

## ENGLISH TEACHING STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' COGNITIVE-AFFECTIVE-CONATIVE RESPONSES IN SECONDARY EFL CLASSROOMS: A CASE STUDY AT SMAN 1 COLOMADU

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the English teaching strategies implemented by secondary school teachers and analyzes students' multidimensional responses across cognitive, affective, and conative domains. Employing a qualitative descriptive case-study design, the research was conducted at SMAN 1 Colomadu during the 2025/2026 academic year. The participants comprised two English teachers and 72 students across Class X-2 (analytical exposition texts) and Class XII A2 (argumentative texts). Data were collected through four classroom observations (8 instructional hours), in-depth semi-structured interviews with the two teachers and eight purposively selected student informants, and instructional documentation. Data analysis followed the interactive qualitative model comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that both teachers systematically implemented five core strategy indicators: communicating learning objectives, presenting instructional materials, increasing student participation, monitoring understanding, and providing feedback. Structured teacher explanations were combined with participatory tasks including question-and-answer sessions, collaborative writing, pair work, and classroom debates. Students demonstrated differentiated tripartite responses: cognitively, material comprehension deepened when explanations were scaffolded by contextual examples and peer discussions; affectively, interactive tasks enhanced enjoyment and self-confidence while reducing speaking anxiety; and conatively, students exhibited active verbal participation, task completion, and autonomous resource-seeking. These findings imply that secondary EFL instruction must balance teacher-led conceptual scaffolding with differentiated, collaborative tasks adapted to students' developmental proficiency levels.

**Keywords:** affective response, cognitive response, conative response, EFL teaching strategies, interactive classroom activities

### INTRODUCTION

English language learning at the senior high school level is designed to develop students' communicative competence, critical thinking, and literacy skills across diverse academic and social contexts. Achieving these multifaceted competencies requires learning environments that transcend mechanical linguistic memorization, providing authentic opportunities for students to interact, negotiate meaning, and apply English purposefully (Widodo & Sudarsono, 2016; Yani, 2016). Within this pedagogical dynamic, teachers serve as instructional designers who orchestrate classroom procedures, scaffold complex linguistic concepts, and establish learning conditions that accommodate heterogeneous student

proficiencies and learning styles. The strategic selection and execution of instructional practices directly determine how effectively learners comprehend content, maintain motivation, and participate in classroom discourse.

Teaching strategies refer to planned, goal-directed instructional actions deployed by educators to facilitate the attainment of curriculum objectives. In secondary EFL pedagogy, these strategies encompass five interconnected instructional indicators: (1) communicating explicit learning objectives, (2) presenting structured instructional materials, (3) encouraging active student participation, (4) monitoring ongoing comprehension, and (5) providing formative corrective feedback (Sewagegn, 2020; Veugen et al., 2021). While teacher explanation remains an essential practice for clarifying abstract grammatical structures, generic text organizations, and task guidelines, excessive reliance on one-way teacher talk often induces student passivity, language anxiety, and disengagement. Consequently, contemporary ELT methodologies emphasize combining structured teacher explanations with participatory activities—such as question-and-answer probing, collaborative writing, small-group problem-solving, peer feedback, and structured classroom debates (Ikhsan et al., 2023; Masdianti et al., 2025).

The effectiveness of teaching strategies is inextricably linked to how students receive, interpret, and internalize classroom instruction. In educational psychology and language acquisition research, learner responses are robustly conceptualized through the tripartite framework of human attitude and engagement: cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions (Hilgard, 1980; Fredricks et al., 2004; Krisdayanti et al., 2023). Cognitive responses relate to students' intellectual processing, concept mastery, inferential reasoning, and text comprehension. Affective responses encompass emotional states, including intrinsic interest, classroom enjoyment, self-confidence, motivation, and language anxiety. Conative responses represent observable behavioral actions and volitional engagement, such as asking questions, volunteering answers, collaborating with peers, completing assignments, and independently seeking supplementary resources (Sumilia et al., 2019; Lestari, 2022).

