



## **Learning Strategies In Improving The Independence Of Blind Children**

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### **Abstract**

Anak Tuna Runggu menjadi perhatian penting, terutama di masa usia dini untuk memberikan pembelajaran kemandirian yang nanti kedepan, mereka terbiasa mandiri tanpa bantuan orang lain. Tujuan penelitian untuk mengidentifikasi dan mendeskripsikan strategi pembelajaran yang efektif dalam meningkatkan kemandirian anak tunanetra di Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) Bukesra Banda Aceh. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara terhadap guru pendamping dan observasi kegiatan belajar mengajar. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi utama yang diterapkan meliputi metode ekspositorik untuk penyampaian materi secara terstruktur, metode heuristik untuk menumbuhkan pemikiran mandiri dan kritis, serta pendekatan team teaching yang memungkinkan bimbingan lebih personal. Selain itu, sekolah menggunakan media audio seperti audio book sebagai alat bantu visual alternatif, kegiatan ice breaking untuk meningkatkan fokus belajar, serta pemberian penghargaan sebagai bentuk penguatan positif untuk membangun motivasi dan partisipasi sosial anak. Kurikulum disesuaikan dengan kemampuan masing-masing siswa guna menciptakan pembelajaran yang inklusif dan adaptif. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa strategi pembelajaran yang terintegrasi dan responsif secara signifikan mendukung perkembangan kemandirian akademik dan sosial anak tunanetra, yang terlihat dari meningkatnya inisiatif, kepercayaan diri, dan partisipasi aktif mereka dalam proses belajar.

Kata kunci: Anak Tunanetra, Strategi Pembelajaran, Kemandirian, Ekspositori, Heuristik, Team Teaching

### **Abstract**

Deaf children are an essential concern, especially at an early age, to provide independent learning that will be beneficial in the future, as they are accustomed to being independent without the help of others. The purpose of the study was to identify and describe effective learning strategies in improving the independence of blind children in special schools (SLB), Bukesra Banda Aceh. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, data collected through interviews with teachers and observation of teaching and learning activities. The results showed that the main strategies implemented include expository methods for the delivery of material in a structured manner, heuristic methods to foster independent and critical thinking, as well as a team teaching approach that allows more personalized guidance. In addition, schools use audio media such as audiobooks as alternative visual aids, ice-breaking activities to increase learning focus, and giving awards as a form of positive reinforcement to build motivation and social participation of children. The curriculum is tailored to each student's ability to create inclusive and adaptive learning. The findings of this study indicate that integrated and responsive learning strategies significantly support the development of academic and social independence of children with visual impairments, which can be seen from their increased initiative, confidence, and active participation in the learning process.


Keywords: Visually Impaired Children, Learning Strategies, Independence, Expository, Heuristic


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## INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is an important foundation for shaping the character, skills, and independence of children in the future, pthere is this stage, children begin to develop social, emotional, cognitive, and physical abilities as a whole. Anak-anak yang berkebutuhan khusus, seperti anak tunanetra, yang memiliki hambatan dalam penglihatan, proses pendidikan memerlukan pendekatan yang lebih spesifik dan terstruktur supaya anak bisa berkembang secara optimal sesuai dengan potensi yang dimilikinya (Lubis et al., 2025).

Children with special needs are different from ordinary children because they face challenges in the learning and growth process. They need educational services that meet the learning needs of all children (Apriani et a, 2021; Fakhiratunnisa, Pitaloka, & Ningrum, 2022). Children with special needs need special advice, certainly different from other normal children, teaching bells, and many other issues; they have different needs, so they should get special advice and support according to the learning needs of each child. Children with special needs can be divided into two main groups. The first group is children who have special needs permanently due to certain disorders from birth. The second group is children who have temporary special needs, which are caused by conditions within themselves or their surrounding environment (Frans Laka Lazar, 2020).

Children with special needs are defined as children who need special Education and services to optimize their human potential, to meet their needs. Children with special needs have special needs when they are young (Eka Daryati & Suryadi, 2022; Mardi Fitri, 2021). Special needs children need help in the form of Education, Social Services, guidance, and consulting services, as well as various other types of specific services (Fakhiratunnisa et al., 2022).

