

Teaching Visually Impaired Students: Challenges and Coping of EFL Teachers in a Saudi University

Kholoud Alahmadi (Corresponding Author) *

English Language Institution (ELI), King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Dr. Khadija Alamoudi

English Language Institution (ELI), King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Received: October 25, 2025 Accepted: November 10, 2025 Published: November 16, 2025

doi:10.5296/ijele.v13i2.23343 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v13i2.23343>

Abstract

Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to visually impaired students (VIS) in higher education presents unique pedagogical and emotional challenges. Although VIS enrollment in Saudi universities is rising, little is known about how EFL teachers navigate these demands. This qualitative, exploratory study, guided by an interpretivist paradigm, examined the experiences of three female EFL teachers at a Saudi university. It sought to understand the challenges they face and the coping mechanisms they develop in response. Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion and were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis. Findings revealed that the participant teachers face significant and interconnected challenges spanning personal, emotional, and instructional burdens, alongside systemic barriers such as inaccessible curricula and limited institutional support. Despite these constraints, participants demonstrated resilience and adaptability, drawing on collaborative efforts to sustain practice. The analysis also revealed a persistent disconnect between institutional policy and classroom realities, suggesting the need for targeted professional development, improved resource allocation, and structural reform. The study offers practical insights into supporting EFL teachers working with VIS and contributes to the broader discourse on disability and language education.

Keywords: EFL teachers, visually impaired students, challenges, coping strategies, teacher resilience, Saudi higher education

1. Introduction

EFL instruction is fundamentally an adaptive practice, where effective teaching depends on the teacher's ability to adjust to learners' needs. (Lintangsari & Emaliana, 2020). This demand is intensified when working with visually impaired students (VIS), whose diverse learning profiles require significant curricular and methodological modifications (Boltenkova et al., 2020). The World Health Organization (2019) classifies visual impairment (VI) into four levels—mild, moderate, severe, and blindness—based on functional vision. For the present research, VIS can be defined as learners with a "*visual restriction of sufficient severity that interferes with normal progress in a regular educational program without some modification*" (Scholl, 1986, p. 29), a definition that foregrounds practical classroom implications rather than medical categorization.

In Saudi Arabia, cultural and religious values significantly influence perceptions of disability. Islam frames disability as part of human diversity, emphasizing compassion, equality, and social responsibility (Elkhereiji, 2019). The narrative of 'Abdullāh ibn Umm Māktūm in Surat 'Abasa further underscores the right of individuals with VI to dignity, respect, and inclusion (*The Qur'an*, 80:1–10; Khattab, 2020). Such moral frameworks have fostered increased enrollment of VIS in Saudi universities (Elkhereiji, 2019; Ajaj, 2022).

Policy statements emphasize the importance of equitable access and propose structural reforms to support students with disabilities (Ministry of Education, n.d.). While these measures have broadened educational opportunities, they have also introduced complex pedagogical challenges for mainstream teachers, particularly those teaching EFL (Elkhereiji, 2019). EFL instruction often relies on visual materials, multimedia resources, and written tasks; elements that create significant access barriers for VIS (Lövi, 2013). As a result, teachers are required to balance language instruction with the demands of curricular adaptation, addressing both the instructional and emotional complexities of ensuring accessibility (Brown & Beamish, 2012).

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

While international research provides valuable insights into the education of VIS (e.g., Boltenkova et al., 2020; Susanto & Nanda, 2020; Lintangsari & Emaliana, 2020), little attention has been paid to EFL teachers' experiences in Saudi universities. Most local studies focus on the perspectives of VIS themselves (e.g., Elshemy & Alzahrani, 2022; Elkhereiji, 2019; Al-Jarf, 2021), overlooking the instructional and emotional realities teachers face. Among the paucities is Khasawneh's (2021); however, his study employed a quantitative design, focusing only on the challenges, thus offering a limited view of teachers' experiences. Therefore, there remains a clear gap in qualitative research exploring how EFL teachers in Saudi higher education navigate both the challenges of teaching VIS and the coping mechanisms they develop in response.

1.2 Research Aims and Questions

This study aims to explore the challenges EFL teachers face in teaching VIS and the strategies they employ to address them. By examining their lived experiences, the study seeks to illuminate how teachers adapt to the academic, emotional, and structural demands of their work.

Specifically, it addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: What challenges do EFL teachers face when teaching visually impaired students?

RQ2: What strategies do EFL teachers employ to cope with these challenges?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the underexplored area of EFL instruction for VIS in Saudi higher education. By focusing on teachers' voices, it adds a rich qualitative perspective to a field often dominated by student-centered or quantitative research. The findings are expected to offer practical insights into adaptive pedagogy, emotional resilience, and collaborative problem-solving within the Saudi context. For practitioners, the study highlights contextually feasible strategies to support VIS learning. For policymakers, it identifies structural gaps that hinder effective practice and calls for systemic professional development and institutional reform.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Learning Profile of VIS

VIS represent a heterogeneous group whose varying degrees of vision require differentiated instructional approaches (Boltenkova et al., 2020; Carpenter, 2020). VIS are inherently auditory learners (Arslantaş, 2017; Boltenkova et al., 2020). They also often demonstrate strong memory and cognitive abilities (Czerwińska & Piskorska, 2018). Consequently, they tend to favor sound-related and mental association strategies for vocabulary acquisition (Wesolowska & Jedynek, 2014). Nonetheless, tactile tools such as Braille remain central for compensating limitations in visual memory (Encalada et al., 2022). Contrary to misconceptions, research shows that VIS can interpret extralinguistic and paralinguistic cues that enrich interaction despite visual constraints (Qiu et al., 2019).

However, the absence of visual feedback restricts their development of expressive non-verbal communication cues, which may intensify their feeling of social isolation (Makarushko & Kokhanover, 2023; Manitsa & Doikou, 2022). Furthermore, abstract language and visually grounded vocabulary can result in verbalism (Başaran, 2012). This phenomenon occurs when VIS use words without fully understanding their sensory meaning, posing challenges for effective instructional adaptation (Rosel et al., 2005).

These learning traits, while offering strengths, present unique demands for EFL teachers teaching VIS.

2.2 Pedagogical and Emotional Challenges

The literature consistently identifies a dual set of challenges — pedagogical and emotional — that affect EFL teachers working with VIS (Villalba, 2022).

2.2.1 Pedagogical Barriers

A major barrier in VIS education is insufficient professional preparation. In their study, Kesiktaş and Akçamete (2011) observed that teachers often struggle to acquire essential

instructional skills during preservice training and fail to apply them effectively in practice. Similarly, Villalba (2022) and Kocyigit and Artar (2015) highlight how inadequate training forces many educators to rely on intuition or the trial-and-error method. As a result, instruction frequently defaults to strategies designed for sighted learners, reducing accessibility and diminishing learning outcomes (Başaran, 2012; Susanto & Nanda, 2020). Cando Guanoluisa et al. (2022) argue that this preparation gap is a root cause of the downstream challenges educators face when teaching VIS.

Curricular inaccessibility further compounds the problem. Traditional educational resources are inherently visual, making them ineffective for VIS unless adapted (Lövi, 2013; Zaki & Khan, 2021). Teachers are frequently expected to manage these adaptations independently, often without proper institutional support (Martínez-Hernández, 2022). This commonly leads to administrative delays in providing essential materials (Lintangsari & Emaliana, 2020; Villalba, 2022).

Accessibility challenges persist in virtual environments, where VIS encounter screen-reader incompatibilities and inaccessible files (Kirboyun Tipi, 2023). These issues are exacerbated by teachers' limited online pedagogical skills, inconsistent practices for accessible content, and inadequate technical support (Bao, 2020). In Saudi Arabia, insufficient training in assistive technologies, inaccessible materials, and assessments further hindered VIS participation in LMS-based courses (Elshemy & Alzahrani, 2022).

Time management is another obstacle, as VIS often require additional time to process content and complete tasks (El Hossary, 2018; Başaran, 2012). However, institutional expectations rarely provide flexibility to adjust pacing, forcing teachers to balance curriculum progression with the demand for individualized support (Marzulina et al., 2021; Polok & Maślanka, 2022; Brown & Beamish, 2012).

The physical environment also affects participation: uncomfortable classroom temperature, smelly classrooms, insufficient air ventilation, mobility problems around campus, and poor acoustics interfere with orientation and concentration (Lindeberg, 2015; Morelle, 2016; Marzulina et al., 2021). Beyond instruction, teachers frequently assume additional roles, serving as advocates, curriculum adapters, and emotional supporters (Çınarbaş, 2022). These additional responsibilities increase workload and professional fatigue (Brown & Beamish, 2012).

2.2.2 Emotional Challenges

Pedagogical challenges are often intertwined with emotional difficulties (Kocyigit & Artar, 2015; Villalba, 2022). Teachers of VIS often report experiencing emotional strain, uncertainty, and reduced self-confidence, often linked to unclear expectations and inadequate training (Pilson, 2022; Kocyigit & Artar, 2015; Martínez-Hernández, 2022). This lack of practical support often results in strong feelings of isolation and frustration, especially when biases are present within professional circles (Villalba, 2022).

Furthermore, many studies show that EFL teachers working with VIS worry about unintentionally discriminating against them through language, behavior, or assumptions, which

can impact learning (Villalba, 2022).