Previous empirical studies in Indonesian EFL contexts have examined various facets of teaching strategies and learner engagement. For instance, Masdianti et al. (2025) demonstrated that creative pedagogical strategies utilizing multimodal media and collaborative tasks significantly enhanced student engagement in rural EFL classrooms. Apoko and Marcellinda (2023) identified that scaffolding and Question–Answer Relationship (QAR) strategies effectively assisted secondary learners in overcoming reading comprehension hurdles. Furthermore, Susantara and Myartawan (2020) and Lestari (2022) revealed that referential and probing teacher questions stimulated deeper cognitive engagement and extended student verbal responses. However, existing research has predominantly investigated teaching strategies in isolation or focused on a single skill, rarely examining how specific genre-based teaching strategies (such as analytical exposition and

argumentative texts) elicit distinct cognitive, affective, and conative responses across different secondary grade levels.

To address this empirical gap, this study investigates English teaching strategies and students' tripartite responses at SMAN 1 Colomadu, Central Java. By comparatively analyzing 10th-grade instruction (analytical exposition texts) and 12th-grade instruction (argumentative texts and debates), this study addresses two central Research Questions (RQs):

1. What teaching strategies are implemented by English teachers in Classes X-2 and XII A2 at SMAN 1 Colomadu across the five core instructional indicators?
2. How do secondary EFL students respond cognitively, affectively, and conatively toward the implemented teaching strategies?

## METHOD

### 1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive case-study design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). A qualitative case-study approach was deemed most appropriate because the investigation focused on describing real-time instructional practices, teacher-student interaction patterns, and participants' subjective learning experiences in their natural classroom setting without experimental manipulation or statistical hypothesis testing.

### 2. Participants and Context

The study was conducted at SMAN 1 Colomadu, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java Province, during the 2025/2026 academic year. The participants were selected through purposive sampling and consisted of two certified English teachers (Teacher 1 and Teacher 2) and 72 students across two intact classes: Class X-2 (36 students) and Class XII A2 (36 students). Teacher 1 (12 years of ELT experience) taught analytical exposition texts in Class X-2, while Teacher 2 (15 years of ELT experience) taught argumentative texts and debate procedures in Class XII A2. From the total student cohort, eight student informants (four from Class X-2, coded as S1-X to S4-X, and four from Class XII A2, coded as S1-XII to S4-XII) were purposively selected for in-depth semi-structured interviews. The selection criteria ensured maximum variation in classroom participation: two highly active students with strong English proficiency, four moderately active students, and two quiet/reluctant students in each class.

### 3. Data Collection Instruments and Schedule

Data collection utilized three qualitative techniques: classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and instructional documentation. Four classroom observation sessions (two sessions per teacher, totaling 8 instructional hours of 45 minutes each) were conducted using a 50-item observation checklist. The checklist evaluated five teaching

strategy indicators: (1) communicating learning objectives (10 items), (2) presenting instructional materials (10 items), (3) increasing student participation (10 items), (4) monitoring understanding (10 items), and (5) providing feedback (10 items). Each item was recorded on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not visible to 5 = always). The calculated mean scores served strictly as descriptive baseline indicators to guide and triangulate qualitative field observations and interview narratives (Widodo & Sudarsono, 2016). Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with both teachers and the eight student informants using validated interview guides. Teacher interviews explored pedagogical rationale, lesson planning, scaffolding techniques, and perceived student engagement. Student interviews elicited reflective accounts of their cognitive comprehension, emotional feelings (enjoyment, anxiety, confidence), and behavioral involvement during English lessons. Instructional documents (lesson plans/RPP, printed handouts, student worksheets, and written debate drafts) were analyzed to corroborate observational findings.

