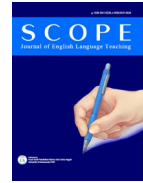




SCOPE

Journal of English Language Teaching

| p-ISSN 2541-0326 | e-ISSN 2541-0334 |
<https://journal.lppmunindra.ac.id/index.php/SCOPE/>



Research Article

The Influence of Learning Theories on Students' Behavior: Mean Girls' Movie Analysis

Amirrudin¹, Fiza Asri Fauziah Habibah²

¹Universitas Nasional, Jakarta, Indonesia

²Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika, Jakarta, Indonesia

KEYWORDS

Learning Theories;
 Students' Behavior;
 Mean Girls' Movie.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of learning theories on students' behavior in Mean Girls' movie. This study employed qualitative descriptive method, which is a method of research that attempt to describe and interpret the objects in accordance with reality. The data of this study were collected from scenes and excerpts based on its scripts. The study draws on learning of behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism. Findings have shown the teacher in Mean Girl's movie applied three learning theories as approaches to discipline the students. Constructivism approach was the very first theory with applying the workshop method, continued by applying cognitivism with questioning method, and applying behaviorism for the last step with positive reinforcement in form of punishment. Broadly speaking, the learning theories applied by the teacher brought the students' behavior to be better particularly in term of discipline and responsibility. This paper is expected to give a clear insight for teachers in understanding and implementing learning theories to teach specifically in term of the students' discipline and responsibility both in school and social environment.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

E-mail: fiza.ffz@bsi.ac.id*

INTRODUCTION

By age group, high school students are in the adolescent stage (Ibrahim & Ibrahim, 2018). There has been a noticeable decrease in child and adolescent mortality over the past decade. As a result, it is crucial to think about the following important query: How does one account for the increased likelihood of immoral behavior and conduct in people (Mohamed et al., 2022).

There has been a lot written on school discipline throughout the years (Over & Glasser, 1999). Approaches to school discipline vary greatly from the philosophical foundations, psychological presumptions, to understanding

of the role and function of education (Over & Glasser, 1999). Previously, the standard reaction to such behavior in educational institutions worldwide has been the application of some form of punishment (Oxley & Holden, 2021). Since learning theories possess numerous uses, there are times when people are sceptical about the need to learn them because they think they won't matter in the real world (Saunders & Wong, 2020).

A study has attempted to identify a different approach to classroom management, sometimes labelled "positive discipline", is being increasingly adopted by schools. This approach focusses on positive reinforcement rather than punishment, proaction rather than reaction, and collaboration rather than top-down decision-making.

Findings revealed inherent in all three models is a more theoretically-informed approach to behaviour management in schools (Oxley & Holden, 2021).

Considering the previously mentioned, this study will close a gap in the literature by analyzing the influence of learning theories towards students' behavior in *Mean Girls' Movie*. More specifically, the goal of this study is to know types of learning theories which are applied by the teacher to bring the students back into a good behavior students and that have a good relation with their colleagues.

Learning theories give teachers models for creating lessons that promote better learning by describing the circumstances and mechanisms through which learning takes place (Saunders & Wong, 2020). By the process of learning, humans acquire a vast variety of abilities, skills, and attitudes. Numerous factors affect how students learn, including previous educational opportunities, exposure to role models who promote education at home, school, and in the community, availability of resources (books, technology), and, perhaps most significantly, students' implicit beliefs about their intellectual prowess (Suter et al., 2016).

The term "learning" is often defined as the teacher actively assisting pupils in order for them to learn in accordance with their interests and needs. The quality of students increases with a teacher's awareness and professionalism in the classroom, and vice versa (Muhajirah, 2020).

In the context of education, reproducible and correctly acquired skills and knowledge are referred to as learning. While psychology lessons take a wider perspective. Learning is the process of changing behavior in response to a stimulus and a response (Behaviorist). Learning is a shift in understanding and perception that is not always manifested in outward behavior (Cognitivist). Through social contact both within and outside of the classroom, students construct their own knowledge through the process of learning (constructivist) (Laeli, 2020).

This study is going to discuss environmental conditioning, making the connection between acts and results, responding to feedback, and repetition of actions all contribute to learning. They also illustrated the significance of defining precise learning objectives and organizing learning assignments to meet them. Power to the teacher! was born out of the realization that behavior might be shaped and guided by a teacher's intervention.