Additionally, teaching students with special needs often involves significant emotional labor (Kasim & Rathakrishnan, 2025; Park & Shin, 2020). Hence, teachers of VIS find it challenging to balance empathy with professional boundaries (Kocyigit & Artar, 2015). While empathy helps build teacher-student rapport (Wang et al., 2022), excessive emotional involvement can indeed burden teachers and lead to emotional fatigue (Samavi et al., 2022), especially in the absence of structured support for teacher emotional well-being (Mansfield et al., 2016).

2.3 Adaptive Practices and Coping

Despite these challenges, the literature identifies a range of adaptive strategies that enable teachers of VIS to cope and support VIS effectively.

2.3.1 Pre Assessment and Ongoing Feedback

Effective instruction typically begins with a pre-assessment that identifies each VIS's strengths, needs, and preferences (Marlina et al., 2023). This baseline allows teachers to differentiate content, pacing, and instructional processes (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010; Suwastini et al., 2021; Ortega et al., 2018). Ongoing dialogue with VIS themselves further refines instruction by allowing teachers to adjust methods based on continuous feedback (Villalba, 2022; Martínez-Hernández, 2022). Carpenter (2020) frames this approach as an initial needs analysis, focusing on evaluating the nature of the VI and available resources, followed by sustained communication to monitor progress and refine supports accordingly.

2.3.2 Enhancing Accessibility

The literature identifies numerous adaptive measures teachers can employ to enhance content accessibility for VIS. In this regard, Martínez-Hernández (2022) distinguishes between adaptations (an umbrella term for all curricular changes), accommodations (changes to delivery pace or access without altering objectives), and modifications (changes that alter objectives or outcomes).

Notably, most instruction adaptations for VIS fall under the category of accommodations (e.g., Martínez-Hernández & Bellés-Fortuño, 2021). This often entails using assistive technologies (Zaki & Khan, 2021), such as Braille devices, screen readers, and accessibility features and software (Al-Jarf, 2021). Studies indicate that accommodations for learning materials can include Braille or large print, combining tactile resources with audio materials and aural practices, changing the font size or contrast, and using editable digital files that work with assistive technologies (Polok & Maślanka, 2022; Setiawan et al., 2022; Leavitt et al., 2018; Kirboyun Tipi, 2023; Çınarbaş, 2022). Teachers can also use structured verbal description to substitute visual input, enabling VIS to build mental representations of the target content (Cox & Dykes, 2001). File format choices also matter; Martínez-Hernández (2022) notes that converting content to editable Word documents is typically more compatible with screen readers than static PDFs.

For virtual instruction, teachers often move tasks to platforms such as Zoom to offer more accessible navigation than conventional LMSs (Mwanza et al., 2023). Finally, allowing extra

time for practice has also been found useful to accommodate VIS language mastery (El Hossary, 2018; Polok & Maślanka, 2022).

2.3.3 Scaffolding

Scaffolding is a highly effective teaching method, though its application in VIS education remains underexplored. Villalba (2022) defines scaffolding as providing contextual support through simplified language, teacher modeling, and cooperative, hands-on learning. In her study, she implemented scaffolding by utilizing translation, explicit descriptions of virtual environments, and leveraging students' residual visual memory. Additionally, she employed affective scaffolding by offering encouragement and fostering a safe environment for making mistakes.

2.3.4 Adapting Learning Environment

Adaptations to the physical and social environment significantly influence VIS participation. Najmee et al. (2025) synthesize physical adaptations as classroom arrangements and visual comfort, providing a framework for practical implementation. Classroom arrangements include assigning seating based on the student's stronger eye, arranging chairs in a U-shape for better verbal interaction, minimizing barriers in walking paths, and maintaining consistent spatial cues through teacher movement or tactile markers (Najmee et al., 2025; Çınarbaş, 2022; Lintang Sari & Emaliana, 2020). Visual comfort entails lighting adjustments that minimize glare and support residual vision (Najmee et al., 2025).

Socio-emotional factors are equally important. They are shaped through empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect, which not only enhance VIS motivation but also foster a sense of belonging (Ajaj, 2022; Manitsa & Doikou, 2020). Integrating cooperative language teaching via non-competitive peer and team tasks further develops social skills and strengthens positive classroom bonds (Jedynak, 2023).

2.4 Support Systems for Coping

The literature identifies key support systems that enable sustainable practice, including institutional support, teacher resilience, and collaborative networks.

2.4.1 Institutional Support

Sustainable practice depends on both teacher expertise and institutional support. Research consistently advocates for comprehensive professional development in VI-specific pedagogy (Setiawan et al., 2020), material adaptation (Marzulina et al., 2021), and inclusive practices (Lintang Sari & Emaliana, 2020). Furthermore, given the centrality of technology in VIS instruction, institutions must provide funded access to digital tools (Wong & Cohen, 2016) and offer in-service training on both the technical and pedagogical application of assistive technology (Al-Jarf, 2021).

2.4.2 Teacher Resilience

Resilience, defined as the capacity to thrive rather than merely survive under adversity (Mansfield et al., 2016), emerges as a decisive personal resource. In the Saudi context, Mitawie

(2020) demonstrated that resilience among VIS educators correlates with higher levels of occupational self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Resilience stems from internal factors, such as belief systems, religiosity, and spirituality, which provide meaning (Schwalm et al., 2021) and can be enhanced through mindfulness-based strategies (Jennings et al., 2013). Equally significant is external support, including collegial relationships, effective leadership, and professional development (Mansfield et al., 2016; Kasim & Rathakrishnan, 2025). Ebersöhn's (2012) Relationship-Resourced Resilience (RRR) emphasizes that resilience grows when teachers "flock" together to mobilize resources, making relationships central to adaptation.

2.4.3 Collaborative Networks

Collaborative networks often fill gaps where formal provisions fall short (Wenger, 1999; Ebersöhn, 2012). This often takes the form of what Wenger (1999) calls Communities of Practice (CoPs), in which teachers come together around shared goals, sustained interaction, and collective problem-solving. Foley and Masingila's (2015) study offers a striking example of a WhatsApp-based CoP where teachers of VIS exchanged resources, solved problems, and offered emotional support, improving teaching practices despite limited infrastructure. Other studies similarly confirm that collaboration enhances teacher confidence and competence, fosters shared responsibility, and promotes the exchange of best practices between special education and regular teachers (Douglas et al., 2015; Khairuddin et al., 2016; Ramos & Andrade, 2014).

In summary, the literature reviewed above portrays a complex interplay of pedagogical and emotional challenges, adaptive strategies, and systemic support in teaching VIS. While these studies provide valuable insights, a dearth of literature remains regarding how these dynamics unfold within the Saudi higher education context, where cultural and institutional conditions create distinct challenges and opportunities. Addressing this gap offers not only the potential to inform local educational policy but also to contribute to broader international debates on VIS EFL pedagogy.

The following section outlines the theoretical framework underpinning this study.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts a multi-theoretical lens—Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and Critical Disability Theory (CDT)—to interpret the challenges EFL teachers face and the coping strategies they employ when teaching VIS in a Saudi university context. These frameworks were identified iteratively during early analysis to align with emerging themes and to capture the psychological, pedagogical, and socio-structural dimensions of participants' reported experiences.

2.5.1 SCT

At the core of this framework, Bandura's (1999) SCT provides the foundational lens through its model of Triadic Reciprocal Causation. Within this model, human behavior is viewed as a dynamic interaction among personal (beliefs, attitudes, values), behavioral (actions, skills), and environmental (resources, structures, opportunities) factors. Central to SCT is the concept of

‘agency’, individuals’ capacity to act intentionally and influence their circumstances, alongside ‘coping efficacy’, the belief in one’s ability to manage and overcome challenging situations (Bandura, 1999).

In this context, personal determinants (beliefs, resilience, and culturally shaped values) interact with socio-structural conditions (resources, administrative expectations, and campus norms) to shape agency and adaptive practice. SCT therefore provides an interpretive anchor for understanding how teachers navigate emotional and pedagogical demands and sustain coping over time.

2.5.2 UDL

Complementing SCT, UDL provides a pedagogical perspective on coping and adaptation. Developed by CAST (2024), UDL promotes proactive curriculum design that accommodates diverse learners through multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression. Its principles—recently refined in the UDL Guidelines 3.0 (CAST, 2024)—emphasize removing barriers embedded in learning environments.

In this study, UDL helps explain how teachers address accessibility challenges by rethinking lesson delivery, materials, and classroom management to align with VIS learners’ sensory and cognitive profiles. In this study’s context, although VIS are taught in segregated settings, they follow the same curriculum as their sighted peers, underscoring the need for UDL to ensure equitable access and adaptable instructional methods.

2.5.3 CDT

CDT provides the socio-political dimension, situating teachers’ challenges within broader institutional and cultural systems. CDT challenges the medical model of disability, framing it as a social construct shaped by policy, institutional design, and prevailing notions of normality (Hosking, 2008; Goodley, 2014). From this perspective, many teacher “challenges” are reinterpreted as structural inequities rather than personal shortcomings. Bringing CDT into dialogue with SCT and UDL clarifies how coping efficacy and adaptive pedagogy function as situated responses to ableist conditions and why durable solutions require institutional, not only individual, change.

Together, these three perspectives provide a multi-layered analytical foundation for understanding EFL teachers’ experiences supporting VIS. SCT provides a psychological perspective explaining why teachers act as they do (agency and coping efficacy); UDL offers a pedagogical orientation explaining how teachers adapt instruction and reduce barriers; and CDT interprets what aspects of their challenges are rooted in systemic structures that shape their experiences. To visualize this dynamic, the researcher developed the following model (Figure 1).

