

Teachers' Pedagogical Competence in Supporting Inclusive Students: A Case Study of Grade V at SDN Cikampek Utara III

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education requires teachers to adapt instruction to diverse student characteristics and learning needs. However, how student identification, instructional adaptation, assessment, and follow-up operate as an integrated pedagogical process remains underexplored. This study analyzed teachers' pedagogical competence in supporting inclusive students in Grade V at State Elementary School Cikampek Utara III. A qualitative case study involved two purposively selected Grade V homeroom teachers. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The study established data trustworthiness through triangulation. The findings showed that teachers identified students' abilities, needs, participation, and learning progress and used this information to adapt methods, media, tasks, learning time, and individual support. Teachers used assessment to monitor development and determine remedial activities, enrichment, and further instructional adjustments. Pedagogical competence was reflected in responsive instructional practices through a cyclical process of student identification, instructional adaptation, assessment, and follow-up action. Given the limited sample and single-school setting, the findings are context-specific. The study highlights the need for continuous professional development in inclusive pedagogy, differentiated assessment, collaborative planning, and structured teacher reflection.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental right, and every student should receive learning services appropriate to their talents, interests, abilities, and learning needs. This principle underlies inclusive education¹⁰, which recognizes student diversity as an integral part of the conditions within schools. Inclusive education is not merely about accepting students with special educational needs into regular classrooms; it also requires learning environments that

provide equitable opportunities for learning and participation. Inclusive education is positioned as an effort to promote equality and prevent discrimination in educational services [1]. It is also viewed as a process that responds to learner diversity and addresses various barriers that may restrict students' access, participation, and development in education [2]. In elementary schools, these principles are particularly important because teachers directly encounter diversity in students' academic, social, emotional, communication, and learning characteristics. Consequently, the effectiveness of inclusive education depends not only on inclusive policies but also on how teachers translate these principles into pedagogical practices that respond to individual differences.

Teachers' ability to translate the principles of inclusion into classroom practices strongly influences the success of inclusive education. Pedagogical competence is essential because it encompasses teachers' ability to understand students' characteristics, design learning activities, implement instruction, conduct assessment, and determine appropriate follow-up actions. Pedagogical competence represents a fundamental teacher capability in managing the learning process [3]. Pedagogy is not merely about delivering subject matter; it also involves guiding and developing students according to their developmental stages [4]. Pedagogical competence is similarly identified as an important component in supporting elementary school teachers' instructional practices [5]. Within inclusive classrooms, pedagogical competence therefore requires more than the ability to deliver standardized instruction; it requires teachers to continuously interpret student characteristics and use this information to make appropriate instructional decisions.

One initial challenge in this process is gaining an adequate understanding of individual student characteristics. Student identification is necessary to obtain information regarding their abilities, potential, needs, barriers, and learning patterns. Teachers' pedagogical competence in inclusive education is associated with their ability to understand student characteristics, implement learning, and conduct assessment [6]. Teachers in Indonesian inclusive schools continue to face difficulties in understanding student characteristics, identifying learning needs, selecting appropriate instructional strategies, and conducting learning evaluations [7]. Teacher competence is also an important component of implementing inclusive education at the elementary school level [8]. These findings suggest that inclusive education policies alone do not guarantee teachers' pedagogical readiness, particularly when teachers must transform information about diverse learners into concrete instructional decisions.

Identifying students with special educational needs should involve information from multiple sources to give teachers a more objective understanding of individual conditions [9]. Identification also serves as an initial stage in recognizing students with special educational needs in inclusive schools [10]. Early identification and assessment are important for supporting inclusive educational services [11]. Thus, student identification should not be understood as an isolated administrative activity, but as the starting point of an instructional decision-making process. Information about students' abilities, potential, needs, barriers, and learning patterns needs to be connected to decisions about how learning is planned, implemented, assessed, and adjusted.

