LLT Journal, e-ISSN 2579-9533, p-ISSN 1410-7201, Vol. 29, No. 2, October 2026, pp. 585-609

LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching
http://ejournal.usd.ac.id/index.php/LLT
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

BRIDGING THE GAP: ELT STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES ON DYSLEXIA-FRIENDLY INCLUSIVE PRACTICES IN INDONESIA

Hidayat Polim
Soka University, Japan
e24d1101@soka-u.jp
*correspondence: hidayatpolim@gmail.com
https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v29i2.470
received 29 January 2026; accepted 26 July 2026

Abstract
While research into inclusivity and dyslexia, a neurodevelopmental condition affecting language learning, has gained greater attention, multilevel stakeholders' perspectives across both public schools and teacher education programs remain underexplored. Addressing this gap, this study adapts the broader UNESCO Policy Review Framework as a lens for investigating dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices among ELT stakeholders, including in-service teachers, school administrators, teacher educators, and university administrators in the Riau Islands, Indonesia. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, this study gathered data through questionnaires, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. Subsequently, data were analyzed via descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Results revealed limited awareness of dyslexia and inclusive education, alongside misconceptions and reliance on special schools. Although inclusive practices were evident (mainly differentiated instruction), specific support for students with dyslexia remained unaddressed. Despite inclusion being viewed positively and mandated within the education system, its implementation remained weak. The study offers implications for systemic reform, suggesting that ELT stakeholders enhance their inclusive practices through training and developing inclusive institutional management. Additionally, teacher education institutions should pursue curricular adjustments to incorporate dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices.

Keywords: dyslexia, ELT, inclusive education, inclusive practices, Indonesia

Introduction
A plethora of studies on teacher education and English language teaching have explored the importance of inclusive practices (Indrarathne, 2019; Kormos & Nijakowska, 2017; Loreman et al., 2013; Saiful, 2025; Woodcock et al., 2022). Developing the understanding, skills, and knowledge needed to effectively support diverse learners is a crucial step for both in-service teachers (ISTs) and pre-service teachers (PSTs) in creating more inclusive classrooms. With an estimated prevalence of 10% globally (International Dyslexia Association [IDA], 2023), it is not uncommon for teachers to have students with characteristics of dyslexia in their classrooms (Johnston, 2019). Nevertheless, studies highlight that students with dyslexia have yet to receive adequate support in their foreign language learning

This work is licensed under CC BY-SA.
Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

(Daloiso, 2017; Kormos et al., 2009; Nijakowska et al., 2018). Without inclusive, dyslexia-friendly supports, those students can be negatively affected in both their academic and socio-emotional development (Indrarathne, 2019; Kormos & Nijakowska, 2017; Peltier et al., 2022; Soegondo, 2022).

In Indonesia, studies on dyslexia have gained greater attention primarily in the domains of psychology and general education (Novita et al., 2019; Soegondo, 2022; Tarjiah et al., 2023). In the ELT context, a few studies have been conducted to investigate the challenges of students with dyslexia in English language classrooms (Dewi, 2012; Kirana, 2022; Stevani & Tarigan, 2022). Dewi (2012) and Kirana (2022) both investigated the challenges of students identified with dyslexia through small case studies, while Stevani and Tarigan (2022) conducted a needs analysis for dyslexic students from two special private junior high schools. These studies serve as invaluable references for understanding specific learning challenges and strategies for dyslexic students within English classrooms. However, these studies have yet to explore the intricate multilevel practices beyond the classroom walls, leaving a gap in understanding the systemic support needed to implement inclusive practices effectively.

Given the ubiquity of dyslexia and the challenges it poses to language learning, challenges in providing inclusive support likely exist within both school-based practices and teacher preparation. Aligning teacher preparation with the actual instructional needs of students at risk of dyslexia in ELT classrooms becomes indispensable for bridging the gap between teacher education and school-based practices. Investigating current perspectives from multilevel ELT stakeholders, such as in-service teachers, school administrators, teacher educators, and university administrators, alongside inclusive classroom practices, provides an essential pathway for developing future guidelines for dyslexia-friendly inclusive classrooms. This pioneering study aligns with the UNESCO Policy Review Framework (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2017), which emphasizes synchronizing strategies and support between teacher education institutions and schools to address students at risk of underachievement. Specifically, it focuses on dyslexia within the Indonesian ELT context as a critical case for identifying systemic barriers to inclusive and equitable education.

The scope of this study encompasses both school-based practices in junior high schools and teacher education programs. Junior high schools are prioritized primarily because English has long been formally established as a compulsory subject at this level of schooling (Emilia, 2025), providing a systemic foundation for formal English instruction. However, the context of previous studies has been limited to private junior high school settings. There remains a significant gap in exploring current inclusive practices to support students at risk of dyslexia in public junior high schools, which serve more than 70% of the overall junior high school population, according to the latest statistics from the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2026). Therefore, this study seeks to fill these gaps by investigating inclusive practices for students with dyslexia in public junior high schools and the preparation of teacher education programs in addressing this issue. This paper presents preliminary findings from a larger study that explores dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices from ELT stakeholders across seven regions in Indonesia. Focusing specifically on the border province of the Riau Islands, where the potential use of English as a foreign language may be more prevalent (Polim,

2021), this study explores the current perspectives of multiple ELT stakeholders on inclusive teaching practices for students with dyslexia within provincial English language education. Two main research questions are formulated:

1. What are the perspectives of ELT stakeholders on inclusive teaching for students with dyslexia?
2. What inclusive practices are currently implemented to support students with dyslexia in English language classrooms?

Dyslexia and English language learning

Dyslexia is a common neurodevelopmental condition affecting language learning (IDA, 2017; Johnston, 2019). Core indicators of dyslexia include phonological processing difficulties and processing speed challenges. Phonological processing relates to the recognition of different sounds or phonemes, mostly affecting listening and speaking, and is often manifested through difficulties in encoding sounds into letters, including spelling (Nijakowska, 2010). Processing speed refers to the automaticity in retrieving words or phrases from memory. To elaborate, individuals with dyslexia struggle with written and spoken language, covering spelling, reading, and pronunciation (IDA, 2017).

In ELT, English linguistic features, particularly spelling or grapheme-phoneme correspondences, present additional challenges due to the opaque nature of the language (Daloiso, 2017; Kormos & Smith, 2024). Compared with more transparent languages, such as Spanish or Bahasa Indonesia, the difference between the individual sounds of a letter and its letter combination in a word presents an impediment to acquiring English at earlier stages. As students progress in learning, their challenges tend to expand into more complex learning tasks, including comprehending text and organizing written and spoken language. Moreover, students with dyslexia often have challenges in working memory and executive functions, such as understanding the concept of time and the organization of ideas.

While a formal diagnosis requires assessment by specialists, English language teachers can observe students' challenges through students' daily progress in writing samples, reading, or spelling tasks (Kormos et al., 2009). Initial screening can be conducted by filling out dyslexia checklists, such as those provided by the British Dyslexia Association, to identify potential indicators (British Dyslexia Association, 2024). As dyslexia lies on a spectrum, where each individual exhibits varying degrees of reading and writing challenges (Nijakowska, 2010), gathering information from parents and other teachers can help guide the implementation of inclusive strategies within the classroom.

Inclusive practices

Inclusive practices represent a wide range of teaching practices comprising strategies, approaches, and behaviors that are aligned with the perspective of inclusion to accommodate all learners in regular classrooms (Finkelstein et al., 2021). Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) argued that inclusive practices should be the norm upon which teaching approaches and pedagogy rely. Moreover, recent studies highlight that inclusive practices help not only those with specific conditions (in this study, dyslexia) but also benefit all learners in their learning process (IDA, 2017; Woodcock et al., 2022). In ELT, teaching practices, such as communicative language teaching (CLT), reflective practices, and project-based learning (PBL),

are inherently in line with inclusive practices (Kormos & Smith, 2024; Young, 2024). Several prominent inclusive approaches include Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Differentiated Instruction (DI), and Multisensory Structured Language Teaching (MSLT) (CAST, 2024; Daloiso, 2017; IDA, 2017; Nijakowska, 2010; Woodcock et al., 2022).

