

The Integration Of Relationship Building Skills In Microteaching Sessions: A Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Recent studies have highlighted the importance of microteaching in developing pedagogical competency among prospective teachers. However, limited research has examined the relational dimension of teaching in microteaching practices, particularly from a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective. Therefore, this study examines the integration of relationship-building skills during microteaching sessions. This study aims to examine how relationship-building skills based on the SEL framework are demonstrated and integrated in prospective English language teachers' microteaching practices. This study employed a descriptive qualitative design utilizing directed qualitative content analysis. Participants consisted of ten prospective teachers enrolled in a microteaching course at a private university in West Jakarta during the 2024/2025 academic year. Data were collected through video recordings of teaching performances, semi-structured interviews, lesson plans, and peer feedback documents. Data were analyzed using deductive-inductive content analysis guided by the CASEL relationship skills framework. Findings indicate that relationship-building skills were present but demonstrated unevenly among participants. Clear instructional communication, supportive feedback, and facilitative leadership were most frequently demonstrated, particularly during the instructional delivery and feedback stages. However, higher-order relational competencies such as constructive conflict resolution, advocacy for justice, and resistance to negative social pressure are rarely observed. These findings contribute to the understanding of relational competencies in teacher education and demonstrate the need to explicitly integrate SEL-based relationship-building skills into microteaching assessments and teacher education curricula.

Keywords: *Social-Emotional Learning, relationship skills, microteaching, teacher education*

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PENDAHULUAN

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) provides a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the interpersonal and affective dimensions of educational practice. Developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), SEL conceptualizes effective education as integration of cognitive instruction and social-emotional competence (CASEL, 2020, p.

2). The framework outlines five interrelated domains self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making that collectively shape how individuals navigate learning environments. Rather than positioning teaching as a purely technical endeavor, SEL frames instructional practice as relational, ethical, and emotionally grounded. Therefore, SEL offers a systematic lens for examining how professional behaviors are enacted within classroom interactions.

More specifically, among the five core competencies, relationship skills represent a central dimension of professional interaction. CASEL (2020, p. 2) defines relationship skills as the ability to establish and sustain healthy, supportive, and cooperative connections through clear communication, active listening, empathy, collaboration, constructive conflict resolution, help-seeking, and ethical responsiveness. Within instructional contexts, these competencies are manifested in how educators explain objectives, respond to learner contributions, facilitate dialogue, and create inclusive classroom climates. Importantly, the SEL framework conceptualizes relational competence as observable and developable behavior rather than innate disposition (CASEL, 2020; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Consequently, SEL is particularly appropriate for analyzing teaching performance because it enables relationship-building practices to be operationalized into concrete instructional actions.

Furthermore, relationship skills are fundamental to effective teaching practice. Instructional success depends not only on methodological expertise but also on the capacity to cultivate respectful and supportive engagement with learners. Research demonstrates that positive teacher student interactions are associated with higher levels of participation, motivation, and academic engagement (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Sorbet & Notar, 2022). When educators communicate expectations clearly, respond empathetically, and manage disagreement constructively, students are more likely to contribute actively and perceive the classroom as psychologically safe. In this regard, relational competence becomes a marker of teacher professionalism, reflecting ethical awareness, responsiveness, and communicative clarity. Thus, relationship skills function as an essential foundation for meaningful student participation.

In addition, the cultivation of these competencies is particularly crucial for students whose professional identities are still developing. Early teaching experiences significantly influence how future educators conceptualize authority, interaction, and instructional responsibility (Tran, 2025; Wicaksono & Saraswati, 2024). Without deliberate emphasis on relational capacity during teacher preparation, instructional performance may become disproportionately focused on technical delivery while neglecting interpersonal engagement. Building relationship skills at the initial stage of teacher education enables student ducators to manage classroom communication effectively, navigate diverse learner characteristics, and construct inclusive dialogue. As one of the most widely used pedagogical practices in teacher education, microteaching provides a structured setting in which students can enact

and reflect on these relational competencies.

In this context, microteaching functions as a controlled and observable instructional environment. Originally introduced by (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 5), microteaching was designed to allow teacher candidates to practice discrete teaching skills within a structured format. In this study, the participants are university students enrolled in a microteaching course, not in-service teachers. During these sessions, students plan short lessons, perform simulated instruction with peers acting as learners, and receive evaluative feedback. Because each instructional phase opening, delivering material, facilitating interaction, providing feedback, and closing requires active interpersonal engagement, microteaching presents an appropriate context for observing how relationship skills are enacted during direct teaching performance (Allen & Ryan, 1969; Richards & Farrell, 2006).

Nevertheless, despite its widespread use in teacher education, research on microteaching predominantly emphasizes technical competencies such as lesson planning, classroom management, content mastery, and instructional clarity (Aksu et al., 2023; Austral et al., 2023). Relationship-building behaviors are often addressed implicitly rather than examined as a distinct analytical focus. Moreover, few studies explicitly analyze microteaching through the Social and Emotional Learning framework, particularly within the relationship skills domain. Existing investigations frequently rely on perception-based measures or reflective accounts rather than systematic behavioral observation of enacted teaching performance. As a result, there remains a limited body of descriptive research that maps how SEL-based relational competencies are demonstrated during structured microteaching sessions.

Therefore, this study aims to describe the relationship-building skills demonstrated by students enrolled in a microteaching course from a Social-Emotional Learning perspective and to analyze how these competencies are integrated across instructional stages. By applying the SEL relationship skills framework to observable teaching behaviors, this research contributes to extending microteaching evaluation beyond technical proficiency. Ultimately, the study seeks to strengthen the integration of relational competence within teacher education assessment and to underscore the significance of socially and emotionally responsive professionalism in preparing future educators.

METODE PENELITIAN

This study employed a qualitative research design with directed qualitative content analysis to examine relationship-building skills demonstrated by students during microteaching sessions from a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective. This design was selected because the study aimed to describe and interpret observable relationship-building practices in teaching performance rather than to statistically measure variables. Qualitative descriptive research enables systematic examination of naturally occurring behaviors and interactions while maintaining close alignment with participants' actual performance in context (Creswell, 2018; Miles et al., 2014).

The analytical approach used in this study was directed qualitative content analysis, in which an initial coding framework is informed by an established theoretical model. Specifically, the analysis was guided by the SEL framework (CASEL, 2020, p. 3) with particular emphasis on the relationship skills domain. In this study, relationship-building skills were operationalized into nine observable indicators adapted from CASEL's relationship skills domain and supported by related literature. These indicators included: clear and respectful communication, active listening and responsiveness, supportive feedback and encouragement, inclusive participation management, culturally responsive interaction, cooperation and collaborative problem-solving, constructive conflict handling, help-seeking/help-giving climate, and ethical care/advocacy for others. Using these theoretically grounded indicators as initial coding categories allowed the researcher to identify how relationship-building competencies were enacted through verbal and nonverbal behaviors during microteaching.

