

# THE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN READING ALOUD AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FBS UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

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## Abstract

This research is aimed at identifying the students' ability in reading aloud at English Department FBS Universitas Negeri Padang. The design of the research is descriptive quantitative and the population were the students of English Department FBS Universitas Negeri Padang registered at academic year 2016. The sample was taken by using total sampling technique. The whole number of sample were 44 students. The research instrument was reading oral test consisting of four types of texts, that is, narrative, descriptive, expository and persuasive. The findings of the research indicated that most students had low ability in reading aloud. About 75 percents of the students were not fluent in reading and 70 percents of them made mistakes in pronunciation and articulation. Besides, they could not catch the writer's message while doing reading aloud. The students also found problems in word stresses and intonation.

**Key words:** reading aloud, pronunciation, articulation, fluent, writer's message, students' ability, word stresses, intonation.

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## Introduction

It is undeniable that reading is a process for readers to get information about things that they want to know. By reading much information from book, magazine, newspaper, and online media will improve someone knowledge too. Therefore, reading should become a habit especially for students. The students who are habitual in reading will get much more information than the students who do not make reading as their habit.

As a matter of fact, there are many strategies that can be used by the students to improve their reading comprehension such collaborative strategic reading, silent reading, skimming and scanning, reading aloud, and etc. These strategies could help students to improve their comprehension toward various kinds of texts. The students can also use these strategies everywhere they read and not only at school or university but also at home.

On the other hand, when the students read they should pay their attention to pronunciation, articulation, fluency, intonation and also comprehension. These aspects are important because when a student reads a text with those aspects correctly he or she can get true information from the text and in turn people who listen their reading could also understand. For example, when a student reads a word such 'work', the stress word is *wɜ:k* not *wɜ:d*. If they say *wɜ:d*, the meaning is 'word', it means that the meaning is different.

In the research by Adrian (2014), he claims that pronunciation is an important rule to achieve success in oral communication. This could be achieved by doing some activities explicitly and not only in an implicit way. The explicit way here means the students are asked to pronounce words louder so other people could hear the words. Then, Lin (2017) it says that good pronunciation patterns show good of knowledge and intelligence. It means that it could make clear of process communication.

Furthermore, comprehending the text is necessary when students read some kinds of texts. In this case, they are hoped to understand what information that has been read and could be shared to the others. In comprehending the text the students can use certain strategies in reading, such as finding topic, main idea, details and transitional expression found in the text.

For that purpose, based on experience and observation as a reading lecturer, a great number of students of English Department FBS Universitas Negeri Padang registered at academic year 2016 still had problems with their loud reading. It was seen that some students make many mistakes when they were asked to read loudly. It can be proved from their articulation and pronunciation of words so that they reading should be corrected many times. When they produce words there are many words that is not clear, and ununderstandable. As a result, listeners could not understand what they read.

In addition, they also had difficulties in stressing certain words. Based on the researcher observation, some students who were asked to read made mistakes in reading. Most of them still had difficulties to put stress on the words they read. Furthermore, to know students' articulation, pronunciation and other aspects of reading, the students were asked to read the texts loudly. By this, their pronunciation, articulation, fluency, and also intonation could be heard and if are mistaken on reading, it could be corrected directly by the lecturers.

Related to the problem, the researcher did the study on the students' ability in reading aloud. This study aims at seeing and describing the students' ability in reading aloud. From this research, it could be shown how far the students were able to read based on the reading aspects, such as, pronunciation, articulation, fluency, and intonation when they are reading text loudly. Moreover, the researcher also tried to see how the students comprehend the text while doing loud reading.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### *1. Reading Aloud*

Huang (2010) says that reading aloud is the foremost technique in connecting the reading skills and speaking skills. Reading skill demands the students to analyze, interpret and understand the writer's intended meaning in the printed material. Meanwhile the speaking skill asks the students to utter the words correctly. Reading aloud does not only provide the students to improve their reading ability and basic skills, but also improve the oral expression. Thus, if the students and the teacher follow the principle and practice this technique gradually on hard, they can improve these integrated abilities well.