UDL is an approach based on the common traits of the neurological process in learning developed by CAST (2024), formerly the Center for Applied Special Technology. Teachers can adopt multiple means in terms of representation, such as providing diverse formats of materials, in engaging students' learning by conducting pair work or group work, and in showing their learning progress, such as options for showcasing their ideas through presentation or portfolio. On the other hand, DI has been a well-known approach that can be used in responding to individual differences in inclusive classrooms (Tomlinson, 2000). DI incorporates three core aspects of learning: content or instruction delivery, learning processes (e.g., creating engaging activities), and modified assessments. While both approaches support inclusion, DI is more responsive, whereas UDL is more proactive (Woodcock et al., 2022).

One approach that has been frequently cited for language learning, in particular to support students with dyslexia, is called Multisensory Structured Language Teaching (MSLT) (IDA, 2017). This approach emphasizes the use of visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic (VAKT) methods to be incorporated when teaching language, from the smallest sounds or phonemes to letters and words. MSLT follows highly structured, explicit instructions to ease the cognitive load of information and reduce unnecessary hurdles in language learning.

Table 1. Classroom accommodations

Materials	Interactive Instruction	Student Performance
· Clarify or simplify written directions · Present a small amount of work · Block out extraneous stimuli · Highlight essential information · Use a placeholder in consumable material · Provide a glossary in content areas · Develop reading guides · Use an audio recording device · Use assistive technology	· Use an explicit teaching procedure · Repeat directions · Maintain daily routines · Provide students with a graphic organizer · Use step-by-step instructions · Simultaneously combine verbal and visual information · Write key points or words on the whiteboard · Use balanced presentations and activities · Use mnemonic instruction · Emphasize daily review	· Provide an outline of the lesson · Encourage use of graphic organizers · Place students close to the teacher. · Encourage use of assignment books or calendars · Use cues to denote important items · Design hierarchical worksheets · Allow use of instructional aids · Display work samples · Use peer-mediated learning · Use assignment substitutions or adjustments.

Note. Adapted from *Dyslexia in the Classroom: What Every Teacher Needs to Know (IDA, 2017)*

The International Dyslexia Association (2017) outlines a list of classroom accommodations as inclusive practices that can be applied under three categories: materials, interactive instruction, and student performance (see Table 1). The adaptation of these inclusive practices addresses challenges in reading, working memory, and executive functions that are inherent in those with dyslexia.

In regard to teaching reading, Kormos and Smith (2024) describe a step-by-step process for providing language learning, starting from teaching phonological awareness, vocabulary knowledge, and comprehension at the word and text levels. Research cautions against teaching practices such as individual reading aloud, which may reduce students' confidence and place an emotional burden on students with dyslexia. Instead, choral reading or reading in small groups can serve as alternatives (Daloiso, 2017; Nijakowska, 2010).

Teacher education for inclusion

One core element of the UNESCO Policy Review Framework for attaining inclusive education is teacher education (UNESCO, 2017). Studies have emphasized the need for transforming general teacher education to address inclusivity, despite an ongoing debate over reserving this topic for special needs education (Forlin, 2013). In line with this, Faragher et al. (2021) underscored that preparing teachers with various inclusive practices should be essential for all teachers, whether in general education or special needs education (Bahrudin et al., 2020; Ediyanto et al., 2021). By understanding the reality of diverse learners in the classroom, all teachers, including English language teachers, can be better prepared to incorporate inclusive practices. It is no exaggeration to mention that teachers play key roles as agents in creating an inclusive classroom (Forlin, 2013). While there is a direct link between challenges faced by students at risk of dyslexia and their language learning, the focus within language teacher education programs tend to fall short on actual preparation and development of both PSTs' and ISTs' skills to accommodate the students (Indrarathne, 2019; Kormos & Nijakowska, 2017).

In Indonesia, studies underscore the limited attention of teacher education programs to disseminating awareness, understanding, and inclusivity (Bahrudin et al., 2020; Ediyanto et al., 2021). While efforts to improve the quality of teachers, for both PSTs and ISTs, either through teacher training or a national teacher certification known as PPG, are ongoing (Stroupe, 2024), Karina et al. (2024) found that there have been very few English teacher education programs that have offered a specific course for inclusive education in their curriculum. The study provided a notable case from one university, which started to offer a course on inclusive education as an elective and was highly welcomed by student teachers, with a high number of enrollments. While this seemed like a positive initiative that improved confidence and attitude toward inclusive teaching, the study found that student teachers indicated the course to be highly theoretical. Consequently, further innovation for the course's applicability is necessary. This current state signals a requirement for an enhanced inclusive course within English language teacher education programs. To achieve this, investigating current stakeholders' perspectives and instructional needs is essential for developing a foundation for bridging the gap between theory and practice. This is especially crucial for addressing primary barriers in students' reading and language learning, a

fundamental component of inclusive support within the Indonesian ELT classroom context.

Conceptual framework

This study employed the UNESCO (2017) Policy Review Framework, which is grounded in international research and designed for attaining the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) mandate of ensuring inclusive and equitable education. Designed to assess inclusive education and monitor its progress (Schuelka, 2018), the framework helps policymakers and stakeholders to remove barriers to quality education, covering four overarching dimensions for inclusion: Concepts, Policy Statements, Structures and Systems, and Practices (UNESCO, 2017). This study adopts this framework as it seeks to understand the multilevel perspectives of stakeholders, with a specific focus on the Practices dimension.

While the framework does not specifically address particular learning differences, this study explores issues surrounding supporting students who are at risk of underachievement, with dyslexia as a case in point for creating inclusive classrooms within the ELT context. Notably, there remains a lack of previous research utilizing this specific framework to analyze dyslexia-friendly inclusive pedagogy. However, utilizing the framework is conceptually aligned with the International Dyslexia Association (IDA, 2017) guidelines for removing barriers to language learning. In addition, several inclusive teaching recommendations for English language teachers have been informed by this framework (Daloiso et al., 2018). Therefore, this study utilized the framework as a lens for exploring current ELT stakeholders' perspectives across four key areas: participation for all learners, support for students at risk of underachievement (namely, students at risk of dyslexia), teacher education, and teacher professional development.

Method

This research employed a concurrent mixed-methods research design, which was aligned with the goal of acquiring comprehensive empirical data from multiple instruments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The UNESCO (2017) Policy Review Framework highlighted that inclusive education is a process that encompasses areas within and outside classroom practice. Therefore, to explore an in-depth understanding of this intricate field, gaining ELT stakeholders' perspectives from multiple angles is indispensable.

Table 2. Mapping of research questions to instruments

Research Question	Primary Instrument	Secondary Instrument
RQ1 (Perspectives)	Interview	Questionnaire
RQ2 (Inclusive Practices)	Classroom Observation	Interview, Questionnaire

A questionnaire, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews (see Table 2) were employed to provide a holistic snapshot of current inclusive practices, aiming to harness insights for creating dyslexia-friendly inclusive classrooms, which can benefit all students (Indrarathne, 2019; Young, 2024). Data were analyzed utilizing descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Subsequently,

interpretation and triangulation were conducted to cross-validate the overarching themes in addressing the RQs.

Participants

This study investigated perspectives from multiple groups of ELT stakeholders across both public junior high schools and teacher education institutions. Participants were selected using purposeful sampling comprising four groups of ELT stakeholders across rural and urban areas in the Riau Islands: English-language in-service teachers (ISTs) and school principals or administrators (SAs), teacher educators (TEs), and university administrators (UAs). These selections were aimed at gaining relevant insights into current inclusive practices in English language classrooms and teacher education. ISTs and SAs were selected from public junior high schools, the educational level where English is formally mandated by the national curriculum. TEs and UAs were from universities that offer English language teacher education programs.

