



Teachers' reinforcement and students' perception to the teachers in English classroom

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Abstract

The study focuses on the positive reinforcement that is used by the teachers in each class and students' perception towards reinforcement itself. This research involved two English teachers and two different classes of year ten students in SMA Kristen YSKI Semarang. To describe the use of reinforcement by the teachers, their teaching process were recorded and observed. Questionnaire and interview were done at the end of the lesson to describe how the students perceive reinforcement. This study is qualitative research. The data showed that the teachers used various types of reinforcement based on the theory of reinforcement by Moore (2007). They are Verbal, Non-verbal, Vicarious, Delayed, and Qualified Reinforcement. They used almost all types of reinforcement, except the Delayed Reinforcement. In general, Non-verbal Reinforcement was mostly used by the teachers. The interview results showed that the students agreed that reinforcement is important and useful for them during teaching and learning process.

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INTRODUCTION

English is one of the subjects that is taught in Indonesian school and becomes one of the important subjects in school. However, Indonesian school still face some problems in having English as the subject in the school. It is because the students have no interest in English, they lack English skill, or even they do not understand at all. As English is an obligation in most of the school in Indonesia, their motivation to learn this subject is to be questioned because they live in a country that the knowledge of English is not compulsory (Marcellino, 2008). Furthermore, most of the students have no life experience using English and are not expected to use English in their future (Astuti, 2013). Thus, teachers' contribution is hardly needed for this problem. Teachers' interaction is particularly critical for students who are learning English as the second language (Marchant & Anderson, 2012).

One of the problems that is faced by the teachers is the students' motivation in learning English. Based on the researcher's experience and preliminary research, the students seemed not too interested in English and they tended not to follow the teachers. Because teaching and learning is a main activity at the classroom, the teachers, therefore, are responsible to make the class becomes more interesting and effective. The teachers are to maintain the teaching and learning process in an effective way, so that the students will feel interested. The effective teacher is one who is able to help students learn more in ways that can be measured (Cruickshank et al., 2012).

To make the students get involved and interested in study English, the teachers can do something to achieve that. One of them is motivating the students. Motivating students may increase students' interest in study English if the teacher applies it properly. One of the most important part in educational setting is motivation, of the students are not motivated enough, they will be unlikely to learn and there will be no chance for increasing the effective instruction (Abbasi et al., 2015).

One of the extrinsic motivation that can be applied by the teachers is reinforcement. According to Turney (1983) positive reinforcement means positive response by one person to another's behavior so that probability of that behavior occurring again is increased. "Reinforcement is one of the most powerful techniques we have at our disposal for directing or motivating the actions of other people or animal." (Walker, 1975). In other words, reinforcement can be meant to give motivation to people or animal. In this case, the teacher can give motivation to the students in order to get them interested in learning English. Reinforcement can be applied during teaching and learning process because the students will feel their efforts are valuable and also will make them to keep trying if they do some mistakes.

There are some types of positive reinforcement that can be used by the teacher in general classroom according to Moore (2007). There are Verbal reinforcement, This reinforcement occurs when the teachers gave positive comments verbally to the students' desired behavior. For example, "good", "excellent", "great", "very nice", "good job", "that's right", etc. Next is Non-verbal reinforcement. This reinforcement refers to the use of some physical action for responding students' action or desired behavior. For example, eye contact, a nod, a smile, a thumb up, moving closer to the students, etc. Vicarious reinforcement is a reinforcement that needs people to observe others. It means that when others do something desirable, then they will probably follow others' behavior. For example, when the teachers say, "I like the way Mary raise her hand before talking". Delayed reinforcement is a reinforcement that does not mean to forget students' actions or behavior, but to give them in a proper time. For example, a question can be given to the students who have known the prior knowledge in the subject before they start the lesson. The teacher might say, "I believe John can answer this, since he did a boall right review last week". The last but not the least is Qualified reinforcement. This reinforcement only occurs when the teachers only reinforce what the teachers want from the students, if the students do not do what the teachers want, at least the teacher will reinforce students' effort, or the way they answer. For example, when students A answers a question incorrectly, but the teacher praises her effort to answer the question (Moore, 2007, p.203).

