

Enhancing Communication Skills for Akademi Digital Lansia Facilitators through Online Training in Makassar and Kendari

Citra Rosalyn Anwar¹, Rita Gani², King Anugrah Wiguna³, Yohannes Adven Sarbani^{4*},
Niken Puppy Setyawati⁵

¹Faculty of Education, Makassar State University, 90123, Indonesia

²Research Curriculum Divison Tular Nalar, D.I. Yogyakarta, 55284, Indonesia

³Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Jenderal Soedirman University, 53125, Indonesia

⁴Learning Curriculum Division Tular Nalar, D.I. Yogyakarta, 55284, Indonesia

⁵Learning Curriculum Division Tular Nalar, D.I. Yogyakarta, 55284, Indonesia

*Corresponding author's email: King.wiguna@unsoed.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Communication; Tular Nalar; Digital
Education; Elderly; Training

Online classes are a training approach that utilizes technology to increase training effectiveness, flexibility and interactiveness, at formal and non-formal education levels. This article explored communication skills in optimizing the Tular Nalar Training of Trainers (ToT) digital class. In the context of ToT, the Tular Nalar online class allowed prospective facilitators to participate directly via virtual space, the material could be accessed at any time and was equipped with interaction via WhatsApp groups. The Tular Nalar ToT program aimed to produce *Sekolah Kebangsaan* Facilitators and Akademi Digital Lansia, which was held in 38 provinces in Indonesia. January 2025 noted that ToT involved 3,481 participants who took part in online training to become facilitators who would deliver material about the Tular Nalar Program. This article used a qualitative descriptive approach in two cities, Makassar and Kendari, especially in the implementation of *Akademi Digital Lansia*. The in-depth interviews and observations in this article provided an analysis and description of the communication challenges of trainers and potential facilitators during ToT in online classes. Technological barriers, materials provided, and interactions required to ensure that facilitators were competent in delivering *Akademi Digital Lansia* materials. Prospective facilitators also face time differences during ToT, lack of interaction, limited discussion space, and material that was not fully understood. Interestingly, with these various limitations, these problems could be overcome with open interaction and good communication between trainers via WhatsApp, both individually and in groups. This showed that every facilitator and trainer needed to develop communication skills, local context, and technological support to become a good facilitator in implementing *Akademi Digital Lansia* Program.

1. Introduction

Increasing understanding and competence can be done through training as a structured and systematic effort to achieve increased knowledge, skills, and attitudes for individuals, organizations, and groups through independent learning or guidance in the workplace (Akhmadi, 2021). The Indonesian National Education System Law of 2003 broadens the legal framework for educational activities. Notably, Article 26 provides specific legal regulation for non-formal education, which is explicitly defined to involve skills education and job training. The National Education System Law

(UU RI No 20 Thn 2003 SISDIKNAS, 2003) specifies that courses and training are intended to impart knowledge, skills, life skills, and attitudes vital for personal development, professional careers, employment, and entrepreneurship. Additionally, training is a key mechanism for developing the competence of educators and teaching staff also a critical component of non-formal education, which occurs outside of formal academic institutions (Umaro et al., 2022). According to the purpose of training, such as education, employment, and dissemination of information (Martins et al., 2019) the Training of Trainers (ToT) model enables the efficient dissemination of information to a large population. This approach is most appropriate for foundational knowledge building and behavior modification, and it is also recognized for its skill-imparting capabilities (Holzman et al., n.d.). In line with contemporary learning theories that emphasize accessibility regardless of age, time, or location, training programs often integrate both face-to-face and distance learning.

One of the training models that is widely used to reach a wider audience is Training of Trainers (ToT). The aim of ToT, well-defined in research, which focuses on disseminating health information (Mormina & Pinder, 2018), is to prepare individuals to become trainers who have competence as competent facilitators, instructors, or teachers. The Training of Trainers (ToT) is a multi-level training approach. Initially, experts train a core group, who then become facilitators to instruct and support other individuals in acquiring knowledge, practical skills, and developing competencies across various groups (Salas et al., 2012). Initially, like other education and training, ToT was carried out face-to-face or classically, but following developments in information and communication technology, by means developed the concept of distance education and training. Online training is then widely carried out because it provides many advantages compared to classical or face-to-face training (Putri et al., 2024 ; Stiller & Bachmaier, 2017 ; Umaro et al., 2022). One of the main advantages is the flexibility and convenience it provides participants to learn at their own pace and time. One of the training activities that chose to use the online ToT method is Tular Nalar, which in 2024 will enter its third year of implementation.

Tular Nalar, as one of MAFINDO's programs supported by Google.org, currently has two main targets in digital literacy training, especially developing critical thinking skills in the digital space, namely *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan* (Tular Nalar, n.d.) Its regional coverage includes 38 provinces, making the online ToT option to produce facilitators in the appropriate number and sufficient competence to accompany participants in the two programs, namely the *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan*. With two different target participants, teenagers or beginner voting age for *Sekolah Kebangsaan* and seniors for *Akademi Digital Lansia*. Data showed that Tular Nalar currently has 3,481 people registered to participate in the online training as facilitators to update the material (Love Frankie; Tular Nalar; Google.org, 2024).

