

TEACHER'S REINFORCEMENT IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM IN  
MTSS DARUL MAKMUR SUNGAI CUBADAK

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**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh beberapa permasalahan yang ditemukan di MTsS Darul Makmur. Pertama, beberapa siswa tidak termotivasi dalam belajar. Kedua, terkadang guru masih menggunakan bahasa Indonesia dalam memberikan penguatan. Ketiga, sebagian Siswa tidak mempedulikan penguatan guru. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis penguatan yang digunakan oleh guru. Kemudian untuk mengetahui jenis penguatan yang sering dan jarang digunakan oleh guru. Kemudian untuk mengetahui alasannya guru menggunakan bala bantuan tertentu. Terakhir, untuk mengetahui bagaimana guru memahami penguatan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Desain penelitian ini adalah deskriptif karena peneliti membuat gambaran penggunaan penguatan oleh guru di kelas Bahasa Inggris. Dalam penelitian ini, lembar wawancara dan observasi digunakan oleh peneliti. Peneliti menemukan bahwa jenis penguatan yang digunakan guru adalah penguatan positif dan penguatan negatif. Pertama, ada dua jenis penguatan positif yang digunakan guru, yaitu penguatan verbal dan penguatan nonverbal. Verbal yang sering digunakan oleh guru adalah penguatan berupa kata-kata dan penguatan berupa frase. Kemudian, penguatan verbal berupa kalimat tidak pernah dilakukan oleh guru dalam proses pembelajaran. Sedangkan penguatan nonverbal yang sering digunakan guru adalah penguatan gestural, penguatan aktivitas, dan penguatan kedekatan. Kedua, penguatan negatif yang sering digunakan guru berupa peringatan, isyarat, dan kontak mata. Sedangkan penguatan negatif yang jarang digunakan guru adalah volume ucapan dan hukuman. Ketiga, alasan guru memperkuat pembelajaran adalah untuk memotivasi siswa dan membuat siswa merasa dihargai dan senang saat belajar.

**Kata kunci:** *Penguatan Guru, Bahasa Inggris.***ABSTRACT**

*This research was due to some problems found in MTsS Darul Makmur. First, some students were not motivated in learning. Second, sometime the teacher still uses Indonesian in giving reinforcements. Third, some Students did not care about the teacher's reinforcement. This study aimed to find out the types of reinforcement used by the teacher. Then, to find out the types of reinforcement often and rarely to be used by the teacher. Then, to find out the reasons the teacher used certain reinforcements. Last, to find out how the teacher understands the reinforcement. This research used a qualitative approach. The design of this research was descriptive because the researcher made a description of the use of reinforcement by the teacher in the English classroom. In this research, the interview and observation sheets were used by the researcher. The researcher found that the type of reinforcement used by the teacher is positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement. First, there were two types of positive reinforcement used by teachers, namely verbal reinforcement and non-verbal reinforcement. The verbal often used by the teacher was a reinforcement in the form of words and reinforcement in the form of phrases. Then, verbal reinforcement in the form of sentences was never done by the teacher in the learning process. While the non-verbal reinforcement often used by the teacher was gestural, activity reinforcement, and proximity reinforcement. Second, the negative reinforcement often used by the teacher was a warning, gesture, and eye contact. Meanwhile, the negative reinforcement rarely used by the teacher was speech volume and punishment. Third, the reasons teachers reinforce learning are to motivate students and make students feel appreciated and happy while learning.*

**Keywords:** *Teacher's Reinforcement, English.*

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## INTRODUCTION

English is a language that is used as a communication tool in nearly every aspect of life. Human beings cannot be isolated from contact in their everyday lives. Communication plays a significant role in assisting humans in completing a variety of tasks. Furthermore, there should be effective communication between teacher and students, students and teacher, and students and students in the educational field, especially in learning. The teacher should make the teaching and learning process fun for the students. The success of learning is largely determined by the positions of teachers. It means that the teacher's approach and style would have a direct effect on the students. Students will learn the subject taught by the teachers enthusiastically if the teacher's approach and style of teaching are engaging. As a result, every teacher should have effective teaching and learning strategies.

