

## **Fostering Teacher-Student Relationships for Effective Classroom Management in English Language**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In an English classroom, classroom management is often associated with discipline and the regulation of student behavior to ensure order and focus. However, effective classroom management encompasses more than discipline, aiming to establish an environment conducive to achieving positive educational outcomes. This study explores the classroom management experiences and perceptions of 5th-semester English Department B Class students. As future educators, these students provide valuable insights into managing classroom dynamics and fostering student engagement. This qualitative phenomenological study adopts a descriptive approach, focusing on their strategies, challenges, and reflections in managing English classrooms. The findings emphasize the importance of developing facilitative skills, relationship-building techniques, and behavior management strategies early in teacher training. Effective teachers are those capable of employing tailored strategies to handle diverse classroom behaviors, from managing group dynamics to addressing individual student needs.

**Keywords:** Behavior, English classroom, learning, relationship, teacher-student

### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a major investment and a central issue for every nation, especially for developing nations that are actively developing their countries such as Indonesia. Development can only be carried out by humans who are prepared for it through education. The quality of education depends largely on the quality of teachers in guiding the learning process. In relation to this, educational activities are a process of changing human attitudes from a certain condition to another condition. In other words, through education, change will be seen in the process of changing human thinking, from not understanding to understanding, from not knowing to knowing (Gee, 2021).

In order to implement effective language learning in the classroom, teachers must have the skills to carry out various roles, of the many important roles of teachers in the classroom, the role of teachers as managers is one of the most important because as he said that "a well-managed class will ignite an atmosphere that supports teaching and learning". Specifically, at the elementary education level, English classroom management is very important because a poorly managed class will not be able to run effectively. Poor classroom management will also hinder students from achieving their highest potential (Ozen & Yildirim, 2022). He also claims that a positive and pleasant atmosphere must be created in School asses to create active learning. Therefore, it is important for teachers to understand classroom management well in any subject including English. The term classroom management can be viewed from several perspectives. The narrow definition of classroom management sees it only as "student discipline and behavior management" (Wolff et al., 2021).

Classroom management refers to classroom discipline. These views only consider classroom management as student behavior management that focuses on maintaining student discipline in the classroom. Classroom management as “all actions taken by teachers in creating an environment that supports and facilitates students in both academic and social-emotional learning” (Kemp & Whitcomb, 2023). Comprehensive classroom management where classroom management is understood as the teacher's efforts to supervise a number of activities in the classroom such as learning, monitoring social interactions, and guiding student behavior. In other words, classroom management can be understood as all efforts made actively by teachers to help students in the learning process in the classroom both academically, socially, and emotionally.

Effective classroom management plays a crucial role in fostering positive educational outcomes. Research has consistently highlighted the significance of schools prioritizing classroom management, particularly by focusing on the teaching and learning process, if they aim to improve overall school quality. As the fundamental unit of an educational system, classroom management is essential to educational leadership. A well-organized class, with dynamic and controlled management of both the learning process and social interactions, along with clear expectations for both academic and social achievements, signifies effective classroom management. Such management creates a supportive learning environment that enhances the clarity and effectiveness of teacher instructions (Thi & Nguyen, 2021). An analysis of educational research conducted in the last fifty years clearly reveals that the ability of teachers to manage their classes has the most dramatic effect compared to other factors. Effective class management increases student engagement, reduces disruptive behavior, and provides benefits for student learning time.

Learning itself is an activity that enlightens students toward a better direction. Improvement in the quality of learning depends highly on the schools' internal conditions, but simultaneously, learning depends on external conditions. The good learning and teaching process exists owing to good interpersonal relationships established among the students themselves and the teachers themselves (Xie & Derakhshan, 2021). Participation of students and themselves teachers play a very important role in the development of socio-emotional situations.

Research has identified the social environment or the classroom climate as the single most pervasive psychological correlate of school learning. The basic principles of student management are: 1). students should not just be objects but subjects, hence, in matters pertaining to their activities, they should be involved in the planning and decision-making, 2). the nature and condition of students are very diverse, both physically in terms of ability and intellectually in terms of physical condition, intellectual ability, social, economic, interests and so on, so diverse activity facilities are needed so that each student has a place to develop optimally, 3). learners will be motivated to learn if they find pleasure in what is taught to them. In this respect, student motivation covers not only the cognitive domain but also includes the affective and psychomotor domains. Studies which focus on effective classroom management has been explored by several researchers; however, the use of phenomenology approach used in the current study is hoped to be able to develop the advancement of the theory in the future, so that the gap in the theory will be bridged.

