Instructional Observation of Positive Teacher Behavior Assessment Strategy in Elementary Classroom Activities

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ABSTRACT

Background. This study examined how positive teachers' behavior impacted young learners' engagement in elementary school.

It focused on two main aspects: how well young learners followed instructions and how teachers delivered clear instructions during classroom activities.

Purpose. The central question was whether observing positive teachers' behaviors during instruction could boost young learners' participation. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this research analyzed the structure of positive instructions, including direct commands, questions, statements, and clarification requests through observation and recording. This research involved 8 teachers from an International Elementary School in North Sumatra and 24 young learners.

Method. To ensure the reliability of the findings, this research used content validity and inter-rater reliability. The results provided a specific measure for evaluating elementary teachers' instructional practices through observation. It highlighted their abilities to manage classroom transitions and provide clear guidance to young learners during activities that can positively impact their academic motivation.

Results. This research conclude the constructive instruction of teachers in lesson teaching by combining social, communication, and emotional regulation skills through by calculating young learners' participation scores.

KEYWORDS

Elementary classrooom activities, Instructional observation, Teacher behavior

INTRODUCTION

Interest in elementary school success has sparked questions about enhancing young learners' cognitive and social development. A crucial area of investigation is how they engage in classroom activities, which can impact their academic progress. Research indicates that active involvement in classroom routines contributes to better performance, as young learners are naturally curious. It is similar to Skinner's conditioning theory that effective classrooms promote hands-on activities to stimulate problem-solving skills (Tatipang et al., 2022). Positive reinforcement, one of Skinner's key principles, can be used by teachers to encourage desirable behaviors such as active participation, completing assignments, and helping others. This may involve praise, rewards, or privileges. For instance,

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when young learners consistently participate in For instance, when young learners consistently participate in class discussions, teachers can praise them to encourage future involvement (Maulana et al., 2015).

In the Indonesian education system, Character-Building is a vital component. According to Law Number 20 of 2003, the goal of national education is to nurture students' intelligence, personality, and noble morals. According to Indonesian Education Law, education should shape individuals not only intellectually, but also ethically, creating a generation of high moral and ethical standards. To achieve this, Indonesia has implemented Curriculum 2013, a program focused on character education. Under Curriculum 2013, teachers are mandated to integrate character education into their teaching. However, the challenge lies in determining the precise model for instilling these character values effectively in the classroom. Teachers must align these values with specific subjects during their teaching sessions (Cahyati et al., 2019).

In the realm of positive teacher behavior in elementary school programs, teachers play a dual role as knowledge providers and moral guides for society. The teacher's personality significantly influences young learners' success in their learning journey. Young learner success is evident in their academic achievements and their motivation to learn (Elliott et al., 2020). Having a positive personality as a teacher can inspire young learners by creating a connection that motivates them to excel and provides an example for them to follow. Thus, young learners often emulate their teachers' personalities in their own lives (Stronge et al., 2011).

The research problem is many teachers resort to punishment-based methods to manage classroom behavior as young learners advance from elementary to higher grades. However, these punitive approaches can be ineffective and harmful to both teachers and young learners. To create a positive classroom atmosphere, teachers should serve as role models for handling emotions. How teachers manage their own emotions greatly influences how young learners perceive and respond to emotions. Teachers need to demonstrate healthy emotional regulation and avoid negative behaviors like verbal abuse or threats (Nocera et al., 2014). To foster a positive emotional climate, teachers should model respect, empathy, and appropriate emotional responses. They also promote prosocial behaviors such as sharing, caring, and effective communication among young learners (Yassine et al., 2020). As part of their teaching efforts, teachers encourage young learners to develop their positive qualities and impart social skills such as cooperation, sharing, and taking turns. It is similar with Bandura's social theory, also known as social cognitive theory, aiming to observe and imitate the actions and attitudes of person in shaping human behavior and development. This theory explores how individuals, both children and adults, think and behave in social situations. Additionally, involving young learners in decision-making about classroom rules and activities fosters a sense of community and responsibility among them (Kurki et al., 2018).

