Instructors' Strategies in Ballet Instruction to Support the Development of Children Aged 3-6 Years at B-Three Dance Academy, Semarang

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to outline the measures taken by the coaches when carrying out ballet dance teaching and in promoting the development of children between the ages of 3 and 6 at the B-Three Dance Academy in Semarang. A descriptive qualitative research method was used in this study. The data came from the coaches and children aged 3 to 6 who took part in the ballet dance lessons at the B-Three Dance Academy in Semarang. The data were gathered by observing the lessons, interviewing the coaches, and reviewing records of the learning activities. Analysis of the data was carried out in three steps: reducing the data, presenting it, and drawing conclusions. The findings show that the coaches' work in delivering ballet lessons includes adjusting the learning materials, the methods, the tempo, and the way in which movements are presented in accordance with the children's characteristics and abilities. In order to keep the children's attention and involvement throughout the lesson, the coaches used. communicative approaches, demonstrated movements, repeated activities, played games, and provided motivation. The learning process helps to promote the children's development, especially in their motor skills, body coordination, balance, concentration, self-confidence, and ability to follow instructions. It was found that differences in the children's characteristics and abilities represented one of the difficulties the coaches encountered when preparing suitable learning experiences. This study provides a summary of the strategies used by coaches in giving ballet dance lessons to young children and the connection between these strategies and the children's development through dance activities.

Keywords: *Ballet instruction; instructor's efforts; early childhood; child development; B-Three Dance Academy*

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INTRODUCTION

Childhood is a crucial stage in growth and development, as it is during this time that a child's various abilities begin to form and develop through the experiences they gain. One activity that can provide a space for children to develop is dance. Dance activities are not only about movement skills but also train body coordination, balance, concentration, courage, and the ability to follow directions. This aligns with the statement by Ashar & Pamungkas (2023), who note that dance activities can foster body coordination, balance, concentration, and courage, as well as a child's self-confidence in expressing themselves. Dance lessons provided from an early age should also be tailored to the child's characteristics and abilities so that learning activities do not become a burden, but instead become an enjoyable experience for them. Dance instruction for early childhood differs from that for adults.

Children are still at a developmental stage that requires simple, engaging learning activities that are appropriate to their physical abilities. Setiawan (2014) explains that dance materials for children need to consider their motor skills and characteristics, so the movements should be simple, practical, and dynamic. This is in line with research by Sholihatunnisa et al. (2024) which shows that creative dance learning can be used as an activity to support the development of kinesthetic intelligence in early childhood. This is supported by research from Yurita et al. (2023), which indicates that the development of creative dance instruction is effective in enhancing the kinesthetic intelligence of children aged 5–6 years. Therefore, the success of dance learning in children depends not only on the material provided, but also on how the trainer delivers the material. One form of dance that can be introduced to children is ballet. Ballet has quite structured techniques and movement rules, so children need to learn gradually, starting from the introduction of basic movements, coordination of body parts, balance, to the ability to follow the sequence of movements.

This condition makes the role of the trainer crucial, especially when dealing with children with different characters and abilities. In one class, there are children who easily follow instructions, children who need repetition, active children, and children who still feel shy to move in front of others. Therefore, trainers need to have strategies so that the same material can be understood by each child in an appropriate way. Research on dance learning in early childhood shows that learning strategies and approaches are closely related to child development. Research by Handayani et al. (2024) shows that the free expression approach in dance learning can provide space for a gradual process.

Meanwhile, Sari (2024) found the development of children's motor skills after participating in traditional dance activities. Research by Lubis et al. (2025) also explained that dance learning can support children's motor skills, coordination, balance, muscle strength, and self-expression. In addition, a study by Nisa et al. (2026) showed that dance learning combined with the STEAM approach can provide space for the development of children's creativity, thinking skills, communication, collaboration, and motor skills. These findings indicate that dance learning can provide broader benefits than just the ability to perform dance movements. However, the implementation of dance learning for children does not always run under the same conditions for each student. Differences in character, abilities, independence, concentration levels, and courage are aspects that need to be considered by trainers. This condition was also found in ballet learning at B-Three Dance Academy Semarang. Based on the results of interviews with trainers, the division of classes for children aged 3-6 years is not only based on age, but also considers the child's ability and independence through trial activities. During the learning process, the instructor adjusts communication styles, assertiveness, motivation, demonstrations, repetition, and games to suit the child's needs. The ballet material, which is based on the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) syllabus, remains consistent, while more adjustments are made to the instructor's delivery and support of the child during the lesson.

