

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES BY ALIYAH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS IN GUNUNGKIDUL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the classroom management practices applied by English teachers in aliyah schools across Gunungkidul District. Although classroom management has been widely discussed, few studies have explored how *content*, *conduct*, and *covenant management* are implemented within the sociocultural and religious context of rural aliyah schools. This study addresses that gap by examining locally grounded and adaptive practices often overlooked in mainstream literature. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through observation and interviews with two English teachers from MAN 1 Gunungkidul and MA YAPPI Gubukrubuh. The results showed that both teachers applied contextual and adaptive strategies. In content management, they arranged students' seating flexibly according to the activity, utilizing media such as story cards, learning videos, and QR code-based quiz applications. In conduct management, they set class rules, used positive reinforcement, and applied reflective approaches such as writing reasons and solutions to violations. In covenant management, they built personal relationships through greetings, empathy, and verbal support, creating a positive and supportive learning climate. These findings suggest that effective classroom management is shaped not only by technical strategies, but also by teachers' sensitivity to local context, student character, and institutional values.

Keywords: English Teachers in Aliyah Schools, Classroom Management, Content Management; Conduct Management; Covenant Management

A. INTRODUCTION

English language learning in Indonesia, especially at the upper secondary level such as Aliyah schools, faces various criticisms, especially related to the low communicative competence of students. One of the causes that is often highlighted is the teacher-centered approach to teaching as well as the lack of active student involvement. In the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL), classroom management is a central aspect because the learning process is highly dependent on meaningful interaction between teachers and

students (Brown, 2001). Teachers are not only in charge of delivering material, but also designing an environment that allows for communication and active engagement. Wide variety of skills and techniques which so called classroom management need to be used to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during a class Babadjanova (2020). As Al-Seghayer (2017) points out that the secrets of successful EFL teachers also relies on various dimensions such as instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. Thus, classroom management is a crucial part of learning effectiveness, especially in the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). A number of theories have been developed to understand classroom management practices, including those from Froyen and Iverson (1999), Weinstein and Romano (2011), as well as local approaches by Rinda and Indrastana (2020).

According to Froyen and Iverson (1999), classroom management consists of three main components. First, *content management* which includes the physical arrangement of the classroom, learning media, and activity flows that support student engagement. Second, *conduct management*, which is the management of student behaviour through law enforcement, reinforcement, and intervention strategies for classroom disturbances. Third, *covenant management*, which is the management of social and emotional relationships that aims to build a sense of security, mutual trust, and a supportive learning community. The three function in an integrated manner and complement each other in creating conducive learning. The main advantage of this model is its ability to clearly distinguish the relational dimension (*covenant*) of conduct and academic content (*content*), which makes it very suitable for the context of madrassahs based on values and personal relationships. Meanwhile, Weinstein and Romano's (2011) model structured classroom management into five principles: creating a caring *environment*, physical organization of the classroom, development of rules and procedures, monitoring student behaviour, and responding to inappropriate behaviour. This model emphasizes the importance of reflection and empathy in fostering class order, but the aspects of social and emotional relationships are not developed as a separate dimension as in Froyen and Iverson's model. Thus, although it is very useful in the management of elementary classes, this model lacks a sharp analytical tool to evaluate the quality of teachers-student interpersonal relationships at the madrasah level.

The approach of Rinda and Indrastana (2020) is more practical and sourced from the results of field studies of EFL teachers in Indonesia. They identified five aspects of classroom management: *teacher talk*, *time management*, *activity management*, *interaction management*, and *evaluation management*. Their focus is on how teachers organize the classroom in their daily activities—including how teachers speak, organize time, organize discussions, and evaluate learning. This model is highly relevant locally and provides a concrete picture of practice in the field, but does not develop the relationships between the components of classroom management within the systematic conceptual framework of Froyen and Iverson.

