

**Challenges and Strategies of English Teachers in Teaching English in
Inclusive Classes at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang**

A THESIS

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FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

2024

APPROVAL

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Certified that thesis entitled "Challenges and Strategies of English Teachers in Teaching English in Inclusive Classes at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang" is my own work and I did not do any plagiarism or inappropriate quotation against the ethic and rules commended by the Ministry of Education of Republic Indonesia Number 17, 2010 regarding plagiarism in higher education. Therefore, I deserve to face the court if I am found to have plagiarized this work.

Palembang, 14th January 2025

The undersigned



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THESIS DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents and family, who have always supported, encouraged, and reminded me to never give up in tough time. I also dedicate this work to the world of education, with the hope that this can be my humble contribution to advancing knowledge and learning.

MOTTO

“I AM THE WINGS OF THE FUTURE”

I am an agent of change for the future, if I give up, then I have destroyed myself
and the future of my nation.

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In the name of Allah SWT, peace and blessings be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad SAW. Alhamdulillah, with great gratitude, the writer has successfully completed this thesis entitled "Challenges and Strategies of English Teachers in Teaching English in Inclusive Classes at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang," as part of the requirements for an Undergraduate Degree (S-1) in the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University.

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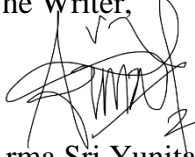
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Hopefully, this thesis will be beneficial to the university, lecturers, students of the English Education Study Program, and any readers who may find it useful.

Indralaya, 30th Desember 2024

The Writer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Arma Sri Yunita', written over a series of horizontal lines.

Arma Sri Yunita

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Challenges and Strategies of English Teachers in Teaching English in Inclusive Classes at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang

ABSTRACT

This study explored the challenges and strategies of English teachers in teaching English within inclusive classrooms at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang. A qualitative case study approach was employed, with data collected through interviews and classroom observations. A total of six English teachers participated in this study. The interview data were analyzed using the process of data reduction, coding, categorization, and thematic analysis, followed by interpretation. The findings revealed that the challenges encountered by English teachers in inclusive classrooms could be categorized into two main themes: internal factors and external factors. Additionally, teachers employed various strategies to address these challenges, including the use of technology resources, behavior management techniques, and collaborative efforts with student's parent and inclusive education staff. Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that further support and training be provided to teachers to enhance their skills in managing inclusive classrooms, particularly in terms of resource adaptation and collaboration.

Key words: Challenges, Strategies, Teaching English, Inclusive Classes, SMP Negeri 13 Palembang.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents: (1) Background of the study, (2) Problems of the study, (3) Objectives of the study, (4) Significances of the study.

1.1 Background

Inclusive education has been implemented widely in Indonesia, and thus it cannot be neglected. According to the Educational Data Center (Dapodik) as of December 2022, a total of 40,928 schools, including elementary (SD), junior high (SMP), senior high (SMA), and vocational schools (SMK), both public and private, have implemented inclusive education. Among these educational institutions, 135,946 students with special needs are receiving education. According to UNICEF (2017), inclusive education is an approach where all students both regular students and students with special needs, regardless of their abilities or needs are welcomed and supported in learning and they all learn together in the same schools, creating a shared learning environment for everyone. This approach seeks to provide access to a broad range of educational and social opportunities for all children, not just those with disabilities or special educational needs (Bešić, 2020). Thus, inclusive education focuses on providing equal access to education for all children, ensuring that every individual can learn and develop according to their potential in a supportive environment.

Inclusive education has undergone significant progress since its introduction. Inclusive education was first emphasized in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), which called for all children, including those with disabilities, to be educated in regular schools. The significance of inclusive education is rooted in the principle of social justice, which asserts that every child deserves access to a quality education. In Indonesia, implementation of inclusive education has gained momentum over the years, particularly following the enactment of Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, which guarantees access to education for all,

including children with special needs. This law encourages the integration of children with disabilities into regular schools.