Early childhood Education is one of the important pillars to realize comprehensive human development. Anak-anak mempunyai hak yang sama untuk berkembang dan mendapatkan pendidikan yang layak, berkualitas, dan sesuai dengan potensi serta kebutuhan individualnya (Farida & Mulyani, 2024). Blind children are children with special needs who are totally or partially visually impaired, which has a direct impact on the way they receive, process, and disseminate information during learning activities (Anggryani et al, 2022). These conditions make blind children need a different learning approach, which is not only informative but also transformative, encouraging independence in everyday life (Khairuddin, 2020).

Independence in children of age is an attempt to move away from parents so that the child can find himself through the search for ego-identity, which is a process of development towards a stable and independent individuality (Sari & Rasyidah, 2019). Children with special needs in early

childhood need to apply independence, which is reflected in the ability to perform daily activities independently, such as eating, dressing, making simple decisions, and verbally conveying wishes (Eka Daryati et al, 2024; Susanti, 2020). This process is important because it is the foundation for the formation of a child's sense of self-confidence and responsibility.

A visually impaired child requires a more adaptive and purposeful approach to learning in order to develop their independence. Physical or sensory barriers that children have can limit their ability to explore the environment and establish social interactions, causing greater dependence on others (Fransisca et al, 2023). The situation requires teachers to implement appropriate learning strategies to help children build the ability to think independently, complete tasks independently, and increase confidence in interacting with the surrounding environment. Independence in children with special needs is an indicator of educational success as well as an important provision for optimal daily life.

Independence is one of the important aspects for the development of a blind child. Kemandirian bukan hanya mencakup kemampuan untuk mengurus diri sendiri secara fisik, tetapi juga mencakup kemampuan mengambil keputusan, memecahkan masalah, serta menjalani kehidupan sosial secara aktif dan bermakna (Pareda et al, 2024; Zuroidah, 2022). The role of learning strategies becomes very crucial because the right strategy will help blind children develop their maximum potential, as well as form confidence to live independently in various situations.

Early childhood teaching is carried out in schools through learning activities, mentoring, and exercises aimed at preparing children to be able to play their role well in various environments in the future. Perkembangan manusia secara wajar juga harus mempertimbangkan aspek individualitasnya, yaitu bahwa setiap siswa merupakan entitas fisik dan mental secara utuh yang memiliki kemampuan serta karakteristik unik, keunikan ini perlu ditumbuhkan secara maksimal melalui Pendidikan (Salum et al, 2025).

Independent learning can support the student's learning process through a series of events that are arranged and designed to support and influence the ongoing learning process that is internal. Learning objectives mean providing the skills that students need to have after they complete the learning process (Sanjani, 2021).

Independent learning has various elements, such as student goals, facilities, content, media, and tools, as well as steps that must be prepared. In addition, classroom learning also has a meaning in which processes in an individual's environment are consciously regulated to allow students to participate in behavior in specific situations or respond to specific conditions (Eka Daryati & Suryadi, 2022).

The independence of children with special needs, especially blind children in Banda Aceh, still needs to be improved. This can be seen from the continued dependence on completing learning and social activities, which is caused by physical limitations and a lack of fully adaptive learning strategies. More targeted and consistent educational interventions are needed to foster the independent abilities of these children, both in academic aspects and in everyday life.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study method. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand in depth complex social phenomena, such as learning strategies for children with visual impairments. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan untuk memahami makna yang terkandung di balik perilaku manusia dalam konteks sosial tertentu, serta menggambarkan realitas secara holistik dan kontekstual (Kusumastuti & ahmad mustamil khoiron, 2019).

### **Types of Research**

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case Study Method. This study focuses on teaching techniques that can contribute to the independence of blind children in SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh.

### **Time and place of research**

This research was conducted at SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh in March 2025.

### **Research Objectives**

The subjects studied were determined by using purposive sampling, namely students who are studying in the Bukesra Banda Aceh SLB who are aged 6 years and have disabilities, as well as educators who teach in the Bukesra Banda Aceh SLB..

