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Analyzing Teacher's Set Induction And Closure In An EFL Classroom: A Case Study At MI Tarbiyah Islamiyah Palembang

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the implementation of set induction and closure strategies in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom and to investigate students' responses toward these strategies. This research employed a qualitative case study design conducted at MI Tarbiyah Islamiyah Palembang. The participants consisted of one English teacher and nine students from grades 4, 5, and 6. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The findings revealed that set induction was consistently implemented through greeting, ice-breaking, and activating prior knowledge, which enhanced students' readiness and engagement. Meanwhile, closure was implemented through reviewing and questioning strategies; however, it was not consistently conducted in a structured and reflective manner. Students generally responded positively in terms of motivation, engagement, and retention, although differences in participation and comprehension were still observed. The study concludes that the effectiveness of instructional strategies depends not only on their use but also on their consistency, depth, and adaptability in real classroom contexts.

Keywords : Set Induction, Closure, EFL, Student Engagement, Teaching Strategies

INTRODUCTION

English has become a global lingua franca, making early language acquisition increasingly essential for students' academic success and future careers. In the Indonesian context, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), and its instruction at the elementary level presents specific pedagogical challenges. Young learners often experience limited vocabulary, low confidence, and varying levels of motivation, which can hinder effective learning (Krashen, 1982; Schunk, 2012). To address these challenges, instructional strategies that enhance engagement and comprehension are required. Among these, set induction and closure play critical roles in structuring effective learning experiences. Set induction functions as the initial stage of a lesson, aiming to activate prior knowledge and

capture students' attention, while closure serves as the concluding phase that consolidates learning and reinforces understanding (Fisher & Frey, 2013; Gagne, 1985).

Recent studies have highlighted the importance of these instructional stages in improving student engagement and learning outcomes. For instance, Jufri and Hidayat (2023) found that effective set induction strategies significantly increased students' readiness and participation in elementary classrooms. Similarly, Abdelrahman (2021) reported that closure activities enhanced students' retention and motivation. However, despite their recognized importance, several studies indicate that these strategies are not consistently implemented in practice due to time constraints, lack of training, and classroom management challenges (Ismawati, 2022; Lubis, 2021). Furthermore, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia emphasizes student-centered and flexible learning approaches, requiring teachers to adopt more interactive and adaptive instructional strategies (Sudirman & Suryadi, 2022). Although set induction and closure align with these principles, limited empirical research has explored how these strategies are applied in elementary EFL classrooms under this curriculum reform.

Most previous studies have focused on secondary education contexts (Astuti, 2018; Yusuf, 2018), leaving a gap in understanding their implementation in primary education. Although prior studies confirm the effectiveness of set induction and closure, limited attention has been given to the consistency of their implementation in elementary EFL classrooms under the Merdeka Curriculum. This study contributes by examining not only how these strategies are applied, but also the gap between theoretical expectations and actual classroom practice. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on instructional strategies in elementary EFL contexts. Practically, it provides insights for teachers on how to implement set induction and closure more consistently and effectively. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how set induction and closure are implemented in an elementary EFL classroom and how students respond to these strategies.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research was conducted at MI Tarbiyah Islamiyah Palembang. The participants consisted of one English teacher and nine students from grades 4, 5, and 6, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted in six sessions to capture teaching practices and student engagement. Interviews explored perceptions and experiences of both teacher and students. Documentation supported data triangulation. Data analysis followed thematic analysis procedures (Braun & Clarke, 2006), including data reduction, coding, categorization, and interpretation. Trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation and member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of set induction was carried out consistently through structured and interactive activities, including greeting, questioning, recalling previous lessons, and the use of games or songs. These strategies effectively

enhanced students' readiness and engagement in the learning process. Based on classroom observations, students became more attentive at the beginning of the lesson and showed active participation by responding to the teacher's prompts. This suggests that the initial phase of learning plays a crucial role not only in preparing students cognitively but also in building a positive emotional atmosphere that supports learning readiness.

