

## Analysis of the Impact of Giving Rewards and Punishment to Increase Student's Interest in Learning Indonesian in Class III of Taman Siswa Elementary School, Pematang Siantar

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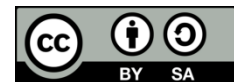
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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the use of rewards and punishments in improving the learning outcomes of third-grade students at Taman Siswa Pematang Siantar Elementary School. A qualitative descriptive approach was used with a total of 23 students as research subjects. The data collection techniques used were observation, questionnaires, and documentation with data reduction analysis, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. Based on the results of the study, it was found that there was a lack of motivation and interest in learning as well as a passive attitude among students during learning activities. This was because teachers did not apply the right strategies. One strategy that can be applied is the use of rewards and punishments. The results showed that the implementation of rewards and punishments by teachers had a positive impact on increasing students' interest in learning. The impact of rewards based on the analysis of the reward questionnaire, per item with the highest score was on p4 (material rewards) at 94.57%. The average reward score percentage was 84.23% (good). The lowest score was on p5 (symbolic rewards) at 73.91% (fair). The impact of punishment based on the questionnaire analysis results with the highest score was p4 (non-verbal punishment) at 91.30% (very good). The lowest scores were on p6 (normative punishment) and p8 (psychological punishment) at 81.52% (good). The average percentage of punishment scores was 84.13% (good). This shows that the impact of punishment on learning interest was at a good level (85.65%). Students showed a positive response to both strategies and became more active in attending lessons.

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## 1. Introduction

Basic education plays an important role in shaping children's intellectual and character foundations. Within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum and the spirit of student-centered learning, various efforts have been made to create a learning environment that is

enjoyable, adaptive, and meaningful. One of the main aspects of basic education is learning Indonesian, as the language of instruction as well as a tool for expression and critical thinking communication for students. In reality, Indonesian language learning often faces challenges in the form of low student interest, which ultimately results in suboptimal learning outcomes.

The issue of declining student interest in learning at elementary schools, particularly in Indonesian language lessons, has become a serious concern in the world of education. Many students experience boredom due to monotonous and uninteresting teaching methods, causing their interest in Indonesian language lessons to decline significantly (Surbakti & Prasetya, 2020). Indonesian language as a subject should be able to train students' language skills, logical thinking, and form their literary character. However, in reality, the learning process often only emphasizes cognitive aspects and lacks affective touches.

In this context, interest in learning is an important factor that determines learning success. Interest in learning reflects students' emotional involvement and motivation in participating in the learning process. Students with high interest in learning are usually more active, creative, and responsible in their learning process (Zakiah et al. 2024). Conversely, students who lack interest tend to be more passive, easily give up, and lack initiative. Therefore, it is very important for teachers to find ways to stimulate and maintain students' interest in learning so that they remain motivated and engaged in the learning process.

Based on the results of observations and interviews that have been conducted, it is known that the interest in learning Indonesian language among third-grade students still varies. Some students have a high interest in learning, while others have a low interest in learning, and the learning outcomes of students in Indonesian language are low.

Therefore, an approach is needed that can increase interest and learning outcomes, namely the application of rewards and punishments in learning activities. The application of rewards and punishments is not merely a matter of giving rewards and punishments, but rather a pedagogical strategy designed to provide positive or corrective reinforcement for student learning behavior. Appropriate rewards can stimulate students' intrinsic motivation to learn, while wisely administered punishments can discipline students to be more responsible (Ashari, 2024).

In the context of Indonesian language learning, rewards and punishments can be integrated with activities that involve oral and written communication. Some students appear very enthusiastic and actively participate in learning, while others tend to be passive and less involved. This difference shows that each child has a different way and pace of learning, so an appropriate approach is needed to encourage their participation more evenly.

Therefore, rewards such as direct praise, visual symbols (stickers, scorecards), and educational games can increase student participation. On the other hand, punishments such as losing a turn or written reminders can be effective behavioral controls when used wisely. This research is important to determine the extent to which the application of rewards and punishments affects students' interest in learning Indonesian. It is hoped that the results can serve as a guide for teachers and policymakers in designing more effective and humane

learning methods, thereby creating a comfortable, enjoyable, and meaningful learning environment for students.

