CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Education plays a vital role in preparing individuals to face the challenges of globalization and rapid technological advancement. In the modern era, education is not only expected to transmit knowledge but also to develop essential skills that enable learners to participate in global communication and access international sources of information. One of the most important skills in this context is English language proficiency, as English functions as a global language used widely in education, communication, and academic discourse. As noted by N. Sari et al. (2024), the significance of English has increased substantially in the globalization era, particularly because it allows learners to access academic literature, scientific knowledge, and cross-cultural communication.

Along with the increasing importance of English, English language learning has experienced significant changes in response to developments in the digital era. Learning processes are now strongly influenced by technological innovation, which demands more adaptive and creative instructional approaches. Mulyani et al. (2022) point out that although English plays a crucial role in supporting students' academic and career opportunities, students' awareness and proficiency levels remain relatively

low. This condition reflects a gap between educational expectations and actual learning outcomes.

Furthermore, Muharram & Fadly (2024) emphasize that the integration of digital media and technology has become an essential element in English language learning, as it enhances student engagement and supports more effective learning experiences. These perspectives underline the need to strengthen English education through appropriate pedagogical practices that respond to contemporary educational demands.

In this context, inclusive education plays a fundamental role in ensuring equal educational opportunities for all learners, including students with special educational needs, within regular school environments. Inclusive education refers to an educational approach that accommodates learner diversity by recognizing differences in abilities, learning styles, and backgrounds while guaranteeing non-discriminatory access to quality education. This concept is rooted in the global principle of education for all, as stated in the Salamanca Statement, and has been implemented in Indonesia through national education policies. According to Murniati & Anastasia (2016), inclusive education emphasizes the meaningful participation of students with special needs in regular classrooms through curriculum adaptation, flexible instructional strategies, and adjusted assessment methods.

Furthermore, the implementation of inclusive education is guided by several key principles, including respect for diversity, curriculum flexibility, collaboration, and the creation of supportive learning environments. These principles are based on the belief that every child has the ability to learn and deserves educational services that respond

to individual needs. Inclusive education also requires strong cooperation among teachers, parents, schools, and communities. Isroani et al. (2024) explain that the success of inclusive education depends on adaptive teaching practices, professional collaboration, and adequate support systems that promote both academic achievement and social development for all learners.

In terms of its development, inclusive education in Indonesia has shown gradual progress across different educational levels, from early childhood education to secondary schools. Government regulations and increasing public awareness have contributed to the growth of inclusive schools in various regions. However, several challenges remain in practice, particularly related to teacher competence, availability of facilities, curriculum modification, and stakeholder involvement. A literature review by Purbasari et al. (2022) reveals that despite the growing number of inclusive schools, inconsistencies in implementation continue to be a major issue. This condition highlights the need for stronger institutional support and continuous professional development for teachers.

One defining characteristic of inclusive classrooms is learner diversity, which includes differences in abilities, learning needs, cultural backgrounds, languages, socioeconomic conditions, and developmental levels. Inclusive classrooms are designed to accommodate all students both those with special educational needs and those without disabilities within a shared learning environment. In this approach, diversity is not viewed as an obstacle but as a natural and valuable aspect of the learning process that requires appropriate pedagogical responses. Inclusive education

emphasizes that each learner is unique and therefore needs differentiated support to ensure meaningful participation and equal learning opportunities Kaur & Bhatia (2024) Moreover, diversity in inclusive classrooms also involves variations in learning styles, cognitive abilities, academic performance, and social-emotional development. Students with disabilities, gifted students, and learners from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds learn together in the same classroom. This diversity requires teachers to have a strong understanding of individual learner characteristics in order to design flexible and responsive instructional strategies. Research indicates that recognizing and valuing learner diversity is essential for creating inclusive learning environments that promote engagement, participation, and a sense of belonging among students (Kaur & Bhatia, 2024).

In addition, the presence of diverse learners in inclusive classrooms requires changes in teaching and assessment practices. Teachers are encouraged to modify instructional methods, learning materials, and assessment approaches while fostering positive social interactions among students. Inclusive classrooms that respect diversity also contribute to the development of empathy, tolerance, and collaboration, which are important for both academic success and social growth. Therefore, effective management of learner diversity is a key factor in the successful implementation of inclusive education and the creation of equitable learning opportunities (Tiraeni et al., 2024).

Despite its positive goals, the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia continues to face various challenges, particularly in classroom practice. Z. P. Sari et al.

(2022) explain that many schools struggle with limited facilities, insufficient teacher training, and a lack of appropriate curriculum adaptation. These challenges become more visible in English language learning, where students are required to develop multiple language skills while possessing different learning abilities and needs.

