

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the background of the research, research questions, objectives, and significance of the study, serving as the foundation for the overall discussion.

1.1 Research Background

In recent years, inclusive education has received growing attention as a pedagogical approach that promotes equity and equal access to educational opportunities for all learners, including those with special educational needs (Rodriguez, 2024). Inclusive education emphasizes the integration of students with diverse physical, cognitive, and sensory conditions into mainstream classrooms, rather than segregating them into special schools or separate programs. Jardinez and Natividad (2024) state that inclusive classrooms foster collaboration, barrier-free learning environments, and individualized support systems, enabling all students to participate meaningfully in the learning process regardless of their abilities. The successful implementation of inclusive education relies heavily on a thoughtful teaching process that is adaptive, responsive, and capable of supporting diverse learner profiles. This includes modifying not only the teaching strategies but also the teaching tools and materials used to deliver instruction.

One of the central challenges in inclusive education is ensuring that all students have equal access to learning materials and instructional content. This is especially true for students with hearing or speech impairments, who may

face unique communication barriers within traditional classroom environments. Learning media, therefore, play an essential role in bridging the gap between teacher and students, facilitating clearer communication, enhanced engagement, and more effective learning outcomes. Learning media are defined as tools, whether physical or digital, that assist teacher in delivering content and enhancing student understanding (Amka, 2018). These media can take various forms such as visual aids (e.g., flashcards, diagrams, pictures), audio-visual materials (e.g., videos, presentations), kinesthetic tools (e.g., realia, manipulatives), and technological platforms (e.g., educational apps, interactive whiteboards). According to Amka (2018), learning media are generally categorized into three types: audio, visual, and kinesthetic, each of which addresses different sensory modalities in students. In an inclusive setting, the selection of learning media must be deliberate and tailored to accommodate students with specific needs, ensuring that instructional materials are not only accessible but also engaging and effective in delivering the intended message.

However, while the theoretical importance of inclusive education is well-established, numerous challenges hinder its practical implementation, especially regarding the integration of effective learning media. Teacher may struggle with a lack of appropriate training, insufficient resources, or difficulty in adapting traditional media to suit the needs of students with disabilities. Research by Andrean (2023) and Novitasari (2022) underscores the importance of the teaching process as a whole, which includes managing the classroom, selecting the right instructional materials, and modifying approaches to fit learner diversity. Further studies by Lumpkin (2020), Finn (2020), and Lazarus

(2020) highlight how both internal and external factors, such as student motivation, emotional well-being, and the school environment, impact how effectively students receive and process information. In such a complex context, learning media emerge as one of the most practical tools available to support equitable learning. When used effectively, they can reduce cognitive barriers, enhance visual or tactile engagement, and support the understanding of abstract concepts in more concrete ways.

Despite the increasing volume of literature advocating inclusive practices in schools, there remains a gap in empirical studies that focus specifically on the role of learning media in inclusive settings, particularly in rural or localized contexts. One such example is SDN 2 Bengkala, a primary school in Bali known for its inclusive education system, particularly in accommodating students with hearing and speech impairments. While anecdotal and observational data suggest that the school has made significant strides in applying inclusive principles, no systematic research has yet explored how learning media are selected, adapted, and implemented in this setting. This study aims to address that gap by investigating the learning media used by teacher at SDN 2 Bengkala, identifying both the tools employed and the challenges teacher face in ensuring inclusivity through media use. By focusing on this under-researched area, the study will contribute valuable insights into the practical dimensions of inclusive teaching and offer recommendations for more effective media integration in similar educational settings.

1.2 Problem Identification

Inclusive education requires teacher to adapt their suitable learning media

to meet the diverse needs of students, especially those with hearing and speech impairments (Stepanović, Živković, 2020). In subjects like English, where communication is key, these adaptations become even more critical. SDN 2 Bengkala is known for its inclusive approach, integrating students with hearing and speaking impairments into regular classrooms. However, limited research exists on how English teacher in this school implement appropriate learning media to support inclusive instruction (Mahisa, Rezeki & Sumiyati, 2023). This study aims to investigate the specific learning media used by English teacher at SDN 2 Bengkala, addressing the gap between theory and classroom practice in inclusive education.

1.3 Limitation Research

This study, while offering valuable insights into the implementation of inclusive education practices, is not without its limitations. First and foremost, the research is confined to a single educational setting, SDN 2 Bengkala, a public elementary school in Bali known for integrating students with hearing and speech impairments into mainstream classrooms. Based on journal *Examining Factors Related to Teacher' Decisions to Adopt Teacher-Training Resources for Inclusive Physical Education* by Tristani, Tomasone, Fraser-Thomas & Bassett-Gunter (2020), the unique characteristics of this school, including its cultural context, resources, and teacher training, may limit the generalizability of the findings to other inclusive schools with different contexts or student populations

Additionally, the study involved a limited number of research participants, focusing solely on English language teachers who were directly engaged in

inclusive classrooms. Consequently, the perspectives of other key stakeholders, including students, parents, school administrators, and special education support staff, were not represented. This limitation may, therefore, constrain the comprehensiveness of the findings and restrict a more holistic understanding of the inclusive teaching environment.

The scope of the research is also specifically centered on single instructional components: learning media used in English language instruction. Other critical aspects of inclusive education, including student assessment and evaluation methods, curriculum modifications, institutional support, and interdisciplinary collaboration, fall outside the parameters of this study. These components, while essential to a comprehensive understanding of inclusive education, are intentionally excluded to maintain a clear and focused research direction.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the background that the researcher has described, it proposes some formulation of the problem in this study as follows:

1. What types of learning media are used by English teacher at SDN 2 Bengkala to support inclusive learning?
2. What challenges do teacher face in implementing learning media to support inclusive education at SDN 2 Bengkala?
3. How do teacher overcome the challenges of using learning media in inclusive classrooms at SDN 2 Bengkala?

