

## TEACHERS' ENGLISH-TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY AT A HOMESCHOOLING IN MEDAN

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### Abstract

*Students with special needs often face challenges in learning English effectively, highlighting the importance of teachers' strategies in supporting their educational success. This study aimed to explore the strategies used by teachers in teaching English to students with special needs at Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym). Employing a qualitative case study design, data were collected from three English teachers (two females and one male) through criterion sampling. The instruments used included direct classroom observations, documentation of therapists' psychological notes, and interviews conducted via WhatsApp voice recordings. Data were analysed thematically. The findings revealed that teachers implemented various strategies for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), such as multimedia visual strategies and the use of images, videos, and colour-based materials. Additionally, they adopted structured learning approaches involving digital aids and role-play activities. For slow learners, teachers applied direct practice methods through engaging activities and relationship-building approaches to foster motivation and confidence. These strategies enabled teachers to create a comfortable and emotionally supportive learning environment, facilitating better language acquisition. The study recommends that teachers integrate adaptive media, structured approaches, and relationship-focused methods to enhance the learning experiences and outcomes of students with special needs.*

**Keywords:** *Autism Spectrum Disorder, Teaching strategies; Special needs education; Teachers competence.*

### INTRODUCTION

Special education requires teachers to be responsible for designing by considering the uniqueness and diversity of students' learning conditions (Apriliyanti, 2022). Students with

special needs are students who experience developmental delays, and have medical conditions, mental conditions, and/or congenital conditions (Larson et al., 2001; Abells et al., 2016). Students with special needs face unique challenges in learning English due to their diverse cognitive, emotional, and behavioural conditions. Effective teaching strategies are therefore crucial to accommodate their learning differences and support their educational success. Teaching strategies are one of the essential components that teachers greatly need in their instruction. This research specifically aims to discuss various teaching strategies that teachers use when teaching English to students with special needs, as these students often experience fluctuating emotional sensitivity. Teaching is broadly defined as an intentional act to facilitate student learning through explanation, demonstration, and guidance (Rajagopalan, 2019). It involves not only the delivery of material but also creating an interactive environment that enables students to understand and apply concepts in their daily lives. Thus, designing appropriate teaching strategies is an essential part of lesson planning and implementation.

Teaching English to students with special needs certainly presents its challenges compared to teaching regular students. In delivering lessons to students, teachers require various special techniques and strategies that will be adjusted based on the students' conditions. Students with special needs have fluctuating emotional sensitivities over time. (Kurniawati, 2014) emphasises that teachers need to manage the behaviour and emotions of students with special needs effectively, as emotional stability is fundamental to learning readiness. Strategies for managing such behaviours include explaining acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, identifying individual achievement levels, designing tailored teaching activities, developing creative materials to avoid boredom, and maintaining comprehensive developmental records to monitor progress.

Despite existing studies defining teaching strategies as structured plans that integrate objectives, materials, methods, media, learning environments, and assessments (Takriyanti et al., 2022; Damayanti et al., 2024), there remains a need to understand how these are implemented specifically for students with special needs in homeschooling settings. Ntinda et al. (2019) highlight that students with hearing impairments are visual learners who face barriers when instructional methods rely predominantly on oral communication.

The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework underpins this study as its grand theory, providing an inclusive pedagogical approach that guides teachers in designing flexible curricula accommodating diverse learners. UDL promotes multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression, ensuring that learning environments address varied cognitive and sensory needs (Genovesi et al., 2022). While UDL has been widely applied in African contexts to create inclusive education for students with disabilities, its implementation within Indonesian homeschooling settings remains underexplored.