However, the teachers are to know and understand the appropriate time and appropriate reinforcement they will give to the students, especially in giving rewards as the reinforcement to the students. the reward should be related to the students' behaviors that are most important to the teachers (Emmer et al., 2006). In addition, the teachers are to consider whether it affects the students' behavior or not, because the aim of giving reinforcement is to engage students' interests and make them follow the material well.

Based on my preliminary research, the teachers used reinforcement to make students got involved in the lesson. After being given the reinforcement, the students seemed interested and they tried to answer some questions given by the teacher.

The aim of this study are to describe the use of reinforcement by the English teachers in SMA Kristen YSKI Semarang, find out which type of reinforcement that mostly used by the teachers, and to describe the students perception towards reinforcement used by the teachers in the classroom.

A large body of research has been carried out to find out the use of reinforcement to support the current study. A study conducted by Pintel in 2006. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of positive reinforcements on the performance of third grade students in their spelling test. She hypothesized that third grade students who experience positive reinforcement in the form of rewards will have significantly higher grades on the end of the week spelling post-test, than when the same students did not receive positive reinforcement in the form of rewards for the end of the week spelling post-test. The participants of this study was fourteen students in third grade of elementary school in southern New Jersey. She conducted the research for 8 weeks consecutively (four weeks without positive reinforcement and four weeks with positive reinforcement). Students who got 92 above would be given a gift as the reward. She compared the test result for four times. Based on the result of the t-test, there was significant improvement in the achievements of the students' grades in their Friday spelling test when they received positive reinforcement in the form of rewards, than when these same students did not receive positive reinforcement for the Friday spelling test. The researcher concluded that positive reinforcement in the form of rewards was able to improve the achievement of 3rd grade students in their end of the week post spelling test.

Next study was from Hoque in 2013. He wanted to find out the effect of positive reinforcement in teaching and learning process. The researcher hypothesized that there was no significant difference in the unit test result of the control group and experimental group and there was no significant difference in the attendance of the control group and experimental group. The researcher chose five school to be the subject of the research. One hundred students were chosen randomly from those five school. Fifty students were the control group, the rest were the experimental group. The researcher used statistical technique for analyzing the data, there were mean, standard deviation, and t-test. Based on the result of the study, there were significant difference between control group and experimental group. The experimental group performed better than the control group and had a higher interest of learning than the control group. The researcher concluded that he supported the importance of Skinner's theory about Operant Conditioning in teaching learning process.

Next study was conducted by Latifah in 2016. The researcher wanted to find out what kinds of positive reinforcement that was used by the teacher, to find out how the teacher used positive reinforcement to maintain and motivate a good behavior of their students in learning English. The researcher collected the data by observing and interviewing the observed teachers. She used video recording in order to make the observation was valid. Based on the result of the analysis, the researcher concluded that the observed teachers almost used all kinds of positive reinforcement. The teachers gave the reinforcement whenever the students answered the teachers' questions or did the assignment well. However, in this study the researcher did not find out what the students perception toward reinforcement is, because of that the researcher will find it out.

Since most of the study above only focused on the used of reinforcement, the current study also investigated the students' perception about the reinforcement used by the teachers. Not to mention, Furthermore the current study used a theory from Moore (2007) who suggested five types of positive reinforcement that can be used in English classroom.

METHODS

This study used qualitative design which focused on analyzing and describing the data in form of sentences. This research was naturally conducted and involved human behavior in its natural settings, as Cresswel (1994) states that qualitative research occurs in natural setting where human behavior and events occur.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were two English teachers and students in grade ten in the academic year 2018/2019 in SMA Kristen YSKI Semarang.

The object of the study

The object of the study was the types of reinforcement used by the teachers and students perception toward reinforcement that the teachers used during classroom.

