

Empowering Shadow Teachers Through Inclusive English Teaching Module Development at Sekolah Alam Langit Biru Bengkulu

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Abstract

Background: English instruction for inclusive students at Sekolah Alam Langit Biru Bengkulu is currently constrained by the absence of structured teaching modules and limited pedagogical training among shadow teachers, resulting in inconsistent instructional practices.

Aims: This community service paper aims to describe the design, implementation, and evaluation of an inclusive English teaching module developed specifically for shadow teachers at Sekolah Alam Langit Biru Bengkulu, with a focus on practical capacity building and classroom applicability.

Methods: The program involved seven shadow teachers and six inclusive students and was conducted through orientation, workshops, guided mentoring, module development using Canva, classroom try-out, and evaluation. Data were collected using teacher pretest–posttest questionnaires measuring instructional readiness and digital literacy, and student vocabulary assessments. All data were analyzed descriptively.

Results: The findings indicate a notable improvement in shadow teachers' instructional readiness and digital literacy, with average scores increasing by approximately 21% from pretest to posttest. In addition, student vocabulary scores improved in four out of six participants, with gains ranging from 17 to 30 points, particularly among those with lower initial proficiency.

Conclusion: The program demonstrates that integrating accessible digital tools and multisensory media within a structured training framework is a feasible and effective approach to supporting inclusive English learning through shadow teachers.

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INTRODUCTION

English has increasingly been recognized as a crucial component of early childhood and primary education due to its role in fostering global communication competence, cognitive flexibility, and early linguistic awareness. Research in second language acquisition emphasizes that early exposure to English can support phonological sensitivity, vocabulary development, and long-term academic readiness when instruction is developmentally appropriate and supported by structured learning materials (Kostoulas, 2020; Wang, 2021). In the Indonesian context, English is widely introduced at the primary level; however, its implementation remains inconsistent, largely influenced by teacher preparedness, instructional design, and the availability of suitable learning resources (Nugroho & Rekha, 2020; Rahmawati & Susanto, 2022).

The challenges of English instruction are amplified in inclusive education settings, where students with special educational needs require differentiated, accessible, and multisensory learning

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experiences. Inclusive learners often face barriers related to attention, language processing, memory, and sensory integration, which necessitate instructional adaptations beyond conventional classroom practices (Alqraini, 2020; Bunbun & Owusu, 2024). Empirical studies demonstrate that simplified linguistic input, visual scaffolding, hands-on activities, and multimodal engagement significantly enhance participation and comprehension among students with diverse learning needs (Al-Azawei et al., 2021; Blackwell, 2021).

These instructional principles align closely with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, which advocates providing multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to accommodate learner variability (CAST, 2020; Rao & Meo, 2016). UDL-based instruction has been shown to improve accessibility and learner autonomy in inclusive classrooms, particularly in language learning contexts where abstract concepts and symbolic representations are common. Despite its proven effectiveness, the practical application of UDL in English language teaching remains limited, especially in schools with constrained resources and limited teacher training opportunities.

Within inclusive classrooms, shadow teachers play a vital role in mediating instruction, supporting behavior regulation, and facilitating student participation. Shadow teachers often serve as the primary instructional bridge for inclusive students, particularly during language learning activities that require individualized assistance (Padmadewi et al., 2024; Suryanto et al., 2025). However, previous studies indicate that many shadow teachers lack formal pedagogical training, subject-specific knowledge, and access to structured instructional materials, which restricts their effectiveness in supporting inclusive learning outcomes.

Community service initiatives in Indonesia have primarily focused on general teacher professional development, such as inclusive classroom management, differentiated lesson planning, and the development of visual learning media (Lestari & Pratiwi, 2021; Putri & Mulyadi, 2020; Sari & Suparno, 2021; Suryani, 2022). Other programs have emphasized the introduction of inclusive education concepts and UDL principles to mainstream teachers (Rao & Meo, 2016b; Yuliani & Karim, 2023). While these initiatives contribute positively to inclusive education, specific interventions targeting English instruction for inclusive learners, particularly through the empowerment of shadow teachers, remain underexplored.

