

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Communication plays an important role in human life. Through communication, humans can share ideas, feelings, and experiences. For communication to be effective and on target, a strategy is needed to achieve its goals. According to Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2006) communication strategy is a guide in designing and managing the communication process to build mutually beneficial relationships. Effendy (2006) also emphasized that communication strategy is a combination of planning and communication management to achieve desired outcomes.

A well-designed communication strategy considers not only the message you want to convey but also the most effective way to reach your intended audience. This strategy involves careful planning regarding content, timing, and the selection of appropriate communication channels, such as face-to-face conversations, written correspondence, social media platforms, or mass media. Furthermore, a communication strategy must adapt to cultural, social, and technological contexts to remain relevant and impactful. As society becomes increasingly diverse and technology continues to evolve, communicators are tasked with selecting appropriate tools and techniques for various audiences. This adaptability ensures that messages are not only delivered but also understood and acted upon.

Evaluating the effectiveness of a communication strategy is crucial. Feedback mechanisms allow organizations and individuals to assess audience responses and refine their methods. This continuous improvement process helps ensure that communication efforts align with objectives, encourage engagement, and build lasting trust. In short, a communication strategy serves as a crucial framework for achieving clarity, building relationships, and facilitating mutual understanding. By carefully managing each element of the communication process, individuals and organizations can increase the likelihood that their messages have achieved their desired impact.

In the context of learning, particularly English language learning, better known as EFL, communication strategies play a crucial role in supporting the smooth process of oral interaction between learners, teacher, and their learning environment. Communication strategies in EFL teaching encompass not only the use of verbal and nonverbal aids but also reflect learners' strategic intelligence in addressing gaps in vocabulary, grammatical structure, and fluency. Numerous studies have highlighted the dynamics and variations of communication strategies used by learners in various settings. For example, a study by Abdi and Varzandeh (2014), showed that EFL learners tend to use paraphrasing, requesting assistance, and even using their native language to overcome difficulties in conveying messages. These strategies are forms of adaptation that reflect a contextual understanding of communication needs. In this context, a qualitative approach using observation and interview techniques allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of how strategies are used in real-world practice, which is constantly changing and nuanced. Furthermore, affective aspects such as oral communication

apprehension and self-confidence have also been shown to influence the intensity and types of strategies used by EFL learners.

In an English language learning environment, teacher plays a crucial role as facilitators, not only providing language materials but also helping to create a comfortable learning environment, thus encouraging students to be more confident in using English actively. A study by Abdullah et al. (2019) showed that a motivational approach based on local culture and emotional engagement can increase students' interest and confidence in speaking English. Furthermore, various studies have shown that technology integration, collaborative tasks, and project-based approaches have proven effective in improving students' communication skills in EFL contexts (Rahman & Isroyana, 2021). However, due to the limited use of English in everyday life, EFL learning often focused on grammatical aspects and test mastery, rather than on communication fluency. Socio-emotional factors such as speaking anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence also significantly influence the type and frequency of communication strategies used.

In EFL classrooms, teacher plays a central role in creating a safe and supportive environment and encouraging the exploration of these strategies. Research by Oktaviani & Misgiyati (2018) shows that teacher who explicitly teach and model communication strategies successfully increase students' confidence in using English actively and flexibly. Therefore, communication strategies in the context of foreign language learning are not simply language techniques, but rather complex and evolving socio-cognitive practices. Given this importance, teacher and curriculum developers should not only pay attention to aspects of grammar and language testing, but also equip students with strategic skills to overcome

communication difficulties. Qualitative research has shown strong evidence that structured communication strategy training can increase students' desire to communicate, active engagement, and ultimately improve students' communication skills in the long term.

Just as communication strategies are essential in English as a second language learning, which emphasizes students' ability to adapt to language and social limitations, inclusive education also requires similar, but more complex, communication strategies (Shute et al., 2012). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, communication strategies are used to address foreign language difficulties, while in inclusive education, these strategies must be able to accommodate students' differences in cognitive, physical, social, and emotional abilities. In other words, communication strategies in both situations serve as tools to ensure equitable access, active participation, and equal interaction in the learning process. Inclusive education requires a flexible learning environment where all students, including those with intellectual, sensory, and physical disabilities, have equal opportunities to understand material, interact, and engage in the learning process. Communication in this context involves more than just speech or words, but also includes sign language, images, assistive technology, and ways of interacting that are empathetic and sensitive to the needs of others.

A qualitative approach is crucial for understanding how communication actually occurs in inclusive classrooms, as it captures the nuances of experiences, social relationships, and the meanings felt by students and teacher in facing complex learning challenges. Research by Widaningsih et al. (2021) emphasized that teacher in inclusive schools in Indonesia use a flexible combination of verbal and nonverbal

communication, depending on the specific needs of students and the context of learning activities. Strategies such as visual cues, structured touch, breaking messages into simpler parts, and verbal positive reinforcement have proven to be very helpful in creating a supportive and inclusive classroom atmosphere. Thus, an understanding of communication strategies in inclusive education cannot be separated from the overall concept of inclusivity. These strategies not only facilitate effective interaction but also plays a crucial role in realizing the fundamental principles of inclusive education, namely ensuring equal access, participation, and learning opportunities for all students regardless of differences. Therefore, to fully understand inclusive practices, it is necessary to examine how communication strategies are implemented, adapted, and developed as an integral part of a learning system that values diversity.