Previous studies in Jambi have shown that English teachers employ various strategies to engage Indonesian homeschooling students with special needs, such as incorporating visual aids and adapting teaching styles to individual characteristics to foster an active and enthusiastic learning environment such as reading paper strategies (paper braille with pen reglet), using JAWS App for reading e-text, strategy to obtain the language development (total

physical response, realia strategy, modeled talk), strategy to encourage active involvement (communication games, dictogloss), Routine- based and Specific Naturalistic Strategies (Setiawan et al., 2020; Aldriani, 2013; Mahaputri, 2015). (Juhaeni & Wardani, 2022) in Purwokerto found that differentiated instruction and multisensory approaches significantly support hearing-impaired students' English learning. However, these studies predominantly focus on formal or inclusive school contexts, leaving a gap regarding effective strategies in homeschooling institutions.

Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym) offers an alternative education model tailored to the psychological profiles, cognitive abilities, interests, and talents of students. Homeschooling is defined as a non-formal education approach conducted under the guidance of teachers and parents to maximise each child's potential in a flexible learning environment (Imam Shofwan et al., 2019). At Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym), learning is implemented through 1) individual learning (single), which is a homeschooling system where children learn independently offline and online, and during the learning process, will be accompanied by subject teachers and parents. 2) Community learning, which is a homeschooling system that limits a maximum of 3 students learning together either offline or online (Adelia, 2023), with the curriculum guided by an independent but flexible curriculum design, of which teachers are allowed for personalised adjustments to meet each student's unique educational needs based on student's psychological records and cognitive abilities.

Despite the growing prevalence of homeschooling for students with special needs, limited research has explored how teacher competence and strategy implementation in such settings influence English learning outcomes. Therefore, this study aims to examine the strategies and media used by English teachers at Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym) in teaching students with special needs. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following research questions; (1) What teaching strategies do English teachers employ when teaching students with special needs at Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym)?, and (2) How do teachers integrate media to support English learning for students with special needs?

By addressing these questions, this study seeks to contribute insights into effective instructional practices for special needs students in homeschooling contexts, highlighting the importance of teacher competence, adaptive strategies, and inclusive pedagogy in supporting their language learning success.

## METHOD

This study used a qualitative case study design to explore teachers' strategies in teaching English to students with special needs at Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym). A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, while the case study framework enables an examination of teaching practices within their real-life context (Creswell, 2013). This design aligns with the research objective of identifying specific teaching strategies and analysing how teachers' professional competence optimises English learning for students with special needs. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative case studies are appropriate when researchers aim to explore a phenomenon comprehensively through multiple data sources to generate rich, contextual insights.

This study involved three English teachers, a psychological therapist, and the headmistress of Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym), selected through criterion sampling based on their relevance to the research focus. The first teacher worked with Grade 11 students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who faced emotional, communication, and cognitive challenges, while the second teacher taught Grade 7 students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), addressing behavioural, cognitive, social, and emotional issues. The third teacher handled Grade 3 slow learners with a combination of emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioural difficulties. The inclusion of the psychological therapist and headmistress provided institutional insights into curriculum adaptations and student psychological profiles. Ethical approval was obtained from the headmistress, and informed consent was secured from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and adherence to research ethics.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted in Indonesian, allowing teachers to describe their strategies, methods, and competencies in teaching English to students with special needs while enabling the researcher to probe deeper into adaptive practices such as visual media use, engaging activities, and student-centred approaches. Additional data came from classroom observations focusing on interactions, teaching media, and lesson delivery, alongside documentation such as daily journals and psychological reports. Thematic analysis was employed to compile, code, and categorise data, identifying key patterns and themes related to effective teaching strategies and professional competencies. Ethical considerations were prioritised throughout data collection and analysis, ensuring participant dignity, informed consent, and confidentiality were upheld at every stage.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to explore how English teachers at Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym) support students with special needs using varied teaching strategies tailored to each student's unique psychological and behavioural profiles. The data were obtained through interviews with three English teachers (T1, T2, and T3), a psychological therapist and classroom observations. The findings are structured into participant backgrounds, strategies applied, challenges faced, and emphasis on how each teacher handles learning situations effectively.