Instruments

To collect the data, observation sheet, quetionnaire sheet, audio-video material, were used in this study. The observation sheet was used to record everything ahppen in the observation on the field notes. Questionnaire sheet was used to gather information from the student. The questions were close-ended questions. I took some pictures, and record videos during the observation and also during the interview process.

Data analysis procedures

To analyze the data the researcher used some steps from Siedel (1998). The first is transcribing. The researcher transcribed the data got from audio-video recording. Next is noticing things, in this step I did “code” step which means naming or labeling something.

Table 1. Code of reinforcement.

No	Types of Reinforcement	Code
1.	Verbal Reinforcement	VR
2.	Non-verbal Reinforcement	NR
3.	Vicarious Reinforcement	VCR
4.	Delayed Reinforcement	DR
5.	Qualified Reinforcement	QR

Next step is collecting and sorting instances of things. In this step, I sorted the data based on the types of reinforcement by Moore (2007). The next is thinking about things, in this process I examined the things I have collected. I counted the percentage of the use if reinforcement.

The last step is describing. I described the result of the analysis in thinking process. the description was also supported by the result of students’ questionnaire and interview.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The use of reinforcement during teaching and learning process

Based on my observation, the teachers used various types of reinforcement and almost used all types of reinforcement. The researcher classified the types of reinforcement based on Moore (2007) theory. There are Verbal, Non-verbal, Vicarious, Delayed, and Qualified Reinforcement.

Verbal Reinforcement

The teachers praised the students orally for what they have done during teaching and learning process. Here is the extract:

Extract 1:

- S *There is the date.*
- T **Ya, good!** *There is the date, there is the place atau venue. Pasti kalau event harus ada tempatnya dimana, kapan, eventnya apa, sudah ya?*
- S *Iya, miss*

Extract 2:

- T *Oke, before we listen to the song, lagu itu kan banyak unurnya, nah kalo tulisan kan ada paragraf, kalo lagu ada apanya?*
- S *Verse, miss*
- T **Oke, good!** *ada versenya, atau baitnya. Kalo yang diulang-ulang?*
- S *Reff, miss*
- T **Oke, good!** *Ada refrainnya. Nah, kadang itu dilagu ada kata-kata yang memiliki arti bukan arti sesungguhnya.*

Based on the extract 1 and 2, the researcher found that every time the students answered correctly, the teachers would give verbal praises directly, as can be seen in extract 1 line 2 and extract 2 line 4 and 6. During observation, the researcher also found that the teachers sometimes used two types of reinforcement at the same time, as can be seen in extract 3 and 4:

Extract 3:

- T *Jadi kalo kalian bikin tugas itu jangan hanya sekedar you finish the assignment trus kalian ngga tau apa-apa ya. Jadi kalian juga belajar dari assignment kalian. Sayang loh.*
S *Iya, miss.*
T **Oke thank you. (the teacher was smiling and nodding).** *Oke, lanjut grup berikutnya.*
S *(students were preparing for the presentation)*
T *Yuk, are you ready?*
S *Yes, miss. (students did the presentation)*

Extract 4:

- T *Oke, next group? (the teacher came closer to the students) Ayo gapapa maju duluan saja. Silahkan dipersiapkan. Soalnya jam terakhir dipakai buat remidi ya? Jadi kita harus manfaatkan 2 jam ini.*
S *(one group came forward to do the presentation) Oke friends, we will present our song*
T *Don't forget to introduce yourself.*

From extract 3, the teacher applied verbal reinforcement and followed by non-verbal reinforcement at the same time. Furthermore, extract 4 showed that the teacher used Non-verbal Reinforcement and then followed by Vicarious Reinforcement.