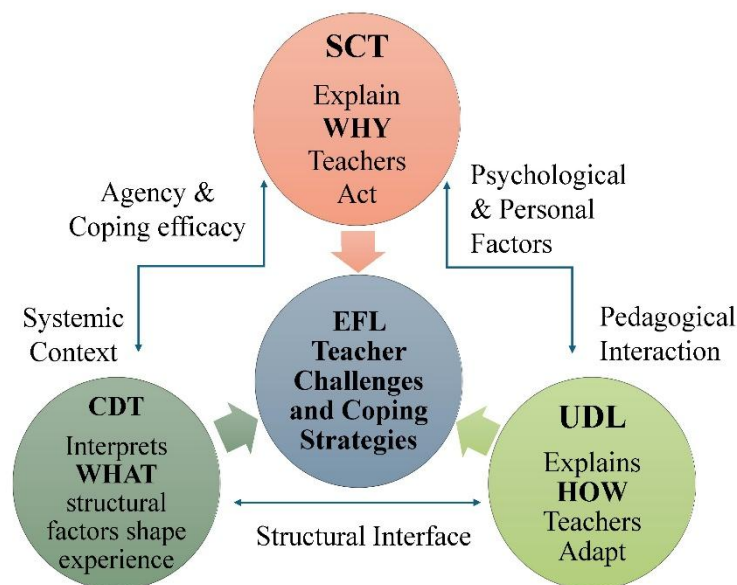


Figure 1. Proposed model for the study's theoretical framework

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted an interpretivist paradigm with an exploratory qualitative design to investigate the experiences of EFL teachers who teach VIS at a Saudi university. Interpretivism assumes that knowledge is multiple and context-dependent, constructed by social interactions and individual perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Hence, this approach enabled a deep exploration of how teachers perceive their roles, challenges, and coping mechanisms within their institutional context. The exploratory qualitative design was particularly appropriate given the limited prior research on EFL instruction for VIS in Saudi higher education (Creswell, 2014; Dörnyei, 2007).

Data were collected through individual interviews and a focus group discussion, allowing teachers to articulate personal insights while co-constructing shared meanings (Braun & Clerk, 2013). The analysis followed a bottom-up, inductive process that moved from detailed codes to broader themes.

3.2 Participants and Context

The study sample consisted of three female EFL teachers from the English Language Institute at the women's campus of a public university in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Participants were purposively selected based on their substantial experience teaching students with disabilities, particularly VIS, and their active involvement in an institutional committee supporting students

with special educational needs (SEN). A criterion purposive sampling was employed to "*access knowledgeable people...by virtue of their expertise or experience,*" with the primary aim being to "*acquire in-depth information from those who are in a position to give it*" (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 219). The participants had collaborated previously, sharing professional familiarity that further enriched the discussion. To maintain confidentiality, they were assigned codes (T1, T2, T3). Table 1 summarizes their professional details.

Table 1. Participants' professional background

Label	ELT Degree	SEN Cert.	SEN Training	EFL Exp.	VIS Exp.
T1	MA	None	Braille, inclusive teaching workshops	35 yrs	11 yrs
T2	BA	None	Braille, inclusive teaching workshops	25 yrs	12yrs
T3	PhD	None	Braille, inclusive teaching workshops	17 yrs	13 yrs

Note. ELT = English Language Teaching; SEN = Special Educational Needs; Cert. = Certificate, Exp. = Experience.

3.3 Research Instruments

3.3.1 Individual Interviews

Individual interviews were conducted to explore participants' perspectives and experiences in depth (Dörnyei, 2007). They were semi-structured and included eight open-ended questions, to allow the researcher to flexibly follow up with spontaneous probes (Braun & Clarke, 2013). An interview topic guide was prepared beforehand to ensure alignment with the research objectives. The three interviews were conversational in tone and lasted approximately 40 minutes each.

3.3.2 Focus Group Discussion

A focus group discussion was used to examine participants' collective experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This method was chosen for its ability to foster interaction and the co-construction of meaning, enabling the exploration of issues that may not surface in individual interviews (Carter et al., 2014). As with interviews, a topic guide with eight open-ended questions was prepared in advance to moderate group interaction. The session lasted 70 minutes.

3.4 Research Procedures

After obtaining official ethical approval from the university's ethics committee, the data collection process commenced. The interview and focus group guides were first developed in alignment with the study's research questions and key themes identified in the relevant literature (Roberts, 2022). Each guide consisted of eight open-ended, topic-focused questions, designed to elicit teachers' experiences, challenges, and coping strategies (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2019). To ensure content validity, the guides underwent peer debriefing, in which an

experienced colleague and the research supervisor helped review and refine the qualitative instruments through discussion and negotiation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Participants were then contacted via WhatsApp and provided with an electronic consent form and a scheduling tool to select convenient times for their individual interviews and the focus group discussion. They also received the guides in advance to allow time for reflection and ensure transparency in data collection as recommended by Roberts (2020).

Data collection was conducted via Zoom and audio-recorded with informed consent. Conducting sessions virtually enhanced accessibility and accommodated participants' schedules without compromising data quality (Braun & Clarke, 2013). All sessions were held in English, the language of instruction at the English Language Institute.

3.5 Data Analysis

The interviews and focus group discussion data were transcribed in a semi-verbatim format, preserving meaning while omitting repetition and off-topic exchanges for clarity (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2013) six-phase model of inductive thematic analysis, which involved (1) immersion in the data for familiarization, (2) generating initial codes, (3) collating related codes to identify candidate themes, (4) reviewing themes against the coded extracts and the full dataset, (5) refining, defining, and naming the final themes, and (6) producing the analytic narrative supported by verbatim quotations.

The analysis was conducted manually in Microsoft Word using color-coding and annotations, a suitable approach given the study's manageable dataset and the focus on maintaining direct, hands-on engagement with the data (Isangula et al., 2024). The process underwent three iterative cycles of discussion with a peer and the research supervisor to ensure consistency, depth of interpretation, and analytic rigor (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3.6 Researcher Positionality and Trustworthiness

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher serves as the primary instrument of data collection and interpretation (Miles & Huberman, 1994, as cited in Dörnyei, 2007). In this study, the researcher—an EFL instructor with prior experience teaching VIS at the same institution—occupied an insider position. This positionality facilitated rapport and contextual understanding but also required ongoing reflexivity to mitigate potential bias (Berger, 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

To ensure rigor, the study drew on the concept of trustworthiness (Stiles, 1993), which Lincoln and Guba (1985) articulated through the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, as parallel to internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity in quantitative research. This research emphasized credibility, dependability, and confirmability.

As for credibility, it was enhanced through member checking, whereby participants were invited to review and verify the preliminary findings to ensure they accurately reflected their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lloyd et al., 2024).

In terms of dependability, an audit trail was maintained documenting all iterative stages of the study, including instrument development, coding, and analysis, thereby promoting a transparent and coherent research process (Dörnyei, 2007; Johnson et al., 2020).

Finally, confirmability was strengthened through reflexive journaling (Olmos-Vega et al., 2022) and regular debriefing sessions with an experienced colleague and the research supervisor (Ahmed, 2024; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). These sessions provided an external check on the analysis; a process Creswell and Poth (2018) compared to “*interrater reliability*” in quantitative research (p. 263).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical safeguards were maintained through institutional approval, informed consent, and participant anonymization. All data were securely stored on a password-protected device, accessible only to the researcher and used exclusively for research purposes. These procedures align with established ethical guidelines for qualitative research (Hosseini & Haukås, 2025).

4. Results and Findings

The findings are presented in accordance with the research questions guiding this study. Thematic analysis revealed four primary themes that address research questions (two for each RQ), with several subthemes further detailing the participants' experiences. To ensure descriptive and analytical clarity, these themes are supported in the narrative with participant quotes and linked to relevant empirical studies on VIS education.

4.1 Findings for the First Research Question

The first research question addressed the challenges EFL teachers face in teaching VIS at the university level. Thematic analysis revealed two overarching themes: (1) teacher-related challenges and (2) system-related Challenges.

4.1.1 Theme 1: Teacher-Related Challenges

This theme includes three subthemes: (a) instructional hurdles, (b) communication dilemmas, and (c) teachers' emotional strains.

a) Instructional Hurdles

The teachers report difficulty conveying abstract, visually grounded concepts (e.g., colors), due to VIS' limited visual experience. T1 explains,

"When it comes to abstract concepts... like the sky is blue... completely blind students have no idea," noting that even Arabic translations failed to clarify meaning.

This challenge strongly aligns with findings on verbalism and the debate on practical adaptations (Başaran, 2012; Rosel et al., 2005).

Online teaching further compounded these challenges. Institutional policies requiring students to keep microphones muted hinder real-time feedback.

"It makes it difficult to gauge students' understanding," says T2.

T1 adds, noting the broader issue of online teaching:

"The inability to use tactile methods and the reliance on voice-only communication pose significant barriers. What if the mics were off?"

These issues echo Foley and Masingila's (2015) findings on the need for adaptable technology logistics that work within institutional constraints while meeting the unique pedagogical needs of VIS.

Learner diversity compounds the task. Classes may include partially sighted and blind students, sometimes with additional disabilities.