### **Data collection techniques and instrument development**

Data collection techniques used in this study include interview techniques with one of the teachers in SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh, and observation of teaching and learning activities to obtain the necessary information.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

This study uses data analysis techniques based on the interactive analysis model developed by Miles and Huberman. This Model includes three main stages that are interconnected and carried out continuously throughout the research process. The three stages include the process of data reduction and data presentation.

## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

### RESULTS

This study was conducted to determine the learning strategies used in improving the independence of blind children in SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh. Based on an interview conducted with one of the accompanying teachers, it was found that the school uses various strategies that are adaptive, responsive, and adapted to the characteristics of blind learners. These strategies include the use of audio media such as audiobooks, the application of expository methods, and heuristics in delivering material, as well as collaborative learning approaches through team teaching.

One of the initial strategies implemented is the ice-breaking activities carried out by teachers every day before starting learning. This activity is carried out in the form of Songs, Rhythmic applause for approximately 7-10 minutes, followed by light conversation to build focus and concentration in children. This strategy encourages children to be more confident in interacting and playing with friends, which is very important in building social skills and self-confidence early (Wijaya, Hanpia, & Amalia Adriana, 2024). The teacher explained that ice breaking also makes the learning atmosphere more positive, fun, and Interactive, which is an important principle in early childhood education, especially for learners with special needs.

The following strategy is the use of audio-based learning media. During the learning process, the guru uses devices such as audiobooks, voice recordings, and other hearing aids as a substitute for visual material. This medium allows learners to receive information through the auditory sensory channel that they predominantly use. For example, in literacy learning, teachers read stories while inviting students to respond and imitate simple sentences. In other subjects, such as basic mathematics, teachers use textured concrete objects that students can touch to understand number concepts and simple counting operations.

It was also found that the teacher applied the expository method to explain the material in a direct and structured way. Students listen to the explanation orally accompanied by tactile props such as textured boards, beads, or blocks of numbers. In addition, the heuristic method is also used by allowing students to ask questions, discuss, and draw their conclusions based on the material that has been heard or felt.

Learning activities are also organized collaboratively using the team teaching approach, which is collaboration between class teachers and accompanying teachers. The class teacher is in charge of delivering the primary material, while the accompanying teacher accompanies the blind students in understanding and adapting the material to their needs. Accompanying teachers also

provide additional services such as personal guidance and self-training, both during and after the lesson. Positive reinforcement in the form of praise, award stickers, or small gifts is also given to students who show independence, such as daring to ask questions, completing tasks on their own, or helping friends.

This form of reward has been shown to motivate students to be active and confident, especially in social interactions. One example found was students who were initially passive began to show the initiative to answer teacher questions or tell personal experiences in front of the class after several awards.

## DISCUSSION

According to the term visually impaired, language derived from the combination of the words Tuna and Netra, the natural Indonesian dictionary, the word tuna is defined as not having, do not have, or in a state of injury or damage. Istila netra refers to the ability to see, so the Blind is a term used to describe people who face problems in vision, either totally or partially (Magfiroh, Hanifah, & Nahdah, 2024). In the literature of English, the term visual impairment is also known as "Visual Impairment" and "Sight Loss."

Based on information from the Indonesian Blind Association (Pertuni), the Blind are individuals who experience visual impairment, which includes those who cannot see at all (total blindness) as well as those who still have residual vision but are not able to use it optimally to read 12-point plain text under normal lighting conditions despite using glasses. Some of the factors that result in immaturity are, first, Prenatal. These causes have a very close relationship with hereditary problems and the development of a child while in the womb. Both postnatal, taking place after the birth of the baby, for example, eye injury during labor, due to the impact of tools or complex objects, can lead to eye disease, and others (Sabila et al, 2024).

Children with ketunanetraan have limitations in vision function, so they have difficulty moving and interacting with the surrounding environment. They also face challenges in finding toys and interacting with peers, as well as experiencing obstacles in imitating the activities of their parents in everyday life. Kondisi ini dikhawatirkan dapat mempengaruhi perkembangan, proses belajar, keterampilan sosial, serta perilaku anak (Pahlefi et al, 2024).

