

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMANISTIC METHODS IN REDUCING AFFECTIVE FACTORS AND IMPROVING ENGLISH LEARNING OUTCOMES OF STUDENTS AT SMP PGRI 1 PALEMBANG

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Abstrak

Faktor afektif seperti kecemasan yang tinggi dan rendahnya rasa percaya diri seringkali menjadi penghambat utama dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris siswa di SMP PGRI 1 Palembang. Penelitian kuasi-eksperimen ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan membandingkan efektivitas tiga metode humanistik Community Language Learning (CLL), Suggestopedia, dan Silent Way dalam mereduksi hambatan afektif serta meningkatkan hasil belajar keterampilan berbicara (speaking skill) siswa kelas VII. Instrumen penelitian yang digunakan meliputi kuesioner skala afektif serta tes kemampuan berbicara berbentuk pre-test dan post-test. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ketiga metode berhasil menurunkan filter afektif negatif dan meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa secara signifikan melampaui Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM). Kelas Suggestopedia mencatat peningkatan nilai tertinggi (dari nilai rata-rata 60,10 menjadi 81,20), disusul oleh kelas CLL (62,50 menjadi 78,40), dan kelas Silent Way (63,20 menjadi 76,80). Dapat disimpulkan bahwa pengelolaan aspek emosional yang tepat melalui pendekatan humanistik terbukti efektif menciptakan iklim kelas yang aman sekaligus mendorong pencapaian akademis siswa.

Kata kunci: Faktor Afektif, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, Silent Way, Hasil Belajar Bahasa Inggris.

Abstract

Affective factors such as high anxiety and low self-confidence often serve as major obstacles to English language learning among students at SMP PGRI 1 Palembang. This quasi-experimental study aims to analyze and compare the effectiveness of three humanistic methods Community Language Learning (CLL), Suggestopedia, and the Silent Way—in reducing affective barriers and improving the speaking skills of seventh-grade students. The research instruments used included an affective scale questionnaire and speaking ability tests in the form of pre-tests and post-tests. The results showed that all three methods successfully reduced negative affective filters and significantly improved student learning outcomes beyond the Minimum Passing Criteria (KKM). The Suggestopedia class recorded the highest score increase (from an average score of 60.10 to 81.20), followed by the CLL class (62.50 to 78.40), and the Silent Way class (63.20 to 76.80). It can be concluded that proper management of emotional aspects through a humanistic approach has proven effective in creating a safe classroom climate while simultaneously boosting students' academic achievement.

Keywords: Affective Factors, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, Silent Way, English Learning Outcomes.

History:

Received : 2 June 2026
Revised : 2 June 2026
Accepted : 9 June 2026
Published : 12 June 2026

Publisher: Horizon Edukasi Prima Indonesia

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1. INTRODUCTION

English language learning at the junior high school level is expected to develop students' communicative competence, enabling them to use English effectively in both academic and social contexts (Tahang et al., 2019; Rosyidah et al., 2023; Nguyen & Habók, 2022). However, the success of language learning is not solely determined by students' mastery of linguistic components such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and language functions. Psychological factors also play a crucial role in shaping learners' engagement and achievement in the language classroom (Umisara et al., 2021; Zarazaga-Peláez et al., 2024; Ventaja-Cruz et al., 2024). In many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, including Indonesia, students frequently encounter affective barriers that inhibit their willingness and ability to participate actively in language learning activities. At SMP PGRI 1 Palembang, for instance, students often demonstrate reluctance to speak English, become passive during classroom interactions, avoid participating in discussions, and exhibit anxiety when required to express their ideas orally. These conditions suggest that emotional and psychological factors may significantly influence students' language learning outcomes.

From a theoretical perspective, affective factors such as anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, and attitudes toward language learning are central determinants of second language acquisition. According to Smith, Mason, and Krashen (2021), the Affective Filter Hypothesis explains that learners who experience high levels of anxiety, fear, or low self-confidence develop a psychological barrier that prevents language input from being effectively processed and acquired. In contrast, learners with lower affective filters are more likely to absorb linguistic input and achieve better language proficiency. Supporting this view, Al-Hoorie (2020) argues that affective variables function as powerful mediators of language learning success, influencing learners' cognitive engagement, persistence, and willingness to communicate. Consequently, students who experience persistent anxiety and negative emotions may struggle to maximize their language learning potential despite having adequate intellectual abilities.