One of the ways for the teacher to handle the classroom is by using reinforcement. Reinforcement is given to improve students' interest in learning. According to Santrock, reinforcement is a consequence that increases the probability that a behavior will occur (Santrock, 2011). While Woolfolk said that reinforcement is the use of consequences to strengthen behavior (Woolfolk, 2007). This means that reinforcement is a kind of follow-up action that teachers give to the students regarding their behavior.

There are two types of reinforcement, positive reinforcement, and negative reinforcement. Skinner in Guy states that positive reinforcement is called reward and negative reinforcement is called relief (Skinner, 2014:101). Reward or reinforcement is a behavior that leads to desirable outcomes, it is more likely to occur in the future situation (Sinner, 20114:184). The reward is one of the strategies that can be used by the teacher because it can increase interest in learning and motivation to achieve satisfactory student achievement. The reward is also provided a positive stimulus to students. Negative reinforcement is any stimulus removal that increases the likelihood of particular behavior (Hoque, 2013). For example, giving punishment for rude students so that behavior will not occur again in the future

When it comes to reinforcing students, teachers should be creative; they should use various types of reinforcement. For the student to not become bored with the teacher, the teacher provides a variety of reinforcement. As a result, students will be more motivated to learn and will exhibit better actions during the teaching and learning process. Therefore, reinforcement in English classes is necessary because it not only motivates students to learn but also helps them achieve academic success and establish character. Students will become frustrated when the teacher uses monotone reinforcement, and they will lose interest in the learning process. Therefore, The teacher's role here is important in providing students with a variety of reinforcements

Based on preliminary research on the 10th of December 2020, the 9th of February, and the 2nd of March 2021 in MTsS Darul Makmur Sungai Cubadak, the researcher got information related to the learning process. The researcher got some pieces of information from interviewing the English teacher. First, the English teacher encourages students to be interested in learning English and to reward good behavior by giving the expressions "good," "very good," "excellent," "nice," and "very nice". Then, it was also observed that the teacher also gave warnings, such as "sssst, calling students" names, giving warnings, and giving explanations.

Second, the students sometimes look demotivated. Some of them were observed to be asleep in class. The researcher assumed that the lack of reinforcement makes them demotivated in learning. Furthermore, the demotivated students would try to grab the teacher's attention by pretending to sleep in class. This makes the teacher give them negative reinforcement, such as giving them punishment. Third, the teacher gave reinforcement in Indonesian. The English teacher needs to use English as much as possible in the class for the students to have more exposure to English. However, the English teacher in MTsS Darul Makmur was observed to give reinforcement in Indonesia. For example, "Adam, coba perhatikan Miss dulu ya". This means that the teacher still uses Indonesian in giving warnings to the students.

Furthermore, the researcher interviewed some students in the class related to their responses to the teacher's reinforcement in the class. Some students said, whenever the teacher gave them a punishment they tend to be afraid of the teacher, and if the teacher is kind and often

praises them, they become more serious about learning. However, some students said that they did not care and they also said that whatever the teacher said did not affect their learning.

MTsS Darul Makmur Sungai Cubadak is one of the schools of Agam regency. The researcher's reason for considering MTsS Darul Makmur Sungai Cubadak as the place for this research is that no research has been done on the types of reinforcement used by teachers in 7th grade, this research would like to find out the reinforcement used by teachers in English classrooms since there is never been done any study related with the teacher reinforcement in this school. It is interesting and important to learn how teachers reinforce their students in English classrooms. Based on the explanation above, this study aims to find out the types of reinforcement used by English teachers in 7th grade in MTsS Darul Makmur Sungai Cubadak academic year 2020/2021. To identify the most and least frequently used types of reinforcement during the teaching and learning process, and to express the teachers' reasons for using that reinforcement during the teaching and learning process.

