

A TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH ADHD IN INCLUSIVE ELEMENTARY EFL CLASSROOMS: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY FROM AN ISLAMIC SCHOOL IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Teaching English to students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in inclusive classrooms requires appropriate strategies to address their attention, behavioral, and language-learning challenges. However, studies focusing specifically on English teaching strategies for ADHD students at the elementary level remain limited, particularly in inclusive Islamic school contexts. This study aimed to explore the strategies used by an English teacher in teaching English to students with ADHD at an inclusive Islamic elementary school in Medan, Indonesia. This study employed a qualitative case study design involving one female English teacher, approximately 28 years old, who had four years of experience teaching English to three male students diagnosed with ADHD at the school. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and lesson plan analysis and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. Based on the analysis of teacher interviews and lesson plans, the findings identified thirteen teaching strategies: expressing greetings in english, managing students attention, providing ice breaking, notifying the learning objectives, writing the lesson topic on the board, explaining the meaning of the lesson topic, giving example, repeating example together, giving exercise, giving feedback, giving assignment, lesson review, and giving rewards. These findings highlight that structured, visual, active, and reinforcement-based strategies play an important role in supporting English learning for students with ADHD. This study contributes to the literature on inclusive English teaching by providing practical evidence of how instructional strategies are systematically planned and implemented in an underexplored Islamic elementary school context.

Keywords: ADHD Learners, English Teaching Strategies, Inclusive Classroom, Teachers' Strategies

INTRODUCTION

Teaching strategies play an important role in supporting successful English language learning, particularly in inclusive classrooms where students have diverse learning needs. Teaching strategy refers to the systematic ways teachers plan, organize, and implement instruction to achieve learning objectives effectively. According to Richards and Rodgers

(2001), teaching strategies involve methods and approaches used by teachers to facilitate students' learning experiences. Similarly, Killen (1998) states that teaching strategies are deliberate actions designed to promote meaningful learning and increase student engagement. In English language teaching, the integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills requires students' concentration, participation, and active involvement during the learning process (Harmer, 1991). Therefore, teachers need to apply appropriate instructional strategies, especially in inclusive classrooms where students have different learning characteristics and educational needs.

Inclusive education itself has become a major educational concern globally. UNESCO (2020) emphasizes that inclusive classrooms should provide equal learning opportunities for all students, including those with neurodevelopmental disorders such as ADHD. In practice, however, achieving inclusion in language classrooms remains challenging because teachers must balance curriculum demands with students' diverse learning needs (Edor et al., 2025). This challenge becomes even more complex in elementary school settings, where students are still developing their basic academic, social, and emotional skills (Iq & Kodiyatar, 2026). In this context, teaching strategies become essential not only for delivering lesson content but also for creating a supportive learning environment that accommodates learners' differences.

The role of teaching strategies becomes more significant when teaching students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by persistent patterns of inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity that may interfere with students' academic performance and social interaction (Association, 2022). Barkley (2006) explains that children with ADHD commonly experience difficulties in attention regulation, behavioral inhibition, and executive functioning, which affect their ability to focus, organize tasks, and complete learning activities. In addition, Brown (2007) emphasizes that students with ADHD often struggle with sustaining effort, managing working memory, and regulating emotions during academic tasks. These characteristics indicate that students with ADHD require more structured, engaging, and supportive learning environments to maintain their participation in classroom activities (Fidosieva, 2024).

Recent studies further strengthen this understanding. Pena and Pan. (2020) explain that ADHD affects students' ability to sustain attention, regulate behavior, and complete tasks, making classroom learning significantly more difficult compared to their peers. Similarly, Creelman (2021) state that students with ADHD often require classroom accommodations, behavioral interventions, and modified instructional strategies to achieve academic success. These findings indicate that effective teaching for ADHD learners requires both pedagogical and behavioral adaptation.

In this context, effective English teaching for students with ADHD requires a pedagogical approach that integrates structured teaching, positive reinforcement, and inclusive pedagogy. Structured teaching provides clear routines, visual organization, and predictable instructional sequences that help students with ADHD regulate attention and complete learning tasks more effectively (Kamble et al., 2020). Complementing this approach, Skinner (2014) emphasizes that immediate feedback and positive reinforcement

strengthen desired behaviors and sustain students' motivation and classroom engagement. From an inclusive pedagogical perspective, Mary (2023) argues that learners with diverse educational needs benefit from multiple forms of engagement, representation, and practice, including visual supports, repetition, and interactive learning activities. Rather than functioning as separate instructional approaches, these perspectives collectively suggest that effective inclusive EFL instruction should combine structured lesson organization, adaptive instructional delivery, and continuous behavioral support to accommodate both the language-learning and behavioral characteristics of students with ADHD.

Recent empirical studies support this integrated perspective. Ssirimuzaawo et al. (2024) found that structured classroom routines and behavioral reinforcement significantly improved academic engagement among students with ADHD. Likewise, Valmiki et al. (2021) reported that reinforcement-based strategies increased task persistence and classroom participation. Together, these findings indicate that structured teaching, reinforcement, and inclusive instructional practices should be understood as complementary pedagogical principles that work together to support students' participation and learning, rather than as isolated classroom techniques.

