

## Suggestopedia-Based Language Learning to Enhance Students' Speaking Skills Viewed from Teachers' Educational Background

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### Abstract

Speaking skills are nowadays more promising skills economically to be learnt. The importance of mastering speaking skills shows that teachers should find a good solution to encourage their students to practice speaking much more. One of the learning models applied by teachers is suggestopedia-based language learning (SBLL) activities. Therefore, this study investigated the effectiveness of suggestopedia-based language learning to enhance students' speaking skills viewed from teachers' educational backgrounds at middle schools. To achieve the research goal, researchers employed experimental study using an equivalent pre-test and post-test control group design. The samples of this study were 75 students at middle schools, and they were divided into two classes. 33 students were involved as the experimental class subjected to the SBLL activities. 32 students were invited as the control classes, which was taught using the existing instructional activities (eclectic learning principles). The two groups were distributed speaking tests in the pre-test and post-test sessions. The variable of teachers' educational background is assumed as helping variable that gives an effect on students' speaking ability. The criteria used in this case are Very High (Educational Doctor) High (Educational Master), Moderate (Educational Bachelor), and Low (Non-educational Bachelor). The research findings of this study informed that the implementation of the SBLL has positive effects on speaking skills at middle schools. Furthermore, there is interaction between teachers' educational background and the use of the SBLL in improving students' speaking skills at middle schools. Therefore, this study can be concluded that the use of the SBLL was able to enhance students' speaking skills viewed from teachers' educational backgrounds at the middle schools.

**Keywords:** suggestopedia learning; speaking skills; teachers' educational background

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## INTRODUCTION

For most language learners, speaking is viewed as the most demanding of the four language skills (Sumarsono, Muliani, & Bagis, 2020; Nasution & Sukmawati, 2019). Speaking demands students to master a number of language features related to each other. For instance, fluent speech requires a mastery of language construction, vowel reduction, and elision (Muslem et al., 2019; Mulyono, 2019). Students who do not get enough practice with reduced speech will face difficulties to understand English native speakers and/or native-like accented speakers (Mukiabadi & Squire, 2019; Khodabandeh, 2018). It is in accordance with Road and Samutprakan (2019) who state that effective speaking

requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interaction that involves not only verbal communication but also the paralinguistic element of speech such as stress and intonation. In this last century, many linguists and educators give more attention to teaching English as a foreign language in various studies. It indicates that speaking skills are needed to be developed by English learners (Herna, 2010; Aprianoto & Haerazi, 2019).

In mastering speaking skill, the students should pay attention toward any proficiencies of speaking. Good speaker is who can cover all proficiencies well by the maximum score. Aprianoto and Haerazi (2019) contend that speaking is a complex skill requiring the simultaneous communication of using a number of different abilities which often develop at different rates because speakers in speaking activities should pay attention to four components of speaking ability such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. In developing these skills, many researchers applied various teaching media and learning methods (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2020; Passiatore et al., 2019; Azis & Dewi, 2020). In this study, researchers tried to improve students' speaking skills using suggestopedia learning activities viewed from teachers' educational background.

The main characteristic or the central of suggestopedia method is the use of music and musical rhythm in learning (Richrads & Rogers, 2001). This method with designed learning activities can relax learners in the class. As a result, students can absorb every material given by a teacher easily. Students will feel enjoyable to practice English without fear of making mistakes. This teaching method also gives a positive suggestion and motivation to learn English enthusiastically. Suggestopedia teaching method is applicable to teach speaking because this method facilitate students to argue about something indirectly in the teaching learning process. Because of this, students feel relax during the learning process and easily to speak something without any fear.

In this study, students can practice to speak English well with practicing continuously. Pae (2017) and Angelini and Garcia-Carbonell (2019) argued that learners have difficulties in acquiring English because they felt afraid of making mistakes. When the learners are in this situation, their heart and blood pressure raise (Galante, 2018; Uztosun, 2020). Students faced a mental block in their brain or affective filter (Angelini & Garcia-Carbonell, 2019). This filter blocks the input, so the learners have difficulties to acquir language caused by their fear (Galante, 2018). The combination of desuggestion and suggestion is to lower the affective filter and motivate students' mental potential to carry out ELT activities. It also aims to accelerate the process by which they learn to understand and use the target language for communication to achieve better learning. It is line with Richards & Rodgers (2001) who stated that the objectives of suggestopedia are to deliver advanced conversational proficiency quickly.

