



Arabic Speaking Skills Training Through Role-Playing Method for Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School Students

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to improve basic Arabic speaking skills through role-playing method for boarding school students at Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School. This is because of the limitedness of competent educators in Arabic, the lack of time for Arabic lessons, and the availability of other subjects and activities, so students' Arabic speaking skills are not optimized. Theoretically, this study used educational linguistic approach with Arabic conversation skills theory and role-playing method, and methodologically, it used a mixed-method approach with a classroom action research design consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting with two cycles. The sources of data were Arabic teachers and Al-Hadi students, tutors or observer teams, and learning events in the classroom. The data collection techniques were tests, observations, interviews, and FGD. The data analysis used descriptive-quantitative and descriptive-qualitative. The results indicate that the role-playing method has succeeded in improving students' basic Arabic speaking skills with an average score of 86.5 or the increase of 26.5%.

Keywords: *Students, Basic Arabic Speaking Skill, Role-Playing Method, Training.*

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة لتحسين المحادثة العربية من خلال طريقة لعب الأدوار لطلبة المعهد في مدرسة الإسلامية الهادي الابتدائية. هذا، على الأساس أن فيها المدرسين الأكفاء في اللغة العربية محدودة، وقلة الوقت لتعلم اللغة العربية ووجود المواد والأنشطة الأخرى، وبالتالي فإن قدرة الطلبة على المحادثة العربية ليست بالشكل الأمثل. من الناحية النظرية، تستخدم هذه الدراسة نهجًا لغويًا تعليميًا مع نظرية مهارات المحادثة وطرق لعب الأدوار، ومن الناحية المنهجية، تستخدم نهجًا كميًا مع تصميم بحث عملي صفي يتكون من التخطيط والتنفيذ والملاحظة والتفكير بدوريتين. ومصادر البيانات فيها هي مدرسو اللغة العربية وطلبة في مدرسة الهادي والمعلمين فيها أو فرق المراقبين وأحداث التعلم في الفصل. وأما تقنيات جمع البيانات فيها هي الاختبارات والملاحظات والمقابلات ومجموعة المناقشة المركزة. وتحليل البيانات فيها باستخدام الطريقة الوصفية الكمية والوصفية النوعية. من النتائج فيها هي أن طريقة لعب الأدوار نجح في تحسين مهارات المحادثة باللغة العربية لدى الطلبة بمتوسط درجات ٨٦,٥ أو زيادة بنحو ٢٦,٥٪.

الكلمات الرئيسية: الطلاب، مهارات المحادثة العربية، طريقة لعب الأدوار، التدريب.

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Arab dasar melalui metode role playing bagi siswa boarding school Sekolah Menengah Pertama Islam Al-Hadi. Ini karena, keterbatasan pendidik yang berkompeten dalam bahasa Arab, waktu pelajaran bahasa Arab yang kurang dan adanya materi-materi dan kegiatan lain, sehingga kemampuan berbicara bahasa Arab siswa belum maksimal. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan linguistik edukasional dengan teori keterampilan percakapan bahasa Arab dan metode role playing, dan secara metodologis, menggunakan pendekatan mixed-method dengan rancangan penelitian tindakan kelas yang terdiri dari perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi dan refleksi dengan dua siklus. Sumber datanya adalah guru bahasa Arab dan siswa Al-Hadi, tutor atau tim pengamat, dan peristiwa pembelajaran di kelas. Adapun teknik pengumpulan data adalah tes, observasi, wawancara dan FGD. Analisis data penelitian ini menggunakan deskriptif-kuantitatif dan deskriptif-kualitatif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan metode role playing berhasil meningkatkan ketrampilan berbicara Bahasa Arab dasar siswa dengan nilai rerata 86,5 atau kenaikan sekitar 26,5%.

Kata kunci: Siswa, Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Arab Dasar, Metode Role Playing, Pelatihan.

A. Introduction

Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School was founded on April, 14th, 1998 under the auspices of the Amal Fatimah foundation. It is located at Jalan Raya Solo Tawangmangu KM. 9.5 Sapen Village, Mojolaban District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java Province, and the phone number is 027 825538. Its statistic number (*NSS/M*) is 204031109098 and was accredited A. It opens six days a week (Monday – Saturday) from 07.00 a.m. to 01.00 p.m. in accordance with the curriculum of the Ministry of Education and Culture. After

teaching and learning process, the activities continue with extracurriculars until 05.00 p.m. Besides, there are also boarding school programs for students who want to study Islam and foreign languages more. Al-Hadi is categorized as a modern school. It is indicated by the form of buildings and learning facilities for instance classroom, laboratory, cooperation, prayer room, and so forth. Moreover, the students were champions in various contests outside the school (Luthfi et al., 2022; Tim Sekolah, 2021).