This design aligned directly with the research questions. Research Question 1 was addressed by identifying and categorizing the relationship-building skills demonstrated by students based on the SEL-derived behavioral indicators. Research Question 2 was addressed by examining how those indicators were integrated across the stages of teaching performance, namely opening, instruction, interaction, feedback, and closing. This stage-based analysis enabled the study to interpret relationship-building competence as embedded practice within instructional processes rather than as isolated traits.

Video recordings of microteaching sessions served as the primary data source, providing authentic evidence of teacher–student interactional behaviors. To strengthen contextual interpretation, the study also incorporated semi-structured interviews and document analysis (lesson plans and teaching materials). The use of multiple data sources supported triangulation and enhanced the credibility and depth of interpretation (Miles et al., 2014, p. 194) .

This study employed three data collection techniques: video-based observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The integration of multiple methods supported methodological triangulation and provided a more comprehensive understanding of how relationship-building skills were demonstrated and interpreted in microteaching.

Data analysis was conducted using directed qualitative content analysis guided by the SEL relationship skills framework. The procedure began with repeated viewing of the video recordings to gain familiarity with the overall teaching flow and interaction patterns. The recordings were then segmented into meaningful teacher–student exchanges, which served as the unit of analysis. Selected segments were transcribed verbatim, including relevant nonverbal behaviors to support accurate interpretation.

RESULT

Data Description

This study employed a qualitative content analysis approach to examine how relationship-building competencies were realized during microteaching sessions from a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective. The primary data consisted of 10–15 minute video recordings of microteaching sessions conducted by 10 students (3 male and 7 female) at a private university in West Jakarta during the 2024/2025 academic year, with peers acting as students. Video-based observation was selected as the main data source because it provided direct and observable evidence of relationship-building behaviors enacted in teaching practice, including both verbal and non-verbal interaction.

All video recordings were watched repeatedly to support familiarization and to identify interaction episodes relevant to relationship-building. Selected episodes were then transcribed verbatim, capturing meaningful teacher–student exchanges and salient non-verbal behaviors (e.g., gestures, eye contact, tone, and supportive facial expressions). In this study, each meaningful teacher–student exchange was treated as the unit of analysis, allowing the researcher to examine relationship-building as it appeared in naturally occurring instructional interaction rather than as a self-reported perception alone.

The coding process was conducted manually using a structured codebook derived from the Relationship Skills domain of the CASEL framework (2020, p. 3). The analysis followed a directed (deductive) content analysis approach, focusing specifically on relationship-related indicators rather than all SEL domains. During coding, segments that did not fully align with the pre-defined indicators were reviewed carefully and refined into subcategories, when necessary, in order to capture more nuanced relational practices. After coding, the coded segments were compared across participants to identify recurring patterns, frequency tendencies, and variations in how relationship-building competencies were enacted.

To address the second research question concerning integration, the coded relationship-building indicators were then mapped across instructional stages, namely opening, instruction, interaction, feedback, and closing. This stage-based mapping enabled the study to examine not only what relationship-building skills were demonstrated, but also how those skills were embedded within different phases of teaching performance during microteaching sessions.

To enhance credibility, findings from video analysis were triangulated with semi-structured interviews and supporting documents, including lesson plans and peer feedback forms. The interviews were conducted to clarify participants' perspectives on relationship-building, the reasons behind particular interactional choices observed in the videos, and perceived challenges in integrating relationship-oriented practices within time-limited microteaching sessions. Throughout the analysis, an

audit trail and iterative coding cycles were maintained to support transparency and consistency, ensuring that interpretations remained grounded in the data and aligned with the SEL analytical framework.

Finding

This study was guided by two primary research questions:

1. What relationship-building skills student demonstrate during microteaching sessions from a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective?
2. How are relationship-building skills integrated into the teaching practices of student during microteaching sessions from a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective?

Two research questions drove this study. First, the focus of the study was to highlight students' relationship building skills exhibited in microteaching sessions through a SEL lens. Second, the study paid specific attention to how these relationship-building skills were incorporated into students' teaching practice in microteaching sessions from an SEL lens. Regarding the first research question, results suggested that students demonstrated a range of types of relationship skills consistent with the SEL framework, most notably within the domain on relationship skills. These skills were identified as communication, maintaining positive working relationships, team work and collaboration in problem solving, leadership, and giving and receiving feedback. Although the extent to which each of these skills was emerging among the participants varied, the majority of students seemed to realize the significance of developing positive, respectful, and supportive teacher student interactions in microteaching sessions.

Regarding the second research question, results showed that inclusive relationship-building competencies were included in students' teaching actions along moments of microteaching sessions; beginning and explain content, classroom interaction, feedback and closing. These abilities were manifested by welcoming the class in, communicating clearly, creating a classroom environment that facilitated student participation, appreciating what students had to say and giving them feedback. Overall, these findings suggest that the relationship building skills are sufficiently used and aligned with the principles of SEL construct by students in their teaching practices.

Relationship-Building Skills Demonstrated during Microteaching (SEL Perspective)

The findings of this study indicate that students demonstrated several relationship-building skills during microteaching sessions when viewed from a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective. Based on observational data, participants demonstrated the ability to communicate respectfully with their peers, who played the role of students, as reflected in the use of polite language, clear explanations, and supportive responses during classroom interactions. Furthermore, many students

demonstrated empathy and awareness of their peers' responses by acknowledging answers, encouraging participation, and providing positive reinforcement. Active listening was also evident when the intern teachers responded to questions, clarified students' understanding, and allowed peers to express their ideas. Furthermore, students demonstrated cooperativeness and patience when managing classroom activities and discussions. These behaviors indicate that participants were able to demonstrate key aspects of relationship-building skills, specifically communication, empathy, respect, and supportive interactions, which are essential components of SEL in educational contexts.

To summarize the overall distribution of relationship-building indicators observed during microteaching sessions, Figure 2 is presented immediately after this paragraph. The indicator-specific distributions are then presented in Figures 3–11 within the relevant subsections.