In English language learning, students with ADHD often face difficulties in understanding instructions, maintaining concentration, remembering vocabulary, and organizing ideas in communication (Raheem & Ghafar, 2025). These challenges may affect their performance in speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities. Bellani (2011) further explains that language-related difficulties among students with ADHD are often linked to working memory limitations, which affect vocabulary retention and oral production. Similarly, Gupta and Sharma (2017) found that working memory impairments contribute significantly to difficulties in reading comprehension and written expression. These difficulties suggest that teaching English to ADHD students requires more than traditional instructional approaches. Teachers need to use adaptive strategies such as repetition, simplified explanations, visual support, active participation, and immediate feedback (Kamble et al., 2020; Skinner, 2014). These strategies not only support language acquisition but also help students regulate their attention and behavior during classroom interaction. De La Paz (2020) also found that structured and repeated instructional practices improved students' writing performance and task organization, particularly for learners with attention difficulties.

Several previous studies have explored teaching strategies used for students with ADHD in English learning contexts. Purwita et al. (2025) found that English teachers in inclusive classrooms applied strategies such as direct instruction, repetition, vocabulary reinforcement, and role-playing activities to support students with ADHD. Similarly, Aini and Prasetyowati (2019) identified vocabulary teaching strategies for kindergarten students with ADHD through word associations, memory-based learning, and repetitive exercises. Tello and Serrano (2024) also found that structured teaching approaches, classroom accommodations, and supportive learning environments positively influenced students' academic engagement and behavioral regulation.

Other studies have also expanded these findings. Navarro-arana et al (Navarro-arana et al., 2025) reported that instructional design for ADHD learners in English classrooms

should include simplified materials, gradual explanations, and repetitive tasks to support comprehension. González et al, (2025) found that visual supports and contextualized teaching significantly improved students' vocabulary understanding and classroom participation. Salehi et al. (2024) demonstrated that dynamic assessment and scaffolding strategies improved reading comprehension and selective attention among ADHD learners in EFL contexts. Agustin (2025) emphasized that inclusive English classrooms require adaptive teacher strategies, classroom flexibility, and structured activities to maintain students' engagement.

Furthermore, Drigas et al, (2025) found that active learning approaches, including movement-based tasks and collaborative speaking activities, significantly improved classroom attention and participation among elementary students with ADHD. Miranda et al. (2011) also found that executive functioning difficulties can be minimized through immediate teacher feedback, structured review, and guided practice. In the Indonesian context, Delgado et al, (2025) reported that teachers in inclusive EFL classrooms often rely on repetition, visual media, and simplified instructions to support ADHD learners' participation.

Although previous studies have substantially improved understanding of teaching strategies for learners with ADHD, several important gaps remain. Existing research has primarily examined instructional strategies within general inclusive education or broad classroom management rather than focusing specifically on English language teaching for elementary students with ADHD. Furthermore, most studies have explored teachers' instructional practices through classroom observations or interview data alone, providing limited evidence of how these strategies are systematically planned before classroom implementation. Consequently, little is known about the relationship between teachers' pedagogical planning, as reflected in lesson plans, and their actual instructional practices in English classrooms. In addition, although previous studies have discussed structured teaching, reinforcement, visual supports, and adaptive instructional practices, these pedagogical principles have generally been examined separately. Limited research has investigated how these approaches work together as an integrated instructional framework to simultaneously address students' attention, behavioral regulation, and English language learning. This gap is particularly important because successful English instruction for students with ADHD requires not only appropriate teaching strategies but also a coherent sequence of instructional practices that support both behavioral and language-learning needs throughout the lesson. Another important limitation concerns the educational context. Most previous studies were conducted in kindergarten, junior high school, or secondary education settings, whereas research focusing on inclusive elementary schools remains limited. This is particularly significant because elementary school represents the foundational stage of English language learning, during which instructional strategies strongly influence students' language development and learning habits. Moreover, research conducted in inclusive Islamic elementary schools remains underexplored, particularly in Indonesia. Since Islamic schools integrate religious values, structured classroom routines, and character education into everyday teaching practices, examining this context may

provide broader insights into how inclusive English teaching strategies are planned and implemented for students with ADHD.

Therefore, this study offers a different perspective by examining English teaching strategies for students with ADHD through the combined analysis of semi-structured interviews and lesson plans. By integrating teachers' pedagogical planning with their classroom practices, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how instructional strategies are systematically designed and implemented in an inclusive Islamic elementary school. Beyond investigating an educational context that has received limited scholarly attention, this study contributes to the advancement of inclusive EFL pedagogy by demonstrating how structured teaching, positive reinforcement, and inclusive instructional practices function as an integrated pedagogical framework rather than as isolated teaching techniques. The findings are expected to enrich the existing literature by illustrating how coherent instructional sequencing can simultaneously support students' attention, behavioral regulation, and English language development. In addition, the findings provide practical guidance for English teachers in designing more structured, responsive, and inclusive English instruction for learners with ADHD. Based on these considerations, this study aims to explore the strategies used by English teachers in teaching English to students with ADHD in an inclusive elementary school and addresses the following research question: *What strategies are used by English teachers in teaching English to students with ADHD in an inclusive elementary school?*

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design. A qualitative case study was considered appropriate because this study aimed to explore in depth the strategies used by an English teacher in teaching students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) within a specific educational context. According to Yin (2018), a case study design is suitable for investigating a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life setting, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. Therefore, this design enabled the researcher to obtain a detailed understanding of the teacher's instructional strategies and experiences in teaching English to students with ADHD in an inclusive classroom setting.

