

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of the literature relevant to the research, encompassing key concepts such as perception, language reinforcement programs, and previous studies related to teacher and student perceptions of educational programs.

A. Perceptions

1. The role of perceptions in language learning

In language education, perception plays a central role in determining learners' motivation, engagement, and achievement. When students perceive a program as useful and enjoyable, they are more likely to participate actively and improve their performance (Williams & Burden, 1997). Similarly, teachers' positive perceptions of a program influence their teaching practices, enthusiasm, and the way they create a supportive learning environment (Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory also supports this view by emphasizing that individuals' beliefs and perceptions about their capabilities affect their actions. In this sense, both teachers' and students' perceptions of the DEC Program will determine how effectively the program is implemented and how successful it becomes in developing students' English proficiency.

a. Teachers' perceptions

Teachers' perceptions are closely linked to their attitudes, beliefs, and instructional decisions. Pajares (1992) states that teachers' beliefs and

perceptions strongly affect their classroom behavior, teaching style, and their interaction with students. A teacher with a positive perception toward a program tends to show greater commitment and creativity in implementing it (Borg, 2003).

In the context of language learning, teachers' perceptions also determine how they adapt materials, assess learners, and manage classroom communication (Farrell & Ives, 2015). If teachers perceive the DEC program as effective, relevant, and well-structured, they are more motivated to integrate it into their daily teaching routines.

b. Students' perceptions

Students' perceptions refer to how learners view, experience, and evaluate a particular learning program. Their perceptions are shaped by factors such as classroom environment, teaching methods, peer interaction, and their own language learning goals (Dornyei, 2005). Positive student perceptions enhance engagement, persistence, and overall learning outcomes (Hanifah, 2020).

Furthermore, when students feel that a program meets their communicative needs and aligns with their personal goals, their motivation to participate actively increases. Conversely, negative perceptions such as seeing a program as irrelevant or too difficult may reduce motivation and participation (Gardner, 2010).

B. The Background of Darussalam English Course (DEC) Program

The Darussalam English Course (DEC) is a specialized program developed within the Darussalam School in Jombang and officially launched in

2003 as a strategic initiative to enhance students' English proficiency. This program emerged from the needs of a pesantren-based educational institution with the vision of "Noble in Character, The Best in Achievement," where proficiency in foreign languages, particularly English, is a key indicator in achieving that excellence.

The background of DEC's establishment is inseparable from the influence of the Darussalam Gontor Modern Pesantren education system, given that the majority of educators at Darussalam Jombang High School are alumni of that institution. They bring a scholarly tradition that emphasizes the importance of foreign language proficiency as a means to broaden horizons and enhance global competitiveness. In this context, English is not merely viewed as a formal subject but also as a life skill that every student must master.

With strong encouragement from Gontor alumni teachers, DEC was subsequently established not only as a regular subject but also as a system that integrates language proficiency with pesantren values. The teaching methods employed also closely adopt the model proven successful at Gontor, namely the implementation of daily language discipline within the pesantren and school environments, mandatory daily language use, and various supporting activities such as speech contests, drama, and so on. Through DEC, MA Darussalam Jombang hopes to produce a generation that is not only of noble character (in line with the vision "Of Noble in Character") but also fluent in international communication, so that they truly become "The Best in Achievement" and are ready to be future leaders. However, MA Darussalam Sengon Jombang has not

only established an English program but also an Arabic program named NAFIRA (Nahdlotur Raghabin Fi Lughah Al Arabiyyah).

The implementation of the DEC program at Darussalam Sengon Jombang is also supported by systematic operational procedures. Structurally, DEC is managed by a dedicated team consisting of a program coordinator and language instructors, who are responsible for designing and supervising all English language learning activities. DEC takes place on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 7:00 AM to 12:50 PM, with each skill allocated 40 minutes focused on various skills such as speaking, reading, grammar, etc. During the learning process, the teacher first presents and explains the material to be studied that day. After the teacher explains, students are given tasks to practice what they have learned. For example, if it is time to practice speaking, students are asked to practice English dialogues provided by the teacher.

This language environment is created through the implementation of an English Language Zone in the school and dormitories, where students are required to actively communicate in English. Not only are they required to speak English, but they are also required to speak Arabic during designated periods; for example, one week in English, the next week in Arabic, and so on. To maintain discipline, student council members conduct daily supervision, imposing penalties on those who do not speak English or Arabic, such as cleaning the bathrooms, running three laps around the field, and so on, while also documenting student progress in a monitoring log. Additionally, there are supporting activities held once a month, such as speech contests, English conversation sessions, drama performances, storytelling, and so on. These activities are not only intended to improve language

skills but also to instill self-confidence, critical thinking skills, and leadership skills. Furthermore, DEC teachers regularly develop lesson plans and evaluate the program to ensure that DEC continues to evolve in line with the needs of the times.

