



## Operative Learning Model Using The 'Snowball Throwing' Method in Teaching Mandarin Vocabulary

Pratama Priya Pambudi<sup>1✉</sup>, Sheyra Silvia Siregar<sup>2</sup>, Ria Riski Marsuki<sup>3</sup>

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

### Keywords

cooperative learning,  
Snowball Throwing,  
Reading skills  
Mandarin Language  
High School

### Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the Snowball Throwing learning model in improving students' reading skills in Mandarin language classes. The research was conducted at SMA PL Don Bosko Semarang with students of class XII 5 as participants. A quantitative approach was employed using a one-group pretest-posttest design. Data were collected through reading tests administered before and after the application of the learning model. The results showed a significant increase in students' posttest scores, indicating that the Snowball Throwing model had a positive impact on students' Mandarin reading abilities. The interactive and collaborative nature of the model encouraged active student participation and enhanced comprehension through peer discussion. These findings suggest that Snowball Throwing is an effective strategy for improving reading skills in foreign language learning, particularly in high school settings. reading skills.

✉ Corresponding Author:  
E-mail: [pratamapriyaa@gmail.com](mailto:pratamapriyaa@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

Learning is fundamentally not only focused on improving cognitive abilities; we also need to enhance teaching methods and learning models. This is crucial to enable students to actively participate in the learning process. There are various methods and learning models that also allow for discussions, debates, games, role plays, and much more (Pranata, 2023).

According to Adhiatmika et al. (2017), the Snowball Throwing learning model is a type of cooperative learning designed like a ball throwing game, aimed at directing students' potential towards group material through a game that utilizes a sheet of paper shaped like a ball, which is then thrown to students by dividing them into several groups.

In terminology, the phrase "snowball" means "snowball," and "throwing" means "to throw." With everything thought about, snowball throwing is simply tossing a snowball. The snowball throwing learning model starts with the group formation, which is represented by a group leader who gets a task from the teacher. Next, each student generates questions in the form of a ball (question paper), which are then thrown to other students. Finally, each student takes turns answering questions from the ball they were given.

The snowball throwing learning model according to Komalasari is a learning model that explores the leadership potential of students in groups and the skills to create and answer questions combined through an imaginative game of forming and throwing snowballs. Snowball throwing learning is one of the learning models developed based on a contextual approach. The snowball throwing learning model requires students to be active in learning. Students are asked to formulate questions based on the material according to their creativity. In addition, 30 students must be able to answer questions from other students, thereby creating good interaction and training students to look for solutions to specific problems, especially in Mandarin language subjects.

This study explored whether implementing the Snowball Throwing learning model could effectively enhance students' Mandarin reading skills. The approach aimed to encourage more active participation, encourage collaboration among peers, and promote a shared learning experience, all of which help students better understand and retain what they read. When analyzing the results, we found that students achieved greatly higher scores on the post-assessments compared to the pre-assessments. This indicates that the Snowball Throwing method was successful in improving their Mandarin reading comprehension. Throughout the lessons, we also observed that students appeared more engaged, motivated, and confident in sharing their insights about the reading material. The classroom atmosphere became more energetic and interactive, making it easier for students to learn both independently and collaboratively.

## METHOD

This study used a straightforward approach to see if the Snowball Throwing method helps students improve their Mandarin reading skills.

We used the Snowball Throwing method in three main parts spread out over a few class sessions. First, the teacher kicked things off by introducing the lesson topic and helping students form small groups. Then, each student wrote down one question related to the Mandarin reading material on a piece of paper. These questions were crumpled into "snowballs" and tossed around the room between students. When a student caught a snowball, they tried to answer the question inside, and then the group discussed the answers together. The teacher moved around, encouraging participation and making sure everyone understood. Make sure that work can be repeated according to the details provided. It contains technical information of the study presented clearly. Therefore, readers can conduct research based on the techniques presented. Materials and equipment specifications are necessary. Approaches or procedures of study together with data analysis methods must be presented.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher provides an easy-to-understand overview of how the data was distributed across the research. The focus is on making the results clear and straightforward. The researcher tested the effectiveness of using the Snowball Throwing method in class XII 5, which has a total of 36 students—14 boys and 22 girls. Before starting the lesson, a pretest was given to measure the students' Mandarin skills, capturing the highest, lowest, and average scores to get a baseline of their abilities before applying the new method. Here's what the initial data showed: This section presents the research results. The research findings may be supplemented with tables, graphs, picture, and/or charts. The discussion section explains the processed data, interprets the findings logically, and connects them to relevant reference sources.