The theory from Marzano and Marzano (2003) enriches the understanding of the importance of interpersonal relationships and student involvement as determinants of classroom success. However, this approach tends to be quantitative and procedural, and is not specifically designed for language learning. Similarly, the Emmer and Evertson (2016) model strongly emphasizes the importance of planning and transitioning activities, but does not include the emotional and value aspects that are essential to EFL learning in aliyah schools. On the other hand, the theories of Charles (2011) and Dreikurs (1968) emphasize the importance of moral

values and the logic of consequences in behaviour management. Both of these approaches are useful in creating classroom discipline, but they need to be complemented by approaches that build social and emotional intimacy. This is provided by *the restorative discipline* theory of Gregory et al. (2016), which emphasizes personal responsibility and relationship recovery. However, this approach requires time, training, and high sensitivity from teachers, so its implementation in schools with limited resources is a challenge in itself.

The *ethic approach of care* from Noddings (2005) offers a strong philosophical foundation for *the covenant management dimension*, emphasizing the importance of authentic, empathetic, and sincere teacher presence in building relationships with students. However, due to its philosophical and non-technical nature, this theory needs to be combined with other, more practical approaches. Considering these models, Froyen and Iverson's framework was chosen for its analytical clarity and relevance to aliyah schools, which emphasize not only academic achievement but also character formation through strong teacher-student relationships. Studies on classroom management in public schools (e.g., Rinda & Indrastana, 2020; Emmer & Evertson, 2016) have provided valuable insights into EFL instruction. However, little research has examined classroom management in Islamic value-based schools such as aliyah schools, where character education and religious values are integral to the learning environment. This study aims to describe the classroom management practices of English teachers in aliyah schools in Gunungkidul Regency, using Froyen and Iverson's (1999) framework to analyze content, conduct, and covenant management.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach, which was appropriate for exploring classroom management practices in natural settings and capturing the complexity of teacher-student interactions (Creswell, 2012). The participants were two certified English teachers from MAN 1 Gunungkidul (a state-owned aliyah school) and MA YAPPI Gubukrubuh (a private aliyah school), selected using purposive sampling (Patton, 2002) to reflect gender diversity and institutional variation. Data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The observation process followed qualitative protocols that emphasized contextual immersion and behavioral mapping (Angrosino, 2007). Thematic analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To ensure trustworthiness, triangulation and member checking were applied, supported by credibility and confirmability principles (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The research was conducted from October to November 2023.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research are presented in line with the objectives to describe classroom management practices in aliyah schools. This study revealed that two English teachers at aliyah schools in Gunungkidul Regency namely Teacher A from MAN 1 Gunungkidul and Teacher B from MA YAPPI Gubukrubuh implemented a classroom management strategy that included three main components: content management, conduct management, and covenant management, as stated by Froyen and Iverson (1999). To facilitate understanding of the comparative practices carried out by Teacher A and Teacher B, Table 1 summarizes the findings based on key indicators for each component. This table highlights both

similarities and differences in their approaches and illustrates how each aspect of classroom management was adaptively implemented within the madrasah context.

Table 1. Summary of Classroom Management Practices for Teachers A and Teacher B

Component	Indicators	Teacher A	Teacher B
Content Management	Classroom setup	Rowed and clustered chairs; presentation rooms; intergroup access	Fixed line; the middle space for chained messaging; gap space for mobility
	Management of teaching materials	Printed text, different worksheets for each group, verbal delivery, text-based Learning	Narrative texts, learning videos, same worksheets for all groups, task progress monitoring
	Learning tools	Whiteboard, marker	LCD projector, mobile phone, QR code
	Learning flow	Explanation – group work – presentation (gallery walk); Clear instructions	Explanation – group discussions – chained messaging; Instructions
Conduct Management	Interference prevention	Verbal reprimands: "sshhh", "ckckck"; polite expressions	Verbal and gestural reprimands; live focus reminders
	Consequences/punishment	Inactive students are asked to present as a consequence	Not explicit; reflective approach and responsibility inculcation
	Character values	Islamic greeting, basmallah, hamdallah; permission; manners; group responsibility	Islamic greeting, Al Qur'an recital, the national anthem; Islamic values were associated with material; classroom hygiene
Covenant Management	Teacher-student relationship	Friendly and patient; smile; informal and social relations; eager to strengthen students' self esteem	Warm and friendly; praise the students' efforts; sensitive to students' emotional states
	Emotional climate	Students were free to ask questions and comment without pressure	Students were invited to sing together to dilute the atmosphere
	Participation and interaction	Lighter questions; active role in gallery walks; group work instructions	Spontaneous questions and responses; equitable role distribution in the group