Tina Fey, an actress, comedian, and writer, is well-known for her contributions to *Saturday Night Live* in the early 2000s. She has also starred in, written, and directed a number of other movies and television shows. *Mean Girls* was written by Tina Fey. *Mean Girls* was envisioned by Fey as a satirical dramatization of the complicated social dynamics among teenage girls in high school. Fey observes

that as time has passed, the movie's relevance has grown (Kaplan, 2019).

Some studies related to this phenomenal movie, *Mean Girls*, have been analyzed. (Habibah & Fadilah, 2022) highlighted the racial stereotypes lobbed at Africans, but with a soft ignorance. These stereotypes indicate the movie *Mean Girls* tends to perpetuate negative stereotypes about Africans more than the positive ones. Another study was done by (Kaplan, 2019) with "Stop trying to make fetch happen": The disempowerment of women's voices in the film *mean Girls*. This study explored the different types of *Mean Girls* presented in the film and how they each use specific voices to obtain their goals. This study however, are focusing to analyze how learning theories influence the students' behavior in *Mean Girls' Movie*. Constructivism, Cognitivism, and Behaviorism are three learning theories that are going to use for analysis.

Cognitive approach gave a base passing to behaviorist approach, and constructivist approach a basis passing to cognitive approach. This means that while the cognitive approach acknowledges behaviorism, it also asserts that behaviorist learning exhibits cognitive processes. Also, the constructivist approach built its guiding ideas upon those of the cognitive approach. The behaviorist school of thought holds that for learning to occur, there must be a stimulus and a response to it, and the ensuing behavior must be observable and quantifiable. The topic of whether or not cognitive process is present in the acquisition of behavior began to be asked when the behaviorist approach gave way to the cognitive approach. We cannot say that behaviorist discoveries are totally disregarded by cognitive psychologists. Cognitive functions and behaviors like information processing, mental models, educated guesses, and expectancies are accepted (Erisen et al., 2016).

When anything is correctly structured and organized, according to behaviorism, kids must be managed using strict rules that have been created in advance. As a result of applying discipline rules, habits and discipline become extremely important in the learning process. Rewarding and punishing behavior is another characteristic of behavioristic theory (Laeli, 2020).

In general, rewards can be seen as one of the methods for boosting students' motivation and interest in their academic endeavors. A suitable incentive can stimulate students in a positive way. Students' engagement in routine tasks and responsibilities in the classroom will rise as a result. While sanctions in education are a reaction to a lack of discipline, the first step in avoiding punishment is to educate and promote discipline. Because it specifies both of its consequences, punishment and strengthening are closely related concepts. In essence, rewards and penalties are employed to promote learning. Teachers specifically choose these to enhance the learning process. It also seeks

to raise pupils' academic success. Effective rewards and sanctions for kids' learning are important (Sidin, 2021).

By rewarding desired actions and punishing unsuitable ones, behaviorism proponents in education have successfully incorporated this system of rewards and punishments in their classrooms. Incentives can take many forms, but they must matter to the learner in some manner. (Yeoh et al., 2018). Behaviorist learning theories place a strong emphasis on behavioral modifications brought on by the learner's associations of stimulus-response. Stimuli control behavior. Behaviorists think that as all behaviors are learnt, they can all be unlearned and replaced by new behaviors. In other words, if a behavior becomes unacceptable, it may be changed to one that is acceptable. The rewarded response is a crucial component of this learning theory (Parkay & Hass, 2000).

According to (Stewart, 2012), much focus is placed on student-centered, active learning and the facilitatorial role of the instructor in cognitive pedagogies. These include the teacher's guiding role, offering "scaffolding" to learning, which is to make sure the student has the necessary information, skills, and support to negotiate a new learning component, and prompting the learner through questioning or modeling.

In fact, asking questions is one of the most important aspects of teaching, and can be highly effective when used appropriately. There are two main classifications of questioning based on student response. Generally, questions with a single correct answer, short, and intended to recall acquired information are called convergent questions. These questions are also referred to as closed-ended questions as students are not expected to contribute to an original idea. For example, after teaching about animals that change color, the teacher then ask "Which animals are chatoyant?"; this question is a convergent question. On the other hand, questions which students answer by analysis, synthesis, or evaluation using their related knowledge of a question, a problem or a situation are referred to as divergent questions (Bulent et al., 2016).

Benjamin S. Bloom, in his book, "Taxonomy of Education Objective (1956), divided the six levels of questions into the cognitive domain. It starts with the questions of recalling facts, which are the lowest levels through the most complex and abstract levels to the highest level, which is classified as evaluation. The six levels of questions are knowledge, understanding, application analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Shanmugavelu et al., 2020).

