

Exploring the Effects of EFL Classroom Management Strategies on Students' Engagement and Academic Success: A Comprehensive Review

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Abstract

Classroom management is the base of effective teaching, particularly in English-speaking university settings where diverse learners and developing educational technologies present unique challenges. The review examines strategies for managing classrooms to enhance student engagement and academic performance, focusing on private universities in Bangladesh. Following the guidelines from Braun and Clarke (2006), 63 peer-reviewed studies were systematically analyzed thematically and were found through academic databases (e.g., Scopus, Google Scholar, ERIC, JSTOR, Education Source) published during the period 2015-2025. Developed themes included the instructing and managing behavior, the transformational possibilities of technology, as well as the significance of teacher self-efficacy and emotion. Findings suggest that successful classroom management requires sensitive approaches, with the fragmentation of traditional face-to-face interactions with digital tools, while addressing cultural and linguistic diversity. Long-term impacts remain underexplored, particularly regarding the growth of large classes and the integration of emotional intelligence into teacher training programs. The implications extend to educators, policymakers, and researchers, advocating for flexible frameworks that prioritize inclusivity, proven practices, and continuous professional development. Future research should adopt mixed-methods designs to evaluate the sustainability of these strategies over time.

Keywords: Academic performance, Classroom management, Students' engagement, Technology integration, Teacher self-efficacy

1. Introduction

One of the most important aspects of teaching English is classroom management. The classroom management employed by the teacher can impact English instruction. To create an optimal learning environment, a teacher needs to manage a large classroom to teach without any kinds of difficulties. A study (Monika et al., 2021) found that managing a classroom means making and sticking to rules for groups of students, not finding and punishing bad behavior. It has a lot to do with teaching. This paper will review and examine the strategies for efficiently managing English classrooms and increasing the learning efficiency for the students in an English-speaking classroom. Over the past few years, various types of classes and teaching methods, such as online classes or blended classrooms, have taken over the education system and classroom management. Mandasari (2020) has shown in his study that, in face-to-face lectures, students can engage directly with teachers or peers. This engagement could appear as a discussion, a question-and-answer session, or a presentation. Students continue to place significant value on traditional lectures, seeing technology primarily as a supplementary tool to enhance successful face-to-face instruction (Mandasari, 2020). The teacher has to understand that learners from different types can have different preferences in their learning styles. Ulfah and Yulianti (2020) cited Ametembun (1980, p.13) and argued that “classroom management, namely the leadership or management of teachers in the administration of their class”.

Although existing studies (e.g., Lai & Zheng, 2018; Burston, 2014; Egeberg et al., 2021; Adiyono et al., 2024; Adula & Kant, 2025; Badawi, 2024; Nugroho et al., 2025; Omodan et al., 2025; Suartama et al., 2024; Tomaszewski et al., 2024) offer valuable insights into strategies for managing classrooms, gaps remain. Many proposed classroom management techniques, such as flipped classrooms and technology integration, are often designed for small or medium-sized classrooms. However, their availability to large classrooms remains underexplored. The review is important for both students and teachers who are in the setting of different learning environments for studying. George (2018) and Badawi (2024) found that the performance of students was better when any classroom-based teaching methodology was utilized, mostly in all quizzes and design projects, when compared with the previous teaching methodology, such as online or digital methodologies. In that case, it is important to study the limitations of students’ preferences when it comes to managing a learning environment. This review aims to discover the challenges of classroom management related challenges for both teachers and students. The review is about effective management techniques of English-speaking classrooms, focusing on people from private universities, teachers, and students. It examines teaching strategies aimed at enhancing speaking and listening skills in such environments. While the study provides valuable information to classroom management in English-speaking classrooms, it does not extend to primary or secondary education or explore classroom dynamics in resource-rich settings. Additionally, the long-term impact of these strategies on student proficiency and engagement remains an area for future investigation. The study will particularly focus on these two questions:

1. How do different and effective classroom management strategies impact student engagement?
2. How do different and effective classroom management strategies influence academic performance?
3. How do cultural and social factors influence students’ sense of belonging in Bangladeshi high schools?