At Sekolah Alam Langit Biru Bengkulu, shadow teachers are central to daily instructional support for inclusive students. However, several specific challenges were identified prior to the implementation of this program. Shadow teachers relied heavily on verbal explanations without sufficient visual or tactile support, resulting in limited student engagement. Instructional activities were often unstructured, with no clearly defined learning objectives, sequencing, or assessment strategies. In addition, teachers reported difficulties in simplifying English vocabulary for inclusive learners and lacked confidence in integrating digital tools into their teaching practices. These conditions led to inconsistent instructional delivery and reduced effectiveness of English learning for students with diverse needs.

Addressing these challenges requires not only pedagogical support but also accessible tools that enable teachers to design structured and engaging learning materials. In this program, Canva was selected as the primary tool for module development due to its user-friendly interface, availability of ready-to-use templates, and accessibility for users with limited technical backgrounds. Unlike more complex design software, Canva allows teachers to create visually organized instructional materials through simple drag-and-drop features, making it particularly suitable for shadow teachers who do not have formal training in educational technology. Its flexibility also supports the integration of visual elements and multimodal content aligned with inclusive teaching principles.

Accordingly, this community service program focuses on the development of an inclusive English teaching module specifically designed for shadow teachers. In this program, an English teaching module is conceptualized as a structured instructional package that integrates clear learning objectives, themed vocabulary content, visual and tactile activities, simple formative assessments, and practical classroom implementation guidelines. The module development process incorporates

inclusive pedagogical principles and accessible digital tools to ensure usability and adaptability in real classroom contexts (Kimmons, 2021).

Accordingly, this community service initiative was conducted under the title “Empowering Shadow Teachers Through Inclusive English Teaching Module Development at Sekolah Alam Langit Biru Bengkulu”, with the aim of strengthening shadow teachers’ instructional capacity and enhancing inclusive students’ engagement and vocabulary acquisition through structured, accessible, and contextually relevant English learning materials.

METHOD

This community service program was conducted at Sekolah Alam Langit Biru Bengkulu over a two-week period in November 2025. The program involved seven shadow teachers and six inclusive students as participants. A structured pretest–posttest design was employed to evaluate changes in teacher competence and student learning outcomes. Teacher instructional readiness and digital literacy were measured using a 15-item Likert-scale questionnaire administered via Google Forms, covering four dimensions: confidence in teaching English, instructional planning clarity, readiness to use digital tools, and perceived usefulness of the developed modules. Student learning outcomes were assessed using a vocabulary test consisting of picture-based identification and word-recognition tasks aligned with the module themes. Both instruments were reviewed by two experts in English education and inclusive pedagogy to ensure content validity prior to implementation. All data were analyzed descriptively to capture practical improvements following the program.

This community service program was carried out through five main stages, namely socialization, workshop, Canva-based module design and development, module try-out with pipe cleaner media, and closing and evaluation. Each stage was systematically designed to ensure that the activities were implemented effectively, participatory, and responsive to the learning needs of inclusive students and shadow teachers at Sekolah Alam Langit Biru Bengkulu. These stages are described as follows:

a. Socialization Stage

The socialization stage aimed to introduce participants to the objectives, structure, and expected outcomes of the program. During this stage, shadow teachers were provided with an overview of inclusive English instruction and the importance of structured teaching materials. This stage also functioned to build participants’ initial understanding and readiness before engaging in more intensive training activities.

b. Workshop Stage

The workshop stage focused on strengthening teachers’ foundational knowledge and practical skills in inclusive English teaching. The sessions covered key topics such as visual design principles, multisensory learning strategies, and the use of Canva as an accessible digital tool for instructional material development. Hands-on activities were emphasized to ensure that participants could directly apply the concepts in designing learning modules.