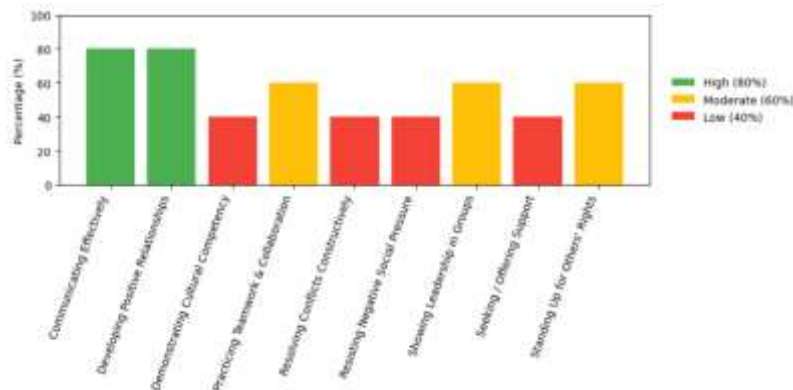


Figure 1 Distribution Relationship-building skill Base on Observation Microteaching

source: processed data (2026)

The distribution of relationship skills based on SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) observed during the microteaching sessions is presented in Figure 2. This number is revealing of the patterns in interpersonal skills when students perform teaching simulation, and is helpful for the discussion that follows. The results are discussed in greater detail in the following paragraphs, with attention to how students exhibited their relationship-building competences in micro-teaching sessions and further interpretations of the patterns described above (see Figure 2).

Referenced to the observation checklist, students quite performed very well in rapport building skill during their microteaching sessions. These competences were shared by the participants and could be observed in various teaching phases, especially during the introduction, instruction and interaction phase. During these phases, students engaged in verbal and nonverbal interactions with students, of which building rapport was a natural byproduct during classroom class activities. These frequently exhibited discourse features appeared to be quite salient in teachers use of greeting students, respectful delivery of instructions, soliciting student participation, and responding immediately to students' responses as shown in the observation data. These were not practiced by individual student teachers,

but seen across several students indicating pattern usage in relationships during microteaching. These skills were typically exhibited in short instances of exchange as part of learning practices, for example during introductions to the class or question and answer work and group exercises. As shown in Figure 2, some indicators appeared more consistently than others. The subsections below discuss each major indicator in detail.

Communicative Effectively

Clear and respectful communication emerged as one of the most frequently demonstrated relationship-building competencies. This indicator was reflected in how students opened lessons with greetings, stated objectives, delivered instructions step-by-step, and maintained polite interaction throughout the lesson. The distribution of this indicator is shown in Figure 3, placed immediately after this paragraph.

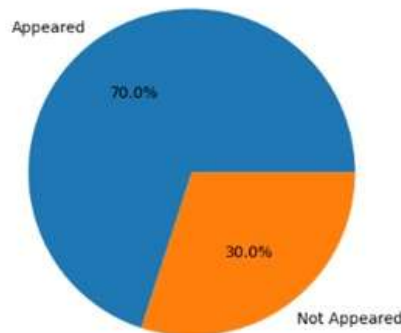


Figure 2. Diagram Communicative Effectively

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 3 shows that 70% of students demonstrated effective communication, while 30% did not demonstrate it consistently. At a descriptive level, many participants opened lessons with polite greetings such as “*Good morning*” and “*How are you today?*”, followed by explicit statements of learning objectives. These moves established procedural clarity and reduced ambiguity about learning expectations. Instructions were often sequenced and delivered in manageable steps, indicating awareness of classroom organization and student orientation.

However, deeper analysis suggests that communication often functioned primarily as an instructional framework rather than a mechanism for reciprocal relational engagement. Interaction typically followed an Initiation–Response–Evaluation (IRE) structure, where student contributions were evaluated immediately and rarely extended through probing questions or peer redistribution. While students invited participation (e.g., “*Who wants to answer?*”), most exchanges remained brief and teacher-controlled, limiting opportunities for dialogic meaning-making. Likewise, feedback expres-

sions such as “*Good job*” and “*That’s right*” supported a positive climate, but they frequently served as affirmation rather than as dialogic scaffolding that extends thinking or builds shared understanding. Overall, communication competence was evident in clarity, politeness, and procedural organization, yet relational depth was constrained by teacher-centered discourse patterns.

Developing Positive Relationship

Developing positive relationships was consistently demonstrated through relational warmth, recognition, and supportive interaction. Many students attempted to establish a welcoming atmosphere by greeting students, using friendly tone, smiling, maintaining eye contact, and acknowledging student participation. The distribution of this indicator is presented in Figure 4, placed immediately after this paragraph.

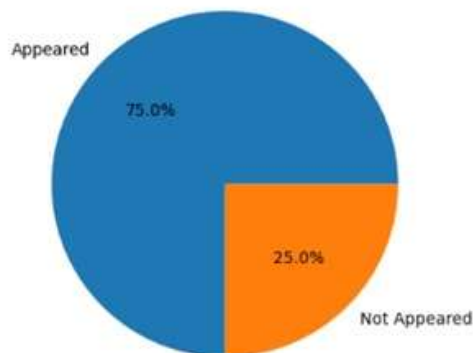


Figure 3. Diagram Developing Positive Relationship

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 4 indicates that 75% of participants demonstrated this indicator, while 25% did not demonstrate it consistently. At a descriptive level, relational warmth appeared through verbal acknowledgments and brief affirmations, for example “*Okay, thank you,*” “*Yes, I know,*” and “*That’s a good effort, let’s work on this.*” Such practices contributed to psychological safety and reduced relational distance between teacher and students.

Nevertheless, analysis shows that many supportive responses were brief and confirmatory, functioning mainly as affective validation rather than as relational expansion. Although students were acknowledged, their ideas were not consistently used as entry points for deeper collaborative exploration. From an SEL perspective, relationship-building involves not only warmth and friendliness but also reciprocal engagement and shared intellectual participation. In many observed episodes, the interaction remained teacher-directed in epistemic authority: students were recognized, but not consistently positioned as co-constructors of meaning. Thus, positive relationship-building was strong at the affective level but less consistently developed into dialogic partnership.

Practicing Teamwork and Collaborative Problem-Solving

Teamwork and collaborative problem-solving appeared in how students organized group discussions, asked students to share ideas, and guided cooperation in completing tasks. The distribution of this indicator is presented in Figure 5, placed immediately after this paragraph.

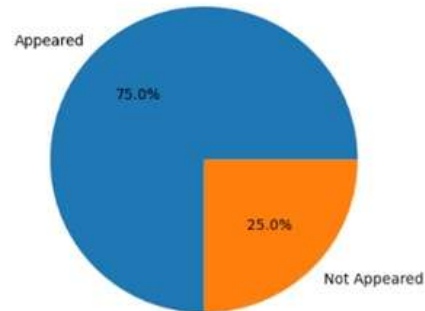


Figure 4. Diagram Practicing Teamwork and Collaborative Problem-Solving

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 5 shows that 55% of participants demonstrated teamwork/collaborative problem-solving, while 45% did not demonstrate it consistently. Teachers used prompts such as “Please do it together first” and “First talk about this before you make an answer,” and they often circulated to monitor participation and clarify confusion.