1.5 Research Objectives

The primary purpose of this study is to explore the implementation of the teaching process that supports inclusive education at SDN 2 Bengkala.

Specifically, the study aims to:

1. To explore the types of learning media utilized by English teacher at SDN 2 Bengkala to support inclusive learning.
2. To identify the challenges faced by teacher in implementing learning media for inclusive education at SDN 2 Bengkala.
3. To examine the strategies used by teacher to overcome challenges in using learning media in inclusive classrooms at SDN 2 Bengkala.

1.6 Research Significance

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study is expected to contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge on inclusive education, particularly in the context of English language teaching for students with hearing and speech impairments. A central focus of this research is the exploration of learning media employed in inclusive classrooms, where the integration of digital tools such as interactive e-books, visual aids, animations, and videos has been shown to enhance engagement and accessibility for hearing-impaired learners (Smith & Jones, 2021). Moreover, the use of podcast-based applications like PODclusive has demonstrated measurable improvements in English language acquisition among students with hearing challenges by providing auditory and visual support simultaneously (Lee et al., 2020). Social media platforms, especially microlearning tools like Instagram, offer visually rich

and interactive content that facilitates language comprehension and retention for students with communication difficulties (Garcia & Kim, 2019). Additionally, new media technologies-including multimedia, smartphones, and mobile applications-enable blended learning environments that promote both synchronous and asynchronous learning, fostering collaboration and self-directed study among students with special needs (Brown & Green, 2018). By investigating these varied learning media, this study provides empirical support for the theoretical frameworks proposed by Tichá et al. (2019), who advocate for differentiated instruction, peer-assisted learning, direct teaching, and play-based strategies tailored to diverse learners. Furthermore, the findings aim to enrich academic discourse on the practical application of inclusive education principles within the Indonesian context, an area that remains underrepresented in current literature (Rante & Helaluddin, 2020). Ultimately, this research seeks to bridge the gap between inclusive education theories and their real-world implementation in classrooms serving students with communication impairments.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

The practical significance of this research is especially evident in its focus on learning media for inclusive education. For English teacher in inclusive classrooms, the integration of visual and digital media-such as interactive videos, e-books with pictures and animations, and visual aids-has been shown to effectively engage students with hearing and speech impairments (Arifah et al., 2022; Amalia et al., 2024). These media not only make lessons more

accessible but also enhance comprehension and motivation among deaf students, as demonstrated by Mahisa, Rezeki & Sumiyati (2023). Additionally, interactive video media have proven highly effective in improving digital literacy and reading abilities for hearing-impaired students, offering features like embedded text, quizzes, and discussion prompts that support active learning and individualized instruction (Fransyaigu et al., 2024; Suwahyo et al., 2022).

For school administrators and education practitioners, the adoption of digital learning media is crucial in providing the necessary support systems and resources for teacher in inclusive settings. Open Educational Resources (OER) and modular digital learning materials allow for flexible, differentiated instruction that can be tailored to the diverse needs of students, ensuring equitable access to educational content (Fichtner et al., 2023; Schulz, 2018). These resources also facilitate ongoing professional development by equipping teacher with practical tools and strategies for inclusive digital teaching.

Curriculum developers and instructional designers benefit from the integration of technology-based learning media, such as podcast applications and EdTech tools, which can be embedded into subject-specific modules-particularly in English language learning (Yuniarti, Pratiwi, & Novianto, 2024). For example, the PODclusive application significantly enhanced the learning experience for deaf students by providing multimodal content that combines sign language videos, textual translations in both English and Indonesian, and offline accessibility, resulting in improved comprehension and engagement among learners with hearing impairments (Yuniarti, Pratiwi, & Novianto,

2024). The application received high validity scores for its content, design, and educational impact from both experts and users, underscoring its effectiveness in addressing the specific needs of deaf students (Yuniarti, Pratiwi, & Novianto, 2024). Such innovations guide the creation of inclusive, accessible, and pedagogically sound learning modules that foster equitable participation in diverse educational settings.

Furthermore, for policymakers and government education authorities, the evidence underscores the importance of supporting inclusive education through targeted policies and resource allocation that prioritize the procurement and development of accessible learning media (Burhanudin, 2021). This ensures that all students, regardless of ability, have equal opportunities to participate and succeed in the classroom.

Finally, for researchers and scholars, this study addresses a gap in localized research on the use of digital learning media in Indonesian inclusive classrooms (Widarti et al., 2024). The findings provide a foundation for further investigation into the long-term impact and effectiveness of specific media types in supporting language acquisition and engagement for students with hearing and speech impairments (UMSIDA, 2025).

This research highlights the critical role of learning media in enhancing inclusive education, particularly for students with hearing and speech impairments. For English teacher, the effective integration of visual and digital media-such as interactive videos, e-books, and visual aids-has been shown to improve student engagement, comprehension, and motivation. School administrators and education practitioners are encouraged to adopt flexible

digital resources and provide professional development to support differentiated instruction tailored to diverse learner needs. Curriculum developers and instructional designers benefit from technology-based tools like podcast applications that deliver multimodal content, exemplified by the success of the PODclusive app, which addresses the unique challenges faced by deaf students. Policymakers are urged to prioritize inclusive education through targeted policies and resource allocation that ensure equitable access to accessible learning media for all students. Finally, this study fills a significant gap in localized research on digital learning media in Indonesian inclusive classrooms and lays the groundwork for future studies exploring the long-term impact of such media on language acquisition and learner engagement. Collectively, these findings underscore the necessity of innovative, accessible, and pedagogically sound learning media to foster inclusive and effective educational environments.