### **The Nature of Reinforcement**

Reinforcement is thus always the occasion for things becoming better than they were but is divided up according to whether it is some new good thing which happens or something "bad" which goes away" (Walker, 1975). Reinforcement is one of the most important teaching skills that must be mastered by the teacher. In support, reinforcement is a program that improves students' performance in some tasks by receiving rewards and punishments (Tadepali, 1996). In addition, reinforcement is a skill that is used by the teacher to change the students' behavior positively (Mandah & Gbrato, 2016: 1-16). Reinforcement is trying to maximize a reward signal instead of trying to find a hidden structure.

Based on the experts' explanation above, the researcher concludes that Reinforcement is one of the skills in teaching that should be possessed by teachers, where an important aspect to support the learning and teaching process is reinforcement. In the learning process, the teacher should give reinforcement and feedback to the students. So, they can feel appreciated for what they do in the classroom.

Using reinforcement in the classroom has a positive influence on the learning process. According to Helmiati, there are some functions of giving reinforcement. The first is to make students more confident. The second is to increase students' motivation, interest, and attention to learning. The third is to Arouse and maintain student behavior. Forth is to maintain conducive learning (Helmiati, 2013). This means that the reinforcement improves the students' behavior toward learning.

Meanwhile, Usman mentioned the functions of reinforcement for students are to increase students' attention in learning, stimulate and increase student learning motivation, improve learning activities, and foster productive student behavior (Usman, 1995). Not only does the students' behavior toward learning, but it also helps the students to become more productive and have more attention.

### **Positive Reinforcement**

Positive reinforcement gives motivation or positive behavior that results in positive behavior. As a concept, it was introduced by Skinner. Positive reinforcement can either be a reward for good behavior or simply a positive communication in the form of praise or encouragement (Skinner, 1953). The main goal of using positive reinforcements in the learning activity is to encourage the students to repeat the good behavior that they have done and that would be useful evidence for them and also for the class (Sari, 2019). Semantic as cited in Angandrowa & Putra explains that positive reinforcement provides a stimulus that increases the probability of a response (Kefas, 2017).

According to Uzer Usman, positive reinforcement is divided into two namely verbal and nonverbal reinforcement. Verbal reinforcement is usually in the form of praising words, appreciation, agreement, and the like. For example: good, very good, correct, smart, yes a hundred for you! Besides words, verbal reinforcement informs a sentence as like your present the material well, you are a talented student (Usman, 1995:81). Non-verbal reinforcement does

not use any kind of expression like in verbal reinforcement instead using reinforcement through gesture, or proximity, contact, activity, token/symbol, and partial

### **Negative Reinforcement**

According to Woolfolk, negative reinforcement is strengthening a behavior by removing an aversive stimulus when the behavior occurs (Woolfolk, 2007). Negative reinforcement occurs when the probability that a response will occur increases as a function of something being taken away from a situation. This type can be achieved if the teacher gives punishment to the learners so that they can decrease their negative behavior. The teacher can make such comments as too bad, shaking his head, etc

### **How To Give Reinforcement**

The way to give reinforcement also should be taken into account as it helps teachers to give the reinforcement effectively to students. It is divided into four individual reinforcement, group reinforcement, immediacy in giving reinforcement, and variation in giving reinforcement. Students that are being reinforced should be clear. It means that if a teacher intends to give reinforcement to a certain student she/he must be able to determine which student should be reinforced. Mentioning the name of the student being reinforced can help teachers to make clear to whom the reinforcement is proposed. It also gives students a sense of being appreciated. It is necessary to make students know the reason why they get reinforcement by stating their desired behavior.

Reinforcement can also be given to a group of students. Once a group of students shows good progress in learning, the teacher can reinforce them by giving them something or letting them do activities that they like. For instance, the teacher gives privilege to a group that can gain the highest point during a classroom quiz to sing a song in the class. Immediacy in giving reinforcement is essential because once the reinforcement is delayed, it will not be as effective as it should be. Reinforcement is better given as soon as students perform the intended behavior. Variation in giving reinforcement is needed as it can make students bored of receiving the same forms of reinforcement and by that time the reinforcement will not be effective as it is not meaningful anymore for the students. Students should be reinforced variously either in terms of the reinforcement types or the way teachers give it to them. Reinforcement will be more beneficial if it is given in a different pattern. For instance, firstly reinforcement is given to all classroom members then, to small groups of the class, and students as individuals (Usman, 1995:83).

