

The Effectiveness of Employing Role-Playing Techniques to Enhance Reading Skills in Elementary School Students

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ABSTRACT

The reading ability of primary school students is still low, and there are still many elementary school students who are not fluent in speed reading. Therefore, teachers are expected to overcome the problems that occur in students. The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the role-playing method as a medium to improve students' reading skills. The research method used pre-experiment research with a pretest-posttest design. This research was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah Wonokromo 1 in the 2022 academic year. The research sample was 25 students. Data collection using a reading ability scale. Data analysis using statistical analysis (t-test). The results showed the sig value = 0.000, which means it is smaller than α 0.05 (Ho: rejected and Ha: accepted). The results of the study concluded that the role-playing method can effectively be used as a medium to improve the reading skills of elementary school students. The results of this study contribute as a novelty and study material both theoretically and practically regarding the effectiveness of the role-playing method as a medium to improve the reading skills of elementary school students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Primary school is one of the important components of the national education system, the role of primary school is to provide the basic provisions needed to live in a society in the form of developing attitudes, knowledge, and basic skills (Rosita, 2021). At this level, primary school is the foundation for shaping children towards a good personality in the next stage of development (Aini, 2018). Primary school is the foundation for the next level of education and must play a role in forming a solid foundation related to the character and personality of children, especially students (Dewi, 2020). Education in primary schools is very strategic in providing the earliest formal education (Hakim & Windayana, 2016).

In general, primary schools are more focused on cognitive and psychomotor abilities. The cognitive aspect is a domain that includes mental activities (brain) and the psychomotor domain is a domain related to skills (Magdalena et al., 2021). This is because, at this age of development, children do more activities related to the thinking process and the active movements they do every day. There are several differences in the conditions

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experienced by students during formal school age and before. When entering formal school age, children will meet and be in a new environment (Fitriana et al., 2021). Cognitive abilities need to learn from recognition because information must be restructured into a form that is relevant to future recognition. There is an opinion that cognitive abilities and success in education can predict positive outcomes throughout life, better health and longevity, life achievement, and good education have a significant relationship with the cognitive abilities possessed by a person (Malanchini et al., 2020).

At the primary school level, the developmental characteristics of primary school students are usually shown by their ability to pronounce sentences, classify objects, be interested in numbers and writing, increase vocabulary, enjoy talking, understand cause and effect, and develop an understanding of space and time (Sabani, 2019). The role of primary schools as a means of having responsibility for helping students to develop reading skills, with good reading skills students can acquire all the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for their success in school and everyday life. Developmental delays evident in students can have a detrimental impact. Student development requires security and safety, responsive care, and early learning provided by parents and family interactions, and supported by an enabling environment (Black et al., 2017).

The current problem is that there are still many problems related to low reading skills in primary school students. There are about 85% of primary school students who are identified as having learning difficulties, have major problems related to reading and language skills. Furthermore, a study conducted by the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2011, showed the results that the reading ability of grade IV primary school students in Indonesia was low, only 5% of Indonesian students studied showed their reading ability to high and advanced levels, while more than 30% of the levels were very low, almost 40% were only low levels and even only 25% of students reached the intermediate level (Krisyanto et al., 2015). Reading learning difficulties are faced by students such as unnatural reading habits, word recognition errors, and reading comprehension errors. There are differences and similarities in the characteristics of reading learning difficulties faced by students in certain forms of difficulty (Fauzi, 2018). Students who experience reading learning difficulties that were show low learning outcomes in other subjects. This means that reading learning difficulties are related to low student learning outcomes in other subjects.