"You have different disabilities in one class...visual plus hearing impairment," notes T3.

Teachers must also balance pace and engagement because

"Some students are slow... some are very fast, so they get bored," says T2.

"One student is motivated... her peer is demotivated because her friend is better," adds T1.

Together, these accounts show how heterogeneity in VIS profiles makes differentiation a continual source of strain (Boltenkova et al., 2020; Brown & Beamish, 2012).

b) Communication Dilemmas

Teachers describe the difficulty of gauging students' emotional states without access to visual cues, such as facial expressions or body language.

"With a sighted student, you can read things in her eyes... with VIS, it is difficult," explains T3, noting that the absence of nonverbal feedback makes corrective responses harder to deliver without discouraging learners.

This finding aligns with Makarushko and Kokhanover (2023), who observed that the lack of non-verbal repertoire in visually impaired children—particularly facial expressions, gestures, and posture—delays their development of expressive communication cues and pantomime.

VIS are also described as especially sensitive to vocal tone, requiring teachers to carefully regulate their emotional expression.

"You have to be very careful that your mood doesn't affect your performance," says T2.

Authenticity was viewed as essential:

"If you were faking it, they would sense it," adds T1.

These observations echo findings that VIS are acutely attuned to subtle auditory and paralinguistic cues (Qiu et al., 2019)

Communication difficulties are particularly pronounced among VIS who have recently lost their vision.

"This student lost her eyesight in high school. She was emotionally devastated," recalls T3.

Such learners often need emotional reassurance alongside academic guidance, adding to teachers' communicative and emotional labor.

Overall, this theme underscores the emotional complexity of communication with VIS, where pedagogical clarity and affective sensitivity intertwine to sustain teacher–student rapport (Kocyigit & Artar, 2015; Villalba, 2022).

c) Teachers' Emotional Strain

Teachers describe how the emotional intensity of teaching VIS often leaves them mentally and physically exhausted. T2 shares,

"That turmoil of emotions is going on when you are explaining," while T1 adds,

"When you are emotionally invested, you feel drained, completely drained."

Such accounts mirror reports of emotional fatigue among SEN teachers, including those working with VIS (Brown & Beamish, 2012; Pilson, 2022; Park & Shin, 2020).

Finally, balancing empathy with professionalism emerges as a constant challenge. Teachers reflect on the emotional ambiguity of their roles—whether to treat students primarily as learners or through the lens of their disability. T3 explains,

"There is a thin line between treating a visually impaired learner as a student and as a blind person."

This internal tension underscores the depth of their emotional engagement, echoing findings on the struggle to maintain empathy without emotional exhaustion (Kocyigit & Artar, 2015; Villalba, 2022; Wang et al., 2022; Samavi et al., 2022).

4.1.2 Theme 2: System-Related Challenges

This theme comprises three subthemes: (a) curriculum and materials issues, (b) environmental and structural barriers, and (c) institutional gaps.

a) Curriculum and Materials Issues

Teachers express frustration with curricula that rely heavily on visual content. T3 notes,

"The curriculum is a hundred percent visually based... even instructions depend on pictures and videos."

To accommodate VIS, teachers report modifying the content themselves. T1 explains,

"We have to work around what we have so we can deliver the information during the class."

Prior research similarly indicates that visually dependent curricula marginalize VIS and heighten teacher workload (Martínez-Hernández, 2022; Cando Guanoluisa et al., 2022; Lövi, 2013; Zaki & Khan, 2021).

The sudden withdrawal of institutional support for assistive-technology resources further compounds the issue. T2 recalls,

"VIS used Braille Sense devices to access the adapted curriculum. Then, all of a sudden, they disappeared."

Even when available, digital materials pose accessibility challenges:

"I cannot give the student the book as a PDF. I have to have the full book as a Word document and remove all the pictures," explains T3.

Resource shortages and formatting issues are widely reported across similar contexts (Kirboyun Tipi, 2023; Lintang Sari & Emaliana, 2020; Martínez-Hernández, 2022).

Rigid pacing guides also restrict the flexibility needed to support VIS. T1, explains.

"You should give the VIS some time to digest, but with the current pacing guide, it is tough."

Collectively, these accounts reveal how curricular rigidity and inadequate institutional support force teachers into continuous improvisation (Marzulina et al., 2021; Polok & Maślanka, 2022; Martínez-Hernández, 2022; Başaran, 2012).

b) Environmental and Structural Barriers

The physical environment also poses persistent obstacles. Teachers describe poor acoustic design as especially disruptive for VIS, who rely heavily on auditory input. T2 explains,

"Sometimes the room is really big with a lot of echoes. They are very sensitive to noise... it distracts them."

The need for acoustically appropriate spaces reflects Lindeberg's (2015) findings that room size and student numbers in educational spaces can affect concentration and comprehension for VIS.

Inaccessible classroom infrastructures exacerbate the challenge. T1 notes,

"We don't have classes that are well-equipped for VIS."

Beyond the classroom, the broader campus environment remains similarly unprepared. T3 observes,

"The VIS can't move around unless she can use the white cane. You rarely see a Vis with a white cane. The university is not prepared to receive these students."

Together, these accounts underscore how barriers extend beyond pedagogy, reflecting infrastructural neglect that constrains both social and academic participation (Marzulina et al., 2021; Morelle, 2016; Ajaj, 2022).

c) Institutional Gaps

Teachers feel unsupported by the institution and express that they are overwhelmed by unclear policies and scarce resources. T3 states,

"You cannot request integrating these students in mainstream when you don't have infrastructure, or curriculum, or services. How are you supposed to handle it?"

With responsibility falling on a few committed staff members, the burden becomes unsustainable. As T1 notes,

"It can't be dependent on only a handful of teachers."

Institutional neglect also affects students' sense of worth. T3 recounts a student saying,

"I feel like the chair I'm sitting on," capturing the emotional weight of marginalization.

In response, teachers advocate for segregated classrooms:

"This is why we fought to have them in separate classes," concludes T3.

Overall, this theme shows how institutional shortcomings push teachers toward reactive arrangements rather than structural reform, echoing regional findings on policy–practice gaps in support for VIS (Ajaj, 2022; Elkhareiji, 2019; Al Naabi, 2021).

4.2 Findings for the Second Research Question

The second research question investigates how EFL teachers manage the complex demands of teaching VIS. Two major themes emerge: (1) adaptability and emotional resilience, and (2) collaborative solutions and support.

4.2.1 Theme 1: Adaptability and Emotional Resilience

This theme includes three subthemes: (a) adaptive instructional strategies, (b) wearing multiple identity hats, and (c) managing self-emotional fatigue.

a) Adaptive Instructional Strategies

Interestingly, the challenges teachers face become a catalyst for creativity. T1 reflects,

"They encourage the innovative character in you... It wakes up and keeps functioning nonstop." This momentum fuels a range of adaptive strategies.

To replace visual cues, teachers rely on expressive delivery and vivid description. T1 explains, *"I rely on dramatization. I try to convey words with emotions... I dramatize as if you are listening to a radio show,"*

while T2 adds,

"I help the student understand the content by describing the whole scene."

Colors are also linked to emotions and sounds to evoke imagery. T3 notes about blue,

"We make the sound of sea waves to convey serenity."

Such practices echo evidence that verbal description can stimulate mental imagery and enhance VIS comprehension (Cox & Dykes, 2001). They align with findings that VIS favor sound-based associative strategies for vocabulary learning (Wesołowska & Jedynek, 2014).

Teachers also use touch and movement to make abstract concepts tangible. As T3 explains,

"I usually hold the student's hand and say, 'Put the pencil in the bag,' to teach prepositions."

T2 uses fingers to illustrate sentence structures:

"Each finger is a word— 'I am a student'—four fingers, four words."

Language is also scaffolded through simplification and selective code-switching:

"If there is a very difficult word, I might switch this one word... and I simplify the language," shares T3

These strategies are consistent with scaffolding-oriented practices discussed by Villalba (2022).

Peer assistance is used strategically with advanced VIS acting as *"teacher's assistants,"* explains T2. T3 shares another approach:

"I ask students to take turns. If one is stuck, we support her or ask her colleagues to help... This encourages harmony and patience."

These accounts align with Jedynak (2023), who notes the benefits of peer tutoring for VIS.

Teachers also employ differentiation to cater to varying academic levels. T2 states,

"I plan with levels in mind... who needs easy tasks, who needs adapted instructions,"

while T3 prepares

"two versions of the same task... a sophisticated one and a simplified one, so everyone can participate."

Such strategies reflect 'Tiered Task Design', a differentiated process technique that targets the same skills at varying levels of complexity (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010; Suwastini et al., 2021).

When microphones are restricted online, teachers move revision to external platforms:

"We keep giving revision classes using Teams or Zoom," says T3.

This approach mirrored Mwanza et al.'s (2021) adaptive moves to mitigate online accessibility issues for VIS.

Collectively, these practices illustrate constraint-driven innovation, an enactment of resilience under pressure (Mansfield et al., 2016).

b) Wearing Multiple Identity Hats

To meet diverse VIS needs, teachers describe adopting fluid roles.

T1, for example, often wears *"the actress hat"* to help students *"grasp the feeling of that thing,"* and at times she wears *"the clown hat"* to use humor to sustain students' engagement.

Emotional mentorship also strongly emerges:

"Before being a teacher, I am a mentor, a guide, a friend," explains T2.