#### 4. Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

The qualitative data were analyzed following the interactive model of qualitative data analysis proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), comprising three concurrent activity flows: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, coded line-by-line into descriptive categories, and synthesized with observational field notes. To establish qualitative trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), credibility was achieved through methodological triangulation (combining observations, interviews, and documentary artifacts) and member checking with teacher and student informants. Transferability was ensured through thick descriptions of the classroom context and instructional procedures. Dependability was maintained via a systematic audit trail of all raw notes and coding schemes, while confirmability was upheld through investigator reflexivity and peer debriefing with ELT faculty colleagues.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The empirical findings are presented in two major sections corresponding to the research questions: (1) teaching strategies implemented by the English teachers across the five observation indicators, and (2) students' multidimensional cognitive, affective, and conative responses.

#### Teaching Strategies Implemented by the English Teachers

Classroom observations revealed that both teachers consistently executed all five teaching strategy indicators during the instructional process. Teacher 1 taught analytical exposition texts in Class X-2 by integrating structured teacher explanations, bilingual

clarification, printed handouts, guided vocabulary exercises, and small-group text analysis. Teacher 2 taught argumentative texts in Class XII A2 through case-based prompts, structured classroom debates, pair writing, and peer critique sessions. Table 1 summarizes the descriptive observation scores across the two observation cycles for each teacher.

Table 1. Descriptive Comparison of Teaching Strategy Implementation Scores

| Teaching Strategy Indicator        | T1 Obs 1 | T1 Obs 2 | T1 Mean | T2 Obs 1 | T2 Obs 2 | T2 Mean |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| Communicating learning objectives  | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     |
| Presenting learning materials      | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     |
| Increasing student participation   | 4.0      | 3.0      | 3.5     | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     |
| Monitoring students' understanding | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     |
| Providing feedback                 | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     |
| Overall Mean Score                 | 4.0      | 3.8      | 3.9     | 4.0      | 4.0      | 4.0     |

As displayed in Table 1, both teachers achieved high overall mean implementation scores (Teacher 1 = 3.9; Teacher 2 = 4.0), falling into the 'often/consistent' category. Qualitative observations elucidated distinct instructional emphases. Teacher 1 regularly stated the lesson focus and learning targets on the whiteboard, distributed printed handouts containing analytical exposition texts (e.g., 'The Importance of Breakfast'), and used bilingual explanation to ensure comprehension. However, during Teacher 1's second observation, student participation dropped slightly (score 3.0) because classroom questioning remained concentrated among several vocal students at the front of the room.

In contrast, Teacher 2 in Class XII A2 achieved a consistent 4.0 across all indicators. Teacher 2 introduced argumentative texts through authentic contextual topics (e.g., 'Digital Money vs. Cash' and 'Social Media Censorship'), divided the class into affirmative and negative debate teams, and actively monitored group discussions. In interviews, Teacher 2 explained:

“In twelfth grade, students need communicative courage. I structure the lesson so that my explanation takes only 20 minutes, followed by 50 minutes of debate preparation and presentation. When they debate a controversial topic, even the quieter students feel compelled to support their team’s argument.” (Teacher 2, Interview Excerpt)

### *Students' Cognitive, Affective, and Conative Responses*

The qualitative analysis of student and teacher interviews revealed rich insights into how learners responded across the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions. Table 2 provides a comparative synthesis of student responses between Class X-2 and Class XII A2.