This study was conducted at an inclusive Islamic elementary school in Medan, Indonesia. The participant of this study was one female English teacher, approximately 28 years old, who had four years of experience teaching English to three male students diagnosed with ADHD at the school. The teacher had been teaching the students continuously from the first grade until the fourth grade of elementary school. The participant was selected purposively because she had direct experience and intensive interaction with students with ADHD in English language learning activities. The focus on a single participant allowed the researcher to explore the teacher's strategies comprehensively and contextually.

The data of this study were collected through semi-structured interviews and documentation analysis. The semi-structured interview was conducted to obtain detailed information regarding the teacher's experiences, challenges, and strategies in teaching English to students with ADHD. The interview used several guiding questions while still

allowing flexibility for further exploration of relevant information during the interview process. In addition, documentation analysis was conducted on teaching modules or lesson plans prepared by the teacher for the fourth grade. These documents were analyzed to identify the instructional strategies, learning activities, classroom management techniques, and teaching adjustments implemented for students with ADHD. The use of multiple data collection techniques was intended to support data richness and provide deeper understanding related to the phenomenon being studied.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis process involved several stages, namely familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. First, the researcher transcribed and repeatedly read the interview data and reviewed the lesson plans to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. Second, important statements related to teaching strategies were identified and coded. Third, the codes were categorized into broader themes representing the teacher's strategies in teaching English to students with ADHD. Finally, the themes were interpreted and presented descriptively to answer the research question of the study.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied several credibility strategies. First, data triangulation was conducted by comparing the interview data with the lesson plan documentation to identify consistency between the teacher's explanation and instructional planning. Second, member checking was carried out by returning the interview transcript and initial interpretations to the participant for confirmation and clarification. Third, peer debriefing was conducted through discussions with the academic supervisor to review the coding process and thematic interpretations. These procedures were intended to enhance the credibility, consistency, and trustworthiness of the findings.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the study based on the analysis of semi-structured interviews and lesson plan documentation. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which resulted in the identification of thirteen teaching strategies used by the English teacher in teaching students with ADHD in an inclusive elementary school context. These strategies reflect how the teacher systematically planned and implemented instructional practices to support students' attention, participation, comprehension, and behavioral regulation during English learning activities. The findings are presented thematically to answer the research question regarding the strategies used by the teacher in teaching English to students with ADHD.

Expressing Greetings in English

Expressing greetings in English was one of the strategies used by the teacher. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher greeted the students in English before introducing the learning material. The teacher usually started the class by saying, "Good morning students" and asking, "How are you today?" before continuing to the next activity. The teacher explained:

"Biasanya sih waktu pertama kali masuk kelas sebelum masuk ke materi, Miss Ratih selalu menyapa siswa terlebih dahulu pakai Bahasa Inggris seperti 'Assalamu'alaikum, good morning students, how are you today?'"

The same activity was written in the lesson plan. In the opening section, the teacher greeted the students before explaining the learning objectives and starting the lesson. What was written in the lesson plan was the same as what the teacher explained during the interview. Both data showed that expressing greetings in English was always used at the beginning of the lesson.

Managing Students' Attention

The second strategy used by the teacher was managing students' attention. The teacher paid attention to where the student with ADHD was sitting before the lesson continued. The student was usually asked to sit near the teacher and away from the window because the teacher noticed that the student was easily distracted by things outside the classroom. The teacher explained:

"Setelah itu Miss ngecek kesiapan siswa buat memastikan siswa ADHD nya itu sudah duduk di tempat yang memungkinkan mereka bisa lebih fokus, biasanya dia Miss dudukkan di dekat Miss dan harus jauh dari jendela, karena kalau di dekat jendela nanti dia fokus ngelihat keluar terus."

This strategy was not written directly in the lesson plan. However, the lesson plan showed that the teacher guided and monitored the students during the learning activities. This was similar to what the teacher explained in the interview. Although the seating arrangement only appeared in the interview, both data showed that the teacher prepared the classroom before continuing the lesson.

Providing Ice Breaking

According to the interview data, the teacher also used ice-breaking activities before starting the main lesson. Students were invited to sing and move together by using a simple English song, such as Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes. The teacher explained that this activity was usually done before introducing the lesson material. The teacher explained:

"Terus Miss ajak mereka ice breaking kecil-kecilan sih biasanya kaya Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes itu loh. Karena kan anak ADHD itu paling suka kalau diajak bergerak itu karena kan dia hiperaktifnya. Jadi dia paling excited."

The lesson plan also showed an opening activity before students learned the main material. Although the song was not mentioned, students were given an activity before the lesson started. This matched the teacher's explanation during the interview. Both the interview and the lesson plan showed that ice breaking was included as part of the opening activities.