Non-verbal Reinforcement

This reinforcement refers to the use of some physical actions for responding students' action or behavior. Here is the extract:

Extract 5:

- T *Ya it's oke. Come on. (the teacher nodded).*
S *Oke, is there only one symbol in both songs?*
S2 *Yes, kalo aku sih....*
T *Try to use English.*
S2 *Yes, we only find one symbol here. If you find another one you can add.*
T **(the teacher smiled and gave point to the student)**

Extract 6:

- S *(The students were quiet)*
T *Come on, what we have learnt? (The teacher came closer to the students)*

Extract 5 and 6 showed that the teachers often gave Non-verbal reinforcement to the students. The teachers simply gave nod or smile to show their appreciation to the students.

Vicarious Reinforcement

This reinforcement needs people to observe others. The students will probably do the same thing if their partners have done it previously. Thus, this type of reinforcement is expected to be able to help students do something desirable. The use of Vicarious Reinforcement can be seen in extract 6:

Extract 6:

- T *Nah, bahaya. Nah Thomas, gimana ini artinya? Udah dibantu sama teman-temanmu lo ini.*
S *Jadi, pas di laut itu ada gelombang besar gitu miss.*
T *Iya, artinya apa? Masa ini lagu ngomongin tentang laut? Ayo coba di hubungkan dengan*

kehidupan. Jadi gelombang ini itu kaya melambangkan apa kalo dikehidupan?
 S Masalah miss.
 T Oke, masalah. Kalo gelombang tinggi berarti masalahnya?
 S Besar.
 T Oke, bagus, gelombang tinggi artinya masalahnya besar. (the teacher spoke louder to one student).
 In line 1 we can see that the teacher tried to encourage the students to do something by observing other’s behavior. When the other students did something desirable, perhaps the others also did the same thing.

Delayed Reinforcement

Based on the result of transcription, the researcher did not find any Delayed Reinforcement applied by the teachers. It was because the teachers tended to give praises directly to the students every time they do something desirable.

Qualified Reinforcement

The teachers tried to encourage the students to do what the teachers wanted. The teachers sometimes reminded the students to keep speaking English in her classroom. Here is the extract:

Extract 7:

T Oke, jadi gimana itu? Hidup kaya layang-layang itu gimana?
 S (students were only quiet)
 T **Oke, coba explain using your own words. Try to use english.**
 S (students were discussing about the answer)
 T Nah, kalian bisa analisa itu, artinya kalian bisa jelasin dong. Itu kan simbolnya, ya kalian jelasin pake kalimat kalian sendiri. Ayo coba gimana?
 S (students were only quiet)
 T Oke, try to think about that, ok? Oke next please.

Extract 8 (lines 1 to 3):

T Oke, next group? (the teacher came closer to the students) **Ayo gapapa maju duluan saja. Silahkan dipersiapkan. Soalnya jam terakhir dipakai buat remidi ya? Jadi kita harus manfaatkan 2 jam ini.**
 S (students were preparing for the presentation) Oke friends, we will present our song..

In extract 7 line 3, the teachers tried to encourage the students to speak English. Even though the students did some grammar mistakes, the teachers still appreciated their effort to try. Extract 8 line 1 and 2 above showed that the teacher was trying to make the students to be confident when they did the presentation.

Types of the reinforcement used by the teachers

Each teacher applied reinforcement the way they preferred. This part presents the findings of types of reinforcement used by each teachers.

Table 2. The Types of Reinforcement used by the Teachers

No	Types of Reinforcement	Code	Teacher A		Teacher B	
			Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Verbal Reinforcement	VR	17	36.17%	21	36.21%
2.	Non-Verbal Reinforcement	NVR	24	51.06%	19	32.76%
3.	Vicarious Reinforcement	VCR	1	2.13%	3	5.17%
4.	Delayed Reinforcement	DR	0	0%	0	0%

5.	Qualified Reinforcement	QR	5	10.64%	15	25.86%
		Total	47	100%	58	100%

From the table above, teacher A and teacher B used various types of reinforcement. They reinforced they way they preferred. The researcher found that they used different amount of reinforcement according to the students' need. Both teachers did not use any Delayed Reinforcement, since they used reinforcement spontaneously in their classroom.