Being a facilitator who must accompany and convey information to participants positively requires special skills, especially communication skills (Voltage, 2024). The ToT process generally includes communication resources that equip facilitators to engage participants and convey information. The ToT carried out by Tular Nalar has a special segment, namely Interpersonal Communication or KAP, as material. KAP is a communication technique used by facilitators during classes. The facilitator is given main points such as greetings, body language, listening skills, and other communication skills. Communication skills are important for the facilitator to have because the Tular Nalar class has two different groups of participants, namely the elderly and first-time voters, who unquestionably require different approaches. The small group structure of Tular Nalar fosters an environment where each participant has equal opportunity for verbal contribution and active listening. Beyond facilitating material dissemination, this approach is essential for facilitators to establish rapport, build trust among participants, and effectively guide discussions. The initial investigation in this research was through interviews and documentation with the organizers of the Tular Nalar program, which was located in the eastern region of Indonesia, namely Kendari City in Southeast Sulawesi Province, which held five (5) *Sekolah Kebangsaan* trainings and one (1) *Akademi Digital Lansia*, while in the city of Makassar, South Sulawesi Province, held eight (8) *Sekolah Kebangsaan* trainings and two (2) *Akademi Digital Lansia*. As the primary organizers in eastern Indonesia, these two provinces informed the selection of the research sites. This study, therefore, centered its analysis on Kendari and Makassar. Preliminary data also showed that each city had

unique participants. Makassar City involved participants with disabilities, children in conflict with the law, and the elderly from the Lansia School, while Kendari City organized training by preparing facilitators who lived in Kendari City with backgrounds, generally lecturers and students, but carried it out in the Wakatobi district. The Class in Kendari City also only involved two different partners apart from Mafindo Kendari, and collaboration with the WKRI Community. This uniqueness then prompted this research to be carried out in both cities to analyze the communication skills possessed by facilitators in implementing the *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan* after participating in ToT Online, to deliver material and assistance to participants.

2. Method

This research used a qualitative research approach to analyze the communication skills possessed by facilitators in Kendari City and Makassar City in delivering material to participants after taking part in the online ToT by Tular Nalar. The study was conducted in Kendari and Makassar City. Participants included six facilitators (three per city) who had completed an Online Training of Trainers (ToT) program to develop their capabilities as Tular Nalar facilitators. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, this research aimed to provide insights into a less-understood research area, rather than focusing on a specific phenomenon. This research used A qualitative descriptive. It is an important and appropriate design for research questions that focus on gaining insights about a poorly understood research area, rather than on a specific phenomenon. Since qualitative descriptive study design seeks to describe rather than explain, explanatory frameworks and theories were not required to explain or 'ground' a study and its results. If a researcher deems that a framework or theory strengthens their interpretations, its use is permissible (Ayton, n.d.; Perez et al., 2023). Data sources were obtained through in-depth interviews, which allowed researchers to collect rich narrative data about facilitators' communication experiences. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and observation were important parts of the data collection process (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Lima & Newell-McLymont, 2021). Observations were also carried out in this research, directly observing during interviews and the process of implementing activities both at *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan* in the field. The aim was to obtain data and documentation of activities during the process of assisting participants when ToT participants become facilitators (Ahmad Nurkhin, S Martono, Muhsin, Fachrurrozie, 2021; Reichard, 2023). which was then processed descriptively and qualitatively to get an overview of the communication skills of Tular Nalar facilitators who took part in the ToT online.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 *Akademi Digital Lansia* Tular Nalar in Makassar and Kendari

Tular Nalar 3.0 is a continuation of the previous Tular Nalar, the first year targeting teachers and lecturers, the second year targeting the elderly and teenagers with various training themes such as social media, economics, elections, and other themes. After three years, Tular Nalar has succeeded in reaching more than 55,000 young people, the elderly, and teachers in 38 provinces. the Tular Nalar Program, which invited participants to think critically, entering 2024 in Tular Nalar 3.0, focused on equipping participants to face the ELECTION year with the main material on sensing hoaxes (*Tular Nalar*, n.d.). The third year still focuses on the elderly and teenagers, but because it discussed election issues, teenagers were prioritized for those who were first-time voters. The Tular Nalar training adopted a unique mentoring method, assigning one facilitator to every ten participants; for the *Akademi Digital lansia*, a co-facilitator was assigned. This departure from traditional classroom settings ensured that all one hundred participants had an equivalent opportunity to speak and listen to diverse viewpoints. This was the matter Tular Nalar needed: at least 10 certified facilitators who had previously taken part in the ToT to hold *Akademi Digital Lansia* or *Sekolah Kebangsaan* classes. Tular Nalar's outreach for the 2024 implementation year targets still covered 38 provinces. This broad implementation requires collaboration with implementing partners other than the MAFINDO network, which was already very extensive throughout Indonesia, and the participation of a large number of Facilitators. One class must have a minimum of 10 certified facilitators, both for *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan*. Even if someone was a facilitator for both classes, then he

or she was obliged to follow the ToT pada *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan* classes. As both had different participants, different materials, and different approaches.