According to Ashari (2024), consistently given rewards, such as verbal praise, small gifts, or recognition in front of the class, can stimulate students' intrinsic motivation to continue demonstrating good learning behavior. Meanwhile, punishment that is delivered in an educational manner, rather than harsh punishment, helps students understand the boundaries and responsibilities in the learning process. Student motivation is formed from two directions: internal motivation and external motivation, and the reward-punishment strategy plays an important role in shaping extrinsic motivation. Research by Subakti and Prasetya (2020) shows that the proportional use of reward and punishment strategies in elementary schools has a significant impact on increasing learning motivation, especially in Indonesian language lessons. Students feel more appreciated when their efforts are recognized, and become more aware of their mistakes when given educational punishment.

Rewards and punishments as the focus of this study are based on their theoretical and empirical relevance to increasing student interest in learning. Rewards and punishments The variables selected are those that can be controlled and modified by teachers in the daily learning process. They do not require special tools, but they do require consistency, sensitivity to student character, and creativity in implementation. According to Piaget's developmental theory, elementary school-aged children begin to be able to think in concrete operational terms. This means that they begin to understand cause-and-effect relationships logically but are still greatly influenced by real stimuli, such as rewards, punishments, and direct activities (rewards and punishments).

## **2. Research Methodology**

This study was conducted at Taman Siswa Elementary School in Pematang Siantar with a population of 119 students and a sample of 23 students. This study used a descriptive qualitative method with data collection techniques of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. According to Moleong (2021), the qualitative approach provides ample space for researchers to explore social and psychological phenomena that influence student learning behavior. Based on this, this study will describe the phenomena that occur in relation to the provision of rewards and punishments. Furthermore, it will be validated and its reliability will be sought using the product moment correlation formula ( $r_{xy}$ ) by Karl Person (Arikunto, 2020) and Cronbach's Alpha using the formula ( $r_{11}$ ) for its reliability (Sugiyono, 2019).

## **3. Result and Discussion**

### **Observation, Interviews, and Questionnaires**

School Grade III has a total of 119 students, and the sample for this study consisted of 23 students using random sampling technique. Based on observations conducted on third-grade students, it was found that these students have a low interest in learning Indonesian. In

addition, the methods used by teachers in teaching are not appropriate. Most students feel bored, tired, and have no interest in the teaching and learning process.

Validation tests were conducted to determine the validity of the instruments used. The results of the validation of the reward and punishment questionnaires showed that each questionnaire contained 10 valid statements and 5 invalid questions. Next, reliability tests were conducted to determine the accuracy of the instruments used. Based on the reliability test results, it was found that the reliability for reward and punishment was 0.78 and 0.75, respectively, from a reference value of 0.60. This indicates that the reward and punishment instruments are reliable. Then, for learning interest, the reliability was 0.69 from a reference value of 0.60 (reliable).

### Giving Rewards and Punishments in Indonesian Language Learning

Rewards in the form of praise and gifts are given to students who are highly motivated and interested in learning. Punishments are given to students who do not follow the lessons properly, such as those who are noisy, late, do not do their homework, or are inattentive in class (daydreaming). Punishments are not given in the form of physical violence but rather verbal reprimands and classroom cleaning duties. For more details, please refer to the table of reward and punishment indicators given by teachers.

Table 1 Indicators of Reward and Punishment

Type	Indicator	Form
Reward	Attending classes regularly	Verbal praise and gifts
	Getting satisfactory grades	
	Completing assignments	
Punishment	Not attending classes regularly	Verbal reprimands and classroom cleaning duties
	Not completing assignments	
	Not getting satisfactory grades	
	Being late for classes	

### The Impact of Rewards and Punishments on Learning Interest

The provision of rewards and punishments for interest in learning Indonesian language among third-grade students at Taman Siswa Pematang Siantar Elementary School has a very significant impact. The impact of rewards based on the results of the reward questionnaire analysis, per item with the highest score, was on p4 (material rewards) at 94.57%. The average reward score percentage was 84.23%, which is in the Good category. The lowest score was on p5 (symbolic rewards) at 73.91%. The impact of punishment based on the questionnaire analysis results with the highest score was p4 (verbal punishment) at 91.30%. The lowest scores were for p6 (normative punishment) and p8 (psychological punishment) at 81.52%. The average percentage of punishment scores was 84.13%, which falls into the Good category. This shows that the impact of punishment on learning interest is at a good level (85.65%).