Teachers must translate an understanding of student characteristics into adaptive learning practices. Uniform instructional practices may overlook differences in students' abilities and learning needs. Differentiated instruction can accommodate diverse learning needs in elementary schools [12]. It also represents one way teachers respond to learner diversity [13]. Differentiation and grouping practices can further respond to student heterogeneity in inclusive classrooms [14]. In the Indonesian context, implementing inclusive learning in elementary schools requires adjusting instructional strategies to accommodate students' diverse needs [15]. These findings indicate that adaptive learning translates student identification into instructional decisions, requiring teachers to adjust learning strategies, activities, grouping, and support according to individual learner conditions.

Adaptive learning does not end with selecting instructional methods and media. Teachers also need to use assessment to understand student development and inform subsequent instructional decisions. Diagnostic assessment can provide information regarding students' initial learning conditions [16]. Assessment is an important component of learning for students with special educational needs because assessment information can be used to determine appropriate educational services [17]. Authentic assessment can provide more comprehensive information about student development [18]. The concept of assessment-informed differentiation further illustrates the relationship between assessment information and differentiated instruction [19]. Assessment therefore functions not only as a mechanism for measuring learning outcomes but also as evidence for refining instructional responses to learner diversity. In this sense, assessment connects instructional adaptation with subsequent pedagogical decisions.

Assessment results also need to be translated into follow-up actions that match students' needs. Remedial and enrichment activities constitute forms of follow-up to learning evaluation [20]. Using educational data is important for supporting decision-making in inclusive education [21]. Identification and assessment services involving multiple parties are also important in supporting students with special educational needs [22]. Collaboration between classroom teachers and support teachers helps improve the quality of inclusive learning [23]. Accordingly, teachers' pedagogical competence in inclusive education can be viewed as a continuous and interconnected process: teachers identify and understand student characteristics, translate this understanding into adaptive instruction, gather evidence through assessment, and use the results to determine appropriate follow-up actions. This interconnected process provides a more comprehensive perspective than examining instructional competence, assessment, or student identification as separate pedagogical activities.

Previous studies have examined teacher competence and the implementation of inclusive education, but many have focused on general teacher competence, teacher readiness and attitudes, or broader aspects of inclusive education implementation. A systematic literature review reported that teacher competence is associated with the ability to understand student characteristics, select appropriate instructional strategies, create supportive learning environments, and provide services according to students' needs [24].

Research on teachers' pedagogical competence in inclusive learning has also identified teachers' ability to manage diverse learning needs and adapt learning activities, while noting challenges related to varied teaching methods and instructional modification [25]. Although these studies establish the importance of pedagogical competence in inclusive education, they offer limited empirical explanation of how the different components of competence connect within teachers' actual classroom decision-making. In particular, the existing discussion does not sufficiently clarify how teachers move from identifying and understanding individual learners to adapting instruction, interpreting assessment information, and determining subsequent learning actions as one continuous pedagogical process.

This limitation is the central research gap this study addresses. Rather than treating pedagogical competence as a general teacher attribute or examining its individual components separately,³⁰ this study conceptualizes and examines pedagogical competence as an integrated process for responding to learner diversity in an inclusive classroom. The study focuses on how teachers' understanding of student characteristics becomes the basis for instructional adaptation, how assessment is used to monitor student development, and how assessment information informs subsequent learning follow-up. The Grade V context at State Elementary School Cikampek Utara III provides an empirical setting in which this interconnected process can be examined in an actual elementary inclusive classroom. Thus, this study's originality lies not simply in its specific school context, but in its empirical examination of the continuity among student identification, adaptive learning, assessment, and follow-up as interconnected dimensions of teachers' pedagogical competence.

Based on this conceptual relationship, the present study positions inclusive pedagogical competence as a cyclical instructional process: student identification provides information about learner characteristics; this information informs instructional adaptation; assessment generates evidence about student development and learning; and assessment results guide follow-up actions and further instructional decisions. Examining these components together enables a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers operationalize inclusive principles through everyday pedagogical practices.