Many primary school students are still not fluent in reading and stammer when reading, this can be seen in students who cannot read simple sentences in a short text. In addition, some students have difficulty distinguishing letters, namely difficulty reading consonant letters at the end of words. To overcome these problems, the learning process must be adjusted to the factors that influence early reading skills (Oktaviyanti et al., 2022). In this case, reading activities become a complicated activity for children, because they involve many aspects that require children to not only pronounce the writing but also be accompanied by visual, thinking, and cognitive psycholinguistic activities (Azkia & Rohman, 2020). The reading ability of primary school students has obstacles and problems faced by teachers, namely that there are still some students whose reading ability is relatively low. There are still students who have not been able to read, maybe this happens because the teacher only uses the lecture method (Hidayah & Novita, 2016).

Reading ability is an important aspect for primary school students. Previous research revealed that students are advised to read the material to more actively explore the imagination and respond positively to the learning process (Nandiyah, 2022). The role-playing method with image media according to the theme can change the way primary school students learn to read, especially in Indonesian language subjects (Kartika & Fauzi, 2021). The role-playing model assisted by visual media has been proven to improve the speaking skills of primary school students (Istiqomah et al., 2020). Role-playing can also increase students' skills to better understand themselves get to know the characters around them and be able to take lessons from the positive side of the person in the role-playing (Akhyar, 2017).

Reading is one of the language skills that must be possessed by all students, the more reading, the more vocabulary mastery students will master (Tantri, 2016). Some cases occur in students' reading ability, there are difficulties in beginning reading as indicated that students have difficulty in listening or listening comprehension, difficulty in fluency in reading aloud, and difficulty in understanding reading texts, students also have difficulty in reading words and difficult in recognizing letters (Basuki, 2011). The causes of these difficulties are in identifying letters, stringing letters, spelling, not paying attention to punctuation, and difficulty concentrating (Setyowaty, 2019).

In school learning activities, reading is one of the most essential skills that students need to master. The ability to read for students is seen as a determinant of their success in carrying out their learning activities while at school (Rafika et al., 2020). This is because all subject matter at school requires an understanding of concepts and theories that can be understood through reading activities. Reading has a very essential role in the life of an individual so the teaching of reading obtained in the first education must receive special attention (Hasanah & Lena, 2021). The good reading ability of students will have a big influence on their success in learning; and vice versa, if their reading ability is poor, it will also be an inhibiting factor in the success of their education at school.

The problem of students' reading difficulties is one of the causes of students' low reading ability. The cause of students' low interest in reading is due to three factors. First, parents do not realize that reading from an early age is important. Second, the availability of books in the school library that are not interesting, not illustrated, and not colored according to students' preferences. Third, the community's concern about establishing a reading park in the neighborhood is lacking (Mardhatillah & Trisdania, 2018). Therefore, learning reading skills is one of the language skills that cannot be separated from writing, speaking, and listening skills (Ulfa et al., 2022). Reading is a vital thing in the learned society, it is important that reading is the beginning of individual learning activities and the process of reading books is very important for a child for his future life. The teacher who teaches this class bears considerable responsibility for the success of the student's reading skills in that class.

Preliminary studies were conducted to explore the problem of students' reading skills, the results of observations at SD Muhammadiyah Wonokromo 1 revealed several problems, including low reading skills. Based on the results of observations with Indonesian language subject teachers, it was found that some of these problems included difficulty spelling words, difficulty putting letters together with words, and some reading per word and letter. There are at least 25 students who have not reached the Minimum Completeness Criteria. This is caused by feelings of fear of reading in front of the class, embarrassment, hesitation, lack of confidence, and the use of language and pronunciation of words that are not yet appropriate.

Based on the problems obtained from observations and interviews in the field, it is necessary to take action to develop students' reading skills, one of the methods that can be used by teachers is by using the role-playing method. Role-playing is a role-playing learning model that guides students to carry out role-playing activities to practice skills. In this role-playing method, students are actively involved in the learning process so that students can hone their speech tools and teachers can find out the mastery of linguistic factors, such as accuracy of speech and selection of less precise words (Deliyana & Fitriani, 2019). Role-playing is a model where students are given tasks by the teacher to dramatize situations that contain problems, to solve problems in life situations. Role-playing as a learning model can help students practice speech by role-playing in real life and encourage students to express their feelings. The implementation of role-playing in learning activities can affect psychology in the form of values, attitudes, and beliefs (Saputri & Yamin, 2022). Role-playing provides new experiences and can also motivate individuals to do something (Alrehaili & Al-Osman, 2022). In Role-playing, they act out stories with roleplaying and make videos to share with others.