There are two gaps in our understanding of teaching behavior that need addressing. First, there is limited research on spoken teaching behavior. Second, teaching character education in Indonesia through a foreign language like English is uncommon, even though it should be part of English instruction. Recent research shows that creative teaching techniques significantly improve English learning outcomes, creativity, and student motivation (Arifudin & Ali, 2022). English plays a vital role in Indonesian education, introduced at the basic level as a means of imparting character education through communication. Proficient language skills are essential for conveying moral values. In line with the 2013 Curriculum, lesson plans are crucial tools for integrating character values and meeting cognitive and affective young learners' goals. The next step is adapting lesson plans to match the learning process, including adjustments to steps, indicators, and assessment methods.

In the classroom context, teachers use instructions for teaching both verbal and nonverbal skills to manage behavior. While some studies have looked at instructions in controlled experiments and adult-child interactions, there is limited detailed information about the types of instructions teachers use in real classrooms and their relationship with other factors (Beaulieu & Jimenez-Gomez, 2022). Two important reasons justify studying instructions in elementary school settings. First, naturalistic studies reveal that instructions, often called directives, commands, suggestions, or requests, are one of the most common ways teachers communicate with young learners. For instance, research shows that in extended teacher-young learners interactions, teachers use directions around 70% of the time during classroom activities (Dhondt et al., 2023). Additionally, research in kindergarten and elementary classes indicates that instructions remain significant as young learners progress through school (Ten-Bokkel et al., 2022). Second, both the form and frequency of adult instructions seem to affect young learners' behavior. In elementary schools with high levels of adult direction, young learners tend to display less appropriate task behavior, lower enthusiasm, and reduced engagement in activities compared to environments with less adult involvement. Previous research also highlights indicators of effective classroom management by teachers, including starting and ending lessons on time, minimizing distractions, handling misbehavior through lesson preparation effectively, and maintaining a clear lesson structure (Pishghadam et al., 2023).

Previous research shows that instructional observation can also help create better learning settings. Several research studies from the 1960s and 1970s showed that when teachers pay attention to students doing well, correct students when they misbehave, and provide clear instructions, it can influence how students behave and follow rules. These behaviors include positive approaches like giving specific compliments or "noticing when students are doing something good" (Arifudin & Ali, 2022). This research investigates young learners' engagements in elementary school concerning two aspects of teaching practices: how well young learners follow teachers' instructions and an analysis of how teachers deliver clear instructions during classroom activities. These aspects are critical factors that teachers consider when planning their daily classroom routines. The goal of this research is to pinpoint classroom conditions associated with active young learners engagement in both academic and play activities. The research problem is: How can observing positive teacher behavior during instruction significantly enhance young learners' participation in classroom activities?.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to assess positive teacher behaviors (Fallon et al., 2023). The methodology involves the following steps as follows: (1) Teacher Training: The researcher provide training to 8 teachers on classroom management strategies, focusing on ten indicators such as instructional variation, engagement, interaction, individual support, self-control for young learners, and adaptive behaviors (Goldberg & Iruka, 2023). This training consists of three-hour sessions conducted five days a week. Additionally, the researcher assist these teachers in aligning their English lesson plans with the 2013 Curriculum. (2) Observation and Recording: The researcher observe and record the teachers during the training sessions, which take place from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, over a period of six weeks. Two cameras simultaneously capture classroom activities, resulting in 30 hours of video data. (3) Data Analysis: The researcher analyze the teachers' statements using a descriptive qualitative approach, such as the structure of positive instructions, such as direct imperatives,

questions, declaratives, or clarification requests. These instructions can be directed toward individual young learners or groups of two or more.

This research includes a sample of 8 teachers from an International Elementary School in North Sumatra, Indonesia. These teachers all hold master's degrees in English education and have at least two years of experience teaching young learners. The choice of this international school is based on several factors, such as: (1) Montessori Teachers Training: All selected teachers have undergone Montessori Teachers Training, making them well-versed in managing opportunities for young learners and supporting their collaborative intellectual exploration, so they must be familiar with blended-learning practices. (2) Emphasis on foreign language: The teachers at this school place a strong emphasis on foreign languages, particularly English. They integrate English lessons into the Cambridge curriculum. (3) Clear behavior standards: The school has well-defined rules and routines for in-classroom behavior, promoting good behavior both within and outside the school. These policies align with the research objectives. In addition, this research also involves 24 young learners from an elementary school. These young learners participate in English lessons over a six-week period to help reveal positive teacher behaviors.