The majority of ISTs and TEs were in their 30s and 40s and demonstrated extensive English teaching experience, with an average of ten years. In addition, all ISTs have completed the Teacher Professional Education Program or Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG), indicating their competencies for teaching under the national curriculum in public schools in Indonesia.

Instruments

The study involved a total of 40 unique participants across the Riau Islands. These individuals contributed data across three instruments, including 34 responses for the questionnaire and 15 participants for the semi-structured interviews; nine individuals completed both the questionnaire and the interview. The number of participants across multiple instruments is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Participants and instrumentation

Group	Instruments		
	Questionnaire (N = 34)	Classroom Observation (N = 3)	Interview (N = 15)
ISTs	29	3	5
SAs	-	-	4
TEs	5	-	4
UAs	-	-	2

Note. ISTs = in-service teachers; SAs = school administrators; TEs = teacher educators; UAs = university administrators.

The study employed a four-section online questionnaire administered via Google Forms. TEs and ISTs completed all four sections, while UAs and SAs completed Sections 1, 2, and 4. Sections 1 and 2 were related to demography and an open-ended questionnaire on familiarity with dyslexia and inclusive practices. Section 3 consisted of 22 items on a six-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (definitely not true of me) to 6 (definitely true of me), adopted from the Teacher of English Preparedness to Include Dyslexics (TEPID) Scale (Nijakowska et al., 2018).

Section 4 of the questionnaire asked about willingness to participate in a follow-up interview. The questionnaires were available in English or Bahasa Indonesia and took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Regarding classroom observations, the Inclusive Practices in English Language Teaching Observation Scale (IPELT) (Young, 2024) was utilized, covering a pre-observation interview, a lesson observation rubric, and a post-observation rubric and interview. The lesson observation rubric consisted of 22 items focusing only on the observable inclusive behaviors in lessons. There were five categories, namely, communication (6 items), learning environment (3 items), materials (2 items), student development (5 items), and task organization (6 items). The purpose was to understand the current teaching practices in the classroom and identify inclusive practices incorporated by in-service teachers. Observation notes were also taken to record additional information related to inclusive behaviors, classroom settings, and teachers' actions.

Semi-structured interviews, as the main instrument, were conducted with all groups of participants: ISTs, SAs, TEs, and UAs to gain in-depth perspectives. Interview protocols were designed based on key features of the Practices dimension of the UNESCO (2017) framework and were aligned with previous literature specific to inclusive practices for students with dyslexia (Nijakowska, 2010; Kormos & Smith, 2024). Approximately 10 to 15 interview questions were employed. The first category was on the participation of all learners, which included awareness and perception of inclusive education, pedagogical strategies, inclusive leadership, and institutional support. Subsequent categories inquired about awareness and perception of dyslexia and inclusive practices in English language teaching in junior high schools, teacher preparation for inclusive teaching in English language teacher education, and inclusive education policy for public junior high schools. The questions were aimed at exploring perspectives from different points of view relevant to their specific groups.

Procedures

The data collection process was conducted with the permission granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Protocol No. 2024066. A formal invitation letter was sent to professional contacts among TEs and SAs by email or WhatsApp, through which subsequent referrals were obtained. The questionnaire was then distributed to prospective TEs and ISTs, and interviews and classroom observations were scheduled for those willing to participate. The overall data collection was conducted between February and June 2025. For observations, out of the ten schools invited (n = 7 urban, n = 3 rural), only three rural schools responded. From an initial nine observations planned, three classroom observations were ultimately conducted in two junior high schools. Permissions to record the lesson were obtained from the in-service teachers. Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants from all four stakeholder groups (see Table 3). Thirteen interviews were conducted in person, while two were conducted online via Zoom. Interviews were audio-recorded once informed consent was secured either on paper or via Google Forms. Each interview lasted an average of 45 minutes and was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia or English, depending on the participant's preference. All participants completed informed-consent forms, and pseudonymous codes (e.g., IST1, SA2, UA1) were applied to ensure confidentiality.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were conducted for the questionnaire results, including mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and frequency distributions of the initial data. Classroom observation data from the IPELT observation scale were analyzed descriptively using magnitude coding and thematic analysis, following a previous study by Young (2024). The observation scale was coded using a four-point scale: not observed (NO = 0), partially (P = 1), substantially (S = 2), and fully observed (F = 3), to indicate the intensity of the inclusive behaviors. In addition, observation notes from pre- and post-observations were thematically analyzed.

Interview transcripts were organized in Google Sheets, reread, and cross-checked before being coded. To aid the deductive analysis, a table was designed with four key features of the Practices dimension from the UNESCO (2017) Policy Review Framework and two additional categories related to awareness and perception of inclusive education and dyslexia (IDA, 2017; Woodcock et al., 2022). Through an iterative process of constant comparison, 14 sub-categories were derived: participation for all learners (4), support for students at risk of dyslexia (4), teacher education (3), and professional development (3). The transcripts were coded under the aforementioned categories and synthesized to ensure internal consistency. Finally, to strengthen the trustworthiness and enhance the interpretation of the results, triangulation across the questionnaire, observations, and interview data was conducted. This integrative step helped to refine overarching themes presented in the discussion to address the research questions.

Results and Discussion

Results

Three primary themes emerged from data analysis and data triangulation across multiple instruments, providing insights into the current perspectives of ELT stakeholders and inclusive practices across ELT classrooms and teacher education.

ELT Stakeholders' perspectives of dyslexia and inclusive education

Frequency counts derived from the open-ended responses indicated that most ISTs and TEs possessed limited familiarity with dyslexia; more than half of the participants were either *unfamiliar* or *slightly familiar* (ISTs = 19, TEs = 1), while only one IST reported being *very familiar*. The majority of participants perceived dyslexia as related to reading and writing challenges, but some associated dyslexia with laziness in reading, lack of memory, or speech delay, echoing common misconceptions due to a lack of awareness of the nature of dyslexia. Similarly, interviews revealed that stakeholders across institutional levels had limited awareness of dyslexia and uncertainty about the challenges it poses to language learning. Remarkably, the survey reported that two SAs viewed dyslexia not as a special need, but as a general learning difficulty, while another associated dyslexia with "low IQ". In contrast, SA1, the only school administrator who had participated in a training that touched upon the dyslexia topic, accurately shared one of the characteristics of dyslexia. It was apparent that these perspectives on dyslexia were shaped by exposure to the terminology, ranging from popular media to occasional training by the government. The following excerpts illustrate the stakeholders' views of dyslexia:

> *What I know about dyslexia is from a Bollywood movie. The individual had the words jumbled in his head.* (IST3)

> *I participated in a workshop for students with special needs. Dyslexics encounter challenges in recognizing letters, often reversing the letter 'b' to 'd'.* (SA1)

Similar responses kept recurring throughout the interview results. TEs and UAs revealed that dyslexia remained a relatively unpopular topic. TE4 became aware of dyslexia indirectly through a colleague at a conference, while TE2 questioned whether dyslexia was synonymous with speech delay, resonating with the survey results. UA1 described dyslexia based on the portrayals from a film, similar to those of IST3 and SA4, in which dyslexic individuals see words mixed up when reading them on a whiteboard. In addition, some ISTs and SAs attributed the students' reading and writing difficulties, two closely related characteristics of dyslexic individuals, to inadequate practice and limited exposure to the language, especially due to the current policy that mandates English as a compulsory subject beginning in junior high school. This excerpt illustrates the perceived challenges between systemic policy and the identification of students with dyslexia in EFL classrooms:

> *I have some difficulties when I teach English because, as we know in Indonesia, English is taught from junior high school.* (IST5).