### **Principles In Giving Reinforcement**

Several principles that should be noticed by a teacher in giving reinforcement both verbal and non-verbal are warmth, enthusiasm, meaning, and avoiding the use of negative responses. It is important to make sure that the student feels the sincerity of the reinforcement given. Any teacher's behavior toward students will show his/her sincerity in giving reinforcement to students. Besides that, students will also feel the teacher's warmth and enthusiasm while giving them reinforcement on certain behavior that they do. In this situation, students feel that they are appreciated and welcomed by the teacher. In addition, it can build a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom.

One of the important things in giving reinforcement is meaningful value. Reinforcement should be given as meaningfully as it can be because it will help students to understand to what extent they are being reinforced and why the teacher reinforced them. So, the reinforcement is meaningful as they know that they deserve it. The use of negative responses will only cause students to be demotivated and stop developing themselves. Instead of blaming a student who cannot answer a certain question, the teacher should switch the question or move to another student (Usman, 1995:82)

It is necessary to pay attention to the principles above in giving reinforcement to reinforce students' behavior. Besides, it also helps teachers to have an effective teaching and learning process

To support this research, some research has been conducted by other researchers on related topics to the upcoming research. Therefore, the researcher presents the previous research to show the gap and difference between the previous one and the new research being proposed.

The first study was conducted by Ms. L.P. Wong in June 2006 entitled "Can the use of positive reinforcement enhances students' motivation in learning English?" The researcher argues that positive reinforcement plays a fundamental role in arousing students' interest in learning English. Researchers strongly believe that teachers can make use of positive reinforcement to arouse students' interest in learning English. Through the class observation as well as the data collected from the interviews and questionnaires, students appear to be more motivated to learn English in the lessons. The second was conducted by Kefas Angandrowa Dwi Putra Zebra about The Use Of Verbal Reinforcement To Motivate 11th Grade Students of SMA Budya Wacana Yogyakarta To Speak English.<sup>23</sup> This research has mainly discussed the types of verbal reinforcement which can motivate 11th-grade students of SMA Budya Wacana Yogyakarta in speaking English, verbal reinforcement they are familiar with, and factors that can motivate 11th-grade students of SMA Budya Wacana Yogyakarta in speaking English. Third, the research conducted by Yuli Eka Putri about An Analysis Of Teachers' Reinforcement Toward Student Interaction In Teaching Speaking At SMPN 7 Padang.<sup>24</sup> This research has mainly discussed the type of reinforcement that is frequently used in teaching speaking at SMPN 7 Padang. The result of this study reported that the teacher used both verbal and non-verbal reinforcement in teaching speaking and the type of reinforcement that is most frequently used is nonverbal reinforcement

Based on the previous study above, the similarity between the previous research with this research is in observing the positive reinforcement used by the teacher. The difference in this research is to find out the types of reinforcement used by the teacher, the reason why the teacher uses certain reinforcement in class, and whether the teacher understands how to use the reinforcement or not.

## **METHOD**

This research used a qualitative approach. The design of this research was descriptive because the researcher made a description of the use of reinforcement by the teacher in the English classroom. Descriptive is concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, demographic information, condition, and procedures (Gay, 1990). Therefore, the researcher used descriptive qualitative, Creswell stated that descriptive qualitative research aims at investigating the details rendering of people, places, or events in a setting in a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2008:254).

### **Respondents**

The informant of this research was the English teacher in 7th grade at MTsS Darul Makmur Sungai Cubadak. There were three English teachers at MTsS Darul Makmur Sungai Cubadak, but the researcher only choose one English teacher, because the teacher often used reinforcement in the teaching and learning process in a classroom compared to the other teachers. She is Miss N, she is the teacher who teaches in the 7th grade. She is also one of the favorite teachers in that school, and the teacher often used reinforcement to students in the teaching and learning process in the classroom compared to other teachers during the learning process, the teacher dominantly used reinforcement in English classrooms. According to her students, she is patient in dealing with the behavior of her students. She is a teacher who was easy to get along with students and her relaxed way of teaching was very popular with students.