This challenge led Tular Nalar to adopt an online format for its ToT, prioritizing time efficiency, facilitator flexibility, the management of a large participant group, and the program's broad geographical scope. Implementing the Training of Trainers (ToT) online immediately provided benefits such as increased accessibility, flexible scheduling, enhanced interactivity, and opportunities for global collaboration (Voltage, 2024). This online ToT had also gone through several evaluations and adjustments made by Tular Nalar in terms of curriculum, time, methods, and materials, starting from the first year of Tular Nalar, where all activities took place online, both ToT and class implementation. the second year started to be divided into *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan*, including at Tular Nalar 3.0.

"The material is easier for facilitators to understand during ToT and independent study time, and is easier to convey to elderly participants and first-time voters. Furthermore, the time selected for the material demonstrated improved suitability over previous arrangements." R, MAFINDO Kendari Facilitator

"...perhaps because there are fewer, so as facilitators we can focus more on paying attention to the details that must be conveyed, when the ToT doesn't take too long." N, MAFINDO Makassar Facilitator

This statement was an indication of one of Tular Nalar's many efforts to improve, preparing prospective facilitators through ToT to implement classes at *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan*.

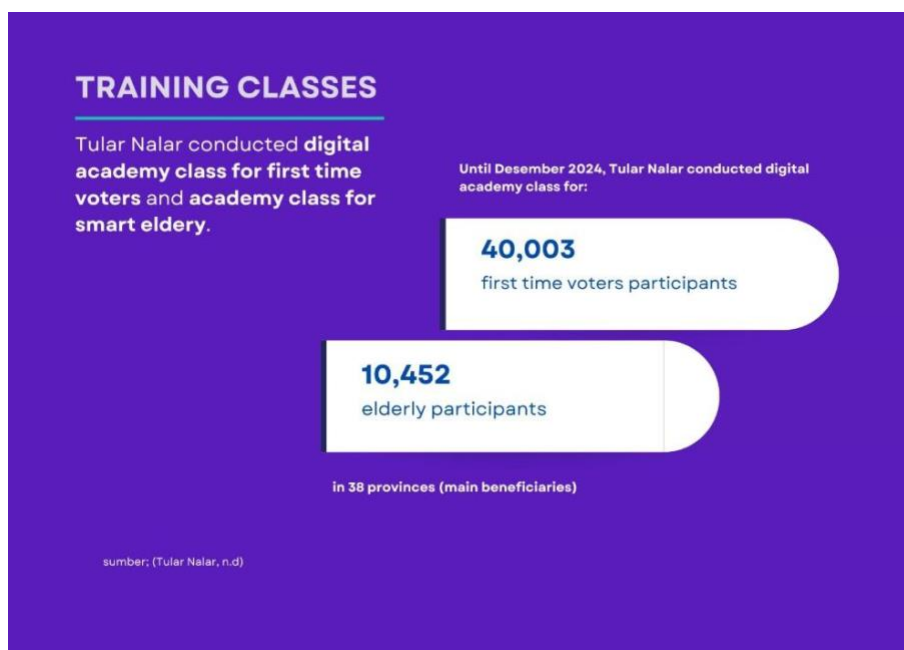


Figure 1. Data for digital academy class. (Source: *Tular Nalar*, n.d.)

The implementation of Tular Nalar on Sulawesi Island in 2024 recorded South Sulawesi and Southeast Sulawesi as the largest implementers, followed by West Sulawesi and North Sulawesi. The data below shows that at Tular Nalar 3.0 specifically in Kendari alone, there were five *Sekolah Kebangsaan* and one *Akademi Digital Lansia*, even though in Makassar, there were five *Sekolah Kebangsaan* and two *Akademi Digital Lansia* Classes. In Kendari City, the implementation was still dominated by MAFINDO Kendari, and only collaborated with two partners, namely the IAIN Kendari Study Program and OASIS Sultra. In Makassar, a more diverse organizational model was evident. While eight *Sekolah Kebangsaan* were held, MAFINDO Makassar directly conducted only two *Sekolah Kebangsaan* classes. The widely held view of these programs was delivered through collaborations with partner institutions like UNM Makassar, STKIP YPUP, UIN Alauddin, and

Bosowa University.. For Akademi Digital Lansia MAFINDO Makassar organized one class, and WKRI, a partner organization of Tular Nalar, conducted another class.



Figure 2. Data of ToT batch 1&2 (Source; Researcher data 2025 (Tular Nalar, n.d.)

Kendari facilitators were mostly lecturers and students who adapted to online learning and independent study; the ToT's online format posed no particular challenge. However, practical application revealed a common difficulty: facilitators struggled with their material comprehension during self-study and the subsequent selection of relevant and digestible examples for participants.