This picture is also evident in the experience of Alea, one of the students at B-Three Dance Academy. Based on the results of interviews with parents, ballet activities not only provide a means to channel Alea's active movements, but also bring changes to her flexibility of movement and openness when interacting with new people. Parents also see that stimulation, communication, introduction to the environment, and fulfilling nutrition are all parts that contribute to child development. This shows that child development does not stand alone, but can be influenced by various experiences and supportive environments. In the context of this research, ballet learning is one of the environments observed to see how the coach's strategies are implemented and how the child's abilities develop during the activities.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. This approach was chosen because the study focused on directly understanding and describing the trainers' strategies in ballet lessons and the development of children's abilities aged 3-6 years at B-Three Dance Academy Semarang. This study aimed to describe how the trainers implemented the lessons, adapt strategies to the children's characteristics, and observe the development of children's abilities that emerged during ballet lessons. The research subjects consisted of ballet dance coaches and students aged 3-6 years at B-Three Dance Academy Semarang, with parents as supporting sources of information. The coach who served as the main source of information was Miss Dewi, a coach at B-Three Dance Academy. In addition, supporting data was obtained through interviews with the parents of one of the students, namely Alea's parents. The determination of subjects was carried out purposively by considering the direct involvement of the informants in the learning activities and child development.

This study did not use samples in the form of quantitative calculations, but used data sources that were considered to provide information in accordance with the focus of the research. The research data consists of primary and supporting data. Primary data was obtained from interviews with trainers regarding ballet learning strategies for children aged 3-6 years. This data includes how to determine a child's class, adapting learning based on age, ability, and independence, how to deal with differences in children's personalities, and the use of methods. Learning, classroom management, and how coaches maintain children's focus and engagement. Supporting data was obtained from interviews with parents regarding their children's experiences during ballet lessons and the development seen after participating in these activities.

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were used to obtain an overview of the ballet learning process and the interactions that occurred during the activity. Interviews were conducted directly with coaches and parents, using questions related to the research focus. Interviews with coaches were used to determine the strategies implemented in the learning process, while interviews with parents were used to obtain information about the children's experiences and development. Documentation was used as supporting data in the form of notes or documentation of learning activities related to the research.

Data analysis techniques were carried out in stages through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. In the reduction stage, data from observations, interviews, and documentation were selected and grouped based on the research focus, namely the trainer's strategy and the development of children's abilities. Next, the selected data were presented in descriptive form to more clearly demonstrate the relationship between learning strategies and child development. The final stage was drawing conclusions based on the analyzed findings to answer the research problem formulation. Data validity was achieved through source triangulation, which compared information obtained from the trainer with information from students' parents and observations of the learning process. This comparison was conducted to determine the suitability of information regarding the trainer's strategy and child development. In this way, the research data is expected to provide a more

complete picture of the implementation of ballet dance learning for children aged 3-6 years at B-Three Dance Academy Semarang.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As one of the dance arts education centers in Semarang City, B-Three Dance Academy is present as a place for developing performing arts for children. Based on its operational history, this studio was founded in 2010, but there was a name change only the official name B-Three Dance in 2022, and began actively operating serving dance training activities and classes since 2010 until now. Geographically, B-Three Dance Academy is located at Jl. Prof. Soedarto No. 10, Pedalangan, Semarang City, Central Java. The existence of B-Three Dance Academy is relevant in the landscape of children's arts education because of its consistency in applying basic ballet material guided by the international syllabus, namely the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) (Royal Academy of Dance, 2026). However, the main challenge in learning children aged 3-6 years lies in the heterogeneity of student characteristics ranging from the level of independence, mood, concentration, to differences in psychological traits such as dominant children compared to shy children. Beyond the physical aspects, the experience of participating in regular training, evaluations, and performances has been shown to foster children's social and emotional development, as well as their self-confidence.

This is supported by a meta-analysis by Koch et al. (2014), which indicates that dance interventions and movement therapy have a significant positive impact on improving various psychological outcomes related to mental and emotional well-being. This phenomenon shows that the success of a ballet studio is not only measured by the achievement of movement techniques alone, but also from how studio management and coaching strategies are able to create a conducive, flexible, and supportive learning environment. Based on this background, it is interesting to examine more deeply the "Trainer Strategy in Learning Ballet Dance for Children Aged 3-6 Years at B-Three Dance Academy, to see how the combination of standard ballet technique structure and the trainer's adaptive approach is able to stimulate the development of motoric, social, and self-confidence of children optimally. Learning ballet dance for early childhood (3-6 years) is not solely determined by the accuracy of mastering movement techniques, but is very dependent on the trainer's ability to contextualize the material to align with the characteristics, level of independence, and individual readiness of the child. Based on the findings at B-Three Dance Academy, the implementation of this learning combines a standard technique structure that refers to the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) syllabus with adaptive and flexible pedagogical strategies.

Adapting Coaching Strategies and Classroom Management

Research findings indicate that class placement is not based solely on age, but rather involves a trial and error process to assess children's readiness and independence. This approach emphasizes that early childhood learning readiness is highly individualized. Class placement is not determined uniformly based solely on age; instead, it involves a trial phase to assess a child's readiness and independence. This structured approach to learning stages is essential for tailoring instruction to each child's individual characteristics, as outlined in the analysis of learning stages for early childhood dance education (Krisnani & Pamungkas, 2022).