In addition, the consistency of implementing set induction indicates that the teacher had a clear understanding of its importance in the teaching process. By starting the lesson with structured activities, the teacher was able to create a predictable learning routine, which is particularly important for young learners. A structured beginning helps students transition from non-academic to academic activities more smoothly, reducing distractions and increasing focus. This also reflects the teacher's ability to manage the classroom effectively and establish a learning environment that encourages participation.

For example, during one observation session, the teacher used a short guessing game with picture prompts to introduce new vocabulary. Students enthusiastically participated by raising their hands and attempting to answer the questions. This activity not only attracted students' attention but also created opportunities for active interaction between the teacher and students. Such interactive engagement indicates that students were not only passively receiving information but were also actively involved in constructing their understanding of the material.

Furthermore, the use of games and songs as part of set induction contributed to a more relaxed and enjoyable learning environment. This is particularly important in EFL classrooms, where students may feel anxious when learning a foreign language. By incorporating enjoyable activities, the teacher was able to reduce students' anxiety and increase their confidence to participate. This finding highlights that emotional engagement is as important as cognitive engagement in the learning process.

This finding indicates that connecting new material to prior knowledge supports meaningful learning, as emphasized by Bransford et al. (2000). The use of questioning and recall activities facilitated cognitive activation, enabling students to relate new information to what they had previously learned. In addition, Fisher and Frey (2013) argued that effective lesson openings provide a strong foundation for subsequent learning activities by ensuring that students are mentally prepared and focused.

Moreover, the integration of interactive strategies such as games and songs contributed to increased motivation and participation. Students were observed to be more enthusiastic and willing to engage in learning when such activities were applied. This supports Harmer (2007), who argued that engaging opening activities are essential in maintaining students' attention, particularly among young learners in EFL contexts. Similarly, previous studies by Nafisah (2013) and Alifah (2020) also reported that interactive set induction strategies significantly improve student engagement and classroom participation.

However, despite the overall effectiveness of these strategies, the findings also revealed that participation was not evenly distributed among students. Some students remained passive or less responsive during the activities, indicating differences in learning readiness, confidence, and language ability. This suggests that while set induction was effective in general, it did not equally benefit all learners. This finding supports Vygotsky's

(1978) theory that learners require differentiated support based on their developmental levels.

In this context, teachers need to adapt their strategies to accommodate diverse learning abilities. For example, teachers may provide simpler questions for less confident students or use peer support strategies to encourage participation. By doing so, the teacher can ensure that all students are actively involved in the learning process, not only those who are more confident or capable. This highlights the importance of flexibility in implementing instructional strategies, particularly in heterogeneous classrooms.

The implementation of closure was conducted through reviewing vocabulary and asking questions at the end of the lesson. These activities were intended to help students recall the material and reinforce their understanding. Based on observation data, closure activities allowed students to revisit key points of the lesson and reflect on what they had learned. This indicates that closure plays an important role in strengthening students' retention and helping them organize their knowledge.

In addition, closure activities provided an opportunity for teachers to assess students' understanding informally. By asking questions at the end of the lesson, the teacher could identify which students had understood the material and which students needed further support. This formative assessment function of closure is important in guiding future teaching and ensuring that learning objectives are achieved.

For instance, in one session, the teacher asked students to mention vocabulary learned during the lesson. Some students were able to recall the words accurately, while others hesitated or remained silent. This variation in responses indicates differences in students' levels of understanding and highlights the importance of reinforcement in learning. It also suggests that closure activities can reveal learning gaps that may not be visible during the main lesson.

This finding is consistent with Gagne (1985), who emphasized the importance of review and reinforcement in enhancing retention. Similarly, Rosenshine (2012) argued that summarization and questioning are essential components of effective instruction because they help students consolidate their knowledge. Through these activities, students are encouraged to process and reorganize the information they have learned, which supports deeper understanding.

However, the study found that closure was not consistently implemented across all sessions. In several cases, the teacher ended the lesson abruptly due to time constraints, without providing sufficient opportunities for reflection or summarization. This inconsistency reduces the effectiveness of closure as a strategy for reinforcing learning. When closure is omitted, students may leave the classroom without a clear understanding of what they have learned.