However, deeper analysis indicates that collaboration was often task-oriented rather than epistemically collaborative. Students were grouped to complete answers efficiently, but teachers rarely structured deeper peer negotiation (e.g., comparing reasoning, challenging ideas, assigning collaborative roles). Teacher authority remained central in validating answers and transitioning between activities. Thus, collaboration functioned more as organizational classroom management than as shared problem-solving aligned with the deeper SEL emphasis on mutual regulation and joint reasoning. Nevertheless, the consistent use of group tasks signals emerging awareness of peer interaction as relational practice.

Showing Leadership in Group

Leadership in group activities was observed when students-initiated group work, managed time and transitions, monitored progress, and guided students toward lesson goals. The distribution of this indicator is shown in Figure 6, placed immediately after this paragraph.

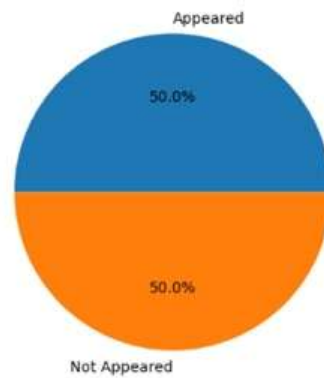


Figure 5. Diagram Showing Leadership in Group

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 6 indicates a balanced distribution: 50% of participants demonstrated leadership behaviors consistently, and 50% did not. At a descriptive level, leadership was evident in managerial moves such as “*Okay, now discuss this with your group,*” and “*Stop talking. Let’s check our answers together,*” as well as monitoring questions like “*Are you finished?*” or “*What is your answer?*”

Analytically, leadership was mostly centralized and teacher-driven. While teachers controlled task flow effectively, students were rarely given structured leadership roles (facilitator, recorder, presenter, timekeeper). Therefore, leadership functioned primarily as instructional control rather than developmental leadership that fosters student autonomy and shared regulation. This highlights a distinction between managerial leadership (strongly demonstrated) and distributed leadership (still limited).

Standing up for the right of other

Standing up for the rights of others refers to fairness, inclusion, and protecting equitable participation. It was reflected in how teachers encouraged respectful listening and attempted to balance participation. The distribution of this indicator is shown in Figure 7, placed immediately after this paragraph.

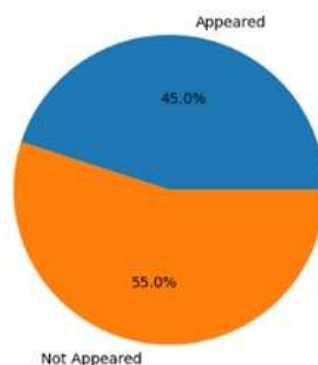


Figure 6. Diagram Standing Up For The Right Of Other

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 7 shows that 45% of participants demonstrated this indicator, while 55% did not. Teachers sometimes used prompts such as “*Let’s hear from someone else*” or reminders like “*Please respect your friends.*” These moves indicate basic awareness of respectful norms and fairness.

However, deeper analysis suggests that such moves often operated as procedural regulation rather than explicit advocacy for equitable voice. Teachers redirected turn-taking, but seldom framed participation explicitly as a matter of rights, inclusion, or fairness. Because overt conflict or discrimination was rare in microteaching, opportunities for strong advocacy were structurally limited. Nonetheless, even in low-conflict settings, advocacy can be enacted through deliberate scaffolding to support quieter students. Overall, this indicator appeared at a basic regulatory level but was not consistently enacted as a deliberate ethical practice.

Demonstrating Cultural Competency

Cultural competence involves recognizing students’ diverse identities and adapting interaction to be culturally responsive, not merely treating everyone “the same.” The distribution of this indicator is presented in Figure 8, placed immediately after this paragraph.

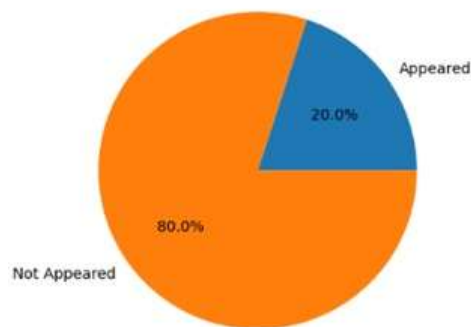


Figure 7. Diagram Demonstrating Cultural Competency

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 8 shows that only 20% of participants demonstrated culturally responsive practices, while 80% did not. Most microteaching sessions used standardized examples and uniform instructions (e.g., “Everyone has the same assignment”), which reflected procedural fairness but rarely activated cultural diversity as a pedagogical resource. Analytically, cultural competence remained largely implicit: teachers-maintained order and general inclusiveness, yet there was limited evidence of intentional recognition of diverse perspectives or culturally relevant examples. This suggests that culturally responsive relationship-building was not yet internalized as an integral practice in microteaching performance.

Resolving Conflict Constructively

Constructive conflict resolution involves mediation, perspective-taking, and dialogic problem-solving, not only behavioral control. The distribution of this indicator is presented in Figure 9, placed immediately after this paragraph.

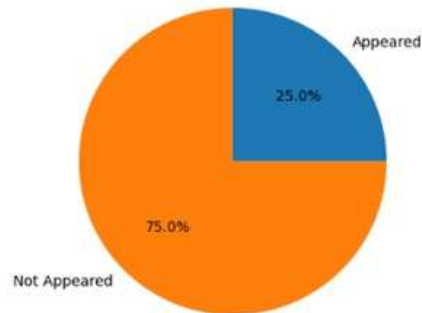


Figure 8. Diagram Resolving Conflict Constructively

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 9 shows that 25% of participants demonstrated constructive conflict handling, while 75% did not. Visible tension was minimal, likely because microteaching is structured and time-limited. When confusion or off-task behavior occurred, teachers typically used brief corrective redirection (“Please stay focused”), which restored lesson flow. Analytically, this reflects classroom regulation rather than relational mediation, as teachers rarely facilitated dialogue to explore misunderstanding or guide students toward negotiated solutions. Thus, conflict tended to be minimized rather than leveraged as relational learning

Resisting Negative Social Pressure

Resisting negative social pressure refers to the teacher’s ability to recognize and address subtle peer dynamics that may discourage students from expressing independent opinions, participating equitably, or maintaining respectful norms. In the observed microteaching sessions, this competency appeared infrequently. The distribution of this indicator is presented in Figure 10, which is placed immediately after this paragraph.