c. Canva-Based Module Design and Development

In this stage, shadow teachers developed English teaching modules using Canva based on inclusive pedagogical principles. The process involved drafting learning objectives, selecting appropriate vocabulary themes, designing visual layouts, and integrating simple assessment components. Guided mentoring was provided to support teachers in refining their modules, with a focus on clarity, accessibility, and alignment between instructional elements.

d. Module Try-Out with Pipe Cleaner Media

The developed modules were implemented in a classroom try-out involving inclusive students. During this stage, pipe cleaners were used as tactile learning media to support multisensory engagement in vocabulary learning. The try-out aimed to observe student participation, engagement, and comprehension when interacting with the instructional materials in real classroom settings.

e. Closing and Evaluation

The final stage involved reflecting on the overall implementation of the program and evaluating its outcomes. Teachers completed posttest questionnaires, and students undertook the final vocabulary assessment. In addition, participants received feedback, certificates of participation, and printed versions of the developed modules to support the sustainability of instructional practices beyond the program duration.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Socialization Stage

The socialization stage familiarized shadow teachers with the objectives, workflow, and expected outcomes of the program. Teachers were informed that they would collaboratively design an English teaching module using Canva and integrate pipe cleaners as tactile, multisensory media for vocabulary instruction. This stage resulted in improved teacher understanding of program objectives and inclusive material design, as reflected in their active participation during subsequent workshop activities (Chao et al., 2022). The implementation of this stage is illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Socialization Stage

Workshop Stage

During the workshop stage, teachers participated in structured training on inclusive module development, basic visual design principles, and multisensory instructional strategies. Observational field notes indicated notable improvement in teachers' ability to organize learning content, select appropriate visuals, and apply inclusive teaching considerations. These observations are consistent with studies reporting that hands-on workshops strengthen teachers' technology integration skills and inclusive planning practices (Flores & Swallow, 2021). Examples of workshop activities and teacher engagement are shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Workshop Session

Canva-Based Module Design and Development

Following the workshop sessions, shadow teachers collaboratively and independently designed English teaching modules using Canva. The modules were developed according to students' developmental phases and included essential instructional components such as learning objectives, vocabulary themes, learning activities, and simple assessments. The resulting modules demonstrated clearer layout organization, appropriate color contrast, improved visual hierarchy, and systematic

sequencing of activities. Canva enabled teachers to efficiently revise and adapt materials based on students' cognitive and linguistic profiles, supporting the practical application of Universal Design for Learning principles. The module development process and layout organization produced by the teachers are presented in Figure 3. Samples of the module cover designs created by shadow teachers using Canva are presented in Figure 4.



Figure 3. Module Development using Canva



Figure 4. Module Covers Designed by Shadow Teachers using Canva

Module Try-Out with Pipe Cleaner Media

The developed modules were piloted with inclusive students using pipe cleaners as tactile learning media for constructing letters, modeling objects, and representing vocabulary items. During the try-out, students displayed increased engagement, longer attention spans, and improved vocabulary comprehension. Teachers also observed improvements in students' visual-motor coordination and retention. These observations support earlier studies emphasizing the effectiveness of manipulable and tactile media in enhancing learning outcomes for neurodiverse learners (Abidin et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022; Siregar et al., 2022). Student engagement during the module try-out using pipe cleaner media is illustrated in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Module Try-out with Pipe Cleaner Media

Closing and Evaluation Outcomes

At the conclusion of the program, all participating shadow teachers formally received certificates of participation as recognition of their engagement and completion of the training activities. In addition,

each participant was provided with a printed version of the English teaching module that had been collaboratively developed during the program. The distribution of printed modules aimed to ensure the sustainability of instructional practices by enabling teachers to directly apply the materials in daily classroom activities without reliance on digital devices. This closing activity reinforced participants' sense of achievement and supported the continued use of inclusive English teaching resources beyond the duration of the community service program.