Teachers also manage peer dynamics like

"a referee between two rivals in a game," as T1 reflects.

Their relationships frequently take on a maternal tone. T2 shares,

"Because we are mothers, we can feel what they are going through."

Yet, this maternal role requires balance. T3 notes,

"You have to be the mother, but at the same time, you must have the discipline part."

Beneath these varied roles is a sense of purpose:

"When you take a student as a mission, it's a noble job," says T2.

Finally, teachers describe their work with VIS as mutually enriching:

"... on a professional level, and on a personal level. We are learning new things... on an everyday basis." T1 reflects.

These accounts portray VIS teacher identity as highly context-responsive, affirming Çınarbaş's (2022) view. Unlike previous literature, the teachers here perceive their role-shifting not as a source of strain (cf. Brown & Beamish, 2012), but as a sustaining and meaningful practice.

c) Managing Self-Emotional Fatigue

Teachers openly acknowledge the emotional toll of their work and share strategies to cope.

Solitude is a standard method for decompression:

"I need complete silence for a couple of hours to empty my brain," says T1.

T2 adds, *"You need to go into flight mode."*

These strategies align with resilience research on mindfulness and self-regulation for sustaining teacher well-being (Jennings et al., 2013; Mansfield et al., 2016).

Peer support is also vital. Teachers lean on one another for emotional validation and relief because, as T2 says,

"Only colleagues can relate to the struggle."

"Sometimes we chat with each other... but when we hear the gratitude from our students, it means it all," adds T3.

Such reflections align with research that confirms collegial support serves as a protective factor against burnout (Kasim & Rathakrishnan, 2025)

4.2.2 Theme 2: Collaborative Solutions and Support

This theme comprises three subthemes: (a) teamwork vs. curricular issues, (b) bridging infrastructure gaps, and (c) advocacy for professional development.

a) Teamwork vs. Curricular Issues

Collaboration plays a central role in how teachers adapt instruction for VIS. They shared labor and material:

"If we have material, we share it. If one of us needs someone to assist, she [a colleague] will volunteer," explains T3.

To address the visually based curriculum, they audio-record course content so that VIS can

"go over what they've learned... through the auditory channel. Those recordings are there with them... they can listen as many times as they wish, at their own pace," notes T1.

This strategy reflects research on the centrality of auditory input for VIS (Arslantaş, 2017; Boltenkova et al., 2020)

Teachers also engage students directly to improve digital text accessibility:

"The students taught us... We met and discussed how to make the Word document accessible," clarifies T3.

They also consulted a blind SEN expert, who offered formatting tips such as avoiding all-caps and using editable Word files for better screen reader compatibility.

These practices align with findings that collaborative resource-sharing and learner participation foster sustainable adaptation (Ebersöhn, 2012; Ramos & Andrade, 2014; Villalba, 2022; Carpenter, 2020).

To address limited time and inflexible curricula, teachers also provide revision and extra classes:

"Usually, the best solution is extra classes, revision classes," says T1.

This approach supports VIS by allowing extended time for practice (El Hossary, 2018; Polok & Maślanka, 2022).

WhatsApp serves as the backbone of this collaboration. Teachers, students, and assistants use shared groups to coordinate lessons and provide immediate feedback.

"Everything we do is through WhatsApp; we provide study materials, homework, because it's easier for them than sending emails," states T1.

This mirrors similar findings that mobile-based communication fosters social and academic VIS inclusion (Foley & Masingila, 2015).

Together, these examples illustrate how teamwork and informal communication networks compensate for institutional shortcomings and enable the co-construction of accessible pedagogical practices (Douglas et al., 2015; Wenger, 1999; Khairuddin et al., 2016).

b) Bridging Infrastructure Gaps

In response to infrastructural constraints, teachers employ small yet intentional strategies to optimize classroom comfort.

Seating is flexible because:

"Sometimes the learner is not completely blind; she has the freedom not to sit next to the windows; she knows her needs better than I do," explains T3.

Others adjust lighting or rearrange students for proximity:

"I move the chairs close to my desk... arrange a U-shape and keep moving between them," notes T1.

These efforts closely align with recommendations for environmental adaptation in VI education (Najmee et al., 2025; Lintang Sari & Emaliana, 2020; Çınarbaş, 2022). However, they contradict Polok and Maślanka's (2022) Study, in which participating teachers assume front-row seating is always best, ignoring individual visual needs.

Beyond physical adjustments, teachers also foster a supportive emotional climate built on trust and empathy:

"My priority is communicating with students because when I do that, I can easily teach them and have a good outcome," says T2.

T3 offers a safe space for making mistakes:

"You have to assure them it's okay to make mistakes. 'We are here to learn. Nobody is here to judge you.' I learn from you, too."

Such relational practices align with the literature on affective scaffolding and the socio-emotional needs of VIS learners (Villalba, 2022; Manitsa & Doikou, 2022; Ajaj, 2022).

c) Advocacy for Professional Development

Teachers strongly advocate structured training and broader institutional awareness:

"You have to train teachers. That's of great importance," stresses T1.

"There's no such thing as a teacher who doesn't know how to handle visually impaired; we must have the basic knowledge," adds T3.

"Before jumping into the experience, read. Get to know about them, about their needs," echoes T3.

These calls align with embedding VIS methodologies in pre-service programs (Kocyigit & Artar, 2015) and with structured professional development for in-service VIS teachers (Marzulina et al., 2021; Setiawan et al., 2020; Al-Jarf, 2021). However, this study stands out from the existing literature, as the participants themselves are the ones calling for such professional development, in contrast to Martínez-Hernández (2022), in which most surveyed faculty perceived this training as optional.

Teachers also highlight the need for campus-wide awareness:

"Raising awareness about VIS has to be a must," asserts T3.

They recount how a single Braille workshop was transformative:

"It was an eye-opening experience," says T1.

"Even non-teaching staff began to recognize the challenges VIS face after such training,"

reflects T3.

These accounts demonstrate how experiential training can foster empathy, aligning with Saudi research on the role of institutions in accessibility and social inclusion (Ajaj, 2022; Alsubaie, 2023).

Overall, the thematic analysis in this section revealed a range of interrelated instructional, communicative, emotional, and systemic challenges. However, it also highlighted teachers' adaptability and resilience in developing solutions, fostering collaboration, and advocating for professional development. Table 2 summarizes the key themes, subthemes, and categories that emerged from the data, providing an overview of these findings.

Table 2: Themes, subthemes, and categories of RQ1 and RQ2 findings

Main Themes	Subthemes	Categories
RQ1: (1) Teacher-Related Challenges	a) Instructional Hurdles	Abstract Concepts. Online Accessibility. Managing VIS Diversity.
	b) Communication Dilemmas	Nonverbal Communication. Vocal Tone & VIS Sensitivity. Communication & Recent VIS.
	c) Teachers' Emotional Strains	Emotional Drain. Professionalism vs. Empathy.
RQ1: (2) System-Related Challenges	a) Curriculum & Materials Issues	Visually-Based Curriculum. Absence of Resources. Pacing & Time Management.
	b) Environmental & Structural Barriers	Acoustics & Noise. Distractions. Poor Infrastructure.
	c) Institutional Gaps	Lack of clear Policies. Impact on Teachers & VIS.
RQ 2: (1). Adaptability & Emotional Resilience	a) Adaptive Instructional Strategies	Sound & Emotional Association. Peer-Assisted Learning. Scaffolding & Differentiation. Alternative Online Platforms.
	b) Wearing Multiple Identity Hats	Performer; Caretaker; Mentor; Referee; Clown, Role Transformation
	c) Managing Emotional Fatigue	Silence & Meditation. Collegial Talk.
RQ2: (2) Collaborative Solutions & Support	a) Teamwork vs. Curricular Issues	Shared Labor & Adaptation. Provision of Extra Classes. WhatsApp & Academic Support
	b) Bridging Infrastructure Gaps	Physical Environment. (seating/lighting /proximity)

	Learning Atmosphere. (empathy, trust, safe space)
c) Advocacy for Professional Development	Mandatory VI-Training. Raising Awareness.

5. Discussion

Despite confronting multifaceted challenges, the participants demonstrated emotional resilience and adaptability, developing collaborative solutions while advocating for institutional reform. The following discussion interprets these findings through the integrated theoretical frameworks of SCT, UDL, and CDT, structured around five thematic areas:

5.1 Resilience as a Foundation for Teacher Agency

The findings suggest that participating teachers drew on resilience to navigate the emotional and instructional demands of supporting VIS. Despite systemic flaws, they remained committed, reflecting Bandura's (1999) concept of "coping efficacy," a strong belief in one's ability to manage obstacles. Interpreting the findings through the demographic lens of this sample (all Arab, Muslim teachers), participants often framed their perseverance in Islamic terms (e.g., teaching as "*a noble mission*"). This aligns with Schwalm et al. (2021), who found that religiosity acts as a significant resilience resource by providing meaning and purpose in adverse situations.

Mansfield et al. (2016) argue that resilience fosters agency, an idea captured in a teacher's remark that challenges can ignite "*the innovative character in you.*" Consequently, resilience has become more than mere endurance; instead, it is an active catalyst for the adaptive practices detailed in the findings. As another teacher summarized, this process manifested as ongoing growth "*on a professional level, on a personal level.*"

5.2 Adaptability and Resourcefulness: UDL in Action

Building on their resilience, teachers demonstrated adaptability by tailoring instruction to diverse learners despite limited resources and formal training. One teacher framed this as a need to "*adopt and adapt,*" capturing the flexible mindset shaping their intuitive daily decisions. This perspective aligns with Bandura's (1999) model of triadic reciprocal causation, in which personal beliefs (e.g., coping efficacy, religious conviction), behaviors (e.g., adaptive strategies), and environmental conditions (e.g., curricular and infrastructure issues, structural gaps) reciprocally shape agentic responses.