The causes of many students experiencing this difficulty are due to the lack of parental attention and guidance in improving students' reading skills at home; lack of student interest in learning; not maximally fulfilling students' learning needs due to the pandemic; the small duration of low grade students' learning hours at school and the lack of focus of the applicable curriculum on students' reading skills (Masykuri, 2018). Special attention, especially from teachers to reading learning, must be given since students are in the early grades. The accuracy and success of the learning process in the early stages will have a major impact on the learning process of subsequent students. This means that the teacher who teaches in this class has a considerable responsibility for the success of students' reading skills in that class. Teachers still have a very important role in teaching their students. This means that no matter how great technological advances are, the role of teachers will still be needed. Technology, which is said to make it easier for humans to find and obtain information and knowledge, cannot possibly replace the role of teachers.

So that the teacher acts as a learning resource for his students. Whatever the student asks about the subject matter being taught, he or she will be able to answer with confidence. Conversely, a teacher's lack of understanding of the subject matter is usually indicated by certain behaviors, for example, monotonous

delivery techniques, teachers often sitting on chairs while reading, their voices weak, they do not dare to make eye contact with students, poor illustrations, and others. Such teacher behavior can cause a loss of confidence in the students, making it difficult for the teacher to control the students.

The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the role-playing method as a medium to improve the reading skills of primary school students. This study uses the role-playing method as a learning model to improve students' reading skills. In addition, the role-playing method can also arouse enthusiasm and foster a sense of togetherness and kinship in students and make the learning more memorable and long-lasting in students' memories.

The contribution of the results of this study as reference material for teachers in providing classroom teaching to improve students' reading skills using the role-playing method, considering that so far many have used it in the form of lectures (teacher-centered). For further researchers, it can be used as a novelty regarding the role of the role-playing method as a medium to improve students' reading skills.

2. METHOD

2.1 Design

The research method uses pre-experiment research, the research uses a pretest-posttest design. This design consists of one group that has been determined, conducting the test twice, namely before treatment (pretest) and after treatment (posttest). The research design of this model can be described in the table 1 below:

Table 1. Research Design

Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
O1	X	O2

Description:

O1 = Pretest score (before treatment)

O2 = Posttest value (after treatment)

X = Treatment

This research design is used to determine whether there is an effect of the role-playing method on students' reading skills. One group pretest-posttest design is a research activity that provides an initial test (pretest) before being given treatment and after being given treatment then gives a final test (posttest).

2.2 Participants

This research was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah Wonokromo 1. The population of this study was third-grade students. The research sample was 25 students, the sampling using a purposive sampling technique. The reason the researcher chose this location is for various reasons, including the following: the location is easily accessible, the researcher has carried out an internship/teaching practice at the school, and there is a recommendation from the teacher at the school.

2.3 Instruments and Data Collection

The measuring instruments used to collect research data consisted of three types (1) reading ability scale (questionnaire); (2) observation (observation of student activities at school); (3) interviews (interviews with subject teachers and school counselors). The three methods are used by researchers as research instruments in the data collection process.

The validity of the instrument used product moment analysis, while the reliability of the instrument used Cronbach alpha analysis. The validity and reliability of the instrument are carried out to find out how careful a reading ability scale is as a measuring tool and how consistent the reading ability scale is but the results are consistent when the measurement is repeated.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis process uses an average difference test (t-test), this analysis is carried out to determine and evaluate the treatment (treatment) that has been carried out on the same sample in two different observation periods.