### Participant Backgrounds

Students with special needs in this study displayed diverse classifications. Teacher 1 (T1) taught an 11th-grade student with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) characterised by unstable mood, communication difficulties, and a strong preference for drawing. Teacher 2 (T2) worked with an 8th-grade ASD student displaying behavioural issues, limited two-way communication, and emotional dysregulation. Teacher 3 (T3) taught a 3rd-grade slow learner with challenges in cognitive focus, gross motor skills, and social-emotional adjustment. The descriptions of each English teacher with each student are described in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1. The psychological therapist records the student's psychological condition based on information from parents and the psychological therapist's observations.

English Teacher	Students	Classification
<b>SI (T1)</b> Female, 30 years old, 3 years teaching experience.	AR: 11 high school students with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)	<p><b>Primary Issue:</b> Emotion</p> <p><b>Co-existing Issues:</b> Communication and cognitive</p> <p>Emotions: Her mood is still unstable, always throwing tantrums when studying if entering new difficult material.</p> <p>Social: Not yet able to communicate and interact with others and too lazy to respond verbally.</p> <p>Behavior: Addicted to gadgets, but students usually draw when they are bored and do not want to listen to their teachers.</p> <p>Cognitive: Difficulty understanding long narratives, story questions and long sentences and not yet able to make sentences when they want to express their feelings.</p>
<b>ZF (T2)</b> female, 24 years old, 2 years teaching experience.	CA: 8 Junior High School students with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)	<p><b>Primary Issues:</b> Behavior and Emotion</p> <p><b>Co-existing Issues:</b> Communication and Cognitive.</p> <p>Behavior: scratching face and body, taking other people's belongings without permission, unable to sit still and focus</p> <p>Social: unable to communicate 2 ways</p> <p>Cognitive: unable to understand language that is too complicated</p> <p>Emotional: unable to express feelings and unable to control emotions</p>
<b>RD (T3)</b> male, 2 years teaching experience.	FA: 3 Elementary students with Slow Learner.	<p><b>Primary Issue: Emotional</b></p> <p><b>Co-existing Issues:</b> Cognitive, Social, Behavioral</p> <p>Cognitive: Still unable to maintain focus, sensory integration abilities are not optimal, such as gross motor skills like running and jumping.</p> <p>Social: Still unable to socialise with new people, uncomfortable in crowds and new situations.</p> <p>Emotional: Still prone to anger and uncontrollable crying, unable to hear loud noises, easily offended and tends to be impatient and easily anxious.</p> <p>Behavior: obsessive and compulsive behavior towards tidiness.</p>

Table 1 shows that students were diagnosed as students with special needs who also have different classifications; this is in accordance with (Nuwa et al., 2023) depicting that children with special needs (ABK) are those who have special characters and behaviors which make them different from other children in social interactions. With this, some strategies have been applied by the three English teachers to teach students with special needs. Each teacher has their own way of choosing the right strategy to be applied to teach students with various psychological conditions. Therefore, this finding elaborates the various teaching strategies

used by teachers in teaching students with special needs at the Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym).

## Teacher 1: Emphasis on Soothing Techniques and Multimedia Visual Strategies

T1 utilised multimedia visual strategies while working with a student diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). These strategies involve teaching approaches that incorporate visual components such as images, animations, diagrams, and spatial visuals to support the learning process (Wang et al., 2019). They are intended to assist students in building mental models by integrating visual and verbal information effectively, thus improving their comprehension and memory retention. For instance, animations can be used to demonstrate complex concepts, while diagrams can illustrate spatial relationships. Rooted in multimedia learning theory, these approaches highlight the value of visual aids alongside verbal instruction to promote understanding, particularly for students who are visual learners. In this context, the student showed a strong preference for visual tasks like drawing but experienced difficulties with two-way communication.

The ASD student managed by T1 is categorised as moderate and sometimes struggles to control her emotions. Therefore, T1 applies a distinctive teaching method to ensure that the student understands the lesson content according to her abilities. The following section will elaborate on T1's efforts in teaching English to this student.