Shifting to perspectives on inclusive education, ELT stakeholders offered a broader range of views. While survey results revealed that most ISTs and all TEs reported their understanding of inclusive education policy as poor or average, with only six ISTs claiming a good level of knowledge, the interview results uncovered varied perceptions among all participants. While knowledge of inclusive education policies was reported to be low across both groups in the survey, the interviews among participants indicated stakeholders' deeper familiarity with its concept and approaches.

Most described inclusive education as a non-discriminatory system where every child should be accepted and allowed to learn in mainstream classrooms. Many emphasized the placement of students with special needs into regular classrooms as the main indicator for inclusion. These perspectives were illustrated in their interview responses:

> *Schools cannot deny students; we have to accept students with any background.* (IST4)

> *We cannot separate children with special needs from regular children, because it will cause inferiority for the children with special needs.* (SA1)

In addition, TEs and UAs raised comparable responses to those of ISTs and SAs. TE3 perceived inclusive education as ensuring fair access to education,

regardless of diverse individual backgrounds, whereas TE4 referred to special schools as inclusive education. Two UAs indicated their familiarity with inclusive policy by reporting the university protocols on reasonable accommodation for students with special needs, primarily focusing on those with physical impairments and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Moving to the awareness of inclusive practices in the classrooms, the open-ended responses highlighted a disparity in familiarity with inclusive pedagogical practices that TEs and ISTs incorporate in their teaching. Most of the ISTs were familiar with DI (n = 20) and CLT (n = 10), while only a few reported being familiar with UDL (four responses) and reflective practices (two responses). Most notably, while there was only one IST who reported familiarity with a multisensory language teaching approach (a core principle of MSLT), none of the TEs indicated familiarity with this approach. This discrepancy highlights a curricular gap within teacher education regarding inclusive practices.

Looking deeper into the quantitative data, the barriers to inclusive pedagogical practices were further highlighted by the descriptive statistics from the TEPID scale (see Table 4). Addressing the core inquiry of this study, the data summarized participants' perspectives on knowledge and skills in implementing inclusive practices (16 items) and their stance toward inclusion of dyslexic EFL learners (6 items). As shown in Table 4, both groups, ISTs (M = 3.28, SD = 0.25) and TEs (M = 3.14, SD = 0.49), had not yet acquired sufficient knowledge and skills on dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices. In contrast, both groups held moderately positive stances toward the inclusion of students with dyslexia in the ELT classrooms, with ISTs reporting a mean of 4.82 (SD = 0.26), and TEs reporting a mean of 5.00 (SD = 0.25).

Table 4. Results of the TEPID questionnaire

	Teacher Educators (n = 5)		In-service Teachers (n = 29)	
Category	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Knowledge and skills in implementing inclusive instructional practices with dyslexic EFL learners	3.14	0.49	3.28	0.25
Stance towards the inclusion of dyslexic EFL learners in inclusive classrooms	5.00	0.25	4.82	0.26

Note. All items used a 6-point Likert scale.

These TEPID scale results were also aligned with participants' responses in the open-ended responses regarding teaching experiences with students with dyslexia. Only a small number of participants, eight ISTs and two TEs, indicated prior teaching experiences with students with dyslexia. Unfortunately, further insights into these teaching experiences among ISTs remained limited due to their unavailability to participate in the follow-up interviews, which consequently limited the depth of the qualitative findings regarding actual classroom practices.

Remarkably, interviews with TEs were available and helped clarify their teaching experiences. Both TEs (TE1 and TE2) shared their previous experiences

teaching with students at risk of dyslexia. They reported having taught students with dyslexia based on their subjective identification of observed dyslexic characteristics, rather than a formal diagnosis. For instance, while TE1 was uncertain of the scientifically based conceptions of dyslexia, she considered students' challenges with letter reversal (e.g., 'b' to 'd') as part of her experience teaching students with dyslexia. Similarly, TE2 identified symptoms such as phonological struggles and difficulties in word arrangement. Both teachers relied on affective strategies, such as patience and individualized feedback, to maintain student motivation in the absence of formal inclusive training. These results resonated with their responses on interaction with students with dyslexia, which came from open-ended responses and interviews. Most participants reported minimal to no prior interactions with students formally identified as having dyslexia, and their perceived confidence in teaching them was consistently low. These results showed that most ELT stakeholders had limited knowledge, skills, and understanding regarding inclusive practices and dyslexic conditions.

Current dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices in classrooms

Results across observations, interviews, and questionnaire responses revealed that Differentiated Instruction (DI) was the most frequent pedagogical strategy referred to by ISTs and SAs, primarily due to its emphasis within the recent national curriculum, the *Merdeka* Curriculum. The TEPID scale highlighted that ISTs and TEs possessed some familiarity with DI in catering to individual learning needs. Notably, ISTs reported a higher mean score ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.47$) compared to TEs ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.84$). These results aligned with the open-ended responses, in which participants listed DI as one of the primary inclusive practices. Participants elaborated further on DI implementation during the interviews. For instance, IST2 illustrated DI through classroom practices, such as selecting and simplifying reading materials. In addition, IST4 and IST5 described the use of PBL as part of DI, especially in the process and product stages of learning. For example, during a small project of creating a short video, IST5 adjusted the learning materials and allowed students to choose topics according to their interests. Differentiation for students was also emphasized by most SAs. SA1 mentioned that the learning goals should be adjusted differently between regular students and students with special needs.

Despite reported use of inclusive approaches through DI in questionnaire responses and interviews, a gap was observed between reported knowledge and classroom practices. Direct classroom observations utilizing the IPELT scale identified inclusive behaviors across five pedagogical domains; yet, they were predominantly low, leaving substantial room for improvement (see Table 5).

Table 5. Results of the IPELT direct lesson observation rubric

Pedagogical Domain	*M*	*SD*
Communication	1.78	0.34
Learning Environment	1.11	1.07
Materials	0.33	0.47
Student Development	1.87	0.38
Task Organization	1.83	0.41

Pedagogical Domain	*M*	*SD*

Note. Not observed (0), Partially (1), Substantially (2), Fully (3).

Notably, the highest mean score observed on the four-point magnitude coding (0–3) was in the Student Development domain (M = 1.87, SD = 0.38), which encompasses tolerating learner error, providing frequent feedback, encouraging students to reflect on what they have learned, and motivating learners. ISTs were observed providing direct feedback during tasks and homework checking. Furthermore, the interview with ISTs corroborated this evidence, revealing an eagerness to accommodate students' errors by reminding them not to worry about making mistakes while learning English, as expounded by IST4:

> *I encouraged my students by telling them that English is our foreign language, so it is all right to make mistakes.* (IST4)

The second most observed domain identified was Task Organization (M = 1.83, SD = 0.38), characterized by teachers connecting activities to students' personal experiences, scaffolding learning objectives, and providing reasonable time allocation to achieve learning goals. On teaching vocabulary, for example, teachers provided examples of how to read difficult words and connected learning with prior lessons. At the same time, ISTs mentioned their efforts in accommodating a reasonable time allocation for students to achieve learning goals. While the context for observation was within the class hour, interview results highlighted the structural challenges that both ISTs and SAs encountered in allocating additional time for addressing students' needs. IST5 and SA4 specifically reported challenges in balancing time allotment for students who need additional support while maintaining responsibility for the entire class. Despite these constraints, they expressed willingness to offer individual support, when possible, by relying on their professional judgment, as illustrated below:

> *We gave special attention to students who needed support. Sometimes I do it personally; I call them and help with the reading. However, we don't have much time to do so. I just try my best I can.* (IST5)

> *I think teachers need more time. Although teachers have to support students with difficulties, including dyslexics, they have to teach the whole class as well.* (SA4)

Within the Communication domain, the item Presents Clear Criteria for Activities yielded the highest mean (M = 2.33, SD = 0.58). Clear, step-by-step instructions were observed during the assignment of tasks. Whenever necessary, or when noticing that students did not fully understand the instructions, most ISTs would rephrase their instructions. Additionally, teachers occasionally used the first language, Bahasa Indonesia, to clarify instructions. In another activity, students were given options and choices to choose their own topics to make sticker signs for a small project. In all observed classrooms, students were given opportunities to ask questions, despite a relatively low frequency of students actually doing so.