"The material was new, there were lots of new terms too, it's not difficult, but you still need your ability to understand. Discussions during ToT online were also limited, then think about how to convey it to the participants," A, MAFINDO Makassar Facilitator

"This was the first time I had taken part in ToT online, and I was trained as a facilitator and then assisted in the form of a small group. It's called learning. Yes, there were difficult things, but after meeting the participants, everything was able to flow on its own, there were no fears," D, OASIS Kendari Facilitator

Despite acknowledging the challenges of material delivery, particularly the limited discussion opportunities in the online ToT, both facilitators expressed confidence in their collaborative ability to effectively deliver Tular Nalar Reasoning materials to both elderly and youth participants.. One thing that supported the facilitators' abilities was their background, which came from an academic environment, so they were familiar with the discussion process and online class activities.

3.2 Training of Trainers Online Tular Nalar

ToT is a way to disseminate information and equip individuals with knowledge, skills, and know-how. It is viewed as an efficient way to reach large numbers of individuals (Holzman et al., n.d.). The Training of Trainers (ToT) model is intended to engage master trainers in coaching new trainers that are a lesser amount of knowledgeable with a particular topic or skill, or with training overall. A ToT workshop can build a pool of competent instructors who can then teach the material to other people. Instead of having just one trainer who teaches a course for a long time, there are multiple trainers teaching the same course at the same time in the ToT model. This means a new participant typically gets to watch an experienced trainer teach, complete the exercises, and then practice teaching segments to other participants (Promotion, 2024).

This statement provided an understanding of ToT as a training model designed to prepare individuals to become competent trainers in specific fields or certain skills, in large numbers, the tiered concept meant that facilitator training will produce other facilitators, and not just depend on one or two facilitators, thus expanding the reach of training, increasing sustainability, and being more cost and time efficient.

ToT is not something new to do in both educational and work environments, but there were still who do not understand Training of Trainees both in terms of knowledge, practice and the main things that must be prepared in carrying out ToT to get maximum results, namely facilitators who had good abilities, to re-teach what they had learned.

| | |
|----|---|
| 1 | ToT is often confused with knowledge campaigns and/or direct training. ToT is a model that should not only pass on knowledge, but also instil behaviour change. ToT differs from direct training in that Lead Trainers should be equipped with knowledge and skills to then train others by presenting information effectively, responding to participant questions, and leading activities that reinforce learning and foster behaviour change. |
| 2 | ToT programmes often focus on the content, but it is just as important (if not more important) to build up the interpersonal skills, communication capabilities, and facilitation skills of trainers. The selection of Master and Lead Trainers is paramount to the program's success: the quality of the ToT depends on the quality of the trainers. |
| 3. | Understanding the enabling environment is critical. This includes understanding time constraints, local context, gender, hierarchical relationships, and formal and informal processes and communication channels. |
| 4. | A ToT might not be the cost-effective “quick fix” to reaching large numbers. A good ToT requires time, money, and human resources investment. This includes time for curriculum and facilitation design, training the trainers, refinement, scheduling training, follow-up support, refresher activities, reviews, and evaluation. A good ToT is a multi-year programme with significant investment in time, capital, human resources and oversight |
| 5. | ToTs should be embedded into learning and development programmes within organisations and these organisations ideally should be financially supporting ToTs; however, to do so requires creating buy-in and often a business case supplemented with evidence as to why the ToT is important and the difference it makes |

(Source: Holzman, Caren; Davidson, n.d.)

Both face-to-face and online ToT are equally important, and both have advantages and disadvantages. Online Training of Trainers is not something new, especially after the pandemic where people have become accustomed to online activities, but as a training process that aims to change knowledge and behavior, online ToT definitely faces challenges, some of these challenges are **Challenges in Engagement**, despite the benefits, virtual facilitation also presents challenges in maintaining engagement and fostering collaboration. Influences such as technical difficulties, distractions, and a lack of non-verbal cues can hinder effective communication and participation. Facilitators need to employ strategies to mitigate these challenges and ensure meaningful engagement among participants. **Emphasis on Digital Literacy:** With the increasing reliance on virtual facilitation tools, digital literacy has become a crucial skill for effective collaboration. Participants needed to be proficient in virtual platform navigation, technical problem-solving, and usage of digital tools for collaborative enhancement. **Shift in Facilitator Roles:** The role of facilitators has evolved in the virtual environment. They must adapt their facilitation techniques to suit the online context, focusing on building rapport, fostering inclusive environments, and leveraging technology to facilitate interactive sessions effectively (Voltages, 2024).

The online ToT held by Tular Nalar also faces this challenge. Although the training time is flexible, it tends to face difficulties with potential facilitators who participate in the training while engaging in other activities, resulting in them being less focused on the material presented.

"What's called online, sometimes we follow along while doing other things, for example, driving, household activities, or even other work. So we don't focus, let alone rely on later being able to do the material ourselves, even though we don't necessarily know what it means when we read the material," N, MAFINDO Makasar Facilitator.

"The challenge of online classes is maintaining focus, well, that's the challenge...if we're offline, we sit in the same room, at least we can try to focus," R. MAFINDO, Kendari Facilitator

Facilitators also encountered difficulties due to the large number of participants, which limited the interactive discussion space. Hard for prospective facilitators to interact, especially if there is material that they didn't understand.