**Table 1.** Pretest Session

<b>Range of Score</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Maximum Score</b>	100
<b>Minimum Score</b>	20
<b>Average</b>	58,61111
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	18,53996

The table above shows what happened during the first meeting, which was a pretest carried out by the teacher in class XII 5 at SMA PL Don Bosko Semarang before trying out the Snowball Throwing learning method. The students in class XII 5 used to have an average score of around 58.6%, which is pretty much middle of the road. The highest score achieved was 100, while the lowest was 20. The scores showed a pretty wide range, with a standard deviation of 18.54, indicating that the students' results varied quite a bit and were spread out from the average. In the second meeting, you could really see the students getting excited about the Snowball Throwing method.

After the Snowball Throwing method was used in the previous session, I conducted a post-test in the third meeting to see how much students had learned. The results from the students in class XII 5 are listed below:

**Table 2.** Posttest Session

<b>Range of Score</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Maximum Score</b>	100
<b>Minimum Score</b>	50
<b>Average</b>	78,33333333
<b>Standard</b>	14,040757
<b>Deviation</b>	-

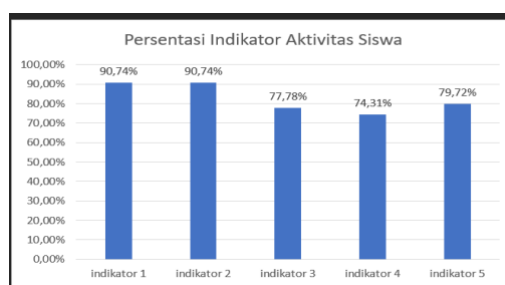
The table above shows the activities in the third meeting, which is the posttest conducted by the author in class XII 5 at SMA PL Don Bosko Semarang after the implementation of the Snowball Throwing learning method. The students of class XII 5 achieved an average class score of 78.33% after the treatment of the Snowball Throwing learning method. Furthermore, the highest student score obtained was 100, and the lowest score was 50. The standard deviation of 14.04 means that the posttest scores of the students show uniformity compared to the previous pretest.

Based on the data in the table above, it looks like using the Snowball Throwing learning method in class XII 5 SMA PL Don Bosko Semarang for teaching Mandarin really made a difference. The average score of the class went up to 78.33%, which shows that students' reading skills in Mandarin improved after applying this method. The top score, which was 100, stayed the same after the new approach, meaning the students with the highest abilities could keep their perfect scores regardless of the teaching method used. The lowest score increased to 50, indicating that even students who initially scored lower saw a noticeable improvement with this new way of teaching Mandarin. The standard deviation dropped to 14.04, meaning the scores after the test became more consistent and closer to

each other compared to before. Overall, this suggests that students' Mandarin reading skills in grade 12, class 5, became more evenly developed and showed important progress following the application of the Snowball Throwing method.

The researcher carried out this study to examine how effective a certain learning model is in helping 12th-grade students at SMA PL Don Bosko Semarang improve their reading skills. In this study, reading skills were assessed based on five main indicators, which are as follows: (1) Clarity of Pronunciation, (2) Grammar, (3) Use of Intonation and Expression, (4) Fluency in Speaking, and (5) Comprehension of Reading Material. The data obtained after the post-test of the application of the Snowball Throwing learning method was analyzed quantitatively through the calculation of the percentage achievement of each indicator and presented in the form of a bar chart as follows:

**Diagram 1. Student Activity Indicator**



Overall, the bar chart above shows that 12th-grade students in class 5 have made good progress in their Mandarin reading skills. Most of the indicators scored above 70%, which means they're doing fair to very well. On average, their overall achievement is about 82.26%, suggesting that using the Snowball Throwing learning method worked well for these students at SMA PL Don Bosko Semarang. These results match the goal of the research, which was to improve Mandarin reading skills by applying the Snowball Throwing method, a student-centered learning approach that encourages active participation.