Table 1 shows that Teacher A and Teacher B applied classroom management in different but sometimes similar ways. Teacher A focused more on structured learning steps, group responsibility, and building informal relationships with students. Meanwhile, Teacher B made greater use of technology, reflective strategies, and activities to create a positive classroom atmosphere. These differences suggest that classroom management in aliyah

schools depends on the school context, resources, and teacher beliefs. The next sections explain each component of classroom management, content management, conduct management, and covenant management, in more detail.

Content Management

Content management refers to how teachers organize the classroom setting, select and deliver materials, use learning tools, and manage the flow of learning activities. In this study, Teacher A and Teacher B showed different ways of managing these aspects to support student learning. Based on the results of observations, teacher A arranged the seats flexibly, adjusting to the designed learning activities. For example, during gallery walk or group discussions, student chairs were arranged in a cluster or group formation, allowing for more intensive interaction between students. Teachers also left a space for movement in the middle and between groups to facilitate mobility during presentation activities or collaborative work.

In contrast, Teacher B maintained a one-row facing seating formation without significant changes, but provided space in the middle of the classroom for activities such as chained messaging, i.e. students deliver chain messages in English. Although the seating formation remained the same, the classroom center was utilized as an interactive arena, and the space between seats was designed to be spacious enough to support students' mobility when performing assignments or presentations.

As evidence, in the observed learning session, Teacher A delivered instructions to students: *"Please arrange your chairs in groups like last week, later there will be discussions and presentations between groups."* This showed that there was strategic and consistent spatial planning, not only situational. Teacher B, although she did not make any changes to the chair formation, still showed initiative in bringing the classroom to life through movement-based activities and collaboration.

This seating arrangement practice was concrete evidence that both teachers understood the importance of adjusting the physical classroom to the learning goals. This was in line with the principle of flexible classroom design as explained by Emmer and Evertson (2016), who emphasize that adaptive spatial arrangements can improve student focus, facilitate activity management, and encourage active participation. Furthermore, this practice also indicated that teachers had a pedagogical awareness of how classroom layouts could support interaction, especially in the context of EFL teaching that emphasized communication.

One of the active learning strategies implemented by Teacher A in the framework of content management was the use of the gallery walk method. In this practice, students were asked to work in groups, produce learning products such as short texts or material summaries, and then display their work in various corners of the classroom. After that, the other group of students rotated to observe, read, and respond to the other group's work.

Based on observations, Teacher A gave systematic instructions, such as: *"Each group, please paste the results of your discussions on the right and left walls. Later we will do a gallery walk, you walk around and comment on the work of other groups."* The teacher also provided paper labels to give the sequence number to each "gallery" and prepared observation sheets that students had to fill out during the activity.

The use of this method showed Teacher A's ability to manage the flow of activities in a structured manner, including spatial arrangement, student roles, and time. This reflects a good understanding of the content management component as stated by Froyen and Iverson (1999), and supports the view of Smaldino et al. (2015) on the importance of designing learning activities that allow for active and reflective engagement.