Based on this context, this²⁶ study addresses three research questions: (1) How do teachers demonstrate pedagogical competence in understanding the characteristics, abilities, and learning needs of inclusive students in Grade V at State Elementary School Cikampek Utara III? (2)⁷ How do teachers demonstrate pedagogical competence in planning and implementing adaptive learning according to the diverse needs of inclusive students? and (3) How do teachers demonstrate pedagogical competence in conducting assessment and¹⁸ determining learning follow-up according to the individual development and needs of inclusive students?

This study aims to analyze teachers' pedagogical competence in supporting inclusive students in Grade V at State Elementary School Cikampek Utara III, particularly in understanding student characteristics, planning and implementing adaptive learning, conducting assessment, and determining appropriate learning follow-up. The study contributes theoretically by extending the understanding of inclusive pedagogical competence from a set of separate teacher capabilities toward an integrated process of

instructional decision-making. Empirically, it provides a detailed account of how this process is enacted in an elementary inclusive classroom, particularly through the connection between student identification, instructional adaptation, assessment, and follow-up action. Practically, the findings provide insights for teachers and schools in developing adaptive, responsive, and needs-oriented learning services for diverse learners.

2. METHOD

Research Design and Setting

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of teachers' pedagogical competence in supporting inclusive students in an elementary school context. The study was conducted at State Elementary School Cikampek Utara III, Karawang Regency, West Java, during the 2026 academic year. A qualitative case study design was selected because the study examined teachers' pedagogical practices in their natural classroom context and how they responded to the diverse characteristics and learning needs of inclusive students.

Participants and Sampling

The researchers selected participants using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in teaching inclusive students. The subjects consisted of two Grade V homeroom teachers from two classes, namely Class VA and Class VB. The two teachers were selected because they were directly responsible for planning, implementing, assessing, and following up on learning activities involving inclusive students in Grade V. Including two teachers from parallel Grade V classes enabled the study to examine pedagogical practices across two classroom settings within the same school context.

The participants consisted of two Grade V homeroom teachers with direct responsibility for inclusive learning. Both teachers held relevant teaching qualifications and had classroom experience in elementary education. Their teaching experience, previous experience in inclusive education, and participation in inclusive-education training were considered as contextual information during data interpretation. The study did not disclose specific demographic information to maintain participant confidentiality. The number and characteristics of inclusive students in each class were considered as part of the classroom context observed during the study.

The study focused on teachers' pedagogical competence in supporting inclusive students, including their understanding of student characteristics, planning and implementing adaptive learning, assessment, and learning follow-up. These dimensions were examined as interconnected components of pedagogical practice, beginning with teachers' understanding of student characteristics and continuing through instructional adaptation, assessment, and using assessment information to determine subsequent learning actions.

Data Sources and Data Collection

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The three techniques were used complementarily to obtain comprehensive evidence concerning

teachers' pedagogical competence and to compare information obtained from classroom practices, teachers' explanations, and relevant documents.

Observations were conducted directly during the learning process to examine teachers' pedagogical practices in authentic classroom situations, particularly their responses to students' characteristics and learning needs, instructional adaptations, assessment practices, and learning follow-up. The researchers conducted classroom observations during regular learning activities in Class VA and Class VB. The observations focused on four main areas: (1) teachers' understanding and response to student characteristics, (2) planning and implementation of adaptive learning, (3) assessment practices, and (4) learning follow-up. The researchers used an observation guide to organize field notes and document relevant pedagogical practices observed during classroom activities.

The researchers interviewed the two Grade V homeroom teachers to explore their experiences, considerations, and actions in planning and implementing learning. The interviews followed a semi-structured format, allowing the researchers to explore predetermined aspects of pedagogical competence while giving teachers opportunities to explain their experiences and instructional considerations in greater depth. The interview questions addressed teachers' understanding of inclusive students, strategies for adapting instruction, assessment practices, and decisions concerning learning follow-up. The interview data were documented and subsequently organized according to the research focus.