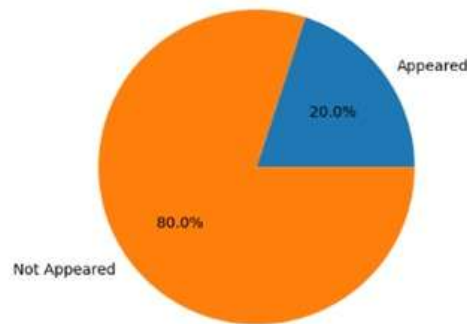


Figure 9. Diagram Resisting Negative Social Pressure

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 10 shows that only 20% of students demonstrated behaviors related to resisting negative social pressure, while 80% did not. At a descriptive level, group discussions often proceeded with limited teacher intervention when certain students dominated interaction or when quieter students remained hesitant. Teachers sometimes asked broad prompts such as “*Anything else?*” or “*Do you agree?*”, but these questions did not consistently challenge conformity or encourage alternative viewpoints.

Seeking offering support and help when needed

This indicator refers to creating a help-seeking/help-giving climate through scaffolding, encouragement to ask questions, and peer support routines. The distribution of this indicator is presented in Figure 11, placed immediately after this paragraph.

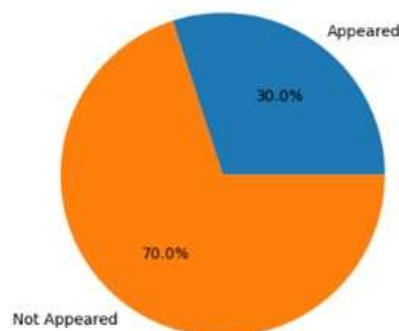


Figure 10. Diagram Seeking Offering Support and Help When Needed

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 11 shows that 30% of participants demonstrated this indicator, while 70% did not. Teachers sometimes provided clarification when students asked questions; however, explicit moves to normalize help-seeking (e.g., “*It’s okay to ask,*” “*Try asking your partner first,*” offering hints rather than answers) were not consistently observed.

At a descriptive level, some students actively contribute and take informal leadership roles, while others remain relatively silent or hesitant. In such cases, students generally allow the discussion to unfold without direct intervention to redistribute participation or explicitly invite diverse perspectives. Occasionally, teachers ask general questions such as *"Anything else?"* or *"Do you agree?"*, but these questions are broad and do not specifically challenge conformity or encourage alternative perspectives. A more in-depth analysis reveals that resistance to negative peer pressure is rarely guided as an explicit relational skill. Although overt conflict or bullying is not apparent, subtle forms of social dominance are present when certain students consistently shape the group's response while quieter members passively follow. Teacher non-intervention often prioritizes maintaining a fluid discussion over ensuring that all students feel psychologically safe to contribute. As a result, potential moments to foster assertiveness and independent reasoning are underutilized.

This discrepancy is pedagogically significant. Resisting negative peer pressure within a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) framework involves more than simply preventing bullying; it requires creating conditions in which students feel empowered to express disagreement, question consensus, and articulate alternative ideas without fear of social rejection. In observed sessions, teachers rarely modeled or encouraged the use of language such as, *"It's okay to have a different opinion,"* or *"Does anyone see this differently?"* Without explicit encouragement, students who feel uncertain or socially marginalized are less likely to voice divergent thoughts. Furthermore, general agreement-checking questions such as *"Do you agree?"* can inadvertently reinforce conformity if not accompanied by an invitation to elaborate or justify differing positions. When consensus is assumed rather than critically explored, group interactions risk becoming surface agreements rather than dialogic engagement. Thus, even though collaboration is structurally present, independent thinking within peer dynamics is not consistently supported.

It is also important to consider contextual limitations. Microteaching environments are transient and performance-oriented, which can diminish teachers' sensitivity to subtle peer dynamics. However, even within a limited timeframe, deliberate encouragement to validate dissent and normalize diverse perspectives can strengthen students' relational resilience. Overall, the findings suggest that students demonstrate competence in managing group interactions but are less prepared to identify and address more subtle forms of peer influence. Therefore, resistance to negative peer pressure remains underdeveloped as an observable relational competency. This highlights the need for greater emphasis on developing assertiveness, critical thinking, and psychological safety in collaborative learning environments.

Integration of Relationship-Building Skill Across Teaching Stage in Microteaching Session from SEL Perspective

The results also reveal that relationship-building skills were integrated into the teaching practices of students during microteaching sessions through several instructional practices and classroom interaction strategies. At the beginning of the lesson, many student teachers attempted to build rapport by greeting the class, asking simple questions, and creating a welcoming atmosphere. During the teaching process, they encouraged student participation by asking questions, inviting opinions, and responding positively to students' contributions. Relationship-building skills were also integrated through supportive feedback, where student teachers acknowledged students' efforts and guided them when they made mistakes. Additionally, some participants facilitated collaborative activities that allowed students to interact and share ideas with one another. These practices demonstrate that the student teachers incorporated SEL-oriented relationship-building skills into their teaching by fostering positive communication, mutual respect, and a supportive classroom environment throughout the microteaching process.

To document how relationship-building indicators were planned and enacted across lesson stages, Table 2 is presented immediately after this paragraph. A broader fulfillment overview is then provided in Figure 12, followed by stage-specific distributions in Figures 13–17.

Table 1. Integration and Relationship-Building Skill Element applied by Microteaching

No	Code	Integration in Lesson plan	Indicator Dominant
1	S2	Creating a friendly and supportive classroom environment, establishing a microteaching role as a learning partner Provide clear direction without being overbearing., encourage participation from all members.	Developing Positive Relationship, Showing Leadership in Groups
2	S3	Communicate learning objectives clearly from the start, provide a simple, step-by-step method, equal Participation Students' rights are safeguarded before they are violated, maintaining fair and equal distribution.	Communication Effectively, Standing Up for the Rights of Others
3	S5	Communicate learning objectives clearly from the start, provide a simple, step-by-step method, equal participation Planning is done cooperatively,disagreements are resolved through reasonable conversation and compromise.	Communicate Effectively, Practicing Teamwork & Collaborative Problem-Solving
4	S6	Create a friendly and supportive classroom environment, position yourself as a learning partner in microteaching Planning is done cooperatively. disagreements are resolved through reasonable conversation and compromise.	Developing Positive Relationship, Practicing Teamwork & Collaborative Problem-Solving

No	Code	Integration in Lesson plan	Indicator Dominant
5	S8	Provide clear direction without being overbearing. encourage participation from all members. Provide clear direction without being overbearing., encourage participation from all members.	Showing Leadership in Groups, Standing Up for the Rights of Others

source: processed data (2026)

As shown in Table 2, relationship-building skills were frequently planned and enacted through instructional routines such as establishing a friendly classroom climate, providing clear directions, encouraging equal participation, facilitating teamwork, and managing group discussion. In several cases, lesson plans explicitly included relational moves (e.g., positioning the teacher as a learning partner, structuring cooperation, and safeguarding equitable participation). At the same time, the integration was not evenly distributed across all stages. Skills related to communication and positive climate were more commonly embedded, while skills requiring dialogic mediation or culturally responsive engagement were less consistently planned or enacted.