## **METHOD**

This study is a qualitative phenomenological study using a descriptive method conducted on 5th-semester students of the English Department, Class B. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure the representation of various student perspectives. The

study was conducted over a period of eight weeks, from the first week of August 2024 to the last week of September 2024.

Data collection methods included interviews, observations, and documentation analysis. The data were analyzed concurrently with data collection following the stages proposed by Miles and Huberman, which involve implementing steps from specific to general with various levels of analysis. The collected data were systematically organized, sorted, coded, and categorized. Emerging patterns were examined, visualized, and conclusions were drawn.

To ensure the validity of the data, member checking and triangulation techniques were employed. The researchers also enhanced the credibility of the findings by increasing persistence and incorporating multiple references to identify and confirm existing patterns. It should be written in paragraphs. It also explains the research approach, kinds of research, data collection technique, and data analysis. They should reflect and describe the purpose of the study appropriately.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Effective Classroom Management**

Based on the findings in this research, effective classroom management is formulated as the teacher's ability to build a conducive learning environment to increase student involvement and participation in learning so that optimal learning outcomes can be achieved. Internally, effective classroom management can be carried out by teachers with the following strategies:

- 1) Teacher style strategies in managing student behavior are:
  - a) Use effective verbal language such as humor, supporting sentences that are not just praise and reframing.
  - b) Effective use of non-verbal language.
  - c) A pedagogical approach that is conducive to students, allowing them to exercise autonomy in their learning choices both individually and collectively, while also creating an environment for students to offer feedback to the teacher in the event of an error.
  - d) Teacher-student sharing involves the teacher providing a profound account of their life experiences, while remaining inside their comfort zone and aimed at stimulating pupils. Conversely, educators possess extensive knowledge regarding pupils' life histories.
  - e) Engagement of student teachers by linking the subjects taught to many facets of the lives of both educators and learners. The formulation of class rules is a collaborative process, encompassing the identification of issues such as the utilization of multimedia technology in the classroom, followed by the development of solutions articulated within the rules.
- 2) The spatial method involves engineering classroom environments. The variations in classroom environment models employed by educators are: U-shaped configuration and dining establishment.
- 3) The teacher's instructional technique employs several learning modalities, including group work and paired models. Concurrently, as an external component, the elements identified at the school management level that facilitate the implementation of good classroom management are:
  - a) Optimize instructor burden by limiting class size to a maximum of 24 students, minimizing the number of concurrent sessions, and regulating weekly teaching hours.

- b) School rules and regulations that address potential challenges in the classroom, including guidelines for the use of multimedia devices (smartphones, laptops/internet), protocols for exiting the school, participation in competitions, and other related matters.

The findings regarding effective English classroom management practices above were observed by looking at:

- 1) Time and space setting (name & space), namely the allocation/load of time that teachers have in teaching and the design/shape of the room used in the teaching and learning process as well as the number of students in one study group.
- 2) Teacher's style in managing student behavior.
- 3) Background of the teacher's instructional strategies. Of the three settings, this study reveals that the instructional strategy setting has no effect on the effectiveness of classroom management, while the time and space setting and the teacher's style in managing student behavior influence the teacher's effectiveness in managing the classroom.

Instructional strategy settings are stages commonly known as teacher instructive actions starting from the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages in teaching (Hatch & Clark, 2021). In the preparation stage, the teacher prepares a lesson plan and prepares teaching aids/learning media. In the implementation stage, teachers carry out the lesson plan with various teaching methods that they design in the lesson plan. It is at this stage that teachers face difficulties in classroom management because what they face in the field is different from the lesson plan that has been designed. This study found the fact that lesson plans were prepared artificially to meet administrative teaching requirements (especially as requested by the Education Office).