### **Instruments**

In this research, the interview and observation sheets were used by the researcher. In this research, the researcher made the observation sheet. It is a list of items based on the theory about kinds of reinforcement from M.Uzer Usman. The table contained the types of reinforcement used by the teacher during a class. The data was obtained using an observation sheet which was designed by using a "Yes" or "No" checklist. The researcher made some indicators on the table and focused only on the types of reinforcement



Their observation sheet was divided into two sections, the first was about positive reinforcement also divided into 2 indicators which are verbal and non-verbal reinforcement. The verbal reinforcement had 3 sub- indicators which are words, phrases, and sentences. Then the non-verbal reinforcement had 5 sub-gestural indicators, proximity, contact, activity, and token. Furthermore, the negative reinforcement was divided into 6 indicators which are speech volume, warning, gesture, eye contact, facial expression, and punishment.

The researcher used an in-depth interview in the unstructured interview. According to Anna, an in-depth interview in general is the process of obtaining information for research purposes through question and answer while face-to-face between the interviewer and the informant being interviewed, with or without using an interview guide, the interviewer and the informant are involved in a relatively long social life (Annesa, 2021). Hence, the researcher interviewed the English teacher to get information about reinforcement used by the teacher in the English classroom. The interview consisted of 7 questions. The first is about the teacher's opinion about the reinforcement. The second is about, the effect of reinforcement on students in teaching-learning progress. The third is to find the teacher's reasoning in using the word as positive reinforcement. Fourth is to find the teacher's reasoning in praising the students as one example of positive reinforcement. The fifth is to find out the teacher's reasoning for using gestures for positive reinforcement. The sixth is about the teacher's reasoning for the absence of sentence type of positive reinforcement. The last is about the reinforcement effect on the learning and the students.

### **Procedures**

#### **Observation**

The ways in doing observation in this research were, the researcher joined in the classroom. Then, the researcher observed in the classroom. Then, The researchers checklist the use of reinforcement used by teachers when learning English in an observation sheet. Then, the researcher observed the teacher's reinforcement in teaching English in five meetings for this observation. Finally, The researcher recorded the use of reinforcement by the teacher in the teaching-learning process

#### **Interview**

In this stage, for collecting the data from the interview, the researcher used some procedures. First, the researcher used a sheet of questions that will be asked to the English teachers based on the information that has been obtained at the time of observation. Second, the researcher asked permission from the informant's willingness to be interviewed. Third, the researcher introduced herself and told the purpose of interviewing the English teacher. Fourth, the researcher asked and talked in a friendly way according to the question that has been prepared based on the interview guide. Last, the researcher recorded the interviewees' answers

#### **Data analysis**

Data Collection is where the researcher collected the data through interview & observation, then the researcher selected, transcribed, and focused on the data by referring to the formulation of the research problems being investigated in the research. In other words, the irrelevant data should be discarded while the relevant data should be included. Then, data Reduction is where the researcher resumes the data and focuses on the research aspects and unnecessary aspects are reduced by the researcher. Then, display the Data where the researchers make the result of the research that consists of the type of reinforcement and the teacher's reason in using it. Finally, conclusion where the researcher concludes the finding based on the type of reinforcement and the teacher's reason for using it (Sugiyono, 2009:388).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Types of Reinforcement Used by the Teacher**

#### **Positive reinforcement (Verbal)**

There are three types of verbal reinforcement based on the research guidelines, namely word, phrase and sentence. In the class, the teacher was discussing Adjectives. She explained in detail such as an adjective showing personality, an adjective showing animal qualities, and an

adjective showing items/things. In the six times observation, after the teacher explained the materials, the teacher gave several questions and asked students to name the adjectives they know. When the student answered, the teacher, gave the word-type reinforcement by saying "good, bagus", "okay", "yes", "very good", "betul", "pintar", "smart", and "ok, thank you", to appreciate who can answer her question about the adjective

Based on the six times observation, it was found that the teacher gave verbal reinforcement in the phrase. The teacher gave the phrase reinforcement by saying "good job, excellent job, and kerja yang bagus", to appreciate students' group work in finding out the types of adjectives other than what the teacher wrote on the whiteboard and who can finish their assignment.

