

# A CASE STUDY OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON REWARD AND PUNISHMENT GIVEN BY THEIR ENGLISH TEACHER

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## **Abstract**

This research generally deals with reward and punishment in English teaching. It is mainly concerned with (1) the types of reward and punishment often given by English teachers, (2) students' perceptions on reward and punishment given by their English teacher, (3) students' feedback on reward and punishment given by their English teacher. The data were collected using questionnaire, interview, and observation. The data analysis was performed through the selection and transcription of the data related to the research objectives. The data were then presented descriptively. The results of this research indicate that (1) 80% of the students mention that the types of reward and punishment often given by their English teacher are praise, tribute, recommendation and commands, and notice, (2) 84% of the students claim that reward and punishment are important in English teaching, and based on the students' feedback, (3) 76% of the students become more motivated in learning after receiving reward and punishment given by their English teacher. These findings suggest that reward and punishment has a significant effect on building up students' motivation to learn and upgrading their academic achievement (grades).

**Keywords:** case study, reward and punishment, students' perceptions

## **Introduction**

Teachers usually implement reward and punishment in the learning process. Reward and punishment have the same purpose, namely, to reinforce the achievement of the learning process. Teacher implements reward and punishment to give appreciation and to prevent any violation that might happen in class. According to Howlin (2015), the students can get rewards when they have a good attitude, perform well in the classroom, or when they have academic achievement. Reward and punishment can be classified as a teaching strategy, which, in Howlin's (2015) standpoint, can be defined as the pattern of activity that is selected and used by the teacher contextually based on students' characteristics, school condition, and learning objectives. Besides, the strategy of using reward and punishment will make the atmosphere of teaching and learning process fun and make the students more

actively involved during teaching and learning process. Usually, reward is given to appreciate individual or collective achievement in learning. In the same vein, punishment is exercised to remind or warn students not to break the rules. This teaching pattern surely will build a positive mind-set to the students to always try their best in order to get maximum results in a learning process. Therefore, in that particular sense, reward and punishment can be interpreted as a strategy in the learning process for students to develop and create good and performing behavior. The teacher should give the proper type of reward and punishment because when the wrong type of reward and punishment is reinforced, it will create a negative effect for the students' learning motivation.

Stepping from the actual experience in a classroom observation the researcher had when conducting an internship program at SMA Negeri 2 Purwokerto in August 2018, she found out that one of the English teachers, Mr. X, often gave reward and punishment to his students. The reward and punishment were manifested in varied ways even in some simple forms such as smiling, nodding, showing a thumb-up, or saying "ok" as the reward. Some challenging questions were also given to his students to answer, serving as the punishment. These forms of reward and punishment were often given and seemingly was quite effective in triggering his students to participate in classroom learning. Despite many of his students being directly affected, not all of his students realized it. On these feasible assumptions, the researcher was interested in investigating the students' perceptions, their actual sense and feeling, on reward and punishment, teaching learning model or pattern practiced by the English teacher. She was also intrigued to further explore the students' feedback toward such reward and punishment in English learning process. In the initial slot of this inquiry, it aims to unveil the kinds of reward and punishment often given by English teachers to the students during the teaching and learning process.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Perception**

The term of perception is also called a point of view, idea, or assumption. According to perception is a process related to acceptance of information by the human brain (Slameto, 2010). Another view was given by Irwanto (1991) who states that perception is a reaction to an object, while someone's reaction can be manifested in the form of a person's attitude or behavior about what is perceived. This suggests that perception is human beings' thinking about certain phenomena after they feel the sensation from their surroundings through an opinion sense of organs. However, in this article, the view of perception implies giving opinion or idea or assumption on reward and punishment given by English teacher during teaching and learning process.

### **Reward**

Reward is an appreciation of some achievements that is given for an individual or group (Kompri, 2015). Reward is given in material and verbal form. Reward has an aim to appreciate the students' good behavior and make them motivated to learn. Reward is likewise a tool to educate students, so that students will be happy because their attitude or their work is appreciated (Purwanto, 2014). Giving rewards for students will stimulate students to be more active in learning process and also will make students become more motivated to study well outside the classroom.

