

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Research Background

English languages is widely recognized as a global language and is a core subject in many school curricula, including in Indonesia. According to Susanthi (2021), "Learning English is very important" because of its role as an international means of communication. However, among primary school students—particularly in international school settings—maintaining motivation and engagement in English learning remains a key challenge. One of the main factors influencing student learning success is the role of the teacher and how they deliver lessons in the classroom. Teachers are not only responsible for content delivery but also play a crucial role in shaping student behavior and motivation through effective instructional communication.

According to Artini (2016), teachers play a central role in shaping student behavior through appropriate reinforcement strategies. Suarjaya (2019) found that positive reinforcement such as praise and symbolic rewards significantly improves young learners' participation. Darmayanti (2020) emphasizes that students' motivation is strongly influenced by the interpersonal rapport between teachers and learners.

To enhance students' motivation and engagement, especially in English language learning, many teachers adopt reinforcement and punishment strategies as part of their classroom management practices. Reinforcement such as praise, stickers, or small rewards is designed to increase the likelihood of desired

behaviors, while punishment (e.g., verbal warnings, task repetition, or loss of privileges) is applied to reduce inappropriate or disruptive behavior (Gunaretnam, 2021). Research in education has shown that these strategies, when implemented effectively, can improve student participation, discipline, and overall learning outcomes (Syahrir et al., 2023; Prasetyo & Susanto, 2021). Motivation is a crucial factor in learning, and both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators can significantly influence student performance and engagement in classroom activities (Puspitasari et al., 2022).

However, despite their widespread use, the application of reinforcement and punishment techniques is not without challenges. In practice, teachers must be highly creative and culturally responsive in their approach, especially in multicultural, multilingual environments such as international schools. Most existing studies have focused on public or general education settings, leaving a gap in understanding how these strategies function and are perceived in international classrooms with young learners (Sesmita et al., 2021)

This research specifically addresses that gap by focusing on Sunrise School, an international school located in Bali, Indonesia. The school implements English as its primary language of instruction and adopts reinforcement and punishment strategies as a key element of its classroom management policy. Based on preliminary classroom observations and interviews, a common phenomenon was identified: a mismatch between teachers' intentions and students' actual responses to reinforcement and punishment. While teachers believe that external rewards such as praise or extra playtime enhance learning motivation, many students reported

that they are motivated to learn even without such rewards. Conversely, punishment strategies such as repeating tasks or losing break time do not always result in improved behavior, and some students remain indifferent or even resistant to such approaches. This aligns with Adnyani (2017), who highlights that students' responses to reinforcement are shaped by cultural and experiential backgrounds.

This divergence indicates a deeper issue students' perceptions and internalization of behavioral strategies may differ significantly from teacher expectations, especially in culturally diverse classrooms. Previous research also suggests that while positive reinforcement can encourage desirable behavior, its implementation can be time-consuming, limited in benefit, or even controversial when viewed from developmental and ethical perspectives (Gunaretnam, 2021). On the other hand, some studies show that reinforcement can positively impact students with learning difficulties, as seen in the work of Smith & Johnson (2022). However, its effectiveness still varies depending on how it is interpreted by the students.

Effective classroom management in the 21st century requires teachers to go beyond rigid application of behavioral techniques. It demands a nuanced, student-centered approach that supports both intrinsic motivation and character development, particularly for young learners in international school settings. Teachers must act not only as facilitators of knowledge but also as motivators and behavioral guides.

The observed phenomenon at Sunrise School highlights the complex dynamics between teacher strategies and student perceptions in behavior management. While reinforcement and punishment are consistently used, student

reactions often do not align with teacher expectations. This suggests the need to explore whether these strategies are developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive, and motivationally effective in such a setting. Moreover, a significant gap exists in the literature regarding the application and perception of reinforcement and punishment techniques in international primary education. The current study seeks to contribute to this underexplored area by examining how English teachers apply these techniques and how students respond to them within a multicultural classroom context.