Notifying the Learning Objectives

Another strategy used by the teacher was notifying the learning objectives. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher told the students what they were going to learn and explained the activities they would do from the beginning until the end of the lesson. The teacher used simple language so that all students could understand the lesson plan for that day. The teacher explained:

“Kemudian Miss jelasin nih tujuan pembelajaran di hari itu secara sederhana dan Miss sampaikan urutan kegiatan yang akan dilakukan dari awal sampai akhir pelajaran. Karena kan anak ADHD itu tipenya harus tahu dulu jadwal kegiatannya supaya fokus mereka itu nggak teralihkan gitu.”

The learning objectives were also written in the lesson plan before the main learning activities. The order of activities in the lesson plan was the same as the one described by the teacher during the interview. This shows that notifying the learning objectives was planned before the lesson was carried out.

Writing the Lesson Topic on the Board

The teacher also wrote the lesson topic on the board before explaining the material. After writing the topic, the teacher introduced it to the students using simple words. For example, when the lesson was about Daily Activities, the teacher first wrote the topic on the board and then told the students what they would learn. The teacher explained:

“Kalau itu biasanya sih Miss tulis dulu di papan tulis materi yang akan dipelajari. Misalnya hari itu kita akan belajar tentang Daily Activities, Miss bilang kalau kita akan belajar tentang Daily Activities.”

The lesson plan showed the same activity. The lesson topic appeared before the explanation of the material and before the classroom activities began. The activity described by the teacher was also written in the lesson plan, showing that the same teaching step was used during the lesson.

Explaining the Meaning of the Lesson Topic

Another strategy used by the teacher was explaining the meaning of the lesson topic. After introducing the topic, the teacher explained its meaning in simple words before teaching the English vocabulary. Students were also invited to say the meaning together before moving to the next activity. The teacher explained:

“Lalu Miss jelasin dulu nih ke mereka apa itu Daily Activities. Terus Miss bilang juga ke mereka, ‘Jadi Daily Activities adalah kegiatan sehari-hari yang biasa kita lakukan.’ Setelah itu Miss ajak mereka untuk menyebutkan apa itu Daily Activities sama-sama supaya mereka juga paham, termasuk siswa ADHD ini.”

A similar activity was found in the lesson plan. Students were introduced to the topic before learning new vocabulary and completing the classroom activities. The explanation in

the interview matched the order of activities written in the lesson plan. Both data described the same teaching activity.

Giving Example

The teacher introduced new vocabulary by using examples from students' daily activities. Words such as wake up, take a bath, have breakfast, study, and go to sleep were explained one by one while showing pictures or flashcards. Giving examples was one of the strategies used by the teacher to introduce the lesson material. During the interview, the teacher explained:

"Miss mulai dari kegiatan yang biasa mereka lakukan setiap hari, seperti wake up, take a bath, breakfast, terus study, sampai go to sleep. Miss tunjukkan gambarnya satu per satu pakai gambar atau flashcard gitu sambil Miss jelaskan. Untuk anak ADHD, Miss gabisa menjelaskan terlalu banyak sekaligus, jadi harus pelan-pelan dan bertahap."

The lesson plan presented the same vocabulary before students started the practice activities. Pictures of daily activities were prepared as part of the learning material. This matched what the teacher explained during the interview, showing that the same examples were used in both the lesson plan and classroom teaching.

Repeating Example Together

After introducing the new vocabulary, the teacher asked the students to repeat the examples together. The vocabulary was repeated in the same order, starting from wake up until go to sleep. Students said each word together while following the teacher's pronunciation. During the interview, the teacher explained:

"Setelah itu Miss ajak anak-anak menyebutkan lagi contohnya sesuai urutannya bersama-sama. Jadi mereka tahu, oh setelah bangun tidur biasanya mandi, habis itu sarapan, terus belajar. Kalau untuk anak ADHD, biasanya mereka lebih mudah mengikuti kalau materinya disusun seperti itu."

The same activity was written in the lesson plan after the vocabulary explanation. Students repeated the vocabulary together before moving to the next learning activity. The order of the activities in the lesson plan was the same as the one explained during the interview. Both data described the same classroom activity.

Giving Exercise

Students were given the opportunity to use the vocabulary they had learned through speaking activities. They came to the front of the class one by one and talked about their daily activities by using simple English sentences. Giving exercises was one of the strategies used by the teacher to help students practice the material. During the interview, the teacher explained:

"Nanti tuh Miss bakal minta mereka buat maju satu per satu ke depan kelas untuk menceritakan kegiatan sehari-hari mereka dengan kalimat yang sederhana. Nah,

kalau anak ADHD tuh biasanya mereka malah lebih semangat kalau kegiatannya seperti itu. Karena mereka bisa berdiri, bergerak, dan berbicara langsung di depan kelas.”

The lesson plan described speaking activities after students finished learning the vocabulary. Students completed activities such as Let's Talk and Look and Answer by describing pictures and answering simple questions in English. These activities were the same as those explained during the interview. The lesson plan and the interview described the same learning activity.

Giving Feedback

While students were completing the learning activities, the teacher gave feedback to their answers. Students who answered correctly received praise, while students who made mistakes were guided to say the correct pronunciation or vocabulary before continuing the activity. Giving feedback was another strategy used by the teacher during the lesson. The teacher stated:

“Misalnya kalau mereka sudah berani maju dan bisa menyebutkan aktivitasnya dengan baik, Miss langsung kasih apresiasi kaya bilang ‘Good job’ atau ‘Excellent’. Kalau misalnya masih ada pengucapan atau kosakata yang kurang tepat, Miss langsung bantu perbaiki saat itu juga dan minta mereka mengulang lagi.”