Through disciplined and consistent implementation, DEC is not merely an additional English language course, but a vibrant language ecosystem that instills language habits and discipline in all students. This is what makes DEC one of Darussalam Jombang's flagship programs in shaping a generation that is proficient in English while upholding Islamic values, in line with the foundation's overarching vision.

Table 1.1 the Schedule of DEC

Daily Schedule	Weekly Schedule	Monthly Schedule
Classroom learning (On Wednesday and Thursday at 07.00 - 09.40, 10.10 - 12.50)	Reading dialogues in the auditorium using a microphone Everyday at 09.40 - 10.00	English Competitions, such as Speech contest, drama, debate, etc. (once a month)
Memorizing vocabularies (07.00)		
Doing homework		

C. The Darussalam English Course (DEC) Program and Language Skills Reinforcement

1. Importance of English reinforcement in Islamic school

In the era of globalization, English language proficiency is a vital skill for effective communication, both locally and internationally. Islamic schools, especially those with boarding systems (MA and MTs), often have non-formal programs to reinforce language skills as added value for their students. These programs aim to provide a structured and engaging environment to improve students' English language abilities.

2. Non-Formal language programs (supplementary language programs)

The DEC program is categorized as non-formal program that serves as a reinforcement or support and enhancement of language skills within the boarding school environment. According to UNESCO (2012), non-formal education refers to “organized and sustained educational activities that take place outside the formal education system, which are intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives.” In the context of language learning, non-formal programs play a vital role in providing flexible and learner-centered opportunities for students to improve their communicative competence (Rogers, 2004; Nunan, 2015).

Non-formal programs like the DEC are essential in educational institutions where formal curriculum time is often limited for intensive language practice. They offer practical and situational learning experiences that complement formal instruction (Richards, 2006). Within boarding school environments (pesantren),

these programs also foster continuous exposure to English, aligning with the naturalistic approach to second language acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Such non-formal programs generally possess the following characteristics:

a. Flexible Curriculum

Non-formal language programs usually design curricula that complement formal education but place more emphasis on communicative practice and specific language skills such as speaking, listening, and pronunciation. Unlike rigid school syllabi, these programs can adapt to learners' needs and institutional goals (Rogers, 2004).

According to Brown (2007), flexibility in curriculum design allows instructors to implement various teaching techniques such as task-based learning, role-playing, and discussion that directly enhance students' ability to use the target language in real-life situations. In the DEC program, the flexible curriculum (a curriculum that can be adapted to students' needs, classroom situations, and learning objectives) provides room for creativity, innovation, and adjustment based on students' English proficiency and participation level.

b. Immersive Environment

One of the most defining characteristics of non-formal programs is the creation of an immersive language environment, where students are encouraged to use English beyond classroom boundaries. As Harmer (2015) emphasizes, consistent language exposure and meaningful interaction accelerate language acquisition.

In the DEC context, the immersion process includes daily English conversations, routine speaking practices, and the use of English during dormitory activities. Such an approach reflects Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles, which promote authentic communication as a means and goal of language learning (Richards, 2006).

Moreover, research by Hidayat and Utami (2023) found that Islamic boarding schools implementing immersive English programs successfully improved students' fluency and confidence by integrating English use into everyday life and social activities.

c. Student needs focus

Non-formal programs are designed to be responsive to students' practical needs and interests. This learner-centered orientation ensures that instruction aligns with learners' communicative goals and personal motivations (Dornyei, 2005). In this model, students are not passive recipients of knowledge but active participants in shaping their learning experiences.

The DEC program, for instance, adapts its activities such as discussion clubs, speech practice, debates, and English games to students' proficiency levels and learning preferences. Such responsiveness enhances engagement, reduces anxiety, and promotes self-directed learning (Williams & Burden, 1997).

In short, the DEC program's design reflects key features of non-formal education: flexibility, immersion, and learner-centeredness, which together support effective language reinforcement in the boarding school context.

3. Assessed aspect in language reinforcement programs

In exploring the perceptions of teachers and students toward the DEC Program, several interrelated aspects must be considered to obtain a comprehensive understanding of its effectiveness and implementation. The effectiveness of a language reinforcement program can be analyzed through several key aspects, including program design and content, teaching methods, and the support and challenges encountered during implementation (Brown, 2007; Richard L. Daft, 2010).

First, the program design and content play a crucial role in determining how effectively the DEC curriculum meets students' communicative needs and learning goals. According to Nation and Macalister (2010), an effective language program must ensure that its content is relevant, balanced, and aligned with learners' real-world language use. The DEC Program, as a non-formal reinforcement initiative, should therefore provide materials and activities that promote active language use, such as speaking practices, listening comprehension tasks, and interactive discussions. The relevance of the content to students' daily life and interests significantly influences their motivation and engagement (Richards, 2006).

