be passive, your score is just from the written test only. But if you are active in class, your score is not only from your written test, but your activity in the classroom can enhance your score."*  
 (authors' translation, meeting 3, Friday 10 May 2019, Mrs. Ema's class)

Based on Mrs. Ema's utterances, it has an implicit meaning that Mrs. Ema would give some additional scores or added points to the students who are always active in the classroom. Mrs. Ema delivered the token rewards in a good way, by giving the students positive motivation to be active students in the classroom. Regarding this, the use of scores is found to be highly effective in build desired student behavior [24].

Mrs. Desi also used the token rewards in her class. Similarly, she gave the token rewards by giving them an additional score for everyone who was active in the class. However, the researcher could not find it in the classroom observation. Mrs. Desi stated it on the interview on May 14th, 2019. Here is the statement of her:

*"I always give an additional point to my students who are active in the class. It is useful to help them if their score is lower than the minimum criterion."*

### 3.1.4. Tangible rewards

Tangible rewards include edibles, toys, or school-related items (pencils, notebooks, etc) [5]. The tangible rewards can be found in Mrs. Ema's class in extract 5. Mrs. Ema stated in an interview session that she thought that the question she posed was quite difficult for the students. Therefore, she did not only praise the student who could answer, but she also gave him a tangible reward.

## Extract 5

- a. Mrs. Ema : "What is the message about?"  
 b. : "Because this question is difficult enough, if you can answer my question, I will give you this one. So, what is the answer?"  
 c. : "Jane told Billy she just arrived at Soekarno-Hatta airport and she asked Billy to find a hotel."  
 d. Student : "Okay, it's very good. She needed help in finding a hotel. Okay, this one is for you."  
 e. : "Okay, it's very good. She needed help in finding a hotel. Okay, this one is for you."  
 f. Mrs. Ema : "Okay, it's very good. She needed help in finding a hotel. Okay, this one is for you."  
 g. : "Okay, it's very good. She needed help in finding a hotel. Okay, this one is for you."  
 (Meeting 3, Friday 10 May 2019, Mrs. Ema's class)

Different from Mrs. Ema, who gave the tangible reward to the student who could answer a difficult question, read, and translate a text, Mrs. Desi gave the reward in the end of the class to the students who were active during the lesson. Mrs. Desi chose two students, a male and a female student to receive the reward. Extract 6 showed how she gave the reward to the students.

## Extract 6

- a. Mrs. Desi : "Just then who frequently answered my question?"  
 b Students : "It's me, It's me."  
 c Mrs. Desi : "Students, please sit tidily. The students who worked hard deserve to get rewards. The ones who were active answering my questions were Iwan. Congratulations Iwan. Keep learning, improve your performance. And Donna as well,  
 d. : "Students, please sit tidily. The students who worked hard deserve to get rewards. The ones who were active answering my questions were Iwan. Congratulations Iwan. Keep learning, improve your performance. And Donna as well,  
 e. : "Students, please sit tidily. The students who worked hard deserve to get rewards. The ones who were active answering my questions were Iwan. Congratulations Iwan. Keep learning, improve your performance. And Donna as well,  
 f. : "Students, please sit tidily. The students who worked hard deserve to get rewards. The ones who were active answering my questions were Iwan. Congratulations Iwan. Keep learning, improve your performance. And Donna as well,  
 g. : "Students, please sit tidily. The students who worked hard deserve to get rewards. The ones who were active answering my questions were Iwan. Congratulations Iwan. Keep learning, improve your performance. And Donna as well,  
 (Meeting 5, Tuesday 14 May 2019, Mrs. Desi's class)

Extracts 5 and 6 show that there were different styles in using the tangible rewards to reinforce the students during the teaching learning process. Mrs. Ema gave the rewards to students who could answer a difficult question, read, and translate a text. While, Mrs. Desi gave the rewards in the end of the class. She gave the rewards to the students who were active during the teaching learning process. According to Buendia and Ortega-Martin, giving a reward by the end of the lesson should be avoided because students' intrinsic motivation can be undermined. What teachers must do is giving rewards for those achieving learning goals or objectives, not those actively participating in learning activities [25]. This implies that providing students with rewards is worth doing as long as the procedure is taken into consideration.