Documentation complemented the data through learning plans, instructional materials, assessment records, student-related documents, and other school-available supporting documents relevant to the implementation of inclusive learning. The researchers examined these documents to provide supporting evidence of teachers' instructional planning, assessment, and learning follow-up. Combining observation, interviews, and documentation enabled the researchers to compare evidence across data sources and strengthen their interpretation of teachers' pedagogical practices. The use of observation, interview, and documentation as data collection techniques is consistent with the qualitative research data collection techniques described in [26]. The combination of observation, interviews, and documentation provided comprehensive data on teachers' pedagogical practices, consistent with data collection techniques commonly used in qualitative research [27]. Using multiple data collection techniques also supported triangulation by allowing information from classroom observations to be compared with interview explanations and documentary evidence.

Research Instruments

In this qualitative study, the researchers served as the primary research instruments. Supporting instruments consisted of an observation guide, a semi-structured interview guide, and a documentation checklist. The observation guide was organized around the study's four main dimensions: understanding student characteristics, adaptive learning, assessment, and learning follow-up. The interview guide explored teachers' experiences, considerations, strategies, and decision-making related to inclusive learning. The documentation checklist identified and organized relevant instructional, assessment, and student-support documents.

Trustworthiness of Data ¹⁵

The trustworthiness of the data was supported primarily through triangulation of data sources and data collection techniques. The researchers compared information from classroom observations with teachers' interview responses and relevant documentation. During data analysis, the researchers examined consistencies and differences among sources to strengthen the credibility of the findings. The researchers also kept systematic field notes and organized the collected evidence according to the research questions and the study's analytical dimensions.

Data Analysis ³

The data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The researchers first reduced data from observations, interviews, and documentation by selecting, organizing, and categorizing information relevant to the research questions. The reduced data were then displayed according to the main dimensions of teachers' pedagogical competence, namely understanding student characteristics, adaptive learning, assessment, and learning follow-up. The researchers examined patterns, similarities, differences, and relationships among the findings from the different data sources. The researchers then concluded by interpreting the identified patterns and comparing the emerging interpretations with the available evidence.

The analysis was conducted interactively, allowing the researchers to revisit and refine interpretations throughout the analytical process. The final analysis focused on explaining how teachers' pedagogical competence was manifested as an interconnected process in which understanding student characteristics informed instructional adaptation, assessment provided information about student development, and assessment results informed subsequent learning follow-up.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations guided the research process to protect participating teachers and the students whose learning activities were observed. Teacher participation was voluntary, and participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study. Information concerning teachers and students was treated confidentially, and individual identities were not disclosed in the presentation of the findings.

²⁸ 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings on teachers' pedagogical competence in supporting inclusive students in Grade V at State Elementary School Cikampek Utara III. The findings are organized into five interconnected themes: (1) understanding student characteristics, (2) adapting learning to students' needs, (3) developing students' potential and participation, (4) assessment and learning follow-up, and (5) the integration of pedagogical competence as a continuous pedagogical decision-making process. The findings were derived from observations, interviews, and documentation and were interpreted by comparing evidence across these data sources.

The findings show that teachers' pedagogical competence in supporting inclusive students in Grade V at State Elementary School Cikampek Utara III is reflected in the interconnected practices of understanding student characteristics, adapting instruction, developing students' potential, conducting assessment, and determining follow-up actions. Data from observations, interviews, and documentation indicate that teachers do not implement learning uniformly. Instead, teachers adjusted instructional practices according to students' conditions, responses, and learning needs. These findings suggest that pedagogical competence in an inclusive context is not limited to preparing learning activities but also involves interpreting information about students and translating it into appropriate instructional decisions throughout the learning process.

3.1. Understanding Student Characteristics as the Basis for Learning

Teachers demonstrated the ability to recognize students' conditions through observation and initial assessment. This understanding covered various aspects of students' learning and development, including academic abilities and learning progress; social and emotional characteristics; communication skills and behavior; interests and potential; difficulties encountered during the learning process; and needs for particular forms of support. Teachers also considered students' observable learning preferences and patterns when providing instructional support, rather than relying exclusively on a single predetermined learning style.