2. Research Methods

This systematic examination uses thematic analysis to analyze 55 peer-reviewed studies on classroom management strategies in educational contexts. The scholarly search took place across different academic databases (e.g., Google Scholar, ERIC, JSTOR, and Education Source) using relevant keywords including “classroom management,” “student engagement,” “behavioral interventions,” and “effective learning techniques.” The review focused on publications from the past 11 years (2015-2025) to capture current trends and developments in the field.

The selection criteria prioritized studies that (1) specifically examined classroom management approaches (e.g., Monika et al., 2021; Mandasari, 2020; Ulfah & Yulianti, 2020), (2) presented empirical data or robust theoretical models, and (3) underwent peer review in English-language publications. Exclusions applied to works that (1) did not address any classroom management techniques (e.g., Han, 2022; Collins et al., 2025; Makaremi et al., 2024), (2) focused on primary or secondary education, (3) were primarily opinion-based, or (4) were unavailable in English. Focusing on a high-quality dataset will be ensured for analysis by this process.

Following established qualitative research methods (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the analysis progressed through multiple phases. The process began with familiarization, where all 50 articles were thoroughly examined to gain a comprehensive understanding of their content. Initial coding was then performed to extract key concepts and findings, which were eventually grouped into broader themes such as “preventative management strategies,” “intervention techniques,” “technologically enhanced management,” and “culturally responsive classroom management.” Themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the underlying data while providing meaningful insights into effective classroom management techniques.

The review maintained scholarly standards through proper source attribution in APA 7 format and limited use of direct quotations. Efforts were made to include diverse educational contexts, grade levels, and cultural perspectives, and actively explored different points of view across educational levels and cultural contexts to mitigate potential selection biases. Notable limitations include the English language restriction, which may have excluded relevant international research such as non-English sources, and potential publication bias favoring studies with significant or positive findings. Nevertheless, this thematic analysis offers valuable understanding of contemporary classroom management techniques and identifies promising directions for future investigation in educational practice.

3. Results

3.1 Classroom Management Strategies on Student Engagement

Classroom settings are important for most EFL and ESL learners, where they can interact with teachers. In face-to-face lectures, students can engage directly with teachers or peers. This engagement could appear as a discussion, a question-and-answer session, or a presentation. Students continue to place significant value on traditional lectures, seeing technology primarily as a supplementary tool to enhance successful face-to-face instruction and engagement (Mandasari, 2020; Abidin, 2024). Another study (Ajmal & Kumar, 2020) showed that code switching is a practical and adaptive communication strategy employed by students in English classrooms. It shows how code switching serves multiple functions, including task completion, social interaction, and overcoming linguistic limitations. This helps navigate bilingual or multilingual classrooms, where code switching is recognized as a valuable tool for enhancing comprehension and promoting inclusivity.

3.1.1 Enhancing Student Engagement through Teaching Methodologies

Student performance improved when any classroom-based teaching methodology was utilized, mostly in all quizzes and design projects, when compared with the previous teaching methodology, such as online or digital methodologies (George, 2018). Another study (Egeberg et al., 2021) found that teacher skills in classroom management as a cornerstone of effective teaching, while also showing the challenges faced by educators, especially those new to the profession. The integration of meaning-making as a central theme in language development advocates for a shift from rote learning to contextualized, authentic language use. It critiques traditional approaches that focus solely on grammar and vocabulary without embedding them in practical, communicative contexts. Furthermore, that view is mostly focused on literary aesthetic and educational dimensions supporting its integration into EFL classrooms to enhance both linguistic and cognitive growth (Utami et al., 2021; Lestari et al., 2023). The study provides information about the need to investigate teacher beliefs and philosophies, as these deeply influence instructional and disciplinary practices in classrooms. Researchers and policymakers can better address gaps by focusing on teacher views in training and support, ultimately enhancing classroom management strategies. This connects with further discussions on teacher professional development and the importance of providing educational practices with teachers' desired philosophies (Egeberg et al., 2021; Egeberg, 2017).

