



# PAIKEM-Based Positive Reinforcement Shaping Technique Against Separation Anxiety in Early Childhood

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## ABSTRAK

Pendidikan di Indonesia masih memiliki permasalahan yang terjadi terutama perilaku kecemasan perpisahan dari figur keterikatan, hal ini ditemukan dari pengamatan peneliti yang dipengaruhi oleh faktor diri dan lingkungan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh teknik Shaping dengan Positive Reinforcement berbasis PAIKEM terhadap kecemasan berpisah anak usia dini. Jenis penelitian ini adalah desain eksperimen kasus tunggal (single-case experimental design) yang dilaksanakan dalam tiga fase yaitu fase baseline (A1), fase intervensi (B) dan fase baseline (A2). Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah satu orang anak pada kelompok A. Pengumpulan data penelitian tentang perilaku kecemasan berpisah anak menggunakan metode observasi dan wawancara dengan instrumen lembar observasi checklist. Data hasil penelitian dianalisis menggunakan metode analisis statistik deskriptif dan penyajian data dipaparkan secara visual (visual inspection) dalam bentuk grafik. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa terjadi penurunan frekuensi kecemasan berpisah dan meningkatnya frekuensi kemandirian anak dari fase baseline (A1) dengan rerata 6 menjadi 14,18 pada fase intervensi (B) dan meningkat lagi frekuensi kemandirian anak pada saat intervensi teknik shaping dengan positive reinforcement berbasis PAIKEM dihentikan (A2) dengan rerata 18,7. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian tersebut dapat disimpulkan bahwa teknik shaping dengan positive reinforcement berbasis PAIKEM berpengaruh terhadap menurunnya kecemasan berpisah anak.

## ABSTRACT

Education in Indonesia still has problems that occur, especially the behavior of separation anxiety from attachment figures, this was found from observations by researchers, which are influenced by self and environmental factors. This study aims to analyze the effect of the PAIKEM-based Shaping technique with Positive Reinforcement on separation anxiety in early childhood. This type of research was a single case experimental design which was carried out in three phases, namely the baseline phase (A1), the intervention phase (B) and the baseline phase (A2). The subject in this study was one child in group A. Collecting research data on children's separation anxiety behavior used observation and interview methods with an observation checklist sheet instrument. The research data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis methods and the data presented visually (visual inspection) in graphical form. The results of data analysis showed that there was a decrease in the frequency of separation anxiety and an increase in the frequency of children's anxiety from the baseline phase (A1) with an average of 6 to 14.18 in the intervention phase (B) and an increase in the frequency of children's independence during the PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement technique intervention. prohibited (A2) with an average of 18.7. Based on the results of this study it can be interpreted that the PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement technique has had an effect on reducing children's separation anxiety.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the experiences experienced by children when starting school is the separation of children for a long time from their parents to participate in learning activities in the classroom. This separation can create a sense of anxiety in children. However, the emergence of this feeling of anxiety is a natural thing

that occurs in the early school period. The introduction to the school environment in the first week is the most valuable period, because children are starting to get to know the school environment, as well as following new rules and being encouraged to socialize with the people around them (Lois et al., 2016; Mulvariani et al., 2021). In this case, it can be used as a source of children's learning for achievement in high-quality learning processes and outcomes. Children are asked to do activities together in class without being accompanied by their parents. One of the problems parents face when their children are away from their foster parents for a long time is anxiety. As a result of this anxiety, it causes children to cry, scream, so that parents must be present accompanying children in activities in the classroom, as well as outside the classroom (Lee et al., 2021; Pantoja et al., 2020). With the introduction of the school environment program (MPLS), parents are allowed to accompany and assist children in introducing the school environment. Anxiety can arise when children are placed in new situations and environments. With the start of the new school year, children begin to enter the school environment. Children are initially comfortable in the home environment, but must adapt to the school environment and break away from attached figures. Even though the school environment introduction period (MPLS) activities have been carried out, and accompanied by their parents, not all children are able to adapt to a new environment quickly (Bessarabova & Kurysheva, 2020; Mavianti, 2021). Early childhood needs time in terms of adjusting to the school environment. In this adjustment, children carry out activities independently without having to be accompanied by their parents. Separation anxiety behavior also occurs for quite a long time. Various expressions of anxiety will be shown by children during a period of separation anxiety felt by children such as crying, screaming, rebelling, not wanting to interact with teachers, to their friends.