Teacher A used Non-verbal reinforcement mostly in her classroom, it is showed in the table that 51.06% of reinforcement is Non-verbal Reinforcement. Whereas, teacher B had different result. She used Verbal Reinforcement mostly in her classroom, since she used 36.21% Verbal Reinforcement in her classroom.

Table 3. The General Result of the use of Reinforcement

No	Types of Reinforcement	Code	Frequency	Percentage
1	Verbal Reinforcement	VR	38	36.19%
2	Non-Verbal Reinforcement	NVR	43	40.95%
3	Vicarious Reinforcement	VCR	4	3.81%
4	Delayed Reinforcement	DR	0	0%
5	Qualified Reinforcement	QR	20	19.05%
		Total	105	100%

In general, the researcher found that Non-verbal Reinforcement was mostly used by the teachers followed by Verbal Reinforcement in the second place.

Students perception towards reinforcement

The questionnaire and interview were done by the researcher to gain data about students' perception towards teachers' reinforcement. The questionnaires were given at the end of the lesson. The students' comments may vary from one class to another class, depending on the teacher that taught them in the class.

Table.4 The Students' Comments on Teacher's Reinforcement

No	Pupil's Comments Reinforcement				
1	When I made effort during the lesson the teacher	took notice of what I did 7	Told me I was right or wrong 18	Didn't take any notice 0	
2	I found this lesson	Quite interesting 7	The same as usual 15	Rather boring 1	Really interesting 2
3	I like to say something	Never	In very lesson	From time to time	

		12	6		7
4	When I made a comment in the lesson the teacher	Praised me 3	Didn't comment 4	Nodded or smiled 18	Didn't seem to notice 0
5	The teacher	Was interested in all I did or said 7	Listened to some of what I said 14	Was not at all interested to me 4	Seem to think anything I did was good 0
6	I felt I really worked hard in this 6	I did what I was supposed to 16		I didn't try at all 3	
7	Has your teacher given you the reinforcement properly?	Yes 0	No 15	I don't know 10	
8	How often does your teacher give you reinforcement in the classroom?	never 1	In every lesson 4	Sometimes 20	
9	Has your teacher given you reinforcement personally?	Yes 9		Never 16	
10	Do you always respond the reinforcement given to you?	Yes, always 7	never 3	Sometimes 15	
11	Is reinforcement important for you?	Yes 19	No 1	I doubt it 5	
12	Do you think the reinforcement given by the teachers is useful for you?	Yes, really useful 17	nope 0	I doubt it 8	

The table above is the table of students comment for teacher A. There were 25 students. From the table above, we know that the students found the lesson was the same as usual, nothing special with the lesson. There were only 2 students said that the lesson was “very interesting”, and 7 students said the lesson was “quite interesting”. And only one student felt the lesson was “rather boring”.

The students thought that the teacher has implemented reinforcement appropriately, but few of them were not aware about reinforcement used in the classroom, it is proven by 10 students chose “tidak tahu” as their answer. Even though the teacher had given the proper reinforcement for the students, as found in the table above, the reinforcement had only been given rarely to the students, since 20 out of 25 students chose “rarely/kadang-kadang”.

On that table, 19 students thought that reinforcement is important and useful for them in classroom. Even though only few of the students (9 out of 25) have been given personal reinforcement by the teacher.

Interview was done to gain more information about their perception towards reinforcement. The interview was conducted after the lesson. The researcher chose the students randomly. From general result of the interview, all of them agreed that reinforcement is something useful and important for them in the classroom. They thought it was one of the way the teachers used, to build their enthusiasm in learning English.

Based on their opinion, giving additional score for them was one of the effective way to reinforce them. They agreed that it could make them to be more active in the classroom, so that they expected that reinforcement should be given to all students.

Discussions

Teachers' reinforcement

An effective classroom must have an effective teacher who takes part in every process of learning. Cruickshank et al., (2012) suggested that an effective teacher is one who is able to help the students to learn more in ways that can be measured. The teachers are to help the students to feel acceptable as individuals and recognize effort and potential. One of the way to make them feel acceptable is giving reinforcement. From general result of the study, the teachers had implemented the reinforcement quite well. They could apply it in a proper time and sometimes the students responded it well.