Teaching English in inclusive classrooms presents specific challenges for educators. Students often demonstrate varying levels of language proficiency, learning speed, and communication ability, which require flexible and differentiated teaching approaches. However, many English teachers are not sufficiently prepared to apply inclusive teaching strategies. According to Z. P. Sari et al. (2022), limited access to professional development reduces teachers' ability to design inclusive instruction and assessment. As a result, students with special educational needs may face difficulties in fully participating in English learning activities.

Furthermore, Sudarso et al. (2024) highlight that successful inclusive learning depends on adaptive instructional strategies and collaboration among teachers, schools, and other stakeholders. In English language classrooms, challenges such as limited resources, time constraints, and low student engagement often hinder the implementation of inclusive practices. These conditions indicate the need for stronger support systems and practical teaching strategies to improve English learning outcomes in inclusive classroom settings.

To respond to these challenges, the use of effective teaching strategies becomes essential. Teaching strategies refer to methods and techniques employed by teachers to facilitate learning and accommodate diverse learner needs. G. N. Dwiningtiyas et al.

(2020) emphasize that creative teachers use a variety of strategies and adapt their instructional methods to suit students' learning styles, highlighting the importance of strategic teaching in inclusive classrooms.

Based on the preliminary observation conducted at MA SMIP 1946 Banjarmasin, the implementation of English language learning also reflects several conditions commonly found in inclusive classrooms. The English classroom consists of students with different learning abilities and learning characteristics. Some students are able to understand the lesson quickly, while others require more time, repeated explanations, and additional support from the teacher. To help students understand the material, the teacher usually combines several teaching methods such as direct explanation, question-and-answer activities, classroom discussion, and simple practice. The teacher also frequently uses examples that are closely related to students' daily lives so that the material becomes easier to understand.

However, teaching students with different learning abilities is not always easy. Based on the preliminary interview, the teacher explained that students in the classroom generally consist of fast learners, average learners, and slow learners. These differences require the teacher to continuously adjust teaching strategies during the learning process. Students who understand the lesson more quickly are usually encouraged to help their classmates, while students who experience difficulties receive repeated explanations using simpler language. This situation shows that flexibility in teaching is an important aspect of English language learning in inclusive classrooms.

Besides differences in students' abilities, the teacher also faces several challenges during the teaching and learning process. The interview revealed that limited learning media, curriculum demands that are not always suitable for students' characteristics, classroom conditions, and environmental factors such as weather can influence the effectiveness of English language learning. Although the school already provides facilities such as a language laboratory and projectors, the teacher stated that more modern learning media and additional training on inclusive education are still needed to support the implementation of inclusive teaching more effectively.

These conditions indicate that teaching English in an inclusive classroom involves more than simply delivering learning materials. Teachers are expected to apply appropriate teaching strategies that accommodate students with different learning needs while dealing with various classroom challenges. Therefore, exploring how English teachers implement teaching strategies in inclusive classrooms is important to provide a better understanding of classroom practices and to identify strategies that can support effective English language learning for diverse learners.

Research also shows that the use of varied and active teaching strategies can enhance student motivation and learning outcomes. Tremblay-Wragg et al. (2021) found that instructors who used multiple teaching techniques experienced increased student motivation throughout the semester. By diversifying instructional approaches and incorporating active learning, teachers can create more inclusive and engaging English learning environments that benefit all students (Tremblay-Wragg et al., 2021)

Additionally, the effectiveness of teaching strategies is influenced by instructional context and teachers' beliefs. Kistner et al. (2015) argue that lesson objectives and teachers' educational beliefs significantly affect how learning strategies are implemented. Teachers with student-centered beliefs are more likely to promote self-regulated learning strategies, such as planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation. This finding suggests that positive teacher beliefs and contextual alignment are crucial in supporting inclusive English language learning.

In inclusive education, teachers play a central role as facilitators who support students' learning and development. Inclusive classrooms require teachers to go beyond content delivery and actively create environments where all students feel accepted and valued Awanda & Sari (2024); Panggabean (2024)Teachers are responsible for guiding learning processes, adapting instruction, and ensuring meaningful participation for every learner (Zainuddin, 2025).

As facilitators, teachers design adaptive lessons, adjust learning materials, and mediate classroom interactions to accommodate diverse needs. They also collaborate with parents and specialists to provide comprehensive support for students with special educational needs. Through this role, teachers contribute to the development of inclusive and supportive learning communities (Awanda & Maya Sari, 2024);(Panggabean, 2024)

However, teachers often face challenges in implementing inclusive practices due to limited training and resources. Many educators feel unprepared to address learner diversity effectively, highlighting the importance of continuous professional

development and institutional support Zainuddin (2025). Strengthening teacher capacity through training and supportive policies is therefore essential for successful inclusive education.