The missions of Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School are to become a professional Islamic school, promote noble characters, and make noble characters the basis of each educational activity. Al-Hadi makes Arabic, which in fact is the language of Islam, and *Tahsin Quran* (to improve the ability to read the Quran) as subjects in its curriculum. Each subject has two hours of lessons in a week. Al-Hadi hopes that these subjects will become their students' provision in understanding Islam perfectly (*kāffah*). Besides, Al-Hadi also makes Arabic as a part of the extracurricular activities in terms of Arabic club to make their students communicate in basic Arabic well. Still, Arabic also becomes the major material in the boarding school program. In addition, Al-Hadi encourages students to use foreign languages, especially Arabic, for daily communication in the boarding school (Luthfi et al., 2022; Tim Sekolah, 2021).

However, this strategy did not work optimally and had no satisfactory result. It is due to that students were not used to speaking Arabic, even daily or basic Arabic. Also, they used Indonesian more. They only used Arabic when communicating with teachers in the classroom or during the learning process. Regarding the average score in Arabic, their scores were below the standards, as many as 60 (sixty). It is definitely low compared to other foreign languages, especially English. Consequently, educators, school leaders, and the foundation hope that there is an innovative program to facilitate and develop students' Arabic skills quickly and accurately (Tim Sekolah, 2021).

Based on preliminary studies, the program failure above was due to four reasons. First, there is limited competent educators in Arabic. In Al-Hadi, there are only two educators with an Arabic education background, so that is not optimal for managing students, whereas students are dozens. Second, the time for Arabic subjects is short. The Arabic subject only has two hours of lessons per week. In fact, students need to practice or minimally acquire new vocabulary every day if Al-Hadi wants their students to be able to communicate in Arabic. Third, there are various subjects. Al-Hadi provides various subjects for students, so their concentration is broken, and they become less focused on Arabic materials. Fourth, there are a lot of other activities. The extracurricular programs and homework for other subjects are abundant and make students tired and less enthusiastic about the Arabic club program.

Based on these problems, focus group discussion (FGD) with partners was carried out. It indicated that there was a need for a community partnership program (CPP) focusing on basic Arabic speaking skills through role-playing method for boarding school students. The aim of this program is to make students able to speak basic Arabic, especially vocabularies, language structure, and language style (*uslūb*) in daily activities used in school and at home. Basic Arabic (*ulā*) was selected because it was difficult to improve junior high school students' Arabic skills to intermediate level (*wustā*), and

advance level (*ulyā*) is generally for Senior High School or University students. Besides, the limitation in applying the *CPP* program to boarding school students was due to the aim of the boarding school itself, namely, to improve students' foreign language skills. Still, this program was appropriate with the extracurricular activities in terms of specialization and did not disturb other students with different interests, in accordance with that, some of the students did not choose Arabic for their extracurricular activities.

B. Methods

This *CPP* used the mixed-method (the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods) with the assistance design of classroom action research (*CAR*) namely, assisting and training 47 students of Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School to improve basic Arabic skills using role-playing method set in the classroom (Kunandar, 2008; Mukhadis, 2021). It was carried out for four months face-to-face in the classroom using the collaborative teacher-as-researcher system, in terms of teachers of Al-Hadi, eight educators or tutors playing as the observers. The locations were Al-Hadi Junior High School at Jalan Raya Solo Tawangmangu Km. 9.5 Sapen Village, Mojolaban District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java Province, and outside the classroom. *CAR* was Kurt Levin's model, which consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting in two cycles (Ginting et al., 2024). Before *CAR* was carried out, some instrumental inputs were used, in terms of training plan for *CAR* consisting of simple daily dialogue, namely, basic sentences, expressions, and vocabularies. In addition, , a set of training in terms of student worksheets, FGD observation sheets, and evaluation sheets was made.

