

## APPLYING READING ALOUD MODEL TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' READING ABILITIES IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

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**Abstract:** The research problem of this study is limited to the main problems arise in the early / beginner level of learning process of reading in elementary school. The problem is that the students' skill in reading is still lack of teacher's guidance. The main factors that cause this arising problems are the decent implementation of learning reading in the early level of elementary school is not yet applied to the teaching and learning process. In line with this problem the research objectives to achieve through this research is to investigate, explain, and elaborate (1) the differences in ability to read in the early level of the elementary school students who were taught using RAC model and which do not use RAC models and (2) the main factors supporting ability of elementary school students' reading comprehension. This study was conducted using a mixture types of explanatory research method. The subjects of this study were teachers and students of elementary schools in the district and sub-district *Cileunyi Ujungberung* Bandung. Research Data will be collected using these instruments: (1) questionnaire (2) interview, (3) assessment of learning outcomes, (4) assessment of processes / skills, (5) the field notes, and (6) documentation. Research data will be processed qualitatively and quantitatively with statistical test. The results of data processing is presented as follows (1) there are differences in the ability to read the beginning of the elementary school students who were taught using the RAC model and which did not taught RAC models and (2) the main factors that support reading comprehension of elementary school students is the intensity of reading itself, strategies of teaching and learning reading, and enrichment of reading material.

**Keywords:** Reading skill, RAC model, elementary school students.

### INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the language skills taught in Bahasa Indonesia subjects in elementary schools. Reading skills are one of receptive written language skills that elementary school students should possess in order to be able to communicate in writing. Therefore, the role of the teaching of Bahasa Indonesia particularly in the teaching of reading in elementary schools is very important. This has been increasingly an important role when associated with the demands of literacy in the information era. Finally, the teaching of Bahasa Indonesia in SD should be directed in achieving literacy.

Reading and writing skills, especially reading skills must be mastered by the students at the elementary school since these skills are directly related to the learning process of students in elementary school. The success of students in following the process of teaching and learning activities in schools is largely determined by their mastery of reading skills. Students who cannot read well will have difficulty in participating in learning activities for all subjects. Students will have difficulty to grasp and understand the information presented in various textbooks, books

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supporting materials and other written learning resources. As a result, their learning process is too slow when compared to their peers who do not have difficulty in reading. In line with the above facts, Sánchez (2013) states that

“Reading as a core subject, has played a key role in our educational system as we know it since the 20th century. Nowadays the philosophy of teaching reading is more structured. Conductivist point of view. This is why reading is a complex interactive process which involves on the part of the reader not only perception and identification of letters but also interaction of thought and language.”

Reading in elementary school is implemented in accordance with the distinctions made in the early grades and higher classes. Reading and writing in the early grades are called beginner reading and writing, while the higher classes are called advance reading and writing. The purpose of beginner reading in the first grade is for students to read words and simple sentences fluently and precisely.

Fluency and precision of children reading at the beginning stages of reading is influenced by the liveliness and creativity of teachers who teach in class 1. In other words, the teacher holds a strategic role in improving students’ reading skills. The strategic role concerns the teacher’s role as facilitator, motivator, learning resources, and organizers during the learning process. Highly competent teachers would be able to give contribution for the country to teach the students, to develop the students’ character and to form scientists and professionals. Furthermore, Hamra and Syatriana (2012) states that

“Many research results indicate that the lecturers’ role is an essential part in forming students to be good readers. The studies indicate that the teacher is a more important variable in reading instruction than are the teaching methods and instructional materials.”

In line with the beginning of the process of learning to read, the problems that arise at this time is not the inability of students to read at the beginning. What happened today is precisely that students who enter elementary school has had the ability to read and write at beginner level. This is consistent with the fact that the new students of the elementary schools have early childhood education through the kindergarten or playgroup. Early childhood education should indeed not teach reading and writing, but in reality the early childhood education has taught their students to read and write at an early stage so that the students would have been able to read and write when entering elementary school.