T1 stated:

*"The strategy I use for AR is based on the observation of the student's learning style; she really likes to draw and doesn't like a lot of explanations or long texts because she is very lacking in two-way communication. Therefore, I use multimedia visual strategies such as songs, engaging visualisations with images and colors, diagrams, concept maps, flashcards, videos, and visual learning applications. The media that I use most often are task-based learning, worksheets or puzzles, matching, true or false questions, short answers, making lists and analysing. The important thing is not to be boring to keep the student's mood stable."*

Teacher 1 explained that he carefully examined AR's learning preferences to guide his teaching approach. Although the student enjoys visual tasks and drawing, he finds it difficult to engage in two-way communication and cannot follow long explanations. To cater to these needs, the teacher adopts a multimedia and visual-based strategy using diverse tools. These methods present material in ways that are attractive and easy for the student to grasp. The activities are designed to be interactive and enjoyable, helping to sustain the student's focus and stable mood. The core aim of this approach is to make learning accessible, stimulating, and emotionally supportive, aligning with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework by offering flexible content delivery and engagement strategies that leverage the student's strengths.

The challenges or obstacles that T1 faces when teaching English to students with ASD is dealing with unstable moods. Thus, a key emphasis in T1's teaching was the use of soothing techniques to stabilise mood when emotional dysregulation occurred. According to T1, anything given to a child with special needs will be easily understood if the child's mood

is good. If the student's mood is bad, the teacher must find a way to stabilize the child's mood so that the child can receive lessons again because the child cannot be forced to do even the smallest task if their mood is not good. When this occurs, T1 implements soothing techniques, such as offering gentle physical contact or incorporating enjoyable activities like painting and coloring, to restore their sense of tranquility. These activities are selected in accordance with the students' interests, with a particular emphasis on their appreciation of drawing. This will enable her to reclaim their attention and establish a more conducive and encouraging learning environment. This is supported by interview evidence as follows:

*"The challenge I face in teaching AR students is when they start to feel bored and uncomfortable continuing the lesson. Then I have to make them feel comfortable again by providing physical touch as a sedative or entertainment such as coloring and painting in between learning because the students I teach are interested in drawing".*

T1 also expressed his motivation to develop professionally despite not having a formal special education background:

*"I have a great interest in helping students with special needs to develop, especially through English language learning. I also continue to learn through the training provided by Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym), as teachers get the opportunity to develop our potential, read literature related to inclusive education, and gain hands-on experience to understand students' needs".*

The findings indicate that Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym) facilitates teacher competency development through training, while Teacher 1's reflections reveal that a strong personal motivation to assist students with special needs can inspire someone to pursue this role, even without formal special education training. Her dedication demonstrates a sincere commitment to fostering students' growth in English learning, supported by her continuous efforts to learn and adapt through professional training, literature on inclusive education, and direct classroom experience. To teach English to her student with moderate ASD, T1 integrates multimedia visual strategies such as interactive apps, videos, flashcards, diagrams, and songs, aligning with the student's visual strengths and drawing interests. She also incorporates task-based activities like puzzles and matching tasks to maintain engagement. However, regulating the student's emotions remains a key challenge, as their mood greatly affects learning receptivity. To address this, T1 applies soothing techniques such as colouring activities and gentle physical touch to restore focus. Her approach reflects the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework by ensuring learner-centred, flexible, and adaptive teaching, which she continuously enhances through professional growth and practical teaching experience.