To ensure the co-occurrence of young learners' behaviors and contextual factors (grouping and teacher behavior), data are analyzed at the behavior or event level by examining the multiple time-sampled data points for each young learner. Specifically, praise is calculated each time when the teachers make a statement to a young learner for their academic work, such as "That looks good" or "Great work." Praise is not counted when it is directed at the whole class to avoid bias. Then, descriptive narrative notes are written by the researcher to highlight positive teachers' behaviours (Zhu et al., 2023). The agreement percentage is calculated for each episode by taking the total number of agreements and dividing it by the sum of agreements and disagreements, then multiplying the result by 100%. The scoring of "Yes" or "No" responses is calculated based on young learners' observations of their willingness to follow or reject teachers' instructions, as recorded during observations.

This research uses content validity through a structured evaluation of positive teacher behaviors in the classroom. This evaluation encompasses aspects like instructional diversity, engagement, interaction, individual support, self-control for young learners, and adaptive behaviors, all aligned with both the 2013 Curriculum and the Cambridge curriculum for young learners.This research also uses inter-rater reliability by involving 8 English teachers as multiple observers in the process. This approach guarantees consistency in the observations made by different observers and helps establish agreement levels regarding positive teacher behaviors (Melanson & Fahmie, 2023).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This result outlines a specific indicator for assessing the teaching behavior of elementary teachers through observation. This indicator focuses on how the teachers handle transitions within the classroom and whether it provides clear instructions to guide young learners during the classroom activities. The scoring is based on whether the teacher explicitly describes what young learners should do to facilitate organized shift between activities. Below is a detailed explanation of this instructional strategy along with examples and data for better understanding.

First Indicator: Describing Transition Instructions in English Drama Lesson

This instructional strategy revolves around evaluating the teacher's ability to effectively manage transitions between activities by providing explicit instructions to young learners through

lesson to maintain order, engagement, and a positive classroom atmosphere. By assessing this aspect of teaching behavior through observation, the teachers can gain insights into how they can manage classroom dynamics and ensure that transitions are integrated into the learning experience.

Table 1. Describing Transition Instructions in English Drama Lesson

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Positive Example:** "Before we head outside to play, remember to go to your cubbies and grab your coats and sunglasses. Let's make sure we're all ready before we line up by the door." 2. **Effective Example:** "Now, we're moving on to our centers. When I call your name, put away your mats, take your name tag, and choose a center you'd like to work at."	1. Yes: The teacher explicitly describes what young learners should do during the transition, guiding them through the process, and the transition is executed smoothly. 2. No: If the teacher provides inadequate or incomplete instructions about the transition, or if the transition instructions are not followed through, or if the only instruction is to "be quiet and listen."	1. Example 1: (Yes: 85% ; No: 15%) 2. Example 2: (Yes: 78%; No: 22%)

Second Indicator: Engaging with Young Learners' Comments and Ideas in English Reading Comprehension Lesson

This instructional strategy focuses on observing how well the teacher interacts with young learners by responding to their comments and ideas. Effective teachers actively listen, respond, and engage with young learners' comments and ideas, fostering an environment where young learners feel valued and encouraged to express themselves. This strategy assesses the teacher's ability to facilitate meaningful interactions that promote critical thinking, communication skills, and self-expression.

Table 2. Engaging with Young Learners' Comments and Ideas in English Reading Comprehension Lesson

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Positive Example:** A young learner says, "Look, I see a tall tower with the blocks!" The teacher responds, "Wow, the tower is really tall. Can you describe the tower in a few words?" 2. **Engaging Example:** A young	1. Yes: The teacher frequently responds by asking questions and making comments that not only acknowledge but also extend and elaborate on their contributions, fostering deeper	1. Example 1: (Yes: 73%; No: 27%) 2. Example 2: (Yes: 82%; No: 18%)

learner shares, "I saw a bird outside the window today." The teacher responds, "That's fascinating! What did the bird look like? What color was it?"