### 3.1.5. Activity rewards

Cutton [5] defines activity rewards as free time, being leader of an activity, or going on a field trip. In this study, the classroom observations showed that there was no activity rewards provided by the teachers during the lesson. Activity rewards were not performed because there was not enough time to apply this type of reinforcement strategies. At the time of the classroom observation conducted, the class main activity was explanation from the teacher about the learning materials for the final test. Because in the previous month the teachers were busy to prepare the National Examination for the IX grade students, the teachers tried to discuss the learning materials quickly. Therefore, there was no free time for the students to have a class game that could let them being a leader, or even going on a field trip. For the two teachers in this study, activity rewards were not likely done due to time constraint.

Table 1 depicts the frequency of classroom instruction reinforcement strategies used by the teachers in their lessons. Table 1 shows that the type of reinforcement mostly used by the teachers was praise (90.6%), followed by tangible rewards (7.8%), and token rewards (1.6%). The symbolic and activity rewards were not used by the teachers. Praise is mostly used by the teachers because it is the most familiar type of reinforcement to the teachers and students. This result is similar to the study of Maori [as cited in 4], who stated that most teachers were reported using social reinforcement such as verbal praise. This is in line with Zebua's study [6], who discover that verbal reinforcement was popular as a medium of encouragement for students. This contradicts with Kinyanjui, et al. [4] who argue that games and play time can be a very significant element of students' life as they are still growing up. In their study, Kinyanjui et al. found that play time and games could be some of the antecedent strategies that the teachers can use in order to ensure high academic achievement. Figure 1 summarizes the distribution of reinforcement strategies used by the teachers in the classrooms.

Table 1. Recapitulation of the use of reinforcement in the classroom

Types of reinforcement	Frequency of Occurrence	Total of Reinforcement	Percentage
Praise or Other Verbal Reinforcement	58	64	90.6%
Symbolic Rewards	0		0%
Tangible Rewards	1		1.6%
Token Rewards	5		7.8%
Activity Rewards	0		0%

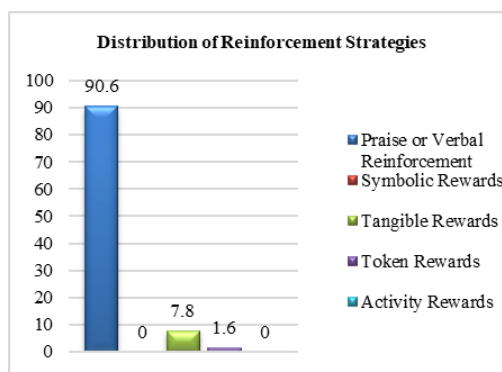


Figure 1. Distribution of reinforcement strategies

### 3.2. Teachers' Perception of Using Reinforcement in the Teaching Learning Process

To gain deeper insights on the teachers' opinions, feelings and perceptions on the use of reinforcement strategies in the classroom, findings from the teachers' interviews are explained in the following.

#### 3.2.1. Reinforcing students is important

Based on the interview data, Mrs. Desi and Mrs. Ema admitted that reinforcing students in the class is important. They stated that they believe every teacher has to give positive reinforcement to the students in the teaching learning process.

Extract 7

*"Giving a reward or only praising students can improve the students' interest in learning English. It is important. If the teacher praises the students, they will be happy. So, they will enjoy more in learning English because every time they can answer a question or be active in class, the teacher will praise them."*

(Authors' translation, Mrs. Desi, interview, 14 May 2019)

In line with Mrs. Desi, Mrs. Ema affirmed that giving reinforcement could improve the students' achievement in the classroom.

Extract 8

*"Reinforcing students is important, because it improves their scores. I use candies or chocolate sometimes, so they compete each other to answer my questions if there is a reward. If they can answer my question correctly, it can be an additional point for them. They can get more score."*

(Authors' translation, Mrs. Ema, interview, 20 May 2019).

The two teachers seemed to have the same perception that reinforcing the students in the teaching learning process is important, meaning that it is necessary to be implemented in class. Giving reinforcement to students in classroom is essential since by reinforcing the students, the teacher and students will probably have a good relationship. In addition, through reinforcement, it can increase students' motivation to be better in learning English. The finding confirms the study from Syafaruddin and Nasution [in 16] that teachers have a role as leaders which can influence and motivate students in the teaching learning process. Davis [in 16] also explains that motivation is a hidden power in oneself and can motivate someone to do a specific behavior. Hence, giving reinforcement to students also resembles motivating them to be better in doing something, learning English in particular.