### **Punishment**

Punishment is an unpleasant educational tool, negative, but it will be a motivating element for students, a tool to encourage students' learning. Purwanto (2007) states that punishment is suffering given or caused intentionally by someone (parents, or teacher) after an offense, a crime or a mistake. In education, applying punishment is nothing but improving students' behavior to be better. Punishment here is as an educational tool to fix the violations committed by students. It is not intended for revenge or for punishing students as such. There are two types of punishment according to Indrakusuma in Ahmad (2012, p. 32): preventive and repressive. Preventive punishment is given before the violation happens, such as order, recommendation and command, coercion, and discipline. Repressive punishments are notice, reprimand, and warning.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

Regarding the aim of the research, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative method. Suwartono (2014) states that a descriptive method is a method used to collect information or data about a phenomenon in its genuine condition. The research was aimed to find out the students' perceptions and students' feedback of reward and punishment. Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong (2006: 4) states that "Qualitative methods are used as research procedures that result in descriptive data containing spoken and written words and people's behavior which can be observed". The purpose of descriptive research itself is to make the data symmetric, factual and accurate of facts, and the nature of certain populations or areas (Suryabrata, 2011).

### **Research Context**

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Purwokerto in the new academic year 2019/2020 which was planned to gain the data at the third or fourth week of the first semester.

### **Population**

The population was the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Purwokerto in the academic year of 2019/2020. The population is 398 students defined into 11 classes, 8 MIPA, 2 IPS, 1 Bahasa. 288 students of MIPA, 72 students of IPS, and 38 students of Bahasa.

### **Sample**

The researcher took 50 students or 12, 56% as the sample of the research because the population of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Purwokerto were 398 students. The sample was taken from 5 different classes, 3 classes of MIPA, 1 class of IPS, and 1 class of Bahasa.

### **Sampling Technique**

In this research, the researcher used systematic random sampling. Systematic random sampling is a sampling technique based on the order of the population members who have been given serial numbers (Sugiyono, 2016). This eased the researcher to classify the respondents. The researcher took 10 students of each class from 1-10 presence number of students based on the presence list. The researcher chose 10 students from X MIPA 3, 10 students from X MIPA 4, 10 students from X MIPA 5, 10 students from X IPS 1, and 10 students from X Bahasa.

### **Technique of Data Collection**

The researcher applied three different types of instrument namely questionnaire, interview, and observation to collect the data for this research.

The first is Questionnaire. The questionnaire was given to the students in the beginning of data collection. It was done to know the students' perception on reward and punishment given by English teacher during the learning process. The researcher used a close-ended questionnaire in order to know the students' opinions on reward and punishment given by English teacher in the learning process. The questions were focused on students' perceptions on reward and punishment.

The second is Interview. This instrument was used to explore deeper information about students' perceptions and feedback toward reward and punishment given by the English teacher. This instrument was applied to all respondents who had been determined by the researcher. The researcher used open-ended questions to obtain more comprehensive data from the students. The data were used to support the data of the questionnaire.

The third is Observation. The researcher used a non-participant observation type where the researcher only observed the group passively without participating or interacting with the group being observed. The researcher also used observation checklists to know the types of reward and punishment often given by the English teacher during the teaching and learning process.

#### Data Validation

Data validation is needed to determine the accuracy of the findings. Hence, the researcher used triangulation by methodology which compared the data obtained in the questionnaire sheets, interview, and observation checklist. The data collected by questionnaire were cross-checked with the data resulted from the interview. Then, the results of the questionnaire and interview were compared with the observation checklist.

#### Data Analysis

There are three steps of qualitative data analysis: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion (Miles & Huberman, 2014). These three-step model are expounded as follows:

First is Data Reduction. Reduction means selection process, concentration of simplification, abstract, and data transformation which emerge from field notes. In the process of reduction, the data are analyzed by classifying, eliminating unimportant data, summarizing part of data, and simplifying the data. Second is Data Display, where a batch of arranged data gives the possibility to draw conclusions, and to be processed to be a visible form. The data are presented by a brief description using charts. These data are supported with the data of the interview. While the data of interview and observation are displayed in the form of description. Finally, it is Conclusion Drawing. Conclusion is needed to inform the readers about the conclusive answers of research questions.

### **Findings**

This section presents the results of the research followed by a detailed discussion based on research questions, generated data and theoretical framework used in this research.