Research has consistently demonstrated that speaking activities are among the most anxiety-inducing tasks for EFL learners. Foreign language speaking anxiety often arises from fear of making mistakes, concern about negative evaluation from peers and teachers, lack of confidence in pronunciation, and limited opportunities to practice communication in authentic situations (Horwitz, 2020; Jin, 2023; Vuong thi hai et al., 2025). When students perceive the classroom as a threatening environment, they tend to avoid participation, resulting in reduced language exposure and limited opportunities for skill development. Therefore, language instruction should not merely focus on linguistic accuracy but should also address learners' emotional needs and psychological well-being (Purnamaningwulan, 2024; Vanichvasin, 2019; Williyan et al., 2025).

In response to these challenges, scholars have increasingly advocated for humanistic approaches to language teaching. Humanistic language teaching emphasizes the development of the whole person by recognizing learners' emotional, social, and psychological dimensions alongside their cognitive growth (Nurpratiwi, 2024; Prajayani & Thoyibi, 2017). Richards and Rodgers (2021) explain that humanistic methods seek to create supportive learning environments where students feel respected, valued, and emotionally secure. Such environments encourage learners to take risks, express themselves freely, and engage more actively in the learning process.

Among the humanistic approaches that have received considerable attention are Community Language Learning (CLL), Suggestopedia, and the Silent Way. Community Language Learning, developed by Curran, conceptualizes language learning as a counseling

process in which teachers act as facilitators and learners support one another within a collaborative community. This approach aims to reduce anxiety by fostering trust, empathy, and group solidarity, thereby creating a psychologically safe atmosphere for communication (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2021). Through collaborative interactions, students gradually gain confidence and become more willing to participate in language activities.

Similarly, Suggestopedia, introduced by Lozanov, seeks to remove psychological barriers to learning by utilizing relaxation techniques, music, positive suggestion, and aesthetically pleasing classroom environments. The method assumes that learners possess untapped learning potential that can be unlocked when negative emotions and limiting beliefs are minimized (Richards & Rodgers, 2021). Studies have suggested that relaxed learning conditions can improve students' motivation, reduce anxiety, and enhance language retention (Gurbuz & Cabaroglu, 2021; Yousefabi et al., 2022; Laia, 2023).

Meanwhile, the Silent Way, developed by Gattegno, promotes learner autonomy and self-discovery through minimal teacher intervention. Instead of providing direct explanations, teachers guide students to construct knowledge independently using visual aids and problem-solving activities. This method encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and develop greater self-confidence in using the target language (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2021). By reducing teacher dominance and increasing learner agency, the Silent Way may contribute to lower levels of communication apprehension and greater willingness to participate in classroom interactions.

Although previous studies have highlighted the potential benefits of individual humanistic methods, comparative research examining the relative effectiveness of Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, and the Silent Way remains limited, particularly within Indonesian junior high school contexts. Most existing studies focus on a single instructional approach without investigating which method most effectively addresses learners' affective barriers while simultaneously enhancing academic achievement. This gap in the literature underscores the need for empirical investigations that compare these approaches within authentic classroom settings.

Therefore, this study aims to compare the effectiveness of Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, and the Silent Way in reducing affective barriers and improving English learning outcomes among students at SMP PGRI 1 Palembang. By examining differences in students' anxiety levels, classroom participation, motivation, self-confidence, and academic achievement, the study is expected to contribute valuable insights into the implementation of humanistic language teaching approaches in Indonesian EFL classrooms. Furthermore, the findings may provide practical guidance for English teachers seeking to create more supportive and psychologically responsive learning environments that foster both emotional well-being and language proficiency.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental design of the non-equivalent control group type (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). This design was chosen because the formal classroom setting at SMP PGRI 1 Palembang did not allow for the random assignment of individual students to new groups without disrupting the school's academic schedule.