2.5 Procedure

The steps of research implementation procedure consisted of three steps (1) giving a pretest to measure the dependent variable (reading ability) before the treatment was carried out; (2) giving treatment to the research sample by applying the role-playing method; (3) giving a posttest to measure the dependent variable after the treatment was carried out.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

3.1.1 Calculated Value of Standard Deviation

The results of the research analysis illustrate the calculation of the mean and standard deviation. The results of the standard deviation will later determine how the data is distributed in the sample, as well as how close the individual data points are to the mean (average value) of the sample. This is done to determine the mean and standard deviation values, as well as to determine the distribution of the research sample data. The results of the standard deviation calculation are explained in table 2 below:

Table 2. Average and Standard Deviation Calculation Results

Test Period	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pretest- Reading Ability	36,24	2,125
Posttest- Reading Ability	40,56	2,457

The table above shows that the calculation of standard deviation resulted in a pretest mean value of 36.24, while the posttest mean value was 40.56. These results show that there is an increase in students' reading ability scores after getting the role-playing method.

3.1.2 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing uses a t-test, this test is conducted to compare the average value along with a certain confidence interval of two populations by looking at the difference in variation of the two data groups. The test uses a paired sample t-test, the results of hypothesis testing are explained in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Paired Sample t-test (Pretest-Posttest)

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Reading Ability Pretest - Reading Ability Posttest	-2,508	1,132	,209	-3,192	-2,231	- 12,701	25	,000

The table above shows that the paired sample t-test (pretest-posttest) results obtained a significance value (2-tailed) of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). The calculated results show that the pretest and post-test results have changed significantly, it can be concluded that the provision of the role-playing method has a significant effect on increasing the value of students' reading skills.

Conclusion of the research hypothesis: H_0 = there is no difference in students' reading ability before and after being given the role-playing method (rejected), and H_1 = there is a difference in students' reading ability before and after being given the role-playing method (accepted).

3.2 Discussion

The results revealed that the role-playing method is effective and has a significant effect on the reading ability of third-grade students at SD Muhammadiyah Wonokromo 1. The results of the pretest and post-test of students' reading ability have a more significant effect with the results of the sig value = 0.000, which means

smaller than $\alpha 0.05$, which means that the role-playing method has a significant effect on improving the reading ability of third-grade students at SD Muhammadiyah Wonokromo 1.

The research findings show that one of the ways to improve students' reading skills to run well is with the Role Playing learning model. Schools as a means of education have a great responsibility to help students develop reading skills. With good reading skills, students can acquire all the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for their success at school and in everyday life. Through reading activities, students can increase information become intelligent, and critical, and have high analytical power to reflect, think and develop thinking creativity. Given the important role of reading in student development, teachers need to encourage their students to read correctly and selectively. Teachers must have adequate competence in the substance of reading and the ability to manage reading skills learning (Hidayah & Hermansyah, 2016). Reading ability is a basic ability that is very important for students to master. If reading activity is low, it can be ascertained that learning achievement is low. This is not an exaggeration considering that the most important element in education is reading activities. Disruption of reading activities can ensure that general educational goals will not be achieved. Moreover, in facing the challenges of 21st-century literacy activities must be prioritized (Widodo et al., 2020).

Reading ability is influenced by internal factors (language and cognitive development) and external factors (stimulation from the family early on, conversations with children to pay attention and direct language, asking questions to develop concepts, teaching methods, and the amount of time in learning) (Hilda et al., 2018). Therefore, many components are important to consider in developing children's reading skills. These components are not only internal such as the child's cognitive level but also external such as stimulation from the child's environment, in this case, the family and educational institutions (Harahap, 2020). Furthermore, students' intensive reading skills are getting better and their learning outcomes can improve (Harsono et al., 2012). The discussion in the article aims to: (1) answer the formulation of the problem and research questions; (2) show how the findings were obtained; (3) interpret the findings; (4) link the research findings to the established knowledge structure; and (5) bring up new theories or modify existing theories. So it can be concluded that the use of role-playing method learning has a significant effect on the reading ability of third-grade students at SD Muhammadiyah Wonokromo 1.