Furthermore, many teachers believe that implementing reading aloud in classroom activity will be much more success in enhancing the students' literacy development (Lane & Wright, 2007 in Robert & Buchinal, 2002). Despite it is a good technique to be implemented, the teacher also have to pay attention on how to apply this technique more effective. Sometimes, doing the same activity without any innovation, make the teaching and learning process tiring. Thus, there are some things that the teacher have to concern in implementing this strategy (Lane and Wright, 2007):

- a) *Methods used in reading aloud.* In order to keep the students engage to the text, teacher should be able to find some great methods. Dickinsons and Tabors (2001) recommend the teacher to apply immediate talk which is asking questions about the text and nonimmediate talk which is finding the word meaning, doing estimating and making inferences, then asking their background knowledge and personal experience relating to the text. As the matter of fact, the nonimmediate talk does work out in reading aloud.
- b) *Choosing the book reading.* This really plays important role in succeeding the reading aloud activity. In doing reading aloud activity, the teacher should be able to make the atmosphere of the class become comfortable and alive. They can do such discussion and projects through the reading aloud text. Thus, the teachers have to be able to choose the appropriate and interactive book for making the learning process become more comfortable and collaborative. In addition, the book used have to be match with curriculum goals so that the reading aloud activity could carry the desired result.
- c) *Applying dialogic reading.* This can be implemented in three ways : (1) supporting them to become active students and avoiding them from becoming passive students (2) providing help and praising the students (3) challenging the students' prior knowledge by doing discussion about the text. This will make the learning process more fascinating. As it become more fascinating, it will also improve their speaking ability in doing the conversation as the goals of reading aloud demanded. (Whitehurst, Arnold, Epstein, & Angell, 1994)
- d) *Text Talk.* This method is developed by (Beck & McKeown, 2001) and concerns to the vocabulary development. Thus, the teacher task is finding the new words in the text to be discussed with the students. Then, the new words that are found in the story will be discussed in more depth by teachers and the students.

### *2. The Aspects of Reading Aloud*

#### *a) Pronunciation*

Pronunciation is production of the sound that is used to make meaning. It includes segmental features which involve the particular sound of language and supra segmental features which involve intonation, phrasing, stress, timing and rhythm. In addition, pronunciation is surrounded by gestures and expression that has close relation to how we produce the language. Good pronunciation will carry correct meaning. However, misunderstanding will happen if the speaker produces wrong pronunciation. Due to this fact, good pronunciation is really demanded in uttering the English word. That is why; pronunciation is the compulsory element in reading aloud.

b) **Articulation**

Articulation is the movement of the speech organs in making the speech sound. The speech organs include the tongue, lips, and jaws and so on. These speech organs have to be practiced a lot in order to achieve good articulation. Moreover, good articulation will be achieved if the students do the reading aloud as their habit. Thus, if the teacher implements the reading aloud as the school's routine activity, their speech organs will be usually trained to produce the English sounds. Furthermore, good articulation will carry good understanding for the listener or vice versa. Overall, articulation also plays an important role in reading aloud.

c) **Fluency**

Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, Meisinger, Levy, & Rasinski, (2010) say that there are three key elements that are being the determiner someone called fluent reader. They are speed, accuracy and correct expression. Speed and accuracy is also depended on good pronunciation and good articulation. Reading with correct pronunciation and good articulation will make the reading effortless and happened so quickly without conscious awareness. Besides, the fluent reading only concerns to how they understand and comprehend the text. It is supported by correct expression. The correct expression involves intonation and phrasing. The correct intonation will help and encourage the readers to highlight and point out the important parts in the text. Meanwhile the appropriate phrasing will help the readers memorize and comprehend the text. Generally, most of the experts said that the readers are called fluent readers when they can read the text without nervousness and comprehend the text.

d) **Intonation**

Intonation refers to the word stress that assists the readers to point out and catch the idea of what is being read or said. The readers with trouble intonation will meet the difficulty in comprehending the text. In saying words, the changes pitch in stressing the syllable must be exist. This helps the readers or the listeners to understand what is being said or read. The tone can be falling and raising that then it has meaning. Usually, the words spoken in rising tone, it is the main point that the speakers try to utter. Meanwhile the falling tone is only the additional information of the main point. It really works in assisting the readers and listeners to catch the idea and comprehend what being said.

e) **Comprehension**

The comprehension will be achieved quickly if the readers have mastered the four aspects above. The fluent reader will have much concern to the information or the idea of text that is being read rather than focus to the words or lexical item. Almarshuemer (2011) states reading aloud is the best method to enhance the comprehension of the students. Reading comprehension is supported by the increasing of memorizing and concentration. Due to this fact, he proves that the memorizing and concentration increase when he implement this technique. Thus, by practicing reading aloud gradually, the students' reading comprehension will be much better all the time.