#### **Positive reinforcement (Non-Verbal)**

Based on the six observations, it was found that the teacher gave gestural expressions while teaching English through facial expressions and body expressions. In facial expressions, the teacher gave smiles to the students and laughed together during the learning process. While body expression, the teacher nodded her head, approached students as if standing next to them, and gave applause to the students who could mention the name of the adjective that they knew.

As a result of observation, the researcher found that the teacher did proximity to reinforce the student during teaching English. The teacher did standing next to the student and moved nearer to the student to assist them in doing tasks in finding out the types of adjectives other than what the teacher wrote on the whiteboard the researcher found that the teacher did contact to reinforce the student during teaching English. The teacher just pats the shoulder of female students. The researcher also found that the teacher did not do any fun activities, like games. But only a quiz in every meeting, the quiz that has been done is about the adjectives that have been studied previously.

For token/symbol reinforcement, the researcher observed that the teacher chose a reward (snacks) for students who could answer questions by the teacher and mention the adjectives asked by the teacher. The teacher also gave points as a token/symbol reinforcement for students who have completed their notes, who completed assignments given by the teacher, and who answered the teacher's question

#### **Negative Reinforcement**

The researcher observed that the teacher called the students names that interfere with their learning process. Sometimes the teacher increases her speech volume if the students still not paying attention. The researcher observed that the teacher warns the students. The teacher said students who do not bring LKS are not allowed to enter class, students who do not make assignments will be penalized standing behind the class on one leg, and students who do not complete the notebook will not get additional points.

The teacher shook her head and asked students to pay attention to the teacher's explanation. It was shown when the teacher said "suaranya nak" while shaking her head and the teacher said "ssstt...diam dan dengarkan penjelasan miss" while putting his finger in front of her mouth to reprimand the students. The teacher warns students by looking cynically at students, then approaching students so that they stop interfering with the learning process. The researcher observed that the teacher approached the students who interrupt the lesson with annoyed faces.

#### **The Reason for The Teacher to Provide Certain Reinforcement to Students**

The reasons teachers reinforce learning are to motivate students and make students feel appreciated and happy while learning. Giving reinforcement can also create a happy atmosphere in the English class so that learning can be carried out well. Then, reinforcement is used by the teacher to create a competitive situation in a sporting manner and to make the students active in the learning process, compete in answering questions from the teacher, make them feel valued, and increase students' scores.

## CONCLUSION

The type of reinforcement used by the teacher is positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement. There were two types of positive reinforcement used by teachers, namely verbal reinforcement and non-verbal reinforcement. The verbal reinforcement often used by the teacher was a reinforcement in the form of words and reinforcement in the form of phrases. Orally, the teacher more often used the word good, yes, thank you, and so on. Then, the verbal reinforcement in the form of sentences was never done by the teacher in the learning process. While the non-verbal reinforcement often used by the teacher was gestural, activity reinforcement, and proximity reinforcement. Then, the non-verbal reinforcement rarely used by the teacher was contact reinforcement and token/symbol reinforcement. Next, negative reinforcement is used by the teacher. The negative reinforcement often used by the teacher in six meetings was attention stress, gesture dan eye contact. Based on the research findings, teachers often approach the students and stand next to the students to see the student's assignments given by the teacher. Meanwhile, the negative reinforcement often used by the teacher was volume stress and punishment.

The reason for the teacher is to provide certain reinforcement to students. The reasons teachers reinforce learning are to motivate students and make students feel appreciated and happy while learning. Giving reinforcement can also create a happy atmosphere in the English class so that learning can be carried out well. Then, reinforcement is used by the teacher to create a competitive situation in a sporting manner and to make the students active in the learning process, compete in answering questions from the teacher, make them feel valued, and increase students' scores.

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