Sources of data were students and teachers of Al-Hadi Junior High School, tutors or observer teams, and learning events in the classroom. Data collection techniques were (1) tests, used to obtain data about students' basic Arabic speaking skills; (2) observation, used to collect the data about students' participation in assistance and training program of students' basic Arabic speaking skills using role-playing method; (3) interview, used to get the data on results of the implementation of assistance and training program on students' basic Arabic speaking skills using role-playing method; (4) FGD of teachers and tutors (observers) for reflecting the result of the *CAR* cycles. The data from observation, questionnaire, FGD, and interview were analyzed through descriptive-qualitative using Miles and Huberman model with reduction, display, and verification or conclusion (Sugiyono, 2009; Udhia et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the data of tests from the *CAR* cycles were analyzed through descriptive-quantitative using percentages to view the improvement. The formula and scoring table were the following:

$$M = \frac{\sum FX}{N}$$

That are : $\sum FX$: total of students' score
 N : number of students, and
 M : average (mean) of students' scores

Table 1. Scoring Guideline for Arabic Skill (Tim Sekolah, 2021)

No	Score / Percentage	Category / Predicate	Description
1	0 – 49.9	Insufficient	Failed

2	50 – 59.9	Very Deficient	Almost Failed
3	60 – 69.9	Deficient	Almost Successful
4	70 – 79.9	Average	Quite Successful
5	80 – 89.9	Good	Success
6	90 – 99.9	Very Good	Very Successful
7	100	Excellent	Excellent

C. Result and Discussion

1. Role-Playing Method and Basic Arabic

In general, the concepts and steps to solve problems in the CPP are to (1) train basic Arabic speaking skills using role-playing method, (2) improve basic Arabic speaking skills, (3) memorize daily vocabulary, and (4) conduct the seminar of Arabic learning strategy for teachers and students.

The first is to train Basic Arabic speaking skills using role-playing method. According to Livingstone, role play is the interactive learning method involving daily life activities for students by practising Arabic optimally as if in real life, for instance, playing as a guest, student, merchant, and so forth (Awang, 2013; Nur et al., 2024). This method gives chances to students of Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School to simulate themselves in daily contexts such as getting to know, buying-and-selling transactions, or others. Since this role-playing practice needs two students in minimum (Utari et al., 2024), it is appropriate to be applied in *kalam* learning in terms of language skills for speaking ability to grammar and contexts in communication (Asy-Syanti, 1993).

In general, the role-playing method used in the CPP is to prepare authentic learning materials using the language taught to students (Arabic) and students' mother tongue (Indonesian) and containing daily dialogues provided with pictures and illustrations that explain a storyline (Ahmad et al., 2024; Fahrurrozi & Mahyudin, 2010). After that, students play those dialogues participants in certain contexts and situations. There are three levels gradually used to practice those dialogues namely, (1) mechanic level, students only memorize texts without knowing the meaning since the importance is that students are able to speak Arabic even if it is only memorizing; (2) meaningful level, students are able to understand the meaning of a dialogue and act in accordance with their roles in those dialogues; and (3) communicative level, students perceive and apply those dialogues in direct or natural communication (Ediyani, 2016). Lastly, educators evaluate the learning processes, such as discussions with students (Fahrurrozi & Mahyudin, 2010).

The second is to improve basic Arabic speaking skills. In specific, speaking skill (*kalām*) gradually consists of four level namely, *muḥādaṣah* (daily conversation dominated with questions), *muḥāwarah* (rational dialogue, dominated with statements and contextual dialog), *mujādalah* (debate with argumentations that are scientific and discouraging each other), and *khiṭābah* (speeches influencing and “hypnotizing” audiences and making them follow the contents of the speeches) (Abdurrahman et al., 2024). The basic Arabic speaking skill in this study is *muḥādaṣah*. The material themes of

muḥādaṣah taught to students are getting to know (*ta'āruf*) address (*sakan*), family (*usrah*), house stuffs (*asy-syai' fī al-bait*), and foods and drinks (*tā'am wa syurb*). Meanwhile, the grammar includes basic sentences, so students avoid compound sentences despite certain contexts. Besides, language style is only limited to daily expressions (*uslūb 'ādī*) frequently used and excludes literary expressions (*uslūb balāgī*) (Melati et al., 2024).

