

# POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT AS MOTIVATION TECHNIQUE IN ESP CLASSROOM

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The study achievements and students' behaviour is affected by the teachers who provide different opportunities in ESP classrooms. Learners of English who are non-native find it difficult to concentrate on learning it as the foreign language especially for specific purposes. Thus, encouragement and motivation of ESP students is an essential part of the successful learning process that is suggested to be performed by the consideration of B. F. Skinner's reinforcement theory.

Motivation is an internal impact of teachers' techniques on students' study achievements that are extremely needed at primary level [4, p. 38]. Using motivation in teaching the foreign language is able to increase student's involvement in learning the foreign language. The research conducted in Pakistan showed that approximately 80% of the ESL teachers agree or strongly agree that motivation is the only way to success and only 20% disagree or strongly disagree with the idea [4, p. 43]. The majority of the disagreed ESL teachers said that too much use of reinforcement might distract attention and concentration in course of the teaching and learning process [4, p. 43].

The encouragement used by teachers is called reinforcement and considering the definition we can say that it is an impact on the students' behaviour. Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines the reinforcement as «making something stronger or more effective or becoming stronger or more effective» [1]. There are two types of reinforcement: positive one that is praise or appreciation and negative which means punishment. Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary gives such definition of positive reinforcement as the offer of desirable effects or consequences for some particular behaviour with the aim of increasing the future likelihood of the repetition of such behavior [6]. A. Catania considers the positive reinforcement to be a technique eliciting and strengthening another behavior by adding rewards and incentives instead of eliminating benefits [2, p. 87]. When teachers apply positive reinforcement they encourage desired behavior eliminate negative one.

If we consider reinforcement as a technique applied in the ESP classroom we should mention that a teacher provides the environment which is considered to be a stimulus [4, p. 34]. The main *positive reinforcers* (stimuli that increase the probability of a desired response [6]) in the ESP classroom are [5]:

- social attention (a conversation);
- praise (a positive comment);
- nonverbal communication (a smile, thumbs up, a nod);
- secondary positive reinforcers (checkmarks).

Reinforcers should be evaluated, individualized and preferable. To define the specific characteristics and components of positive reinforcement for an ESP student the teacher needs to know student's preferences and attitudes. The most common way to determine preferences for positive reinforcement can be using a structured interview of student needs (for example, analysing the peculiarities of specialities or future

profession) or through a preference assessment. The application of reinforcer should be monitored. Evaluation assessment is a final stage of reinforcement application in the ESP classroom [5].

In conclusion, it is evident that the techniques used by teachers are important in boosting student's motivation in learning English. Both teachers and researchers consider motivation to be one of the most crucial factors influencing the learning of the foreign language. Positive reinforcement is essential in course of learning English by ESP students. Teachers may use such kind of reinforcement as positive one in order to motivate, encourage and make the students focus on learning the foreign language. The proposed technique can be effectively used in practice.

## REFERENCES

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