**RESEARCH PAPER**

**TOPIC: Lead­ins Used By Teachers in Teaching English for Occupational Purposes to Non Native Speakers**

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

Teacher has a great responsibility on determining the success of learning process of a language classroom as there are many elements that teachers need to take into account in establishing effective learning environment for their students whom may vary in terms of cultures, races, intellect, learning strategies and many more others. Hence, well­thought lead­ins are indeed crucial to be applied in language classroom as it Arrendas (1998) has explained that lead­in is a strategy that been used by teachers in the initial part of the lesson which aims at exposing the students to the content of the lesson as well as enabling the students to correlate the idea with their prior knowledge in order to create meaningful learning environment for the students. Prior to this matter, lead­ins is another important element in pedagogy that should not be taken lightly among the teachers and has to be explored deeper in order to be utilized effectively in their classrooms. As there is not much studies that are focused in this matter, it is hoped that it is the academic gap that the researchers hoped to fill in into the rapid development of academic field.

This paper studies on teachers’ usage of lead­ins in their non­native English classrooms. The aims of this paper is to provide ample information to fellow researchers on the current trend of the usage of lead­ins among the teachers that are specifically selected as our respondents to fulfill our requirements to study on this matter. The findings that are hoped to be retrieved from this study would be based on the Rosette (1982) theory which includes in analyzing the problems, priority, ability, attitudes and solutions in applying lead­ins in their English classrooms. Henceforth, the methodology that is used in this study would be based on semi­ structured interviews in which 30 respondents are carefully selected according to the requirements needed. 15 respondents are selected among the teachers from local universities and the remaining respondents are among the students who have been involved in English classes. The main purpose of this is to get unbiased findings on the views of lead­ins implementation in English classes. In the end of the paper will show the findings in which reports on the analysis of the teachers’ and the students’ attitude and acceptance with the implementation of lead­ins in the classrooms. Suggested solutions are also included in the end of the analysis in hoped to provide information for the teachers to understand more and being able to utilize it accordingly in their English classrooms.

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions are formulated as below:

1. Is the usage of lead­ins is important to be applied in English business classrooms?

2. How does the implementation of lead­ins in classes affect the students' participation and interest in classrooms?

3. What are the limitations that the teachers face in implementing lead­ins in classrooms?

4. What are the suggested solutions to utilize the lead­ins to the fullest?

 **The research objectives for this study are as followed:**

1. Identify the importance of use of lead­ ins in English classrooms among non­natives learners
2. identify the effects on the usage of lead­ ins in the classes to the learners' interest in learning
3. identify the constraints that the teachers face in implementing lead­ ins into classes
4. Identify the suggested solutions for the teachers.
5. **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework that is chosen for this study would be based on the Situational Learning Framework by J. Lave. Lave emphasizes that learning takes place when it is implemented into functional activity, context and culture that is related to the topic discussed. Correlation to that, it displays relevance to this study as the application of lead­ ins would be based on specific circumstances that the teachers would use to fit into the topics of the lessons. Besides that, Brown, Collins & Duguid (1989) also stated that this framework allows the learners to "acquire, develop and use cognitive tools in authentic domain activity". Henceforth, it suits to the objectives of this study as it is intended to explore on how the implications of lead­ ins as a form of situational learning element could attract the learners' interest and motivation in English classrooms.

1. **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Lead­ ins was recognized in the dated back of 1970’s. The fundamental concept of lead­ in is introduced the theme of the lesson. For example­ introducing or predict some vocabulary from the given text. It is a way to grab the students’ attention. However, C. Turney (1975) pointed out that it is very important to attract students’ attention and cultivate their desire for learning at the beginning of teaching. He put forward the functions of leading­ in: gaining attention, arousing motivation, setting up a teaching target, structuring and making links. In addition to, G. Roger & S. Walters (1983) stated that the lead­ in language should make the communication between teachers and students free and lively. He suggested a variety of methods of lead­ in, for example, socializing, which is based on the real life situation, and inducing, which can lead students inductively to solve the problems the teacher give them and construct the internal links of the knowledge through the guiding of the teacher. Accordingly, James M. Cooper (1992) pointed out that the ultimate goal of lead­ in is to stimulate the interest of students for learning and their desire to participate in the class activities. Moreover, Arendas (1998) emphasized that lead­ in is essential for the structure of the whole class teaching, which plays an important role for the learning and the motive. However, Robert E. Slavin (2004) gave requirements to design lead­ in: 1) Lead­ in should attract students’ interest, and 2) teachers should provoke their curiosity and make them be interested in the new contents. He focused on the priority students’ fondness in terms of learning new contents and teachers should begin their classroom with the lead­ ins activity.