The lesson plan did not mention feedback as a separate activity. However, it showed that the teacher guided students during the practice activities and responded to their answers throughout the lesson. This matched the teacher's explanation in the interview. Although the activity was described in a different way, both data referred to the same teaching practice.

Giving Assignment

Giving assignments was another strategy used by the teacher. At the end of the lesson, students were given a worksheet (LKPD) about Daily Activities. The worksheet contained pictures and simple questions related to the material they had learned in class. Before students left the classroom, the teacher made sure that everyone understood what they had to do. The teacher explained:

“Miss kasih mereka LKPD yang berisi gambar-gambar tentang Daily Activities dan minta mereka menjawab pertanyaan yang ada di LKPD tersebut. Sebelum pulang, Miss juga biasanya memastikan mereka sudah paham apa yang harus dikerjakan di rumah.”

The worksheet activity was also included in the lesson plan. It was placed after the main learning activities and before the closing session. The lesson plan showed the same assignment described by the teacher during the interview. The information from both data sources was consistent, showing that students received the worksheet after completing the lesson activities.

Lesson Review

Before ending the lesson, students were asked to remember the material they had learned that day. They mentioned the vocabulary they still remembered and answered a few simple questions from the teacher. Reviewing the lesson was one of the strategies used by the teacher before closing the class. The teacher explained:

“Nah, sebelum selesai biasanya Miss review dulu tuh materi yang sudah dipelajari. Jadi Miss tanya lagi ke anak-anak, misalnya hari ini kita belajar apa, siapa yang masih ingat kosakata yang tadi sudah dipelajari.”

The lesson plan showed the same activity in the closing section. Students answered review questions and recalled the vocabulary before the lesson finished. The activity written in the lesson plan was the same as the one described during the interview. Both data described the same closing activity.

Giving Reward

The last strategy used by the teacher was giving rewards. Before the lesson ended, the teacher gave appreciation to students who had participated during the learning activities. The appreciation was given in different ways, such as praise, applause, or simple symbolic rewards. The teacher explained:

“Kalau semuanya sudah jelas, Miss kasih apresiasi ke anak-anak, bisa tepuk tangan bersama atau pujian karena sudah belajar dengan baik hari itu.”

The lesson plan also showed appreciation as part of the closing activities, although rewards were not written as a separate step. Students were invited to reflect on the lesson before the class ended. This was the same activity described by the teacher during the interview. Both data showed that appreciation was always given before students left the classroom.

DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that English teachers employed a series of interconnected teaching strategies to support students with ADHD in an inclusive elementary classroom. Rather than functioning as isolated instructional techniques, these strategies formed a structured learning process that simultaneously addressed students' behavioral characteristics and English language learning needs. This finding confirms previous studies indicating that successful instruction for learners with ADHD requires adaptive and well-organized teaching practices (M. et al., 2024; Purwita et al., 2025). However, the present study extends these findings by demonstrating how the strategies were implemented sequentially throughout the lesson, beginning from classroom preparation to lesson closure. This suggests that effective inclusive EFL instruction depends not only on selecting appropriate teaching strategies but also on organizing them into a coherent instructional sequence that continuously supports students' attention, participation, and language development.

The first finding showed that greeting students in English functioned as an initial strategy to establish classroom readiness while exposing students to simple English expressions. This finding is consistent with Brown (Brown, 2007), who emphasizes that routine classroom language provides meaningful opportunities for authentic language exposure. It also supports Tello and Argudo-Serrano (M. et al., 2024), who argue that predictable classroom routines improve behavioral regulation and students' readiness to learn. Nevertheless, the present study indicates that greeting routines served a dual function in inclusive EFL classrooms. Beyond creating a positive classroom atmosphere, the repeated use of familiar English greetings gradually introduced students to authentic communicative expressions in low-anxiety situations. Since students with ADHD often experience difficulty transitioning into learning activities, beginning the lesson with predictable English interactions helped reduce uncertainty while simultaneously increasing exposure to the target language. This finding implies that English teachers should view routine classroom expressions not merely as classroom management practices but also as opportunities to build students' communicative competence through repeated and meaningful language use.

The second finding demonstrated that managing students' attention before introducing new material was an essential strategy in supporting learning. This finding aligns with Barkley (Rusell, 2006), who explains that inattention is one of the core characteristics of ADHD and often interferes with learning processes. Similarly, Creelman (Creelman, 2021) emphasizes that minimizing environmental distractions enables students with ADHD to sustain concentration for longer periods. While previous studies mainly discuss attention management as a behavioral intervention, this study shows that gaining students' attention also functions as instructional preparation in EFL classrooms. Ensuring that students were attentive before presenting English vocabulary or instructions allowed them to process language input more effectively and reduced the possibility of missing important information. In this context, classroom management and language instruction became inseparable components of effective teaching. Therefore, English teachers should deliberately allocate time to secure students' attention before introducing new linguistic content, as this simple practice may substantially improve students' comprehension and engagement throughout the lesson.