## **Teacher 2: Emphasis on Structured Learning Approach and Behaviour Management**

Teacher 2 (T2) applied a Structured Learning Approach (SLA) with her ASD student, integrating visual schedules, simplified instructions, multisensory teaching (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic), social stories, and positive reinforcement to promote engagement and social skill development (Wahyu et al., 2017). SLA involves five main components: direct instruction to teach targeted behaviours explicitly, modelling to demonstrate desired actions, role-playing

for practice in controlled settings, providing immediate performance feedback, and ensuring the transfer and maintenance of these skills in real-life contexts. Her student, categorised with severe ASD, often struggles with emotional regulation, such as scratching his body, an inability to sit still, and limited two-way communication. To address these challenges, T2 employs kinaesthetic methods combined with concise instructions while prioritising the creation of a safe and supportive relationship to optimise the student's focus and participation.

T2 shared:

*"The strategies I use to teach include structured learning approaches, such as using visual schedules and clear instructions to provide predictable routines, multisensory teaching, such as combining visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning methods to maintain engagement, and simplifying complex instructions into smaller, manageable steps. Then, I use social stories with narratives to teach appropriate social behaviors. And finally, I use positive information such as reinforcing wants, behaviors, and rewards. Such strategies are implemented through modification of consistent practices based on continued progress and engagement'.*

To support these strategies, T2 incorporated varied media:

*"I also use media to support different learning styles, such as visual aids like flashcards and picture schedules to enhance comprehension. Second, I have digital aids such as educational apps and interactive videos to enhance engagement. Third, I have tactile materials such as puzzles to support sensory learning, and finally, I have storybooks and role plays to encourage language development and social skills".*

In order to assist students with ASD, Teacher 2 (ZF) implemented a structured, multisensory instructional methodology. She established predictable routines by dividing tasks into smaller stages, providing clear instructions, and utilizing visual schedules. In order to sustain engagement, she implemented positive reinforcement, utilized social stories to teach social skills, and incorporated visual, auditory, and kinesthetic methods. (Kuparinen, 2017) states that visual support in the form of written texts, supporting signs, quick sketches, and images should be provided to students with autism to create a positive learning environment and set clear priority targets. However, behavioural and emotional regulation remained challenges. This is supported by interview evidence as follows:

*"A common problem in my class is that students cannot sit still for a long time and are always overreacting in the class. However, I can overcome this by persuading students to return to studying or pretending to call their parents. However, this situation greatly affects the limited learning time."*

Effective classroom management, as highlighted by the second participant, requires diverse strategies to address student behavior and concentration. However, even effective strategies struggle against persistent distractions that significantly impact limited instructional time. Participant 2 also felt her educational background did not align with teaching demands. Nevertheless, professional development courses and special education workshops can provide

teachers with essential skills to create inclusive learning opportunities for all students. This approach is reinforced by the subsequent statement:

*"I continuously adjust teaching methods based on student progress, take professional development courses, attend specialised educational workshops, and apply new techniques learnt from experts." Although I do not have a formal educational background in this field, I believe that my adaptability, willingness to learn, and dedication can make a positive impact. In addition, I also maintain close communication with parents and therapists to ensure consistency in learning both at school and at home".*

### Teacher 3: Emphasis on Direct Practice and Positive Emotional Support

Interview findings indicate Participant 3 employs a direct practice approach with slow learners. This method, defined by (Dakhlan & Tanucan, 2024), exclusively uses the target language, mimicking natural acquisition through inductive grammar, oral communication, and practical vocabulary. It promotes active engagement and real-world conversation, utilizing context, visuals, and gestures over translation. Highly effective for improving beginner and intermediate speaking and listening skills, its interactive nature also boosts motivation and engagement. This is further supported by Participant 3's subsequent interview statement:

*"The strategy I use to teach slow learners is to use direct practice, because slow learners tend to understand material more easily through real experiences than through abstract concepts. In addition, I minimise giving homework so as not to cause excessive stress, and they remain motivated to learn. In addition, I use interesting activities so that students can develop their potential. The most important thing is to build friendly and caring relationships, such as providing support, smiles, and praise for every progress they make, no matter how small. Recording progress regularly and giving rewards for their success can also increase their self-confidence. Finally, conducting psychological assessments and providing counselling is also very helpful in understanding their personal and psychological problems that affect the learning process".*