Second, the teaching methods applied by instructors within the DEC Program are another essential component. Effective methods such as communicative language teaching (CLT), task-based learning (TBL), and cooperative learning can greatly enhance students' participation and interaction (Brown, 2007; Harmer, 2015). The variety and adaptability of these methods allow teachers to respond to diverse student proficiency levels and learning styles.

Moreover, teachers' pedagogical creativity contributes to a positive classroom atmosphere that encourages experimentation with language use, which is critical for developing fluency and confidence (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

Third, the learning impact of the DEC Program reflects how well it achieves its intended outcomes in improving students' English proficiency, motivation, and self-confidence. A program's success can be measured not only through linguistic competence but also through affective growth such as increased willingness to communicate and reduced language anxiety (Dornyei, 2005). Research by Hanifah (2020) demonstrated that students' positive perceptions of a language program significantly enhance their motivation and performance. Therefore, the DEC Program's perceived impact on students' learning outcomes serves as a key indicator of its overall effectiveness.

Lastly, both support and challenges influence how teachers and students experience the DEC Program. Teachers often face challenges such as limited teaching resources, time constraints, or inconsistencies between formal and non-formal curricula (Wulandari, 2019). Students, on the other hand, may encounter difficulties in adapting to an English-only environment or balancing DEC activities with other academic responsibilities. However, institutional support through administrative encouragement, peer collaboration, and available facilities can mitigate these issues and strengthen the program's sustainability (Rahmawati, 2022).

So, evaluating these four dimensions curriculum design, instructional methodology, learning outcomes, and contextual support provides a holistic perspective on how the DEC Program operates as a language reinforcement

initiative within a boarding school setting. A balanced assessment of these aspects is essential to understanding both the strengths and areas for improvement in the program's implementation.

D. Previous Studies and Research Gap

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between teachers' and students' perceptions and the success of educational programs, particularly in the field of English language learning. Understanding how perceptions shape the teaching-learning process is essential to evaluate a program's effectiveness, as both teachers and students play pivotal roles in determining learning outcomes and program sustainability.

Research focusing on students' perceptions and learning outcomes has consistently shown that positive attitudes toward language programs correlate with higher motivation and achievement. Hanifah (2020) found that students who perceived their English learning program as enjoyable, relevant, and well-structured demonstrated greater participation and academic success. This suggests that learners' perceptions not only influence their motivation but also shape their approach to learning tasks and their level of engagement in classroom activities. Similarly, Gardner (2010) emphasized that learners' affective factors, including motivation and attitudes, are key determinants of language learning success. In line with this, Oxford (2017) argued that students' perceptions of the learning process strongly affect their use of learning strategies and self-regulation. Thus, understanding how students perceive the DEC Program provides essential insights into its impact on their language learning process, confidence, and communicative competence.

In relation to teachers' perceptions and program implementation, Wulandari (2019) highlighted that the degree of teacher support and their positive perceptions of a new educational program are critical for successful implementation. Teachers, as facilitators and mediators of learning, possess valuable insights into pedagogical effectiveness, curriculum challenges, and classroom interaction. When teachers view a program as beneficial and aligned with their professional values, they are more likely to engage enthusiastically and creatively in its delivery (Pajares, 1992; Borg, 2003). Moreover, Farrell and Ives (2015) demonstrated that teachers' beliefs and perceptions directly influence classroom practice, instructional choices, and student outcomes. Therefore, exploring teachers' perceptions of the DEC Program can reveal important information about how the program's structure and methodology align with the pedagogical realities in the classroom.

Several similar studies conducted in Islamic educational contexts, especially boarding schools (*pesantren*), have also investigated language reinforcement programs and found common themes concerning expectation gaps and environmental influences. For instance, Putri and Fauzi (2021) discovered that students often enter English programs in Islamic schools with high expectations for fluency but encounter challenges in maintaining consistent English use due to limited peer interaction and lack of supportive environments. This "expectation versus reality" gap is a recurring issue in many reinforcement programs. Furthermore, Hidayat and Utami (2023) noted that the effectiveness of language programs in boarding schools is often affected by environmental factors such as the linguistic atmosphere, peer support, and administrative encouragement

which can either enhance or hinder students' efforts to practice English outside the classroom. These findings imply that the success of programs like DEC depends not only on their design and pedagogy but also on the institutional culture and daily environment that surrounds learners.

Previous studies have mainly focused on students' perceptions, teachers' perceptions, or the effectiveness of English extracurricular activities separately. Moreover, most of these studies were conducted in general school settings rather than Islamic boarding schools. There is still limited research that simultaneously explores both teachers' and students' perceptions of a structured English reinforcement program such as the Darussalam English Course (DEC). Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive evaluation of the DEC program from both stakeholder perspectives while identifying its strengths, implementation challenges, and possible improvements.