The lowest mean score was on the Materials domain (M = 0.33, SD = 0.47), revealing the limited adjustment in terms of materials and use of multimodal and multisensory teaching. Aligned with questionnaire responses that reveal both ISTs and TEs were less familiar with multisensory teaching, interviews with these two groups of participants unveiled their unawareness of multisensory teaching as a method for supporting students**.** As evident in the sub-item of the TEPID questionnaire, TEs reported a slightly higher mean (M = 4.00, SD = 0.71) regarding familiarity with the principle of multisensory teaching compared to ISTs (M = 3.00, SD = 1.66). This result was in contrast compared to the open-ended responses, where no TEs reported familiarity with multisensory teaching. This discrepancy might be due to reporting bias or failing to tick the types of inclusive practices.

Remarkably, IST5 emphasized the usefulness of incorporating audio and visual elements without referring to multisensory teaching, but rather to DI. Indeed, an inherent overlap exists where multisensory teaching serves as a component of DI. This was evident in the form of utilizing various instructional modes involving auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning, as reported in the following excerpt:

> *The differentiation . . . is quite helpful . . . because they will be grouped with their individual abilities. For example, some of them understand from the audio or video.* (IST5)

Interview results uncovered some other practical and inclusive teaching strategies, such as group projects, vocabulary games, pronunciation practices, and outdoor activities. For instance, IST5 cited an outdoor vocabulary project in which students had to discover new vocabulary from objects in nature and label them in English and Bahasa Indonesia.

> *I conducted a mini project-based task about nature, where students worked in groups, and they had to find objects, such as 'leaf' and its translation in Bahasa Indonesia. Then, they wrote the name directly on the object and practised how to read the words they found.* (IST5)

Other ISTs claimed that integrating games or hands-on activities, such as *Simon Says* and *Musical Chairs,* helped students retain the new vocabulary. IST4, for example, conducted a five-minute vocabulary and spelling activity at the end of class, requiring students to say and spell one word learned during the lesson as an exit ticket. Although conducted without specific knowledge of multisensory teaching, these inherently multisensory activities were reported to spark students' engagement in the classroom.

While the main teaching material was the Merdeka Curriculum textbook, some teachers incorporated additional materials and activities. One such activity observed was an ice-breaking session requiring attentive listening and coordination among students. ICT use was not observed, but the post-observation interview confirmed that ICT was occasionally used in class, such as for listening practice and games. Intrinsically, the incorporation of multisensory elements was observed to overlap with the use of ICT, a practice mentioned by most ISTs during interviews, mostly as tools for material delivery, including slide presentations and audiovisual resources, such as YouTube videos. Further analysis of the interviews revealed that

the use of multisensory and multimodal materials was unintentional and primarily influenced by the representation of learning materials, either from textbooks or the use of IT, rather than a full-fledged multisensory teaching approach.

In regard to teaching reading, the reading practice in class was mainly teacher-led, covering short texts and reading practices either individually, as a group, or as a class. ISTs relied on an old-school drill method ("repeat after me"), reading together, and reading aloud, as evident in both observation and interviews. ISTs were observed to invite students to read aloud either sentences or a short paragraph. Another variation in reading was reading together. Through this approach, students can feel at ease regardless of their English fluency. They claimed this repeated practice helped familiarize students with English listening and reading. IST3 explained:

> *I will read the sentence first, then the students follow. If any students have difficulties… I will give corrections.* (IST3)

In utilizing reading aloud, IST1 structured it to be more inclusive by asking more fluent students to read first, followed by others. For teaching reading comprehension, one notable approach was previewing instructions and questions before reading a whole passage. The IST2 claimed this strategy could help students avoid being overwhelmed by the text.

> *So, I asked the students to look at the instructions, read the questions, and finally read the text. This helps students avoid feeling overwhelmed by the text and allows them to focus on the specific points being asked.* (IST2)

Apart from some observed inclusive strategies, challenges in the Learning Environment domain were evident. These included external noise, which occasionally distracted students during lessons, and poor air circulation in the class. Another challenge observed in the Materials domain was the use of a small font size on the whiteboard, leading to difficulties in reading for students sitting at the back. Beyond these constraints, classroom reality was not far removed from the challenges that overshadowed the systemic development of inclusive schools. Interviews with ISTs and SAs reported a lack of information on identifying students with dyslexia. Most ISTs claimed that they had no experience teaching students with dyslexia in their classrooms, as formal identification was not available. This came as no surprise, as the sub-item from the TEPID scale indicated limited familiarity with the educational policy concerning students with dyslexia across schools and teacher education, with ISTs yielding a mean of 3.25 (SD = 1.63) and TEs with a mean of 1.80 (SD = 0.84). Given that no students were formally identified with dyslexia in participating schools, the support measures or accommodations were generally broad. For example, one IST utilized peer support. The teacher sometimes paired students, mixing those with higher English proficiency with those of lower proficiency, creating a supportive interaction among students. SAs were also unanimous in giving extra support to accommodate their students, but the schools lacked specific guidelines.

ISTs and SAs described that they mainly relied on individual judgment and a personal approach to ensure all students were supported. In some instances, accommodations for student assessment and informal interventions were provided in the form of remedial assessment and one-on-one sessions during breaks. SA4 shared one experience of witnessing a student with reading difficulties who received one-on-one reading practice for an hour or two, three to four times per week. Despite limited awareness of dyslexia, efforts to address students' needs were made, oftentimes through an unstructured, personal approach. In addition, SAs asserted that support for students with special needs varied from school to school and highlighted the need for professional support from psychologists in terms of identifying students at risk of dyslexia in schools.

ELT stakeholders' professional development for inclusive practices

The TEPID scale, as presented in Table 4, demonstrated limited teachers' knowledge and skills on inclusive practices to support students with dyslexia despite their moderately positive stances towards inclusion. This phenomenon underscores an underlying scarcity of teacher professional development regarding this specific matter of the study. Analysis of the open-ended responses indicated that a majority of the ISTs (n = 24) and all TEs reported that they did not have any formal training to teach students with dyslexia. Remarkably, a few ISTs and SAs acknowledged their participation in various professional development programs, in particular on concepts of inclusivity in general education. Three ISTs and four SAs mentioned that inclusive education was a topic in one of the modules in the PPG program and a workshop organized by the Ministry of Education at the regional or national level. IST5 claimed to have initial training on other types of neurodevelopmental conditions, such as ADHD and autism, for the first time through attending a regional-level workshop. However, IST5 admitted that the training provided was relatively general and lacked practical strategies for inclusive teaching, while the specific topic of dyslexia in the ELT context remained overlooked.