The new elementary school students who have the ability of beginner level reading and writing technically give the elementary school teachers an ease since it does not have to teach them reading and writing anymore. On the other hand, these conditions emerge a new problem that is the loss of the teacher’s particular

role in teaching reading and writing Bahasa Indonesia. This has an impact on the monotony of teaching reading and writing at the beginner level of elementary school because the student is considered to have an expected standard of competence. These conditions resulted in several problems, among others, the students were forced to do reading and writing tasks that are exactly what they have to do when they got to class two. Moreover the more occurring conditions are that the students are still given reading materials that the same as what they have learned when taking early childhood education so that they become more and more bored studying Bahasa Indonesia.

Both of these conditions occur spawned a number of new problems to be solved. The first problem is that students have a negative attitude towards learning Bahasa Indonesia. They consider learning Bahasa Indonesia as monotonous and less challenging. This attitude is proven by the fact that most students prefer to study other subjects that are considered more challenging. Then they tend to consider learning Bahasa Indonesia is not important. The second problem is that the beginner students' reading skills are not well developed due to learning that takes place is the same as what they have learnt before. This is in line with the fact that we barely meet the creative efforts of teachers teaching so that students have better reading skills. The third problem is the weakness of the orientation of the students' acquisition. For reading should be combined with other materials of other subjects so that reading for starters still have a clear orientation.

The third major problem that occurs is caused by the fact that the learning model existed during the early reading is still not developed specifically for the beginner classes in elementary schools. This is in contrast with the emergence of many models of teaching beginner reading of that thrive in the early childhood level. In line with this, it is necessary to optimize a model of teaching reading in the early grades of elementary school which are more oriented to the development of attitudes, skills and students' knowledge. One model that can be optimized are the Reading Aloud with Comprehension (RAC) model. This is consistent with the fact that the benefits of this model, when compared to other models, which only concern on reading aloud without comprehending the context, this model is suitable for beginners and building reading skills while also students' understanding. Through this model, it is expected to the teaching and learning process to implement the strategy in beginner reading in the first grade of elementary school remains challenging for students to learn Bahasa Indonesia.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research employed explanatory type of mixed methods. The subjects were teachers and students of primary schools in the district and sub-district in Cileunyi Ujungberung Bandung.

The instrument used to collect the data of this study were (1) questionnaire (2) guidelines for semi-structured interviews to collect data about teacher's response on the design (3) test to measure reading ability of students, (4) assessment process in the form of scoring rubrics to measure students' activity, (5) the field notes to collect data of observation, (6) guide the assessment reading process, and (7) documentation to collect data about the research process. Based on the type of instrument used, this study resulted in two types of data, qualitative data are processed qualitatively and quantitative data were processed using statistical method that is test (t) and ANOVA test.

## RESULT

Based on the test results of experiments conducted three times, it is known that in the third experiments students' reading ability has increased significantly. This indicates that the application of RAC Model at the time of the experiment contributed significantly to the improvement of students' reading ability. This increase occurred in all phases of the experiment. Thus, the model used is able to be used to improve students' reading ability.

Based on the results of teaching and learning held in three classes of control, it is known that the conventional model of learning in reading also significantly contributes to the improvement of students' skills in reading comprehension. However, when comparing to RAC model implemented in the experimental schools, which significantly contributes to differences in reading ability at any time of learning, the learning model used is only capable of significantly differences in reading ability after the learning process is carried out three times.

To prove the effectiveness of the model then t test was implemented and the results are as follows.

**TABLE 2: T TEST RESULTS IN READING ABILITY BETWEEN EXPERIMENT CLASS AND CONTROLS CLASS**

|   |                 | <i>Beginner Level of Reading</i> |                                    |
|---|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|   |                 | <i>Equal variances assumed</i>   | <i>Equal variances not assumed</i> |
| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | F               | .099                             |                                    |
|   | Sig.            | .753                             |                                    |
| <i>t</i> -test for Equality of Means    | t               | 6.037                            | 6.038                              |
|   | df              | 183                              | 182.980                            |
|   | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000                             | .000                               |
|   | Mean Difference | 11.28799                         | 11.28799                           |

|   |                       | <i>Beginner Level of Reading</i> |                                    |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|   |                       | <i>Equal variances assumed</i>   | <i>Equal variances not assumed</i> |
|   | Std. Error Difference | 1.86965                          | 1.86943                            |
| 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | Lower                 | 7.59915                          | 7.59957                            |
|   | Upper                 | 14.97682                         | 14.97640                           |