Their resourceful use of UDL principles was evident in providing multiple means of representation (audio, tactile, digital) and engagement (multisensory cues, task differentiation, code-switching). To address reduced interaction in online classes, teachers offered extra sessions on alternative platforms, consistent with UDL's aim of minimizing participation barriers.

Their responsive pedagogy was both relational and infrastructural. Teachers adjusted the physical environment (reducing glare, flexible seating) and the social climate (reassurance,

respect, safe space for mistakes) to lower barriers to participation. The use of "identity hats" was instrumental. For example, moments of acting, mentoring, or "clown" functioned as intentional pedagogical moves to sustain attention, regulate affect, and keep learning on track.

This proactive stance can be interpreted in light of sociocultural factors rooted in Islamic principles, which emphasize educators' moral obligation to impart knowledge to all learners, thereby prompting participants to assume additional roles when necessary.

However, the reported reliance on audio and Word-based materials rather than Braille, although consistent with many VIS' digital preferences, may, over time, erode Braille literacy in EFL contexts; this potential risk warrants ongoing monitoring and targeted support.

5.3 Collaborative Work and Supportive Community

Collaboration emerged as a vital coping strategy. Participants described a dynamic network consistent with Wenger's (1999) community of practice (CoP), a group bound by shared goals, mutual engagement, and co-constructed solutions. In this study, the participants' CoP included teachers, SEN specialists, and students who engaged in ongoing dialogue and joint problem-solving to enhance support. WhatsApp emerged as a key medium for collaboration, enabling participants to share adapted materials, coordinate extra classes, provide private feedback, and sustain academic support. Although an official Blackboard platform was available, participants found WhatsApp more practical and accessible for VIS, likely due to its built-in iOS accessibility features. Beyond academics, it also served as a collegial space where SEN committee members exchanged resources, discussed challenges, and offered emotional support. As one teacher remarked, *"Only colleagues can relate to the struggle."*

However, reliance on WhatsApp also exposed structural gaps as the informal platform compensated for the lack of an institutional digital system tailored for disability navigation support. Furthermore, while WhatsApp fostered immediate and accessible collaboration, it also blurred professional boundaries by making teachers constantly reachable and raised data privacy concerns, as learning materials and class-related information were shared through an informal platform.

Nonetheless, beyond virtual spaces, the collaborative culture extended into the classroom through peer-assisted learning, where teachers emphasized that *"your friend next to you is not your rival; she can be a great help."*

These practices can be interpreted through Ebersöhn's (2012) notion of relationship-resourced resilience, which locates resilience in collective, socially embedded processes rather than in individual traits. Based on the participants' sociocultural and demographic profiles, the collaborative ethos also appeared embedded in their collectivist and Islamic values, in which supporting the vulnerable is regarded as a moral duty. Their long professional ties, some spanning 15 years, further reinforced their group cohesion and mutual support (Wenger, 1999). Finally, although systemic gaps persisted, participants also noted a degree of institutional facilitation, as evidenced by the establishment of a dedicated SEN committee with decision-making authority.

Together, the interplay between individual resilience, agency, and collaborative practice appeared to create a more robust support system within existing constraints.

5.4 Gender and Emotional Dynamics

The all-female EFL sample provides a key context for interpreting participants' emotional experiences and resilience. The teachers' reported tension between empathy and professionalism may reflect both the higher emotional empathy often observed among females (Toussaint & Webb, 2005; Trentini et al., 2022) and Saudi cultural norms that position women to shoulder most caregiving responsibilities (Alrasheed, 2018). While potentially overwhelming, this sensitivity may function as a pedagogical strength in this context. It enables the female teachers to assume the maternal roles they described, supporting both academic progress and students' emotional well-being.

Additionally, the gender-segregated educational system in Saudi Arabia has likely further shaped this dynamic. On the one hand, all-female settings may facilitate stronger communication and trust, which are considered critical for VIS success, and align with research on the benefits of teacher–student gender matching (Lim & Meer, 2015). On the other hand, while participants reported strong collaboration within female networks, segregation may restrict cross-campus collaboration with male colleagues and compound the emotional burden on female teachers. From a feminist perspective, the teachers' emotional burden reflects the feminization of teaching, where caring and relational work are socially expected of women yet remain largely undervalued within educational institutions (Acker, 1995; Nias, 1996).

5.5 Between Policy and Practice: A Structural Dilemma

While this study does not focus on inclusive education models, the findings nonetheless reveal a clear disconnect between policy discourse and classroom realities. Despite official guidelines promoting the integration of students with disabilities (Ministry of Education, n.d.), the reported teachers' lived experiences suggest otherwise. As framed by CDT, this gap reflects what Goodley (2014) terms 'systemic ableism', where educational structures implicitly privilege sighted learners and shift the burden of accommodation onto individual teachers. Notably, while the current segregated model may appear regressive, it should not be hastily criticized. On the contrary, the participants described it as the most workable and humane option under present constraints. VIS learners' profiles, they argued, require instructional flexibility that rigid, fast-paced mainstream classrooms currently cannot provide. The emotional toll of this misalignment was captured by one teacher, who recalled a student saying, *"I feel like the chair I'm sitting on."* This moment became a turning point: *"That is why we fought to have them in separate classes."* From a CDT perspective, such testimony illustrates how under-resourced mainstream settings can produce profound marginalization.

In this context, teachers' advocacy for separate classes should be read not as exclusion, but as a pragmatic act of agency amid structural shortfalls. As Ebersöhn (2012) and Wenger (1999) argue, collective coping mechanisms often emerge precisely where formal systems fall short. Without substantial institutional reform, the promise of inclusion in Saudi higher education remains idealistic, placing undue pressure on already overextended educators.

Finally, to illustrate the complex relationships among the findings discussed in this section, the researcher developed a conceptual model that visualizes the core processes leading to teachers' agency in response to constraints (see Figure 2)

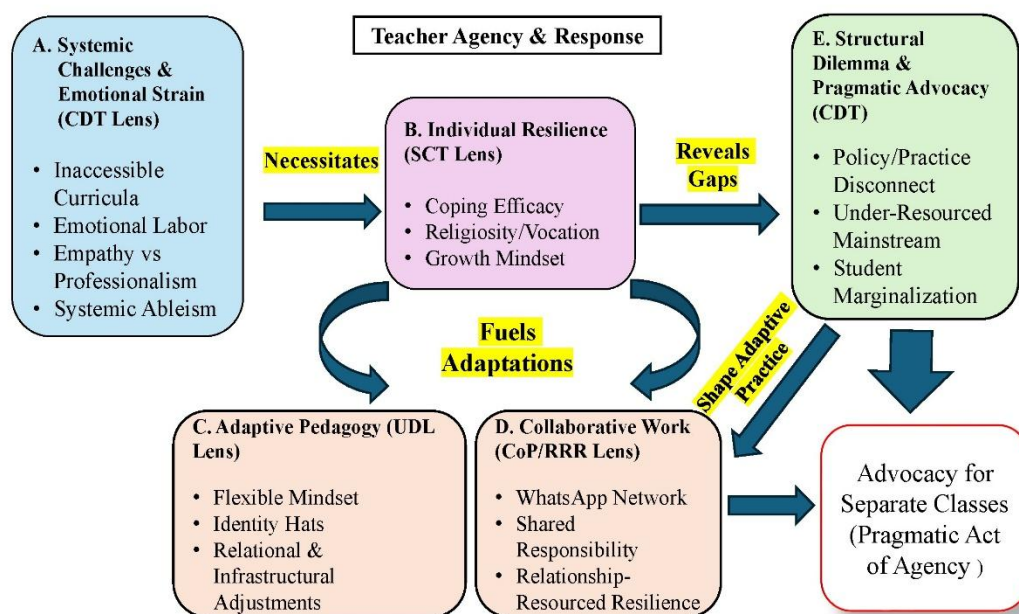


Figure 2. Proposed conceptual model of teacher agency in response to constraints

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the challenges EFL teachers face when teaching VIS in a Saudi university and to examine the coping mechanisms they employ in response. Using qualitative thematic analysis, the study provided an in-depth understanding of how teachers navigate instructional demands in a context where structural and material support remains limited.

The findings reveal that the teachers encountered multifaceted challenges ranging from personal, emotional, and instructional burdens to profound systemic failures, including an inaccessible curriculum and a lack of institutional support. In response to these challenges, teachers demonstrated remarkable resilience and creativity, developing collaborative support networks and advocating for mandatory professional development and institutional change.

6.1 Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study have several theoretical implications. They offer one of the few qualitative accounts of EFL teachers' lived experiences working with VIS in Saudi higher education, thereby extending previous research that has largely focused on student perspectives. The study has proposed an integrated model of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and Critical Disability Theory (CDT) to illustrate how teacher

resilience operates within intersecting personal, pedagogical, and socio-structural contexts. Culturally, it foregrounds the moral and spiritual dimensions of teacher agency, demonstrating how faith-based commitment and collective ethos could sustain motivation under constraint.