"It's too crowded, there are a lot of people, so it's a bit difficult to ask questions, the arena is limited, and if you're offline, there are fewer participants. Or even if you're online, maybe you can consider the participants within regional boundaries, for example Sulawesi-Maluku-Papua, Java-Bali, that's possible, right..." R, MAFINDO Kendari Facilitator

"Communication is a bit difficult both ways because questions are limited, and the material uses video, so sometimes there is something that is not understood in the material that is shared because it is different from what is shown in the video during ToT." A, MAFINDO Makassar Facilitator

Very homogeneous participants, with different educational backgrounds, technological facilities, networks, and so on, are also a challenge. Facilitators said they had to overcome poor networking, not understanding the material, not even knowing how to present it, but not having the opportunity to ask questions.

"Sometimes we have trouble networking, bad signal, so how can you focus. Not to mention that some of the facilitator friends don't understand. Fortunately, our PIC was responsive and able to explain again," RN, MAFINDO Makassar facilitator

"If you use a cellphone, the problem is that the screen is small, the network is difficult, and sometimes the video doesn't match the material. Or we don't understand how to adjust it. Nevertheless, collaborative support from colleagues, the coordinator, and the PIC provided crucial assistance. The consistently available open discussion forum and the responsive Tular Nalar team via WhatsApp enabled these difficulties to be effectively addressed." D, OASIS Kendari Facilitator

Mafindo Makassar and its partners, who were generally from academic groups, did not experience much difficulty in adapting. The same with Mafindo Kendari, which organizes several classes. They deliberately prepared many potential facilitators. apart from ensuring the availability of facilitators when carrying out various classes, they also collaborated with partners when partners asked for help in explaining the material, and even asked for additional facilitators. Mafindo Makassar and Mafindo Kendari ensured the availability of facilitators who had taken part in the ToT organized by Tular Nalar.

"The good thing is that if the cooperation with partners in our area is good, so that when implementing it they need technical and material explanations, we can help. We even send our facilitators to help those who lack facilitators," Ast, Mafindo Makassar

"Our involvement in the Training of Trainers (ToT) stemmed from both the need for trained facilitators and the perceived value and applicability of the material to our work within the university setting. Consequently, we anticipate opportunities for shared facilitation responsibilities and potential collaborations with partner institutions," E, MAFINDO Kendari Facilitator

Various challenges when carrying out online ToTs have become evaluation material for the Tular Nalar team, starting from conducting ToTs periodically, trying to respond to various questions via group chat and personal chat, the freedom to take part in ToTs repeatedly, opening up space for more questions, simplifying material and delivery and other evaluation results which are continuously refined in each ToT, even providing ToTs with potential facilitators with certain partner groups. ToT Tular Nalar 3.0 took place from the end of 2023 to 2024, producing facilitators who are ready to accompany classes at both *Akademi Digital Lansia* and *Sekolah Kebangsaan*.

Preparing many facilitators to take part in ToT Online, both in Kendari and Makassar, gives each individual the opportunity to develop and participate. In addition, it is an advantage for Mafindo Makassar and Kendari itself because they have many facilitators who are ready to share their roles. Investing in internal trainers reduces long-term dependence on potentially expensive external resources, making training more sustainable and accessible (Martins et al., 2019).

3.3 The Potential of Online ToT in Improving Facilitator Communication Skills

For a facilitator, strong communication skills are the main foundation in various roles, especially when directing and supporting training sessions and community groups with diverse backgrounds. A facilitator with effective communication skills can guide discussions, manage group dynamics, and ensure that each participant understands and contributes effectively (Voltages, 2024). This is important because in the Tular Nalar class, training occurs in small groups where one facilitator will accompany ten participants. This presents a challenge for the facilitator to build the participants' confidence so they want to speak up actively while also being able to moderate those who are overly active, ensuring that the training can proceed well without anyone dominating and that time is used appropriately. Without these communication skills, facilitators will struggle to create an environment conducive to collaboration and achieving common goals. Effective communication is not just about conveying information, but also involves listening, understanding, and responding to participants' needs and perspectives (Smithberger, n.d.).

"Accompanying the elderly is full of challenges, they want to tell a lot, their stories are interesting, but there are also those who are difficult to get active with, there are also those who don't care, that's the challenge," E, MAFINDO Kendari facilitator

Facilitators needed to skillfully manage their focus when working with younger and older participants to ensure balanced contributions and a sense of inclusivity. Simultaneously, the constraint of time required careful consideration throughout the sessions." A, MAFINDO Makassar Facilitator.

Facilitators who have better communication skills can gain various significant benefits. Attendee engagement levels will increase because clear and engaging communication encourages active participation and deeper thinking. Participants will also feel more satisfied when they feel valued and understood, which is created through effective communication, including active listening and showing empathy (Sumaiya et al., 2022).

"Facing teenagers, especially when they are already tired, you have to be smart in attracting their attention so they want to be more involved, or they will be embarrassed to be active. Well, that's the challenge," N, MAFINDO Makassar facilitator.