The other scholars from China and educators also notice the important role of lead­ in in EFL classrooms. In relation to, Hu Shuzhen (1996) thought that lead­ in, as an important link in the classroom teaching, can be at the beginning of a lesson, and sometimes is throughout teaching. She described the functions, types and basic requirements of lead­ in. Similarly, Liu Xianguo

(2004) studied optimized lead­ in language and regarded the language of lead­ in as an art, like

“The first hammer knocking in the minds of students or like the magnet drawing their attention” (p.17). Moreover, Li Rumi (2000) stressed that lead­ in is the key link of the classroom teaching and lead­ in in different characteristics would produce different functions. Fu Jianming (2005) also pointed out the similar idea that lead­ in can cultivate students’ motive for learning and create fine learning and teaching environment, which influences the quality and efficiency of teaching.

1. **METHODOLOGY**

The method extracted in this research is Qualitative research method. Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis( Patton & Cochran, 2000). Qualitative data tend to be collected in close proximity to the specific situation such as via direct observation or interview, with the influence of the local context being taken into account and not being discarded (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Regardless of the research design or method used, qualitative research can inform theory and model development, if it is conducted in a way that leads to insights into particular psychological, social, and/or cultural processes and practices that exist within a specific setting, location, time, context, event, incident, activity, and/or experience (Connolly, 1998; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2004). Glaser and Strauss (1967), the fathers of grounded theory, created the method of constant comparison analysis. When a researcher is interested in utilizing an entire dataset to identify underlying themes presented through the data, a constant comparison analysis can be helpful. Constant comparison can be undertaken deductively (e.g., codes are identified prior to analysis and then looked for in the data), inductively (e.g., codes emerge from the data), or abductively (i.e., codes emerge iteratively (Leech, 2007). The research is conducted on the use of lead­ ins in the classes for teaching English language in IIUM. There is not much work done under this topic which actually motivates us more to work on this and use qualitative research method which is also stated by Patton & Cochran “In situations where little is known, it is often better to start with qualitative methods (interviews, focus groups, etc.)”.The respondents are the lecturers of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and University technology Mara Malaysia (UITM) and students from International Islamic University Malaysia. There were 8 lecturers from IIUM and 7 from UITM & 15 students belonging to different kulliyyahs (faculty) from IIUM .The teachers are have taught English language as EOP to students who belong to the final year under­graduate program & have to take EOP before they graduate. The lecturers interviewed have years of experience in teaching English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) to the undergraduate students and English Language to different levels of students.

1. **INSTRUMENTS**

The “interview” is a managed verbal exchange (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003 and Gillham, 2000) and as such its effectiveness heavily depends on the communication skills of the interviewer (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007). The interview questions were based on Rosettes (1982) question types which includes five main categories namely *Problems, attitudes, abilities, priorities and solutions*. There were total a set of 26 questions for the lecturers and 11 questions for the students which were divided accordingly. The interview conducted were the semi­ structured interviews. Semi­structured interviewing, according to Bernard (1988), is best used when you won't get more than one chance to interview someone and when you will be sending several interviewers out into the field to collect data. The results of the interview for both the lecturers and the students are compared to extract the major findings. Each lecturer respondent will be addressed as R1, R2, R3… and Student S1, S2, S3… So on.