On constructivism theory, students are the subject in teaching. Teachers should offer more humanism cares for students and create a favorable teaching environment for students. It emphasizes on the initiatives and the interaction in teaching. Students should focus on exploration learning

and cooperative learning based on previous knowledge and experiences by means of interactive actions (Jia, 2010).

Cooperative learning in form of workshop plays a significant role for teaching the students. According to Steinert and Ouellet (Anggraini, 2018) in their workbook "Designing Successful Workshops" defined workshop as "a usually brief, intensive educational program for a relatively small group of people in a given field that emphasizes participation in problem solving efforts". When properly structured, this educational approach is a time- and money-effective way to actively involve participants in the learning process. It traditionally gives learners the chance to exchange knowledge, practice skills, and receive feedback. Because of their inherent flexibility and support of adult and experiential learning approaches, workshops are popular. In order to assist knowledge acquisition, attitude transformation, or skill development, they can also be customized to a variety of environments.

METHOD

This study used the learning theories, they are, behaviorism theory of B.F. Skinner, cognitivism theory of Piaget, and constructivism theory of Vigotsky. These theories are used to analyze the teacher approaches to handle the mean girls.

The qualitative descriptive method was used in this study because it deals with detailed descriptions in the analysis. One can keep the chronological flow, evaluate local causation, and arrive at useful explanations using qualitative data. They aid researchers in moving past their original assumptions and frameworks. Last but not least, the results of qualitative research are indisputable. (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

The data of this study were collected from scenes and excerpts based on its scripts. The data analysis in this present study were beginning with collecting the data. In this stage, the researcher watched the Mean Girls' full movie several times. Next is reducing the data, where the researcher selected, focused, and simplified specifically the scenes of the teacher's strategies to discipline the students' behavior and took notes. Later is describing the data using framework of film theory, and finally analyzing the data by using the framework of the learning theories; Behaviorism theory of B.F. Skinner, cognitivism theory of Piaget, and constructivism theory of Vigotsky.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results demonstrated that the teacher, Miss. Norbury, used three learning theories to discipline her students, beginning by applying the constructivism theory, followed by cognitive theory, and finally behaviorism theory.

Constructivism Theory

The first learning theory which is used is constructivism theory of Vigotsky by applying the workshop approach. Taking this theory as the first step, Miss. Norbury has a role as a facilitator. This is the idea that learning is a social activity. Learning is directly associated to our connection with other people. Teacher is more likely to be successful as they understand that peer involvement is one of the keys in learning. Miss. Norbury used sharing and cooperative learning for method. This method involves students working together on activities or learning tasks in a group to ensure that everyone participates. The techniques used in this constructivism approach is workshop.

Miss. Norbury: "okay, what we can do today is a couple exercises help to help you express your anger in a healthy way."

"Miss. Norbury had us confront each other directly about the things that were bothering us, and it seemed like every click had its own problems."

These two excerpts indicated the steps of implementing the workshop. Students are asked to writing out an apologies to people that they'd hurt in their lives. Finally workshop ended up with an opportunity for students to share or reflect. Located in a gym, each girls expressed her mistakes and apologized for her friends that she hurt.

Cady: "Regina wait, I didn't mean for that to happen. It's find out that everyone hates me"

Regina: "I don't care"

Cady: "Regina please, Regina stop!"

Regina: "do you know what everyone says about you. They say you're a home-schooled jungle freak who's a lot version of me. So don't try act so innocent. You can take that fake apology and shut your ..." (the scene goes to where Regina got hit by bus)

These excerpts indicated the main character's behavior, Cady, started to change. This means the workshop quite has an influence towards the students' behavior, even though not significant yet.

Most girls did the same until Janise Ians' turn. Her apologies to Regina made Regina realized if Cady cheated on her along this time. Cady as the main character of the movie started to feel guilty on what has she been done during this time. As consequences, she left out and chased Regina George.

There are some aspect that Miss Norbury as the teacher considered when conducting a workshop:

1. Create a relaxed atmosphere for learning.

To create a relaxed atmosphere, the teacher lead the students to gather in one big place. In this case, the students are lead to a gym hall.

2. Outline the objectives of workshop.

The teacher explains to the students what will accomplish in the available time. They are going to do a workshop and going to discuss what has happened among the girls that make them quarreled so bad.

3. Outline what is expected of them and the purpose behind all the tasks.

By doing the workshop, the teacher expected to seek for solution and expected the girls can get along well with their friends.

4. Encourage active participation and allow for problem solving and/or skill acquisition.

Involve the girls in all phases of the workshop. Invite questions, group discussion, and debate.