A broader summary of overall fulfilment and distribution of relationship-building indicators across participants is presented in Figure 12, placed here to visualize the extent to which indicators were achieved during microteaching sessions.

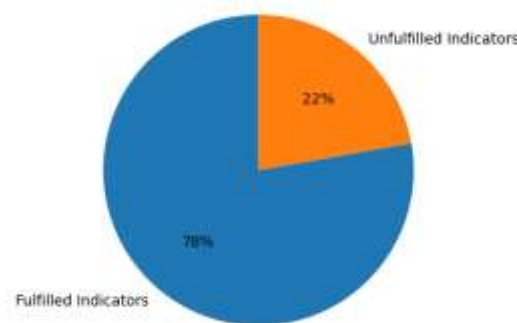


Figure 11. Fulfillment of Relationship-building skill Indicators in a Student

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 12 indicates that relationship-building competencies were generally present, but the degree of integration varied across students and across lesson stages. The following subsections explain stage-by-stage integration patterns.

Opening stage

Relationship-building skills were most strongly integrated during the opening stage, primarily through clear and respectful communication, warm greetings, and early positioning of the teacher as approachable and supportive. At a descriptive level, most students began with greetings (“*Good*

morning,” “How are you today?”), welcoming body language (smiling, open posture), and brief engagement questions (“Are you ready to learn?”). These moves established psychological safety and reduced social distance. Analytically, the opening stage functioned not only as a procedural start but also as a relational framing moment in which teachers signaled that the learning environment would be respectful and supportive. The level of integration in the opening stage is shown in **Figure 13**, placed immediately after this paragraph.

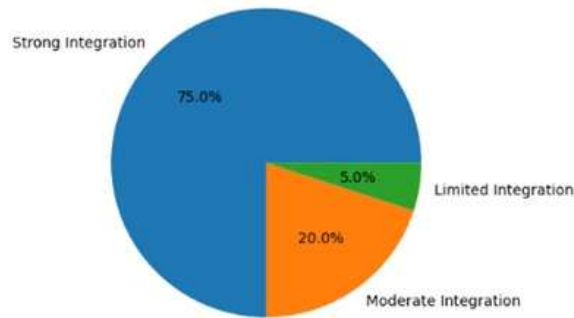


Figure 12. Opening stage

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 13 shows that 75% of students fell into the Strong Integration category, 20% into Moderate Integration, and 5% into Limited Integration, indicating that most participants integrated relationship-building behaviors strongly at the beginning of the lesson.

In S5’s case, communication and collaborative problem-solving were intentionally embedded in the lesson design from the beginning. S5 clearly articulated the learning objectives and structured initial activities to encourage group discussion and collaborative inquiry. Rather than presenting objectives as fixed instructions, S5 positioned them as collective goals to be achieved through interaction. When minor misunderstandings arose during group work, S5 facilitated clarification by inviting multiple perspectives before guiding students toward a common agreement. This demonstrated not only clarity of instruction but also dialogic sensitivity.

From a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective, this stage the difference between a routine classroom opening and a relational framing. A greeting alone does not automatically build quality relationships; a greeting becomes relationally meaningful when combined with attention to students' emotional presence and structured opportunities for mutual engagement. In S5 practice, communication was connected to a collaborative structure, demonstrating an intentional alignment between the relational climate and lesson planning. S5: The following is an interview from S5:

“I usually start by explaining the learning objectives at the beginning of the lesson so students understand what they are expected to achieve. After that, I give the instructions step by step using simple and clear language. I try not to give too many instructions at once because it can confuse students. Sometimes, I also write the main points on the board or repeat key instructions to make sure everyone can follow the activity.”

“When collaborating with peers in planning and conducting microteaching activities, I usually start by discussing the lesson objectives and teaching procedures together. We share ideas about teaching strategies, learning activities, and classroom management so that everyone can contribute. During the planning process, I try to communicate openly, listen to my peers’ suggestions, and respect their ideas. When conducting microteaching, we support each other by giving feedback, observing the teaching process, and helping when someone faces difficulties. This collaboration helps us improve our teaching skills and learn from each other’s strengths.”

Interview data indicated that participants demonstrated high levels of structured communicative competence, particularly in clarifying learning objectives and structuring instructions in a cognitively accessible manner. The deliberate use of step-by-step explanations, simplified language, repetition, and visual reinforcement (e.g., writing key points on the board) reflected not only procedural clarity but also a conscious effort to reduce cognitive load. This demonstrated awareness of students' learning needs and an effort to ensure instructional transparency. From a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective, these behaviors align well with effective communication as a fundamental relationship-building skill, as clarity serves as a form of relational care that minimizes students' anxiety and confusion.

Overall, the findings indicate that the opening stage was the strongest phase for observable relationship-building behaviors. The student demonstrated confidence in establishing a respectful tone, clearly articulating goals, and initiating group-oriented learning. However, while warmth and clarity were always present, the depth of dialogic engagement varied depending on how far the teacher extended the interaction beyond the introductory exchange.

Instructional stage

In the instructional stage, relationship-building skills were primarily integrated through maintaining positive relationships and supporting cooperative learning, often through gentle correction, encouragement, and comprehension checks. Many students combined explanation with brief questions to maintain engagement (e.g., “Can someone tell me the first step?”). When students hesitated or answered incorrectly, teachers frequently softened correction with affirming language (“That’s a good start let’s see it together”), reflecting relational sensitivity during content delivery. The level of integration in the instructional stage is presented in Figure 14, placed immediately after this paragraph.

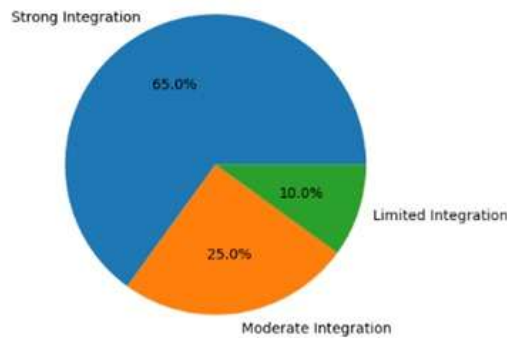


Figure 13. Instructional stages

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 14 shows that 65% of students demonstrated Strong Integration, 25% Moderate Integration, and 10% Limited Integration. These data indicate that relational integration remained strong during instruction, though not as consistently as in the opening stage.