All SAs confirmed their participation in workshops on the topic of inclusive education at differing levels of depth. Most of the workshops were either online or in-person, with a duration from one day to two and a half months. Workshops from the government were limited and held based on selection from the local government, as SA4 expressed:

> *There was a workshop on inclusive education, but our school was not selected.* (SA4)

SA1 participated in an intensive two-week online workshop via the ministerial online platform called GTK Room, which introduced assessment and identification of students with special needs in general education classes, including dyslexia in general classrooms. Other SAs, however, reported a lack of in-depth, inclusive education workshops, as evidenced by the response from SA2:

> *There was a workshop on inclusivity, which was more of a general knowledge of it… and no particular content on students with dyslexia.* (SA2)

Within teacher education, the lack of familiarity with inclusive education policy on the TEPID scale highlights the inadequacy of curricular alignment on inclusive education and dyslexia in ELT classrooms. Notably, interviews revealed that TE3 and UA1 had heard the term dyslexia during their teacher education, but admittedly, they never studied it further. Given the questions regarding preparing teachers with inclusive teaching practices, TEs and UAs agreed that the current teacher education program had yet to sufficiently prepare PSTs for inclusive teaching, particularly for supporting students with dyslexia in English language classrooms. TE1 asserted that schools were asked to accept students with special needs, including dyslexia, but PSTs should also be prepared to teach them. TE3 emphasized that PSTs were mostly unprepared to teach students with dyslexia. Despite the institutional focus on developing students' academic and English skills cited by TEs and UAs, specific discussion on dyslexia and dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices was notably absent. These excerpts illustrated the barrier within English teacher education:

> *I am not even sure 50% because they are not really exposed to the topic during the lecture*. (TE3)

> *Actually, the specific discussion about dyslexia so far is not there yet … we have not discussed it within our program*. (UA2)

Some TEs and UAs voiced the need for a specific course on inclusive education and dyslexia, either as part of an existing course or as a separate course. TE2 and TE3 asserted the need for integrating the topic into current courses, such as Curriculum Development, English for Young Learners, or a fully separate inclusive education course. Both UAs were in favor of the idea of creating a new specialized course on inclusive education, noting that current subjects, such as micro-teaching, Student Development, and Educational Psychology, did not address inclusive practices for students with dyslexia. Additionally, TEs and UAs emphasized the need for inclusive teacher educator training and the engagement of experts and policymakers to guide the inclusive transformation. Where there was variation across responses, these results necessitate that ELT stakeholders across schools and teacher education institutions further enhance their knowledge and skills on the topic of dyslexia and inclusive practices.

Discussion

This discussion addressed the research questions concerning (a) ELT stakeholders' perspectives and (b) current inclusive practices, as well as highlighting the implications of the study. Three overarching themes were generated, encompassing the perceptual barriers to dyslexia and inclusive education, pedagogical barriers to dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices, and insufficient teacher training and institutional support.

Perceptual barriers to awareness of dyslexia and inclusive education

Regarding the first research question on ELT stakeholders' perspectives, the findings indicated that ELT stakeholders have limited awareness of dyslexia. Both

questionnaire and interview results indicated that issues of dyslexia remain scarcely noticed by ELT stakeholders at public junior high schools and English language teacher education institutions. Some were unaware, and others held misconceptions, associating it with laziness or low IQ. While perspectives on dyslexia continue to evolve, as in this study, Soegondo (2022) pointed out that misconceptions remain widespread in Indonesian society, not to mention among ELT stakeholders. Despite the estimated 10% prevalence (IDA, 2017), the primary findings indicated that teachers with extensive years of experience were unaware of these potential challenges of dyslexia in their classrooms. This knowledge gap was aligned with findings from Indonesia (Stevani & Tarigan, 2022) and other international contexts (Indrarathne, 2019; Kormos & Nijakowska, 2017), highlighting the lack of familiarity with the nature of dyslexia and practical guidelines for teachers.

In addition to limited knowledge of dyslexia, ELT stakeholders had varying degrees of familiarity with inclusive education as revealed from survey and interview results. The findings unveiled the common perspectives of ELT stakeholders on inclusive education as non-discriminatory education, characterized by the placement of students from all backgrounds, including those with special needs, in mainstream classrooms. While placement was an initial point, global debates highlight that placement itself does not equate to inclusion (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; UNESCO, 2017). Overemphasis on placement only leads to a surface-level understanding of inclusion. Participants' stance toward inclusion tended to reflect their sense of adherence to inclusive education policy rather than readiness for systemic reform. This aligns with Rasmitadila and Tambunan (2018), who revealed that readiness for inclusive education was indicated by conformity to law, but lacked the strategies for developing genuine inclusion. To move beyond these barriers, changes in mindset for viewing inclusive education to account for more inclusive teaching approaches, accommodations, and resources are required (Schuelka, 2018).

While survey results showed that most ISTs and TEs were in favor of the inclusion of students with dyslexia in ELT classrooms, the interviews confirmed that they were unsure of how to provide effective support and accommodations. This unawareness among ELT stakeholders may be attributed to the invisibility of the dyslexia condition. Johnston (2019) noted that phonological processing challenges are difficult to notice when teachers lack the specific knowledge and skills. To address this, Peltier et al. (2022) suggested the need to unveil common misconceptions and provide scientifically based conceptions, such as those provided by the International Dyslexia Association (2017). This can be pursued through conducting training on dyslexia and inclusive practices for ELT stakeholders.

Furthermore, the findings accentuated the contextual factors that correlated to language learning challenges, pointing specifically to the late introduction of English as a compulsory subject in public junior high schools (Emilia, 2025). This educational policy and English status within public schools differ considerably from those of the private institutions, including those investigated by Dewi (2012) and the private special junior high schools focused on by Stevani and Tarigan (2022). In public schools, this national policy indirectly hinders the early identification and intervention that could otherwise be more effective for dyslexic individuals in the primary years of schooling (Soegondo, 2022). This is especially

vital within the ELT context, due to the opaque nature of English, which presents additional challenges to foreign language learners (Kormos & Smith, 2024). While support can technically be provided at any level, this national educational policy led to a higher emphasis on remediating basic language gaps. This urgency to achieve foundational proficiency often diverts teachers' attention away from the underlying neurodevelopmental conditions of their learners. These findings highlight broader needs for measures towards inclusion in raising awareness, knowledge, and developing systemic readiness for effectively identifying students with dyslexia (Indrarathne, 2019).

Remarkably, the interview results revealed reliance on special schools and special education teachers, highlighting the continuing debate surrounding special schools for inclusivity (Forlin, 2013). This might unintentionally hinder the transformation toward inclusivity in mainstream schools as defined under the UNESCO (2017) framework. There is a need for ELT stakeholders to build a common understanding of the concepts of inclusive education rather than simply categorizing supports into distinct educational environments. While special schools may be relevant in certain contexts (Bahrudin et al., 2020), Kormos and Smith (2024) and Nijakowska et al. (2018) emphasized the need for language teachers to develop their own inclusive teaching skills in mainstream classrooms. Hence, this finding necessitates a perceptual shift among ELT stakeholders from relying on external support to enhancing their pedagogical capacities for inclusive teaching.

Pedagogical barriers to dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices

In response to the second research question on current inclusive practices, the results suggest that dyslexia-specific practices were limited as observed in the classrooms, but some general inclusive practices, such as Differentiated Instruction (DI), were evident through both survey and interview results. These findings echo Young (2024), who asserted that within the ELT context, various teaching methods and philosophies are inherently inclusive. It is worth noting that ISTs and SAs were familiar with DI, which was highlighted in the Merdeka Curriculum since 2022 (Stroupe, 2024). ISTs reported some adjustments in their teaching aligned with Tomlinson (2000): in material delivery, in learning processes, and in assessments. However, insufficient time to tailor the materials to individual students' needs posed a challenge in the classroom. This result supports Woodcock et al. (2022), mentioning that DI has its value for flexibility, but tends to be responsive, which consequently requires more teacher time. Alternatively, the current practices might benefit from incorporating a broader framework, such as UDL, which was scarce among ISTs in this study. The UDL framework provides a more proactive approach, utilizing strategic design for teaching with logical and comprehensive guidelines covering core aspects of learning: materials, activities, and assessments (CAST, 2024).

Furthermore, the observation of rural schools in this context presented environmental constraints in the classroom settings that hindered an inclusive learning environment. Physical environment challenges, such as external noise and limited font size visibility, obstructed the ability to inclusively optimize participation of all learners. While creating a conducive and safe learning environment is essential to learning, as emphasized by IDA (2017) and the UDL framework (CAST, 2024), achieving this requires immediate, practical actions from

teachers. Despite the infrastructure limitations and unforeseen constraints, optimizing available resources can considerably accommodate struggling students at risk of dyslexia. Such pedagogical efforts include fostering respect among students in neighboring classes to minimize external noise, regularly checking if students can read the font on the whiteboard, and inviting those who struggle to move to the front seats.