Inclusive education is a global movement that aims to provide equal learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities (UNESCO, 1994). In the implementation of this inclusive education, there is a special class called the Inclusive Class. An inclusive class is a place of learning that has variations and collaborative methods used to facilitate learning for inclusive children. Inclusive classes in this sense mean a place where diversity among learners is valued and considered a source of learning rather than a problem; a place where children from diverse backgrounds are valued for who they are, and can feel safe enough to express whatever they know, without fear or discrimination; and a place where the curriculum, teaching and learning methods, and materials are culturally responsive to meet the various learning needs and interests of children from diverse backgrounds (Sanjay Kuma, 2010). Inclusive education provides the

same educational services as children to all children with special needs and allows them to be side by side with the others without any differences from their peers. Therefore, they do not only pursue academic abilities but also more than that. The main goal of inclusive education is to provide opportunities for all individuals, including individuals with special needs, and to ensure that students with special needs receive an appropriate education and eliminate the discrimination they experience. To achieve this, the concept of inclusion continues to evolve in school curricula. Inclusive classrooms can be viewed as an educational style that provides all children with the opportunity to receive more appropriate learning.

Inclusive education in the context of English language learning (EFL) refers to an approach to English that accommodates all students, including those with special needs or learning style differences, within the same classroom environment. In inclusive English classrooms, teacher not only face the challenge of varying student language abilities but also must be able to adapt to the diverse needs of students, including those with physical conditions, learning disabilities, or social and emotional challenges. The design of inclusive and transformative English language learning, integrated with community service, is based on several theories and pedagogies, including social constructivism, which emphasizes the importance of communication and social and community engagement in improving the quality of learning for students (Imamyartha et al., 2023). Given the importance of communication and teaching strategies in inclusive education, English language (EFL) education in inclusive classrooms must be considered an ever-changing space, requiring support from the entire education system and ongoing reflection from teacher. Commitment to inclusive education is evident not only in access

policies but also in daily practices that emphasize curriculum adaptation, flexibility in teaching methods, and a personalized approach that respects the needs of each student. Therefore, integrating inclusive principles into EFL teaching is inevitable if we are to establish an equitable, sustainable, and inclusive education system for all students.

One school that implements inclusive education is SD N 2 Bengkala. This school is located in Bengkala Village, Kubutambahan Regency, Bali Province at SDN 2 Bengkala, an inclusive school in Bali that is famous for its population of deaf and mute students. SDN 2 Bengkala has implemented a learning system that combines inclusive students and regular students in one class, with an approach for inclusive children using a regional sign language known as Bahasa Kolok. This initiative arose from the needs of the local community, where some local residents are deaf, so SDN 2 Bengkala aims to provide education to all children in the village equally, without discriminating against each other. To get a clearer picture of how the communication strategies used at SDN 2 Bengkala, a case study was chosen to illustrate this condition. Also to capture the nuanced interactions, cultural context, and adaptive teaching practices that emerge in an inclusive classroom setting. By focusing on a single, unique school environment, the research can provide rich, contextualized insights that might be overlooked in broader quantitative studies, thereby offering a deeper and more holistic depiction of how communication strategies are implemented in real-life inclusive education.

In the context of inclusive education at SDN 2 Bengkala, communication strategies are not merely a supporting tool, but a foundation that determines whether deaf and hearing students can learn and interact effectively in the same classroom.

The urgency of this research arises from the fact that SDN 2 Bengkulu has a unique educational model rarely found in other schools: it combines students with special needs and regular students in a shared learning environment.

This research is crucial because communication strategies can foster effective communication between students and teacher. Without them, students with hearing impairments risk exclusion not only from the classroom environment but also from broader social and academic development. By selecting SDN 2 Bengkulu as the research location, this study seeks to determine the communication strategies used, explain the challenges faced, and explore how these challenges were overcome. This allows for an in-depth exploration of how teacher implement, adapt, and innovate communication strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners. These findings can not only provide practical advice for teacher in similar situations but also help enrich the general discussion about how communication approaches can strengthen inclusive education systems.

1.2 Problem Identification of the Study

SDN 2 Bengkulu is an inclusive school located in a community with many deaf people. Strategic communication between teacher and students is the main key to the success of this inclusive education. Strategic communication can be said to be one way to make communication more effective. With this communication strategy it make teacher easier to communicate because they have already made plans for what to do.

Based on the incident in the background above, the newly discovered communication strategy only uses everyday language, namely *Kolok Language*.

The communication strategies used by teacher in this school are still not widely known. Therefore, identifying these strategies, evaluating their level of effectiveness, and understanding the obstacles faced by teacher in their implementation are very important to improve the practice of inclusive education that is more equitable and of high quality.