Observation findings showed that teachers attended to students' individual conditions throughout the learning process and used this information when providing support. Teachers monitored students' responses to explanations, questions, assignments, and classroom activities and used these observations to determine whether students needed additional explanation, assistance, or adjustments. Understanding student characteristics also helped teachers determine task difficulty, types of assistance, and appropriate ways to present learning materials.

Interview findings supported the observation data by indicating that teachers considered students' abilities, difficulties, participation, behavior, and learning progress when determining instructional support. The documentation further showed that teachers considered information about students' conditions when implementing classroom learning and assessment. The consistency of evidence across observation, interviews, and documentation indicates that understanding student characteristics was not merely a stated teacher belief but was reflected in classroom practices and instructional decisions.

These findings indicate that understanding student characteristics has a practical function in determining instructional decisions. Teachers not only recognized differences in students' abilities but also responded to them through instructional practices. This finding is consistent with the importance of teacher³⁵ ability to understand student characteristics and learning needs in inclusive schools [7]. A systematic review of teacher competencies for inclusive education similarly emphasizes that teachers need¹⁶ specific competencies to recognize and respond appropriately to the diverse educational needs of students with special educational needs [28].

The key implication of this finding is the transformation of information about students into pedagogical action. Understanding student characteristics does not stop at identifying individual differences; it becomes the basis for determining how learning should be delivered. Pedagogical competence is demonstrated when teachers connect students' individual conditions with instructional decisions implemented in the classroom. Thus, student identification functions as the initial stage of a broader pedagogical process rather than as a separate administrative activity.

3.2. Adapting Learning to Students' Needs

Instructional adaptation was one of the most visible findings in **teachers'** practices. Based on observations and interviews, the forms of instructional adjustment included:

Table 1. Forms of Instructional Adaptation Implemented by Teachers for Inclusive Students

Form of adaptation	Practices identified
Learning methods	Use of varied methods according to students' conditions
Learning media	Pictures, videos, concrete objects, games, and practical activities
Learning materials	Simplification or adjustment of materials according to students' abilities
Instructions	Simple and clear instructions delivered gradually
Tasks	Adjustment of task difficulty and format
Learning time	Flexible time for students who required additional time
Individual support	Individual assistance when students experienced difficulties
Learning environment	Classroom arrangements that enabled students to participate

Observation findings showed that teachers used varied methods, media, instructions, tasks, and individual support during the learning process. The observations also indicated that teachers made instructional adjustments in response to students' participation and learning responses. Interviews similarly revealed the use of pictures, videos, concrete objects, games, practical activities, step-by-step instructions, and flexibility in tasks and learning time. Documentation of learning activities provided additional evidence that instructional planning and learning implementation included adjustments intended to accommodate students' different learning conditions.

The practices observed in Class VA and Class VB showed a broadly similar pattern of instructional adaptation. Both teachers adjusted learning to students' needs, although the specific combination of methods, media, tasks, and supports depended on classroom conditions and students' responses. This similarity indicates a shared pattern of inclusive pedagogical practice within the school, while the differences in implementation reflect the contextual nature of teachers' instructional decisions.

These practices indicate that differentiated learning implemented by teachers does not simply involve assigning different tasks to students. Differentiation is reflected in how students access learning materials, participate in the learning process, complete tasks, receive additional learning time, and obtain support. This understanding aligns with research showing that inclusive teaching often involves differentiation and individualized approaches that allow teachers to respond to students' heterogeneous learning needs rather than applying a uniform instructional approach [29].

This finding aligns with the view that differentiated learning can accommodate students' diverse learning needs [12]. Differentiation also reflects teachers' efforts to respond to differences among students [13]. In inclusive classrooms, instructional adjustments provide a practical way for teachers to address student diversity [14]. The present findings further show that instructional adjustments serve as concrete responses to classroom diversity. Further, research on inclusive teaching practices indicates that differentiation, modification of instruction and learning materials, and individualized student support are important dimensions of inclusive classroom practice [30].