Similarly, the incorporation of MSLT, which was regarded as effective in addressing phonological challenges encountered by students with dyslexia (IDA, 2017; Nijakowska, 2010), was not apparent. Reflecting on the survey and interview results, ISTs' knowledge of the multisensory teaching approach was largely absent. The incorporation of learning materials or activities incorporating visual, audio, or kinesthetic elements was primarily driven by a broad understanding of individual learning needs, resulting in spontaneous rather than intentional teaching strategies. This finding reiterated the necessity for ISTs to develop inclusive practices such as MSLT into their instructional techniques (Johnston, 2019; Supriatna & Ediyanto, 2021).

In teaching reading, an aspect closely related to dyslexia, the use of a conventional drill method ("repeat after me") and reading aloud were prominent. The "repeat after me" technique, as evident in the observation and mentioned throughout interviews, is aligned with the intervention practices for students with dyslexia (Daloiso, 2017; Daloiso et al., 2018; Nijakowska, 2010). Students with dyslexia benefit from repetition practice, especially when paired with MSLT. On the other hand, reading aloud can be empowering if carefully employed, as evident in this study, where fluent students were asked to read first, allowing those who struggle additional time to prepare. Without such consideration, reading aloud can be discouraging for students' motivation and confidence (IDA, 2017). Additionally, one prevalent practice observed in classrooms, segmenting reading materials, can continue to be incorporated into reading comprehension tasks as it helps reduce information overload in the working memory in individuals with dyslexia (Kormos & Smith, 2024).

While the results indicated that the identification of students with dyslexia has not been established, Daloiso et al. (2018) and Kormos and Smith (2024) argue that ELT teachers can still provide immediate support to students at risk of dyslexia through a series of progress monitoring and observations. The proactive roles of ELT stakeholders for general inclusion were present but required further enhancement for dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices. On a broader scale of inclusion, the results indicated the need for teachers to enhance teaching practices beyond what is already available. This included incorporating accommodations within materials, instructional approaches, and evidence-based strategies as proposed by previous studies (CAST, 2024; Daloiso et al., 2018; IDA, 2017; Kormos & Smith, 2024; Nijakowska, 2010) into daily teaching practices.

Insufficient teacher training and institutional support

This theme addresses both the first and second research questions, highlighting the scarcity of specific training in the ELT context and the lack of systemic support for students with dyslexia. While the government has conducted some workshops on inclusive education, the specific issue of supporting students with dyslexia in ELT classrooms has remained unaddressed. Moving toward

inclusion, enhancing teacher training is essential (UNESCO, 2017). In fact, only a small number of ELT stakeholders had received professional training on the topic of inclusive education and dyslexia, uncovering a critical barrier to teachers' knowledge.

Within preservice teacher education, current programs have not addressed both the specific aspects of dyslexia and the broader inclusive practices. The paucity of discussion on the topic of dyslexia within teacher education emphasizes a need for curriculum adjustment in introducing this topic into language teacher education programs (Nijakowska et al., 2018; Stevani & Tarigan, 2022). The core aspects to be focused on have been suggested in Martan et al. (2018), that is, to equip teachers with teaching skills and strategies for adapting inclusive teaching materials and assessments for dyslexic students. Without introducing the topic of inclusive education and dyslexia into teacher education programs, future teachers will continue to be underprepared, hindering progress toward creating a more inclusive classroom.

The findings address the need for specific training for ISTs to develop skills to support students at risk of dyslexia in becoming successful in their English language learning, as echoed in recent studies (Indrarathne, 2019; Stevani & Tarigan, 2022). Proper training can be conducted by trained educators or experts in the field, as well as via online training, where ELT stakeholders can gain various types of practical knowledge from reliable sources. However, sustained teacher development is needed, so teacher training can be the groundwork for achieving multifaceted objectives of raising teachers' awareness, self-efficacy, attitude, and teaching skills centered on inclusivity and dyslexia (Kormos & Nijakowska, 2017; Schuelka, 2018). This is also the case for teacher educators. The results of this study also highlighted a crucial void of specialized teacher educator training on inclusive teaching practices, an essential component for transforming inclusive teacher education (Nijakowska et al., 2018; UNESCO, 2017). Thus, prioritizing knowledge and skills of in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, and teacher educators is essential to ensure that efforts toward creating inclusive classrooms are aligned across institutional levels.

At a systemic level, teachers and school administrators lacked the skills, knowledge, and resources to implement inclusive education for students at risk of dyslexia. While dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices beyond the language classroom have not been addressed previously (cf. Dewi, 2012; Kirana, 2022; Stevani & Tarigan, 2022), this study revealed that some support was provided, mainly based on individual initiatives, such as informal one-on-one sessions. This lack of systemic support mirrors Schuelka's (2018) argument that teachers and school administrators were often told to implement inclusive education without sufficient preparation and systemic support. Therefore, while teachers and school administrators should progressively enhance their immediate inclusive classrooms and school practices, addressing the broader systemic and environmental constraints requires robust institutional support. Aligning with the goal of the UNESCO (2017) framework to remove barriers to inclusive education, overcoming these systemic and environmental limitations necessitates a top-down approach from the education ministry and policymakers. This includes pursuing collaboration to enhance training on inclusive education and dyslexia, administering practical guidelines for inclusive school management, and allocating appropriate resources

to ensure inclusive learning environments for all students. Embarking on this transformation among ELT stakeholders is essential for creating a more inclusive classroom for accommodating students at risk of dyslexia.

Conclusion

This study has explored the current perspectives of ELT stakeholders on inclusive practices to support students with dyslexia. The findings revealed constrained perspectives of ELT stakeholders, reflected in limited awareness of dyslexia and inclusivity in general. Current inclusive practices were modest, with limited evidence of dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices. This study contributes to the literature by pioneering a novel application of the UNESCO (2017) Policy Review Framework for a multilevel perspective analysis across ELT stakeholders at both public junior high schools and teacher education institutions to address the gap in understanding inclusive practices in the ELT context in the Riau Islands.

The study underscores the implications for systemic reform and enhanced collaboration among teachers, administrators, policymakers, and experts to raise awareness and incorporate inclusive practices in the ELT context. First, current teacher training can be enhanced to train teachers on the topic of dyslexia and inclusive practices, including the integration of the UDL framework and the MSLT approach. Second, guidelines for inclusive institutional management should be established at the school level to provide necessary accommodations for addressing students' challenges. Within English teacher education programs, teacher educators should upskill their inclusive teaching capacities, and curricular adjustments can be pursued, such as establishing an inclusive education course with a primary focus on dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices.

Despite the implications, there were still some limitations of this preliminary study, primarily due to the small sample size and uneven representation of data. Classroom observations were initially planned to include rural and urban areas, but final observations were limited to three rural schools. While these observations still provide satisfactory insights for understanding immediate teaching practices in English language classrooms, future research encompassing observations from both geographical settings can explore a wider range of inclusive practices for supporting students at risk of dyslexia. While identification and systemic support remain scarce in public schools, future studies should also investigate the best practices from various inclusive institutions, including private schools, in supporting students with dyslexia in ELT classrooms. Identifying and distilling these practices into practical guidelines that could be adapted to public schools is a vital step toward creating a more equitable and inclusive education within the wider society of Indonesia. Furthermore, the generalizability of this study can be enhanced by future research across provinces or regions in Indonesia, aiming at the development of a teacher training program for advancing dyslexia-friendly inclusive practices in the Indonesian ELT context.