## **Method of the Research**

This research is conducted by using descriptive-quantitative research because it describes about the students' reading aloud ability. According Gay (2012:9), descriptive research is a research that determines and reports the way things are. It is supported by Sukmadinata (2010:72-73), descriptive research is a kind of research that describes the phenomenon, events that happen in the surroundings. Therefore, this research is conduct with descriptive research in order to describe and explain about students' ability in reading aloud.

Furthermore, the instrument of this research is reading aloud test. In implementing the instrument in research the students were given four kinds of the texts to be read. There were narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository texts. Each text consisted of one paragraph. Therewas one paragraph of narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository text. To get the sufficient data, the students should read one paragraph among the four texts. The prosedure of the test were as follows: 44 students were given 2 minutesto read loudly each paragraph of the four texts. Furthermore, there are four aspects to be assesed in this reading aloud test, that is, pronunciation, articulation, fluency, intonation and comprehension. Those four texts that researcher chosewere the texts that students had already learned before which was used on their reading book. In data analysis, there were 2 scorers who assessed the students' ability in reading to keep the objectivity of the research. The scorers used reading rubric to asessthe students' ability that made by researcher. The reading texts and reading rubric havebeen validated by a reading lecturer in English Department UniversitasNegeri Padang.

In addition, the population of this research were the second year students of English Department of UniversitasNegeri Padang consisting of 152 students. Gay (2000:124), population is a group which makes the researcher's interest to do the research and also the population is accessible and available. It can be said that the population must available and the important thing to run the research. Thus, there are five classes of

the second year students of English Department of UniversitasNegeri Padang. The members of each class are listed as below:

**Table 1. Second Year Students of English Department of UniversitasNegeri Padang**

Classes	Members
K1 2016	32
K2 2016	33
K3 2016	33
NK1 2016	25
NK2 2016	29
otal	152 Students

The research usedcluster random sampling technique in getting sample. According to Gay (2009:130), cluster-random sampling is one way of feasible technique in choosing the sample with less time. There are five classes of the second year students of English Department of UniversitasNegeri Padang which will be chosen in random. The researcher tookl two classes as the samples to represent the other in order to know the students' reading aloud ability. The researcher usedlottery for each class in taking the sample.

On the other hand, validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to be measuring (Usy&bassoon : 1991). This test and score were validated by a lecturer in English teaching program, UniversitasNegeri Padang. This test is valid based on T-test. Polit and Hungler (1993) refer to reliability as the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures the attribute it is designed to measure. This test is reliable because this test was already tested to students. In the other words, the same result would be got if other researchers did the same method. This test would be reliable by two lectures of English teaching program at UniversitasNegeri Padang.

**Findingsand Discussion**

**a) Findings**

The findins show the results of this research gotten from reading test as done by the students at academic year 2016. The test was measured by two scorers of English education lecturers at English Department of UniversitasNegeri Padang. The students were tested using reading aloud in reading four kinds of texts, namely, narrative, descriptive, expository and persuasive. Therewere forty four students that was divided into two groups. The result of this test was shown in the table below:

**Table 2. Students' Reading Aloud Score of Group A**

Number of Respondent	ASPECT						Score
	Pro	Artic	Fluency	Intonation	Compre	Average	
R.1	76	74	73	74	75	74,4	B-
R.2	79	77	75	74	70	75	B
R.3	79	79	82	81	80	80,2	B+
R.4	75	74	75	74	74	74,4	B
R.5	81	78	76	76	77	76,6	B+
R.6	76	75	76	74	73	74,8	B
R.7	74	75	74	73	75	74,2	B
R.8	75	74	75	75	74	74,6	B
R.9	75	76	74	74	75	74,8	B
R.10	77	73	73	74	75	74,4	B