Within the scope of content management, Teacher B optimized the use of technology such as LCD projectors, learning videos, and QR code-based quiz applications to support the delivery of materials. This strategy allowed students to be more interested and actively involved in the lessons, even if the seating formation is not changed. This approach is in line with the principle of integrating learning media in content management (Smaldino et al., 2015). In addition, Padhi (2021) emphasized that effective content management in rural schools requires creativity in compiling contextual teaching materials. This can be seen in Teacher A who chooses learning materials and instructions based on the actual readiness of students. This could be seen when Teacher A chose teaching material in the form of narrative texts with a *fractured story approach*, which was to redevelop famous stories with different perspectives, plots, or endings. This material was chosen because it was challenging but still in accordance with students' abilities and interests. In the learning session, Teacher A said: *"We will learn narrative text by changing some famous stories that you already know either from our own country or stories from foreign cultures."*

The selection of this material shows that Teacher A strove to provide relevant, creative, and learning content based on students' literacy experiences, both locally and globally. This practice not only enriched language competence, but also fostered students' confidence to express their ideas freely. In addition, Jon et al. (2021) linked students' ability to build communicative competence with teachers' ability to manage content adaptively and encourage interaction-based learning.

Conduct Management

In the management of student behavior, Teacher A and Teacher B exhibited different management strategies, but they were both functional and tailored to the context of their respective classes. These differences reflected the pedagogical orientation and diverse professional beliefs in carrying out *conduct management*. In the aspect of interference prevention, Teacher A used a mild and non-confrontational verbal approach, such as *"sshhh"*, *"ckckck"*, and polite facial expressions to reprimand students who started to lose focus. This strategy aimed to maintain discipline without damaging the emotional atmosphere of the class. Meanwhile, Teacher B applied a combination of verbal and gestural reprimands, such as looking directly at or touching the student's desk while giving a brief reminder: *"Focus, ok?!, there is a little time left."* This approach demonstrated the ability of real-time interventions to restore order without stopping the flow of the lesson.

In the aspect of providing consequences, Teacher A applies strategies that were structural and educational. He conveyed the rules and consequences from the beginning, and in observation it was seen when he said: *"If you are not active during the group work, I will ask you to make a presentation on behalf of your own group."* This was a form of logical consequences, where the consequences were not punitive, but instead encouraged responsibility for participation (Dreikurs, 1968). The teacher also gave positive verbal reinforcement, such as *"I like the way you work together. Keep going, this group is already*

good." This showed that behavior management strategies not only suppressed distractions, but also reinforced positive behaviors (Charles, 2011).

Instead, Teacher B opted for a reflective and humanistic approach. In the learning session, when students joked excessively during the discussion, the teacher did not reprimand harshly. He approached the students and instructed: *"After the lesson, I will ask you to write a paragraph: why you didn't focus and how you can fix it in your next lessons."* This approach reflected the practice of restorative discipline (Gregory et al., 2016), which emphasizes self-awareness, personal responsibility, and reflection as the basis for behavior change.

In instilling character values, the two teachers integrated Islamic values in behavior management. Teacher A consistently started learning with Islamic expressions--salaam, basmallah, and hamdallah. He also reminded students of the importance of politely asking for permission, maintaining group ethics, and completing tasks together. Meanwhile, Teacher B opened the class by reciting Al-Fatihah together, singing the national anthem, and relating verses of the Qur'an to the subject matter. The teacher also emphasized the importance of classroom cleanliness as part of the students' social responsibility. This practice showed that behavior management in aliyah schools were inseparable from the moral and spiritual dimensions, as exemplified by the two teachers. Based on the interview Teacher A also disciplined students who did not complete the task *"Saya tagih dengan baik sampai dapat sambil menanyakan alasannya dan menetapkan waktu penyelesaiannya"* (I consistently asked them to submit the assignment while trying to know the cause and establishing a settlement agreement).