3.1.2 Student Engagement and Motivation

Effective classroom management is a critical factor in enhancing student engagement and maintaining a disciplined learning environment (Agbaria, 2021). It shows the importance of addressing teacher challenges in this area, as ineffective management can negatively impact student motivation and classroom dynamics. Studies (e.g., Menon, 2023; Zhao, 2021; Gold et al., 2021) are also discussed on the interplay between classroom management, student behavior, and teacher-student relationships, ensuring the need for strategies that support both teachers and learners. By addressing the psychological aspects of teaching it shows the extensive development of teachers, ensuring they are prepared not only academically but also emotionally and mentally for their roles (Karakose et al., 2023). Hasan et al. (2020) found in new media and feedback in language learning that it provides the changing role of new media tools in providing information in the language learning context. The move from live face-to-face feedback to online has also been indicative of the rising status of digital and their place in the development of flexible and learner-centered learning spaces. They offer dynamic communication capabilities, giving both learners and instructors autonomy to overcome obstacles such as scheduling issues and social anxiety (Hasan & Rahman, 2017). The review will further discuss the interplay between classroom management, student behavior, and teacher-student relationships, ensuring the need for strategies that support both teachers and learners. Vansteenkiste et al. (2020) stated that self-efficacy, motivation, classroom management anxiety, and attitude toward the teaching profession as key determinants of teaching quality and performance. This is why it is important and necessary for extensive approaches in teacher education that consider multiple psychological and professional factors simultaneously and understand these variables collectively to inform the development of effective teacher training programs (Nguyen et al., 2022).

3.2 Classroom Management Strategies and Their Impact on Academic Performance

Effective classroom management is a critical factor in enhancing student academic performance and maintaining a disciplined learning environment. It shows the importance of addressing teacher challenges in this area, as ineffective management can negatively impact student motivation, academic performance, and classroom dynamics. The study connects with further

discussions and studies that will be reviewed on the interplay between classroom management, student behavior, and teacher-student relationships, ensuring the need for strategies that support both teachers and learners (Agbaria, 2021; Zhao, 2021).

3.2.1 Challenges and Possible Solutions for Enhancing Student Academic Performance

Effective classroom management is a developing and dynamic process that is mostly reactive to shifting behaviors, emotions, and motivations of students, particularly in the context of modern challenges such as large classrooms, hybrid or blended learning models, and the application of technology. Aria and Cuccurullo (2017) explored the Methodological rigor of systematic reviews and their potential to provide proven insights into classroom management. It shows the value of aggregating data from multiple studies (e.g., Lestari et al., 2023; Lathifah et al., 2021; Kurniasari et al., 2020) to enhance the reliability and validity of findings, particularly in understanding cause and effect relationships. Despite the benefits of systematic reviews, the study notes a gap in the literature, such as comprehensive analyses that classroom management is limited. That perspective needs research to guide educational practices and policies. Apart from that, classroom management is a dynamic and adaptive process necessary for addressing the ever-changing behaviors, emotions, and motivations of students. It ensures the importance of creating a structured yet flexible learning environment, especially in the context of online and hybrid learning models (Lathifah et al., 2021). Another challenge that can be mentioned is class size and environment. Blatchford and Russell (2019) argued that class size is a key variable in educational research but criticized the narrow scope of existing studies, which have primarily focused on academic outcomes rather than larger classroom dynamics. The current state of class size research emphasizes its overemphasis on academic outcomes rather than exploring the underlying classroom processes that mediate these effects. It shows a critical gap in understanding how class size influences teaching and learning dynamics, such as student engagement, teacher-student interactions, and instructional quality (Blatchford & Russell, 2019; Blatchford & Webster, 2018).

Bozkuş (2021) argued about the importance of organizing physical and instructional elements, such as seating arrangements, lesson schedules, and classroom rules, while also addressing behavioral challenges and ensuring student engagement. Another study (Egeberg et al., 2021) found that teacher skills in classroom management as a foundation of effective teaching, while also showing the challenges faced by educators, especially those new to the profession. Overall, cognitive flexibility theory is a framework for supporting student teachers in developing Professional Vision for Classroom Management (PVCMM). It shows the importance of integrating multiple perspectives to navigate the complexities of classroom management, particularly in ill-structured or unpredictable teaching environments. It shows the dual role of classroom management in promoting both academic achievement and a positive social environment (Gold et al., 2021; Seufert et al., 2022).