Based on the background of the problem, this research is conducted to explore how teachers of English express positive reinforcement and punishment to young learners. This study purpose to (1) determine the type of Reinforcement and punishment techniques the teacher applies and (2) This research describe how the teacher expresses Reinforcement and punishment techniques toward students' motivation in learning. (3) students' responses to the application of these reinforcement and punishment This study focus on primary students in an international school.

## **1.2. Problems Identification**

According to Esterina,et al. (2022), students' learning inspiration indicators include their determination to succeed to improve student learning achievement, their willingness to persevere through challenges, and their unwavering attitude towards assignments. Teachers are crucial in igniting and boosting student motivation. The instructor must determine the best action to increase students' interest and drive during the learning process. If there is motivation, learning results

will be at their best (Nurrohmatulloh & Mulyawati, 2022). Inspiring others will be more effective when the goal is precise, achievable by the person being inspired, and aligned with their needs. Based on the goal, there are two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic, according to (Syarifuddin & Zulfah, 2020). In essence, assigning Reinforcement and penalties to EFL students can help teachers better motivate them to study and accomplish learning objectives. According to a study by Asmawati (2020), giving students Reinforcement and penalties significantly impacts their willingness to learn.

For several reasons, old-fashioned reinforcement techniques, such as rote memorization, strict discipline, and extrinsic Reinforcement, may be less effective in today's educational environment. Students today often benefit more from approaches that foster intrinsic motivation, creativity, and critical thinking. By moving away from traditional reinforcement techniques and adopting more modern, student-centered approaches, educators can create a learning environment that is more effective and engaging for today's students.

Incorporating creativity into classroom management can significantly enhance the learning experience by making it more engaging and enjoyable for students. Creative classroom management strategies maintain order and foster a positive learning environment where students feel motivated and excited to participate—definition of a Creative Teacher (Pramudito & Harjanto, 2020). A creative teacher is an educator who can use various innovative approaches in teaching, facilitating engaging and inspiring learning and creating an atmosphere that supports the holistic development of students. Creative teachers tend to be



flexible, think outside the box, and adapt to students' needs and the changing times. By incorporating creativity into classroom management, teachers can create a more engaging, fun, and supportive learning environment that fosters student motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Creative strategies help maintain order and encourage students to participate actively in their education, making the learning experience more meaningful and enjoyable.

Until the present time, many educators continue to implement reinforcement and punishment strategies in their classroom management, particularly in English language classes. This practice warrants further investigation, especially to explore how students respond to these two methods and the potential effects they have on student behavior, motivation, and overall engagement in the learning process. Research is essential to gain a deeper understanding of how reinforcement and punishment influence students, allowing educators to assess the effectiveness of these approaches. By examining students' reactions to these methods, we can determine whether they are truly conducive to fostering a positive and productive learning environment. This understanding could, in turn, help teachers identify more effective strategies for classroom management and improve the overall educational experience for students.

Although the use of punishment, such as reprimands or loss of privileges, is often viewed as a deterrent to learning and is believed to demotivate students, it remains a common practice among many teachers. Some educators maintain that punishment is necessary to preserve discipline and order in the classroom, despite concerns that it may have adverse effects on students' motivation, attitudes, and

enthusiasm for learning. This ongoing reliance on punishment, despite its potentially negative consequences, underscores the need for further research to understand the underlying reasons for its continued use. Additionally, it is important to investigate whether there are alternative, more effective approaches that could be employed in place of punishment, ones that might better support a positive, engaging, and sustainable learning environment for students.

### 1.3. Limitations of the Study

Based on the identification of the problems mentioned above and the limitations encountered in conducting the research, this study will be limited in the following ways. In the context of the 21st-century learning system, the study will focus on the use of positive reinforcement and punishment as key strategies for motivating students and managing behavior in the classroom. Positive reinforcement is used to encourage students' motivation and abilities, while punishment is employed to reduce undesirable behaviors. This study will specifically explore how English teachers express and implement Reinforcements and punishments in their classrooms. The research explore the following aspects:

1. The types of Reinforcement and punishments used by English teachers to young learners in English classrooms.
2. The methods used by English teachers to express these Reinforcement and punishments.
3. The responses of students to these Reinforcement and punishments it self.