The cognitive character of the blind has an effect on development and learning in various ways, and the academic character of the blind not only has an impact on cognitive development but also affects the development of academic skills, especially in aspects of reading and writing. For

example, individuals without visual impairment can write and read without paying attention to the details of The Shape of letters or words.

For a visually impaired child, the activity is a challenge because of the obstacles to visual acuity. This difficulty can usually be slightly resolved through the use of various media or alternative reading and writing aids adapted to the needs of each individual. Social and emotional character is a social behavior generally developed through the observation of habits and social events, which the individual then imitates. The refinement of such behavior is usually carried out through repeated practice and, if necessary, by requesting feedback from the competent authorities.

The general character of behavior in children with visual impairments does not directly cause disorders or behavioral deviations in children, but this condition can affect apparent behavior, such as the emergence of suspicion of others. Loss of vision function has an impact on limitations in receiving visual information when communicating and interacting. In addition, the limitation in relying on the sense of hearing also makes children with visual impairments more easily offended, for example, when joking in social interactions. (Nuwa et al, 2023).

### **Learning Strategies for Blind Children**

#### **Expository and heuristic**

The term expository comes from the word exposition, which means to explain. In learning, expository refers to the way teachers use to convey ideas, as well as other important information to students. The expository method is a method of learning that begins with an explanation, asking questions, and an assignment. Its application is that students are expected to follow the teacher's directions carefully. This method aims to convey the contents of the lesson directly to learners (Puspitasari, 2023).

Heuristic learning is a learning strategy that encourages students to be active by demanding that they find and understand for themselves the various problems posed by teachers, based on knowledge and experience that they have acquired. This strategy is one of the alternatives that teachers can choose in the learning process (Trisilaningsih, 2019). Heuristic approach aims to create a learning environment that is useful, effective, and efficient, where students feel happy in learning and establish communication between students and teachers as well as between fellow students.

Learning is comfortable and dynamic, and student achievement is expected to increase optimally. Heuristic strategy is a learning approach whose main focus is to enable students in the learning process to develop their intellectual thinking skills. In another sense, a heuristic learning strategy is defined as a series of learning activities that emphasise the importance of critical and analytical thinking in order to find answers to the problems posed (Nur'aini, 2022).



Expository learning strategies have important benefits for children with visual impairments, especially in helping them understand the subject matter in a clear and structured way. Through the method of lectures, demonstrations, and questions and answers, teachers can convey important information without relying on visual media, making it easier for blind children to follow the course of learning. In addition, the expository approach allows teachers to provide a solid knowledge base directly, thus accelerating the process of understanding new concepts without requiring much adaptation to the visual limitations of students ([Supriyadi et al, 2023](#)).

Heuristic learning strategies also provide significant benefits for visually impaired children. With this approach, children are invited to think actively, critically, and independently in finding answers to given problems. Heuristic learning encourages blind children to optimize the use of senses other than sight, as well as relate previous knowledge and experience to new material. In addition to improving analytical thinking skills, this strategy also builds children's self-confidence and learning motivation, as they are directly involved in the learning process.

### **Team Teaching Learning Strategy**

Team teaching or collaborative teaching is a method of learning in which two or more teachers work together in managing the class, starting from the planning phase, implementation, and ending with the evaluation of learning for the same group of students. This teaching is usually applied to learners who have differences in interest, ability, or grade level. In its application, more than one facilitator is actively involved in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Through this collaboration, teachers can evaluate and correct deficiencies based on learning outcomes.

Team teaching involves joint planning, collaborative delivery of materials, and collective evaluation, remediation, and enrichment. This cooperation is supported by a precise distribution of roles and responsibilities, so that it is expected to result in the achievement of learning objectives that are more effective than individual teaching. This method will work optimally if the team members consist of two or more teachers with equivalent qualifications ([Febianti, 2022](#)).

The Team Teaching method is very useful in learning for blind children because it allows cooperation between several teachers with different skills to meet the special needs of students more optimally. The presence of more than one teacher provides opportunities for blind children to receive more individual attention, both in academic and social aspects. In the context of early childhood education, this approach is very supportive because early childhood, especially those with special needs, requires intensive, consistent, and personalized guidance.