This finding is in line with previous studies (Fisher & Frey, 2013; Ismawati, 2022), which reported that closure is often neglected or implemented superficially in classroom practice. This suggests that teachers may prioritize completing the lesson content over providing sufficient time for reflection, which can negatively affect students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, student participation during closure was also uneven. While some students actively responded to the teacher's questions, others remained passive. This

suggests that closure strategies need to be more interactive and inclusive to engage all learners effectively. Teachers may need to incorporate collaborative activities, such as group discussions or peer summarization, to increase participation during the closing stage of the lesson.

Students generally showed positive responses toward the implementation of set induction and closure strategies. They reported feeling more motivated and interested in learning, especially when interactive activities were used. This finding indicates that engaging instructional strategies can create a more enjoyable and supportive learning environment. Observation data also showed that students were more engaged during lessons that incorporated games, questioning, and interactive discussions. This indicates that the use of varied instructional strategies contributes to a more dynamic and interactive classroom atmosphere. Students were not only listening to the teacher but were also actively involved in the learning process, which is essential for language learning.

This result is supported by Deci and Ryan (2000), who highlighted that intrinsic motivation increases when students perceive learning activities as enjoyable and meaningful. When students are motivated, they are more likely to participate actively and persist in learning, even when they encounter difficulties. However, despite the high level of engagement, some students still experienced difficulties in understanding the material, particularly in terms of vocabulary. This finding suggests that engagement alone does not guarantee comprehension. Marzano (2007) argued that effective learning requires not only engagement but also structured support and reinforcement to ensure that students fully understand the material.

This indicates that teachers need to combine engaging strategies with clear explanations and sufficient practice opportunities. For example, after introducing vocabulary through games, teachers should provide additional exercises or repetition activities to strengthen students' understanding. This combination of engagement and reinforcement is essential for effective learning in EFL classrooms. Overall, this study demonstrates that the main challenge lies not in the selection of instructional strategies, but in their consistent and effective implementation. While the teacher showed a good understanding of set induction and closure, practical constraints such as time limitations and differences in students' abilities affected their application. Compared to previous studies (Yusuf, 2018; Lubis, 2021), this research provides a more critical perspective by highlighting the gap between theoretical knowledge and classroom practice.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that set induction was implemented consistently and effectively, particularly in enhancing students' readiness and engagement at the beginning of the lesson. Through structured and interactive activities such as greeting, questioning, recalling previous lessons, and using games or songs, the teacher was able to create a positive and engaging learning atmosphere. These strategies not only helped students become more attentive but also encouraged active participation, which is essential in an elementary EFL classroom context. This suggests that a well-planned set induction

plays a significant role in preparing students both cognitively and emotionally, thereby supporting a more effective learning process.

In contrast, the implementation of closure was found to be less consistent and lacked sufficient depth in reflection. Although closure activities such as reviewing vocabulary and asking questions were applied, they were not always conducted in a structured or comprehensive manner. In several instances, closure was implemented briefly or omitted due to time constraints, which limited its effectiveness in reinforcing students' understanding. As a result, students did not always have adequate opportunities to reflect on what they had learned, which may affect their ability to retain and consolidate knowledge in the long term.

Furthermore, students generally responded positively to both set induction and closure strategies, particularly when interactive activities were involved. They showed higher levels of motivation, interest, and participation during the learning process. However, the findings also revealed that differences in comprehension and participation still existed among students. Some students were more active and responsive, while others tended to be passive or experienced difficulties in understanding the material, especially in terms of vocabulary. This indicates that while the strategies were effective overall, they did not equally benefit all students, highlighting the need for more adaptive and inclusive teaching approaches.

Therefore, this study concludes that the effectiveness of set induction and closure strategies depends not only on their implementation but also on the consistency, quality, and depth of their application in classroom practice. Teachers should focus on maintaining consistent use of set induction while improving the implementation of closure by allocating sufficient time for reflection and involving all students actively. In addition, teachers are encouraged to apply more flexible and differentiated strategies to address the diverse needs of learners. By doing so, both set induction and closure can be optimized to enhance students' engagement, comprehension, and overall learning outcomes in EFL classrooms.

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