The third is to memorize daily vocabularies. Since the previous step is conducted in the classroom, this step is outside the classroom as the reinforcement for the previous step. In this step, students are conditioned to memorize daily vocabularies consisting of base conjunctions (*ḥarf*), nouns (*ism*), and verbs (*fi'l*) without affixes (Laili et al., 2021). The meaning of these daily vocabularies can generally be sensed. Besides, students also habitually memorize daily expressions frequently used in simple conversations, such as thanking (*syukr*), happiness, condolences (*ta'āzī*), and so forth. These vocabularies and expressions can enrich students' memorization, so when they do a dialogue, they are able to improvise even a simple improvisation and anticipate getting stuck on the dialogue.

The fourth is to conduct a seminar on Arabic learning strategy for teachers and students. For teachers, this step is specialized for educators who teach Arabic in both the boarding school and Al-Hadi Junior High School. Beside learning strategies in the classroom, the educators also get materials from the team and experts in Arabic about the newest strategy to improve students' Arabic speaking skills for beginners. The materials include learning preparation, implementation, and evaluation of *kalam*. The basis methodology of role playing is represented in terms of philosophical basis, approach, model, strategy, method, technique, and procedure (Suyono & Hariono, 2011). It aims to facilitate teachers in continuing and developing the strategy implemented in the CPP individually although the CPP has finished. For students, this seminar will enrich students' knowledge of Arabic learning strategy especially basic Arabic.

As the steps above, some components to measure students' basic Arabic skills are formulated. They are (a) to say new vocabularies with good and right pronunciations; (b) to use language structures and styles with good and right intonation; (c) to demonstrate dialogues in pairs well; (d) to conduct question-and-answer using vocabularies and expressions taught; (e) to use body movement (facial expressions and hands) while conducting a dialogue appropriate with the text memorized, and (f) to memorize 10 to 25 new vocabularies.

2. The Increase in Students' Basic Arabic Speaking Skills

Table 2. Changes of Mean Score of Students' Basic Arabic Speaking Skill

	Component	Pra	C1	I	Des.	C2	I	GI	Des.
1	Vocabulary Pronunciation	60	87.2	27.2	Increased	87.8	0.5	27.8	Increased
2	Language structure and style	60	85.6	25.6	Increased	87.8	2.1	27.8	Increased
3	Dialogue Demonstration	60	89.9	29.9	Increased	93.6	3.7	33.6	Increased

4	Question-and-answer	60	85.1	25.1	Increased	89.4	4.3	29.4	Increased
5	Body Movement	60	76.1	16.1	Increased	86.2	10.1	26.2	Increased
6	New Vocabulary Memorization	60	73.4	13.4	Increased	74.5	1.1	14.5	Increased
	Mean	60	82.9	22.9	Increased	86.5	3.6	26.5	Increased

That are Pre: pre-cycle, C1: first cycle, I: improvement, C2: second cycle, and GI: general improvement

Table 2 shows the mean score of all components is only 60 in the pre-cycle, and it increases in the first and second cycles. The vocabulary pronunciation increases from 60 to 87.2 in the first cycle and 87.8 in the second cycle, the structure and language style increase from 60 to 85.6 in the first cycle and 87.8 in the second cycle, the dialogue demonstration increases from 60 to 89.9 in the first cycle and 93.6 in the second cycle, the question-and-answer increases from 60 to 85.1 in the first cycle and 89.4 in the second cycle, the body movement increases from 60 to 76.1 in the first cycle and 86.2 in the second cycle, and new vocabulary memorization increases from 60 to 82.9 in the first cycle and 86.5 in the second cycle.

In general, the assumption of basic Arabic language skills in the pre-cycle is 60 (deficient), and after conducting the training, the score increases to 82.9 (good) in the first cycle and 86.5 (good) in the second cycle. It indicates that there is an increase of 26.5 in accordance with the mean score of all components, namely the increase of 27.8 in vocabulary pronunciation and language structure and style, 33.6 in dialog demonstration, 29.4 in question-and-answer, 26.2 in body movement, and 14.5 of new vocabulary memorization. Besides, the predicates show changes from pre-cycle to the first and second cycles. In the first cycle, the mean score of the first, second, third, and fourth components changes from deficient to good predicates, but the fifth and sixth remain in the average predicate. In the second cycle, the first, second, third, fourth, and sixth components are predicated as good, but the sixth component is still in the low predicate.