Time and space settings are measures used to see how teachers manage the class in the spatial context or the time and place limitations they face. In terms of time, what is seen is the average teaching hours and the number of parallel classes allocated or assigned to teachers in a week. Meanwhile, the background to managing student behavior is seen from different style patterns based on the Skinnerian perspective which emphasizes the role of the teacher as an authoritative figure and the Rogerian perspective which underlines the importance of teachers as knowledgeable leaders.

As detailed in the data description section, the average weekly teaching time for the participating teachers is 24 hours, with an average of 7 parallel classes and more than 30 students per class. Based on these averages, this study found that the teachers faced challenges in achieving effective classroom management. Teachers who taught 8 hours per week, managed 3 parallel classes, and had 24 students per class, however, were generally more engaged and more effective in their classroom management.

These findings align with a report from the Alberta Teachers Association, which discusses teacher working hours. The report highlights that, while students' need for diverse learning methods continues to grow, teachers' heavy workloads are a significant factor hindering their ability to manage classrooms effectively. The report states that the link between teacher workload and challenges in achieving effective classroom management is a "universal issue" for educators.

The large class size is a significant barrier to implementing contextual learning, which requires continuous and close supervision of students (Das et al., 2022). Furthermore, in terms of classroom layout, this study reveals that a "traditional" classroom arrangement poses considerable challenges for the participating teachers. The "traditional" setup, used by all the

teachers involved in the study, creates difficulties in both maintaining control and fostering active student participation.

The teachers identified two primary obstacles to implementing student-centered learning, or "contextual learning." The first challenge is student resistance to engaging in class activities. Students are accustomed to the "traditional" classroom environment, where they remain mostly stationary, taking notes during lectures and speaking only when prompted. The second obstacle is related to class size, as teachers struggle to effectively monitor and manage students within the context of their teaching methods. The link between physical classroom management, such as layout and class size, and pedagogical challenges is clear, underscoring this as a significant barrier (Naude & Meier, 2019).

The variations in the "horseshoe" classroom setting and the "restaurant" setting used in the study appear to provide opportunities for the teacher to move freely, making it easier to distribute attention to all students. Such classroom arrangements not only allow for greater student participation and involvement in class activities, but they also illustrate methodological differences in the teaching process. The "restaurant" setup, which was used by the participating teachers, encourages students to work in groups and foster a sense of teamwork. In these conditions, the teacher's role as an "Instructor" becomes less dominant, and they act more as a facilitator.

When a teacher adopts a group model to enhance peer-to-peer interaction, delegating authority to students becomes essential (Michaelsen et al., 2023). This delegation of authority means that the teacher shares power and responsibility, giving students the opportunity to determine the intellectual content of their work and providing reinforcement by evaluating the results of their group work (Andrade & Brookhart, 2020).

In his study he said layout class with the effectiveness of classroom management. The results of the study findings reveal that the effectiveness of inclusive English classroom management in the school studied is determined by the existence of a learning room setting that is different from the classroom in general, namely by dividing the classroom into several zones, namely the learning zone, social zone, quiet thinking zone, creative zone and discovery and multiple purpose zones. In the background aspect of teacher style in managing student behavior, it was revealed in this study that perspective Skinnerian very dominantly held by the participating teachers. As many as 2 (two) out of 3 (three) participant teachers showed a tendency to reduce student behavior management only as a reactive response to their environmental conditions (responses to environmental contingencies).

As authoritative figures, the participating teachers established performance and behavior standards for their students. At the start of the learning process, these teachers communicated various rules and procedures they expected students to follow, along with the minimum academic scores required for completing the course. The use of rewards and punishments was also evident as a method to help students understand cause-and-effect relationships, encouraging them to meet the established standards and behave accordingly. Students will receive praise as a result of achievement and conversely, deviations from standards of achievement and behavior will result in punishment/sanctions. Such tendencies ignore the active and creative side of students. This active and creative side in a Rogerian perspective is a basic element for achieving effective classroom management.

In line with the Rogerian perspective, Rudolf Dreikurs (1968) with his main argument that students have a desire and need for social recognition, advised teachers "not to compete for power with their students" (Sweeney, 2019). According to Dreikurs, the practice of punishment will lead to a "power struggle" thereby ignoring students' needs and desires for social recognition. Dreikurs emphasized more logical consequences rather than punishment. Violations regarding a student's use of a smartphone in class, for example, do not have to be



handled by the teacher confiscating the student's cell phone in front of his classmates. This will actually result in not achieving or even losing a sense of social recognition for the student concerned and then causing him to commit new violations to seek social recognition on other occasions. Dreikurs states that:

“A logical consequence is different from a natural consequence in that natural consequences occur without teacher planning or discussion with the student. Although logical consequences should be clearly related to the misbehavior, they also require active planning and conscious application”.