Inclusive education provides numerous benefits for both students with special needs and others. It helps to reduce stigma and discrimination against individuals with special needs. Inclusive education in primary schools aims to develop personality and life skills, enabling students to actively participate in the community and not become a burden on their families or society (Pautina et al., 2020). Kart (2021) argues that inclusive education positively impacts students' academic achievement in lower grades and socially benefits them by reducing fear, hostility, prejudice, and discrimination. By promoting inclusion from an early age, society can become more tolerant and accepting of differences. Inclusive education enhances both academic and social outcomes for all students, including those with special needs (Choi et al., 2020). Inclusive education also positively impacts students' academic and non-academic development. Schwabsky (2019) also adds that inclusive school ensures effective support and the development of appropriate competences, leading to higher achievement for all learners. This is due to richer social interactions and the opportunity to learn from peers with diverse backgrounds and abilities. Furthermore, Uttayotha and Scheef (2021), asserts that inclusive education allows students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers, benefiting everyone involved. In conclusion, inclusive education offers significant benefits for all students, including those with special needs, by promoting academic success and positive social outcomes. It reduces stigma, prejudice, and discrimination, fostering a more tolerant and accepting society. By supporting students' development through inclusive practices, schools enhance both academic and non-academic growth, leading to higher achievement for all learners. Inclusive education also enriches social interactions, providing opportunities for students to learn from one another's diverse backgrounds and abilities.

Inclusive education is crucial because it guarantees that every child, including those with disabilities has access to quality education. By integrating students with special needs into regular classrooms, inclusive education promotes

equal opportunities for all learners, allowing them to develop academically, socially, and emotionally in a supportive environment (Dalgaard et al., 2022). This approach not only benefits students with disabilities by providing them with the resources and support they need to succeed, but it also fosters understanding, empathy, and respect among all students. In doing so, inclusive education helps create a more inclusive and equitable society where every child can reach their full potential.

Although inclusive education is very important, its implementation faces several challenges. According to Kaltsum et al. (2024), the obstacles in implementing inclusive education include the lack of special assistant teachers and insufficient accessible facilities. Many teachers feel unprepared and lack confidence in teaching students with special needs. This was also stated by Arias et al., (2023) which stated challenges in inclusive education include insufficient resources, lack of purposeful training, contrasting laws and policies, weak government support, appropriate curriculum, and proper classroom organization. Additionally, the facilities available in schools often do not support inclusive education. For example, supportive learning tools, such as hearing aids and adapted learning materials, are often unavailable. This makes it difficult for students with special needs to participate fully in the learning process.

In addressing those challenges, teachers play an important role as they are main actors in implementing inclusive education. According to Abrol (2023), teachers are crucial in promoting inclusive education by encouraging participation, reducing underachievement, and enhancing education through appropriate support and services for students with special needs. Additionally, teachers must be able to identify the individual needs of each student and provide appropriate support. Teachers must adapt their teaching methods to ensure all students, including those with special needs, can learn effectively (Hnoievska, 2022). Furthermore, teachers must create a supportive classroom environment where every student feels valued and included. As highlighted by Monteiro (2021), a supportive classroom environment, fostered through effective feedback, leads to higher levels of school

identification and behavioral engagement among students. It can conclude that a positive inclusive classroom not only helps students with special needs but also encourages greater school engagement and a sense of belonging for all students, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable learning environment.

In addition to teaching language skills, teaching English in inclusive classrooms requires a flexible and innovative approach. Teachers must create a welcoming and supportive environment where all students feel accepted and valued. As highlighted by Ghafar (2023), English teachers face additional challenges, including adapting to new teaching methods, addressing diverse student needs, and incorporating electronic and intelligent training tools. To fulfill their roles effectively, English teachers in inclusive classrooms require adequate training in inclusive education. This training should cover understanding various special needs, effective teaching strategies, and the use of assistive technology. According to Puspitasari (2019), teaching English in inclusive classes is often perceived as ineffective. Regular students sometimes struggle with disruptions caused by the behavior of students with special needs, leading to difficulties in grasping the concepts. Consequently, the curriculum goals are not fully met, as lessons need to be repeated multiple times. In conclusion, teaching English in inclusive classrooms requires adaptability, creativity, and adequate training to effectively meet the needs of all students. By creating a supportive environment and utilizing diverse teaching strategies and assistive technologies, teachers can better address the challenges of inclusivity. Despite the obstacles, with proper preparation and support, inclusive education can lead to more equitable learning opportunities for all students, ensuring that no one is left behind in their educational journey.