However, the study will be limited to these specific questions and will not extend to broader educational strategies or the implementation of Reinforcement

and punishments outside of the English classroom setting. Additionally, this study will only focus on young learners and may not account for the experiences of older students or other educational contexts.

#### **1.4. Statement of the Problem**

The problems in this study can be formulated as follows:

1. What type of Reinforcement and punishment are expressed by English teachers to young learners in English classrooms?
2. How do English teachers express the Reinforcement and punishments?
3. How are the students' responses to teacher Reinforcement and punishment?

#### **1.5. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore and analyze the use of Reinforcement and punishments by English teachers in the classroom, particularly with young learners. Specifically, this study purpose to:

1. To Identify the types of reinforcement and punishments that English teachers express.
2. To Describe the English teacher expressed the reinforcement and punishment in the classroom.
3. To Explain student's respond the reinforcement and punishments given by Teacher.

#### **1.6. Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to make a significant contribution to the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, particularly in the area of classroom management. By examining the role of positive reinforcement and punishment in classroom settings, this research purpose to enhance our understanding of how these



strategies can be effectively implemented in EFL classrooms to improve both the learning environment and student behavior. The findings will contribute to the theoretical development of classroom management strategies, highlighting how reinforcement techniques can foster a positive and productive learning environment. As studies such as those by Syahrir et al. (2020) have shown, the use of appropriate classroom management strategies plays a crucial role in optimizing student engagement and academic success. This research to expand upon these theories by focusing specifically on how Reinforcement and punishments impact student motivation and classroom behavior.

#### **1.6.1. Theoretical Significance**

The theoretical significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to the development and refinement of classroom management theories, especially in EFL contexts. While previous studies have focused on general classroom management or specific aspects like student engagement, this study specifically investigates how positive reinforcement and punishment influence EFL students' behavior and motivation. The findings are expected to contribute to an understanding of how these strategies can be adapted and applied in language learning environments to promote desirable student outcomes. Additionally, by exploring the effectiveness of different types of reinforcement (both positive and negative) and punishment in shaping classroom dynamics, this research will help expand the theoretical framework of classroom management to include strategies that specifically support language acquisition and student engagement in foreign language classrooms. In this way, the study will offer new insights into how EFL

teachers can refine their pedagogical approaches to enhance both language learning and student behavior.

### **1.6.2. Practical Significance**

#### **a. Students**

The results of this study will provide practical insights into how positive reinforcement can contribute to the creation of a better classroom environment. By fostering a supportive, encouraging, and structured environment, positive reinforcement has been shown to significantly increase student motivation, engagement, and academic performance (Syahrir et al., 2020). Students will be more likely to participate in lessons and exhibit positive behaviors when they feel motivated and valued. This study will demonstrate how Reinforcements can help shape positive learning behaviors, thereby improving students' overall learning experiences.

#### **b. Teachers**

For teachers, this research offers valuable insights into the design and implementation of effective reinforcement strategies that promote student motivation and facilitate a smoother teaching and learning process. Teachers will gain a deeper understanding of how to manage classroom dynamics using both reinforcement and punishment effectively. By incorporating these strategies, teachers can foster a more organized and productive classroom environment, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes (Espinosa Cevallos & Soto, 2020). Additionally, the

study will offer practical suggestions for balancing Reinforcements and punishments in a way that supports both discipline and motivation, creating a positive impact on overall classroom management.