5. Provide relevant and practical information.

Although active participation and interaction are essential to a successful workshop, teachers must also feel that they have learned something.

6. Vary activities and styles.

The teacher keeps the workshop flowing at a pace that keeps the girls attention.

7. Summarize the workshop and request feedback from the students.

Cognitive theory

Cognitive theory proposed by Piaget was used later in the middle of workshop using questioning method. Miss. Norberry directly pointed out cady with some questions. Questioning is an interrogative process that stimulates a response by allowing the individual to use his or her cognition to produce information based on the question asked. (Cotton, 1988).

Miss. Norbury: "Cady, do you have anything you wanna own up to?"

Cady: "No.."

Miss. Norbury: "you never made a rumor about anybody?"

Cady: "No.."

Mrs. Norbury: Nothing you wanna apologize for?

Cady: "No.."

Miss. Norbury: I'm really disappointed on you, Cady!"

These excerpts indicated the teacher applied questioning approach to a student, named Cady. Clarifying type as one

of questioning techniques was chosen by Miss. Norbury to verify information. Cady in this case, didn't answer correctly. She lied at Miss. Norbury.

This method actually didn't successful to force Cady telling the truth. However, it success to make Cady feeling guilty for the first time. Later, applying this method leading Cady to act according to behaviorism perspectives. It's the stimulus-respond theory.

"When you get bite by a snake, you're supposed to suck the poison out. That's what I had to do. Suck all the poison out of my life. I started with Regina, who is living proof that the more people are scared of you. The more flowers you get then there is Miss Norbury who is living proof that no good deed goes unpunished."

However, the implementation of this cognitive theory lead Cady to the theory of *stimulus-response behaviorism*. The stimulus-response sequence is a key element of understanding behaviorism. A stimulus is given, and the response is what happens next.

Behaviorism theory

The very last effort that Miss. Norbury do to discipline the students are applying behaviorism theory proposed by B.F. Skinner. As there was a stimulus for Cady, the arresting of Miss. Norbury by the police due to Cady's dishonesty in answering questions, this stimulus resulted in a response in the form of Cady's reaction to the problems faced by Miss. Norbury. Her response was a desire to tell the police honestly that the accusations against Miss. Norbury as a drug user is not true. It was just Cady's fad that he wrote on the *burn-book* to gain recognition from the plastics gang.

This story is nearing the end when the stimulus in the form of negative reinforcement managed to get a response of a positive response.

Cady: "I am sorry"

Miss. Norbury: "I forgive you. But as my own personal form of punishment, I figured out how you're gonna earn that extra credit."

(the scene goes to where cady was driven into a mathlete competition)

In this excerpts, Cady began to change her behavior by returning to being a sweet and good girl. He started his positive reinforcement step by apologizing to friends he had hurt, then in the end she received punishment from Miss. Norbury. This penalty or punishment is actually a part of positive reinforcement. Cady had to join in *mathlete* competition. Miss. Norbury in this case, used her power as teacher as controller. This is behaviorism perspectives which regarded the teacher has power over his students and the student must accept what the teacher orders. Since this

was a positive reinforcement, Cady didn't reject at all. She welcomed the punishment with a smile.

Positive punishment used by the teacher can be depicted as follows: A response (R) is where the student had to pay an extra credit for her bad score in previous tests. (→) presentation of a stimulus (S) that decreases (−) is when the teacher forced the student to participate in a competition. Its effect would decreased likelihood that the student won't act under similar condition.

CONCLUSION

The very first theory used by the teacher to discipline the students is constructivism. In this approach, the teacher role as a guide, providing 'scaffolding' to learning – that is, to ensure the student has the requisite knowledge, skills and support to negotiate a new piece of learning – and prompting the student through questioning or modeling. The teacher forced the students to join a workshop. They are asked to writing out an apologies to people that they'd hurt in their lives. This made the students realized their mistakes. It eventually improve their friendship.

Cognitive theory was used later in the middle of workshop. Miss. Norbury directly pointed out cady with some questions. Questioning is an interrogative process that stimulates a response by allowing the individual to use his or her cognition to produce information based on the question asked. Clarifying type was chosen by Miss. Norbury to verify information. Cady in this case, didn't answer correctly. She lied at Miss. Norbury. However, the implementation of this theory lead Cady to the theory of stimulus-response behaviorism.

The last theory used by the teacher in this movie is behaviorism. It is penalties and disciplining strategies. It is in form of positive punishment for Cady to participate in Match competition. In this step, the teacher used her power as controller of the learning environment. This approach is considered successful that Brought Cady, the main character of Mean Girls Movie back to be a sweet and a good person.