Not only does giving reinforcement motivate students, but it also changes the students' behavior. Nauert [in 16] asserts that rewards could change someone's behavior and encourage cooperation without destructive negative consequences that come with punishment. Teachers can help students who have a bad habit in the classroom to be better or even the teachers can change their bad behavior by positively reinforcing them and giving them more attention during the teaching learning process.

### 3.2.2. Praise is the most-used type of reinforcement

There are various types of classroom reinforcement strategies; praise is the most favorite type for the teachers. Both of the teachers mostly used it in every meeting of their class. When the researchers interviewed the teachers and asked what type of reinforcement used by them, both of the teachers mentioned that it was praise. Mrs. Ema stated:

Extract 9

*"The type of reinforcement that I often used, such as the utterances 'good job', 'great', 'very nice', are the strategy I often used. It is like my habit. Whenever my student answered my questions correctly, I lifted my thumb up and said good job. It does not need cost and they looked happy when I gave them that feedback."* (Authors' translation, Mrs. Ema, interview, 20 May 2019).

Likewise, Mrs. Desi asserted that she frequently used praise in her class:

Extract 10

*"In the class, I often said 'good job, very good, excellent', etc, as you could see in my class. I mostly said 'very good'. So, if you asked me what type that I often used, it was the verbal reinforcement, it is so simple and the students know the meaning of it."* (Authors' translation, Mrs. Desi, interview, 14 May 2019)

Based on the interviews, the teachers have something in common that both of them used praise as the type that is mostly used in the teaching learning process. It appears that praise is the easiest way to reinforce students in the class. Praise does not need money to spend nor take a long time to prepare. It is a simple thing to do but has a great influence for the students.

There are so many ways to reinforce students in the classroom. Every teacher has their own favorite type of reinforcement used in the classroom. Giving rewards to the students is also favourite in encouraging students in learning English; one of the teachers explained that she mostly used praise or verbal reinforcement in the classroom because it is easy to be done and the students will feel proud of themselves because they can do the teacher's instruction correctly. Findings of this present study is similar to the study of Kinyanjui, et al. [4] who found that most teachers are likely to embrace praise as a reinforcement strategy that is readily available at the time of the desired behaviour occurrence.

Besides, tangible reward is another favorite reinforcement of the teachers to be used in the classroom. However, this type of reinforcement is not advised by [4] who discovered in their study that that forms of tangible reward like incentives are good in themselves but those that tend to be material in nature should not be frequently used.

### 3.2.3. Fair reinforcement

Reinforcing students in the classroom is important. However, teachers could not give reinforcement to particular students only. The teachers should be fair to give reinforcement to the students. All of the students have to get the same attention from the teacher. In a class, usually there are two groups of students: an active group and a passive group. The teachers should be able to reinforce all of the groups without discriminating each other. Giving all of the students chance to get reinforcement from the teacher is required.

Looking at the classroom observations, there were some students who were really active to answer questions in the classroom, both in Mrs. Ema's class and Mrs. Desi's class. In this regard, Mrs. Ema and Mrs. Desi are smart and well-experienced teachers. They always praise or give a reward to their students who are active in their classes. Both teachers are great in delivering the rewards to the students. For example, in the classroom observation meeting 1, in May 9th, 2019, Mrs. Ema asked the students to do an activity then discussed it together after they finished it. In the discussion session, there were some students who tried to answer the questions continuously. It seemed that the students would get a praise or a reward from Mrs. Ema continuously too. But Mrs. Ema did not let the situation happened. Mrs. Ema gave the chance to other students who rarely answered her questions, so the students in her class received the same attention from Mrs. Ema and they were also praised and rewarded by Mrs. Ema. Extract 11 is the evidence:

## Extract 11

- a. Mrs. Ema : “Sekarang nomor 2, siapa bisa? What is the message about?  
 b. Who can answer number 2? Be active. What is the message about? Salah tidak  
 c. apa-apa, ayo. Jangan anak-anak itu terus yang menjawab.”  
 d. Student : “Arsa, Ma’am.”  
 e. Mrs. Ema : “Arsa? You want to try?”  
 f. Arsa : “Yes.” (Arsa answered the question).  
 g. Mrs. Ema : “Is it right?”  
 h. Student : “Yes.”  
 i. Mrs. Ema : “Yaa, thank you, Arsa. Great. Jadi intinya memang tentang apa? Ya, Jane had  
 j. trouble finding a hotel. Ya. Jane needs help.  
 k. Apalagi? Ada jawaban yang lain nggak?”  
 (Mrs. Ema’s class, Thursday, 9 May 2019)

From extract 11, it can be seen that Mrs. Ema treated her students equally. She let one student who rarely answered her questions answer it, then she praised him. In an interview on 20 May 2019, she explained that:

## Extract 12

*“Praising or reinforcing students must be fair. Sometimes students envy or they think that I only give rewards to certain students. Actually, they themselves choose to be passive in the class. That is why I often point them who are usually silent and passive in class, so they have a chance to get the reward from me.”*

Every student in the classroom deserves to get the same attention from the teacher, like being reinforced by the teacher. The reinforcement should be received by the students fairly. What is meant by fairly is that the teacher should give a chance for each student in the classroom to be reinforced. Both of the teachers reinforced the students fairly, by giving a chance to the students who rarely participate in the classroom. Teachers have to know how they organize their class or how they control it. If the teachers do not reinforce the students fairly, that will make the students feel as if they are ignored by the teachers, because the teachers only focus on reinforcing particular students only. Therefore, if teachers reinforce students fairly and positively, all of the students in the classroom will get the same attention from the teachers, and they will try to be active in the classroom to get a sense of achievement. This is asserted by Morin [26] that it is important for a teacher to provide positive reinforcement since it encourages students to repeat a good habit of behavior in the classroom.

#### 3.2.4. Punishment is never used by the teachers

Every student certainly has different behavior. Some of them are good behave, but some are not. Mrs. Ema and Mrs. Desi have been teaching for 20 years. Both of them can be said as experienced teachers. They have their own styles or techniques in facing various characteristics of their students.

Findings of the interviews with the teachers (extract 13) show that they explained that they never give punishment to students in the classroom. In the interview with Mrs. Desi on 14 May 2019, she asserted that she never gave her students punishment:

## Extract 13

*“I have never punished my students. Giving punishment to the students does not guarantee that they won’t do it again, it just makes them disrespectful to me and they lose their interest in learning English. But do not pamper the students, if they are wrong, they should be reprimanded. Do not directly punish them. Punishing the students is the last choice if they are hard to be reminded. However, I have never given punishment to my students.” (authors’ translation)*

Similarly, Mrs. Ema claimed that she has never punished her students. Extract 14 is an interview with Mrs. Ema.

## Extract 14

*“Punishing, never. One day, there was a student who forgot to bring a dictionary, I spoke to him humorously: You forget to bring your dictionary, what do you remember? Are you going to school*



*to study or meet your crush? Then I asked him to borrow a dictionary from the library or his friend from another class."*

Mrs. Desi argued that punishment is the last choice to be applied in the class, when the reprimand does not go well. For Mrs. Ema, giving a satire utterance is enough than giving punishment for the students.

The teachers' preference not to use punishment in class is supported by Grohol [in 16] who stated that it is easier to punish people than to reward them. Grohol added that when both options are available, rewards lead to increase contributions and lead to lower pay off for the group. The options are always available, but people seem to think that punishment will give effect to increase the contribution, but as stated by Grohol, it does not.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Two English language teachers in the present study employ three types of classroom instruction reinforcement strategies in the class. The reinforcement are praise or verbal reinforcement, token rewards, and tangible rewards. There are two types of reinforcement which the teachers did not use in their teaching and learning process, symbolic rewards and activity rewards. These strategies are not used as they appear to spend much money and take time. For the teachers, making reinforcement is more powerful than punishment to encourage students' positive behaviour in class. Reinforcement is important, as can be inferred from the interview findings with the teachers. The findings also suggest that giving reinforcement should be fair to all students in order to minimize a negative consequence. This study concludes that in the teaching of English as foreign language in the Indonesian context, positive reinforcement provided by a teacher will increase students' motivation in learning the language.

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