

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research that contains the research background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, research scope, conceptual framework, and previous studies.

A. Background

Teachers and students play an essential role in the classroom and have their tasks and goals. One of the main tasks and roles of the teacher in the classroom is managing the class during learning through reinforcement strategies that can arouse students' motivation to learn English. According to research by Khaliq et al. (2016, p. 145), reinforcement strategies can be a source of strength to increase motivation in learning English. As a result, students participate in accepting and respecting the form or approach of reinforcement the teacher uses to improve motivation to study English. Motivation, attitudes, and beliefs about language learning are among the factors that can affect students' efficiency in language classes (Oroujlou et al., 2011).

Reinforcement is a strategy that can grow and increase students' motivation to understand the concept of learning English in the classroom. Reinforcement refers to the stimulus that follows and depends on the behaviour, increasing the likelihood of repeated behaviour (Smith, 2017). Teachers can play an active role in influencing students' learning motivation. Reinforcement has a big enough role in teaching and learning activities. Students tend to feel happy when learning English after receiving reinforcement from the teacher. If students get satisfaction after their efforts are successful, then these feelings can encourage students' desire to go further in learning. Happiness can be in the form of pride and confidence. Giving reinforcement with clear goals and what students have done will motivate them to learn and do, repeat, and improve their positive conduct and achievements (Guendouze, 2012).

Speaking skills are an essential aspect of the curriculum in language teaching, making it an essential assessment item. Many people utilize English as a means of communication in this global period, making it more straightforward for

individuals from other nations to connect and converse. Speaking is one method of verbally communicating thoughts and information. Language communication must be applied more realistically to enable learners to communicate. According to Gert et al. (2008, p. 207), Speaking is speech or communication to be recognized by the speaker, and the receiver analyzes the statement to understand the message transmitted.

When learning and teaching Speaking in class, the use of reinforcement strategies provided by the teacher requires the involvement of student responses to determine whether the use of these strategies is to the needs of students in learning Speaking. Response is an action or response, action or feeling that is suitable or responsive or reacts to a force or circumstance that encourages (McKechnie, 1981). In learning Speaking, students think that learning Speaking is full of challenges. Students have difficulty learning to speak English because they have to think and speak simultaneously to express information orally (Haryudin et al., 2018). Therefore, reinforcement strategies are essential in teaching and learning Speaking skills. According to Sari (2018, p. 115), implementing reinforcement strategies in Speaking skills is critical. It affects students' motivation to communicate ideas in speaking class and talk more than usual.

In this research, strengthening strategies have been implemented by teachers at Mekar Galih Middle School. According to one of the English teachers at Mekar Galih Middle School, some students are passive, indifferent, lack motivation, and lose interest in learning English in class, which impacts students' speaking skills. Therefore, one of the English teachers at SMP Mekar Galih implemented the use of Reinforcement Strategies in class as an effort to overcome several conditions that occurred among students. Therefore, it is essential to know the use of reinforcement strategies implemented by teachers and how students respond to reinforcement strategies in learning speaking skills in the classroom.

Several researchers with different problem focus have used this strengthening strategy. Previous research conducted by Kurniasih et al. (2021, p. 43) focuses on using classroom reinforcement strategies that influence student behavior. For comparison, the current research refers to students' responses to teachers' use of reinforcement strategies in learning and teaching Speaking skills in

the classroom. The second study was guided by Wang et al. (2021). This research focuses on positive and negative reinforcement strategies for EAL students. Meanwhile, recent research focuses on EFL students' responses to reinforcement strategies provided by teachers. The third study by Bhatti et al. (2021) contains English teachers' perceptions of using positive reinforcement strategies using quantitative research methods. Previous research differs from the focus of the current research on EFL students' responses to teachers' use of strengthening strategies during the teaching and learning process of speaking skills using qualitative research methods.

Therefore, this research is intended to explore the phenomenon of reinforcement strategies that occur in the field regarding student responses to the reinforcement strategies used by teachers in learning and teaching Speaking skills. Therefore, this research aims to fill the research gap regarding strengthening strategies in Speaking skills.

B. Research Questions

From the description above, this research is intended to answer the following two questions:

1. How is the teachers' reinforcement strategy used in teaching and learning Speaking skills?
2. What are the students' responses to the teachers' reinforcement strategy in teaching and learning Speaking skills?