The findings extend these previous perspectives by demonstrating that differentiation in the observed classrooms was multidimensional. It involved not only differences in learning tasks but also changes in methods, media, instructional language, learning time, classroom participation, and individual assistance. Therefore, instructional adaptation in this study reflects teachers' pedagogical competence in translating students' individual needs into classroom practice. Adjustments in methods, media, materials, tasks, time, and support indicate that teachers do not simply implement their initial instructional plans but adjust them according to students' responses throughout the learning process.

3.3. Developing Students' Potential and Participation

Teachers not only supported students experiencing learning difficulties but also created opportunities for them to develop their abilities and potential. The forms of development included identifying students' interests and abilities, providing varied learning experiences, offering opportunities for students to demonstrate both academic and non-academic abilities, providing positive reinforcement, and offering individual support according to their needs. Teachers also involved students in group activities and encouraged active participation in the learning process by asking and answering questions, engaging in discussions, and expressing opinions.

Observation findings indicated that participation opportunities were embedded in regular classroom activities rather than provided only through special activities for inclusive students. Students were encouraged to participate in questioning, answering, group activities, discussions, and other classroom tasks according to their abilities. Teachers assisted when students experienced difficulties while maintaining opportunities for them to participate alongside their peers.

The findings indicate that teachers tried to keep students involved in classroom activities without providing treatment that could make them feel different. The development of potential was not limited to academic achievement but also involved opportunities for students to participate and demonstrate their abilities.

Communication was an important part of this process. Teachers used simple, clear language, gave students opportunities to express difficulties, and used visual aids, direct examples, gestures, and written explanations when needed. Teachers also communicated with parents to obtain information about students' conditions. The interview findings indicated that teachers used communication with parents to obtain additional information about students' learning conditions and to support continuity between information obtained at school and information provided by families.

Evidence from both classrooms indicates that teachers treated participation and communication as components of instructional support rather than activities separate from learning. Teachers attempted to create opportunities for students to engage with peers, communicate their difficulties, and demonstrate their abilities while receiving support when needed.

These findings demonstrate that inclusiveness in learning is not achieved merely through adjustments to learning materials. A sense of safety, opportunities for participation, and acceptance of diversity are also important aspects of teachers' pedagogical practices. Teachers attempted to position students as active participants in learning rather than merely recipients of support. This finding suggests that pedagogical competence in inclusive classrooms includes an interpersonal dimension, in which teachers' instructional decisions are accompanied by communication and participation practices that allow students to engage in learning according to their potential and individual conditions.

3.4. Assessment as the Basis for Learning Follow-Up

The findings show that teachers conducted assessment continuously through observation, questioning, assignments, students' work, performance-based activities, and written assessments adjusted to students' abilities. Teachers used diagnostic assessment to identify students' initial abilities and as a basis for planning instruction. Teachers also conducted formative assessments throughout the learning process and adjusted assessment practices to meet the needs of inclusive students.

Observation findings showed that assessment was embedded within classroom learning activities rather than being limited to formal assessment periods. Teachers observed student performance, asked questions, examined completed tasks, and considered students' responses during learning. Interviews indicated that teachers used these sources of information to identify students' difficulties and monitor learning progress. Documentation of assessment activities further supported the use of multiple assessment forms to gather information about student development.

Teachers did not use assessment results merely as information about students' achievement. Teachers used them to determine remedial activities, enrichment, individual support, adjustments to task difficulty, changes in learning media or methods, and flexibility in learning time. Teachers monitored students' development periodically and communicated it to parents and relevant parties.

The findings demonstrate a direct connection between assessment information and subsequent instructional action. When assessment information indicated that students needed additional assistance, teachers provided further explanation, individual support, task modifications, or additional learning time. When students demonstrated adequate or stronger understanding, teachers provided opportunities for further participation and enrichment. Assessment therefore functioned as a source of information for subsequent pedagogical decisions rather than solely as a mechanism for recording achievement.