Given the speaking skills, researchers used suggestopedia method to improve students' speaking skills. It is aimed to comfort the students in learning and to enjoy with the material because they could be focus, could exchange their ideas easily in conducting speaking activities. The researcher hoped by the using strategies the students comfort in learning, enjoy with the material and easy understanding. Therefore, this study was focused on finding out the effect of suggestopedia method on students' speaking ability at the eighth-grade students in the middle schools.

## **Literature Review**

### *Speaking Skills*

According to Hsu (2019) speaking is giving a chance or opportunity to approach the students with language to find the real life conversation in the classroom. In declaring how to structure and what to teach in speaking classes, teachers always refer to some questions; who the students are, what they are learning English for, and what they expect to learn

(Irmawati, 2016; Anugrah et al., 2019). The one basic consideration is about the students' current level and leaning atmospheres (Cowie, 2018). This situation can be resulting great learning outcome caused by the class situation, environment, teaching method, technique, approach or even from the teachers who cannot deliver their material successfully (Hanan & Budiarti, 2019). Therefore, speaking is one of the most complicated language which needs a good skill and confidence to speak out their words. Speaking is generally thought to be the most important of the four skills. Indeed, one frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still they cannot speak it (Hayati, 2020). Furthermore, the students live in social life without talking in English often, and they do not interact and survive in life (Muliani & Sumarsono, 2019).

According to Sudarmaji et al. (2021), students should be asked to improve speaking skills on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. In mastering speaking skill, the students should pay attention toward any proficiencies of speaking (Suparlan, 2021). Good speaker is who can cover all proficiencies well by the maximum score. Ariani and Tawali (2021) argue that speaking is a complex skill requiring different language skills to support language acquisition.

### *Suggestopedia-Based Language Learning*

Suggestopedia is designed to help students to focus more on their learning activities including in the teaching of English as a foreign language. It facilitates students to utilize their systemic nonconscious effects during learning activities in the classes. This method also is oriented to control students in classroom management during learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In the teaching-learning practices, students are asked to feel relax such as listening music and make some notes based on their listening as possible as they can do. In speaking classes, this method is considered as effective strategy or method to retain English vocabulary (Richards & Rogers, 2001; Hall & Cook, 2012).

In the Lazanov's thesis revealed very few practical details about the uses to which suggestion might be put in the classroom. Lazanov found that that hypermnesia is linked to certain techniques of relaxation and concentration in educational system in which certain yoga exercises could be used. In the classroom, it induces students' super memory learning using basic factual materials. Suggestopedia is started purely as psychological experiment which aimed at increasing memory capacities in the educational process (Richards & Rogers, 2001). Suggestopedia is an experiment to enhance students' capacities for memorization. In the process of teaching and learning, the problem of understanding the material given in a lesson such as various song contains the memorizing process and automating it (Tomson, 2015; Higgins, 2009). All instruction and training becomes pointless if the new knowledge, habits and skills are not memorized and automated, so that they can use as a basis for further study.

## **METHOD**

In this study, researchers employed an experimental study using quasi-experimental design. This study is characterized by much greater control over the research environment. Some variables were manipulated to observe the effect on other variables (Kothari, 2004). This study is categorized as quasi-experimental with the pretest-post-test non-equivalent control group design. This current study involved 56 students from the middle schools. Because the population is less than 100 students, the all of 56 students in total are taken as the research sample. The sample was divided into two groups; the control and experimental group. The control group was treated using snowball method, while the experimental group was subjected to the SBLL method. The sample comes from the eighth-grade students in the middle schools in academic year of 2022/2023. In this research, the

researcher uses purposive sampling technique to take the sample. The samples have a particular set of characteristics.

To collect the research data, researchers used speaking tests that are intended to see students' vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and grammatical competences in the two groups. The speaking test is alike orat tests by providing students with some oral topics to speak. Oral test is carried out by talking or face to face interview between teacher and students. For the example, students do the interview about the picture with teacher. To score the result of it, the researcher divided scores into some criterias. Those are scores of the pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. To get the mean scores, researchers are assisted by SPSS devices.