3. **Descriptive Praise Example:** During playtime, the teacher comments, "I noticed how you and your friends re-check the reading answers together. You all worked together so nicely!"

4. **Engaging Example:** A young learner shares, "I saw a bird outside the window today." The teacher responds, "That's interesting! What did the bird look like? What color was it?"

engagement and communication.

2. No: The teacher's responses are minimal, lack elaboration, or fail to encourage further discussion and exploration of the children's ideas.

3. Example 3: (Yes: 74%; No: 74%)

4. Example 3: (Yes: 84%; No: 16%)

Third Indicator: Facilitating Active Engagement in Large-Group Activities in English Outdoor Activities

This instructional strategy involves assessing how the teacher designs and guides large-group activities to provide young learners with opportunities to make choices within different activity settings. The focus is on the teacher's efforts to encourage and support young learners to become actively involved in the learning process during these activities.

Table 3. Facilitating Active Engagement in Large-Group Activities in English Outdoor Activities

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Assistance in Engagement Example:** A young learner seems hesitant to join a group activity. The teacher offers Play-Doh or other engaging materials to make young learners become actively engaged. 2. **Initiating New Activity Example:** The teacher introduces a new activity, such as blowing bubbles or drawing a picture about nature outside of classroom, to encourage a young learner who has not chosen an activity.	1. Yes: The teacher takes action to encourage young learners to become actively engaged. 2. No: Young learners do not want to participate and they do not actively engaged.	1. Example 1: (Yes: 65%; No: 35%) 2. Example 2: (Yes: 70%; No: 30%)

Fourth Indicator: Guiding Young Learners with Acceptable Alternatives in English Vocabulary Development

This indicator assesses whether the teacher uses modeling or prompting to guide young learners towards using acceptable alternatives when displaying challenging behavior. Teachers help

young learners learn to express their needs and emotions appropriately through specific suggestions or demonstrations.

Table 4. Guiding Young Learners with Acceptable Alternatives in English Vocabulary Development

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Modeling Example:** A young learner grabs a toy from his friend. The teacher models by saying, "Instead of grabbing, you can say, "Can I have a turn, please?" 2. **Prompting Example:** A young learner is about to push another young learner in line. The teacher prompts by saying, "Remember, we use our words. You can ask: Can I go next?"	1. Yes: The teacher guides young learners to use acceptable alternatives by modeling, prompting, or providing specific suggestions. 2. No: The teacher does not show alternatives for specific instruction.	1. Example 1: (Yes: 85%; No: 15%) 2. Example 2: (Yes: 83% ; No: 17%)

Fifth Indicator: Assisting Young Learners with Problem-Solving in English Debate Activities

This indicator assesses whether the teacher guides young learners through modeling, logical consequences, and problem-solving techniques. This process involves identifying the problem, brainstorming potential solutions, evaluating those solutions, and selecting one to try.

Table 5. Assisting Young Learners with Problem-Solving in English Debate Activities

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Problem Identification Example:** The teacher says, "Let's think about what happened. Can you tell me what the problem was?" 2. **Solution Brainstorming Example:** The teacher asks, "What could you do differently when you cannot have a toy you want? Can you think of some options?" 3. **Solution Selection Example:** The teacher prompts, "Out of the solutions we talked about, which one do you think would work best right now?"	1. Yes: The teacher gives opportunities for young learners to practice problem-solving in various contexts to enhance their overall learning experience. 2. No: The teacher does not want to encourage young learners to present arguments and propose solutions to complex issues.	1. Example 1: (Yes: 75%; No: 25%) 2. Example 2: (Yes: 78%; No: 22%) 3. Example 3: (Yes: 87%; No: 13%)

Sixth Indicator: Teaching Social Skills or Emotional Competencies in English Writing Skill

This indicator assesses whether the teacher utilizes naturally occurring opportunities to teach social skills or emotional competencies. Teachers use everyday situations to engage young learners in discussions or activities that encourage the development of social and emotional skills.

