

## Improving Speaking Skills Through the Sociodrama Method in Grade V Students at Elementary School

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### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received March 07, 2026

Accepted April 20, 2026

Published May 16, 2026

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#### Keywords:

Classroom Action Research;

Elementary School;

Sociodrama Method;

Indonesian Language;

Speaking Skills.

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### ABSTRACT

The low speaking skills of fifth-grade students at Elementary School 2 Ambon in learning Indonesian are the background of this research. Initial conditions indicate that students' abilities are still below the Minimum Completion Criteria. This research aims to improve students' speaking skills through the application of the sociodrama method. The type of research used is Classroom Action Research (CAR) model Kemmis and McTaggart. The research was conducted in two cycles involving 25 students as research subjects. Each cycle consists of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, oral tests, and documentation. The results of the study showed a consistent increase in speaking skills. The average class score increased from 62.60 (sufficient) in the pre-cycle to 69.20 in the first cycle and reached 79.76 (good) in the second cycle. The percentage of classical completeness increased drastically from 0% in the pre-cycle to 56% in the first cycle and reached 100% in the second cycle. The improvement includes aspects of intonation, pronunciation, fluency, expression, and self-confidence. This study proves that the sociodrama method is effective in creating an active, enjoyable, and student-centered learning environment, and provides practical references for teachers in their efforts to improve speaking competence in elementary schools.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language learning in elementary schools encompasses four core language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Fatmawati et al., 2023; Lingasari & Rochaendi, 2022). Among these four competencies, speaking plays a central role as the primary medium of oral communication in everyday life, enabling individuals to effectively convey ideas, feelings, and information. This skill is a core competency that must be developed comprehensively, as it is a key indicator of students' success in language literacy (Magdalena et al., 2021). Given its vital role,

developing speaking skills from the elementary level requires serious attention from educators to build a solid communication foundation.

Conceptually, speaking reflects the ability to express thoughts and feelings verbally (Mubarok et al., 2025). However, the reality on the ground shows that elementary school students' speaking skills still require significant improvement, as many students struggle to articulate their ideas in front of the class (Anjelina & Tarmini, 2022). These obstacles are often triggered by low self-confidence, excessive anxiety, and linguistic errors such as grammatical inaccuracies, limited vocabulary, pronunciation errors, and inappropriate intonation (Azzahra et al., 2023). Ummah et al. (2020) identified three main obstacles in this area: difficulty in developing ideas, limited vocabulary, and a lack of courage to perform orally.

Poor speaking skills were also confirmed by Padmawati et al. (2019), who found that fifth-grade students were often unable to express their opinions or respond adequately to teacher questions. This phenomenon was exacerbated by passive classroom interactions, minimal use of instructional media, and the dominance of lecture methods, which deprived students of space for exploration. A similar situation was identified at Elementary School 2 Ambon, where initial observations showed that students tended to be reluctant to speak in front of the class and often switched to local dialects during the learning process. As a result, academic achievement in the speaking domain at the school did not meet the Minimum Completion Criteria.

In response to these challenges, instructional innovations are needed that can create an active, student-centred learning ecosystem. The sociodrama method presents a strategic solution because it directly involves students in portraying specific characters or social situations relevant to the material (Irma & Andrzej, 2025; Ius, 2025; Tanjung & Ridho, 2024). Through this activity, students are trained to speak spontaneously, express emotions, and develop oral communication skills in meaningful contexts (da Penha Nery & Gisler, 2019; Trisiantari, 2017). The use of this innovative method has been proven to increase student motivation and active participation, which in turn strengthens their speaking skills at the elementary level (Suriani et al., 2021).

The application of sociodrama has been supported by various empirical findings. Fauziah et al. (2020) emphasized that this method provides direct communication experience in real-world simulations, thereby encouraging students' courage to perform in public. Research by Hasriyani et al. (2022) demonstrated a significant effect of sociodrama use on dialogic speaking skills with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . Furthermore, Daulay et al. (2023) and Ramadani & Hamza (2025) concluded that practicing spoken language in meaningful situations is a key factor in effective language learning in elementary schools.