C. Research Purposes

From the research questions above, the purposes of this research are:

1. To investigate teachers' reinforcement strategies in teaching and learning Speaking skills.
2. To determine students' responses to the teachers' reinforcement strategy in teaching and learning Speaking skills.

D. Research Significances

Theoretically, this research explores students' responses to the reinforcement strategies given by the teacher during Speaking skills teaching and learning activities. Practically, this research provides essential meaning for teachers, students, and researchers in the future. First, for teachers, this finding is important because reinforcement strategies can support teaching and learning activities of students' Speaking skills in class. Then for students, the reinforcement strategy given by the teacher can help determine student responses to the strategies given as a reference in learning Speaking skills. Finally, this research can provide helpful information for future researchers researching related fields.

E. Conceptual Framework

Students' intellectual and emotional development is significantly influenced by language. Language, which assists pupils in expressing their experiences, thoughts, and feelings, is another crucial factor in a student's success in academic disciplines. According to Gebhard (2006, p. 101), English as Foreign Language (EFL) is the study of English by individuals who live in areas where English is rarely used as a first language for communication. In such an environment, student cannot practice using English for conversations outside the classroom.

Referring to Rebecca (2006, p. 144), Speaking is the initial medium infants acquire language. It is a part of most people's everyday participation in language activities and is the primary driver of language change. Harmer (2007, p. 343) has explained that Speaking is a talent that must be trained and developed independently of the grammatical curriculum. According to Hughes (2011, p. 6), Speaking is not an ability in itself; Speaking is difficult, teaching Speaking by using Speaking to educate, insight from a collection of utterances, and integrating the components of Speaking. Furthermore, Harmer (2007, p. 343) and Hughes (2011, p. 6) revealed that Speaking is challenging to master. Another statement was put forward by Fitriati (2017, p. 413) that while teaching EFL, teachers need competence in Speaking English to achieve instructional goals. Therefore, teachers need strategies to support students' skills in Speaking.

The viability of employing reinforcement theory in second language acquisition is suggested by Xiaojing (2015). External reinforcement can successfully boost students' motivation, which is congruent with the challenges of learning a second language. According to Seifert & Sutton (2009, p. 61), students' good learning outcomes may be influenced by external incentives. Therefore, teachers must have the skills to determine teaching and learning strategies that suit students' needs, primarily to support students' Speaking skills. One strategy that is expected to encourage Speaking skills is a reinforcement strategy. Several experts, human performance abilities and competencies are acquired through reinforcement (Akinboye, 1992). Increasing the chance of manners to promote the occurrence of a stimulus-response or event is emphasized by reinforcement theory, which significantly affects the facilitative impact on teaching and learning. Positive and negative reinforcement are included in the reinforcement theory, and each impacts student learning differently, (Heidenreich, 2007).

Positive reinforcement is repeating particular stimulus events for a rewarded response to develop specific learning (Omomia, 2014). For instance, teachers might praise and reward students for receiving good quiz scores to increase the frequency of high scores. When a student is motivated to behave in a particular way, negative reinforcement prevents or minimizes a negative outcome, such as lowering homework if the student performs well on a quiz. Additionally, there needs to be more study on secondary school students. Middle school is typically viewed as a crucial development period for mental abilities and other qualities that need outside assistance to control students' study habits. By giving or removing a stimulus right after a specific conduct, reinforcement techniques try to make it more likely to happen again. Another way to put it is when reinforcement is used correctly. It leads to the subsequent manner that is more common. There are two categories of reinforcement, namely, positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement.

After the desired action is demonstrated, positive reinforcement works by giving the individual a motivating or reinforcing stimulus, increasing the likelihood of repeated conduct. Positive reinforcement may make both desired and undesirable manners more likely. According to Martin and Pear (2005, p. 32), the terms "reward" and "positive reinforcement" are frequently used interchangeably.

According to Farozin (2004, p. 76), positive reinforcement is a stimulus supplied to an operant action to either enhance or cause it to stop appearing. According to Dalyono (2009, p. 33), positive reinforcement is the presentation of a stimulus that enhances the possibility that a response will manifest. Positive reinforcement is defined by Pidarta (2007, p. 214) as any stimulus that can shape a response to action conditioning, as well as any reward that can shape a response to instrumental conditioning.