The third finding revealed that ice-breaking activities were consistently used to restore students' concentration and regulate their energy before continuing learning activities. This finding supports Fidosieva (Fidosieva, 2024), who suggests that movement-based activities help students with ADHD regulate attention and reduce restlessness. Likewise, Ssirimuzaawo et al. (Ssirimuzaawo et al., 2024) argue that active behavioral interventions increase classroom participation among learners with ADHD. However, the findings of this study indicate that ice breaking contributed to more than behavioral regulation alone. Short physical activities appeared to prepare students cognitively before they engaged in English learning tasks, enabling them to refocus their attention after periods of declining concentration. Rather than interrupting instruction, these activities functioned as transitional learning supports that enhanced students' readiness to participate in subsequent language-learning tasks. For inclusive EFL classrooms, this finding suggests that movement-based activities should be intentionally integrated into lesson planning as

pedagogical strategies that facilitate both behavioral regulation and language learning readiness.

The fourth finding showed that informing students about the learning objectives at the beginning of the lesson helped establish clear learning expectations. This finding is consistent with Killen (Killen, 1998) Effective teaching strategies: Lessons from research and practice.who argues that communicating instructional objectives enables learners to understand the direction and purpose of classroom activities. It also reflects structured teaching principles discussed by Kamble et al. (Kamble et al., 2020), in which predictable instructional sequences support learners with ADHD. In the present study, learning objectives appeared to reduce uncertainty by helping students anticipate upcoming activities and mentally prepare themselves for learning English. Since students with ADHD frequently experience difficulties with planning and executive functioning, clearly explaining lesson goals may reduce cognitive demands associated with organizing learning tasks independently. Consequently, English teachers should communicate lesson objectives explicitly using simple and comprehensible language so that students understand not only what they will learn but also why the learning activities are meaningful.

The fifth finding indicated that writing the lesson topic on the whiteboard provided visual support throughout the lesson. This finding supports Harmer (Harmer, 1991), who highlights the importance of visual presentation in facilitating language learning, particularly for young learners. It also corresponds with González et al. (2025), who found that visual aids strengthen vocabulary acquisition by making abstract concepts more concrete. Nevertheless, the present findings suggest that visual presentation served broader purposes for students with ADHD. Displaying the lesson topic continuously helped students maintain orientation during classroom activities and reduced the cognitive effort required to recall the lesson focus. The written topic functioned as a constant visual reminder that reinforced students' attention whenever distractions occurred. This indicates that visual supports are not merely supplementary teaching materials but essential instructional scaffolds that assist students with ADHD in maintaining focus throughout English lessons.

The sixth finding revealed that explaining the material using simple language, short instructions, and gradual explanations helped students understand English more effectively. This finding supports Harmer (Harmer, 1991), who argues that teachers should adjust instructional language to learners' proficiency levels to facilitate comprehension. Similarly, Eder et al.(Eder et al., 2025) emphasize that adapting language instruction to students' diverse learning needs is fundamental to inclusive education. While previous studies mainly emphasize simplifying instruction to improve comprehension, the present study suggests that simplified explanations also reduce the cognitive demands experienced by students with ADHD. Because learners with ADHD often struggle to sustain attention and process lengthy verbal information (Rusell, 2006)(Barkley, 2006), presenting information in smaller, manageable segments enabled them to focus on one concept at a time without becoming cognitively overwhelmed. This finding indicates that instructional simplification should not be interpreted as lowering academic expectations but rather as an effective pedagogical adaptation that enables students to access the same learning objectives through more manageable instructional delivery. Therefore, English teachers in inclusive classrooms

should prioritize clarity, concise explanations, and gradual presentation of new language to maximize students' understanding and participation.

The seventh finding demonstrated that providing examples played an important role in helping students understand English vocabulary and expressions. This finding is consistent with Brown (Brown, 2007), who explains that learners acquire language more effectively when abstract concepts are connected to meaningful and familiar contexts. It also supports González et al. (Pérez-jorge et al., 2025), who found that visual aids significantly improve vocabulary learning by helping students associate words with concrete representations. In this study, the teacher frequently accompanied explanations with pictures, flashcards, gestures, and examples drawn from students' everyday experiences. These visual supports appeared to reduce the abstract nature of English vocabulary, allowing students to process meaning more easily despite their attention difficulties. Rather than functioning merely as supplementary teaching materials, visual media became instructional scaffolds that maintained students' attention while strengthening vocabulary comprehension. This finding extends previous studies by demonstrating that visual media not only facilitate vocabulary learning but also help compensate for attentional limitations commonly experienced by students with ADHD. Consequently, English teachers should integrate visual resources systematically into vocabulary instruction, particularly when introducing unfamiliar concepts, because visual supports simultaneously promote attention, comprehension, and long-term vocabulary retention in inclusive EFL classrooms.