**Table 2. Cont**

R.11	76	75	77	77	79	76,8	B+
R.12	76	70	70	70	73	71,8	B
R.13	77	76	78	76	79	77,2	B+
R.14	76	77	74	74	74	75	B
R.15	84	80	81	77	81	80,6	A-
R.16	83	78	79	82	81	80,6	A-
R.17	74	73	75	74	75	74,2	B
R.18	78	75	76	75	78	76,4	B+
R.19	80	80	80	80	81	80,2	A-
R.20	78	77	74	77	75	76,2	B+
R.21	80	81	80	80	80	80,2	A-
R.22	75	75	73	73	70	73,2	B
Total	77,3	75,9	75,9	75,6	76,9		-

Furthermore, the average of students' scores are divided into reading aloud aspect. They are pronunciation, articulation, fluency, intonation and comprehension. The aspect of in group A were shown in the following table.

**Table 3: The Grade Distribution of Reading Aloud for each Quality in Group A**

SCORE	CRITERIA	GRADE	QUALITY	AVERAGE (PARTICIPANTS)
100-85	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading with excellent pronunciation</li> <li>- Reading with perfect articulation</li> <li>- Reading with smooth fluency</li> <li>- Reading with clear intonation</li> <li>- Reading with excellent comprehension</li> </ul>	A	Excellent	0
84-80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-reading with very good pronunciation</li> <li>- Reading with very good articulation</li> <li>- Reading with very good fluency</li> <li>- Reading with very good intonation-</li> <li>- Reading with very good comprehension</li> </ul>	A-	Very good	5
79-76	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading with good pronunciation</li> <li>- Reading with good articulation</li> <li>- Reading with good fluency</li> <li>- Reading with good intonation</li> <li>Reading with good comprehension</li> </ul>	B+	Good	5
75-70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading with fair pronunciation</li> <li>- Reading with fair articulation</li> <li>- Reading with fair fluency</li> <li>- Reading with fair intonation-</li> <li>- Reading with fair comprehension</li> </ul>	B	Fair	12
69-65	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading with poor pronunciation</li> <li>- Reading with poor articulation</li> <li>- Reading with poor fluency</li> <li>- Reading with poor intonation-</li> <li>- Reading with poor comprehension</li> </ul>	B-	Poor	0

**Table 3. Cont**

64-60	-reading with not appropriate pronunciation -reading with not clear articulation -reading with less fluency -reading with less intonation -reading with less comprehension	C+	Very poor	0
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The table above shows that 5 students get very good grade, 5 get good scores and 12 students get fair. This means that only few students who were able to read with very good reading, and 5 of them are in good quality. On the other hand, most students were still unable to read aloud well. It is seen in the table 2 that the students found difficulties in reading aloud.

In addition, the tester gave reading aloud test for class B from English education program of Universitas Negeri Padang. The test was given to them are the same as group A. There were two scorers from English education lecturers. The scores gave almost similar scores to students in group A. The scores can be seen in table 4 below:

**Table 4: Students' Reading Aloud Score of Group B**

Number of Respondent	ASPEK					Average	Score
	Pron	Artic	Fluency	Intonation	Compre		
R.1	75	73	74	73	75	74	B
R.2	76	72	75	75	74	74,4	B
R.3	79	77	76	79	77	76,8	B+
R.4	76	77	76	76	77	76,4	B+
R.5	76	77	77	75	77	76,4	B+
R.6	76	78	74	76	78	76,4	B+
R.7	76	76	76	76	77	76,2	B+
R.8	80	80	80	81	80	80,2	A-
R.9	79	78	77	76	76	77,2	B+
R.10	78	77	78	79	77	77,8	B+
R.11	78	75	75	74	73	75	B
R.12	78	76	78	76	77	77	B+
R.13	76	70	73	72	73	72,8	B
R.14	75	73	76	72	72	73,6	B
R.15	77	76	76	78	76	76,6	B+
R.16	73	75	73	75	73	73,8	B+
R.17	73	72	72	72	75	72,8	B
R.18	74	73	73	74	72	73,2	B
R.19	77	76	72	73	73	74,2	B
R.20	78	73	72	74	75	74,4	B
R.21	74	74	72	74	76	74	B
R.22	76	73	74	73	75	74,2	B
Total	76,7	75,4	75,4	75,4	76		

The scores reached by the students of class B above can be concluded in the table 5 below:

**Table 5. The Average of Criteria of Reading Aloud in Group B**

SCORE	CRITERIA	GRADE	QUALITY	AVERAGE(PARTICIPANTS)
100-85	- Reading with excellent pronunciation - Reading with perfect articulation - Reading with smooth fluency - Reading with clear intonation - Reading with excellent comprehension	A	Excellent	0
84-80	-reading with very good pronunciation - Reading with very good articulation - Reading with very good fluency - Reading with very good intonation- - Reading with very good comprehension	A-	Very good	1
79-76	- Reading with good pronunciation - Reading with good articulation - Reading with good fluency - Reading with good intonation - Reading with good comprehension	B+	Good	9
75-70	- Reading with fair pronunciation - Reading with fair articulation - Reading with fair fluency - Reading with fair intonation- - Reading with fair comprehension	B	Fair	12
69-65	- Reading with poor pronunciation - Reading with poor articulation - Reading with poor fluency - Reading with poor intonation- - Reading with poor comprehension	B-	Poor	0
64-60	-reading with not appropriate pronunciation -reading with not clear articulation -reading with less fluency -reading with less intonation -reading with less comprehension	C+	Very poor	0

From the table above, it indicates that no students who got excellent quality on the aspects such reading by excellent of pronunciation, perfect articulation, smooth fluency, clear intonation and excellent comprehension in group A. Based on the table it can be seen that 1 student got very good score, 9 students got good quality and 12 students got only fair quality in reading aloud. It means that the majority of students in class B still have problem on reading aloud. .

#### **b) Discussion**

Necessarily, reading information that using English for college students should give much knowledge for them. Reading English information is different with reading by using Bahasa Indonesia, because it should be followed with some abilities for comprehend the text. The readers should take attention with pronunciation, articulation, fluency and intonation to valuable meaning of a text.

Furthermore, reading aloud is a way that can be done by readers to repair their pronunciation and other criteria of reading in getting in formation of a text. There are many researchers who had done research of reading aloud to improve students' pronunciation, articulation, fluency and intonation. Lin (2017) tries to use

reading aloud in his class to improve students' pronunciation. Nevertheless, there are some students still had poor in pronouncing even familiar words.

Moreover, the aim of this research is to identify the students' ability in reading aloud at English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang. There are four kinds of texts including narrative, descriptive, expository and persuasive texts that should be read by the students. In testing them, there were two scorers who tested them. Here, the writer describes result of reading aloud test by showing their scores related to reading aloud aspects.

The results indicate that there are some students that were still unable to pronounce words correctly. Some of them made wrong stress of word. This condition influences students in making meaning of the text, so that they misunderstood the information. From 44 students that were tested in reading aloud, there were no students that got excellent quality in reading. It can be seen from the table above that only 6 students got very good score, 14 students got good ones and 24 students got fair quality in reading aloud. It means that the students were still have problem in doing reading aloud.

The other important point is comprehension. Comprehending a text is a crucial thing when a reader reads a text. The thing that a reader must get after reading is she or he gets the meaning of information in the text read. After giving reading test aloud for the students, it showed that they did not understand the text while they were reading. From the table, it shows the average score of comprehending in group A and B are only 76. This score signs that students' comprehension of text is still low.

Related to this description, students' reading are still low. It needs improvement from the students themselves. By changing learning style of the students, it could improve their reading comprehension. And, also by doing reading aloud, it could influence students' good pronunciation, articulation, fluency, intonation and comprehending. This activity also could be done in reading class activity by lecturer's monitoring. Not only at school or university but at home the lecturer motivates the students to read aloud. As college students, they are hoped to have good pronunciation, articulation, intonation, fluency and comprehension in reading

## **Conclusion and Suggestion**

To sum up, it is reasonable to conclude that the reading aloud technique could increase the students' ability in reading. From this technique, there are some aspects of reading such as pronunciation, articulation, fluency, intonation and comprehending that should be improved with this technique. Furthermore, reading aloud does not only help a reader to foster reading ability but also oral skill. In fact, reading aloud is still regarded as less important in reading class, so that it does not become habit for the students. This research tells us that reading aloud should get special attention from reading lecturers and the head of English Department FBS Universitas Negeri Padang. If it possible, the subject of Reading Aloud can be considered to offer in English curriculum later. Finally, it is hoped that students take more attention to their way in reading, so that they can pronounce words and getting valuable meaning from reading.

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