Using the Snowball Throwing method in Mandarin classes offers several important benefits, both in understanding the language and in student motivation. Because it's a cooperative and interactive way of learning, it helps students stay engaged, improves their comprehension, and makes language learning more meaningful through peer interaction. Here are some of the main advantages seen during the learning process:

1. Improves Reading Comprehension Gradually.
2. Encourages Confidence in Language Use.
3. Enhances Learning Motivation and Engagement.
4. Develops Collaboration and Social Skills.

5. Promotes Deeper Understanding through Peer Interaction.
6. Supports Differentiated Learning.

## CONCLUSION

This study clearly shows that using the Snowball Throwing cooperative learning method can greatly improve students' Mandarin reading skills. The research was done with a class of 36 students 14 boys and 22 girls at SMA PL Don Bosko Semarang, using a simple pretest-posttest setup. The results were impressive: students' average reading scores went from about 58.61 before the treatment to 78.33 afterward. Besides, the spread of scores became narrower, with standard deviation decreasing from 18.54 to 14.04, which indicates that students' learning outcomes became more consistent after the activity.

From the five reading indicators assessed pronunciation clarity (90.74%), grammar accuracy (90.74%), intonation and expression (77.78%), fluency (74.31%), and reading comprehension (79.72%) it is evident that the Snowball Throwing model has a strong impact, particularly on phonological awareness and grammatical understanding. This indicates that the interactive questioning and answering process involved in the method effectively stimulates cognitive engagement, language processing, and retention in Mandarin learning.

In conclusion, the Snowball Throwing learning model is a highly effective and engaging instructional strategy for teaching Mandarin at the high school level. It enhances both academic performance and student engagement, and addresses several common challenges in foreign language learning. Therefore, it is recommended for broader application across similar educational contexts, with adjustments tailored to the specific language skills being targeted.

Although the Snowball Throwing learning method has shown several pedagogical advantages—such as fostering student engagement, promoting active participation, and enhancing collaborative learning—there are also notable limitations that should be taken into account, particularly in the context of classroom implementation.

1. Time management becomes a significant challenge.
2. Method may disadvantage students with introverted personalities or low self-confidence.
3. Effectiveness of the method heavily relies on classroom management and student discipline.
4. There is a risk of superficial learning.

In conclusion, while the Snowball Throwing method offers dynamic and interactive learning

experiences, its implementation requires careful planning, effective classroom control, and supplementary assessment strategies to ensure it supports deep and equitable learning for all students.

## REFERENCES

- Adhiatmika, M. W., Agustini, K., & Sindu, I. G. P. (2017). Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Tipe Snowball Throwing Terhadap Hasil Belajar Siswa Pada Mata Pelajaran TIK Kelas VIII SMP Negeri 5 Tejakula. *KARMAPATI*, 6(1), 1–10.
- Fazari. (2012). Peningkatan Kemampuan Berbicara Melalui Metode Simulasi Siswa Kelas IV Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tarbiyah Islamiah Bente Berkat Kecamatan Mandah Kabupaten Indragiri Hilir. *Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan UIN Syarif Kasim Riau*.
- Ismatilah, D. N. (2023). Pengaruh Penggunaan Metode Snowball Throwing dalam Maharah Kalam. *Annual International Conference on Islamic Education and Language (AICIEL)*, 922–935.
- Pranata, D. (2023). Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Tipe Snowball Throwing Terhadap Hasil Dan Minat Belajar Peserta Didik (Literatur Review). *INNOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research*, 3, 3318–3328.
- Rasyidah, S. N., Rabiah, S., & Akidah, I. (2023). *IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARD LANGUAGE WITH SNOWBALL THROWING MODEL TO IMPROVE STUDENT ' S SPEAKING SKILLS IN SMA NEGERI 1 TAKALAR*. 1(3), 963–972.