1. **DATA ANALYSIS**

As noted by Miles and Huberman (1994), “The strengths of qualitative data rest on the competence with which their analysis is carried out” (p.10). Qualitative researchers believe that there is only one way to analyze qualitative data—through the method of constant comparative or constant comparison analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).Triangulation is crosschecking of data using multiple data sources or using two or more methods of data collection. Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999) identify type of triangulation of sources which examines the consistency of different data sources from within the same method. For example: at different points in time, in public vs. private settings, comparing people with different viewpoints.

In this study, the perception of the students and the teachers are being compared in using lead­ins and their usage by the teachers and hence a triangulation relationship is built. Each interview is transcribed carefully and then the main focus of all the interviews is being highlighted. The perception of teachers on natives and non­natives are also being highlighted. The main gist of the interviews is being carefully analyzed and highlighted. Each interview is analyzed based on the five categories and is being entered into a table for each respondent which will make it more clear. The student’s interview are also divided into the five categories and their perceptions are also recorded in the table separately making the data clear.

**TEACHERS INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS­ Appendix­3**

**PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS ON NATIVES AND NON­NATIVES­**

**Appendix4**

**STUDENTS INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS­ Appendix­5**

1. **FINDINGS**

**RESPONDENTS APPROACH TOWARDS USING LEAD­INS**

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| --- |
| **R1** defined lead­ins as mood creations to find out the conditions of the students, their knowledge about previous lesson and giving an overview of today’s lesson. R1 uses lead­ins in the classes and think it is a positive approach towards teaching. **R2** uses lead­ins sometimes especially in the initial period of the weeks or semester which is important for the initial time. **R3** defines lead in as something to attract student’s attention, to make things or introduce the subject. For R3 it depends on the skills to be taught or the syllabus.R3 uses lead­ins for writing as the students can comprehend what they are going to learn about. R3 do not use lead­ins unnecessary for pleasure.  **R4** defined Lead­ins are before even the introduction of the lesson. Phrase like “today we are going to talk about.” is not a lead in but the introduction of the lesson. R4 uses Lead­ins in the class but says that student’s background interest makes him develop the lead ins for the class. R4 do not prepare the lead­ins lesson but do its own type of lead­ins. **R5** defined it is as set induction, and mentioned that it can be called as lead­ins R5 uses lead­ins the class varying with the topic which is to be taught.  **R6** uses lead­ins in the class but not often because after sometime of the semester the students get bored and want things to finish. R6 use lead­ins in the class in the initial time of the semester whereas at the end of the semester the focus shifts on the lessons to finish. **R7** do not use lead­ins in the class as it is a content based class where the students already have the idea of the lesson and know what they are going to learn. **R8** do not use lead­ins in the class as the classes are large in number and they aim to focus on the lesson more than asking questions to the students. R8 only asks questions about the previous class and jump into the lesson. **R9** calls it as induction as the term is used during the study years. R9 is aware of it and try to slot in the induction in lessons.  |

**R10** is aware of the usage of leads­ins in class, though more familiar with the term 'set induction. R10 thinks it is very important to be applied in class because of the general idea behind lead­ins is that it helps activate students' background knowledge or schemata which will assist the students to better understand the topic taught.

**R11** prefer to call it as set induction and thinks it is important because the students need to at least have a glimpse of idea, about the topic that is going to be discussed.

**R12** normally call it as induction and thinks that induction process/set is actually the most crucial component through the lesson. This is because the induction sets up students' initial perspectives on the lesson and it is aimed to capture students' attention.

**R13** believes that it is very importantespecially when teaching English language classes. To introduce the lesson like vowels or literature, we need to use lead­ins to attract their attention.

**R14** is aware of the usage of lead­ins in class but normally call it as set induction.

**R15** defined lead­ins as activities used to attract the attention of the students which is commonly called as set inductions or lead­ins. These are very important as needed to trigger the students.

**PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS ON LEAD­INS**

The perception of the teachers in using lead­ins have different angles which are very important. According to the teachers, Lead­ins are defined as mood creations and attention seeking activities for making their teaching effective and interesting. The teachers believe that using lead­ins in the class enhances the academic performance of the students but interestingly most of the teachers don’t use lead­ins in their classes. Activities like asking questions, talking about the previous class, showing a video or a photo, slides, PowerPoint are being used for lead­ins.