The closeness between children and parents is established from childhood, namely when children are trying to fulfill their basic needs for trust or what is called 'basic trust and basic mistrust'. Child closeness is examined more deeply by previous study which states that the attachment of mother and child figures is something that is natural in nature because attachment is a strong emotional bond as a result of the child's interaction with the environment that is developed by the child with people who have a special meaning in his life (Suryadinata, 2016). However, the child's behavior will become unnatural if the child's attachment to the parent becomes an anxiety that creates excessive insecurity in the child. Anxiety is a form of environmental response, therefore, behavior with anxiety can be reduced. New behavior can be formed with reinforcement (reinforcement) accompanying the application of shaping techniques. The desired new behavior is given reinforcement every time the new behavior is displayed (Ambari et al., 2020; Cut Nizar, 2021). Shaping technique is a behavior modification technique that aims to shape the desired (behavioral) behavior (target behavior), by providing behavior that is close to the target behavior (successive approximation), so that the desired behavior is formed (Muali et al., 2021; Mulvariani et al., 2021). Education in Indonesia still has problems that occur, especially the behavior of separation anxiety from attachment figures, this was found from observations by researchers, which are influenced by self and environmental factors. Because of that, education is a means of forming morals and intellectuals so that they are free from negative behavior such as screaming, crying, and rebelling, therefore education plays a very strategic role in being able to carry out complete information and collaboration on various problems that are happening at this time.

One of the early childhood education institutions that has cases of student anxiety is Yudistira Batuan Kindergarten. This kindergarten institution has cases of students with anxiety of separation from their parents. According to observations and interviews the school had never provided treatment that focused on children. Incidents of children with separation anxiety from parents are handled by letting the parents be in the class (so the child doesn't cry), and then the child is able to remain in the class. The school allows parents to accompany children during learning activities at school, until the child feels comfortable being in class with their parents. This is considered by the school as a form of support for children. Teachers treat children with separation anxiety like other students, and there is no specific treatment regarding children's problems. Children are assisted in adapting to their new learning environment. Teachers assume that in early childhood it will be common for anxiety to arise, when children are separated from their attached figures. Almost all early childhood, both boys and girls experience anxiety when separated from their caregivers (Ganley et al., 2021; Puspitasari & Wati, 2018). However, the child's behavior will become unnatural if the child's attachment to the parent becomes an anxiety that creates excessive insecurity in the child. Especially to the extent that the child refuses to go to school, or remains excessively anxious even after 4 weeks of adjustment. Children who experience separation anxiety always have a need to be with their attached figure to receive love and get support for the activities they are doing, so the absence of an attached figure will make the child defensive and reduce the child's involvement in learning in the classroom when the child goes to school (Estonanto, 2018; Puspitasari & Wati, 2018). Based on the results of observations made in group A at Yudistira Batuan Kindergarten, there was one child who experienced separation anxiety from an attached figure (mother)

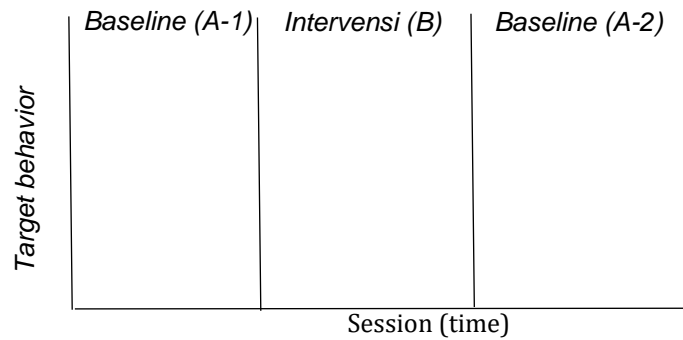
in the unnatural category. This child has a sense of lack of involvement in participating in class activities. For example, if his mother does not accompany him into the classroom and accompanies him in the classroom, this child will cry, rebel, scream, and avoid the activities and assignments given by the teacher. If the mother is in the classroom, the child must be next to an attached figure, and sometimes must be on the mother's lap. With this, the child will feel safe if his mother is near him. This behavior certainly has an impact on the learning process, because the other children will feel uncomfortable due to the presence of strangers in the class besides the teacher and their friends, besides that when the attached figure tries to separate himself from the child, children will cry, scream, rebel to banging on the classroom door. Because of this, students and teachers in the learning process are unable to concentrate and become distracted from participating in activities in the classroom.