Table 6. Teaching Social Skills or Emotional Competencies in English Writing Skill

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Building Relationship Example:** "We're going to write letters to our pen pals in another school today. Think about what you'd like to share and ask questions to get to know them better. Remember to be friendly and respectful in your letters." 2. **Collaborative Learning Example:** "Create a story together in pairs. Each person will take turns writing a sentence or paragraph. Discuss your ideas and build a story that makes sense with your friends." 3. **Appreciation Example:** "Let's write thank-you letters to a teacher or staff member in our school who has helped us. Share what you appreciate about them."	1. Yes: When the teacher regularly uses natural opportunities throughout the day to teach social skills or emotional competencies. 2. No: The teacher does not teach social skills or emotional competencies frequently.	1. Example 1: (Yes: 78%; No: 22%) 2. Example 2: (Yes: 86%; No: 14%) 3. Example 3: (Yes: 92%; No: 8%)

Seventh Indicator: Stating Logical Consequences in English Sentence Development

This indicator evaluates whether the teacher states logical consequences when redirecting challenging behavior. Logical consequences should be directly related to young learners' behavior and offer a clear alternative, providing a cause-and-effect learning experience.

Table 7. Stating Logical Consequences in English Sentence Development

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Expressing Emotions Example**: Young learners play a game of charades where they act out various emotions. The logical consequence is that they enhance their ability to recognize and express emotions. 2. **Empathy Circle Example:** Young learners gather in a circle to share their feelings and experiences. The logical consequence is an increased sense of empathy as they learn to listen and relate to each other's emotions. 3. **Role-Playing Conflict Resolution Example:** Young learners engage in role-playing scenarios where	1. Yes: The teacher directs young learners to use cause-effect sentence related to the events that had been happened. 2. No: The teacher does not direct young learners to use cause-effect sentence related to the events that had been happened.	1. Example 1: (Yes: 90%; No: 10%) 2. Example 2: (Yes: 82%; No: 18%) 3. Example 3: (Yes: 78%; No: 22%)

they practice resolving conflicts. The logical consequence is improved conflict resolution skills and better social interactions.

Eighth Indicator: Redirection of Children not Following Directions in English Conversation of Daily Routine Practices

This indicator focuses on whether the teacher redirects children who are not following given directions. The teacher guides children back on track if they are withdrawn, distracted, or off-task.

Table 8. Redirection of Children not Following Directions in English Conversation of Daily Routine Practices

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. Positive Reinforcement Redirection Example: a. Original Instruction: "Please, put on your shoes so we can go for a walk." b. Redirection: "Great job getting your jacket on! Now, let's finish getting ready by putting on your shoes, so we can go for a walk." **2. Choice Redirection Example:** a. Original Instruction: "Time to brush your teeth." b. Redirection: "Would you like to use the blue toothbrush or the red one? It's your choice! Let's make teeth nice and clean. It is enjoyable." **3. Engagement Redirection Example:** a. Original Instruction: "Please, set the table for dinner." b. Redirection: "How about we set the table together? You can place the forks, and I'll do the spoons. We'll finish quickly, and then it's time for our delicious dinner."	1. Yes: The teacher consistently redirects young learners who are not following directions. 2. No: The teacher consistently redirects young learners who are not following directions.	1. Example 1: (Yes: 87%; No: 13%) 2. Example 2: : (Yes: 90%; No: 10%) 3. Example 3: (Yes: 77%; No: 23%)

Ninth Indicator: Structuring Activities for Collaboration in English Teaching Method

This indicator focuses on whether the teacher intentionally structures activities that encourage young learners to work together. Teachers create situations where young learners can collaborate and practice social skills while engaging in shared activities.

Table 9. Structuring Activities for Collaboration in English Teaching Method

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Reading Activity Example:** The teacher says, "Choose a friend to read a book with." This prompts young learners to select a partner and collaborate on reading. 2. **Art Activity Example:** The teacher suggests, "Find a friend to make friendship pictures with." This encourages young learners to work together on an art project.	1. Yes: The teacher consistently creates a situation where young learners collaborate together. 2. No: The teacher does not consistently create a situation where young learners collaborate together.	1. Example 1: (Yes: 83%; No: 17%) 2. Example 2: (Yes: 80%; No: 20%)

Tenth Indicator: Acknowledging Positive Behavior with References to Expectations in English Idioms

This indicator assesses whether the teacher acknowledges and comments on positive behavior by referring to classroom expectations or rules. The teacher uses verbal cues to acknowledge instances of appropriate conduct.