Table 2. Matrix of Students' Cognitive, Affective, and Conative Responses

| Response Dimension         | Class X-2 (Analytical Exposition)                                                                                                         | Class XII A2 (Argumentative / Debate)                                                                                                     | Synthesized Finding                                                                                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Cognitive Dimension</b> | Comprehension supported by structured teacher explanation, printed handouts, bilingual glossaries, and guided paragraph decoding.         | Comprehension developed through claim-evidence analysis, counter-argument drafting, and peer rebuttal formulation in debates.             | Cognitive processing shifts from literal decoding in Grade 10 to analytical and evaluative reasoning in Grade 12. |
| <b>Affective Dimension</b> | Students felt comfortable during group reading but reported mild anxiety during individual spontaneous questioning.                       | High enthusiasm, competitive excitement, and elevated speaking confidence during team debates and peer critiques.                         | Interactive collaborative formats significantly enhance enjoyment and mitigate speaking apprehension.             |
| <b>Conative Dimension</b>  | Observable behaviors: taking notes, answering direct teacher questions, doing worksheet exercises, and consulting bilingual dictionaries. | Observable behaviors: active turn-taking in debates, defending viewpoints, drafting collaborative essays, and searching online arguments. | Volitional actions become increasingly autonomous, collaborative, and communicative in senior grade levels.       |

### *Cognitive Responses: Scaffolding and Analytical Decoding*

Cognitively, students in both classes confirmed that structured teacher guidance provided an indispensable foundation for text comprehension. In Class X-2, tenth graders relied heavily on Teacher 1's bilingual explanations to understand the generic structure of analytical expositions (thesis, arguments, reiteration). Student S1-X remarked:

“When the teacher explains the thesis and arguments using both English and Indonesian examples, I can easily identify the main idea. The printed handouts with bold vocabulary also help me understand difficult words without getting confused.” (S1-X, Interview Excerpt)

In Class XII A2, cognitive engagement was driven by analytical reasoning and claim-evidence evaluation. Students analyzed argumentative essays not merely for grammatical form, but to evaluate the logical strength of claims. Student S2-XII stated:

“Debate preparation forced us to read the text critically. We had to find the weaknesses in the opposing team’s argument. That made me understand the reading passage much faster than just answering multiple-choice questions.” (S2-XII, Interview Excerpt)

### *Affective Responses: Anxiety Mitigation and Communicative Confidence*

Affectively, student responses varied between individual and collaborative tasks. While rapid open-class questioning occasionally induced performance anxiety among introverted tenth graders, collaborative group work and structured debates generated widespread enthusiasm. Student S3-X noted:

“If the teacher suddenly points at me to answer in front of the whole class, my heart beats fast because I'm afraid of making grammar mistakes. But when we work in pairs first, I feel much more relaxed and confident to speak up.” (S3-X, Interview Excerpt)

In Grade 12, the gamified nature of classroom debates generated high emotional engagement. Student S1-XII explained:

“Debates are exciting and fun. We don't feel sleepy because everyone has to listen carefully to the other team to prepare rebuttals. It really built my confidence to speak English in public.” (S1-XII, Interview Excerpt)

### *Conative Responses: Behavioral Involvement and Autonomous Actions*

Conatively, students translated cognitive clarity and positive affect into active classroom behaviors. In Class X-2, conative actions manifested as diligent note-taking, peer dictionary consultation, and completing Student Worksheets (LKPD). In Class XII A2, conative engagement was characterized by spontaneous target-language turn-taking, active rebuttal delivery, collaborative essay editing, and using smartphones to verify authentic online sources.

## **Discussion**

The empirical findings of this study demonstrate that effective secondary EFL instruction relies on a dynamic interplay between systematic teacher guidance and interactive, genre-specific student activities. Consistent with contemporary ELT literature (Widodo & Sudarsono, 2016; Sewagegn, 2020), communicating clear learning objectives and outlining lesson trajectories provides students with necessary cognitive orientation. When students understand why they are analyzing an analytical exposition or debating an argumentative issue, their intrinsic goal orientation and task persistence increase substantially.

A critical insight emerging from the findings is the developmental progression of student responses across grade levels. Tenth-grade learners in Class X-2 required substantial teacher scaffolding, bilingual mediation, and printed handouts to support literal comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. This aligns with Apoko and Marcellinda’s (2023) finding that lower-secondary and early-senior high school learners require explicit

schema activation and visual support. Conversely, twelfth-grade learners in Class XII A2 flourished under student-centered, debate-driven tasks that demanded evaluative comprehension, critical rebuttal, and collaborative writing. This demonstrates that as linguistic proficiency and metacognitive maturity advance, teachers should gradually release instructional control, transitioning from teacher-led modeling to peer-mediated communicative inquiry (Masdianti et al., 2025).