Learning theories used by Miss. Norbury beginning from constructivism theory as the first step to discipline the students, continued by applying cognitivism which made Cady aware of her wrong actions, and ended by applying behaviorism in form of positive reinforcement. It is a punishment to join *mathlete* competition. These over all learning theories sequences considered successful to discipline the students.

To conclude, the learning theories applied by the teacher brought the students' behavior to be better particularly in term of discipline and responsibility.

As an implication, this study is expected to give a clear insight for teachers in understanding and implementing

learning theories to teach specifically in term of the students' discipline and responsibility both in school and social environment.

REFERENCE

- Anggraini, R. (2018). Making In Service Teacher Training Effective Through Workshops. *Proceeding of the 3rd International Conference on Education 2018: Teachers in the Digital Age*, 255–262.
- Bulent, D., Erdal, B., Ceyda, A., Betul, T., Nurgul, C., & Cevahir, D. (2016). An analysis of teachers questioning strategies. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 11(22), 2065–2078. <https://doi.org/10.5897/err2016.3014>
- Erisen, Y., Sahin, M., & Celikoz, N. (2016). *Learning and Teaching Theories, Approaches and Models* (1st Editio, Issue July). Çözüm Eğitim Yayıncılık.
- Habibah, F. A. F., & Fadilah Fadilah. (2022). African Dereotypes in American Teen Movie Mean Girls. *Pujangga: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 8(1), 89–98. <http://journal.unas.ac.id/pujangga/article/view/1717/1176>
- Ibrahim, R. H., & Ibrahim, F. B. (2018). *European Journal of Psychology and Educational ...*, 1(2), 53–59. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6592/a6eb28e6db4e302f17c47eb2c9a017bd6cf5.pdf>
- Jia, Q. (2010). A Brief Study on the Implication of Constructivism Teaching Theory on Classroom Teaching Reform in Basic Education. *International Education Studies*, 3(2), 197–199. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v3n2p197>
- Kaplan, A. (2019). ' Stop Trying to Make Fetch Happen ': The Disempowerment of Women's Voices in the Film Mean Girls. *SUURJ: Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal*, 3(Article 16). <https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/suurj/vol3/iss1/16/>
- Laeli, A. F. (2020). Behaviorism: psychological theory of learning. *ELLITE: Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 5(2), 87–93. <https://doi.org/10.32528/ellite.v5i2.3265>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). *Qualitative Data Analysis : Handout. A Sourcebook of New Methods*. California; SAGE Publications Inc., 1–8.
- Mohamed, N. H., Beckstein, A., A/L Rathakrishnan, B., & Pang, N. T. P. (2022). The influence of personality traits on moral disengagement and drug use among adolescents with discipline problems. *Cakrawala Pendidikan*, 41(2), 340–350. <https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v41i2.43816>
- Muhajirah, M. (2020). Basic of Learning Theory. *International Journal of Asian Education*, 1(1), 37–42. <https://doi.org/10.46966/ijae.v1i1.23>
- Over, I., & Glasser, W. (1999). *Theories of School Discipline*.
- Oxley, L., & Holden, G. W. (2021). Three positive approaches to school discipline: Are they compatible with social justice principles? *Educational and Child Psychology*, 38(2), 71–81.
- Saunders, L., & Wong, M. A. (2020). Learning Theories: Understanding How People Learn. In *Instructions in libraries and information centers*. <https://doi.org/10.21900/wd.12>
- Shanmugavelu, G., Ariffin, K., Vadivelu, M., Mahayudin, Z., & R K Sundaram, M. A. (2020). Questioning Techniques and Teachers' Role in the Classroom. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 8(4), 45–49. <https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v8i4.3260>
- Sidin, S. A. (2021). The Application of Reward and Punishment in Teaching Adolescents. *Proceedings of the Ninth International Conference on Language and Arts (ICLA 2020)*, 539(Icla 2020), 251–255. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210325.045>
- Stewart, M. (2012). *Understanding learning: theories and critique*, in L.Hunt and D. Chalmers (eds) "University teaching in focus: a learning centred approach (Issue January, pp. 1–20). Routledge.
- Suter, C. V., Rosenberg, D., Becker, M. T., Ferguson, C., Catz, K. N., Clair, S. S., Chenjeri, P., Mulliken, K., & Francisco, E. M. (2016). *I . Executive Summary*. 1–17.
- Yeoh, E. K. K., Chang, L., & Zhang, Y. (2018). Educational Learning Theories: 2nd Edition. In *Chinese Economy* (Vol. 51, Issue 4).