

The Power of Words: Motivating Secondary Students using Positive Reinforcement

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Abstract. Motivation is a significant thing for every student to acquire enthusiasm for learning. Successful teachers are teachers who have the ability to foster the spirit and motivation to learn (Karwati, E., & Priansa, 2013). There are two factors influence each other in the learning process so that to produce effective learning. Internal factors include; physiological/physical factors and psychological factors, while external factors include; family factors and school factors. Since the last two years students have become familiar with online learning, students have become less active in conveying their aspirations and thoughts, which can lead to boredom in learning because they usually look for material on the internet and so on. Therefore, it is necessary to provide reinforcement so that students are enthusiastic in learning. The researcher used a qualitative method in this research. This research was started in March. The subject of this research was class X Mipa 2 which consisted of 36 students. The instruments of this research are an observation checklist, questionnaire and interview. To find out the results of the questionnaire, the researcher analyzed and collect the data that was collected based on the Likert scale level. Based on the results of the research in the findings section, it shows that the intensity of positive reinforcement given by the teacher to students of class X MAN 1 Makassar in the form of face-to-face learning is very high because the average score is 64.25 from the two meetings. In both meetings, here were 2 indicators of verbal reinforcement and 4 indicators of non-verbal reinforcement appeared. From the verbal side, reinforcement is in the form of the words: very good; good; smart; all right; good job, and the sentences: yes, very good answer; I am satisfied with your answer; and you succeeded, was given by the teacher at both meetings. While from the nonverbal side, reinforcement in the form of gestures (smiles, thumbs up, applause), contact (patches on the shoulder), activity (giving games), and tokens (additional points) were also given by the teacher. These results are relevant to previous research conducted by Pratiwi (2018) who found that the intensity of rewards given by teachers is included in the form of face-to-face learning. The result showed that students were highly motivated in learning English toward the positive reinforcements given by teacher since the result of the mean score was 58.9. This result is relevant to the statement of (Uno, 2016) "extrinsic motivation arises because of stimuli from outside the individual such as a teacher". Also, it is supported by the statement that the main goals 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). Based on several theories above, the researcher concluded that giving positive reinforcement is very important to encourage students to learn and attract attention so that they are more enthusiastic about learning. The teacher's intensity in giving positive reinforcement was categorized into very high which resulted that students were highly motivated. It caused by the teacher's awareness of their roles as the source of extrinsic motivation for the students. The teacher focused on giving positive reinforcement especially giving praise at every meeting and the additional score for students who actively participate in learning which it may improve students' motivation.

Keywords: teachers' intensity, positive reinforcement, students' motivation