As seen from the forming factors, some factors influence reading ability consisting of internal factors including learning motivation and student interest in learning, and external factors, one of which is learning methods (Oktaviyanti et al., 2022). Reading learning difficulties experienced by primary school students are difficulties in spelling letters into syllables (Zulfitriah, 2021), difficulties in spelling syllables into words, and difficulties in distinguishing letters (Oktadiana, 2019). Furthermore, morphological awareness has a beneficial effect on their reading ability and reading comprehension (Levesque et al., 2017).

The role-playing method is effectively used to improve the reading ability of primary school students, the effect of changes in improving students' reading ability is based on the role-playing method is a teaching method in which in its implementation students get an assignment from the teacher to dramatize a social situation that contains a problem, then students are asked to solve a problem that arises from a social situation (Rohaeti & Saleh, 2021). In its application, students are taught to (1) train themselves to understand and remember the material to be dramatized or acted out; (2) take initiative and be creative; (3) improve self-skills; (4) students gain experience to accept and share responsibilities with others; (5) improve the spoken language (Yanto, 2015). The advantage of the role-playing method is that it involves all students can participate and have the opportunity to advance their ability to cooperate as a whole. The game is an easy discovery and can be used in different situations and times (Jehaut et al., 2020).

The learning model based on the role-playing method has advantages including inviting students to join in honing the potential that exists in themselves and giving students the freedom to make decisions quickly and accurately, a game can make opportunities for teachers to facilitate the achievement of learning objectives to make quality education (Tagupia, 2022). Continuous teacher learning is driven by teacher needs and reflective dialog (Mindawati, 2002), including continuing to discuss curriculum, teaching, and student development, meaning that teachers are also required to continue to develop their knowledge and be varied in providing learning methods to students (Vangrieken et al., 2017). Role-playing can be used for all ages. In addition, this Role playing method also has advantages in its use such as (1) students train themselves to understand and remember the content of the material to be played; (2) students will practice taking the initiative and being

creative; (3) the talent contained in students can be nurtured so that drama art seeds may emerge or grow from schools; (4) cooperation between players can be fostered and fostered as well as possible; (5) students acquire the habit of accepting and sharing responsibilities (Aprinawati, 2017).

The use of the role-playing method provides a new atmosphere and provides a learning experience for forming a more creative and active thinking process. The roleplaying method emphasizes teaching based on experience. As for the effects (benefits), students can identify real-world situations and with other people's ideas. The use of play therapy has four benefits, including (1) making it easier for oneself to channel expression; (2) encouraging self-creativity; (3) channeling emotions; and (4) practicing agility and innovation (Utomo, 2021). The role-playing method allows students to change their behavior through the characters they play (Nurhasanah et al., 2016). The role-playing method is a way of mastering learning materials through the development of imagination and appreciation (Setiawan & Lubis, 2016).

The application of the role-playing method emphasizes emotional involvement and sensory observation of real problems. Students as learning subjects actively practice communicating and interacting with their friends in certain situations or conditions. Students are given the freedom to express the roles obtained during learning, this is possible to train self-confidence. In using the role-playing method, student activities look more varied, starting from asking both the teacher and friends, asking for input from friends, discussing, and a series of other activities. Students seem to live the role they get in learning (Santoso, 2016). Strictly speaking, role-playing is useful to increase their knowledge of a given problem, to reflect on the problems and views of others, to illustrate the relevance of theoretical ideas by placing them in a real-world context, and to illustrate the complexity of decision-making (Annan-Diab & Molinari, 2017).

The effectiveness of the role-playing method can influence students' reading skills, through role playing-based learning students become more active and more enthusiastic in a learning process, because in the learning process, students are asked to directly role play and play a play so that students easily remember an event that has been experienced. Role-playing itself can create a lot of interaction between students and teachers and students themselves (Nurhasanah et al., 2016). The role-playing method is one of the learning methods that can be chosen in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Through the role-playing method, students can pay attention and play a role in the lesson when the lesson is indeed related to their daily lives. The role-playing method is focused on the realities that occur in life and is related to the appreciation of a social role played by students (Kartini, 2007).