This finding matters because it shows that assessment is an integral part of the instructional decision-making cycle. Teachers use assessment information to understand students' conditions and adjust subsequent instructional actions accordingly. This pattern

aligns with assessment-informed differentiation, which emphasizes using assessment information to adapt instruction to students' needs [19]. The finding also supports the view that assessment plays an important role in determining appropriate educational services for students with special educational needs [17].

Therefore, teachers' pedagogical competence in this study is not reflected solely in their ability to conduct assessment. It is more strongly demonstrated through their ability to use assessment results to make instructional decisions. Remedial activities, enrichment, individual support, instructional modification, and flexible learning time are concrete ways teachers use assessment information in learning. Assessment therefore functions as a feedback mechanism that connects information about student development with subsequent instructional responses.

3.5. The Integration of Pedagogical Competence in Inclusive Learning Practices

Viewed as a whole, the findings reveal a pattern linking understanding students, adapting instruction, conducting assessment, and determining follow-up actions. Teachers first identified students' characteristics and needs, then adjusted strategies, media, materials, tasks, learning time, and support. Teachers monitored the learning process through assessment and used results to determine subsequent instructional actions. This pattern demonstrates a relationship between teachers' understanding of students and the decisions made throughout the learning process.

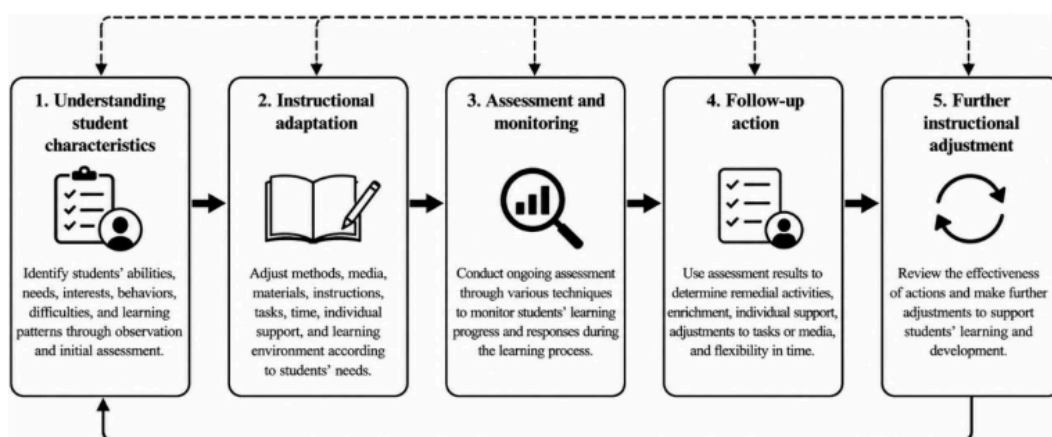


Figure 1. Integrated Process of Teachers' Pedagogical Competence in Inclusive Learning

Figure 1 summarizes the central pattern identified across observations, interviews, and documentation. Student identification provides information for instructional adaptation; instructional adaptation creates opportunities for monitoring student development; assessment generates information for follow-up; and follow-up actions provide a basis for further instructional adjustment. The process is therefore iterative rather than strictly linear.

This pattern suggests that pedagogical competence in inclusive education is cyclical and contextual. Teachers do not simply plan learning and implement it as planned; they continuously observe students' conditions and make adjustments. This finding broadens the understanding of pedagogical competence because teachers' competence cannot be

adequately assessed solely through instructional planning. More importantly, competence is reflected in how teachers use information about students to respond to needs that emerge during the learning process.