3.2.2 Academic Performance and the Role of Structured Classroom Management

Many studies (e.g., Egeberg, 2017; Bozkuş, 2021; Vansteenkiste et al., 2020) showed a comprehensive perspective on classroom management, incorporating two key components, which are behavior management (BM) and instructional management (IM). Behavior management involves proactive strategies to prevent misbehavior, such as setting clear expectations, monitoring student behavior, teaching appropriate conduct, and allowing students to contribute to decision making. Instructional management, on the other hand, focuses on achieving academic goals through effective teaching methods, including planning structured routines and employing diverse instructional techniques to ensure active participation and engagement. English Medium Instruction (EMI) in the surface of Bangladesh education is consistent with the broader debate on global dominance of English as a medium of instruction, especially in the private institutions.

Communicative approach receives prominence as an indication of move towards a teaching that focuses on such as teaching the language for practical communication rather than simply have it learnt for learning's practical knowledge in which market requirements are taken into account in a world in which English is increasingly required for education and employment (Hasan et al., 2024a). Moreover, the behavioral management of a teacher shows the importance of addressing teacher challenges in this area, as ineffective management can negatively impact student motivation and classroom dynamics (Agbaria, 2021).

3.2.3 Enhancing Academic Performance through Technology Integration

The transformative role of technology in education is basically to show its ability to enhance both teaching and learning processes (Nguyen et al., 2022; Tondeur et al., 2021). It ensures the shift toward smart learning environments, where technology supports innovative pedagogies and empowers learners to become more engaged and interactive. Silfani et al. (2025) stated that role playing in technology integration and activation of prior knowledge in the development of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). It fits within a larger conversation of the need to overcome technological resistance and thus improve student achievement, as well as to capitalize on prior knowledge, which is not possible for deeper learning. Additionally, the inclusion of digital tools like Quizizz and WhatsApp for online assessments reflects the adaptation of traditional evaluation methods to modern, technology-driven learning environments (Mollick & Mollick, 2023). The integration of technology and commitment to health protocols during the pandemic further shows the evolving nature of classroom management in modern education (Lathifah et al., 2021; Kurniasari et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2022). Burston (2014) and Rintaningrum (2023) explored how university language learners independently used mobile devices for learning outside the classroom. It identified three dimensions of them out of class mobile learning experiences, which broadly aligned with the pedagogical framework for learning. In that case, technology connects with further discussions on the role of formative and summative assessments as well as the entire educational assessments in enhancing learning outcomes and addressing the challenges of hybrid or remote education (Akcil et al., 2021).

3.3 Social and Cultural Influences

Student sense of belonging is a critical factor influencing their academic and social experiences during the transition to high school (Keyes, 2019). It critiques the lack of attention given to high school students in previous research, emphasizing the need to understand their unique challenges. Akter and Hasan (2024) showed that the socio-cultural dimensions of early childhood development in Bangladesh show how the knowledge and skills around children's social and moral upbringing are transmitted through informal modes of interactions, but also hold sufficient value to provide direction within the family. It also fits into the wider discourse around the role of early childhood in promoting cultural identity, social competence, and basic values. The focus on storytelling and games also develops the role that indigenous practices have historically played in the holistic development of children, integrating the importance of the inclusion of cultural contexts in current educational paradigms. The study focuses on ninth graders and the role of belonging in mitigating feelings of isolation and enhancing classroom engagement. Another fact that shows that code switching is a practical and adaptive communication strategy employed by students in English classrooms (Ajmal & Kumar, 2020; Kumar et al., 2021). It shows how code switching serves multiple functions, including task completion, social interaction, and overcoming linguistic limitations. This helps navigate bilingual or multilingual classrooms, where code switching is recognized as a valuable tool for enhancing comprehension and promoting inclusivity (Seufert et al., 2022; Yin, 2015). Ultimately, it explains how literary texts serve as a medium for learners to

interpret social and cultural contexts, thereby enriching their understanding of both language and society (Nanda, 2016).