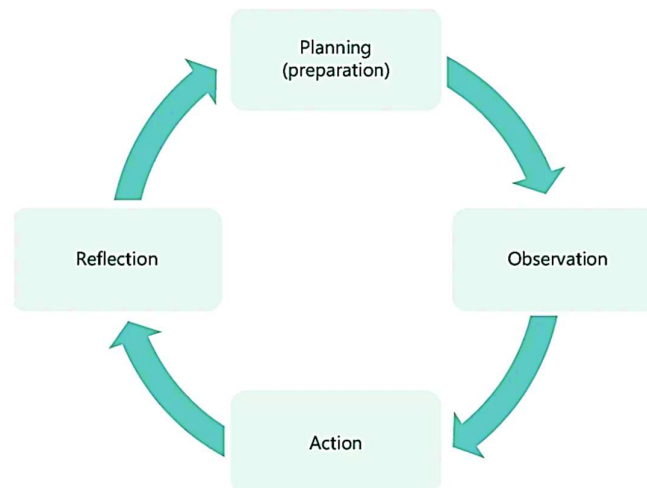
The uniqueness of this study lies in the integration of the sociodrama method, which focuses on strengthening formal Indonesian vocabulary to reduce the dominance of local dialects in Ambon schools. While previous research has focused largely on general fluency, this study specifically evaluates how sociodrama can serve as a language transition tool for students who are highly dependent on regional languages to Indonesian, appropriate to the educational context. By applying

Classroom Action Research (CAR) through the Kemmis and McTaggart model, this study not only measures the results but also provides an in-depth description of the process of changing students' communication behavior in each cycle.

Based on this urgency, this study aims to describe the implementation of the sociodrama method and comprehensively analyze the improvement of students' speaking skills. The results of this study are expected to provide alternative solutions for educational practitioners in addressing low speaking proficiency, while also contributing to the development of more innovative and meaningful instructional strategies within the Indonesian language curriculum in elementary schools.

## 2. METHOD

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design, designed to directly address real-world classroom problems. As a form of reflective inquiry, CAR aims to improve the quality of the instructional process while enhancing student learning outcomes through measurable interventions. This research was conducted collaboratively between researchers and classroom teachers, emphasizing the principle of a continuous cycle until the established success criteria were optimally achieved.



**Figure 1.** Classroom Action Research (CAR) Design

The research model adopted was the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which integrates four main stages in each cycle: (1) planning, (2) acting, (3) observing, and (4) reflecting. This study is planned to take place in two cycles, with each stage designed to address weaknesses identified in the previous stage. If the success indicators have not been met by the end of Cycle I, the research will continue to Cycle II, integrating the reflection results from the first cycle as a basis for action improvements.

The research location is at Elementary School 2 Ambon, Ambon City, Maluku Province. The research subjects involved 25 fifth-grade students in the 2024/2025 academic year. The selection of fifth-grade students was based on preliminary findings indicating that the students' speaking proficiency level in the class was still low,

necessitating targeted intervention through more interactive and effective learning methods than the conventional approaches previously used.

To obtain accurate data, this study employed three main data collection techniques. First, systematic observations were conducted using observation sheets to monitor the implementation of the sociodrama method and active student participation. Second, an oral test was administered in the form of a drama performance in front of the class to objectively measure students' speaking skills. Third, documentation techniques were used to collect supporting data such as photographs of learning activities, attendance records, and documents of student work as physical evidence of the intervention.

The research instruments used included observation sheets of teacher and student activities and a speaking skills assessment rubric. The rubric covered five assessment dimensions: fluency, vocabulary accuracy, clarity of pronunciation and intonation, self-confidence, and relevance of content to the role played. The collected data was then analyzed using quantitative descriptive techniques to calculate individual learning outcomes and classical mastery, to provide a clear picture of the effectiveness of the actions that had been taken.

$$\text{Learning Outcome} = \frac{\text{Score Obtainde}}{\text{Total Score}} \times 100\%$$

Classical mastery was computed as follows:

$$\text{Classical Mastery} = \frac{\text{Number of Students Whor Passed}}{\text{Total Student}} \times 100\%$$

Student learning outcomes were subsequently compared against the Minimum Mastery Criterion of 70, as determined by Elementary School 2 Ambon. Student performance was classified using the criteria presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Student Learning Mastery/Pass Criteria

No	Interval	Grade	Classification
1	85 – 100	A	Excellent
2	70 – 84	B	Good
3	55 – 69	C	Sufficient
4	40 – 54	D	Poor
5	< 39	E	Very Poor

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

##### Pre-Test Results

Prior to the start of Cycle I, the researcher and the fifth-grade teacher conducted a pre-test to assess the students' speaking proficiency levels at the starting point. This test enabled all 25 fifth-grade students to ensure an accurate and comprehensive picture of their competencies as baseline data for the study.

