

ABSTRACT

Young learners in EFL classrooms require external motivational support from teachers to sustain their engagement and participation in English learning. Praise and punishment are commonly used as behavioral regulation strategies, yet existing studies have predominantly focused on student outcomes rather than teachers' professional perspectives and classroom implementation. This study aimed to explore a teacher's perspective and classroom implementation of praise and punishment strategies to manage the motivation of young English learners.

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design. Data were collected through three classroom observation sessions and one semi-structured interview with one English teacher teaching Grade VII students at SMPN 1 Panjalu, Ciamis, Indonesia, and analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2023) interactive model. Data triangulation was conducted to strengthen the credibility of the findings.

Regarding implementation, verbal praise, non-verbal praise, and praise by proximity were the most consistently applied strategies across all three sessions, complemented by more selectively used material reward and activity reward. Preventive punishment through verbal warning and redirection was the dominant form, alongside consistently applied repressive punishment such as standing in front of the class and repetition of material, while extra task was used more selectively; overall, punishment was applied constructively. Students demonstrated positive responses to praise and constructive responses to punishment. Regarding teacher perspective, the teacher's beliefs, professional knowledge, attitudes, and reasoning collectively shaped her approach to praise and punishment. The teacher viewed praise as an important motivational tool and punishment as an expression of care, and both strategies were perceived as complementary in sustaining students' motivation and engagement. Triangulation confirmed a high degree of consistency between the teacher's stated perspectives and actual classroom practices.

This study concludes that the use of praise and punishment reflects a perspective-driven approach grounded in the teacher's professional beliefs and reasoning to manage young learners' motivation in the EFL classroom. Future research is encouraged to involve more participants and incorporate students' perspectives to provide a more comprehensive understanding of these strategies in EFL settings.

Keywords: teacher perspective, classroom implementation, praise and punishment strategies, young learners' motivation, EFL classroom