"If the facilitator is communicative and interesting, the participants will be enthusiastic. During the class, there was a facilitator who was very popular with the participants. They tried to become members of that facilitator group, just because of the first impression during the introduction session that he was funny and communicative," E, MAFINDO, Kendari facilitator.

In situations that could lead to conflict, facilitators with good communication skills can discuss differences of opinion and tension within the group more wisely, facilitating open dialogue and listening to various points of view. Apart from that, when the situation is too busy with things outside the context of the material, the facilitator must be able to return the discussion to the material being discussed. In addition, effective communication builds cooperation, encourages participants to connect, share ideas, and work together in group discussions. Ultimately, facilitators who communicate well can create a dynamic and productive training environment, keeping participants engaged and maintaining momentum to stay focused. Facilitators with the ability to communicate effectively are fundamental competencies that directly influence the success of any training they facilitate. Poor communication can lead to ambiguity, misunderstandings, and ultimately, failure to achieve expected results. Having a facilitator who can communicate well shows that investment in developing this capability will provide great benefits for the organization (Fauth & González-Martínez, 2021 ; Jadhav, 2014 ; Putri et al., 2024).

When developing an online Training of Trainer (ToT) curriculum, facilitator communication skills must serve as a foundational element, necessitating the inclusion of several important components. Active listening training is fundamental, involving modules that focus on techniques such as retelling, reflecting, and empathizing (Malik & Putri, 2023). Facilitators must learn how to convey clear and concise messages by simplifying language, avoiding excessive joking, using appropriate body language, and staying focused on the topic. Encouraging open dialogue is very important, so the curriculum must include strategies for asking open questions, creating a safe space for participants to share, and valuing each contribution (Prasetyo & Anwar, 2021).

The curriculum not only focuses on verbal communication but also maximizes effective non-verbal communication, especially when carrying out face-to-face training, and the use of body language, eye contact, and facial expressions plays an important role (Jospeh, 2002). Although online communication differs from face-to-face communication, teaching effective online communication skills, including building connection and trust, is essential. Similarly important is the remote management of group dynamics, which involves strategies for balanced participation, addressing dominant individuals, and engaging passive online members (Cincinnati, n.d.)

"Because the ToT is online, there are good and bad sides to the material delivered via video. The good thing is that time can be used well, the bad thing is that interaction is certainly more difficult. Often there are examples of communication that you want to ask about in more depth, but because the discussion time is limited, they don't get conveyed..." R, MAFINDO kendari facilitator

"If the TOT is offline, it can be done at the same time as practicing during the class, so you can imagine, oh, this is how the training works, that is how the material is delivered, and so on. But once again, that's the challenge if it's online, we overcome it by discussing and asking each other via chat to clarify things that are still confusing," N, MAFINDO Makassar Facilitator

The Tular Nalar class required the facilitator to deal with two different participants, namely the elderly and teenagers. Characters, approach, and material all have to be adjusted. Communicating with the elderly, the challenges are trust, the ability to listen, the ability to manage time, respect, and teaching without seeming patronizing (Sanecka, 2020). They tended to be very active, especially in their groups, when the facilitator succeeded in attracting their attention. They also tend to be slower in accepting the material; for this, the facilitator must be able to use appropriate expressions, choose easy language and examples that are close to the daily life of the elderly.

"The elderly are a challenge, they want to talk about things they have experienced related to the topic we are discussing, at first I was a little unsure how to approach them, it turns out they were active, enthusiastic and finally realized the things that elderly people have to go through in this technological era..." E, MAFINDO Kendari Facilitator

"It turns out that their curiosity is high, they also want to learn and share, so we as facilitators must be able to regulate the tone of voice, choose words and expressions so that what is conveyed can be understood. The process of getting the message is different; sometimes we have to repeat ourselves, but it is very interesting, especially when listening to their stories," R, MAFINDOMakassar Facilitator.

The ability to adapt is a key element that greatly enhances communication effectiveness, and it is an indispensable skill for facilitators interacting with participants from varied backgrounds and diverse environments.

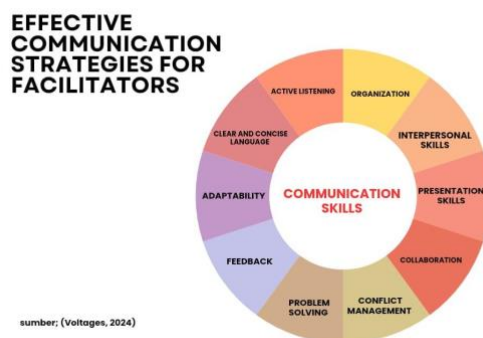


Figure 3. Key Communication Skills for Facilitators (Source ; (Voltage, 2024)

Enhance facilitators with good communication skills and mastery of the right material is not an easy thing, especially when the ToT is carried out online. Several facilitators said that the ToT would be easier if they could directly see the implementation of the training while the ToT was taking place. Apart from that, more interactive discussion times are also a challenge, because we must be aware that the different backgrounds of the facilitators certainly require an appropriate approach in implementing the ToT. However, both Kendari and Makassar facilitators stated that the Tular Nalar material, whether read independently or presented during Tot Online, was sufficient for them to understand and discuss together, so that various misunderstandings could be overcome.