In addition, the processes of implementing basic Arabic speaking skill training regarding the employment of CAR are the following:

The first stage is the pre-cycle. At this stage, the team discuss with Arabic teachers of Al-Hadi to know students' basic Arabic speaking skills. It is found that students' speaking skills was deficient or as many as 60. Consequently, the plans are made for the first cycle to fix the problem in the pre-cycle namely, (a) preparing daily dialogue materials; (b) providing 25 new vocabularies; (c) providing tips and tricks to improve students' confidence in speaking Arabic, and (d) preparing the media relevant to daily themes.

The second stage is the first cycle. It includes planning, implementation, observation, and reflection.

1) Planning is based on the pre-cycle recommendations and equipped with the preparation of dialogue materials for exercises, evaluation sheets, and instruments used in the CAR cycle.

2) Implementation is conducted by using the role-playing method in basic Arabic skills training. The role-playing method begins with preparing the authentic teaching materials using the language being taught (Arabic) and the students' mother tongue (Indonesian) and dialogue about daily life with the theme of introduction and address. After that, students, in pairs, play the participants in the dialogue prepared. The practice is carried out in a meaningful way, that is, students are able to understand the meaning of the dialogue and act according to their roles in the dialogue. Finally, tutors evaluate the students' dialogue by showing their mistakes and giving some solutions. In addition, the evaluation is also reinforced by a discussion or question-and-answer between students and tutors. The media used were audio, laptop, and student worksheets containing dialogue.

3) Observation deals with how well students practice the dialogue. The researchers observe their fluency in pronouncing vocabularies and using language structure and style in a dialogue with the right intonation. Besides, students' body movements, such as hands and facial expressions, should be appropriate to the meaning of the sentences expressed. In general, the result of observation is represented in Figure 1.

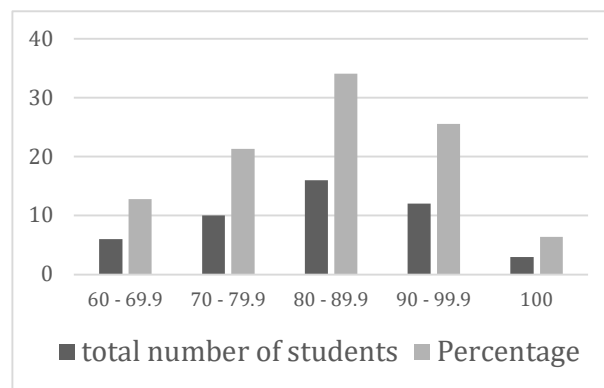


Figure 1. Score of Students' basic Arabic speaking skill in Cycle 1

Figure 1 shows the score of students' basic Arabic speaking skills namely, 60 – 69.9 (deficient), as many as 6 (12.8%); 70 – 79.9 (average) as many as (21.3%); 80 – 89.9 (good) as many as 16 (34%); 90 – 99.9 (very good) as many as 12 (25.5%), and 100 (excellent) as many as 3 (6.4). Thus, there are 12.8% of students whose scores increase from low to higher.

4) Reflection is to reflect the result of the preview steps in the first cycle. It shows the disadvantage and advantage. The disadvantage is that not all students achieve good predicates. There are 6 students in the deficient predicate and 10 students in the average predicate among 47 students. It is due to that the students do not fully understand the components of Arabic speaking skills. Besides, the tutors focus more on memorization and fluency in practising dialogues. The advantage is that the scores of students who speak basic Arabic are increased. The mean score increases as much as 22.9, from deficient predicate (60) to good (82.9). This shows a significant improvement. Moreover, there are 12 students with a very good predicate (90 – 99.9) and 3 students with an excellent predicate (100).

Based on the results of the first cycle, the plan for the second cycle is made regarding (a) to explain the components of basic Arabic speaking skills to students in-depth, (b) to provide more drill role playing, (c) to increase the score from low to higher, and (d) to conduct a discussion with students with low scores, in order to find solutions to the problems they face.

The third is the second cycle. The second cycle includes planning, implementation, observation, and reflection.

1) Planning in the second cycle is based on the recommendations of the first cycle, as explained in the reflection of the plan for the second cycle. They are to (a) prepare new daily dialogue materials, (b) provide 25 additional vocabularies, (c) provide different tips and tricks to improve students' confidence, and choose alternative speaking in basic Arabic, and (d) prepare media relevant to daily themes, especially family, and (e) provide evaluation instruments.