However, T3 also found some challenges in teaching slow learners, especially in terms of adjusting the pace of teaching so that students do not feel overwhelmed or left behind. It is important for T3 to maintain their confidence and motivation, as they may experience feelings of inferiority or hopelessness when they have difficulty understanding the material. T3 must have the ability to create a positive and fun learning environment and be patient and creative to overcome these barriers. This supportive environment will foster a sense of inclusion, reduce frustration, and motivate students to persist in their learning activities. T3 explained:

*"The problem that often occurs in my class in teaching students who are diagnosed as slow learners is that students cannot sit still for a long time. This will certainly be a challenge, such as one of the main ones being the difficulty of managing the pace of teaching so that they do not feel left behind or stressed but can still follow the lesson, then keeping their motivation and self-confidence high, because they*

*often feel inferior or frustrated if they do not understand the material. esremetulat Therefore, to overcome this, I have to be patient, creative, and able to create a fun learning atmosphere so that they do not feel isolated and remain motivated to learn”.*

Teacher 3 supports slow learners by facilitating subject comprehension through hands-on and real-world experiences. She minimizes tension and sustains motivation by avoiding excessive homework. Confidence is fostered via engaging activities, encouragement, progress monitoring, and incentives. Additionally, she emphasizes fostering supportive relationships and utilizing psychological assessment and counseling to address personal learning impediments.

*“I actively seek training or workshops on special education, read related books or articles, and discuss with other teachers to gain new insights. I also receive feedback from students and colleagues to continuously improve my teaching. In addition, I keep trying different strategies to see what works best for my students.”*

Findings reveal the teacher's strong commitment to enhancing teaching quality through continuous self-development. Acknowledging the common challenge of inadequate specialized training for regular teachers in special education (Cruz, 2020), the teacher proactively seeks training, engages with literature, and consults parents and therapists for new insights. They also welcome feedback from students and colleagues to refine methods and experiment with diverse strategies to meet unique student needs. This approach exemplifies exceptional creativity, flexibility, and dedication, despite lacking a formal background in special education.

## DISCUSSION

The discussion results highlighted several important points regarding English teaching strategies for students with special needs, the challenges faced by teachers, and how teachers' skills and competencies can optimise learning strategies. Additionally, students with special needs have different characteristics and unique learning styles, making it important for teachers to recognise each child's individual needs in order to create a comfortable and supportive learning environment. According to (Byrd & Alexander, 2020), the ability to collect data and conduct assessments effectively is crucial for identifying students with special needs and determining whether and what type of services are required to meet their needs.

After conducting data analysis based on the psychological background records compiled by therapists, researchers found that each student with special needs had a distinct classification, as some students were identified as autistic with emotional, communication, and cognitive disorders, while others were categorised as autistic with behavioral and emotional disorders, and some were classified as slow learners with emotional and social difficulties, and this identification enabled teachers to gain a deeper understanding of each student's individual characteristics, including their learning motivation, anxiety levels, self-confidence, learning styles, and emotional conditions that significantly influence the learning process. Therefore, this understanding became a crucial foundation for designing teaching strategies that are responsive to students' specific needs and for building strong teacher-student

relationships, and it was further revealed that implementing adaptive learning strategies is highly important because teachers need to apply a differentiation approach in their teaching to adapt methods and styles to the diverse student characteristics identified previously.

Moreover, from the interviews conducted, it was seen that teachers applied multimedia visual strategies and structured learning approaches using visual cues to reduce pressure when teaching autistic students, and they also used project-based learning strategies to increase engagement and direct practice strategies for slow learners to support their comprehension and participation. In terms of learning media selection, the findings showed that the chosen media should accommodate students' psychological needs and support their learning styles since teachers tended to select multimodal media such as learning videos, interactive simulations, and visual aids to optimise information processing, and they also considered the use of interactive digital media effective in enhancing students' motivation and participation, especially for those who learn best through experiential activities. Thus, understanding students' psychological backgrounds contributes not only to the selection of more appropriate teaching strategies but also to the utilisation of more effective learning media that can maximise their learning outcomes.

