



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**EFFECTS OF SUGGESTOPEDIA ON THE CRITICAL THINKING
SKILLS OF SELECTED MALAYSIAN FORM TWO STUDENTS**

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**EFFECTS OF SUGGESTOPEDIA ON THE CRITICAL THINKING
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By

NG SIEW HUA

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

July 2001 /



DEDICATION

To all my family members; my parents, Ng Khim Chin and Sia Cho Hi, my two brothers, Ng Kok Hwa and Ng Kim Hwa, sisters-in-laws, Voon Ah Kam and Chin Kuan Yin and my two youngest sisters, Ng Ngen Hwa and Ng Poh Hwa, I would like to dedicate this study for their unceasing support and encouragement without whose understanding writing of this thesis cannot be done and lastly to my two nieces, Ng Li Wen and Ng Li Phin and my two nephews, Ng Li Yuan and Ng Li Hong for bringing me joy and inspiration.

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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Faculty: Educational Studies

To develop learners' full potential intellectually and emotionally with the ability to think critically, learners need to be exposed to positive and constructive suggestions in a non-threatening environment. This research examined the effects of Suggestopedia on a selected group of Malaysian form two students' critical thinking skills using the COGAFF (cognitive and affective) taxonomy of questioning as a tool to assess the subjects' level of thinking.

The research design used in this study was a nonrandomized control group, pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design on two groups of homogenous form two Malay students selected based on their form one final year examination academic performance. The research was carried out over a period of two weeks on two classes of students (25 students in the control group and 32 students in the experimental group). The instruments used were pretest questionnaire and posttest questionnaire, pre- and post- reading tests using the seven levels of COGAFF taxonomy of questioning, direct observation and interviews.

The data and results collected were analysed using the SPSS for percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-tests and repeated-measures analysis of variance. The findings showed that there was no significant difference in the mean scores in the first posttest between the two groups of subjects administered immediately after teaching. However, there was significant difference in the mean scores in the experimental group as compared to the control group in the second posttest administered after two weeks. The findings also showed that subjects in the experimental group responded more positively to the lessons and reading texts as compared to the control group. This study concluded that the teaching method, Suggestopedia, had a positive and consistent effect on this group of form two students' critical thinking skills immediately after treatment and also after a lapse of time as compared to the control group with the normal classroom teaching method.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
untuk memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains.

**KESAN SUGGESTOPEDIA KE ATAS KEMAHIRAN BERFIKIR
SECARA KRITIS PELAJAR MALAYSIA TINGKATAN DUA
YANG TERTENTU**

Oleh

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Untuk memperkembangkan potensi pelajar dari segi kognitif dan emosi sepenuhnya supaya berkebolehan untuk berfikir secara kritis, pelajar perlu didedahkan dengan cadangan yang positif dan konstruktif dalam keadaan aman dan tidak mengancam. Kajian ini melihat kesan Suggestopedia atas kemahiran berfikir secara kritis di kalangan satu kumpulan pelajar Malaysia yang tertentu dari tingkatan dua dengan menggunakan alat taxonomi pertanyaan COGAFF (kognitif dan affektif) untuk menguji tingkat pemikiran pelajar.

Rekabentuk kajian yang digunakan untuk kajian ini adalah rekabentuk kumpulan kontrol tidak rawak, praujian-pasca ujian eksperimen-kuasi ke atas kumpulan pelajar yang sama dan mengikut keputusan akademik tahun akhir tingkatan satu mereka. Kajian dijalankan ke atas pelajar dari dua kelas tingkatan dua yang berlainan (25 orang pelajar dari kumpulan kawalan dan 32 orang pelajar dari kumpulan eksperimen), dan kajian ini telah mengambil masa selama dua minggu.

Alat ukur yang digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data adalah soal-selidik praujian dan soal-selidik pasca ujian, pemerhatian secara langsung, temuduga, pra ujian membaca dan pasca ujian membaca yang menggunakan tujuh tahap taxonomi COGAFF sebagai alat ukur pemikiran pelajar.