Figure 6. Distribution of Certificates and Printed English Teaching Modules to Shadow Teachers at the Closing Stage of the Program

Program evaluation involved pretest–posttest comparisons for both teachers and students. Teacher pretest and posttest scores represent mean values derived from Likert-scale responses measuring instructional readiness and digital literacy. Student scores represent the percentage of correct responses on the vocabulary assessment. Two students obtained maximum scores in both pretest and posttest, indicating high initial vocabulary mastery and a ceiling effect; however, other students demonstrated measurable improvement following the module implementation.

Overall, descriptive analysis of the pretest–posttest data indicates a consistent upward trend in teachers' instructional readiness and digital literacy. The average teacher score increased from the pretest to the posttest, reflecting a shift from a moderate to a higher level of readiness after participation in the program. All seven shadow teachers demonstrated score improvement, suggesting that the orientation, workshop, and mentoring stages effectively supported their instructional competence.

Table 1. Teacher Pretest and Posttest Scores (Likert Scale Means)

Participants	Score	
	Pretest	Posttest
Teacher 1	3.3	4.3
Teacher 2	3.5	3.9
Teacher 3	2.9	3.9
Teacher 4	3.5	4
Teacher 5	4.1	4.6
Teacher 6	3.2	4
Teacher 7	4	5

Student vocabulary assessment results also indicate overall improvement following the module implementation. Four out of six students showed notable score increases, particularly those with lower baseline scores in the pretest. Although two students reached maximum scores in both assessments, indicating a ceiling effect, the remaining students demonstrated meaningful progress in vocabulary mastery after engaging with the developed module.

Table 2. Student Pretest and Posttest Scores (Vocabulary Assessment Results)

Participants	Score	
	Pretest	Posttest
Student 1	53	83
Student 2	24	44
Student 3	100	100

Participants	Score	
	Pretest	Posttest
Student 4	100	100
Student 5	54	71.5
Student 6	83	95

Discussion

The evaluation results indicate that the methods employed in this community service program were appropriate for strengthening shadow teachers' instructional capacity and supporting inclusive English learning. Rather than establishing causal relationships, the findings provide descriptive evidence of practical improvements observed during program implementation.

The structured combination of socialization, workshops, and guided mentoring contributed significantly to improving teachers' readiness to design inclusive English learning materials. The initial stages enhanced teachers' understanding of visual accessibility, multisensory instruction, and digital module development. These findings are consistent with [Chao et al. \(2022\)](#), who emphasize the role of early orientation in improving instructional coherence and teacher preparedness, as well as [Flores & Swallow \(2021\)](#), who highlight the effectiveness of guided digital training in developing teacher competence.

Furthermore, the teachers' ability to systematically construct module components reflects improved pedagogical planning and instructional clarity. The modules were developed using a structured framework consisting of three main parts: general information, core components, and appendices. The general information section provides foundational context, including module identity, description, Pancasila student profile, learning facilities, and the selected learning model. The core components articulate the instructional process through clearly defined learning objectives, guiding questions, learning activities, assessment strategies, and enrichment and remedial activities. The appendices complement the main content by providing student worksheets, reflections, a glossary, and references. This structured design supports coherent lesson flow and aligns with recommendations for well-organized instructional materials in inclusive settings ([CAST, 2020](#); [OECD, 2020](#)).

The Canva-based module development process further demonstrates that accessible digital authoring tools can facilitate the production of structured and inclusive instructional materials. Teachers were able to apply principles of layout organization, visual hierarchy, and content adaptation that align with the Universal Design for Learning framework. This finding supports previous conclusions that digital platforms can enhance teachers' capacity to create adaptable learning resources for diverse learners ([Jalil et al., 2023](#); [Kimmons, 2021](#)). Moreover, Canva enabled teachers with limited technical backgrounds to independently design complete instructional modules, highlighting its suitability as an inclusive digital authoring tool.