Table 10. Acknowledging Positive Behavior with References to Expectations in English Idioms

The Examples of Teacher Instruction	Scoring Instruction	Percentage of Yes & No (%)
1. **Respectful Listening Example:** a. The rule: Listening respectfully when someone else is talking. b. The teacher says: "Keep it up!" to appreciate how young learners are all good in taking turns to speak during English lesson. 2. **Handing in Homework Example:** a. The rule: Complete the homework. b. The teacher says: "You are really hit the nail on the head by remembering to bring your homework today." 3. Participation and Effort Example: a. The rule: Trying your best. b. The teacher says: "Please going the extra mile during our lesson today."	1. Yes: The teacher consistently acknowledges positive behavior by linking it to classroom rules and English idiom use. 2. No: The teacher consistently acknowledges positive behavior by linking it to classroom rules and English idiom use.	1. Example 1: (Yes: 93% ; No: 7%) 2. Example 2: : (Yes: 87%; No: 13%) 3. Example 3: (Yes: 92%; No: 8%)

Regarding teacher behaviors, the researcher found that young learners were more engaged in academic activities when teachers offered praise or kept an eye on their actions, compared to when teachers were not present. This suggests that young learners respond positively to teachers' supportive acknowledgment, which can come in the form of monitoring and affirmations like praise or social interaction. This research result is similar to (Van den Berghe et al., 2013) who state that teacher monitoring serves as a way for teachers to observe and understand young learners' interests and development, allowing them to tailor experiences and share progress with parents and others. The significance of teacher affirmations and monitoring may have been heightened for children because these behaviors were relatively infrequent compared to a teacher's usual pattern of giving directions or being less involved (Meyer & Turner, 2023).

Regarding young learners' participations, the quality of play activities observed in this research is noteworthy. Understanding the factors influencing teachers' decisions in enhancing young learners' education is vital for effective implementation of standards and professional development (Smith et al., 2023). In some cases, teachers may face challenges allocating time and resources due to the use of English textbooks in lesson planning. To boost young learners' active engagement in learning, teachers integrated strategies into their teaching behavior for both academic and play activities. This improved young learners' English skills, particularly in listening and speaking.

In summary, the findings demonstrate that teachers' teaching behavior significantly and positively impacts young learners' academic motivation. Effective teaching encompasses several key areas of instructional behavior. One essential aspect of effective teaching is instructional clarity, which involves how clearly and explicitly the teacher communicates what young learners need to learn, do, and understand by emphasizing "academic student-teacher interactions." Another crucial domain is classroom management, which involves establishing an organized and disciplined learning environment. This includes setting and enforcing classroom rules, managing inattentive behavior, and responding to young learner misbehavior during lessons (Van den Berghe et al., 2013). This means that better teaching behavior leads to higher academic motivation among young learners. Importantly, teaching behavior influences both controlled and autonomous motivation, showing that teachers can motivate Indonesian students in various ways, through structured or self-driven approaches.

CONCLUSION

This research underscores the importance of teaching social and emotional skills in elementary classrooms. By observing and assessing young learners' participation, teachers can better integrate these skills to improve their behavior and enhance learning outcomes. This research highlights that young learners' readiness for learning encompasses various aspects, including physical well-being, social confidence, emotional maturity, language development, general knowledge, and moral awareness. Teachers often grapple with disruptive behavior, which impacts their effectiveness and young learner achievement. Helping young learners manage their behavior and emotions is crucial for active participation in learning, so teachers play a vital role in teaching these skills and providing guidance. This research suggests that policymakers and educators should focus on enhancing young learners' experiences by integrating academic and emotional competence in the education system. Future research should explore ways to incorporate classroom management behavior into standardized scores to promote this integration in Indonesian education.

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