4. Discussion

This thematic review reveals several correlated observations on effective classroom management in English-speaking university settings, particularly focusing on Bangladeshi private institutions. Most of the research being discussed, ranging from classroom interactions to teacher self-efficacy, certain patterns appear that both reinforce existing literature and uncover areas requiring further research. The findings suggest that successful classroom management is difficult, context-sensitive, and closely linked to pedagogical development, technological adaptation, and teacher psychology. A consistent theme across the reviewed literature is the main points of student engagement in effective classroom management. Agbaria (2021) and Zhao (2021) showed that mismanagement not only disrupts instruction but also directly lowers student motivation and interest. The study is connected with Vansteenkiste et al. (2020), who suggest that intrinsic motivation and a sense of belonging are vital to academic success. These findings correspond with further educational literature that recognizes the classroom environment as a crucial factor in student behavior and performance (Adiyono et al., 2024; Omodan et al., 2025; Suartama et al., 2024; Tomaszewski et al., 2024; Karakose et al., 2023; Keyes, 2019).

Another interesting pattern is shown in the cultural and contextual variation in classroom management practices. For example, code switching appeared as the valuable strategy in multilingual classrooms (Ajmal & Kumar, 2020; Kumar et al., 2021), facilitating comprehension and enhancing inclusivity. This culturally responsive approach showed what Seufert et al. (2022) called “adaptive management” and also provided Nanda’s (2016) argument for using literary texts to contextualize language learning within students’ socio-cultural and modern possibilities. These findings support the call for more locally grounded frameworks in classroom management, personalized to linguistic diversity and socio-cultural dynamics. Technological adaptation, though highly emphasized post-pandemic, presents both opportunities and contradictions. While tools like Quizizz and WhatsApp aid formative assessment and engagement (Kurniasari et al., 2020; Lathifah et al., 2021), several studies focus on the importance of face-to-face learning for further interaction (Nugroho et al., 2025; Omodan et al., 2025; Suartama et al., 2024; Tomaszewski et al., 2024; Mandasari, 2020; George, 2018). These findings support Burston’s (2014) observation that mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) works best when it supplements, rather than replaces, in-person interaction. Thus, a key implication for curriculum designers is to blend digital tools strategically rather than treat them as a wholesale substitute for classroom-based learning.

One difference that occurred is the connection between successful classroom management and classroom size. While many strategies (e.g., differentiated instruction, student-oriented routines) appear effective in small or medium classes, their capacity in large classrooms remains unexplored and has not been researched (Blatchford & Russell, 2019). This connects with the critique by Blatchford and Webster (2018), who argue that educational research often prioritizes outcomes over the insignificant dynamics of classroom processes. For Bangladeshi universities, where large class sizes are common, this represents a critical research and policy gap. Teachers need training and institutional support for personalized management strategies for such settings. Another important finding is connected to teacher professional development and psychological ability. Several studies (Menon, 2023; Egeberg et al., 2021) found that teacher beliefs and emotional strength directly influence classroom control and instructional effectiveness. Vansteenkiste et al. (2020) found that self-efficacy and professional identity as key parts of effective classroom behavior. These findings focus on the need for teacher education programs to go beyond pedagogy and include emotional intelligence, adaptive leadership, and stress management training. A future-

oriented recommendation is to develop continuous training systems that support new teachers in their early careers, helping them build both confidence and expertise (Anis & Hasan, 2025; Egeberg & McConney, 2017).

In addition to that, the review also explored a gap in long-term impact assessment. While studies report short-term improvements in engagement and participation following the implementation of new management techniques, few long-term studies examine whether these outcomes are sustained over time. Aria and Cuccurullo (2017) stated that systematic reviews often lack causal findings, suggesting the need for mixed methods research that includes observational, experimental, and qualitative data to evaluate the sustainability of classroom management strategies. Researchers must also investigate how classroom dynamics develop over semesters, particularly in hybrid learning environments where both digital saturation and modern tools and their absence of interest raise challenges (Khan et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2022).

From a policy perspective, the findings favor more flexible and inclusive management frameworks. These should account for different learner needs, especially in ESL/EFL contexts. Techniques such as actively developing and engaging behavior management (Bozkuş, 2021) and participatory rule setting (Vansteenkiste et al., 2020) show promise but require adaptation to cultural perspective and interesting aspects, and institutional expectations. Policymakers must ensure that university governance structures do not impose solid disciplinary rules but instead help teachers to develop based on the classroom environment and different settings. Furthermore, national education strategies should invest in developing smart classrooms while protecting the human and teacher-oriented elements of education (Omodan et al., 2025; Suartama et al., 2024; Tomaszewski et al., 2024; Alfoudari et al., 2021). The review also suggests the importance of classroom nature, not just physical, but emotional and social. Seufert et al. (2022) stated that immersive training (e.g., virtual simulations) can improve teacher skills by offering realistic practice environments. Such innovation may significantly enhance teachers' ability and preparation in dynamic or unpredictable scenarios. Moreover, actions focused on improving teacher-student relationships, ensuring mutual respect, and reducing management-related anxiety can positively influence the classroom environment.