Based on the findings above, the teachers used reinforcement as the way to appreciate students' efforts and enthusiasm. "Positive reinforcement in practice can build self-positive concept, develop an attitude of success, and enhance instructional motivation for the students" (McDaniel, 1987). Each teachers must have different preference of reinforcement since they have different style of learning. Not only did the teachers use one type of reinforcement but also they used two types of reinforcement at the same time. They sometimes combined it because it was very effective to show their respect and appreciation to the students. For instance, the teachers gave thumbs up while saying "good" or "nice". This is the combination of Verbal Reinforcement with Non-verbal Reinforcement.

Delayed Reinforcement is one of the types of reinforcement that was not used by the teachers, based on the findings above. Giving reinforcement directly to the students may raise their confidence as they had done well in the classroom. This result is not in line with the result of the study conducted by Hanjayani (2010), since her study showed that all types of reinforcement were applied by the teachers.

Types of reinforcement used by the teachers

Non-verbal reinforcement was the types of reinforcement that mostly used by the teachers. The teachers simply gave smile or nod to show their respects the students. "Most teachers eventually learn to use smiles, nods, and touch, to show approval" (McDaniel, 1987). This findings latter in line with study conducted by Adibsereshki et al., (2014) which showed that tangible reinforcement is more effective than social reinforcement. Tangible reinforcements are concrete objects that a student needs or wants, it refers to the use of extrinsic rewards, such as, stickers, food, award certificate, or points (Cruickshank et al., 2012). On the other hand, this findings contrast with the study by Hanjayani (2010). Her study showed different result, which was Verbal Reinforcement that had the highest frequency during teaching and learning process.

Students' perception

During teaching and learning process, there must be interaction happened between students and teachers. Based on the students' perception above, they all agreed that reinforcement positively helped them in the classroom. This is in line with the result of study conducted by Pratiwi (2015) which showed that more than half of students agreed it helped them improving students' grade. This is also supported by the study by Hoque (2013) which showed that students treated by positive reinforcement was performing better.

In addition, the students perceived that reinforcement is important and useful. This one is supported by the study by Burnett and Mandel (2010), the students perceived that they felt good inside when they were praised. Thus, this study supported praises as one of the Verbal Reinforcement that are important and positively help the students to work harder.

Most of the students agreed that giving additional score was often used by the teachers. They thought that it will help them to be more enthusiastic. This finding is supported by the study of Pintel (2006) which showed that there was improvement in students' achievement who had been given positive reinforcement in form of rewards. The tangible reinforcement was effective to be implemented in the classroom compared with social reinforcement, as showed in Adibsereshki's study.

CONCLUSION

There are five types of reinforcement that are suggested by Moore (2007), there are Verbal Reinforcement, Non-verbal reinforcement, Vicarious Reinforcement, Delayed Reinforcement, and Qualified Reinforcement. Based on the result of this study, it can be concluded that both teacher A and teacher B used reinforcement the way they preferred in the classroom. From the result findings, the teachers used various types of reinforcement. Teacher A used Non-verbal Reinforcement the most during lesson, whereas teacher B used Verbal Reinforcement the most. In general after the researcher did the recapitulation, it can be concluded that Non-verbal reinforcement was mostly used by the teachers.

Based on the result in chapter IV, most of the students agreed that reinforcement is a way that is used by the teachers to motivate the students. They thought that reinforcement is similar to motivation. They also agreed that reinforcement is very useful and important for them, especially when they made some effort during classroom. They felt appreciated and motivated. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the teachers have already implemented reinforcement properly during teaching and learning process.

From the result of students' interview, it can also be concluded that Non-Verbal Reinforcement, such as, giving additional score for the task, was mostly responded by the students. From the interview result, they preferred Non-verbal reinforcement as the most useful reinforcement for the students.

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