In line with this, the findings in this study are that the Rogerian perspective encourages the achievement of effective classroom management by emphasizing the active and creative side of students. This side is clearly visible in the process of creating and socializing class rules. The Rogerian perspective underscores the importance of a teacher style that is facilitative (rather than manipulative), respects student actualization (rather than students' environmental circumstances), and encourages students to participate (rather than forcing them to follow rules) in the process. In this study, one participant teacher who applied Rogerian styles did not appear to experience significant obstacles in managing his students' behavior. The process of creating and disseminating classroom rules is carried out in an elicit manner and is a significant initial capital in achieving effective classroom management.

This study also highlighted that the participating teachers faced a dilemma regarding the use of multimedia technology, which impacted student behavior. On one hand, teachers greatly benefited from the development of technology and integrated it into their teaching both inside the classroom and in building relationships with students outside the English lessons. On the other hand, issues arose in class that were considered disruptive, such as students' indiscipline in using multimedia. For example, students secretly using mobile phones or browsing the internet on laptops for non-educational purposes (e.g., Facebook, YouTube), which teachers found difficult to control. Therefore, the advancement of technology in schools has brought about challenges in classroom management and discipline (Naveed et al., 2022).

The introduction of technological media, ineffective time management when using multimedia tools, smartphone use in class, and the impact of voice/video recordings on personal life are some of the problems that emerged as a result of new technology being incorporated into schools (Alfailakawi & Al-Anzi, 2022). Hence, effective classroom management is crucial in creating a conducive learning environment and preventing behavioral issues and indiscipline.

In this context, this study reveals that the Rogerian perspective that is visible in the teachers is the way they use Twitter, Facebook and other social media to develop equal relationships, and even become a way to motivate students into effective efforts by the teacher in their English classroom management. On the other hand, the Rogerian perspective can also be seen in how one participant teacher uses information technology as a productive learning medium, which arouses students' interest in showing their best (Florkowski et al., 2022).

This authoritative figure is also visible in the way the participating teachers create metaphors for their role in the classroom. One of the three participating teachers consider the classroom as a "small stage" where the teacher as an actor expresses and entertains the students as an audience. The task of the actor (teacher) is to make the audience (students) happy. In fact, they have to "steal" the students' attention. Two of the three participating teachers consider themselves to be "civil servants" who are tasked with making rules to maintain and protect the harmony of their class members. This metaphor provides an illustration to better understand the classroom management practices carried out by the participating teachers. This analysis and exploration open up access to their thoughts and beliefs behind what they do in their class.

## **Theoretical and Practical Understanding *Effective English classroom management***

This study begins with an investigation into teachers' theoretical understanding of effective classroom management. The findings of this study specifically state that teachers' cognitive factors are very dominant in influencing their work effectiveness style in classroom management. The cognitive factor in question is how the participating teachers develop thoughts and assumptions about classroom management. Cognitive factors also include perspectives/theories understood by teachers. The following review of teachers' theoretical understanding is based on teachers' descriptions of their role in the classroom and themes of classroom management emphasis revealed from teacher interviews.

Two of the three teachers described their role in the classroom as “giver” (students as “receiver”), as “guardian” or “teacher”, as “performer/actor”. Such roles appear to make them the centered of responsibility. The association of these roles when linked to the learning practices carried out is proven to lead to "teacher-centric" teaching practices. One of the three participants described their role as a "motivator" (students as players who receive encouragement) and as a "formula discoverer" (students use the formula for their health). Both role depictions position the teacher as a facilitator who seeks efforts that touch the intrinsic side of students. In implementing classroom management, it appears that the one teacher tend to choose practices that provide greater opportunities for students to take part.