2) Implementation is conducted by using another variation of the role-playing method, namely swapping partners. This method begins with preparing authentic teaching materials using the language being taught (Arabic) and the students' mother tongue (Indonesian) and dialogue about daily life with the theme of family. The tutors explain the components, strategies as well as tips and tricks of basic Arabic speaking skills to students along with examples. After that, the students are divided into seven groups. Each group is further divided into several dialogue pairs. Then, in pairs, students act out the participants in the dialogue. This dialogue practice is carried out in a meaningful way that students can understand the meaning of the dialogue and act according to their roles in the dialog.

After that, the tutors evaluate students' dialogue by pointing out their mistakes and providing them with solutions. In addition, the evaluation is also reinforced by a discussion or question-and-answer between students and tutors. The media used are audio, laptop, and student worksheets containing dialogues.

3) Observation is to observe the implementation process. It indicates that the training atmosphere is more meaningful, because tutors give students spirit and alternatives to speak basic Arabic. Students can adapt to the role-playing method for practising the dialog. Students also increasingly understand and are easy to speak in basic Arabic according to the components taught by the tutors. This is because, in addition to the role-playing method, the tutor also provides tips and tricks on each indicator of each component of the basic Arabic speaking skill. Tutors also make different treatment to students who get low scores by approaching them, asking about their problems, and finding practical solutions for them. As a result, both students with low and higher scores show improvement. The score of students' basic Arabic speaking skills in the cycle 2 is represented by Figure 2.

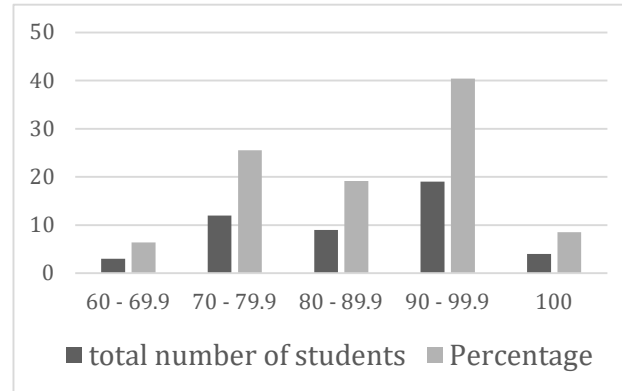


Figure 2. Students' basic Arabic speaking skills in Cycle 2

Figure 2 indicates the scores of students' basic Arabic speaking skill, including 60 – 69.9 (deficient) as many as 3 students (6.4%); 70 – 79.9 (average) as many as 12 (25.5%); 80 – 89.9 (good) as many as 9 (19.1%); 90 – 99.9 (very good) as many as 19 (40.4%); and 100 (excellent) as many as 4 (8.5%). Therefore, there are 3 students (6.4%) whose scores remain deficient even though they attend the training.

4) Reflection of cycle 2 indicates disadvantage and advantage. The disadvantage is the increased score from the first cycle to the second cycle decreases when compared to the increased score from the pre-cycle to the first cycle. This is because most students feel the weight of family material is more difficult than the introductory. Although they are more enthusiastic about participating in the training, the students are tired because of the busy activities both at school and boarding school. In addition, the advantage of the second cycle is the increase of students' basic Arabic speaking skills at each level, including the increase from deficient to average, as many as 3 students, average to good, as many as 1 student, good to very good as many as 8 students, and very good to excellent amounting as many as 1 student. Therefore, the major score of students' basic Arabic speaking skill previously shows a good predicate as many as 16, but it changes into a very good predicate as many as 19 students.

Based on the data above, the training to improve students' basic Arabic speaking skills using the role-playing method for boarding school students at Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School is successful since the mean score reveals 86.5 with an increase of 26.5%, and the majority of students are in the very good predicate (90 – 99.9) with a total of 19 students (40.4%).

3. Discussion

In general, the result of this training strengthens previous studies showing that the role-playing method was able to improve basic Arabic skills from 9 to 35% (Aslamiyah, 2022; Awang, 2013; Candra et al., 2021). It also shows that the role-playing method can increase students' motivation and confidence in speaking Arabic. This is in line with the study of Hidayah, Aliyah and Banyumas (2017), suggesting that by using the role-playing method, students were courageous to express their opinions using Arabic in front of the

class. It indicates that, in addition to speaking skills, the role-playing method also increased students' interest in learning basic Arabic (Harianto, 2021).