SMP Negeri 13 Palembang is one of the schools that has been implemented inclusive education in Palembang. Based on data on inclusive students obtained from schools, there are 37 inclusive students who have a variety of disabilities in the form of physical, mental, sensory and intellectual. Given this diverse range of needs, the implementation of inclusive education in this school is crucial. To support these students in their learning process, the school has developed the “AKSI

NYATA” program, which aims to create an inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive. The AKSI NYATA program focuses on designing and adapting learning activities to meet the specific needs of inclusive students. This includes modifying lesson plans, using differentiated instruction, and incorporating assistive technology to aid students with sensory or intellectual disabilities. Despite these efforts, the implementation of inclusive education at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang faces several challenges, such as limited resources and large class sizes. These challenges make SMP Negeri 13 Palembang an important case study for examining the barriers to successful inclusive education and identifying strategies that can be applied to enhance the effectiveness of programs like AKSI NYATA.

To address the challenges in implementing inclusive education, it is crucial for teachers to understand the challenges they will face and the strategies they can use to teach English in inclusive classrooms. While many existing studies have addressed the broader context of inclusive education, few have specifically focused on the challenges of teaching English in inclusive settings. Most research on inclusive education discusses general pedagogical issues, without delving into the unique strategies required to teach English to students with diverse abilities (e.g., Puspitasari, 2019; Neliyam Tiraeni et al., 2024; Banda, 2019). This gap in the literature indicates the need for further research on the strategies used by English teachers in inclusive classrooms. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the challenges and strategies faced by English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang and providing insights into how teachers adapt their methods to ensure success for all students. Additionally, this research intends to explore more localized issues, focusing specifically on the context of SMP Negeri 13 Palembang.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the challenges experienced by English teachers in teaching English in inclusive classes?
2. What are the strategies employed by English teachers in teaching English in inclusive classes?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research problems above, the writer concludes that the research has two objectives. The objectives of this study are presented as follows:

1. To find out the challenges experienced by English teachers in teaching English in inclusive classes
2. To find out the strategies employed by English teachers in teaching English in inclusive classes

1.4 The Significances of the Study

The significance of the research can be highlighted in the following points:

1. Academic contribution: this research fills a critical gap in the literature by exploring the intersection of English language teaching and inclusive education in a more local context. By focusing on the specific challenges and strategies pertinent to teaching English to students with diverse needs at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang, the study offers local insights that are often missing in broader research.
2. Policy development: the findings of this study can inform policymakers about the practical needs and challenges faced by teachers in inclusive classrooms. By highlighting the obstacles and successful strategies identified by English teachers, the research provides evidence-based recommendations that can shape inclusive education policies. This will help in creating more supportive environments for both teachers and students, ensuring that educational policies are effective and responsive to the needs of all learners.
3. Teacher training and professional development: this study underscores the importance of adequate and continuous professional development for teachers, especially those working in inclusive classrooms. The insights gained from this research can be used to design targeted training programs that equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to handle

diverse student needs effectively. Enhancing teacher preparedness will contribute to more successful and inclusive educational practices.

4. **Practical implementation:** the research offers practical strategies and recommendations that can be directly applied in schools, particularly at SMP Negeri 13 Palembang. By understanding the specific needs and challenges within this school, the study provides a blueprint for other schools in Indonesia to follow. This can lead to the improvement of inclusive education practices, ensuring that students with special needs receive the support they require to succeed academically and socially.
5. **Social justice and equity:** promoting inclusive education aligns with the principles of social justice and equity. This study advocates for the right of every child to receive a quality education, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. By addressing the barriers to inclusive education and proposing effective solutions, the research contributes to the creation of a more equitable educational landscape in Indonesia. This can have long-term positive impacts on societal attitudes towards diversity and inclusion.
6. **Future research:** the findings of this study can serve as a catalyst for further research in the field of inclusive education. By providing a detailed analysis of the current challenges and effective strategies, the research opens up new avenues for exploration. Future studies can build on this work to explore other aspects of inclusive education, such as the role of technology, parental involvement, and the impact of inclusive practices on student outcomes.

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