Based on the data in the table above, it is known that the t value of 6.04 with Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.00 smaller than alpha 0.05. This means that the RAC model used have a higher level of effectiveness for improving the reading skills of elementary school students than the model used in schools. This proves RAC Model effectively improve reading skills of elementary school students.

## DISCUSSION

### Reading Aloud with Comprehension (RAC) Model

RAC Model used in this study is a learning model literacy reading-oriented development processes and learning outcomes (Hahn, 2002). In line with its objectives, this model has a function and an important role in developing good learning, ie learning to read the corresponding concept of proper reading, developing the habit of reading comprehension carefully and creatively, and ultimately these will impact on the improvement of students' reading ability.

This learning reading process based model requires teachers' work in total. This means there must be seriousness of teachers in developing a harmonious, quality, and dignified learning. Through the application of RAC, teaching and learning is built on awareness between teachers and students regarding their shared roles. Collegiality, openness, and feel the development of knowledge systems began to take shape through this application. This condition is further encouraging the creation of a conducive teaching and learning environment for teaching and learning process begins with the formation of a positive attitude, both from the teacher himself and the students themselves. Students are ultimately always accustomed to learning by starting awareness why and for what they are learning.

RAC also deemed able to build a better quality of teaching reading. This is in line with the fact that this model requires teaching reading always be carried out by applying the relevant syntax in reading activities (Lance, et. Al., 2003). Under these conditions, the second thing that developed in students' reading skills is not only physical skills but also mental skill. In this case the students were conditioned to examine a discourse through text-based scientific means for the better intelligibility

and tenacity of understanding the contents of the discourse. Through such learning process, students will be conditioned to gain the knowledge-based skills so that the acquisition of knowledge is more constructive and creative (Swason, et. al., 2011).

Aside from being able to build a harmonious and quality learning, RAC has also been able to build a dignified learning. Dignified learning is learning on the basis of an active effort based on the values of the characters. Through RAC, cognitive knowledge was not formed solely based on the intellectual abilities of students but is also based on the principles of cooperation, caring, honesty, perseverance, and the values of other characters. Under these conditions, intellectuality developed on students are also accompanied by the development of the students' character. Based on this fact, RAC was considered the right model used in forming a superior personal that have good intelligence and a noble character.

Based on the results of research, the teaching and learning activities which employ RAC have several advantages compared to other models commonly used in schools. There are at least five advantages of RAC model. First, RAC is designed in line with the method used in reading comprehension. Based on the proper use, the model creates more conducive teaching and learning process and is directly able to improve students' competence. This is in line with the opinion of Joyce, et. al., (2009: 23) stated that the use of the learning model is believed to be able to improve the achievement of learning objectives.

The second advantage is that RAC used was obviously specific to the reading process so that the model can be developed based on the real activity of the students during reading. In line with the clear stages of this activity, the teacher can better monitor the students during the learning level of difficulty for RAC actually has a formative function during the learning process. This is in line with the opinion of Popham (2011: 5) which stated that formative assessment is carried out during the teaching and learning process based on the real activity of the students during the process so that this assessment will be able to provide feedback significantly to the improvement of learning achieved by students.

The third advantage is that RAC used has been able to prepare students to have proposed characters during the learning process. Real activity conducted through the learning model, students unconsciously been accustomed to cultivate core values and universal character include (1) honesty, (2) intelligence, (3) care, and (4) firm. The four characters value is then developed specifically in accordance with authentic activities undertaken during the students' learning process.