Data dan keputusan yang dikumpulkan telah dianalisis dengan menggunakan SPSS untuk mendapat peratus, min, sisihan piawai dan ujian-t dan ujian “repeated-measures analysis of variance”. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa tiada perbezaan signifikan bagi kedua dua kumpulan pelajar dalam ujian-pasca pertama. Namun, keputusan menunjukkan bahawa ada perbezaan yang signifikan bagi kumpulan eksperimen berbanding dengan kumpulan kawalan dalam ujian-pasca kedua yang diberikan selepas dua minggu. Keputusan dari alat ukur lain juga menunjukkan bahawa respon subjek dari kumpulan eksperimen lebih positif berbanding dengan kumpulan kawalan dalam pelajaran dan minat membaca atas teks pembacaan. Kesimpulan dari kajian ini ialah cara pengajaran, Suggestopedia, memberi kesan positif dan konsisten atas kemahiran berfikir secara kritis bagi kumpulan pelajar tingkatan dua selepas olahan dan selepas sesuatu waktu masa berbanding dengan pelajar dari kumpulan kawalan yang terlibat dalam cara pengajaran yang norma.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Sek.	Sekolah (School)
Men.	Menengah (Secondary)
Keb.	Kebangsaan (National)
COGAFF Taxonomy of Questioning	Cognitive and Affective Taxonomy of Questioning
CDC	Curriculum Department Center
PMR	Penilaian Menengah Rendah (Lower Secondary Assessment)
KBKK	Kemahiran Berfikir secara Kritis dan Kreatif (Critical and Creative Thinking Skills)
ESL	English as a Second Language

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Learners in the traditional classrooms are often exposed to negative and destructive suggestions which prevent the learners from developing their full potential (Kussler, 1998). In order for the learners to develop their full potential, Kussler (1998) suggests that these negative suggestions be replaced with constructive suggestions by creating a non-threatening learning environment. Many members in the language teaching community are trying to find ways to increase the learners' receptive input and to lower the learners' anxiety in the communicative output (Celce-Murcia, 1991). Brown and Yule (1983) and Bowen, Madsen and Hilferty (1985) suggest Suggestopedia as one of the packaged pedagogies or teaching methods which focuses on tapping the learners' abilities in learning languages by counteracting the fears and inhibitions that are likely to impede language learning.

Bowen, Madsen and Hilferty (1985) mention that there are assurances of progress in language learning using Suggestopedia as a method of teaching. They also mention that in ideal conditions the experience of learning is totally positive and

learners also show surprising fluency and communicative ability in a short span of time. This research serves to focus on the learning environment using this teaching method, Suggestopedia, to examine its effect on the learners' critical thinking skills.

Chapter One of this research explains the following aspects: background of this research, theoretical background based on research findings related to Suggestopedia and critical thinking, rationale for selecting the theories related to Suggestopedia and critical thinking, a conceptual framework of this research, statement of the problem, objectives and significance of this research, operational definition of research terms and finally limitations encountered in this research.

Background of Research

English Language, a second language in both secondary and primary Malaysian schools, is taught based on the English Language Syllabus planned by the KBSM (Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah). The aims of the syllabus are to develop the students intellectually, emotionally, spiritually and physically to meet one of the main objectives of the National Philosophy of Education. It also aims to produce students who are able to think rationally, critically and creatively apart from equipping them with skills and knowledge of English which are communicative in nature. The objectives of the secondary school English Language programme are to enable students to be able to listen and understand English used formally and informally, to speak effectively on a variety of topics, to

read and understand prose and poetry for information and enjoyment and to write effectively for different purposes (Sukatan Pelajaran Sekolah Menengah, Bahasa Inggeris, 1987).

In 1990, the Class Readers Programme initiated by the Ministry of Education was incorporated into the KBSM English language classroom. This programme is introduced to expose students to materials written in English and to prepare the students for future literature study (Ariffin, 1992, Sreetharan, 1996, Mukundan, Ting and Ghani, 1998). The class-readers are used as supplementary reading texts in class to improve the students' reading skills and to promote the learning of English as a second language. However, in 1999, the Ministry of Education has proposed to end the Class Reader Programme (CRP) and replace it with another literature programme, the Literature Component in the English Language curriculum for Secondary Schools in the year 2000 (Pendidikan Perancangan Kurikulum, 1999). Its objectives are to enable students to give personal responses to texts, to show an awareness of how language is used in a particular purpose, to reflect upon, draw conclusions and relate issues and concerns of life as portrayed in the literary texts and to understand and appreciate other cultures. This will indeed enable students to appreciate Literature; to learn literature with a small "l*" as well as with a big "L*".

* Literature with a small "l" are texts which uses language which could be said to be literary whereas literature with a big "L" refers to Literature in English as an academic subject (Carter & McRae, 1996)

According to the Education Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak (Kaur, July 25, 1999) the inclusion of literature in English will not only assist in promoting the reading habit among students but also enable them to evaluate and criticize literary works. Besides this, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak also feels that literature in English will be able to promote universal moral values like unity, diligence and patriotism (Kaur, July 25, 1999). To be able to evaluate and criticize literary works, students will need to read critically and go beyond the text to be able to appreciate the literary texts.