As emphasized by Soleimani and Razmjoo (2016), teachers' pedagogical beliefs greatly influence the choice of behavior management strategies. In this context, Teacher A represents a structured, rules-based approach, while Teacher B shows a tendency towards a relational and reflective approach. Both show that there is no single approach that is most effective in behavior management (*no one-size-fits-all*, Moradi, 2020). The most important thing is the suitability of the strategy with the character of the students, the values of the institution, and the personality of the teacher himself.

Covenant Management

In the aspect of *covenant management*, both teachers showed real efforts in building strong interpersonal relationships with students. This practice can be seen from the way they create a positive emotional climate and respond to the affective needs of students personally. Teacher A consistently provides verbal reinforcement that strengthens students' confidence. In the observation of the class, Teacher A gave appreciation by saying: *"Cool, Don't be afraid to make mistakes, the important thing is that you have the courage to convey."* This sentence not only reinforces but also fosters a sense of security to express one's opinions, as well as affirming that participation is more important than perfection. Practices like this show that there is an awareness of teachers on the importance of building student self-esteem as part of the success of learning English. This is in line with the principle of *caring pedagogy* according to Noddings (2005), where affective reinforcement is part of an authentic educational relationship.

Meanwhile, Teacher B shows high sensitivity to students' emotional states, especially when they see students looking moody or unfocused. In one of the sessions, Teacher B stopped the explanation and said in a calm tone while approaching to the student's desk: "*Are you okay? If you are not ready to participate in our activities, it is not a problem. Later on, OK?!"* In other case when Teacher B tried to implement an *English-only classroom* but the students are reluctant to respond to teacher' questions instead of pushing the students to do so he said "*Okay tidak apa apa, coba yang lain apakah ada yang bisa menjawab*". Based on the interviewed the teacher said that "*Saya juga orang Jawa, orang desa, tapi berkomitmen belajar berbahasa Inggris dan menjadi guru Bahasa Inggris.*". (I am also a Javanese and I'm committed to learn English; I'm now an English teacher). By switching into Bahasa, he claimed that it will make the students feel secure and comfortable for unable to answer the teacher questions.

This approach reflected efforts to build a sense of psychological security and trust in teachers, which were "essential in learning that involved the courage to speak and express oneself. Teacher B's response reinforced the relevance of the *ethic of care*, that genuine concern for the well-being of students is the foundation of meaningful educational interactions (Noddings, 2005). This is also supported by the result of the interview in which teacher claimed that this strategy built closeness and motivation

Thus, even though the styles used were different, both teachers showed an understanding that *covenant management* was not just about building closeness, but creating an environment that make students feel appreciated, accepted, and emotionally supported in the learning process. This indicates that the quality of teacher-student relationships is often the key to building learning motivation. Likewise, in the Macías (2018) study, novice teachers who managed to build positive social relationships were better able to maintain students' attention and participation in the classroom. The involvement of students who are active in both aliyah schools in this study also strengthens the findings of Cevallos and Soto (2020) that effective personal relationship management increases student learning motivation and creates a learning environment that supports positive interactions between students and teachers. The quality of covenant management also shows that classroom management is not just a technical procedure, but also a social action shaped by the teacher's personal values, empathy, and commitment. As emphasized by Charles (2011), the success of teachers in maintaining order and respect in the classroom is determined more by the character and social sensitivity of the teacher than by formal rules alone.

D. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to describe classroom management practices implemented by two English teachers at aliyah schools in Gunungkidul Regency, focusing on three components proposed by Froyen and Iverson (1999): content management, conduct management, and covenant management. The findings revealed that while both teachers applied strategies across these three areas, their practices varied according to institutional context, resource availability, and personal teaching beliefs. Teacher A emphasized structured learning flows, group responsibility, and informal rapport, whereas Teacher B integrated technology, reflective approaches, and emotional engagement. The findings confirmed that effective classroom management is context-sensitive and shaped by pedagogical beliefs, school culture, and teacher-student relationships, aligning with the framework of Froyen and Iverson (1999).

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