2.2 Population and Sample

The research population consisted of all seventh-grade students at SMP PGRI 1 Palembang. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling (Sugiyono, 2022), in which three classes were selected as experimental groups: Class VII.1 (received the Community Language Learning/CLL treatment), Class VII.2 (Suggestopedia), and Class VII.3 (Silent Way).

2.3 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection was carried out through two main types of instruments:

1. Speaking Test: Consists of a pre-test and a post-test to measure student learning outcomes. Assessment adopts an adapted version of Hughes's speaking rubric (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019), which covers the aspects of fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.
2. Affective Scale Questionnaire: Developed using a modified version of the Foreign Language Class Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz, which was adapted to measure students' motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety levels (Al-Hoorie, 2020).

2.4 Data Analysis Technique

Quantitative data obtained from test scores and questionnaires were analyzed using inferential statistics. Prerequisite tests for the analysis included tests of normality and homogeneity. To identify significant differences in effectiveness among the three humanistic methods, the data were analyzed using one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) via SPSS software (Field, 2018).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to the quantitative data analysis, there was a decrease in negative affective factors and an increase in students' speaking achievement at SMP PGRI 1 Palembang following the intervention

Table 1. Summary of Students' Pre-test, Post-test, Gain Scores, and Affective Indicators

No	Class/Method	Pre-test Average	Post-test Average	Gain	Dominant Affective Indicator
1	VII.1 (CLL)	62.50	78.40	+15.90	Low Anxiety & High Empathy
2	VII.2 (Suggestopedia)	60.10	81.20	+21.10	High Motivation & Relaxed
3	VII.3 (Silent Way)	63.20	76.80	+13.60	Autonomy & Self-Confidence

demonstrated reluctance to participate in speaking activities due to fear of making mistakes and being negatively evaluated by their peers. However, after several learning sessions using CLL, students became more willing to express their ideas and engage in classroom interactions. This improvement can be attributed to the supportive and collaborative environment established through the CLL approach.

The findings r

According to Richards and Rodgers (2021), Community Language Learning is grounded in counseling-learning principles in which the teacher assumes the role of a facilitator rather than an authoritative instructor, while students function as members of a learning community. Such an environment promotes mutual trust, empathy, and cooperation among learners. Consequently, students experience less pressure when communicating in the target language because responsibility for learning is shared collectively rather than individually. This finding supports Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which suggests that lower levels of anxiety facilitate more effective language acquisition by allowing learners to process linguistic input more efficiently.

Furthermore, the reduction of anxiety observed in this study is consistent with previous findings indicating that cooperative learning environments positively influence learners' emotional well-being and willingness to communicate (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Through peer support and collaborative problem-solving, students in Class VII.1 gradually developed greater confidence in using English. As their fear of making mistakes diminished, they became more active participants in classroom discussions and speaking activities. Therefore, CLL can be considered an effective humanistic approach for addressing affective barriers that commonly hinder English language learning among junior high school students.

Among the three humanistic methods investigated, Suggestopedia produced the highest improvement in students' learning outcomes, with Class VII.2 achieving an average score increase of +21.10 points. This finding suggests that the combination of relaxation techniques, positive suggestion, and a comfortable learning atmosphere significantly contributed to students' motivation and academic performance. Before the intervention, many students perceived English as a difficult and intimidating subject. However, after participating in Suggestopedia-based learning activities, students reported feeling more relaxed, confident, and motivated to engage with English learning tasks.

The theoretical foundation of Suggestopedia emphasizes the removal of psychological barriers that limit learning potential. Lozanov's theory proposes that students often possess hidden reserves of learning capacity that remain underutilized due to fear, anxiety, and negative beliefs about their abilities (Richards & Rodgers, 2021). By incorporating classical music, comfortable seating arrangements, and positive teacher encouragement, Suggestopedia creates a low-stress learning environment that promotes concentration and receptiveness to language input.