In practice, trainers employ demonstration, repetition, interactive communication, motivation, and the use of props (such as puppets) to maintain children's attention.




Figures 1 and 2. Rest after Exercise.
Original Author Documentation, 25 September 2026.

This aligns with the findings of Zhao et al. (2024), who stated that the quality of teacher-child interactions and relational closeness play a crucial role in fostering child engagement during the learning process. In addition to instructional aspects, classroom management and managing students' emotional states are crucial elements for successful training. This is supported by Tilbe & Xiaosong (2024), who state that teacher-related factors make a significant contribution to the quality of interactions with children in the context of early childhood education. Trainers carefully monitor children's moods, concentration, and fatigue levels, for example by avoiding the midday break (11:00 AM–3:00 PM WIB) and providing quiet time for children who are not yet ready. Handling differences in character, such as directing dominant children to take turns learning and providing a gradual stage for shy children, reflects effective social interaction management. The dynamics of these relational connections align with the findings of Bub & Vaughn (2024), which indicate that the characteristics and perceptions of the teacher-child relationship in early childhood are influenced by the individual conditions and responses brought by the child (child-driven effects). When conflict or a lapse in concentration occurs, the trainer's quick response by temporarily stopping the music or providing personal guidance can maintain classroom conduciveness. These findings are supported by Alamos and Williford (2020), who emphasize that the quality of teacher interactions is closely related to children's level of engagement in learning tasks.

Stimulating Children's Motor and Social Development

The integration of ballet technical structure and flexible teaching strategies has a multidimensional impact on children's development. From a motor perspective, basic materials including warm-ups, legs and feet, arms, balance, and flexibility have been shown to positively stimulate children's fundamental motor skills. These findings are consistent with research by Tahira et al. (2022), which indicates that dance learning activities make a tangible contribution to the improvement of children's gross motor skills.




Figure 3 and 4. Flexibility and Balance Exercises
Author's Documentation, 30 September 2026

This is supported by Đošić et al. (2025), who found that structured dance programs for preschoolers significantly contribute to improved coordination and balance. Furthermore, Logan et al. (2012) state that structured interventions and exercises are significantly effective in improving children's fundamental motor skills. Furthermore, a meta-analysis by González-Devesa et al. (2026) strengthens empirical evidence that dance programs have a strong positive correlation with the development of preschoolers' fundamental motor skills. Not only limited to physical aspects, the experience of participating in regular training, evaluation, and performances has been proven to shape children's social development and self-confidence. In line with the findings of Damayanti et al. (2023), dance learning activities have proven effective as a means to foster children's self-confidence and courage in expressing themselves in public. Changes in research subjects (such as Alea and Amel) show that ballet activities function as an effective socialization medium to reduce social awkwardness, increase courage perform, and foster cooperation and empathy skills. These findings align with research by Lobo and Winsler (2006), which showed that creative dance and movement programs are closely related to improving children's social competence preschool. In addition, recent findings from Peng et al. (2026) noted that dance arts interventions showed a pattern of positive improvements in children's social-emotional competencies.

Pedagogical Implications

Overall, the comparison between the standardized technical structure of ballet and the flexibility of an instructor's approach broadens the scope of previous research. Ballet instruction does not hinder a child's growth, provided that the instructor acts as a facilitator who is sensitive to the psychological and emotional needs of the students. These findings imply that arts education institutions should equip instructors not only with technical dance proficiency but also with pedagogical skills for early childhood, classroom emotional management, and empathetic communication. Consequently, ballet instruction can function optimally as an environment that holistically stimulates a child's motor, social, and emotional development, as well as their concentration and independence. A dance-based learning approach has been shown to provide an ideal space for the growth, development, and well-being of students (Yatim & Apriyansyah, 2025). This aligns with the perspective that dance-based learning activities play a strategic role in optimizing all aspects of early childhood development (Triska et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that the trainer's strategy in ballet learning for children aged 3-6 years at B-Three Dance Academy Semarang is applied adaptively by considering the age, ability, independence, character, and readiness of the child. Adjustments are primarily made to the methods of delivery, communication, demonstration, repetition, motivation, games, and class management, while the ballet material still refers to the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) syllabus. Ballet learning shows a relationship with the development of children's abilities, especially in the aspects of motor skills, coordination, balance, flexibility, concentration, courage, independence, and social interaction. The experience of participating in training, evaluation, and performances also provides space for children to develop self-confidence and the ability to interact with the environment. This finding provides a theoretical contribution that early childhood ballet learning is not only oriented towards mastering technique, but can also be understood as a learning process that integrates aspects of movement and child development. Practically, the results of the study emphasize the importance of the trainer's pedagogical ability in adapting learning strategies without eliminating the structure of ballet material so that activities are in accordance with the characteristics and developmental needs of children.

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