In data analysis, the researcher used descriptive statistics and inferential statistic to calculate all of data he got with SPSS 19. Dealing with the descriptive statistics, researchers focused on the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation scores. Meanwhile, the inferential statistic is analysis derived from sample data that are used to make inferences about the population from which the sample is taken. In this research the researcher used t-test to compute the data which is the interval and derived from one samples. Researchers compared the result of t-test to t-table. If the result of t-test > t-table, the alternative hypothesis is accepted but if the result of t-test < t-table then the null hypothesis is rejected (Miller, (2005: 25).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to find out the effectiveness of SBLL method to improve students' speaking skills viewed from teachers' educational background at the eighth-grade students in the middle schools. The SBLL method is flexible learning method in ELT context that can facilitate students in meaningful learning activities (Richards & Rogers, 2001; Hall & Cook, 2012). In the middle schools in Indonesia, speaking skills are the most demanding of the four language skills (Aprianoto & Haerazi, 2019). This part discusses the research finding and discussion. In finding the data, the researcher used SPSS 19 software as an analogical analysis. Researchers collected the students' speaking achievement from the results of the pre-test and post-test. The researcher gave students' pre-test in experimental and control group. The researcher treated the students by used suggestopedia for experimental group, and guessing games for the control group. After given the treatment, the researcher gave the students post-test both of the groups. In obtaining the data, the researcher conducted the research at the eighth-grade students in the middle schools in academic year 2020/2022. The students' speaking scores resulting in the pre-test or post-test in the experimental group can be presented in the following Figure 1.

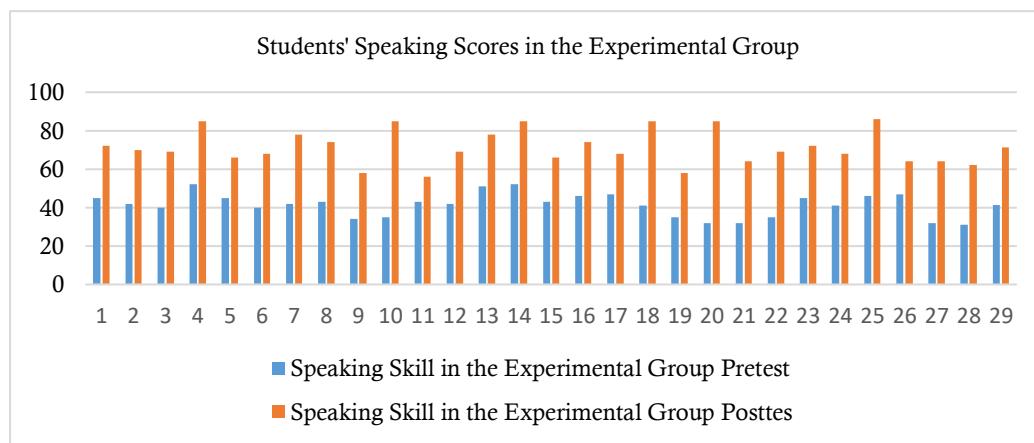


Figure 1. Speaking Skills in Experimental Group

Figure 1 presented the mean scores of students' speaking skills in pre-test session was 41.1. it indicates students still face difficulties in speaking ability in the eighth-grade students of the middle schools. After giving a special treatment using the SBLL method, students' speaking skills was improved. It means there is a positive effect using the SBLL method on students' speaking achievement. It was proven that the mean score in post-test session was 71.4. Compared with the students' speaking skills in the control group, the experimental group was better than that. Students felt relax to acquire some speaking elements in classes by using the SBLL method. In the implementation of the SBLL method, students are asked to train themselves on rules of phonology, vocabulary, word construction, and sentence formation. It was done in enjoyable learning activities. It is supported by some studies in which students who are treated with dynamic learning activities get more chances to elaborate and produce their language abilities in speaking classes (Muliani & Sumarsono, 2019; Hayati, 2020; Suparlan, 2021). In the SBLL activities, students also are facilitated with various speaking activities such as exploring social meaning and grammatical forms in different contexts. It aims to give students the sociolinguistic competences in speaking classes (Irmawati, 2016; Anugrah et al., 2019).