6.2 Pedagogical Implications

The findings carry several implications for EFL practice and institutional policy. At the curricular level, universities and policymakers should redesign programs to move beyond visual dependency toward a multisensory, UDL-based approach. Rather than simply providing PDF versions of materials, curricula should be created from the outset in linear, editable formats with auditory or tactile alternatives. Also, incorporating concise audio descriptions of visuals and flexible pacing guides can better include both VIS and sighted learners, reduce teacher workload, and promote VIS independent learning.

At the institutional level, campus navigation systems should include tactile pathways, Braille signage, and auditory cues to enhance safety and autonomy for VIS. Classrooms should also be designed to meet VIS' acoustic needs, employing measures that minimize external noise and facilitate clear communication.

The findings further highlight the need for sustained practice-based professional development. Faculty should receive structured, experiential training in VIS pedagogy—covering effective communication, multisensory instruction, and emotional awareness—combined with in-class application and peer feedback. Such initiatives can shift VIS instruction from individual improvisation to consistent institutional support.

Finally, given reports of teacher fatigue, institutions should establish in-house counseling and peer-mentoring programs. These measures could help prevent burnout and enhance the sustainability of effective teaching.

6.3 Limitations and Recommendations

While this qualitative research provided valuable insights, its focus on three female teachers from a single Saudi university limits the transferability of its findings. The study also represented only teachers' perspectives, as the voices of VIS and administrators were not included. Moreover, the data relied solely on teacher self-reports, which, while valuable, may not fully reflect classroom realities.

Future research, therefore, could expand to multiple universities and employ mixed-method designs to strengthen and triangulate findings. Incorporating classroom observations is also recommended to more accurately capture teaching practices. Furthermore, including the perspectives of VIS and institutional administrators would provide a more comprehensive understanding of EFL teaching for VIS. Finally, comparative studies exploring male teachers' experiences could help clarify gender-related differences and add valuable insight to the field.

References

- Acker, S. (1995). *Carry on caring: The work of women teachers*. British Journal of Sociology of Education, 16(1), 21–36. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1393124>
- Ahmed, S. K. (2024). The pillars of trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health*, 2(100051), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glmedi.2024.100051>
- Ajaj, R. M. (2022). *Exploring the Academic and Social Integration of Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired Attending a Saudi Arabian University* (Publication No. 29391463) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Al-Jarf, R. (2021). Blind Saudi Female College Students and Assistive Technologies: A Case Study. *International Journal of Research in Engineering, IT and Social Sciences*, 11(4), 1-9.
- Al Naabi, S. M. (2021). *Pedagogies for teaching English as a foreign language to learners with visual impairments in Oman* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Exeter.
- Alrasheed, B. (2018). *Composing journeys: Understanding the lived experiences of Saudi Arabia's female early childhood educators* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of British Columbia). <https://doi.org/10.14288/1.0364583>
- Alsubaie, A. (2023). *The implementation of inclusive education for EFL students with a disability at a Saudi Arabian university* [Doctoral dissertation].
- Arslantaş, T. K. (2017). Foreign language education of visually impaired individuals: A review of pervasive studies. *Ihlara Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2(2), 95-104.
- Bandura, A. (1999). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 2(2), 21–41.
- Bao, W. (2020). COVID-19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2(2), 113–115. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.191>
- Başaran, S. (2012). Teaching English to visually impaired students in Turkey: A case study. *Energy Education Science and Technology Part B: Social and Educational Studies*, 2(217-226), 10.
- Berger, R. (2013). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15(2), 219–234. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112468475>
- Boltenkova, J., Nevolina, A., Koksharov, V., Li, S., Rasskazova, T., Tkachuk, G., & Baliasov, A. (2020). Teaching EFL to blind and visually impaired students: An overview. *ICERI Proceedings*. <https://doi.org/10.21125/iceri.2020.1209>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*. SAGE.
- Brown, J. E., & Beamish, W. (2012). The changing role and practice of teachers of students with visual impairments: Practitioners' views from Australia. *Journal of Visual Impairment &*

Blindness, 106(2), 81–92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0145482x1210600203>

Cando Guanoluisa, F. S., Pinta Claudio, L. J., Berrones Cevallo, D. V., Palate Colcha, C. D., Chanaluisa Taipe, S. L., & Gavilanes Pilatas, G. M. (2023). Visually impaired students' and their teacher's perceptions of the English teaching and learning process. *Mextesol Journal*, 46(4), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.61871/mj.v46n4-3>

Carpenter, J. (2020). EFL education for the visually impaired in Japan: Data from five interviews. *Latin American Journal of Content & Language Integrated Learning*, 13(1), 57–78. <https://doi.org/10.5294/lacil.2020.13.1.4>

Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. J. (2014). The use of triangulation in qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 41(5), 545–547. <https://doi.org/10.1188/14.onf.545-547>

CAST. (2024). *Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 3.0*. <https://udlguidelines.cast.org>

Çınarbaş, H. I. (2022). *Language teacher cognition and professional teacher identity formation of teachers of students with visual impairments: a case study* (Doctoral dissertation, Middle East Technical University (Turkey)).

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. R. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). Routledge.

Cox, P. R., & Dykes, M. K. (2001). Effective classroom adaptations for students with visual impairments. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 33(6), 68–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004005990103300609>

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE.

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

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Czerwińska, K., & Piskorska, A. (2018). Cognitive functioning of a blind student in a foreign language classroom. *Forum Pedagogiczne*, 8(2), 211–226. <https://doi.org/10.21697/fp.2018.2.15>

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Douglas, S. N., Chapin, S. E., & Nolan, J. F. (2015). Special education teachers' experiences supporting and supervising paraeducators. *Teacher Education and Special Education: The Journal of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children*, 39(1), 60–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406415616443>

- Ebersöhn, L. (2012). Adding 'Flock' to 'Fight and flight': A honeycomb of resilience where supply of relationships meets demand for support. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 22(1), 29–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14330237.2012.10874518>
- El Hossary, Y. (2018). EFL in education planning for visually impaired in Egypt: An experimental case study. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, (6), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2018.05.01>
- Elkhereiji, K. (2019). *Self-efficacy of vision-impaired students: impacts of technology-enhanced language learning* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Southampton).
- Elshemy, R., & Alzahrani, F. (2023). Digitally mediated communication of Emojis by visually impaired users: The case of sarcastic WhatsApp messages. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 58–65. <https://doi.org/10.36923/jicc.v23i2.187>.
- Encalada, E. G., Jordán, C. D., Chicaiza, V. E., & Pazmiño, S. J. (2022). Enhancing reading competence through the braille system for visually impaired people: A preliminary study. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning*, (01), 65–77. <https://doi.org/10.17501/26827034.2021.1106>
- Foley, A. R., & Masingila, J. O. (2014). The use of mobile devices as assistive technology in resource-limited environments: Access for learners with visual impairments in Kenya. *Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology*, 10(4), 332–339. <https://doi.org/10.3109/17483107.2014.974220>
- Goodley, D. (2014). *Dis/ability studies: Theorising disablism and ableism*. Routledge.
- Halcomb, E. J., & Davidson, P. M. (2006). Is verbatim transcription of interview data always necessary? *Applied Nursing Research*, 19(1), 38–42. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apnr.2005.06.001>
- Hosking, D. L. (2008, September 2–4). *The theory of critical disability theory* [Paper presentation]. 4th Biennial Disability Studies Conference, Lancaster University, United Kingdom. https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/events/disabilityconference_archive/2008/abstracts/hosking.htm
- Hosseini, M., & Haukås, Å. (2025). Beyond Macroethics: Developing an ethical framework for interview data collection and analysis to acknowledge participant rights. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 23(3), 977–995. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-024-09594-9>
- Isangula, K. G., Kelly, S., & Wamoyi, J. (2024). Manual qualitative data coding using MS word for students and early career researchers in resource-constrained settings. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 23, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241299223>
- Jedynak, M. (2023). Current issues in FL learning and teaching in the context of the visually impaired learners. *English Language Education*, 129–142. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-28655-1_8

- Jennings, P. A., Frank, J. L., Snowberg, K. E., Coccia, M. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2013). Improving classroom learning environments by cultivating awareness and resilience in education (CARE): Results of a randomized controlled trial. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 28(4), 374–390. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000035>
- Johnson, J. L., Adkins, D., & Chauvin, S. (2020). A review of the quality indicators of rigor in qualitative research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 84(1), 7120. <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe7120>
- Kesiktaş, A. D., & Akcamete, A. G. (2011). The relationship of personnel preparation to the competence of teachers of students with visual impairments in Turkey. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 105(2), 108-124. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0145482x1110500208>
- Khairuddin, K. F., Dally, K., & Foggett, J. (2016). Collaboration between general and special education teachers in Malaysia. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 16(S1), 909–913. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-3802.12230>
- Khasawneh, M. A. S. (2021). The problems of teaching English for visually impaired students. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, 9(10), 117–123.
- Khattab, M. (2020). *The Clear Qur'an: A Thematic English Translation of the Message of Allah*. Al-Madinah International University & White Thread Press.
- Kirboyun Tipi, S. (2023). How screen readers impact the academic works of college and graduate students with visual impairments. *Sakarya University Journal of Education*, 13(3), 416-434. <https://doi.org/10.19126/suje.1201482>
- Kocyigit, N., & Artar, P. S. (2015). A challenge: Teaching English to visually-impaired learners. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199, 689-694. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.599>
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2019). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). SAGE. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529716665>
- Leavitt, R. R., Athanasiou, M. S., & Sanchez, K. (2018). Vocabulary instruction for an English language learner with visual impairment: A multiple-components intervention including tactile representations. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 36(3), 238–250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0264619618782566>
- Lim, J., & Meer, J. (2015). The impact of teacher-student gender matches: Random assignment evidence from South Korea. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w21407>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE.
- Lindeberg, S. B. (2015, February). The importance of sound for access to social and educational context: An observational and interview study with students with blindness [Paper presentation]. In G. Kouroupetroglou (Ed.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Enabling Access for Persons with Visual Impairment (ICEAPVI)* (pp. 33–42). National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