The eighth finding showed that repeating important vocabulary and classroom expressions strengthened students' understanding of English. This finding aligns with Gupta and Sharma (Gupta & Sharma, 2017), who explain that repeated exposure supports learners with working memory limitations by reinforcing memory retention. Likewise, Bellani et al. (Bellani et al., 2011) argue that repeated language input is particularly beneficial for learners with ADHD because it compensates for difficulties in processing and retaining verbal information. However, the present study suggests that repetition served purposes beyond memorization. Repeated pronunciation, vocabulary review, and classroom expressions gradually increased students' confidence to respond orally during classroom interaction. As students became more familiar with frequently repeated language, they participated more actively without excessive hesitation or anxiety about making mistakes. This finding indicates that repetition should not be viewed as mechanical drilling alone but as an instructional scaffold that simultaneously strengthens memory, builds confidence, and encourages meaningful language participation. Therefore, English teachers should intentionally recycle important vocabulary and expressions throughout different stages of the lesson rather than presenting them only once.

The ninth finding revealed that giving exercises enabled students to practice newly learned vocabulary and expressions immediately after instruction. This finding supports Brown (Brown, 2007), who emphasizes that meaningful practice reinforces language acquisition by allowing learners to apply newly acquired knowledge. It is also consistent with Salehi et al. (Salehi et al., 2024), who found that structured practice activities improve selective attention and language performance among learners with ADHD. In the present study, practice activities served not only as assessment tools but also as opportunities for

students to consolidate learning while receiving continuous teacher guidance. Immediate practice allowed teachers to identify misconceptions quickly and provide assistance before misunderstandings became established. This suggests that guided practice is particularly valuable in inclusive EFL classrooms because it enables teachers to monitor students' understanding while maintaining active engagement throughout the learning process. Accordingly, English teachers should provide sufficient opportunities for guided and structured practice before expecting students to complete tasks independently.

The tenth finding indicated that providing feedback helped students recognize both their strengths and areas requiring improvement during English learning activities. This finding supports Alahmadi & Foltz (2020), who explain that effective feedback improves learning by helping students understand their current performance and identify strategies for improvement. It is also supported by Valmiki et al. (Valmiki et al., 2021), who emphasize that immediate responses are especially beneficial for learners with ADHD because they reinforce appropriate behaviors and sustain motivation. The findings of this study further demonstrate that timely feedback encouraged students to remain engaged and corrected misunderstandings before they interfered with subsequent learning activities. Rather than merely evaluating students' performance, feedback functioned as continuous instructional guidance that supported language development throughout the lesson. This finding implies that feedback should be integrated into everyday classroom interaction rather than being reserved solely for formal assessment. In inclusive EFL classrooms, immediate and supportive feedback can simultaneously strengthen students' academic progress, motivation, and confidence in using English.

The eleventh finding revealed that giving assignments functioned as an extension of classroom learning and independent practice. This finding supports De La Paz (Ia & Pan, 2020), who found that structured follow-up tasks improve task organization and academic performance among learners with attention difficulties. This strategy also reflects structured teaching principles proposed by Kamble et al. (Kamble et al., 2020), where organized follow-up activities help maintain learning continuity. For students with ADHD, assignments provide opportunities to revisit the material independently and strengthen understanding through repeated exposure (Gupta & Sharma, 2017). Beyond reinforcing classroom learning, the present study indicates that assignments also encouraged students to develop greater learning responsibility within their individual capabilities. Since students with ADHD often require repeated opportunities to consolidate newly learned material, carefully designed follow-up tasks allowed them to revisit English vocabulary at their own pace while strengthening long-term retention. This finding suggests that assignments in inclusive EFL classrooms should emphasize meaningful reinforcement rather than task quantity. Teachers should therefore design manageable assignments that consolidate essential language skills without imposing excessive cognitive demands on students.

The twelfth finding showed that lesson review functioned as a reinforcement strategy at the end of the lesson. This finding aligns with Miranda et al. (Miranda et al., 2011), who emphasize that guided review and repeated recall improve executive functioning and cognitive organization among learners with ADHD. It is also supported by Gupta and Sharma (Gupta & Sharma, 2017), who explain that repeated review strengthens memory retention

for students experiencing working memory difficulties. In this study, reviewing the lesson provided students with another opportunity to revisit English vocabulary and expressions while reorganizing what they had learned before the lesson ended. More importantly, the review session enabled the teacher to identify concepts that students had not fully understood and clarify them immediately. This suggests that lesson review should not be regarded merely as a routine closing activity but as an essential instructional component that consolidates learning and bridges students' understanding before they move to subsequent lessons. For English teachers working in inclusive classrooms, allocating sufficient time for reviewing key vocabulary and language expressions can improve students' retention while helping them develop stronger confidence in recalling previously learned material.

The thirteenth finding revealed that giving rewards increased students' motivation and strengthened classroom participation. This finding strongly supports Skinner's (Skinner, 2014) theory of positive reinforcement, which explains that rewards strengthen desired behaviors. It is also supported by Valmiki et al. (Valmiki et al., 2021), who found that reinforcement-based strategies significantly improve persistence and task completion among learners with ADHD. Since students with ADHD often need immediate recognition to maintain engagement, rewards such as praise, applause, and simple symbolic appreciation encouraged them to remain actively involved throughout English learning activities. However, the present study suggests that positive reinforcement contributed not only to behavioral management but also to students' willingness to participate in English communication. Receiving immediate appreciation appeared to reduce students' fear of making mistakes, enabling them to answer questions, pronounce vocabulary, and participate in classroom interaction with greater confidence. This finding indicates that positive reinforcement should be viewed as an instructional strategy that simultaneously supports behavioral regulation and language learning. Therefore, English teachers should consistently provide constructive praise and immediate encouragement to create an emotionally supportive learning environment where students with ADHD feel confident to engage in English learning without excessive anxiety.