Teachers can focus on delivering material in general, while other teachers provide specific guidance using appropriate methods and tools, such as audiobooks. This collaboration not only helps



in the achievement of learning goals but also creates a safe and comfortable learning environment, which is very important in the early development phase of the child. This strategy also reflects the importance of cooperation in building a rich, comprehensive, and integrated learning experience. This is a key principle in Early Childhood Education that is oriented to the needs and potential of each child.

The results of this study indicate that the learning strategy implemented in SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh is very concerned with the principles of inclusivity, differentiation, and responsiveness to the needs of children with visual impairments. The use of audio media as a substitute for visual media is a very important form of adaptation for Blind Children. According to [Magfiroh et al. \(2024\)](#), blind children experience obstacles in receiving visual-based information, so audio media becomes the main path for them in acquiring knowledge. Media such as audiobooks and voice recordings help students access study materials more easily.

The application of expository and heuristic methods shows that teachers combine learning strategies oriented to providing direct information while encouraging students to think actively and independently. According to [Puspitasari \(2023\)](#), expository methods are very effective in conveying basic information clearly and quickly. Meanwhile, the heuristic approach as proposed by [Trisilaningsih \(2019\)](#) encourages students to develop critical thinking skills through exploration and discussion, which is important for building independence.

Strategi Team teaching strategy implemented in SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh is following the needs of children with special needs. Collaboration between classroom teachers and co-teachers creates a more coordinated and supportive learning environment. This is reinforced by [Febianti \(2022\)](#), WHO states that team teaching allows the provision of more personalized and effective learning services for students with different needs, including blind children.

Giving positive reinforcement through rewards is proven to increase student motivation in learning and interacting. This strategy is consistent with Skinner's learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of positive reinforcement in shaping desired behavior. In the context of Blind Children, rewards such as praise or small gifts can be important drivers for increasing their participation and confidence ([Lu & Ana Hamu, 2022](#))

The customized curriculum also reflects the principle of child-centered learning, which is an important cornerstone in early childhood education. With curriculum adjustments, teachers ensure that every child gets the same opportunity to develop according to his or her abilities. This is also supported by [Farida & Mulyani \(2024\)](#), who emphasize that inclusivity in education must start from the preparation of a curriculum that is adaptive to the needs of learners.

Overall, the learning strategies implemented in SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh show that the independence of blind children can be significantly improved through the right approach. The application of adapted methods, Adaptive Learning media, teacher cooperation, and a supportive learning environment can facilitate children with visual impairments to develop academically and socially. These strategies are not only effective in building the independence of blind children, but also can be an inclusive and humanistic learning model in other educational units.

Each strategy, ranging from the use of audio media, the application of expository and heuristic methods, to the team teaching approach, is elaborated based on observations and interviews with educators in SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh. The explanation not only describes the process of implementing the strategy but also shows the positive impact obtained by students after the strategy is implemented, such as increased self-confidence, the ability to complete tasks independently, as well as active participation in learning and social activities.

The results of this study were examined by comparing them with the results of previous studies. The results indicate the suitability of the strategy implemented in SLB Bukesra with the approach recommended by the previous researchers. For example, [Magfiroh et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasized the importance of the use of audio media in the learning of blind children to overcome visual limitations. [Puspitasari \(2023\)](#) shows that expository methods are effective for conveying material clearly and directly, while [Trisilaningsih \(2019\)](#) states that heuristic methods have the potential to foster critical thinking skills and independence in students. Thus, the findings in this study reinforce the evidence that personalized, collaborative, and experiential learning strategies are highly effective for increasing the independence of children with visual impairments.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study reveal that the learning approach used in SLB Bukesra Banda Aceh focuses on an adaptive and responsive approach to the special needs of Blind Children. The application of this strategy includes the use of expository methods that allow conveying information in a clear and structured manner. In addition, teachers also use heuristic methods that aim to encourage students to develop independence in critical and analytical thinking. Learning strategies are also complemented by the implementation of team teaching, which provides opportunities for students to receive guidance in a more individual and optimal way. Learning support is also provided through the use of audio media, such as audiobooks, icebreakers designed to overcome the visual limitations of blind students.

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