#### c. Future Researchers

This study will provide a foundation for future research in the field of classroom management. Future researchers can build on the findings by exploring alternative or more refined strategies for Reinforcement and punishing students in a way that enhances positive behaviors and minimizes disruptive actions. As the field of classroom management continues to evolve, further research will be needed to assess the long-term impact of these strategies on student outcomes and to explore the cultural and contextual factors that may influence their effectiveness (Herman, 2020). This study also opens the door for future studies that could examine how these strategies work in different educational settings, helping to develop more robust and adaptable classroom management practices.

### 1.7. Definition of Key Terms

#### 1.7.1. Positive Reinforcement

In positive reinforcement, when a person exhibits a desirable behavior, they receive a Reinforcement or positive consequence immediately afterward. The Reinforcement can be anything meaningful and motivating to the individual, such as praise, recognition, privileges, tokens, treats, or other forms of positive feedback. Reinforcements and punishments are fundamental tools in behavioral psychology used to influence behavior. When someone receives positive reinforcement

(Murpratiwi et al., 2018) to produce a desired situation, people are more likely to repeat the behavior to meet in the same position again. Positive reinforcement has a wide range of effects on children, including their motivation, independence, self-confidence, and initial writing ability. It has even been shown to impact the effectiveness of writing instruction (Murpratiwi et al., 2018). Performance can be enhanced with the use of positive reinforcement. As stated by Skinner in Gordan (2014: 682), favorable reinforcement is when someone responds positively to something favorable and will receive a Reinforecement or anything. According to Daft (2018), positive reinforcement is the application of enjoyable and Reinforecementing concealing after a behavior. Performance can be enhanced with the use of positive reinforcement. The key principle of positive reinforcement is to focus on reinforcing the behaviors you want to encourage rather than punishing or focusing on unwanted behaviors. By using positive reinforcement effectively, individuals can be motivated and encouraged to adopt and maintain positive behaviors, learn new skills, and improve their overall performance and well-being.

### **1.7.2. Punishment**

This punishment purpose to improve and direct students in the right direction so students know and realize their mistakes and do not repeat them in the future. Punishment, in this case, is not punishment in physical form but how educators train their students to be better in a way that students usually do not like. According to Daft (2018), punishment reinforcement imposes an unexpected consequence on an individual engaging in undesirable behavior. Punishment has been a shift towards more positive and proactive approaches to discipline. Rizkinta (2021) claimed that

the consequences and incentives in this situation have a big impact. Sipayung and Tanjung (2020) made a similar statement, stating that the use of incentives and consequences in the classroom significantly impacts students' motivation to learn. Research has shown that relying solely on punishment may have limitations and potential negative effects on students, such as increased hostility, decreased motivation, and a focus on avoiding punishment rather than learning. Many educators now emphasize the importance of promoting positive behavior through strategies like positive reinforcement and fostering a supportive classroom environment. Adding to this view, Suarjaya (2019) states that minimal and context-aware punishment is necessary to maintain emotional safety for young learners while still promoting accountability.

### **1.7.3. Motivation**

Motivation here refers to factors that drive students' interest, engagement, and persistence in learning. It plays a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance. Motivated students are more likely to participate actively in the learning process. Providing reinforcement such as Reinforecments will automatically increase their motivation and self-confidence, especially in the learning process. According to (Manullang, et al.2023), motivation comes from within or outside of oneself that someone uses to push their spirit and accomplish particular goals and ambitions. It is also indirectly affecting the mental strengthening of the children. Students' motivation level can impact their level of interest, readiness, persistence, tenacity, independence, learning outcomes, and



achievement Lestari, (2019). With their confidence and continuous encouragement and motivation, their independence and ability will develop.

#### **1.7.4. Young Learner**

A young learner typically refers to a child or student in the early stages of their educational journey, usually ranging from preschool to primary school. Young learners generally are between the ages of 3 and 12, although this may vary depending on the educational system and cultural context. When working with young learners, educators and parents often employ teaching approaches and strategies that are tailored to their developmental needs, interests, and learning styles. In Indonesia, young learners are referred to as kindergarten and primary students. It refers to children who are still young and are new to the teaching and learning process.