Subject S6 was highly achieving in forming good relationships and encouraging teamwork and collaborative problem-solving with real learning activities. In the microteaching framework, S6 conducted Interactive learning activities like group discussion and collaborative assignments facilitated by Students-to-student interaction while maintaining a friendly classroom atmosphere by acting as a learner and encouraging students for active participation. These ways of working helped students become more confident in offering their ideas and collaborating. S6 also participated in collaborative lesson planning and was able to discuss aside with an open mind, without being offended. Subsequent performance on these skills together identified S6 as a robust promoting factor of social contacts and being team member effective. The below is an S6 interview:

“In microteaching sessions, I try to build positive relationships with students by creating a warm and respectful classroom atmosphere from the beginning of the lesson. Because in class there are always our friends, usually we position ourselves as friends who will definitely take turns doing teaching practice, so it's a kind of support or feedback”

“When there are differences of opinion during group planning, I try to handle them calmly and professionally. I listen to each perspective before giving my own opinion and focus on finding the best solution for the lesson rather than insisting on my own ideas. If disagreements occur, we usually discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each idea and choose the most suitable one together. By maintaining respectful communication and being open to compromise, I believe differences of opinion can become a positive learning experience rather than a conflict.

Interview data revealed that by intentionally creating a warm and respectful atmosphere from the beginning of the lesson, participants demonstrated an awareness that a relational climate is not an accident, but rather a foundation for effective teaching. Explicitly positioning peers as *"buddies"* who alternate teaching roles demonstrates a reduction in power distance and an attempt to normalize mutual support within the microteaching context. This demonstrates that relationship building is not solely directed at students but is also embedded within the peer dynamics.

In pair S6 showed high relationship competence by establishing a supportive atmosphere in the classroom, andhing for active participation from both the students and herself. S6 was able to successfully manage instructional conversations and collaborative planning by engaging in respectful, open communication about multiple viewpoints. This type of orientation proved to be an effective embodiment of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) principles as part of the microteaching sessions and highlighted the significance of relationship-building skills in terms of good pedagogy and enjoyable classroom atmosphere.

Interaction stage

In the interaction stage, relationship-building skills were most visible through active encouragement, responsiveness to student contributions, and structured collaboration. Teachers frequently used positive reinforcement and nonverbal support (e.g., thumbs-up gestures) to validate student participation. Interaction also revealed whether students could move beyond IRE patterns and facilitate reciprocal engagement. The level of integration in the interaction stage is shown in Figure 15, placed immediately after this paragraph.

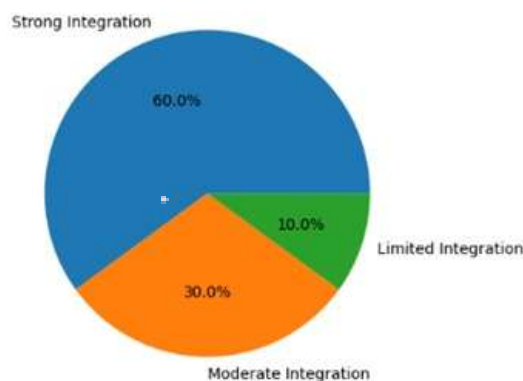


Figure 14. Interaction stages

source: processed data (2026)

In the case of S2, relationship-building was embedded more intentionally within instructional design. S2 incorporated interactive learning tasks such as structured group discussions and collaborative assignments directly into content explanation. Rather than positioning instruction as one-directional knowledge transfer, S2 facilitated student-to-student interaction while maintaining a supportive classroom tone. This suggests that instructional communication was intertwined with collaborative engagement rather than separated from it. Furthermore, S6 demonstrated openness during collaborative lesson planning and student-to-student discussions, indicating relational competence beyond classroom performance. During the implementation of microteaching, S6 encouraged student participation without dominating responses, creating space for diverse perspectives. This reflects a shift from simple understanding checks to interactive meaning-making. The exchange below is from S2:

“When I ask a question, I give appreciation such as "good job," "thank you for your answer" after the student answers the question verbally, if non-verbally, I usually show a gesture like a thumbs up "good", and if it's wrong, it's okay, so I'll throw the question to someone else”

“To ensure that everyone participates in group activities, I pay attention to students who tend to be quiet or less confident. I try to encourage them by asking simple questions or inviting them to share their ideas in a supportive way. I also set clear rules at the beginning, such as taking turns when speaking and respecting each other’s opinions. By creating a safe and structured environment, I aim to make all students feel comfortable and willing to participate actively in group work.”

From an SEL perspective, the interaction stage is a key point where relationship-building becomes either peripheral or embedded into pedagogical reasoning. Participants who combined questioning with encouragement and inclusive participation management demonstrated stronger integration than those who treated interaction mainly as answer-checking. Overall, the interaction stage showed high potential for relationship-building, though the depth varied by participant.

Overall, the findings indicate that while most students demonstrated relational sensitivity during explanations, S6 demonstrated a more advanced integration of relationship-building into instructional practices. Learning is not simply about delivering content but about maintaining a climate of positive interaction and collaborative engagement. This alignment illustrates how effective pedagogy and relational competence can mutually reinforce each other throughout the learning phase.

Feedback stage

During the feedback stage, relationship-building skills were primarily manifested through supportive feedback, respectful correction, and efforts to maintain students’ confidence. Correct answers were often affirmed with praise (“Yes, that’s right. Wonderful”), while incorrect or partial responses were addressed with softened feedback (“That is pretty good, but let’s think about it”), followed by clarification. These practices indicate relational sensitivity in evaluation. The level of integration in the feedback stage is presented in Figure 16, placed immediately after this paragraph.

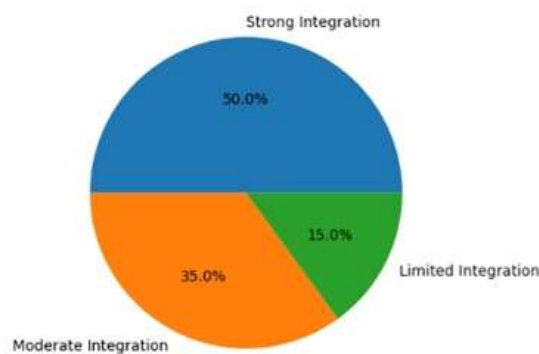


Figure 15. Feedback Stage

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 16 shows 50% Strong Integration, 35% Moderate Integration, and 15% Limited Integration, indicating that integration in feedback was generally positive but less consistent than earlier stages.