The ESL education in Malaysia is concerned about the students' ability to read critically. It is presently focusing on the ideas of both KBSM (Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah) and KBKK (Kemahiran Berfikir secara Kritis dan Kreatif) programmes with the hope that these ideas can be transferred into the classroom. It also aims at enhancing students' cognitive and affective domain in order to develop their critical and creative thinking skills so that learners are equipped with the ability to apply these knowledge and thinking skills rationally in real life situations (Ghazali Mustapha, 1998). However, there is the question of whether our Malaysian second language learners do possess these critical thinking abilities to comprehend, analyse, apply or even appreciate the English literature texts which are selected and approved by the Curriculum Panel in the Ministry of Education.

In relation to the question of whether our Malaysian second language learners do possess these critical thinking abilities, many secondary and university-level EFL

teachers feel the need to assist students develop study strategies to improve literary competence (Isenberg, 1990). These study strategies are aimed at developing the reader's awareness of how the learners should approach the reading of a literary text. Isenberg (1990) mentions that the question of "literary competence" is closely related to the intellectual performance of the learners. Therefore, literary competence needs to be improved at the procedural level (Isenberg, 1990).

At this procedural level, Tomlinson (1998) argues that materials used should be accompanied by learning which stimulates the left and right brain activities. According to Tomlinson (1998), narrowly focused activities which require little cognitive processing will result in shallow learning unless it is accompanied by activities which stimulate the affective processing. This is a fundamental principle of the Lozanov's Suggestopedia. Lozanov assumes that the only major linguistic problems in the language classrooms are memorization and integration (Adamson, 1997a). Learners remember the words and patterns of the language and integrate them into their personalities. In addition to this, the materials and activities used which stimulates the thoughts and feelings in the learners allows for the maximization and stimulation of the left and right brain's learning potential (Tomlinson, 1998). They encourage intellectual involvement as in cognitive processing and aesthetic and emotional involvement as in affective processing. Here, Lozanov's Suggestopedia is designed primarily to make these two processes more effective through engaging the learners in a variety of left and right brain activities in the same lesson (Adamson, 1997b, Tomlinson, 1998)

The question now is how true are the above statements as mentioned by Adamson (1997b) and Tomlinson (1998) when our Malaysian second language learners are engaged with literary texts and a variety of related activities which are supposed to help stimulate the right and left brain in a cozy musical learning environment as suggested by Lozanov's Suggestopedia. Based on this argument, this research seeks to find out the effect of this teaching method, Suggestopedia, on a selected group of Malaysian Form Two students' critical thinking skills.

Theoretical Framework

Two key ideas have been brought up in this study. They are the teaching method, Suggestopedia and critical thinking. This section discusses and gives an overview of the basic theory and specific theory related to the main key ideas: Suggestopedia and critical thinking.

Suggestopedia

In this section, two aspects are being discussed. They are theories of learning and theories of learning related to Suggestopedia.

Theories of Learning

The three major theories related to language learning are behaviourism, cognitivism and humanism (Chitravelu, Sithamparan and Choon, 1995).

Behaviourism started in the early twentieth century and it emphasizes the relationship and reinforcement between stimulus and response. The fundamental principle of this theory is to produce a set of habits through repetition. When the habits are formed and memorised, language used becomes automatic. Cognitivism, on the other hand, emphasises on how the learners organise their knowledge. The principles behind this theory are to teach learners ways to analyse problems and to think for themselves. Learning is an active mental process where learners are required to discover and explore and apply what they have learned to situations. Errors are viewed as an integral part of learning (Chitravelu, Sithamparan and Choon, 1995). Finally language teaching based on the humanistic theory emphasises a holistic view of the human personality and humanistic values and a lesser analytical approach to the content of teaching (Brumfit, 1984). Humanism takes into account the affective and emotional factors of the learners. This theory views a conducive non-threatening learning environment as an important factor in affecting and influencing language learning.

Another more recent theory related to language learning is the transitive theory. It relates strongly to ones' ability to construct meaning using his own schemata. As a result, meanings are created as the readers encounter the text (Ghazali Mustapha, 1997). This transitive theory employs Beyer's Model of Functional Thinking Operations of making meaning out of ones' background knowledge and the reading texts are related to the thinking operations like critical and creative thinking referred to in the fields of teaching of literature of science, language arts and social sciences (Beyer, 1992, Ghazali Mustapha, 1997). Beyer's