Stimulus is a positive reinforcement if it continuously presents something as an event (as a consequence of conduct that occurs) to increase and maintain the frequency of that conduct (Sukadji, 2000). Using incentives to encourage and teach students to adhere to classroom rules and regulations and to complete academic work is the most contentious subject in manner management (Witzel and Mercer, 2003). Teaching people acceptable conduct and expectations is crucial (Miltenberger, 2008). These approaches include giving learners immediate feedback, breaking activities down into manageable parts, repeating instructions as often as feasible, working on tasks in order of increasing complexity, and giving encouragement (Frisoli, 2008). For instance, if the teacher commends pupils for doing their assignment, this reinforces the stimulus.

Negative reinforcement occurs when a given stimulus, usually an unpleasant stimulus, is withdrawn after a specific action has been performed. Eliminating or avoiding a bad outcome increases the likelihood that certain activities will reoccur. Negative reinforcement should not be seen as a kind of punishment. According to Walgito (2010, p. 81), negative reinforcement makes a reaction more likely to occur when removed from a situation. When long assignments are omitted, negative reinforcement shapes appropriate action.

There are two kinds of reinforcement methods for students in the classroom: verbal and nonverbal (Mas'ud, 2006). This reinforcement is communicated through approval, thanks, and praise in verbal reinforcement, for example, on the word extraordinary. Verbal reinforcement can stimulate students' self-confidence and affect the achievement of their Speaking performance (Apriliyanti, 2018). It was also found that the strength in the relationship between verbal reinforcement and students' Speaking achievement and self-confidence was quite fair. A good

correlation between verbal reinforcement and the achievement of their Speaking performance and self-confidence means that verbal reinforcement is essential to stimulate their self-confidence to achieve better Speaking performance (Pintel, 2006). Whereas in nonverbal reinforcement, usually, this reinforcement is expressed in various ways, such as supportive gestures, including smiles, thumbs up, happy expressions, touch-based reinforcement strategies, and others.

So that when the teacher has implemented the strategy, this research will investigate the responses received by students. The response is an outcome of a stimulus, such as an emotion or action. Response is an action or an act of responding, a suitable or responsive action or feeling or reacting to a driving force or circumstance (McKechnie, 1981). **Figures 1.1** illustrates conceptual framework in this study.