The results of this pre-test provided the researchers with the fundamental data they needed to measurably design action strategies for the next cycle. This information was then integrated into the development of a sociodrama-based lesson plan, specifically designed to improve students' speaking skills in accordance with identified needs.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Average Scores of Students' Speaking Skills (Pre-Test)

No	Assessment Aspects	Average Score	Category
1	Intonation	11.28	Enough
2	Pronunciation	12.84	Enough
3	Fluency	13.24	Enough
4	Expression	11.56	Enough
5	Confidence	13.64	Enough
	Overall Average Total	62.6	Enough

Table 2 shows that the overall average score for students' speaking ability in the pre-test was 62.60, which is categorized as sufficient. Specifically, the average achievement for each assessed aspect included intonation (11.28), pronunciation (12.84), fluency (13.24), expression (11.56), and self-confidence (13.64). These results indicate that students' speaking performance in drama-based Indonesian language learning at Elementary School 2 Ambon is still relatively low and requires further optimization.

Building upon these findings, the researchers selected all 25 fifth-grade students as research subjects for intervention in Cycle I. The primary focus of this cycle was to improve students' speaking skills through the implementation of the sociodrama method. With this approach, it is hoped that the obstacles identified in the pre-test can be systematically addressed through more interactive and contextual role-playing.

**Cycle I Results**

**Table 3.** Results of Student Speaking Skills Assessment in Cycle I

No	Assessment Aspects	Average Score	Category
1	Intonation	12.48	Enough
2	Pronunciation	14.28	Enough
3	Fluency	14.64	Enough
4	Expression	12.72	Enough
5	Confidence	15	Enough
	Overall Average Total	69.2	Enough

Table 3 shows that after the intervention in Cycle I, the average score for students' speaking ability increased to 69.20, although it was still classified as adequate. The average score for each assessment aspect, including intonation, was 12.48, pronunciation 14.28, fluency 14.64, expression 12.72, and self-confidence 15.00. Of the 25 students, 14 successfully achieved or exceeded the Minimum Completion Criteria of 70, while the remaining 11 fell below this threshold.

These results indicate that the implementation of the sociodrama method in drama-based learning has not significantly improved the overall speaking skills of fifth-grade students at Elementary School 2 Ambon. Although there was progress compared to the previous phase, this achievement did not meet the completion target set by the

researchers. Therefore, the research continued into Cycle II to strengthen strategies and optimize students' speaking performance to achieve more satisfactory results.

## Cycle II Results

**Table 4.** Results of Student Speaking Skills Assessment in Cycle II

No	Assessment Aspects	Average Score	Category
1	Intonation	14.56	Good
2	Pronunciation	16.52	Good
3	Fluency	16.72	Good
4	Expression	14.76	Good
5	Confidence	17.28	Very Good
	Overall Average Total	79.76	Good

Table 4 shows significant improvement in Cycle II, with the average score for students' speaking ability reaching 79.76, which is classified as good. All 25 students (100%) were declared successful because they met or exceeded the established Minimum Completion Criteria. Specifically, the average achievement in each assessment aspect improved, with intonation at 14.56, pronunciation at 16.52, fluency at 16.72, expression at 14.76, and self-confidence reaching the highest score of 17.28.

The successful achievement of all these assessment indicators confirms the effective implementation of drama-based learning through the sociodrama method at Elementary School 2 Ambon. These results demonstrate that the intervention comprehensively stimulated students' speaking skills, from technical linguistic aspects to mental aspects of communication. With the full classical completion target achieved, this series of research activities was declared successful and completed in Cycle II.

## Discussion

The CAR study conducted in Grade V of Elementary School 2 Ambon aimed to improve students' speaking skills through the implementation of the sociodrama method in Indonesian language learning. The following discussion analyzes the baseline conditions of students' speaking ability, progression during Cycle I, and the outcomes achieved in Cycle II, in conjunction with relevant theoretical frameworks and prior empirical findings.