The study also sheds light on the pedagogical mechanisms of formative feedback. In Class XII A2, Teacher 2 utilized immediate oral corrective feedback during debate practice to address critical pronunciation and communicative breakdowns, while providing delayed, written constructive feedback on collaborative argumentative essays to address syntactic accuracy and rhetorical coherence. As emphasized by Veugen et al. (2021) and Heilporn et al. (2021), differentiating feedback modalities ensures that corrective interventions do not disrupt real-time spoken fluency while fostering meticulous grammatical precision in writing.

Furthermore, the affective findings underscore the necessity of pedagogical scaffolding for low-proficiency and introverted learners. The anxiety reported by tenth-grade students during sudden whole-class questioning highlights the limitations of unstructured teacher questioning. To mitigate student reticence, EFL practitioners should implement structured interaction routines—such as Think-Pair-Share, tiered questioning, and pre-discussion graphic organizers. Allowing students to rehearse responses in low-stakes peer dyads prior to public sharing significantly lowers the affective filter (Krashen, 1982; Hakim, 2019), transforming passive listeners into confident contributors. The findings offer concrete pedagogical implications for secondary EFL educators: (1) Genre-Differentiated Instruction: Instructional strategies should align with text genres—utilizing structured analytical worksheets for expository texts and debate simulations for argumentative texts; (2) Scaffolding Interaction: Teachers should employ cooperative structures (e.g., Think-Pair-Share) before conducting open-class questioning to support introverted and lower-proficiency learners; (3) Balanced Feedback Modalities: Educators should combine immediate supportive oral feedback during speaking tasks with detailed diagnostic written rubrics for written outputs; and (4) Digital Scaffolding: Future teaching strategies should harness interactive digital platforms (e.g., Padlet for collaborative argument mapping, Quizizz for formative reading checks) to enhance conative engagement. This study is subject to several limitations. First, the investigation was conducted in a single secondary school involving two teachers and four classroom observation sessions; hence, the qualitative findings cannot be statistically generalized across all Indonesian secondary school contexts. Second, the study focused on processual interactions and perceptual responses without quantitatively measuring standardized pre/post gains in reading or speaking achievement. Future research should employ mixed-methods or Classroom Action Research (CAR)

designs across multi-school contexts, incorporating digital technology tools and standardized language proficiency metrics.

## CONCLUSION

This case study investigated English teaching strategies and students' cognitive, affective, and conative responses across Classes X-2 and XII A2 at SMAN 1 Colomadu. The findings revealed that both teachers consistently implemented five core instructional strategy indicators: communicating learning objectives, presenting materials, increasing participation, monitoring understanding, and providing feedback. Structured teacher explanations achieved maximal pedagogical efficacy when systematically combined with participatory, genre-appropriate activities, such as collaborative text analysis, pair work, and structured classroom debates.

The implemented strategies elicited distinct, multidimensional student responses. Cognitively, structured teacher explanations provided essential conceptual grounding, while collaborative analytical tasks deepened inferential and evaluative comprehension. Affectively, interactive learning formats heightened student enjoyment and communicative self-confidence, although unstructured spontaneous questioning occasionally triggered language anxiety among introverted learners. Conatively, students demonstrated active behavioral involvement through diligent note-taking, active debate rebuttals, collaborative drafting, and autonomous resource-seeking. Based on these findings, secondary EFL teachers are encouraged to differentiate instructional strategies according to text genres and learner developmental stages, utilizing peer-scaffolding routines to support reluctant speakers. Future researchers are recommended to conduct longitudinal Classroom Action Research (CAR) and mixed-methods investigations exploring the integration of interactive digital technologies (e.g., digital argument mapping and automated formative assessment) on students' conative engagement and measurable English learning achievement across diverse educational settings.

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