The fourth advantages is that RAC used is not only presenting the general activity in learning, but also containing a number of activities oriented to the formation of good reading habits. The habit of reading in this study is not the physical / visual reading behavior but rather cognitive behavior. The habit of reading mentioned here is the habit of the students in building their own knowledge based

on material they read, this includes the habits of accurately capture and process ideas appropriately and cooperatively, and acquire the habit of expressing ideas creatively and responsibly. Based on this fact, the model used spawned new thinking that reading habit is not only physical / visual activities, but also more important is mental / cognitive activities.

The fifth advantages is that the RAC used was equipped with worksheets processes that lead students to work based on the demands of the learning model. Under these conditions, even if teachers do not master the model of teaching and learning reading well, teachers and students themselves will implement and follow the authentic-based learning activities aligned with the learning model. The use of worksheets processes impact on improving the ability of students directly and gradually in line with the principle of learning stages as proposed by Axfor, Harders, & Wise (2009: 3) who stated that through the learning stages, pupils will have a set of complex skills, strategies, and knowledge.

### **RAC Contribution to the Literacy Development**

RAC used in this study is also proven to contribute positively and significantly to the increase of students' reading skills in elementary school. This increase occurred in all sample schools, which means that the RAC model function not only for students who are highly skilled but also for low-skilled students. RAC used in this study are packed through the activity of thinking. Along with this fact, the students were familiarized to process discourse with the appropriate strategies. In line with the strategy used, more students could explore in depth the contents and the context of discourse so that their understanding was to be increased. The success in increasing reading ability through this activity is in line with studies that have been conducted Greenleaf et. al., (2010: 3) that develops reading apprentice ship model that also relies on the activity as a stimulus for the development of students' skills in reading comprehension.

Teaching and learning reading with optimizing authentic activities for the basis of the activities is to create models of teaching reading based on students' activities. This condition is the same as a research conducted by Greenleaf et. al., (2010: 3). Therefore, it is natural if RAC was proved able to develop students' reading comprehension. Other experts who develop reading-based learning activities relevant to RAC Model is Bryant, et. al., (2009: 1). Bryant, et. al., (2009: 1) based on the results of the research concluded that the direct interaction of the student for reading text on pre-reading, reading, and after-reading stage will build students' knowledge of the material learned.

In connection with the preparation worksheet as a form of authentic assessment process during the process of reading, RAC used in this study are consistent with the findings of research conducted by Alonzo et. al., (2009: 1). Alonzo, et. al.,



(2009: 1) concluded that the assessment will build a higher understanding related to diversity in the pupils.

Along with above description it can be said that learning model used in the study has also proved to improve the quality of learning process of reading in school. This is because of the fact that the RAC Model is basically the development of creative, innovative, and productive learning. Through the implementation of this model, the teacher recognized that teaching reading is becoming more interesting and creative so that students are challenged to be able to read the whole variety of early elementary school classroom discourse better. Similarly Shanahan, T and Lonigan, CJ (2010) stated their findings that the success of teaching reading at the beginner level of the class depends on the creation of creative and fun learning.

Based on holistic analysis is also known that this model provides motivation for students to continue reading. This causes students' intensity of reading is becoming higher and higher. Variety readings used are also able to motivate students to continue reading. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Mol et. al., (2009) which concluded that interactive teaching materials are able to develop students' reading ability. Reading instructional strategies, on the other hand, is also a factor that made the teaching and learning activity successful. This is in line with the findings by Walton, PD, & Walton, LM (2002) that stated that the appropriate reading strategies and hierarchies are able to build the students' ability to read various discourses.

## CONCLUSION

Teaching and learning model named RAC used in this research is a teaching reading and learning model oriented to the development process and learning outcomes. Based on the survey results revealed that the RAC used has several advantages compared to other models that commonly used in schools. This difference shows that RAC Model developed have significant importance for the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning outcomes in reading.

Based on the survey results revealed that RAC Model is proven to significantly contribute to the development of habits and increase students' reading ability. This increase occurred in all sample schools, which means that RAC Model is not only functioned for high-skilled students but also for low-skilled students. Given this reality, RAC Model is needed to improve students' habits and abilities in reading comprehension in a variety of text types.

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