The findings from the two Grade V classrooms demonstrate a shared pattern while also showing that pedagogical decisions are context-dependent. Both teachers demonstrated efforts to understand students, adapt instruction, monitor learning, and provide follow-up. However, students' individual conditions and classroom situations shaped their specific instructional responses. This indicates that inclusive pedagogical competence cannot be reduced to a fixed set of instructional techniques; it involves teachers' capacity to select and modify appropriate responses according to the conditions encountered in practice.

Academically, this study contributes to the discussion of teachers' pedagogical competence in inclusive education by showing that such competence operates as a series of pedagogical decision-making processes rather than a collection of separate abilities. Understanding student characteristics forms the basis for instructional adaptation; adaptation creates more appropriate learning experiences; assessment provides information about student development; and assessment results inform follow-up actions. This relationship indicates that the quality of inclusive learning depends greatly on teachers' ability to connect these stages consistently.

The main contribution of this study is therefore the empirical identification of pedagogical competence as an interconnected decision-making process in an inclusive elementary classroom. Rather than treating student identification, differentiated instruction, assessment, and follow-up as separate competencies, the findings demonstrate that each component provides information that informs the next pedagogical decision. This process-oriented interpretation strengthens understanding of how inclusive education translates into everyday classroom practice.

The findings also demonstrate that inclusive learning at the classroom level is not determined solely by the presence of students with diverse needs or by school policies. The meaningful implementation of inclusion is reflected in teachers' actions to provide access to learning, create opportunities for participation, adjust instruction, respect individual development, and use assessment results to determine subsequent support. Thus, pedagogical competence becomes an important mechanism for translating the principles of inclusive education into everyday classroom practice.

Parent involvement also emerged as a supporting element in understanding students' conditions. Teachers communicated with parents to obtain additional information concerning students and their development. This practice suggests that inclusive pedagogical competence extends beyond classroom interaction because information from families can complement teachers' observations and support a more comprehensive understanding of students. However, the extent of parental involvement should be interpreted within the specific context of the school and the practices documented during the study.

At the same time, the findings suggest that implementing inclusive learning requires teachers to make continuous pedagogical adjustments rather than relying solely on predetermined instructional plans. The need to adjust methods, materials, tasks, time, and individual support illustrates that inclusive teaching involves ongoing negotiation between

curriculum expectations and students' individual learning conditions. This contextual dimension is important because the effectiveness of inclusive pedagogical practices depends not only on teachers' knowledge but also on their ability to respond flexibly to classroom realities.

Overall, this study demonstrates that teachers' pedagogical competence in an inclusive context is adaptive, continuous, contextual, and needs-based. Its central pattern can be summarized as understanding students → instructional adaptation → assessment → follow-up action → further instructional adjustment. The success of inclusive learning therefore depends not only on initial planning but also on teachers' ability to continuously interpret students' development and respond with appropriate pedagogical decisions.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined teachers' pedagogical competence in supporting inclusive students in Grade V at State Elementary School Cikampek Utara III. The findings show that pedagogical competence operates as an interconnected and continuous process involving student identification, instructional adaptation, assessment, and learning follow-up. Teachers used information about students' abilities, needs, participation, and learning progress to adjust methods, media, tasks, learning time, and individual support. Assessment was used not only to measure learning outcomes but also to determine remedial activities, enrichment, additional support, and further instructional adjustments.

The main contribution of this study is the identification of pedagogical competence as a cyclical, adaptive, contextual, and needs-based process: student identification → instructional adaptation → assessment → follow-up action → further instructional adjustment. This perspective shows how inclusive education principles translate into everyday classroom practice, and the findings should be understood as a contextual interpretation rather than a basis for broad generalization.

Practically, schools should strengthen inclusive pedagogy through training in differentiated and diagnostic assessment, collaborative planning, special education consultation, and structured teacher reflection. The study is limited by its two-teacher sample, single-school setting, potential observer effects, reliance mainly on teacher perspectives, absence of systematic student and parent perspectives, and limited description of inclusive student profiles. Future research should involve students, parents, special assistant teachers, and school leaders and compare multiple schools to examine whether the identified cyclical process remains consistent across different inclusive education contexts.

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