### Students' Speaking Ability Prior to the Sociodrama Intervention (Pre-Test)

The pre-test results revealed a class mean score of 62.60, categorized as *sufficient*, which did not meet the established Minimum Completion Criteria of 70. This baseline condition reflects a pervasive deficiency in speaking performance attributable primarily to students' low self-confidence and limited Indonesian language vocabulary.

This condition aligns with the findings of [Rahmawati et al., \(2021\)](#), who assert that low speaking proficiency among Grade V elementary students is closely associated with insufficient interpersonal intelligence and diminished self-confidence, which

constitute major barriers to oral expression in public settings. Similarly, [Muthi'ah et al., \(2022\)](#), argue that teacher-centered instructional approaches consistently fail to provide adequate opportunities for students to practice and freely express themselves, thereby resulting in stagnant speaking development. These conditions motivated the researcher to adopt the sociodrama method as a more active, innovative, and student-centered instructional alternative.

### Speaking Skills During Cycle I

Following the Cycle I intervention, the class mean score increased from 62.60 in the pre-test to 69.20, although it remained within the *sufficient* category. A total of 14 out of 25 students (56%) achieved the Minimum Completion Criteria, while 11 students (44%) had yet to meet the minimum threshold. Incremental improvements were evident across all assessed dimensions: intonation increased from 11.28 to 12.48, pronunciation from 12.84 to 14.28, fluency from 13.24 to 14.64, expression from 11.56 to 12.72, and confidence from 13.64 to 15.00.

These improvements indicate that the sociodrama method had begun to exert a positive influence on students' speaking development. [Fitri and Pransiska, \(2020\)](#) explain that the core advantage of the sociodrama method lies in its capacity to cultivate students' communication skills through direct practice, encompassing vocabulary development, speaking fluency, and the reinforcement of self-confidence via role enactment. This method encourages students to actively engage in simulated real-world situations, thereby yielding meaningful speaking experiences.

The failure to achieve full classical mastery in Cycle I was attributed to several factors: students remained unfamiliar with the sociodrama format, some lacked adequate preparation in understanding the narrative and dialogue, and a number of students were still inhibited by anxiety and reluctance to perform before their peers. [Izzati et al., \(2024\)](#), affirm that initial discomfort during the introduction of role-based methods is a predictable phenomenon that can be mitigated through motivational support, gradual familiarization, and intensified teacher scaffolding. Based on the Cycle I reflections, the researcher refined the instructional strategy prior to proceeding to Cycle II.

### Speaking Skills During Cycle II

In Cycle II, the refined implementation of the sociodrama method informed by Cycle I reflections produced a significant improvement in students' speaking skills. The class mean score advanced to 79.76, classified as *good*, with all 25 students (100%) meeting or surpassing the Minimum Completion Criteria. All assessed dimensions demonstrated growth: intonation reached 14.56, pronunciation 16.52, fluency 16.72, expression 14.76, and confidence 17.28. These achievements exceeded the predetermined success indicators, confirming that the study objectives were fulfilled in Cycle II.

The success of Cycle II was attributed in part to targeted enhancements based on Cycle I evaluation findings, including extended rehearsal time, clearer role

assignments, and pre-performance motivational reinforcement. These adjustments are consistent with the findings of [Muthi'ah et al., \(2022\)](#), who demonstrate that role-playing in Indonesian language instruction effectively improves elementary students' speaking skills when implemented systematically, with careful attention to student readiness, instructional clarity, and constructive teacher feedback.

### **Students' Confidence and Courage**

Among all assessed dimensions, confidence and courage demonstrated the most pronounced improvement across the research phases. The mean confidence score progressed from 13.64 in the pre-test to 15.00 in Cycle I and surged significantly to 17.28 in Cycle II. This trajectory demonstrates that the sociodrama method successfully created a psychologically safe environment in which students could express themselves orally without fear of error, as all speaking activities were embedded within an enjoyable role-play simulation.