The problems that teachers pointed out were mainly the time constraints, large classes, inactive participation of the students, lack of creativity in teachers, lack of availability of resources for the teachers, teaching methods of trained and untrained teachers, classes being content and language based, over ambitious in using lead­ins, difference of language proficiency level of the students and some just perceive that it is a waste of time. Initially the approach of using lead­ins was not favored by the students later it did but it the result as teachers perceive was fifty­fifty. Also some of the teachers use it in the initial/starting of the semester and gradually stop using at the mid/end of the semester. But despite of all these problems, teachers perceive that it is very important to use lead­ins in the class.

 Using lead­ins does come in the priority list of the teachers. The priority of the teachers is student centered learning nowadays. Some teachers do perceive that for some teachers their priority is the lessons and not lead­ins which make it a teacher dominated class which is totally wrong. Teachers perceive that the priority of the teachers should be using lead­ins to kick start the class and to prompt their critical thinking. The priority of the students should also include the extraction of the background of the students which is very important as perceived by the teachers. Activating the student’s schemata is the most important thing which can be activated mostly by using lead­ins because of which lead­ins are the priority of the teachers. But due to problems faced by the teachers, sometimes teachers do prioritize the lead­ins according to time, the no of students and the lesson which varies in the university environment. The teachers prioritize their lesson mainly, so that they can help the students in going with the flow of the lesson rather than using lead­ins for a long time which kills the interest of the students of learning. Student’s cognitive level, their level of proficiency and their interest as a teacher should be prioritized. Involvement of these three elements make the attitude of the teacher also positive towards the class.

Teachers perceive that the attitudes of the students are very positive but in some circumstances it changes like the attitudes depends on the teaching attitudes of the use of lead­ins. The teacher’s attitudes are positive because the students are able to relate it with the real world and perform effectively. Teachers' attitude in the usage of lead­ins depends on the way they view lead­ins and how much they help in the overall teaching & learning process. Sometimes students will be interested in getting to know more about the topic (if it went well) and participate actively (perform well in class) to have further understanding. Students attitude also play an important role in determining teachers attitude. Sometimes, the priority of the teachers are mostly to prepare them so that they are able to attempt the examination because of which they sometimes don’t really focus on the lead­ins but directly go to the lesson. Students love lead­ins because they are interested in voicing their opinions and feel closer to the teacher which makes the attitude of the teacher’s positive toward it. Mostly teachers perceive that it does not matter in the end if some of them don’t like or don’t like using but in a professional way, they have to use lead­ins. This triggers the ability of the teachers.

Interestingly, the abilities of the teachers actually vary as it comes natural to some whereas some of them are trained to do that. All teachers are able to but depends on their preferences. Most of the teachers are able to use lead­ins most of the time before starting the lesson but not all. The teachers have the abilities to make their classes effective but the creative aspect is missing from them. The abilities and the attitudes of the teachers to use lead­ins clash. If the teachers know about lead­ins they are able to use but some are not able at all. Teachers perceive that to activate their ability, the teachers have to be trained. Teachers should be able to use Lead­ins activities and approaches which include asking questions, statistics, telling a joke, using photos and videos which works really well as lead­ins are effective if the teacher is able to attract the attention of the students. Teachers training usually include all these usage of lead­ins which helps a lot in shaping their ability. They might not use the word ‘lead­ins’ but they should know the concept of attracting the student’s attention. Most of the language teachers have the ability to extract the background to use better lead­ins.

To shape their ability, change their attitude, prioritize their teaching and for getting rid of the problems, the teachers have suggested a lot of solutions which the upcoming teachers actually can adopt for their classes and make their teaching­learning process more effective.