The findings of this study align with Al-Hoorie's (2020) discussion of affective variables in language learning. He argues that when learners experience reduced mental and emotional tension, their intrinsic motivation increases, enabling them to engage more actively with learning materials. Similarly, Krashen (1985) maintains that a low affective filter allows language input to reach the learner's acquisition system more effectively. The remarkable improvement achieved by Class VII.2 indicates that emotional comfort and positive classroom experiences can play a substantial role in enhancing language learning outcomes.

In addition, students exposed to Suggestopedia appeared to develop more positive attitudes toward English learning. Positive emotions generated during learning activities encouraged greater participation, improved concentration, and stronger persistence when encountering linguistic difficulties. These findings support the notion that motivation and emotional well-being are closely interconnected and collectively contribute to successful language acquisition.

Although the Silent Way treatment implemented in Class VII.3 produced the smallest increase in academic achievement (+13.60), the method demonstrated a significant impact on students' autonomy, self-confidence, and problem-solving abilities. Unlike traditional

teacher-centered approaches, the Silent Way minimizes teacher talk and encourages students to discover language patterns independently through exploration, experimentation, and peer interaction. As a result, students become more actively involved in constructing their own knowledge rather than passively receiving information.

According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2021), the primary objective of the Silent Way is to cultivate learner independence and self-reliance. The teacher deliberately remains silent for extended periods, allowing students to take responsibility for their learning process. In the present study, students initially experienced difficulty adapting to this approach because they were accustomed to receiving direct explanations from teachers. However, as the learning process progressed, they gradually developed the confidence to ask questions, provide peer corrections, and solve language-related problems collaboratively.

This finding is consistent with Zimmerman's (2000) theory of self-regulated learning, which emphasizes the importance of learner autonomy in achieving long-term educational success. Students who are capable of monitoring, evaluating, and regulating their own learning tend to develop stronger self-efficacy and greater academic resilience. The Silent Way encourages precisely these skills by requiring learners to actively participate in meaning-making processes rather than relying exclusively on teacher guidance.

Moreover, the increase in students' self-confidence observed in Class VII.3 supports previous research indicating that opportunities for independent discovery enhance learners' sense of competence and ownership over learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2021). Although immediate gains in test scores were lower compared to Suggestopedia and CLL, the Silent Way may provide more sustainable long-term benefits by fostering autonomous learning behaviors. Students who become independent learners are better equipped to continue developing their language proficiency beyond the classroom environment.

Overall, the comparative findings suggest that each humanistic method contributes to English language learning through different affective pathways. Community Language Learning primarily reduces anxiety through social support and collaborative interaction; Suggestopedia enhances motivation and academic performance through relaxation and positive suggestion; and the Silent Way develops learner autonomy and self-confidence through independent discovery. These results reinforce the importance of addressing affective factors in EFL classrooms and demonstrate that humanistic approaches can effectively support both students' emotional well-being and language achievement.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that all three humanistic language teaching methods Community Language Learning (CLL), Suggestopedia, and the Silent Way contributed positively to reducing affective barriers and enhancing English learning outcomes among students at SMP PGRI 1 Palembang, although each method achieved these outcomes through different mechanisms. Community Language Learning was particularly effective in reducing students' anxiety by fostering a supportive and collaborative learning community, while Suggestopedia produced the greatest improvement in academic achievement by creating a relaxed and motivating learning environment. Meanwhile, the Silent Way showed the strongest potential for developing learner autonomy, self-confidence, and self-regulated learning skills despite yielding comparatively lower short-term academic gains. These findings imply that English teachers should consider integrating humanistic approaches into classroom practice to address students' emotional and psychological needs alongside linguistic development, thereby creating more inclusive and learner-centered environments. Furthermore, schools and curriculum developers may benefit from incorporating affective-

oriented teaching strategies to enhance students' motivation, participation, and overall language achievement. Future research is recommended to investigate the long-term effects of these humanistic methods on students' language proficiency, motivation, and learner autonomy across different educational levels and contexts. Additional studies employing larger sample sizes, mixed-methods designs, or longitudinal approaches could provide more comprehensive evidence regarding the sustainability and comparative effectiveness of humanistic language teaching methods in EFL classrooms.

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