3.4 Challenges and Solutions in Developing Facilitator Communication Skills through Online ToT

Developing the communication skills of facilitators who take ToT online, but it should be an offline class, and mentoring, giving challenges, and obstacles. Technical issues and facilitators' lack of digital literacy can be significant barriers. Maintaining participant engagement and motivation in virtual environments can also be a challenge, given the potential for distraction and multitasking (Team, 2021). In addition, providing an overview of the communication atmosphere during face-to-face online training is sometimes difficult, and building good relationships and trust online is more difficult than face-to-face.

To overcome these challenges, several practical solutions can be implemented. Designing online activities that are engaging and interactive can help maintain participant engagement and motivation (Sandlin, 2013). Tular Nalar uses games or quizzes to keep the interest of prospective facilitators, The ToT atmosphere is not too serious, uses sentences that are easy to understand, and various other efforts. When interacting and participating from the start, clear basic rules have been established (Ahmad Nurkhin, S Martono, Muhsin, Fachrurrozie, 2021), for example conveying how to use comments in the chat column, filling in attendance, the mic can only be opened with the permission of the operator, polite use of photos or images, the ability of the host or MC to greet and communicate with participants are things that can create a positive and productive learning environment.

In general, both facilitators in the city of Kendari Makassar stated that the Tular Nalar material was easier to understand and easier to convey again. The challenges when ToT is online are the same as the obstacles to online classes in general: limited discussion space, unsupported networks and devices, a very large number of participants, and the temptation to multitask, which reduces focus on following ToT. Facilitators can develop their communication skills, because apart from the interpersonal communication material presented during ToT, the participants they face in the field also shape the facilitator's communication character. Dealing with the elderly and teenagers requires different communication challenges, which ultimately determine the course of the class and the changes experienced by participants after taking classes at *Akademi Digital Lansia*.. Some facilitators even still communicate well with the participants they accompany. These findings reveal that the facilitator is successful in gaining the participants' trust, communicating effectively, and, critically, in facilitating behavioral change through the participants' adoption of the material.

4. Conclusion

A strategic and well-designed online ToT program can be a powerful tool for organizations in Indonesia to develop a cadre of highly effective facilitators who can drive engagement, collaboration, and positive outcomes across a wide range of activities. Tular Nalar has implemented this Online ToT by continuously evaluating the online ToT curriculum has been improved by adjusting the material, process, delivery, targets of the facilitator, and participants that the facilitator will face later. Communication skills are a focus that must be considered both online and face-to-face. Tular Nalar needs to continue to perfect the process of delivering material online for face-to-face classes. Tular Nalar facilitators can develop their communication skills, because during class they must be able to adapt quickly to the participants they face, both elderly and teenagers. The facilitator's background is also a concern that Tular Nalar must pay attention to when developing material during ToT Online.

5. Acknowledgement

Thank you to the Tular Nalar Mafindo program for initiating the *Akademi Digital Lansia dan Sekolah Kebangsaan*, a training program that hones critical thinking skills in digital spaces for the elderly and novice voters in the 2023-2024 period. Thank you to fellow lecturers across universities who are members of the Tular Nalar Mafindo 2025 program curriculum team, the Tular Nalar Community Outreach Team, Resource Persons, Mafindo Makassar, Mafindo Kendari, Mitra Tular Nalar, and the FIP UNM Educational Technology Laboratory, who helped with the data collection and processing process in this research.

6. References

- Ahmad Nurkhin, S Martono, Muhsin, Fachrurrozie, M. F. (2021). Peningkatan Inovasi Pembelajaran Melalui Pelatihan Virtual Sebagai Penguatan Kompetensi Kepala Sekolah. *Jurnal Implementasi*, 1(2), 139–145.
- Akhmadi, A. (2021). Implementation of Blended Learning in Training. *Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan*, 15(1), 78–87.
- Ayton, D. (n.d.). *Chapter 5: Qualitative descriptive research*. Open Educational Resources Collective. https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/qualitative-research/chapter/_unknown_-5/
- Cincinnati, U. of. (n.d.). *7 Common Challenges to Distance Learning*. University of Cincinnati. <https://online.uc.edu/blog/common-distance-learning-challenges/>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
- Fauth, F., & González-Martínez, J. (2021). Trainee perceptions of instructional design in continuous online training and learning transfer. *Education Research International*, 2021(1), 3121559.
- Holzman, Caren; Davidson, M. (n.d.). *Unraveling the ToT Model: Insights and Best Practices for Effective Training of Trainers By Caren Holzman, Enabling Outcomes and Matthew Davidson, Primark*.
- Holzman, C., Boyce, K., & Davidson, M. (n.d.). *Understanding & Applying the Training of Trainers (TOT) Model: Learning, Good Practice and Guidance*.
- Jadhav, A. (2014). *A Study on Training and Development in Indian*. 3(1), 34–39.
- Jospeh, D. (2002). Unit 8 Non Verbal Messages. *Human Communication*, 132–157.
- Lima, W., & Newell-McLymont, E. F. (2021). Qualitative Research Methods: A Critical Analysis. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2(2), 189–199. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3845254>
- Love Frankie ;Tular Nalar ; Google.org. (2024). *Penelitian Formatif Pemilih Lansia*.
- Malik, A., & Putri, L. D. (2023). Kompetensi Komunikasi sebagai Faktor Keberhasilan dalam Pelaksanaan Program Kampus Mengajar (Studi Kasus di SD Negeri Sinaba Kasemen Kota