1.3 LIMITATION RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that must be considered. First, the focus of this study is the communication strategies used by teacher towards inclusive students, especially deaf students at SDN 2 Bengkala. This study does not comprehensively discuss inclusive classroom, but is only limited to the aspect of communication strategies in learning. Second, this study only covers communication strategies carried out by teacher through classroom observations and interviews. In addition, the results of this study are contextual, limited to SDN 2 Bengkala.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the background of the research, the research question that used to be discussed in this research is:

1. What communication strategy does teacher use for inclusive classroom at SDN 2 Bengkala?
2. What challenges do teacher face in implementing effective communication strategies for deaf students in an inclusive classroom environment at SDN 2 Bengkala?

3. What communication strategies do teacher at SDN 2 Bengkala use to overcome communication challenges?

1.5 Research Objective

According to the research question, the aim of this study is a:

1. To investigate communication strategy that teacher use for inclusive classroom at SDN 2 Bengkala
2. To explain the challenges that teacher face in implementing effective communication strategies for deaf students in an inclusive classroom environment at SDN 2 Bengkala
3. To examine the strategies that teacher use when facing communication problems at SDN 2 Bengkala

By achieving these goals, this study provides insights into make a significant contribution to improving inclusive educational practices and ensuring that students with special needs receive an equitable and quality education.

1.6 Significance Significances

1.6.1 Theoretical Significances

This study aimed to examine how communication strategies are used specifically between teacher and students at SDN 2 Bengkala. It provides a deeper understanding of how teacher apply communication strategies in inclusive EFL classrooms, particularly in teaching deaf students. Communication plays a crucial role in inclusive education because it determines whether students with special needs can actively participate in learning activities and interact effectively with

teacher and peers. By focusing on teacher–student communication strategies, this study highlights an essential aspect of inclusive education that is often overlooked in the context of English language teaching.

This study is significant because it emphasizes the vital role of teacher communication strategies in supporting inclusive EFL learning environments. Communication is a fundamental component of the teaching and learning process, as it influences how instructions, learning materials, and knowledge are conveyed and understood by students. In inclusive classrooms, effective communication becomes increasingly important due to the diverse linguistic, sensory, and learning needs of students. Therefore, this study contributes to a better understanding of how communication strategies can facilitate meaningful learning experiences for deaf students in inclusive settings.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the fields of communication and inclusive education by reinforcing the concept of strategic communication proposed by Argenti (2007), who argues that communication should be deliberately planned and aligned with specific objectives. In inclusive classrooms, teachers are required to consciously adapt their communication methods to ensure accessibility for all learners. This study demonstrates how teachers implement strategic communication through verbal and non-verbal strategies, such as visual aids, gestures, facial expressions, and sign language, to achieve effective classroom interaction.

Overall, the findings of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically by enriching the existing literature on communication

strategies in inclusive EFL classrooms and providing insights that can support teacher in developing more effective and inclusive communication practices in real classroom contexts.

1.6.2 Practical significances

1. Teacher

These results can give teacher valuable information for creating multimodal communication plans related to teaching deaf students in inclusive EFL classes. Teacher can make sure that deaf students have better access to learning resources and classroom instructions by fusing existing language. By using these strategy, eachers can better manage diverse classrooms, promote more equal interactions between hearing and deaf students, and increase the involvement of deaf students. Multimodal communication strategy are therefore not only useful aids in the teaching and learning process but also serve as the base for developing an inclusive educational environment that is more sustainable, equitable, and participatory for deaf students.

2. School

Schools can use this study to inform the development of inclusive curricula that specifically address the needs of students with hearing impairment. This includes understanding the importance of assistive technology, visual aids, and ongoing training for educators in inclusive communication and education for people with hearing impairment. The study also encourages schools to collaborate with teacher, parents, and students to improve long-term inclusive practices for children with hearing loss. Schools can use this study to improve inclusive policies, expand access

to appropriate educational supports, and ensure that children with hearing loss have equitable learning experiences that meet their communication and learning needs.

3. Education

At the educational level, this study highlights the importance of developing flexible and inclusive curricula that accommodate the communication and learning characteristics of deaf students. Educational practices should emphasize visual-based learning, the integration of sign language, and the use of multimodal instructional strategies. Such approaches enable deaf students to better comprehend learning materials and actively participate in classroom activities. By addressing the specific needs of deaf learners, the education system can promote more equitable access and ensure meaningful participation for all students.

4. Future Research

This study opens opportunities for future research to explore how inclusive education models for deaf students can be implemented more broadly, particularly in EFL contexts. Future studies may focus on the effectiveness of sign language integration, visual-based instruction, and assistive technologies in supporting deaf students' learning outcomes. Additionally, research can investigate how collaboration between educators, families, and institutions contributes to sustainable inclusive practices. The findings of this study can serve as a foundation for developing innovative pedagogical approaches and informing educational policies that support deaf students and other learners with diverse needs.