However, it should be noted that the role-playing method also has weaknesses. The role-playing method is not easy to apply. This is in line with Sudarmadi, Eka, and Sulistyawati (2019), who said that although the role-playing method could improve speaking skills, it was practically not effective. One of the reasons is that the use of this method takes a long time, while learning in the classroom generally takes a limited and short time (Hermila, 2020). However, the study reveals that it is not because of time but because of the beginner class. As suggested in the result that the role-playing model is meaningful, that students understand the meaning of the dialogue and act according to their role in the dialogue, there are many students who practically use the mechanical model, namely students only memorizing the dialogue without knowing its meaning. Students consider that the most important thing is to be able to speak in Arabic, although they only memorize it.

The difficulty in practising the role-playing method is caused by the number of students. The more students, the harder the method is to apply unless there are many educators or a team, as conducted in the training. The reason is that the method cannot be applied in large groups. The method divides students into small groups. Then, each student is required to be active in practising certain themes in each of the small groups. Each group is accompanied by a tutor or educator in order to run the activity optimally (Sarifah, 2022).

In addition, the use of the role-playing method is not optimal in improving students' basic Arabic speaking skills on memorizing new vocabularies. The result shows an average of 74.5% or students only memorised approximately 37 of the 50 vocabularies provided. Although it is categorized as average, this component becomes the lowest compared to the others. The reasons are that students are busy, their concentration is divided, and they learn other subjects both in intra and extracurricular activities. These reasons prevent students from fully practicing some of the dialogues provided. If there is a language structure or style that is long enough or uses complex sentences, students will leave it. Moreover, some students with very good or excellent predicates are dominated by the 8th grade, and students with deficient, average, and good predicates are majorly in the 7th grade. This means that apart from the role-playing method, students' ages and experiences in learning Arabic also influence the process of improving students' skills.

Moreover, the dialogues in the training use daily activity themes, and the level of basic Arabic speaking skills is at the lowest level, namely *muḥādaṣah* or so-called introductory material, so students feel familiar with the material and think that the material is not difficult (Hasibuan et al., 2022). As a consequence, it is not surprising that the increased scores of students' basic Arabic speaking skills are significant. If the level of speaking skill is at *muḥāwarah* (discussion) or *mujādalah* (debating), the result is assumed to be different, although it is predicted to be less effective. It represented the quite difference from the increase in the first cycle, as much as 22.9% and the second as much as 3.6%. This data shows that the higher the weight of the material taught, the lower the skill increases.

Another thing that needs to be revealed in the use of the role-playing method is the post-training students' speaking skills. One of the Arabic teachers at Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School reveals that two months after the training, the student's basic Arabic speaking skills decreases. It means that the role-playing method is effective in the training, but there is no guarantee that students' speaking skills will remain or improve after the training. Therefore, further methods are needed in order to maintain the Arabic speaking skills students acquire, and they should be able to improve their skills. In fact, after the training, the team also provide students and teachers of Al-Hadi with concepts, and practices as well as tips and tricks to improve Arabic speaking skills by conducting the seminar. Still, after the evaluation, the team concludes that the seminar has not shown any significance for two months after the training.

D. Conclusion

The result of the analysis shows that the role-playing method applied to improve basic Arabic speaking skills for Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School students is a meaningful method, focusing on vocabulary, grammar, language style, demonstration, and body movements with the theme of introduction, address, and family. The application of this method is assumed to be very successful since it increases the mean score of basic Arabic speaking skills of Al-Hadi Islamic Junior High School students up to 86.5 with an average increase of 26.5%, and most students are in the very good predicate (90 – 99.9) as many as 19 students (40.4%).

The data shows that the role-playing method is appropriate to improve basic Arabic speaking skills. However, the appropriateness of using this method has not been tested in improving intermediate or advanced levels of Arabic language skills. It is possible that the different results will be found considering the difficulty level between speaking skill (*muhādaṣah*) which is usually for basic classes, and discussion skill (*muhāwarah*) or debating skills (*mujādalah*) which is generally for advanced classes. It is based on the result of this training that this method is predicted to be less effective in improving students' speaking skills. Consequently, it is necessary for educators to improvise and innovate in using the role-playing method in accordance with learning objectives, materials, students' ability and motivation, and the learning environment.

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