Furthermore, teachers emphasize classroom management based on at least three major themes, namely order, learning opportunities and caring. The theme of order and learning opportunities can be affiliated with practices where the teacher has full control over the classroom situation, while the theme of caring tends to require teachers to give freedom to students to determine their desire to learn. Two of the three participating teachers showed a combination of these themes and only one emphasized one theme, namely order. The combination of these three themes shows a strong dynamic between practice-based classroom management effectiveness teacher-centered (Skinnerian) or student-centric (Rogerian). In this context, the findings of this study are in line with what is meant by Charlotte Wolff et al., (2021) that knowledge is a significant factor that guides a teacher to make choices in classroom management practices so that they are effective (Wolff et al., 2021). According to Wolff, teacher knowledge is the result of how the teacher connects experience (what is done and obtained from the classroom) with the theory that is understood. Wolff thus emphasized that teaching experience alone is not enough to guide teachers in determining their classroom management practices.

The implementation of classroom management to internal orientation factors (orientation and disposition), teaching practices (teaching choices and practices) and theoretical mastery (thinking and assumptions) (Junker et al., 2021). The developing teacher practice cannot be considered as mastering skills and procedures in the classroom alone (Smith & Gillespie, 2023). Teachers' classroom management practices, which he calls 'knowledge construction', must be viewed as a holistic and complex process and are influenced by 2 (two) significant factors, namely (1) the interpersonal dimension, namely the class where the teacher experiences the learning process and (2) the intrapersonal dimension. This dimension involves the knowledge and beliefs that teachers have so that they influence the learning process in the classroom. The relevance between the implementation of classroom management and teachers' cognitive, practical and pedagogical professional knowledge (König et al., 2020). Therefore, from this perspective, the need to explore teachers' theoretical understanding of classroom management to understand their management practices becomes very important. This study also reveals that theoretical understanding which emphasizes cognitive factors is influenced by 4 (four) aspects, namely the work environment, educational and training background attended,

teaching experience and personal life background. These four aspects cannot stand alone but are interrelated.

The desire to become a teacher from the start, which was part of their personal life background, was revealed to be shared by only one of the three participants. A workplace environment that develops students' humanistic experiences as well as the experience of attending various professional training more than five times, including training on conflict resolution and training on behavior management or similar themes, are factors that encourage the tendency towards Rogerianism. On the other hand, some of these factors are not shared by the other two participating teachers. From the training aspect, for example, it was revealed that the type of training taken by the one "Rogerian" teacher had several differences compared to the other two participating teachers. These differences in type lead to the perspective of both tending towards Rogerian.

Such training is suspected to have a substantial influence on teachers' theoretical understanding. The findings of aspects of life that are linked to teachers' theoretical understanding of classroom management above is life experience, learning experiences in formal contexts, professional training that has been taken, accumulated teaching experience and contributions from peer groups, both locally and generally (Caldera et al., 2020).

### ***Classroom management at college student level***

Regarding the implementation of classroom management in one class at the college level (English Department, 5th semester), the findings of this study are that the instructor carries out classroom management involving instructional and curriculum management, behavior management, and environmental management, with unique variations tailored to the college setting.

Instructional and curriculum management includes curriculum planning, creating a learning process plan (RPP), scheduling, implementing learning methods and assessment. Behavior management includes how teachers establish and enforce rules and procedures, how teachers initiate lessons, how teachers build relationships with students, how teachers apply discipline and consequences and how involved teachers are in the learning process. Environmental management consists of classroom settings, namely arranging furniture and determining the number of students per class. Furthermore, a brief overview of the findings of the implementation of classroom management in one class at the college level (English Department, Semester 5) is presented in Table 1.

From the table, it can be analyzed that at the college level, support for effective classroom management is comprehensive. Flexibility in environmental arrangements, such as the "horseshoe" seating pattern and the mobility of the instructor, fosters an interactive and engaging learning environment. The inclusion of visual elements like schedules, student work, and bulletin boards on the classroom walls demonstrates an effort to create an organized and visually supportive setting that positively impacts student focus and participation.

In terms of behavior management, collaboratively creating and displaying classroom rules encourages a sense of ownership and accountability among students. Restorative approaches, such as counseling, offer constructive methods for addressing behavioral issues. Non-verbal techniques, including strategic pauses, eye contact, and teacher mobility, quickly address disruptions and prevent escalation, contributing to a conducive learning atmosphere.