These findings corroborate the research of [Siboro et al., \(2022\)](#), who identified a positive and significant relationship between the application of role-playing methods and the enhancement of self-confidence in elementary school students. When students are given the opportunity to embody a fictional character, the psychological burden of public speaking is reduced, as students perceive themselves as speaking not in their own capacity but as characters within a narrative thereby minimizing communicative anxiety. This position is further supported by [Khairun et al., \(2020\)](#), who demonstrate that role-playing techniques consistently enhance individuals' speaking confidence by simulating social interaction scenarios that prepare participants for authentic communicative situations.

### **Intonation, Pronunciation, Fluency, and Expression**

Beyond confidence, the dimensions of intonation, pronunciation, fluency, and expression also exhibited consistent improvement from the pre-test through Cycle II. Fluency progressed from a mean of 13.24 in the pre-test to 14.64 in Cycle I and 16.72 in Cycle II. Similarly, pronunciation increased from 12.84 to 14.28, then to 16.52. These improvements reflect the impact of students' active engagement in sociodrama activities, which provided sustained and meaningful speaking practice.

The gains observed in intonation and expression are intrinsically linked to the nature of the sociodrama method, which requires students not merely to recite dialogue but to genuinely embody the emotional states and circumstances of their assigned characters. Through this process of character interpretation, students implicitly rehearse context-appropriate intonation and emotionally congruent expression. [Rahmawati et al., \(2021\)](#) demonstrate that the cultivation of students' interpersonal intelligence through interactive speaking activities directly enhances their ability to calibrate expression and intonation to communicative context, ultimately elevating the overall quality of their oral communication.

### **Sociodrama Method and Speaking Skills**

Collectively, this study confirms the effectiveness of the sociodrama method in improving the speaking skills of Grade V students at SD Negeri 2 Ambon. The class score increased by 6.60 points from the pre-test to Cycle I, and by a further 10.56 points from Cycle I to Cycle II, indicating an accelerating trajectory of improvement as students became progressively more accustomed to the sociodrama format. The classical completion rate advanced from 0% in the pre-test to 56% in Cycle I and ultimately reached 100% in Cycle II.

The effectiveness of the sociodrama method can be attributed to several pedagogical mechanisms. First, it establishes an authentic and meaningful communicative context, rendering the use of oral Indonesian more natural and less intimidating for students. Second, students' emotional investment in character portrayal facilitates organic vocabulary activation within realistic situations. Third, student-to-student interaction throughout the sociodrama process promotes collaborative learning that strengthens listening, responsiveness, and turn-taking skills. As [Izzati et al., \(2024\)](#), explain, role-playing encourages students to become more active, confident, and proficient oral communicators, as speaking activities are conducted within an enjoyable, goal-directed environment that offers immediate feedback from both peers and the teacher.

These findings further underscore the importance of active and participatory learning approaches in the development of speaking skills at the elementary level. In contrast to conventional teacher-centered methods, the sociodrama method repositions students as autonomous agents of learning with full authority to express themselves orally. This principle elevates the sociodrama method beyond a tool for improving academic speaking scores it serves as a foundation for cultivating robust and meaningful oral communication competence essential to students' personal and social development.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

The implementation of the sociodrama method has been proven to be effective and significant in improving the speaking skills of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Ambon, as indicated by the increasing trend in the average class score from 62.60 (sufficient) in the initial test, to 69.20 in Cycle I, and reaching 79.76 (good) in Cycle II. This increase is in line with the classical completion rate which jumped drastically from 0% in the initial stage to 100% at the end of Cycle II, where all students successfully exceeded the Minimum Completion Criteria of 70. This progress covers all dimensions of assessment—intonation, pronunciation, fluency, expression, and self-confidence—with the most prominent achievement in the aspect of student mentality, which confirms that an active and student-centered learning environment can reduce psychological barriers in communication. Therefore, the sociodrama method is recommended as an innovative and solution-based instructional alternative for developing speaking competence in Indonesian language learning at the elementary school level.

As a suggestion, it is recommended for elementary school teachers to regularly integrate the sociodrama method into Indonesian language learning to create a more dynamic and interactive classroom atmosphere that can help develop students' speaking skills. Furthermore, schools are expected to support teacher competency development through role-based learning media training. Further researchers can develop this research by testing the effectiveness of the socio-rama method on a broader range of materials or combining it with digital technology to address the challenges of modern learning.

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