The module try-out stage confirms the practical value of combining digital visual materials with tactile media in inclusive English instruction. The use of pipe cleaners as manipulable learning tools supported students' engagement, attention, and vocabulary retention. Students demonstrated increased participation and improved task performance, indicating that multisensory learning experiences can facilitate deeper language processing. These observations are consistent with previous studies highlighting the effectiveness of tactile and multisensory instructional approaches for learners with diverse needs ([Abidin et al., 2021](#); [Siregar et al., 2022](#)).

Despite the overall positive outcomes, several challenges emerged during the mentoring and implementation processes, including teachers' initial difficulties in using Canva, limited internet access, and challenges in simplifying vocabulary and aligning instruction with diverse learner needs. To address these issues, facilitators provided step-by-step guidance, simplified templates, continuous feedback, and offline alternatives, while also encouraging peer collaboration. These strategies gradually improved teachers' confidence and independence in designing instructional materials. Overall, the integration of structured module development, accessible digital tools, and multisensory learning media proved to be a feasible approach to supporting inclusive English teaching while strengthening teacher capacity and enhancing student engagement.

Implications

The findings of this community service program have several practical implications for inclusive education settings. For schools, the developed module can be adopted as a standard instructional resource to support consistent English teaching for inclusive students. For shadow teachers, the program demonstrates that structured training combined with accessible digital tools can enhance instructional confidence and material design skills. At a broader level, this program offers a feasible model for community service initiatives focusing on teacher empowerment through hands-on workshops and guided mentoring, particularly in schools with limited access to specialized instructional resources.

Research contribution

This community service program contributes to inclusive English language teaching by presenting a structured model for strengthening teacher capacity through socialization, workshops, and guided module development. It also provides practical evidence supporting the effectiveness of Canva-based visual modules combined with tactile media for vocabulary learning among inclusive students. The program offers a replicable framework that may be adapted across different educational contexts.

Limitations

This program involved a limited number of participants, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. The evaluation focused on short-term outcomes, and long-term effects on teaching practices and student retention were not examined. In addition, teacher questionnaire responses were self-reported and may be influenced by subjective perceptions.

Suggestions

Future community service programs are encouraged to involve larger and more diverse participant groups to enhance external validity. Longitudinal evaluation designs are recommended to examine sustained impacts on instructional practices and student learning outcomes. Further initiatives may also explore alternative digital platforms and varied tactile media to compare instructional effectiveness across inclusive learning contexts.

CONCLUSION

This community service program successfully achieved its objective of strengthening shadow teachers' capacity to design and implement inclusive English teaching materials. Through a structured combination of training, mentoring, and practical application, teachers were able not only to develop accessible and contextually relevant modules, but also to improve their confidence and independence in planning and delivering inclusive instruction. The program demonstrates that systematic guidance, when supported by user-friendly digital tools and multisensory approaches, can effectively bridge gaps in pedagogical and technological competence among shadow teachers. Furthermore, the resulting instructional materials provide a practical foundation for more consistent and engaging English learning experiences for inclusive students. Overall, this initiative underscores the importance of capacity-building programs that are responsive to teachers' needs and adaptable to real classroom contexts in promoting sustainable inclusive education practices.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

MP conceptualized and implemented the community service program, conducted workshops, guided module development, and carried out data collection and analysis. HS supported institutional coordination and program facilitation at the school level. DS, RA, and WS supervised the program and provided academic guidance and feedback. All authors contributed to manuscript preparation and approved the final version.

AI DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The authors used ChatGPT, an AI-based language assistance tool developed by OpenAI, during the preparation of this manuscript for language refinement, clarity improvement, and structural editing. After using the tool, the authors thoroughly reviewed, revised, and edited all content as needed and take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the publication. The use of artificial intelligence did not influence the research design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, or conclusions of the study.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial, institutional, or personal conflicts of interest that could have influenced the design and conduct of the community service program, the analysis and interpretation of data, the preparation of the manuscript, or the decision to publish the results.

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