1. The teachers should be retrained, their focus should be reshaped again and their paper based workloads should be reduced and let the teachers give more acquisition in teaching and learning.
2. Objectives must be attainable.
3. The teacher should make sure that the lead­ins should not take much of the time. The lesson and the lead­ins should be parallel.
4. The teacher should not take lead­ins for granted as it enhances the students understanding provided that they are not just to finish the class early and just use lead­ins to fill the class.
5. The lead­ins are different and should be different for content and language teaching. The teachers have to make familiar with the content of the task to the students for which lead­ins should be used.
6. Activities of lead­ins for adults should be more intellectual like the teacher can draw their attention by talking about incidents, happenings in the real world and relate to the topic whereas for the students they can use a joke, story etc.
7. Use Multimedia activities like video, music which promotes and makes the class very interesting and students enjoy.
8. Meet all the three criteria of an effective lead­in which are to be futile to implement a lead­in if it fails to do what it is supposed to do: help students better comprehend the intended topic. Secondly, it is a myth that an effective lead­in must be sophisticated and revolutionary. It could be a very simple idea as long as it serves its purpose. Keep it short, sweet and simple. Last but not least, do implement lead­ins in the teaching & learning process because they are positively accommodating to students' overall comprehension on the intended topic.
9. Be very positive and confident about what you are teaching, try to be more creative, make the atmosphere of the class easy by using lead­ins, and make sure you trigger the talent in the students.
10. Determine your students' background, their language proficiency, age etc. Do your research on learning materials and be creative and don’t try to be over­ambitious in use of lead­ins.

**PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS ON USING LEAD­INS FOR NATIVE OR**

**NON­NATIVES**

The perception of teachers are quite mixed in the usage of lead­ins in regard to native and non­native speakers. Some teachers perceive that the lead­ins for the natives and non­natives should be different as the natives already have the basic proficiency level whereas non­natives have a drawback in this regard. Therefore teachers need to be careful with their students also. For non­natives students belonging to Asia, Japan, the teachers have to slow down a little bit, turn their language, look at their reactions, rephrase if necessary your lead­ins. Lead­ins are very good for both but is easier for native speaker. Non­ native speakers, the language should be used according to them. Teacher’s speed of presentation also matters a lot in non­ native class. On the other side, some teachers perceive that the lead ins used for natives and non­natives shouldn’t be different as we as teachers are teaching them the same subject in the same class. Teachers actually don’t have time to classify the students in terms of natives or non­natives. The solution as perceived by the teachers is that the lead­ins can be very general which relates to the foreigner and the locals, because some time natives can be ignored unintentionally. The teachers should try to find a common ground which can be of emotional ground or intellectual where they connect with the teacher. It depend on the subject materials and the subject focus in the case of native­ and non­native speakers. They have different responses but lead­ins are favorable in their cases also.

**PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS ON LEAD­INS**

In regard to lead­ins, student’s perception play an essential role in order to understand teacher’s performance in the class and their teaching strategies. Effective or ineffective learning can only be determined by effective or ineffective teaching practices of the teachers. The students believe that teachers skip using lead­ins in class in order to finish their course or lesson and think that it is time consuming. Students points out that the main problem is the connection between the lead­ins and the lesson is lost. They do not complement each other and run perpendicular to the lesson and not parallel. One major problem students mentioned that teachers are really not interested in extracting the background knowledge of the students which the students think is essential. Students points that teachers have positive attitude toward lead­ins and the teachers are qualified enough to be able to use lead­ins in the class. They mentioned that teachers use lead­in activities like they ask questions, talk about their life, show videos, play songs, summary of the previous lessons, ice breaking activities and news. Using these activities actually show the priority of the teachers which clearly indicates that it is to use lead­ins but some students mention that it changes with the time span. According to the students, the priority of the teachers by mid/end of the semester changes which is different when the semester starts. Students also believe that they are not able to understand the difference between the lead­in and the lesson which actually confuses them. Interestingly students perceive that using lead­ins is a very creative and an exciting idea which actually excites them and motivate them for the lesson. Multimedia activities like using videos, playing songs and clips makes students more interested in the class and help them to understand the lesson better. Therefore, students suggest that teachers should make maximum use of lead­ins in the class which should include the multimedia activities rather than asking questions. Students also perceive that the university should make a rule for the lecturer to use lead­in the classes where the content of the lead­ins should include not only the general topics but also the subject they are teaching. Students add that lead­ins should be culture and real world related also as it helps them to relate the lesson more with the real world. Students perceive that lead­ins usage must be encouraged and classes should be made more interesting by using lead­ins than making it boring by directly talking about the lesson which is kind of uncreative on the teacher’s part.