Islam strongly emphasizes the values of equality, inclusion, and respect in education. As stated in the Holy Qur'an (Al-Hujurat, 49:13):

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

This verse teaches that all humans are equal and that diversity exists to promote understanding and respect. In inclusive classrooms, this principle encourages teachers to treat all students fairly and create non-discriminatory learning environments (Mutiya, 2025; L. Sari, 2023).

Furthermore, Islamic teachings emphasize compassion and gentle leadership, as stated in Surah Ali 'Imran (3:159):

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيْظَالْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوْا مِنْ

حَوْلِكَ ۖ

This verse highlights patience and empathy as essential qualities for educators. In inclusive English classrooms, teachers who apply these values create saalshschfe

and supportive environments that encourage student participation (Anggun & Haifaturrahmah, 2025).

Moreover, the Qur'an explicitly prohibits ridicule and bullying, as stated in Surah Al-Hujurat (49:11):

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ

This principle aligns with the need to create inclusive classrooms where students feel safe to learn and express themselves. By upholding Islamic values of respect and compassion, teachers can foster harmonious English learning environments that support all learners (Anggun & Haifaturrahmah, 2025; Mutiya, 2025)

Previous studies have extensively discussed inclusive education implementation and the role of teachers in diverse classrooms. Purbasari et al. (2022) highlight challenges related to teacher competence and instructional adaptation, while Murniati & Anastasia (2016) emphasize flexible strategies and collaboration. Studies in English education also show that effective teaching strategies improve student motivation and learning outcomes (Mulyani et al., 2022).

However, most existing studies focus either on inclusive education in general or English teaching in regular classrooms. Limited research specifically examines English teaching strategies within inclusive classroom contexts. This gap indicates the need for further exploration of how English teachers apply inclusive teaching strategies in practice.

Therefore, this study aims to explore teaching strategies used in English language learning within inclusive classrooms, focusing on how teachers address learner diversity and promote equal participation. The findings are expected to contribute to inclusive English education by providing practical insights for teachers and educational stakeholders.

B. Definition of Key Terms

The researcher will define key phrases related to the title in order to prevent any misunderstandings about the study:

1. Teaching Strategies

Teaching Strategies are the various ways or techniques used by teachers to help students learn more effectively. These strategies can include teaching methods, the use of aids, or ways of interacting with students to make it easier for them to understand the material. In this study focuses on how teachers deal with diverse students in the classroom so that learning can be accepted by all students.

2. English Language Learning

English Language Learning is the process by which a person learns English, either as a first, second, or foreign language. This can happen in various environments, such as at school, at home, or through direct experience in everyday life. In this study, the focus be on the English learning process in diverse classes with different levels of understanding, social backgrounds, and different learning needs to get equal access to understand and use English.

3. Inclusive Classrooms

An inclusive classroom is a classroom where students with different learning characteristics and abilities learn together in the same learning environment. In general, inclusive classrooms may include students with various educational needs. However, in this study, the term inclusive classroom specifically refers to a classroom that consists of students with different levels of learning ability, namely fast learners, average learners, and slow learners.

Fast learners are students who are able to understand English learning materials more quickly and usually require additional challenges to maintain their learning progress. Average learners are students who are able to follow the learning process at the expected pace with regular guidance from the teacher. Meanwhile, slow learners are students who need more time, repeated explanations, and additional support to understand the learning materials.

Therefore, the focus of this study is not on students with disabilities or special educational needs, but on how the English teacher applies teaching strategies to accommodate students with different learning abilities in the same classroom and ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate in the learning process.

C. Research Questions

1. What teaching strategies do teachers apply and adapt to support diverse students in inclusive English classrooms?

2. What challenges do teacher face in used English language teaching strategies in an inclusive setting, and how are these challenges addressed?

D. Objectives of Study

1. To explore how teachers apply and adapt teaching strategies to support the diverse learning needs of students in inclusive English classrooms.
2. To examine the challenges teachers in implementing effective teaching strategies for English language learning in an inclusive setting and explore how these challenges are managed.

E. Significance of Study

1. Theoretical Significance

   a. This study is expected to contribute to the development of knowledge related to inclusive education and English language learning, particularly in understanding teaching strategies used in inclusive classrooms.

   b. This research is also expected to serve as a reference for future studies related to inclusive teaching strategies and English language education.

2. Practically

a. For Teachers

This study is expected to help English teachers understand and apply appropriate teaching strategies in inclusive classrooms to address students' diverse learning needs.

b. For Students

This study is expected to support students in inclusive classrooms by promoting a more inclusive and supportive English learning environment that encourages active participation.

c. For Schools

The findings of this study may be used by schools as a reference to improve inclusive teaching practices and teacher support in English language learning.

d. For the Researcher

This study is expected to broaden the Researcher's understanding of inclusive education and teaching strategies in English language learning, as well as provide valuable experience for future academic research