References

Badan Pusat Statistik. (2026, February 20). *Number of schools, teachers, and pupils of junior high school under the Ministry of Education and Culture by province, 2025-2026*. https://www.bps.go.id/en/statistics-table/3/ZHpkb1ZtcDNZV2RHTlUweVdFZ3JhVkl3Ym1ScVp6MDkjMw==/jumlah-sekolah--guru--dan-murid-sekolah-menengah-pertama--smp--di-bawah-kementerian-pendidikan-dan-kebudayaan-menurut-provinsi--2025-2026.html

Bahrudin, Jaya, I., Abidin, I., Hartati, S., & Rugaiyah, R. (2020). Education for all: The evaluation of inclusive education programs in elementary school in Jakarta, Indonesia. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, *12*(8), 532-547. https://www.ijicc.net/images/vol12/iss8/12848_Bahrudin_2020_E_R.pdf

British Dyslexia Association. (2024, July 30). *Dyslexia checklists - IDA*. https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexia/how-is-dyslexia-diagnosed/dyslexia-checklists

CAST. (2024). *Universal design for learning guidelines version 3.0*. https://udlguidelines.cast.org/

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE.

Daloiso, M. (2017). *Supporting learners with dyslexia in the ELT classroom*. Oxford University Press.

Daloiso, M., Delaney, M., Ianes, D., Kormos, J., & Smith, M. A. (2018). *Our experts advise on inclusive practices in English language teaching*. Oxford University Press. https://www.oup.com.cn/test/inclusive-practices-in-english-language-teaching.pdf

Dewi, K. M. K. (2012). Dyslexia and EFL teaching and learning: A case study in Bali Children Foundation, Singaraja-Bali. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia: Undiksha, 1*(1). https://ejournal-pasca.undiksha.ac.id/index.php/jurnal_bahasa/article/view/307

Ediyanto, E., Kawai, N., Hayashida, M., Matsumiya, N., Siddik, M. A. B., & Almutairi, A. T. (2021). Indonesian teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education. *Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education*, *12*(2), 31-44. https://doi.org/10.2478/dcse-2021-0014

Emilia, E. (2025). English language education at secondary level. In S. Zein & F. A. Hamied (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of English language education in Indonesia* (pp. 460-476). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003399308-34

Faragher, R., Chen, M., Miranda, L., Poon, K., Rumiati, Chang, F., & Chen, H. (2021). Inclusive education in Asia: Insights from some country case studies. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*, *18*(1), 23-35. https://doi.org/10.1111/jppi.12369

Finkelstein, S., Sharma, U., & Furlonger, B. (2021). The inclusive practices of classroom teachers: A scoping review and thematic analysis. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *25*(6), 735-762. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1572232

Florian, L., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2011). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *British Educational Research Journal, 37*(5), 813-828. https://doi.org/10.1080/01411926.2010.501096

Forlin, C. I. (2013). Issues of inclusive education in the 21st century. *Journal of Learning Science*, *6*, 67-81. https://doi.org/10.15027/35243

Indrarathne, B. (2019). Accommodating learners with dyslexia in English language teaching in Sri Lanka: Teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and challenges. *TESOL Quarterly*, *53*(3), 630-654. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.500

International Dyslexia Association. (2017). *Dyslexia in the classroom: What every teacher needs to know*. https://dyslexiaida.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/DITC-Handbook.pdf

International Dyslexia Association. (2023). *English learners and dyslexia*. https://dyslexialibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/file-manager/public/2564/english-learners-and-dyslexia.pdf

Johnston, V. (2019). Dyslexia: What reading teachers need to know. *The Reading Teacher*, *73*(3), 339-346. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1830

Karina, N. P., Lintangsari, A. P., & Emaliana, I. (2024). Preparing EFL pre service teachers for inclusive teaching: The students' perception on the outcome-based evaluation of the introduction to inclusive education course. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal, 7*(1), 43-54. https://doi.org/10.12928/eltej.v7i1.10280

Kirana, A. W. (2022). Issues in reading comprehension: A case of an Indonesian bilingual dyslexic student. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 11*(3), 488-501. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v11i3.33581

Kormos, J., Csizér, K., & Sarkadi, Á. (2009). The language learning experiences of students with dyslexia: lessons from an interview study. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, *3*(2), 115-130. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501220802638306

Kormos, J., & Nijakowska, J. (2017). Inclusive practices in teaching students with dyslexia: Second language teachers' concerns, attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs on a massive open online learning course. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *68*, 30-41. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.08.005

Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2024). *Teaching languages to students with specific learning differences*. Multilingual Matters.

Loreman, T., Sharma, U., & Forlin, C. (2013). Do pre-service teachers feel ready to teach in inclusive classrooms? A four country study of teaching self-efficacy. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *38*(1), Article 3. https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2013v38n1.10

Martan, V., Skočić Mihić, S., & Matošević, A. (2018). Teachers' attitudes toward teaching dyslexic students. *Croatian Journal of Education - Hrvatski časopis Za Odgoj I Obrazovanje*, *19,* 75-97. https://doi.org/10.15516/cje.v19i0.2704

Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the foreign language classroom*. Multilingual Matters.

Nijakowska, J., Tsagari, D., & Spanoudis, G. (2018). English as a foreign language teacher training needs and perceived preparedness to include dyslexic learners: The case of Greece, Cyprus, and Poland. *Dyslexia*, *24*(4), 357-379. https://doi.org/10.1002/dys.1598

Novita, S., Uyun, Q., Witruk, E., & Siregar, J. R. (2019). Children with dyslexia in different cultures: Investigation of anxiety and coping strategies of children with dyslexia in Indonesia and Germany. *Annals of Dyslexia, 69*(2), 204-218.

Peltier, T. K., Washburn, E. K., Heddy, B. C., & Binks-Cantrell, E. (2022). What do teachers know about dyslexia? It's complicated! *Reading and Writing*, *35*(9), 2077-2107. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-022-10264-8

Polim, H. (2021). Challenges in the teaching practicum in Indonesia. *The Bulletin of the Graduate School, Soka University, 42*, 439-462.

Rasmitadila, & Tambunan, A. R. S. (2018). Readiness of general elementary schools to become inclusive elementary schools: A preliminary study in Indonesia. *International Journal of Special Education*, *33*(2), 366-381.

Saiful, J. A. (2025). Strategies and challenges in empowering a pre-service English teacher with physical disabilities: An autoethnography. *Language and Language Teaching Journal*, *28*(2), 902-919. https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v28i2.12786

Schuelka, M. J. (2018). *Implementing inclusive education*. K4D Helpdesk Report. Institute of Development Studies. https://k4d.ids.ac.uk/resource/implementing-inclusive-education/

Soegondo, K. D. (2022). Bridging awareness advocacy with collaboration towards better dyslexia management in Indonesia. In G. Elbeheri & L. Siang (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of dyslexia in education* (pp. 135-142). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003162520-17

Stevani, M., & Tarigan, K. E. (2022). Need analysis of dyslexia students in English reading comprehension instructions. *JEELS*, *9*(2), 327-352.

Stroupe, R. (2024). Navigating challenges: English language education in rural Indonesia. *TEFL Praxis Journal,* *3*(1), 3-23. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14286313

Supriatna, A., & Ediyanto, E. (2021). The implementation of multisensory technique for children with dyslexia. *IJDS: Indonesian Journal of Disability Studies*, *8*(1), 279-293. https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.ijds.2021.008.01.17

Tarjiah, I., Supena, A., Pujiastuti, S. I., & Mulyawati, Y. (2023). Increasing the reading ability of a student with dyslexia in elementary school: An explanatory case study by using family support, remedial teaching, and multisensory method. *Frontiers in Education*, *8*, Article 1022580.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2000). *Differentiation of instruction in the elementary grades*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED443572.pdf

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2017). *A Guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education*. https://doi.org/10.54675/MHHZ2237

Woodcock, S., Sharma, U., Subban, P., & Hitches, E. (2022). Teacher self-efficacy and inclusive education practices: Rethinking teachers' engagement with inclusive practices. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *117*, Article 103802. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103802

Young, D. (2024). Identifying inclusive training needs with the inclusive practices in English language teaching observation scale. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, *9*(1), Article 59. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-024-00287-9