In its application, the role-playing method can be used in the learning process in the classroom both instructional and accompaniment. The important aspects contained in the role-playing method are that this method can make students not be shy to come forward because they are not alone, train students to be able to condition the situation in the classroom, and train the confidence of the students themselves (Rohaeti & Sunanih, 2021). Role-playing as a learning model aims to help students find the meaning of self (identity) in the social world and solve dilemmas with group assistance. Through role-playing, students learn to use the concept of role, realize the existence of different roles and think about their behavior and the behavior of others. So that when students play the role of another person themselves, students understand the character they are playing themselves.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The relevance of the role-playing method has implications for learning in elementary schools both theoretically and practically, namely primary school teachers can use the role-playing method as a learning base to improve students' reading skills. The use of role-playing method can be used as a concept and discourse of practice considering that many use it in the form of lectures (teacher-centered). The implications for learning in schools are (1) the role-playing method can be used as a breakthrough and innovation in classroom learning; (2) the role-playing method has a variety of variants so that primary school teachers can choose the type of game used; (3) the role-playing method can be used as an alternative method that can be selected and used in dealing with the problem of students' reading ability.

The contribution of these results as a consideration for teachers, readers and further researchers, namely as follows:

- 1) Provide and add reference material or reference for teachers in understanding the level of students' reading ability;
- 2) Provide input for teachers and schools regarding the role of using role-playing as a teaching method;
- 3) Provide an overview of what factors need to be considered to improve students' reading skills;
- 4) Provide solutions about the role of the role-playing method as a learning strategy to improve students' reading skills.

5. RESEARCH LIMITATION

There are several limitations in this study so that in the future, future researchers can pay attention and consider the shortcomings that need to be improved in future studies. The limitations of this study include:

- 1) The number of samples is only 25 students, of course it is still insufficient to describe the actual state of the population.
- 2) The object of research is only focused on reading ability.
- 3) In the data collection process, the information provided to the sample through questionnaires sometimes does not show the actual opinion of the respondent, this happens because sometimes differences in thinking, assumptions, and understanding are different for each respondent, as well as other factors such as honesty in filling out the sample's opinion in the questionnaire.

6. CONCLUSION

The role-playing method is effectively used to improve the reading ability of primary school students, the effect of changes in improving students' reading ability is based on the role-playing method is a teaching method in which students are assigned by the teacher to dramatize a social situation that contains a problem, then students are asked to solve a problem that arises from a social situation. Primary school teachers can use the role-playing method in every learning process. In the context of the roleplaying method, teachers are required not only to play themselves as teachers or educators but also as facilitators and motivators for students. The results of the study concluded that the roleplaying method can effectively be used as a medium to improve the reading skills of primary school students.

The benefits of applying the role-playing method for primary school teachers are increasing knowledge in improving students' reading skills. Meanwhile, students can improve their reading skills and students seem more interested and enthusiastic to carry out learning.

Suggestions and recommendations from the results of this study include (1) as a reference related to the use of role-playing methods; (2) further researchers can consider the limitations of this study; (3) can be used as a novelty of research (Novelty) the use of role-playing methods; (4) roleplaying methods can be used as a learning medium in improving students' reading skills.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The results of this research are original and by the data obtained from SD Muhammadiyah Wonokromo 1, the author is fully responsible for the authenticity of this article.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The author declared they have no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the significant competing financial, sponsorship, commercial, legal, organizations, or professional relationship that could influence the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

ETHICAL APPROVAL STATEMENT

The author has approved the article to be published in the Indonesian Journal of Innovative Teaching and Learning (IJITL) by following the Publication Ethics and Journal Policies.

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