- Lintangsari, A. P., & Emaliana, I. (2020). Inclusive education services for the blind: Values, roles, and challenges of university EFL teachers. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)*, 9(2), 439. <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v9i2.20436>
- Lloyd, N., Hyett, N., & Kenny, A. (2024). To member check or not to member check? An evaluation of member checking in an interpretive descriptive study. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 23(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241301383>
- Lõvi, M. (2013). *Aspects of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in the case of blind and visually impaired learners in Estonia* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Tartu.
- Makarushko, M., & Kokhanover, T. (2023). Development of skills of non-verbal ways of communication as a way of socialization of students with visual impairment. In D. Iliško (Ed.), *New paradigm in modern language teaching: Collective monograph* (pp. 181–195). ACCESS Press Publishing House. <https://doi.org/10.46656/book.2023.newparadigm>
- Manitsa, I., & Doikou, M. (2020). Social support for students with visual impairments in educational institutions: An integrative literature review. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 40(1), 29–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0264619620941885>
- Mansfield, C. F., Beltman, S., Broadley, T., & Weatherby-Fell, N. (2016). Building resilience in teacher education: An evidenced informed framework. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 54, 77–87. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.11.016>
- Marlina, Ediyanto, E., & Kusumastuti, G. (2023). Differentiated learning for students with special needs in inclusive schools (Teacher's perception of students learning profile). *International Journal of Instruction*, 16(4), 423–440. <https://doi.org/10.31227/osf.io/r2zyf>
- Martínez-Hernández, A. I. (2022). Functional diversity in higher education: Curriculum accommodation for people with vision disability or hearing impairment in the English as a foreign language classroom. <https://doi.org/10.6035/14110.2022.736604>
- Martínez-Hernández, A., & Bellés-Fortuño, B. (2021). Accommodating the syllabus to visually impaired students in the English language classroom. *International Journal of English Studies*, 21(1), 75–92. <https://doi.org/10.6018/ijes.438891>
- Marzulina, L., Erlina, D., Holandiyah, M., Harto, K., Herizal, H., Amrina, R. D., & Nopalia, N. (2021). Teaching English to visually-impaired students: An analysis of teachers' problems. *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran*, 136-146. <https://doi.org/10.19109/ejpp.v8i2.9742>
- Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *People with special needs in higher education*. Ministry of Education, Saudi Arabia. Retrieved from <https://moe.gov.sa/en/education/highereducation/Pages/PeopleWithSpecialNeeds.aspx>
- Mitawie, M. M. (2020). The occupational self-efficacy and its relationship to psychological resilience and self-control among male and female teachers of students with visual impairment. *Journal of Educational Sciences, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU)*,

I(23), 515–574.

Morelle, M. (2016). *Challenges Experienced by Learners with Visual Impairment in Two Mainstream Primary Schools in Klerksdorp, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of South Africa, Pretoria. <http://hdl.handle.net/10500/23125>

Mwanza, E., Simalalo, M., & Simui, F. (2021). Virtual learning for persons with visual impairment: An exploration of learning platform in a home environment from UTH special school in Lusaka, Zambia. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 2(6), 60-67. <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2021.2.6.196>

Najmee, N. A., Mohammed, Z., Rahman, M. H., Fadzil, N. M., Ludin, A. F., & Hassan, R. (2025). Classroom settings for visually impaired schoolchildren: A scoping review. *PLOS ONE*, 20(2), e0318871. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0318871>

Nias, J. (1996). Thinking about feeling: The emotions in teaching. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 26(3), 293–306. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764960260301>

Olmos-Vega, F. M., Stalmeijer, R. E., Varpio, L., & Kahlke, R. (2022). A practical guide to reflexivity in qualitative research: AMEE guide No. 149. *Medical Teacher*, 45(3), 241–251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159x.2022.2057287>

Ortega, D. P., Cabrera, J. M., & Benalcázar, J. V. (2018). Differentiating instruction in the language learning classroom: Theoretical considerations and practical applications. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 9(6), 1220. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0906.11>

Park, E., & Shin, M. (2020). A meta-analysis of special education teachers' burnout. *Sage Open*, 10(2), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020918297>

Pilson, A. (2022). 'We're on their side, aren't we?' Exploring Qualified Teacher of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (QTVI) views on the role of supporting the emotional well-being of visually impaired children. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 40(2), 335–350. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0264619620984218>

Polok, K., & Maślanka, A. (2022). The use of new technology in teaching English to visually impaired students. *Man Disability Society*, 55(1), 33-47. <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0015.8511>

Qiu, S., An, P., Hu, J., Han, T., & Rauterberg, M. (2019). Understanding visually impaired people's experiences of social signal perception in face-to-face communication. *Universal Access in the Information Society*, 19(4), 873–890. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10209-019-00698-3>

Ramos, S. I., & De Andrade, A. M. (2014). ICT in Portuguese reference schools for the education of blind and partially sighted students. *Education and Information Technologies*, 21(3), 625–641. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-014-9344-6>

Roberts, R. (2020). Qualitative interview questions: Guidance for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4640>

- Rosel, J., Caballer, A., Jara, P., & Oliver, J. C. (2005). Verbalism in the narrative language of children who are blind and sighted. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 99(7), 413–425. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0145482x0509900704>
- Samavi, A., Hajjalizadeh, K., Javdan, M., & Farshad, M. R. (2022). Psychometric validation of teacher empathy scale: Measurement invariance in gender. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1042993>.
- Scholl, G. T. (Ed.). (1986). *Foundations of education for blind and visually handicapped children and youth: Theory and practice*. American Foundation for the Blind.
- Schwalm, F. D., Zandavalli, R. B., de Castro Filho, E. D., & Lucchetti, G. (2022). Is there a relationship between spirituality/religiosity and resilience? A systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 27(5), 1218–1232.
- Setiawan, W. A., Adnyani, L. D., & Suprianti, G. A. (2020). Strategies in teaching reading to visually impaired students. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris undiksha*, 8(2), 65. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jpbi.v8i2.28663>
- Stiles, W. B. (1993). Quality Control in qualitative research. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 13(6), 593–618. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0272-7358\(93\)90048-q](https://doi.org/10.1016/0272-7358(93)90048-q)
- Susanto, S., & Nanda, D. S. (2020). Teaching and learning English for visually impaired students: An ethnographic case study. <https://doi.org/10.35542/osf.io/jy26f>
- Suwastini, N. K. A., Rinawati, N. K. A., Jayantini, I. G. A. S. R., & Dantes, G. R. (2021). Differentiated instruction across EFL classrooms: A conceptual review. *Tell-Us Journal*, 7(1), 14–41.
- Tomlinson, C. A., & Imbeau, M. B. (2010). *Leading and managing a differentiated classroom*. ASCD
- Toussaint, L., & Webb, J. R. (2005). Gender differences in the relationship between empathy and forgiveness. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 145(6), 673–685. <https://doi.org/10.3200/SOCP.145.6.673-686>
- Trentini, C., Tambelli, R., Maiorani, S., & Lauriola, M. (2022). Gender differences in empathy during adolescence: does emotional self-awareness matter? *Psychological reports*, 125(2), 913–936. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294120976631>
- Villalba, K. (2022). Learning to "see" again: Overcoming challenges while teaching English to visually-impaired students. *Studies in Technology Enhanced Learning*. <https://doi.org/10.21428/8c225f6e.b71fdd12>
- Wang, X., Zhang, L., Peng, Y., Lu, J., Huang, Y., & Chen, W. (2022). Development and validation of the empathy scale for teachers (EST). *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 72, 101112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2021.101112>
- Wenger, E. (1999). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge University Press.

Wesołowska, A., & Jedynek, M. (2014). FL Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by Blind, Partially Blind and Normally Sighted Learners of English In Teaching Languages off the Beaten Track, [w:]. *Language Learning & Language Teaching series*, 306-328.

Wong, M. E., & Cohen, L. G. (2016). Access and challenges of assistive technology application: Experience of teachers of students with visual impairments in Singapore. *Disability, CBR & Inclusive Development*, 26(4), 138. <https://doi.org/10.5463/dcid.v26i4.450>

World Health Organization. (2019). *World report on vision*. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/world-report-on-vision>

Zaki, S. A., & Khan, U. (2021). Teaching visually impaired Indian ESL learners in inclusive classrooms: A review of pedagogical approaches. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 2(3), 244–255. <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v2i3.678>

Acknowledgments

The researcher would like to express sincere appreciation to the participants whose valuable insights made this study possible. Gratitude is also extended to Dr. Khadija Alamoudi for her invaluable guidance and consistent support throughout the development of this research.

Funding

Not Applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Macrothink Institute.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.