#### Results of Questionnaire

There are 20 statements covering the aspects of reward and punishment. The data show that 19 students chose *always*, 7 students chose *often*, 15 students chose *sometimes*, 9 students chose *seldom*, and there was no one who chose *never* for statement number 1. This indicates that the act of praising students works most of the times. The data also denote that 14 students chose *always*, 12 students chose *often*, 17 students chose *sometimes*, 6 students chose *seldom*, and 1 student chose *never* for statement number 2. This signifies that giving applause to the students works most of the times. The data show that 10 students chose *always*, 9 students chose *often*, 13 students chose *sometimes*, 7 students chose *seldom*, and 11 students chose *never* for statement number 3. This denotes that mentioning students' name who secured good grades works sometimes. The same is true for statement number 4 on which 9 students choose *always*, 11 students choose *often*, 14 students choose *sometimes*, 10 students choose *seldom*, and 6 students choose *never*. This implies that being noticed by the teacher because of the students' smartness is sometimes effective in stimulating students to get active in learning. For statement number 5, the data show that 23 students chose *always*, 15 students chose *often*, 5 students chose *sometimes*, 6 students chose *seldom*, and 1 student chooses *never*. This marks that passing a smile to a student giving a correct answer works most of the times.

The other data (for statement number 6) also shows that 14 students chose *always*, 6 students chose *often*, 14 students chose *sometimes*, 12 students chose *seldom*, and 6 students chose *never*. This informs us that approaching students' desks when they have difficulties rarely works. For statement number 7, the data show that 13 students chose *always*, 18 students chose *often*, 13 students chose *sometimes*, 4 students chose *seldom*, and 2 students chose *never*. It can be inferred that praising students for their participation even when giving a wrong answer works most of the time. From the other data (for statement number 8), it displays that 17 students chose *always*, 14 students chose *often*, 9 students chose *sometimes*, 7 students chose *seldom*, and 3 students chose *never*. This elicits a conclusion that praising students for being polite works most of the time. The data from statement number 9 show that 12 students chose *always*, 15 students chose *often*, 11 students chose *sometimes*, 8 students chose *seldom*, and 4 students chose *never*. It can be concluded that praising students for submitting tasks on time works effectively sometimes. For statement number 10, we gain the information that 9 students chose *always*, 13 students chose *often*, 8 students chose *sometimes*, 12 students chose *seldom*, and 8 students chose *never*. This implies that giving stars on students' works only works sometimes.

Following the trend of the previous statements, statement number 11 indicates that 19 students chose *always*, 8 students chose *often*, 11 students chose *sometimes*, 10 students chose *seldom*, and 2 students chose *never*. It can be said that giving additional score for being active works most of the times. The data likewise show that 18 students chose *always*, 15 students chose *often*, 7 students chose *sometimes*, 5 students chose *seldom*, and 5 students chose *never* for statement number 12. It can be concluded that reducing score for not submitting assignment works most of the time. The next data (for statement number 13) show that 18 students chose *always*, 17 students chose *often*, 6 students chose *sometimes*, 3 students chose *seldom*, and 6 students chose *never*. It can be said that reducing score for late submission of assignments works most of the time. For statement number 14, the data show that 28 students chose *always*, 13 students chose *often*, 5 chose *sometimes*, 3 students chose *seldom*, and 1 chooses *never*. It can be concluded that asking students' attentions in class works most of the times. For statement number 15, the data show that 25 students chose *always*, 18 students chose *often*, 5 students chose *sometimes*, 2 students

chose *seldom*, and no one chose *never*. It then can be inferred that asking for attention by being silent while watching rowdy class works most of the times.

The other data (for statement number 16) indicate that 29 students chose *always*, 8 students chose *often*, 1 student chooses *sometimes*, 3 students chose *seldom*, and 9 students chose *never*. This suggests that asking for students' attention by hitting the table works most of the time. For statement number 17, the data show that 15 students chose *always*, 18 students chose *often*, 11 students chose *sometimes*, 4 students chose *seldom*, and 2 students chose *never*. It can be learnt that showing angry expressions when students make mistakes works most of the time. The data show that 15 students chose *always*, 9 students chose *often*, 15 students chose *sometimes*, 9 students chose *seldom*, and 2 students chose *never*. Based on these, it can be concluded that calling students' names in high voice when they are making a mistake works sometimes. For statement number 19, the data show that 15 students chose *always*, 7 students chose *often*, 7 students chose *sometimes*, 7 students chose *seldom*, and 14 students chose *never*. It can be inferred that punishing students by scolding them in front of the class works sometimes. For statement number 20, the data show that 18 students chose *always*, 5 students chose *often*, 6 students chose *sometimes*, 7 students chose *seldom*, and 14 students chose *never*. Based on these data, it can be concluded that mentioning students' names who get bad grades works sometimes.

#### Results of Interview

The following are the results of the interview with the students on the implementation of reward and punishment model in their teaching learning process exercised by their English teacher.