The students who are provided with snowball method in the speaking class have difficulties in performing speaking skills. this method facilitates students to just speak in some parts. Students do not have a good chance to perform their speaking skills because they do not get a comprehensible topic in speaking class. Due to this situation, the students' speaking skills in the control class which is taught using the snowball method was lower than students in the experimental group. The mean score of students in the control group can be presented in Figure 2. In some studies, snowball method was assumed as helpful learning strategy to facilitate students to improve students' language skills and linguistic elements in ELT contexts.

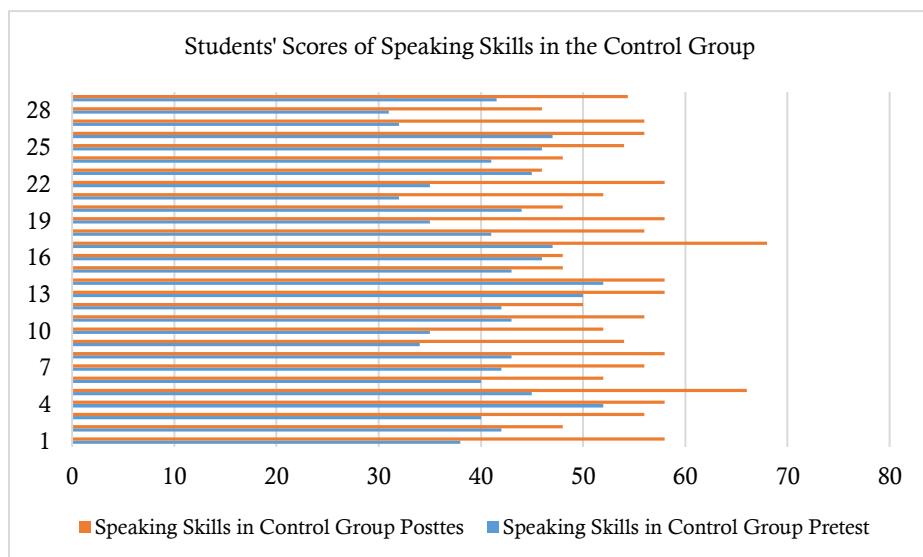


Figure 2. Students' Speaking Skills in the Control Group

The mean score of students' speaking skills in pre-test at the control group was 41.5, meanwhile the score in the post-test was 54.4. There shows improvement of speaking performance. However, the improvement is not significant to reach the passing grade of speaking skills. The passing grade was enacted in the score of 70. According to Aprianoto and Haerazi (2019), speaking skills require students to have grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Pranoto &

Suprayogi, 2020; Passiatore et al., 2019). In the implementation of the snowball method, students are not directed to acquire those competences. Students are just controlled in doing and accomplishing their speaking tasks with partner. Although students are able to complete their tasks, they cannot perform their speaking skills well. For instance, students cannot pronounce English words well, produce correct sentence formation in speaking activities, and make English correct word formation. It is different situation compared to the SBLL method implementation. In this class, students are provided with extensive authentic practice in speaking activities. According to Hanan and Budiarti (2020), students should be given opportunities as much as possible in speaking class such as taking part in discussion session in the class, sufficient times to interact with peers and teachers, and asking and answering questions. the differences of students' speaking skill achievement from the two speaking learning methods can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The Mean Score of Students' Speaking Skills in Experimental and Control Group

Descriptive Statistical Analysis		Pre-test in Experimental Group	Posttest in n Experimental Group	Pretest in the Control Group	Posttest in the Control Group
N	Valid	28	28	28	28
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		41.39	71.36	41.54	54.36
Median		42.00	69.00	42.00	56.00
Mode		32 <sup>a</sup>	85	35 <sup>a</sup>	58
Std. Deviation		6.160	9.028	5.847	5.472
Minimum		31	56	31	46
Maximum		52	86	52	68
Sum		1159	1998	1163	1522

The result of students' speaking skills in the two groups showed a difference in which students who were taught using the SBLL method were better speaking skills than those who were subjected to the snowball method. Table 1 showed the passing grade for speaking skills was achieved by students who are taught using the SBLL method. Students seemed that they are able to link units of speech together with facility and without inappropriate slowness and hesitation (Aprianoto & Haerazi, 2019; Hanan & Budiarti, 2020). It is supported by teachers who have good background education in ELT experiences. It is proven with the teachers have qualified certificate nationally. The researcher found mean score of the pre-test experiment group was 41.39, meanwhile the mean score of pre-test control group was 41.54. The median score of pre-test experiment group was 42, the median score of pre-test control group was 42, the mode score of Pre-test experiment group was 32, the mode score of pre-test control group was 35, and standard deviation of pre-test experiment group was 6.160, and standard deviation of control group was 5.472. The data showed that students treated using the SBLL method have good motivation and interest to attend the speaking classes. In practice, students are asked to analyse functional use of language such as activities on basic greeting, talking on telephone, and shopping (Terai et al., 2021). These simple activities are directed to train them in using language use and pronunciation level. Due to this, students felt easy to follow the class and teachers encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis on the Two mean score groups