Overall, the findings answer the research question by demonstrating that English teachers employ a combination of structured, visual, contextual, repetitive, interactive, and reinforcement-based strategies when teaching students with ADHD in inclusive classrooms. While previous studies have generally examined these strategies individually, this study shows that their effectiveness lies in their systematic integration throughout the instructional process. Together, the thirteen strategies addressed the core characteristics of ADHD, including inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity, and working memory limitations, while simultaneously supporting students' English language development. These findings indicate that effective inclusive EFL instruction depends on a coherent instructional design that balances students' behavioral needs with meaningful language-learning opportunities.

Furthermore, this study extends previous research by demonstrating the close relationship between lesson planning and classroom implementation in supporting students with ADHD. The consistency between the teacher's lesson plans and instructional practices suggests that effective inclusive teaching relies on deliberate pedagogical planning rather

than spontaneous classroom decisions. This finding contributes to the growing body of inclusive EFL research by showing that structured lesson sequencing, visual support, repeated language exposure, guided practice, and positive reinforcement collectively foster students' participation in English learning.

Collectively, the thirteen teaching strategies illustrate that effective English instruction for students with ADHD is grounded in the integration of three complementary pedagogical principles: structured teaching, positive reinforcement, and inclusive pedagogy. Greeting routines, attention management, explicit learning objectives, lesson sequencing, and visual organization reflect structured teaching by providing predictable learning routines that support students' attention and executive functioning. Feedback and rewards represent positive reinforcement by strengthening appropriate learning behaviors and sustaining motivation, whereas simplified explanations, visual media, concrete examples, repetition, guided practice, and lesson review exemplify inclusive pedagogical practices that accommodate students' diverse cognitive and language-learning needs. Rather than operating independently, these principles formed an integrated instructional framework that simultaneously supported students' attention, behavioral regulation, classroom participation, and English language development. This finding extends previous studies by demonstrating how these pedagogical principles can be systematically integrated throughout the teaching process in inclusive EFL classrooms.

From a practical perspective, the findings provide important implications for English teachers working in inclusive EFL classrooms. Teachers should establish predictable routines, secure students' attention before introducing new material, provide simple explanations supported by visual media and concrete examples, reinforce learning through repetition and lesson review, and offer immediate feedback together with positive reinforcement to sustain students' motivation and participation. These instructional adaptations rely primarily on thoughtful lesson planning, consistent teaching practices, and teachers' awareness of students' learning characteristics rather than extensive curriculum modifications or specialized resources. By integrating these strategies into everyday instruction, teachers can create more inclusive learning environments that support both students with ADHD and their peers.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the teaching strategies employed by an English teacher in teaching students with ADHD in an inclusive Islamic elementary school. The findings revealed that effective English instruction for students with ADHD was achieved through the systematic integration of thirteen interconnected teaching strategies: expressing greetings in English, managing students' attention, providing ice breaking, notifying the learning objectives, writing the lesson topic on the board, explaining the meaning of the lesson topic, giving examples, repeating examples together, giving exercises, giving feedback, giving assignments, lesson review, and giving rewards. Rather than functioning as isolated instructional techniques, these strategies complemented one another to create a structured, engaging, and supportive learning environment that simultaneously addressed students' attention, behavioral regulation, and English language learning needs. This study extends the

existing literature on inclusive EFL education by providing empirical evidence of how teaching strategies for students with ADHD are systematically translated from lesson planning into classroom practice within an inclusive Islamic elementary school context. More importantly, the findings demonstrate that effective inclusive EFL instruction is best understood as an integrated pedagogical framework that combines structured teaching, positive reinforcement, and inclusive pedagogy, rather than as a collection of separate classroom techniques. Through this integrated framework, teachers are able to organize instruction systematically while simultaneously promoting students' attention, behavioral regulation, active participation, and English language development. Consequently, this study advances current understandings of inclusive EFL pedagogy by illustrating how coherent instructional sequencing can effectively address both the behavioral and language-learning needs of students with ADHD.

The findings also provide practical implications for English teachers working in inclusive classrooms. Teachers are encouraged to establish predictable classroom routines, communicate learning objectives clearly, utilize visual media and concrete examples when introducing new language, reinforce learning through repetition, guided practice, and lesson review, and provide immediate feedback together with positive reinforcement to maintain students' motivation and engagement. These strategies offer practical guidance for designing more structured, responsive, and inclusive English learning environments that accommodate the characteristics of students with ADHD while supporting meaningful learning for all students.

This study is limited to a single inclusive Islamic elementary school involving one English teacher and three fourth-grade students with ADHD. Consequently, the findings reflect a specific educational context and should not be generalized to all inclusive EFL settings. In addition, the study focused on describing the implementation of teaching strategies rather than examining their direct impact on students' English learning outcomes. Future research is encouraged to involve more participants from different educational levels and inclusive school contexts to provide broader evidence of effective teaching strategies for students with ADHD. Further studies are also recommended to conduct more extensive classroom observations over longer instructional periods to gain a deeper understanding of how these strategies are implemented and how they influence students' engagement and English language learning.

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