However, the successful implementation of classroom management strategies also heavily depends on the instructor's skills. The findings of this study indicate that instructors often lack training in classroom and behavior management skills relevant to their field experience. They also do not receive adequate supervision, whether from the department, government, or educational institutions. In a pedagogical context, the lack of skills in building relationships



with students and managing behavior is a significant obstacle to effective classroom management (Doyle & Tagg, 2023).

Training provided at the start of an instructor's career and maintained consistently can help them develop the necessary skills, particularly within the first five years of teaching experience (Tarbutton & Ramirez, 2019). Skills such as being a good facilitator, mastering the art of building relationships with students (and even parents), and effectively managing behavior are crucial components of initial training. Highly effective instructors are those who can implement appropriate strategies for behavior management in their classrooms (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). Successful classroom management encompasses managing the behavior of the whole class, specific groups, and individuals in an integrated manner.

Thus, supporting the development of instructors' skills is a strategic step to ensure the sustainability of effective classroom management practices at the college level.

Table 1. Classroom Management

Classroom Management Aspect	Details
Curriculum and Instructional Management	The curriculum aligns with national and departmental standards. Lesson planning (RPP) is created independently by the instructor, incorporating group work, individual activities, and interactive discussions.
Environmental Management	Classroom layout is flexible and includes arrangements such as "horseshoe" seating. The teacher's position is mobile to adapt to the lesson's dynamics. The classroom walls feature a schedule, student work, and a bulletin board.
Behavior Management	Classroom rules and procedures are collaboratively created and displayed on the classroom wall. Student behavior issues are addressed at the classroom level through direct interaction and restorative methods, including counseling. The instructor builds relationships with students through face-to-face meetings and uses non-verbal techniques to manage behavior effectively.

This behavior management is part of a comprehensive classroom management plan designed by a teacher. In such a context, this research shows that close student teacher relationships increase the effectiveness of classroom management (Duong et al., 2019). Teachers feel more successful in controlling and directing the class when they are homeroom teachers or they feel close to their students because the teacher is a student advisor.

This study documented the utilization of nonverbal tactics as a successful strategy employed by participating teachers to create a suitable classroom atmosphere. Non-verbal strategies employed by participant teachers include pausing during explanations, maintaining eye contact, and adjusting physical proximity. This approach promptly halts the disruption in the classroom and inhibits its escalation. The teacher use several non-verbal strategies, including distinguishing gestures and applause, to convey passion for the class. All non-verbal communication can serve as a way to convey disciplinary messages to kids (Varma et al., 2022). By use silence effectively, a teacher can facilitate assumptions among students. Employing silent methods effectively can enhance teachers' comprehension of student expectations (Diniatulhaq et al., 2020).

## CONCLUSION

The teachers' understanding is dominated by the Skinnerian perspective. This dominantly implemented perspective makes the effectiveness of classroom management measured by standards set by the teacher and student participation becomes minimal. On the other hand, the Rogerian Perspective appears to be implemented by the teacher and supports the effectiveness of the class being run, but is not too dominant. Effective classroom management refers to a

teacher's capacity to cultivate a supportive learning environment that enhances student engagement and participation, hence facilitating optimal learning results. Effective classroom management is attainable through the proficient implementation of three fundamental components: behavior control, environmental management, and curriculum and instructional management. Behavior management pertains to how educators cultivate relationships with students to promote intrinsic motivation for positive behavior, mitigate disruptive acts, and stimulate engagement. Environmental management encompasses the organization of space (classroom), time (allotment of instructional hours), and the student population inside the class. Curriculum and instructional management encompass the design, determination, and implementation of educational programs, including the curriculum, syllabus, and lesson plans. Classroom management implemented in the three schools includes all three substantive elements, but there is a tendency to emphasize curriculum and instructional management. This study found that behavior management and environmental management play a more important role in effective classroom management than curriculum and instructional management. Some effective efforts made by teachers to create effective classroom management are the use of non-verbal language, building personal relationships with students, developing relationships through social media and changing the English classroom layout. The development and use of multimedia technology are factors that inhibit the effectiveness of classroom management. On the other hand, the use of multimedia technology also supports the effectiveness of classroom management in terms of teacher and student relationships.

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