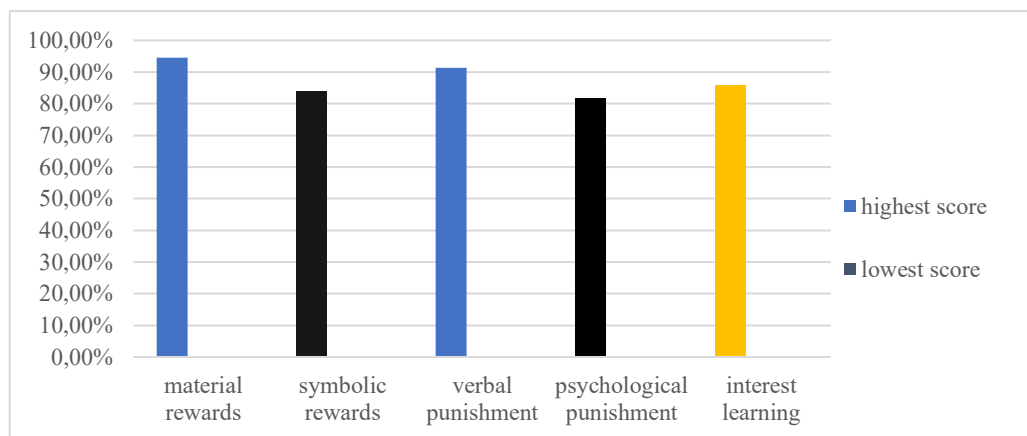


Figure 1. Highest and Lowest Percentages of Rewards and Punishments

### Rewards and Punishments for Learning Interest

The use of rewards and punishments has a positive impact on the learning interest of third-grade students at Taman Siswa Pematang Siantar Elementary School. Overall, from a total of 230 responses (23 respondents x 10 statement items), a total score of 91 “Strongly Agree” (SS) answers, 133 “Agree” (S) answers, 6 “Disagree” (TS) answers, and no “Strongly Disagree” (STS) answers were obtained. The percentage of responses for each category was 47% (SS), 51% (S), and 2% (TS). There were no STS responses (0%). With an average percentage of 84%, the interpretation falls into the Good category.

The results above show that rewards and punishments are appropriate for use in increasing students' overall interest in learning. On average, students agree with the application or provision of rewards and punishments in the learning process. Students appreciate the changes that have occurred in themselves.

This strategy aims to control student behavior and foster intrinsic motivation in the Indonesian language learning process. Teacher consistency in applying rewards and punishments is also key to helping students understand behavioral boundaries and the purpose of the rewards and consequences they receive. The impact of rewards and punishments on student interest in learning is clearly evident in increased student participation and enthusiasm during lessons. Observations show that students display high enthusiasm in attending lessons, are more focused when the teacher explains the material, and are more active in class activities. Rewards have been proven to provide positive encouragement; students feel appreciated and motivated to maintain good behavior. Meanwhile, punishments also play an important role as a means of discipline. With punishments, students better understand their responsibilities for their tasks and class rules. The combination of both encourages the formation of positive character and helps create a conducive learning environment.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The use of rewards and punishments to influence student interest and behavior in the classroom appears to have had a positive effect. Students showed high enthusiasm during Indonesian language lessons. They became more focused when listening to the teacher's explanations and were more motivated to participate actively. The impact of rewards based on the results of the reward questionnaire analysis shows that the item with the highest score is p4 (material rewards) at 94.57% with an average of 84.23% in the good category. The impact of punishment based on the results of the questionnaire analysis shows that the item with the highest score is p4 (verbal punishment) at 91.30% with an average of 84.13%.

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