	Nama	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	Experimental	28	71.36	9.028	1.706
	Control	28	54.36	5.472	1.034

Table 2 showed that students' speaking skills in the experimental group have been passing the maximum grade criteria. The passing grade criteria is 70 in the speaking class in the middle schools. In this study, students achieved the maximum grade criteria in 71.36. Based on speaking activities in this current study, the quality of ELT teachers determined how the SBLL method is applied. Therefore, the educational teacher background is together giving a positive effect on students' speaking skills. for instance, in deciding how to structure the SBLL learning tools and what to teach in speaking class, they designed in various learning speaking activities in the form of suggestopedia activities. It aims to create good atmosphere class with a dynamic learning situation (Kormos, 2020). In practice, teachers let students use their own language to address what they mean in communication. It sometime is good for students to build their fluency (Hall & Cook, 2012). Based on the t-test analysis, the use of the SBLL method has a significant effect on students' speaking skills viewed from teachers' educational background. It is can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Result of Independent t-test Analysis

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means					
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
							Lower	Upper	
Equal variances assumed	6.993	.011	8.521	54	.000	17.000	1.995	13.000	21.000
Equal variances not assumed			8.521	44.480	.000	17.000	1.995	12.981	21.019

This study proposed two hypothesis. Based on the t-test analysis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. It means the use of the SBLL method was effective in improving students' speaking skills. The students' speaking skills were significant difference compared to students who are subjected to the snowball method. The data showed score of the t-test was higher than the t-table. There is an positive effect of suggestopedia method towards student' speaking ability at the eighth-grade students in the middle schools. in the implementation of the SBLL method, teachers applied some learning strategies that affect speaking suggestopedia activities. For instance, the discussion activity provides students with reading activities first. Thus, students try to comprehend the content of the text. Students in front of the class are introduced with the topic, and then are asked to get into pairs and very often small groups to discuss the related topic. At the end of activity, students are asked to ensure a successful discussion outcome. With teachers' assistance, students are able to perform their learning tasks through performing their task in oral performance in front of the other students.

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to find out the effectiveness of SBLL method to improve students' speaking skills viewed from teachers' educational background at the eighth-grade students in the middle schools. The teachers' educational background is together giving a strong effect on classroom setting and learning and material design in speaking class when applying the SBLL method. In this study, the SBLL method is flexible learning method in ELT context that can facilitate students in meaningful learning activities. Students felt relax to acquire some speaking elements in classes. In the implementation of the SBLL method, students are asked to train themselves on rules of phonology, vocabulary, word construction, and sentence formation. It was done in enjoyable learning activities. Students are provided with dynamic learning activities and get more chances to elaborate and produce their language abilities in speaking activities such as exploring social meaning and grammatical forms in different contexts. It aims to give students the sociolinguistic competences in speaking classes.

The students who are provided with snowball method in the speaking class have difficulties in performing speaking skills. This method facilitates students to just speak in some parts. Students do not have a good chance to perform their speaking skills because they do not get a comprehensible topic in speaking class. Due to this situation, the students' speaking skills in the control class which is taught using the snowball method was lower than students in the experimental group. In the fact of the ELT demand, speaking skills require students to have grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. In the snowball method, students are not directed to acquire those competences. Students are just controlled in doing and accomplishing their speaking tasks with partner. Although students are able to complete their tasks, they cannot perform their speaking skills well. For instance, students cannot pronounce English words well, produce correct sentence formation in speaking activities, and make English correct word formation. It is different situation compared to the SBLL method implementation. In this class, students are provided with extensive authentic practice in speaking activities and are given opportunities as much as possible to take a part in discussion session in the class, sufficient times to interact with peers and teachers, and asking and answering questions.

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