Dienes' learning theory emphasizes that games can make children happy in learning, therefore the learning process really needs an appropriate and interesting strategy for children in their learning activities. PAIKEM (Active, Innovative, Creative, Effective, and Fun Learning) is a learning model created to stimulate an active, innovative, creative, effective, and fun teaching and learning process (Afnibar, 2021; Asari, 2021). The PAIKEM learning model is considered very suitable for the purpose of increasing student involvement in class, because this model is a learning approach that allows children to be able to do various kinds of activities that can increase their understanding and skills through an emphasis on learning and playing. Educators can use resources and tools, as well as take advantage of the existing environment so that learning activities become interesting and fun for children (Fauziyah et al., n.d.; Hidayat Ara, 2012). With interesting and fun activities, then the child will then focus his attention and behavior on learning activities, want to be involved independently, and build new attachments with the teacher and other friends in class. Based on the case study in Group A of Yudistira Batuan Kindergarten, the researcher wanted to carry out research, namely the application of PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement shaping techniques as a treatment to be tested for its effect on children's separation anxiety. The aim of this study was to analyze the effect of PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement shaping techniques on separation anxiety. The application of Shaping Techniques is used as the formation of new behavior by providing reinforcement for each development of behavior that resembles a predetermined target behavior.

## 2. METHOD

The type of research used in this research is quantitative research with a single-case experimental research design, which is a research design that aims to evaluate the effect of a single case treatment or intervention. In research with a single case (single case design), researchers use the A-B-A design. Single case design research with A-B-A design also aims to obtain data before the subject receives treatment or intervention, when receiving treatment and after being given treatment, then to see whether there is any effect that occurs as a result of the treatment given, SSR refers to the research strategy developed to document changes (Widodo et al., 2021).

The research subject is the source of the data to be examined which is related to the research problem. Before carrying out the research, the research subject must first be determined strictly so as not to deviate from a predetermined goal (Moshinsky, 2019). Data is a variety of information (quantitative and qualitative) obtained from the results of data collection with certain instruments (data collection tools) in accordance with the nature of the data from these variables. It can also be stated that data is all facts and figures that can be used as material to compile information and information is the result of data processing that is used for a purpose. Based on the above understanding, the data used in this study is data that shows separation anxiety behavior in core activities in the classroom. So in this study the sample used was one child, with the subject criteria being a 5 year old boy, with the initials IKAN, born on May 9 2018. In this case the subject still has a high level of separation anxiety. The A-B-A design research design is visually presented in Figure 1. In the intervention design stage, the subject is conditioned during learning activities and the time used in one meeting is 60 minutes during classroom learning activities. Recording of the emergence of separation anxiety behavior was carried out tally on the observation sheet with a behavior checklist (Harahap, 2019; Hasanah, 2017).



**Figure 1 . Basic Design Procedures A-B-A**

Observations were also made to determine the readiness and involvement of participants in learning activities and daily social interactions in the classroom. In each measurement two observers were involved who were not involved in class activities. In a study to obtain the expected data, data collection techniques are needed. This step is very important because the data to be collected will later be used in testing the hypothesis (Kartigesan M.Veloo, 2021; Sulaiman et al., 2019). By carrying out data collection techniques must be adjusted to the required data. The instrument grid is needed as a guide in formulating instrument items. The separation anxiety observation sheet grid can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1 . Separation Anxiety Observation Sheet Grid**

Variable	Dimension	Indicator
Separation Anxiety	Self-awareness	Behavior that expresses emotions in accordance with conditions when happy
		Behavior that expresses emotions in accordance with the conditions when sad
		Behavior that expresses emotion in accordance with conditions when enthusiastic
		Behaviors that express emotions are in accordance with the condition of facial expressions when angry
		Behavior that shows the child's ability to adjust to the situation
		Behavior that shows self-confidence
		Behavior that shows knowing one's own feelings and managing them naturally (reasonably self-control)
		Behaviors that show gradually being able to sit in class without being accompanied by an attached figure
		Behaviors that show paying attention to the teacher when the figure is attached outside the classroom
		Obey class rules (activities, rules)
		Demonstrates enthusiasm for competitive play positively
		Knowing his friend's feelings and
		Prosocial Behavior

Variable	Dimension	Indicator
		responding appropriately
		Show empathy
		Demonstrate sharing behavior with peers
		Demonstrate the behavior of participating in playing and working together with peers

In this study, visual analysis (visual inspection) was used, namely by interpreting measurement data using graphics accurately and meaningfully, within and between the conditions involved (Bachry et al., 2018; Dewi & Nirda, 2022).

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Result

In a single case study, the treatment and control were subject to the study, so a quantitative analysis was carried out by comparing the results of the subjects' measurements in the conditions of receiving and not receiving the intervention. The data analyzed in this study was separation anxiety. This research is a study with a single case (single case design), researchers used the A-B-A design. The object under study was the PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement shaping technique for children's separation anxiety. Data from observations (measurements) of the frequency of children's behavior that were visually analyzed in each of the research conditions are listed in the graph shown in Figure 1.