What's more, Subject S3 power skill harmony and also sticking up for the little man (Defending the Rights of Others). In microteaching sessions, S3 scripted classroom activities like (guided discussion, interactive instruction) clearly stated learning objectives and gave explicit detailed directions. In these activities, S3 showed an awareness of the students freedom to participate as much as he wanted, thus giving all equal space to speak and avoid one student's domination of classroom discussions. Indeed, these preventive measures reflect a commitment to equitability and equality in the educational experience, protecting the rights of students before they are trampled. Interview from S3 is as follows:

“When I notice that students look confused or ask questions, I try to respond calmly and patiently. I usually repeat the instructions using simpler words and give concrete examples related to their daily experiences. If necessary, I demonstrate the task or ask one student to restate the instructions to check their understanding. This helps me ensure that students really understand what they need to do before continue the lesson.”

“I'm not defending. For example, when expressing my opinion, I'm not called a defender, but rather trying to engage everyone in discussion, filtering each opinion, trying to unify it, and striving to remain fair. If a group continues to treat another group unfairly, I will politely object, providing logical reasons, so they can accept it. I believe everyone should be treated with respect and fairness”.

These interviews yielded insightful results, particularly in situations where students experienced confusion. The participants' calm and patient responses, combined with the strategic use of simplified language, concrete examples, and instructional repetition, reflected more than just procedural clarity. They signaled a deliberate effort to maintain students' emotional safety while ensuring cognitive understanding. By asking students to restate instructions, the participants shifted from one-way explanations to formative verification, demonstrating an awareness of the need for active understanding rather than passive acceptance.

Lastly, the interaction stage is also the most transparent about incorporating relationship-building capacities into Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) frameworks. Collaborated learning by using active questions asking, positive verbal and non-verbal feedback and balance leadership. These methods illustrate some of the ways that planned interaction strategies can be used to build relationships, sustain inclusion and develop a dynamic environment for learning in microteaching sessions.

Closing stage

In the closing stage, relationship-building integration varied more widely. While many students ended lessons with polite closings, brief summaries, and appreciative remarks, fewer used closing as an

opportunity to consolidate relational connection through reflection, shared appreciation, or reinforcement of inclusive learning norms. The level of integration in the closing stage is presented in Figure 17, placed immediately after this paragraph.

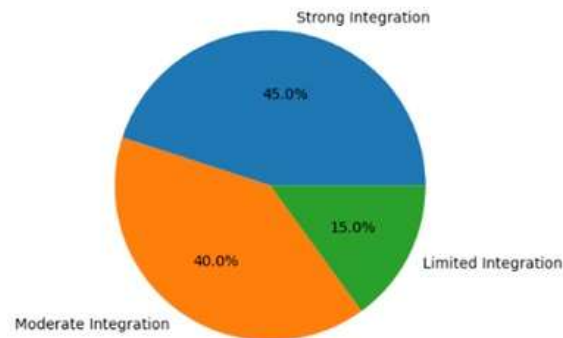


Figure 16. Closing Stages

source: processed data (2026)

Figure 17 shows 45% Strong Integration, 40% Moderate Integration, and 15% Limited Integration, indicating that relational integration in the closing stage was generally present but not consistently strong.

Interview evidence (e.g., from S8) suggested that some participants used organizational leadership to create clarity before group work and to protect equal participation through clear rules and respectful reminders. Analytically, such leadership supported relational stability by reducing ambiguity and preventing dominance. However, closing practices often remained procedural (e.g., “*Okay, that’s all, thank you*”) rather than relationally consolidating (e.g., appreciation of contributions, reflective questions, encouragement for future learning). This indicates that relationship-building at closing tended to function as polite completion rather than as deliberate relational closure. In fewer instances, it actively extended dialogue or redistributed participation power. Here’s an Interview from S8:

“When guiding group or pair activities, I demonstrate leadership by providing clear directions and explaining the purpose of the activity before students begin working. I try to organize the activity so that students understand their roles and the expected outcomes. During the activity, I monitor the groups, offer guidance when students seem confused, and keep the discussion focused on the task. Rather than dominating the activity, I try to act as a facilitator who supports students’ learning and encourages them to think independently.”

“When unfair treatment occurs, I respond by establishing clear classroom rules about respect and equal participation. I remind students to respect each other’s opinions and I try to manage discussions so that no one person dominates. My goal is to maintain a safe and comfortable classroom environment for everyone.”

Interview data revealed that participants demonstrated structured instructional leadership. By explicitly providing clear directions, clarifying the objectives of the activity, and outlining roles and expected outcomes before group work began, participants demonstrated structured instructional

leadership. However, analytically, this leadership was not hierarchical but organizational, designed to create clarity that enabled autonomy. Clarity here served not only as an instructional framework but also as relational stability, reducing ambiguity that might lead to confusion or unequal participation.

Overall, the findings suggest that relationship-building skills were integrated across microteaching stages, but unevenly. The opening and interaction stages showed the strongest and most consistent integration of relationship-building behaviors, particularly those related to communication clarity, supportive climate, and participation encouragement. In contrast, advanced competencies such as conflict mediation, cultural responsiveness, resisting negative peer pressure, and help-seeking/help-giving practices were less consistently integrated across stages, likely due to the structured, simulated, and time-limited nature of microteaching. These findings suggest that microteaching provides meaningful opportunities for developing foundational relational competence, but further structured practice may be required to strengthen deeper SEL-oriented interactional skills.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the integration of relationship-building skills in microteaching sessions from a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) perspective. Guided by two research questions, the study examined (1) the relationship-building skills demonstrated by students during microteaching and (2) how these skills were integrated across teaching stages (opening, instruction, interaction, feedback, and closing). Using directed qualitative content analysis informed by CASEL's SEL relationship skills domain, the findings show that students demonstrated multiple relationship-building behaviors, but with uneven depth and consistency.

Regarding the first research question, the most frequently demonstrated relationship-building skills were clear and respectful communication and developing positive relationships. Students generally used polite greetings, clear instructions, supportive tone, and affirming responses that contributed to psychological comfort and classroom order. Teamwork and collaborative problem-solving, as well as managerial leadership in organizing classroom activities, were also observed, indicating emerging competence in structuring cooperative participation. However, deeper relational competencies—such as culturally responsive interaction, constructive conflict resolution, resistance to negative peer pressure, and help-seeking/help-giving climate appeared less frequently. These findings suggest that while foundational relational practices were consistently enacted, more advanced SEL-informed relational pedagogy remains developmental.

Regarding the second research question, relationship-building skills were integrated across all teaching stages but were most consistently visible in the opening and interaction stages, where direct teacher–student engagement was strongest. Integration during instruction, feedback, and closing stages was present but varied in intensity and relational complexity. In many cases, relational behaviors sup-

ported instructional flow and classroom management, but were less consistently used to promote dialogic engagement, distributed agency, and deeper co-construction of meaning. Overall, the study concludes that microteaching supports the emergence of foundational relationship-building awareness and practices, yet the full enactment of complex SEL-oriented relational competencies may require more explicit scaffolding and richer teaching contexts.

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