**COMPARISON BETWEEN STUDENTS AND TEACHERS PERCEPTION**

In comparison, to what students perceive, there is mostly agreement with what teachers and students perceive. There is slight discrepancy between in their perceptions on abilities and priorities.

1. The teachers and the students both agreed that the major obstacle in using lead­ins in the class is the time constraints because of which teachers they sometime use lead­ins and sometimes they do not. Because of this reason they use when the semester commence and later diminishes the use of lead ins.
2. The students prefer lead­in activities, which involve multimedia activities like using a video, photo or playing a sing, which teachers also suggested in solutions and focused on its use.
3. The teachers have positive attitude towards lead­ins in which some attitudes are based and involved with the students attitudes also on which some students agree and some don’t. Students say that they are sometime in a good mood whereas sometimes they just use it because they have to use on based on which they say that the attitudes of the teachers vary.
4. Both teachers and students agreed that using lead­ins are the priority of the teachers where some of them are not sure about their priorities and attitudes.
5. As teachers perceive that the most of the teachers are able to use in the class effectively and use variety of lead­ins in the class. At this point the students don’t agree and say that some the teachers are able but some are not able at all. They don’t relate it to the lesson and talk for a long time which becomes boring after a point of time. They sometimes use multimedia but mostly will ask questions which is really boring. As one of the teacher perceived that the creative part of the teachers are missing, the students completely agree with that.
6. Teachers strongly perceive that the lead­ins are the priorities of the teachers to which students don’t agree at all. They say that the priority of teachers is the lesson and not lead­ins. They directly jump into the lesson and want to finish the syllabus as soon as possible. Teachers perceive that teachers priority is based on students respond to which students points that some teachers don’t involve the students and talk about some issue because they want to. Students perceive that they are able to figure out whether the mood of the teacher is good or bad which actually determines her priority and attitude later.

**CONCLUSION**

Lead­ins as defined by the teachers and researchers, are the mood creations and attention grabber activities employed by the teachers in the class for effective learning. This research clearly pointed out the importance of lead­ins and highlighted the end result which is enhancement of student’s academic performance and effective teaching for teachers. Using lead­ins will prompt the creative side of the teachers which will enable them in improving their professional ways of teaching. Regarding lead­ins, teachers should be clearly be careful about the techniques of using lead­ins, their applications and most importantly the students responds. The lead­ins for the content courses and the language courses should be different but the lead­ins used in the language classes shouldn’t be bland but with some hint of content which was perceived by both teachers and students clearly. The teachers should make lead­ins their priority, show positive attitude towards their usage, try to polish their abilities by getting equipped by using more of computerized and multimedia activities which triggers the students’ interest and minimize the problems in the usage of lead­ins in the class. As perceived by the teachers, teachers should not elongate the use of lead­ins and try to make it short and effective. Use of lead­ins should be highly encouraged as a two minute session of leading the students to the lesson can actually make a difference. For teachers who are trained or untrained one major change that we actually can already put lead­ins in the lesson outline which will make sure that the teachers will use it as it is in the outline of the lesson. This is major step which can be taken by the publications, course designers and the authorities of the schools and colleges. This change can be made in the teacher’s handouts which is mostly used by teachers as guide to teach the lesson. This can be employed as some teachers try to skip it because of their personal preferences which is completely wrong as using lead­ins will shape the mood of the students according to the topic of the lesson. As James M • Cooper (1992) pointed out that the ultimate goal of lead­in is to stimulate the interest of students for learning and their desire to participate in the class activities.

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