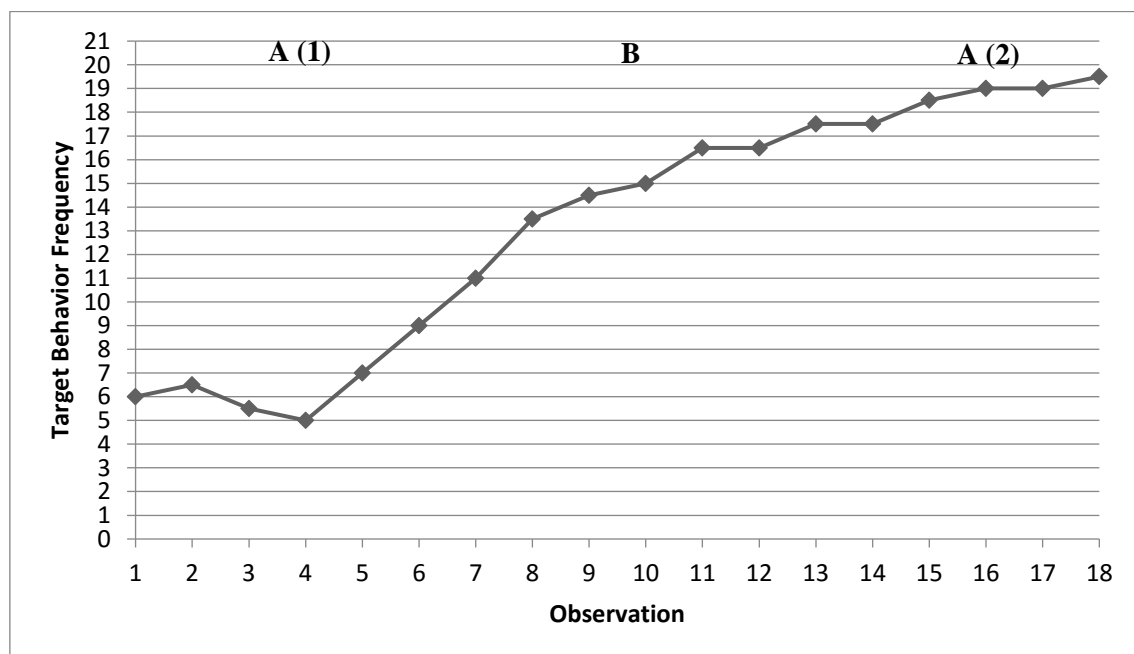


Figure 1 . Graph of Behavioral Measurements of Early Childhood Separation Anxiety

Figure 1 shows an increase in children's independent behavior from the baseline phase (A1), the intervention phase and the baseline phase (A2). Analysis within and between measurement conditions for research subjects showed that separation anxiety, in this case indicated by symptoms of refusing to be abandoned by attached figures, was raised by children with a fairly high frequency in the baseline phase (A1). This is indicated by the average independence of only 6, although there is a tendency to improve by 1 point. The frequency of target behavior in this phase is in the range of 5-7. In the intervention phase (B), the child's separation anxiety, which in this case was shown by symptoms of refusing to be abandoned by an attached figure, decreased when the PAIKEM-based shaping technique was applied. This is indicated by the child's average independence of 14.18 where the increase on the first day of program implementation was 2.5 points. Although in the 11th to 12th observations there was no increase in the frequency of children's behavior, the subject's behavior showed an indication of improvement by 8.5 points in 8 days of

applying the technique. Changes that are increasingly visible after the intervention is stopped can be seen in the baseline phase (A2), where the symptoms of children refusing to be abandoned by attachment figures are increasing with an average of 18.7. And there is an increase in the range of 18.5-19.5.

## Discussion

The measurement results show that there are significant differences in children's separation anxiety behavior, so that interventions in the form of behavioral management in shaping children's behavior gradually with positive reinforcement can reduce separation anxiety and increase children's independence in the classroom. The behavior of children's separation anxiety can be due to reinforcements that are indirectly obtained by children when interacting in the classroom with attached figures (Hardi et al., 2022; Lois et al., 2016). The emergence of separation anxiety behavior in the classroom that lasts more than 6 months is the basis for the importance of implementing interventions in the classroom. This study aims to determine the effect of the PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement shaping technique on children's separation anxiety in the classroom setting. The measurement results showed that there was a difference in the frequency of children's separation anxiety behavior as indicated by the increased independence of the children after receiving the PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement shaping technique in class. Based on these results, an alternative hypothesis which states that there is an influence of PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement shaping techniques on children's separation anxiety is accepted in this study (Fauziyah et al., n.d.; Hidayat Ara, 2012). These significant results indicate that behavioral management in shaping children's behavior gradually with positive reinforcement can increase children's independence and reduce separation anxiety in children in the class.