-
- Serang). *Scriptura*, 13(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.9744/scriptura.13.1.1-13>
- Martins, L. B., Zerbini, T., & Medina, F. J. (2019). Impact of Online Training on Behavioral Transfer and Job Performance in a Large Organization. *Revista de Psicologia Del Trabajo y de Las Organizaciones*, 35(1), 27–37. <https://doi.org/10.5093/jwop2019a4>
- Mormina, M., & Pinder, S. (2018). A conceptual framework for training of trainers (ToT) interventions in global health. *Globalization and Health*, 14(1), 100. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-018-0420-3>
- Perez, A., Fetters, M. D., Creswell, J. W., Scerbo, M., Kron, F. W., Gonzalez, R., An, L., Jimbo, M., Klasnja, P., & Guetterman, T. C. (2023). Enhancing Nonverbal Communication Through Virtual Human Technology: Protocol for a Mixed Methods Study. *JMIR Research Protocols*, 12, e46601. <https://doi.org/10.2196/46601>
- Prasetyo, M. A. M., & Anwar, K. (2021). Karakteristik Komunikasi Interpersonal serta Relevansinya dengan Kepemimpinan Transformasional. *Jurnal Komunikasi Pendidikan*, 5(1), 25. <https://doi.org/10.32585/jkp.v5i1.1042>
- Promotion, N. C. for C. D. P. and H. (2024). *Understanding the Training of Trainers Model*. Cdc.Gov. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthy-schools-training/php/tot/index.html>
- Putri, A. F., Pemila, U., Jadmiko, A. W., Putra, K. A., & Kurniawan, D. (2024). Evaluasi Pelatihan Daring Training of Trainer untuk Pelatih Keperawatan Gawat Darurat. *Jurnal Keperawatan Klinis Dan Komunitas (Clinical and Community Nursing Journal)*, 8(1), 9. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jkkl.87701>
- Reichard, S. (2023). *Manual Qualitative Data Analysis Tutorial Using Creswell & Poth's Data Analysis Spiral*. Omega Graduate School. <https://ogs.edu/manual-qualitative-data-analysis-tutorial-using-creswell-poths-data-analysis-spiral/>
- Salas, E., Tannenbaum, S. I., Kraiger, K., & Smith-Jentsch, K. A. (2012). The Science of Training and Development in Organizations: What Matters in Practice. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, Supplement*, 13(2), 74–101. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100612436661>
- Sandlin, C. (2013). An Analysis of Online Training : Effectiveness , Efficiency , and Implementation Methods in a Corporate Environment. *Undergraduate Honors Theses*, 57. <https://dc.etsu.edu/honors/57>
- Sanecka, A. (2020). Social Barriers to Effective Communication in Old Age. *Journal of Education Culture and Society*, 5(2), 144–153. <https://doi.org/10.15503/jecs20142.144.153>
- Smithberger, L. K. (n.d.). *Facilitating Learning Through Facilitation : How Facilitation Skills Can Inform Communication Center Tutoring Best Practices*. 2, 3–17.
- Stiller, K. D., & Bachmaier, R. (2017). Dropout in an Online Training for Trainee Teachers. *European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning*, 20(1), 80–95. <https://doi.org/10.1515/eurodl-2017-0005>
- Sumaiya, B., Srivastava, S., Jain, V., & Prakash, V. (2022). The Role of Effective Communication Skills in Professional Life. *World Journal of English Language*, 12(3), 134. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n3p134>
- Team, C. (2021). *In-Person vs. Online Training: What Does the Research Say?*
- Tular Nalar. (n.d.). <https://tularnalar.id/untuk-pengajar/>
- Umaro, M., Rejekiningsih, T., Ardianto, D. T., Technology, E., & Maret, U. S. (2022). *Challenges of Training Institutions in Accelerating Availability of Graphic Design Online Classes for Trainees*. 6(4), 652–662. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.23887/jet.v6i4.48041>
- UU RI no 20 thn 2003 SISDIKNAS. (2003). https://jdih.kemdikbud.go.id/sjdih/siperpu/dokumen/salinan/UU_tahun2003_nomor020.pdf
-

-
- Voltage. (2024a). *Effective Communication Strategies for Facilitators*. Voltagecontrol.Com. <https://voltagecontrol.com/blog/effective-communication-strategies-for-facilitators/>
- Voltage. (2024b). *The Impact of Technology and Virtual Facilitation Tools on Engagement and Collaboration*. Voltagecontrol.Com. <https://voltagecontrol.com/articles/the-impact-of-technology-and-virtual-facilitation-tools-on-engagement-and-collaboration/>