##### 1) *Reward and Punishment are important.*

Based on the interview result about students' perception on reward and punishment given by English teacher, most of the students answer that reward and punishment are important during the learning process. Students assume that rewarding can make students more motivated in learning something while punishing students can provide a deterrent effect to make mistakes and motivate them to be better in doing something.

##### 2) *Students feel happy when the teacher gives reward but embarrassed when they get punishment from the teacher.*

Based on the question about students' feelings of getting reward and punishment from the teacher, most of the students feel happy when their teacher gives reward to them but embarrassed when they get punished. They are keen when their works are appreciated and it makes them more motivated to study harder and to be more active in class. On the other hand, students feel embarrassed when the teacher gives punishment to them, but they are aware of their mistakes so they have no objection to being punished. They admit that after getting punished, they do not want to make similar or more mistakes.

##### 3) *The most given reward and punishment*

There are several ways to give reward and punishment to the students. Based on the students' interview results, the teacher mostly uses verbal forms to reward the students in class. The students usually get praise and tribute as reward from the teacher. While for the punishment, the students often get recommendation and command as preventive punishment, and warning notice as repressive punishment.

##### 4) *Students often get verbal advice from the teacher.*

Giving advice to students is a must for a practicing teacher. Based on the students' answers, they claim that the teacher mostly gives verbal advice to them rather than written advice. The teacher gives advice to students to study hard and to pay attention during the learning process. He also gives commands to the students to pray before starting the class. The opposite of command is prohibition. In this case, the teacher often says that the students are prohibited from making noise and using their gadgets during lessons. It is stated by some of the students.

5) *The teacher often gives reward and punishment.*

According to the students, the teachers, especially English teacher, often gives rewards and punishments during the learning process. Teachers usually give rewards to the students who get the highest score, answer the question correctly, are active during lessons, and get good test results. Not only in the academic aspect, but the teacher also rewards good behavior and ability (such as paying attention, not talking and making noise during lessons, being well prepared and well informed).

Teachers often give rewards to the students by pointing them to answer questions. Correct answers will be appreciated by giving rewards to the students, but wrong answers will be punished as well. Punishments given here by the teacher are like repeating word pronunciation, noticing students, asking students to answer questions, asking students to read paragraphs or conversation, giving students more homework, tasks, and assignments, and anything that can provide a deterrent effect to the students.

6) *The students give positive feedback*

Based on question number six about students' feedback on reward and punishment given by English teacher, the result shows that 90% of the students give positive feedback to reward and punishment. They claim that both reward and punishment are good to motivate them to study harder, to always do something better, and to prevent them from making mistakes.

#### Results of Observation

The data were generated from the results of questionnaire and interview. This instrument is used to find out the type of reward and punishment often given by English teacher during the learning process in class. The indicators of the result are as follows:

1) Reward

Based on the result of the observation checklist, it can be pointed out that the teacher often uses praise and tribute for rewarding the students. These types of reward are in the form of action, such as verbal and written reward. This becomes the way the teacher treats the students.

2) Punishment

Based on the observation checklist result, the teacher uses both preventive and repressive punishment to the students. The teacher uses recommendation and commands as the preventive punishment and notice as the repressive punishment.

#### Discussion

The discussion is postulated successively on the three main research questions as shown below.

1) *What are the types of reward and punishment often given by English teacher?*

The teacher often gives praise and tribute as reward to the students. The students usually get reward from the teacher when they answer the questions well, when they get good test results, or have all the homework done. The teacher not only gives rewards in academic aspects, but also in ability and behavior aspects. The teacher usually gives rewards to the students who are prepared before the class. When the teacher asks the students about the previous material and the students can answer it, they will get a reward from the teacher. The findings are in line with Howlin's (2015) standpoint that the students who perform with proper attitude and achievements will be normally rewarded by the teacher. Teachers usually give applause or smiles to the students. To appreciate the students' achievement or good behavior, the teacher uses more verbal language such expressions as *good, great, good job, excellent, ok, nice*. The teacher does not only praise the students but also gives tribute. The use of tribute can make the students more motivated and enjoy the class. When the students get good scores, the teacher usually mentions their names in front of the class.