In the case of educational settings, the behavior of children's separation anxiety can be due to a lack of reinforcements that are indirectly obtained by children when interacting in the classroom with attached figures (Handrianto et al., 2021; Widiyati et al., 2019). The emergence of separation anxiety behavior in the classroom that lasted more than 6 months, became the basis for the importance of interventions applied in the classroom. In the baseline phase, even though the intervention had not been applied to the research subjects, there were changes in behavior that tended to improve the child's separation anxiety behavior. This is because the principle of learning in early childhood demands that there is always a better improvement (Fauziddin & Mufarizuddin, 2018; Lindeman et al., 2021). The application of shaping techniques with positive reinforcement is carried out every day in the classroom as a form of behavior habituation towards children. The class environment is actively involved in the habituation process so that it supports the success of the shaping technique with positive reinforcement (Cut Nizar, 2021; Lois et al., 2016). In this intervention phase there was stability in the frequency of the child's independent behavior, although in the 14th observation there was no progress due to the child coming to class late so that the child returned to showing symptoms of separation anxiety so that the attached figure again accompanied the child in class. However, these symptoms only appeared at short intervals (3 minutes) at the start of core activities.

Behavioral principles of previous study believes that a behavior that has been learned as a form of operant response will tend to be repeated in subsequent similar conditions (Marlena, 2021). These learning outcomes are the main objective of the importance of implementing early intervention on children. The success of learning this behavior that has been done by children can be seen from the 100% data overlap on the measurement of the child's separation anxiety behavior as indicated by the independence of the child in the class. Prizes that are included in the class as reinforcement for the child's success in showing independence are adjusted to the child's interests (Amini & Mariyati, 2021; Astrini, 2021; Handayani et al., 2021). The prizes include: various stickers containing the subject's favorite pictures such as cartoons or the subject's favorite characters. The inclusion of prizes based on the child's interests can increase encouragement to be involved in activities organized in class. To maintain children's enthusiasm, gifts and types of stickers offered vary. The expression shown has an influence in the process of social interaction between children and the environment (Dudek & Heiser, 2017; Hsiao et al., 2022). The cheerful expressions shown by the children have a positive impact on the social closeness of the children in the class. If the child feels happy in the classroom, then alertness will increase and then the child is able to respond appropriately to the stimulation conveyed by friends. The ability to respond appropriately makes children more likeable and ultimately more involved in positive interactions with friends. This finding supports previous research shaping technique is one way to shape the expected new behavior (Setiadi & Jaswandi, 2019). The results of his research show that the application of shaping techniques has a positive role in helping students form new behaviors so they don't cheat on students. By giving reinforcement gradually until it approaches the expected behavior. The main focus is how to change this behavior. Shaping technique is a formation of new behavior that has not been done before by providing reinforcement to achieve and approach the desired behavior by researchers (Muali et al., 2021;

Mulvariani et al., 2021). The suggestions can be proposed, for teachers based on the findings obtained, this research can be used as a reference for designing fun learning for children with the aim of obtaining independent and optimal learning outcomes. It is suggested to teachers to be more skilled in developing learning innovations by applying various strategies, approaches, or methods that are able to overcome the behavior of early childhood separation anxiety and increase motivation and enthusiasm in participating in learning activities for children. In addition, teachers are more creative in providing facilities in the form of learning media and provide greater opportunities for students to create a fun and meaningful learning process for students. For school principals based on research findings, it is suggested to school principals to be able to use this research as a support for teacher learning resources in enriching the use of techniques and methods used by schools so that schools are able to produce intelligent students. For other researchers Based on the research findings, it is suggested to other researchers that the results of this study be used as a reference for carrying out further research related to overcoming separation anxiety behavior in early childhood.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, it was concluded that the shaping technique with positive reinforcement had an effect on children's separation anxiety. This is indicated by the decrease in children's separation anxiety symptoms and the increase in children's independent behavior in the classroom. Shaping technique with positive reinforcement can be used in cases of children with separation anxiety with symptoms of fear of being alone or fear of being left alone by an attached figure and applied along with learning in the classroom. This shows that there is a significant effect of the application of PAIKEM-based positive reinforcement shaping technique. on separation anxiety in early childhood at Yudistira Batuan Kindergarten, Gianyar Academic Year 2022/2023.

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