This study shows that teachers also encounter considerable challenges in applying effective English learning strategies, with a key issue being their lack of formal training or specialised education in inclusive teaching, as two out of three participants did not have a background in special education, making it difficult for them to fully understand students' unique needs. Maintaining students' attention, particularly among autistic learners who easily become bored or uncomfortable, also emerged as a major challenge, and to address this, teachers employed personalised techniques such as soothing physical touch or engaging activities like coloring and drawing based on students' interests. Additionally, behavioural issues, including students who struggle to sit still and frequently leave the class, further disrupted learning time, while for slow learners, teachers had to carefully adjust the lesson pace to ensure they did not feel overwhelmed and remained motivated. These barriers are associated with the perceptions and representations of ordinary life behaviors in society that are problematic for children with disabilities and their families (Tah, 2025).

Despite these obstacles, teachers show a high commitment to improving their competencies through training, reading literature related to inclusive education, discussing with peers and actively communicating with parents and therapists. Developing strategies to adapt the learning environment is essential, as the lack of professional development in understanding autism remains a barrier to inclusive education; nevertheless, teachers continue to seek ways to enhance their competencies ((Petersson-Bloom & Holmqvist, 2022). Although educators often struggle to find opportunities for improving their skills in special needs teaching (Slowik et al., 2021), this is not the case at Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym), where teacher training is provided to support effective learning implementation.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that teaching English to students with special needs at Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym) demands an in-depth understanding of their psychological

conditions, learning preferences, and behavioural characteristics. Although many teachers lack formal training in special education, they have shown commendable dedication to enhancing their competencies through professional workshops, literature review, collaboration with therapists, and continuous practical engagement, aligning with Slowik et al. (2021). Furthermore, the integration of differentiated teaching methods, along with the use of multimodal and interactive media tailored to students' psychological profiles, has effectively fostered an inclusive and engaging learning environment. Institutional support, particularly the teacher training programmes provided by Cadika Homeschooling (a pseudonym), has further enabled teachers to adapt their approaches to meet diverse student needs, reflecting Petersson-Bloom and Holmqvist's (2022) assertion that such professional development is essential for inclusive education.

However, beyond these findings, this study's uniqueness lies in highlighting context-specific strategies within a homeschooling institution that integrates structured learning approaches, multimedia visual techniques, and direct practice tailored to individual psychological assessments. This contribution offers practical insights for inclusive education policy formulation, teacher training models, and curriculum design in similar non-formal educational settings.

## LIMITATION

This study has several limitations. First, it employed a qualitative case study design involving only three teachers within a single homeschooling institution, which limits the generalisability of its findings to broader educational settings such as public schools, inclusive schools, or different homeschooling contexts. Second, the sample size was small and specific to certain classifications of special needs (ASD and slow learners), thus excluding other special needs categories such as visual, hearing, or physical impairments, which may require different teaching strategies. Third, data collection relied heavily on interviews, observations, and documentation within a short time frame, lacking longitudinal tracking of students' progress to measure the long-term effectiveness of applied strategies. Lastly, teachers involved did not have formal special education backgrounds, potentially limiting the depth of specialised pedagogical practices explored, and the study did not incorporate direct student voice or parental perspectives, which could provide a more holistic understanding of teaching effectiveness for special needs students.

For future research, it is recommended to conduct experimental studies to evaluate the effectiveness of specific strategies or media tools for students with diverse special needs, such as comparing visual and auditory materials for students with autism and slow learners. Additionally, longitudinal studies assessing the impact of continuous teacher training on student progress will provide empirical evidence to guide sustainable instructional planning in inclusive education. Overall, implementing tailored teaching strategies supported by institutional training has significant implications for improving educational outcomes and fostering equity for students with special needs.

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