Besides, the teacher gives punishment to the students. Punishment itself is given because the students make mistakes or do some things prohibited. The most types of punishment often given are *recommendation, commands* and *notice*. Recommendation and command are given before bad things happen, while notice is given after the students make a mistake. Teacher gives recommendations to the students in order that they always pay attention and concentrate on the lesson. The teacher also recommends students to study harder and to learn more about English. Moreover, the teacher always asks the students to pray before starting the class because, according to the teacher, it is important to ask help from God for the ease of learning. The opposite of command is prohibition. Teachers usually prohibit students from having conversation during lessons and playing with gadgets or being sleepy in the class. However, the students who get recommendations and commands, some of them still make a mistake and the teacher will give a notice to them. The students are usually bored and sleepy during the lesson, and they cannot concentrate and pay attention to the teacher. In this case, the teacher will give notice to the students such as "not to put your head on the table, please pay attention, do not be noisy, do not do anything when explaining the materials." These punishments will not be given without any reason. The punishments used by the teacher have the same aims with reward. They are both used to make students more motivated and to prevent them from continuous action.

2) *What are the students' perceptions on reward and punishment?*

Based on the data, it can be concluded that the students have a good perception of the reward and punishment given by English teacher. Both reward and punishment are important things in an educational environment. The reward itself is given to the students to appreciate their work and good attitude. Meanwhile, punishment is given to prevent any violation and immoral act. The students claim that they are happy when the teacher gives reward but they feel embarrassed when they get punishment from the teacher. Rewards can make them motivated to study harder and to learn more or be more active in class. The underlying reasons are that there is a bonus from the teacher and this can make the lesson fun and enjoyable. Being punished means that they have done something bad or prohibited. They realize that they have broken the rules and it is reasonable for them to be punished by the teacher. The students do not mind being punished by the teacher for their mistake. They assume that it will make them more aware of their mistakes and be more careful not to make more mistakes so they will not be punished.

In this case, it is clear that the students are afraid of being punished. This implies that punishment has a big deterrent effect on students. Students will be afraid to make similar



mistakes and they will consider the consequences of their actions. It makes them put more respect on themselves and others, especially respect to the teacher. In other words, both reward and punishment are good to be given to the students as long as the teacher uses proper reward and punishment. Reward aims to educate students to be better. This is in line with the statement of Purwanto (2014) about the purpose of reward in which punishment is given to create the discipline of the students. If they get punished once, they will try not to get punished again. This finding is in line with Ahmadi's (2001) research findings underlining that punishment should be given in a good way so it will not cause more problems to the students.

### *3) Students' feedback toward reward and punishment*

The students' feedback to the reward and punishment given by English teacher is mostly positive. The students get more motivated to learn and study harder to get better scores. They like being appreciated by the teacher. It makes class run well and fun. While punishment also gives good effect on students. They realize that punishment is proof of teacher's affection and attention of the students. Students claim that punishment can prevent them from making mistake and doing bad habits. Punishment provides a deterrent effect to the students for not making more mistakes and they become motivated to do better and better. Thus, it can be concluded that both reward and punishment have a good effect on students, and the students also show good feedback on the implementation of reward and punishment.

The use of praise and tribute as reward in English teaching is quite popular and the students mostly like this kind of reward in English lessons. Actually, praise and tribute are the simple forms of reward. The data show that the students like being appreciated by the teacher in any form. Moreover, the teacher also uses recommendations and commands, and notices as punishments are often given to the students as a consequence of their violence. The result shows that the use of these types of punishment is quite effective on the students. They mostly think that the teacher gives punishment to them because they deserve it. Therefore, it will never be given without any reason. It means that they realize and understand their mistake they have made and they are responsible for their mistakes. These types of punishment are also considered lenient types of punishment. The students assume that these types of punishment are educational. The punishments which they get are not physical punishment, so that they accept the punishment and they do not mind being punished for their mistakes.

## **Conclusion**

The types of reward often given are praise and tribute. The types of punishment that are often used by English teachers are recommendation and command as the preventive punishment and notice as the repressive punishment. The students agree with the rewarding and punishing model in English lessons. Reward and punishment are important to educate the students and to stimulate them to always be better. Reward and punishment also make the class run well and fun, and it makes students more motivated to study harder and become more active in joining the class. The students also give positive responses to such rewards and punishments given by English teacher. Rewarding students builds good self-confidence while punishing students provides a deterrent effect to the students to prevent them from making more mistakes.

In addition, the teacher should give more attention to the students as well as appreciate their work. They should prevent the students from committing violations. These can be done by giving reward and punishment to the students during lessons. Teachers should manage the class well, their students' behavior in class, and create discipline for the students. The researcher realizes that this research was not the final study about reward and punishment. Other researchers may study further about the use of reward and punishment on the larger scope and different levels and the effectiveness of reward and punishment on the students' grades. There is a possibility that the effect of reward and punishment can be different if reward and punishment are implemented properly to the students considering their different levels.

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