This review supports Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which argues that student motivation thrives when classroom management meets three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The study confirms that culturally responsive practices and teacher self-efficacy serve these needs by building inclusive, caring learning communities. While technology integration opens up new possibilities for engagement, SDT highlights the continued importance of authentic face-to-face interaction for building connection and motivation. However, there are gaps in the manner in which long-term management practices and emotional intelligence training are synchronized with SDT principles, particularly in large classrooms. In order to address this, policymakers need to design teacher development initiatives that are student-centered, autonomy-supportive, and non-punitive. Subsequent research needs to apply SDT in examining how adaptive classroom management sustains motivation longitudinally and results in equitable and engaging education for diverse learners.

Finally, this research brings attention to the duality of instructional and behavioral management. As explored by Egeberg et al. (2021) and Bozkuş (2021), academic success depends on the close connection between effective lesson delivery and the behavioral consistency of students and teachers. Instructional management requires planned, purposeful teaching with engaging content, while behavioral management demands consistency, motivation, and fair deployment of rules. Therefore, classroom management training should contain both cognitive and affective

strategies. The thematic review confirms that classroom management is not a universal classroom rule of leadership and management. It is an adaptive, reflective, and context-sensitive process truly involved with student engagement, teacher identity, technological innovation, and socio-cultural diversity. The results encourage educators to adopt complete, inclusive, and evidence-based approaches that force policymakers to invest in training, infrastructure, and teacher well-being and invite researchers to pursue more integrative and comparative studies. As educational environments continue to develop, the capacity of educators to manage effective classroom management by teachers will continue to be necessary for successful teaching and learning.

5. Conclusion

The complicated sides of classroom management have been shown in this thematic review within English-speaking university settings, particularly in the Bangladeshi private university context. Reviewing a wide range of peer-reviewed literature, the study identified key themes such as instructional strategies, behavioral management, technology integration, cultural responsiveness, and teacher self-efficacy that collectively prepare effective classroom environments. The research suggests that well-implemented management strategies not only reduce disruptive behaviors but also attract students to academic achievements and engagement, improve academic outcomes, and support positive teacher-student relationships.

One of the most important aspects is that there is no universal strategy for classroom management. Instead, successful approaches must be adaptable, culturally sensitive, and responsive to the needs of different kinds of learners. Whether through proactive and engaging rule setting, the thoughtful use of technology, or the incorporation of culturally relevant pedagogies such as code switching, teachers must remain reflective and responsive in their practice. Equally important are the emotional and psychological sides of educators, which play a significant role in shaping classroom environments and student motivation. Although technological tools and blended learning models have expanded the possibilities for managing learning environments, this study reinforces that traditional face-to-face interaction remains invaluable for building meaningful engagement (Hasan et al., 2024b). Additionally, the review revealed important gaps in current research, particularly concerning the long-term impact of classroom management strategies, the scalability of techniques for large classes, and the integration of emotional intelligence in teacher training programs.

Considering these results, this review calls on educators, administrators, and policymakers to invest in professional development that goes beyond pedagogy to include emotional strength, classroom leadership, and context-specific training. Universities should also prioritize research-based frameworks that balance innovation, which are mostly student-centered practices. Finally, future research should aim to conduct length through time and mixed-method studies to improve our understanding of how effective classroom management strategies develop and impact learner outcomes over time.

There are some limitations to this research, including the use of thematic analysis, which may overlook contextual nuance, and the focus on English-speaking universities, which limits generalizability across contexts. The absence of longitudinal data also constrains insight into long-term impact. Future research should address these gaps with cross-cultural, mixed-method studies to enhance theoretical and practical applicability.

Finally, effective classroom management is not only a technical skill but also a pedagogical and ethical responsibility. It remains central to the mission of inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education in modern, dynamic learning environments.

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