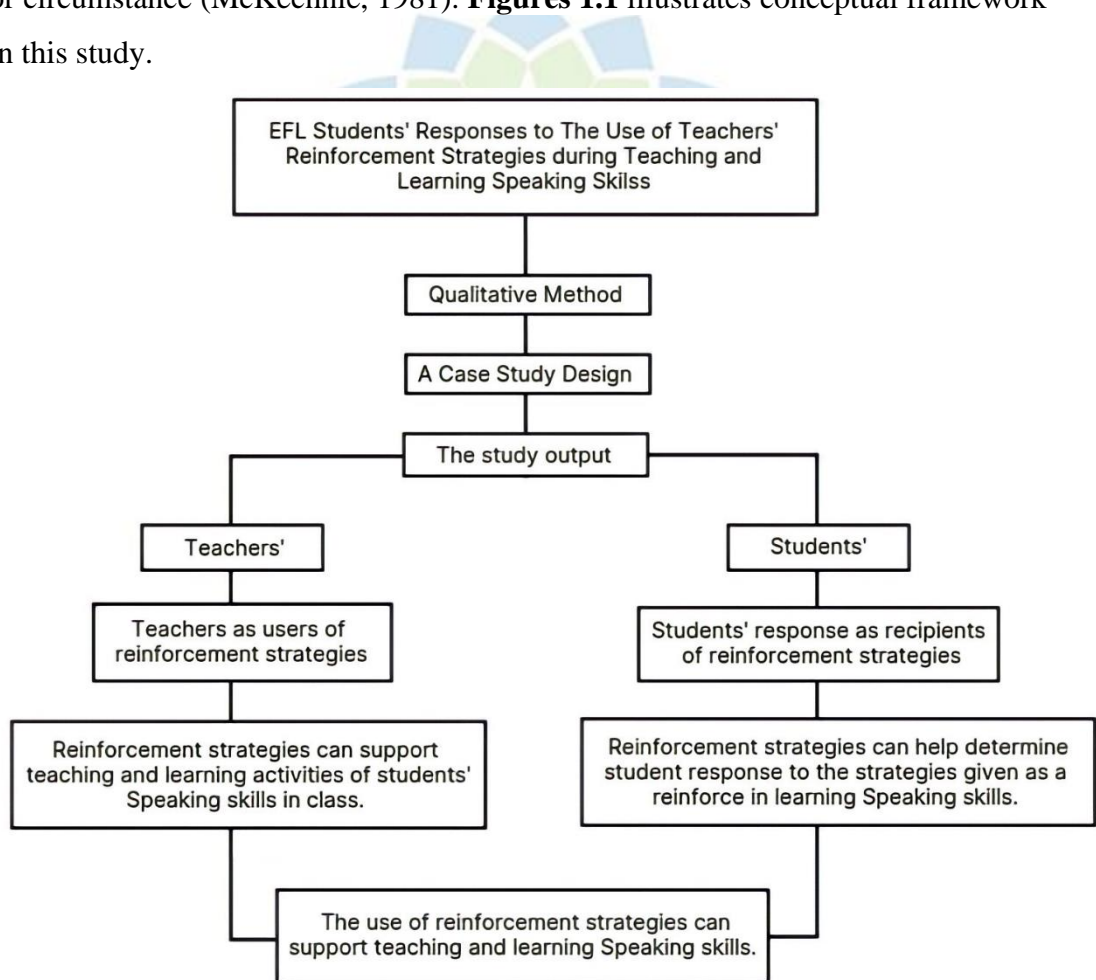


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

F. Previous Study

Several previous studies have researched reinforcement strategies, including the first research conducted by Kurniasih et al. (2021). This research investigates the types of reinforcement used by English teachers at class VIII SMP Negeri 17 Jambi City. The research results show that the school's English teacher uses reinforcement to teach students to increase good behavior and reduce unwanted behavior. The type of reinforcement strategy used by teachers uses word and sentence reinforcement as verbal reinforcement in their English teaching to strengthen students who follow the teacher's rules. The difference between previous research conducted by Kurniasih et al. (2021) and current research has a different focus. Previous research focused more on the general reinforcement strategies English teachers give to students to shape students' good behavior. Meanwhile, the current research focuses more on students' responses to the reinforcement strategies used by English teachers, specifically in teaching and learning Speaking skills.

The second research was taught by Wang et al. (2021). This research explores the effect of teacher positive and negative reinforcement on students' English learning engagement when they learn English as an additional language (EAL). This survey involved students who spoke English as a second language voluntarily. The findings revealed that EAL students who received positive reinforcement were more engaged in learning English than those who received negative reinforcement. As a result, increasing the appropriate use of positive reinforcement in learning English for EAL students will impact future learning. Meanwhile, this research discusses students' EFL responses to using teachers' reinforcement strategies during teaching and learning Speaking skills. This research focuses on EFL (English for Foreign Language) students, which differs from previous studies involving EAL students.

The third study was guided by Bhatti et al. (2020). This study explores the perceptions of English teachers about positive reinforcement in English classes using a quantitative paradigm as a research design. The results show that Pakistani students have shown a positive attitude toward using motivation in the classroom. This research also highlights that if motivation is used efficiently in the classroom, it will become a high-level tool for language learning. The recommendations and

findings of this research should be considered carefully, and steps should be taken to implement them in the classroom. If implemented deliberately, the teaching and learning situation of English skills at the primary level is expected to improve remarkably. In contrast to previous research conducted by Bhatti (2020), previous research focused on the perceptions of English teachers in general. Current research focuses on students' responses to teachers' reinforcement strategies in teaching and learning Speaking skills. The current research used qualitative methods, while previous research used quantitative methods.

Therefore, in outline, the differences in previous research discussed a type of reinforcement strategy that focuses more on student behavior, the focus of EAL students, and the latest research that discusses teacher perceptions of using quantitative reinforcement strategies. Meanwhile, this latest research discusses EFL student responses to the teachers' reinforcement strategies during teaching and learning Speaking skills using qualitative research methods.

