

# Egra on Primary School in Serang City Banten; Strategies in Teaching Reading for Early Grade

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## Egra on Primary School in Serang City Banten; Strategies in Teaching Reading for Early Grade

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### Abstract

*The aims of the research is to find out the strategies in teaching reading for early grade students in primary school in reading Serang City Banten Indonesia. The strategies are determined from the results of the study using the instruments of Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA). The researchers used the quantitative research method by implementing the survey research design. The authors describe the obtained results of the student's skill in reading components. As an example, we illustrate the proposed technique of teaching reading for primary school students. Our method allows to improve the student's reading ability is moderate; the children are less able to recognize; the meaningless word is still hard to be spelled; the students can understand the story well. The new strategies effectiveness evaluation is confirmed by the calculation the students recognize letters with a low reading speed about 2.02 minutes for 100 letters. The ability to read meaningful 32 words in 3 minutes, but the ability in reading a meaningless, the students got difficult 20 words in 3 minutes. The students reading in general are good with 88 percent, only a few students cannot read the text. The students can tell the contents of the reading by listening the story and retelling the story given orally in 80 percent. For the conclusion and the research results, the significance of this research is the stake holders of the education, both teachers and students in teaching and learning reading in primary school level. The newest ideas of this contribution is the initial efforts to teaching reading by determining students level of reading skill and decided the text leveling and facing and having treatment of the students classification nor only for the students that have already master the reading but also for the middle and lower skill students in reading by having various method of teaching reading such as reading aloud, reading together, and guiding reading. And providing various reading sources beside textbooks.*

*Keyword: EGRA, reading skill, teaching reading, reading texts, reading material.*

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## **I. Introduction**

As an effort to improve the life and level of a nation, it needs to start with education, especially education in elementary schools. Education in elementary schools is very important and is related to the laying of the knowledge base for treading life and science at another level. One of the things that become very important and crucial is education in primary schools especially reading subjects, more specifically reading the early grades. The success of the process of learning to read or learning to read in this initial class will determine the success of students in learning other subjects because reading is a trigger for the development of other skills.

Many countries have done EGRA, and are considered successful in conducting EGRA as an initial program in developing the quality of primary school especially in reading skill. The program covered giving assist for the students and teachers in reading and providing the supports for the reading sources like books/texts leveling. Through the USAID PRIORITAS program, especially in the Banten Province reading program in particular it became one of the regions with the city district collaborating and becoming an EGRA development project. One of them is Serang City, Banten Province, especially in elementary school level, (UN, 2015).

As a follow up to the initiation program conducted by USAID PRIORITAS in Banten, especially in the city of Serang, the researchers conducted dissemination using primary school targets as partner sub-districts and comparison sub-districts to see the extent of project impacts and lesson learners to improve the quality of teaching reading.

From the preliminary data obtained from the implementation of EGRA, it is obtained based on the scope of the teaching of early grade reading teaching as well as strategies for improving the quality and quality of teaching reading early grades in primary schools in the City of Serang, Banten.

From the preliminary data found the characteristics of early reading skills of elementary school early grade students such as: the ability and speed of reading letters, the ability to read meaningful words, the ability to read words without meaning, This is very useful for improving the quality and quality of teaching and reading strategies, especially strategies and carrying capacity for teaching reading. Read and understand the text by answering questions from the text. Hear and understand spoken text by answering both explicit and explicit questions.

The objective of this research is to find out the strategies in reading skill for teaching primary school students in Serang City, Banten Indonesia.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1) Reading Assessment for Early Grade

Reading Assessment for Early Grade Students of Primary School is inspired by the process of reading itself, which is a gradual process that begins with the familiar phase, and ends with the reading phase. The stages that underlie this EGRA are that concepts of understanding and fluency must be taught together through text reading skills, (Stern J. a., 2014). In doing EGRA, important things to consider are the factors that influence the reading process. For example, the time in reading the text, the duration given and the time recorded at the end of the reading or text. Therefore, time is important in measuring this reading ability. On the other hand, this also limits the child in showing the child's ability to read. In general, the core components of EGRA are: (1) reciting letters, (2) reading meaningful words, (3) reading words that have no meaning or meaningless, (4) reading comprehension, and (6) understand oral texts. The most important thing that is emphasized for children in EGRA is how the child understands the text implicitly or explicitly from the questions given based on the text being read.

There are several things that need to be considered, including first, the factors that influence or support the process of children learning to read, the second, the EGRA instrument or measuring instrument itself and its development. The process of acquiring reading skills or learning to read requires a very long time, which goes through various phases and is closely related to written and spoken language. There are differences in the reading assessments of early grade students having the same phase and adjusted for input and carrying capacity in the process of having early reading skills.

The EGRA device consists of pronouncing alphabet letters, reading meaningful words, reading meaningless words, reading texts, and listening to texts, (["https://globalreadingnetwork.net/sites/default/files/resource\\_files/EGRA%20Toolkit%20Second%20Edition.pdf"](https://globalreadingnetwork.net/sites/default/files/resource_files/EGRA%20Toolkit%20Second%20Edition.pdf), [Online].).

### 2) Student Reading Achievement

This EGRA reading assessment is expected by various countries in the world to be a national program for diagnostic reading assessments for a country. There are many countries that use EGRA as an early indicator of student capacity especially at the primary level to develop their reading skills as a trigger to learn other skills in other skills, (PRIORITAS U., [Baseline Monitoring Report, Volume 3: An Assessment of Early Grade Reading Assessment](#), 2013).

Almost all countries in the world have initiated EGRA for elementary schools in their respective countries. Efforts made to promote

education campaigns for all and to achieve the goals of achieving the global millennium development of the United Nations in 2015. The number of primary schools in developed countries that have conducted EGRA marks this participation. Other evidence is the increase in primary schools by 91 percent in developing countries by 2020. In addition, the number of children dropping out of school at the elementary school level around the world has almost dropped by half in the same period.

Discussing about reading skills, children's skills to understand simple texts are fundamental skills for children who can be sharpened, learned, and enhanced with intensive and routine practice. Armed with this basic skill, early childhood has equipped themselves with important skills that are useful for him to learn other related things. There are many elementary school students in various countries that have not been able to read simple texts or have not even been able to recognize letters. Therefore, the initial stage for children to develop their reading skills is very important for the development of advanced skills that are the basis for developing reading skills, (Crouch L. , 2012).

Literacy skills are the fundamental abilities needed by children to learn other fields. The thing that children must do at first is that they need to learn reading skills so that reading skills can be used to learn other knowledge. Children can take or transfer the existing knowledge in the text available or given so that the ability to read or understand the text is very necessary in understand the texts. As an example of Mathematics using language as the explanatory medium, students need reading skills to understand or learn various subjects in these books or mathematics subjects, ("<https://www.education.gov.za/ArchivedDocuments/ArchivedArticles/EGRA.aspx>," [Online].). Therefore, in this case, students increasingly need to increase learning activities through reading or understanding texts, and comprehensive reading skills reading. Therefore, reading skills are very important to study life outside the classroom so that elementary school children can grow more academically mature, (J. a. L. N. Stern, 2014).

This article was inspired by the USAID PRIORITAS project, which is engaged in improving reading skills for students in the early grades of primary school in Serang Banten. In an effort to improve the quality and quality of primary school teachers in teaching reading skills to early grade students in primary schools, USAID PRIORITAS assesses early grade reading skills using the EGRA instrument (Reading measurement for early grade students). Then, the authors conducted a similar program in another area to obtain a baseline data reading ability for early grade students. This data is very important to determine strategies and steps for strengthening the teachers in the

learning process, especially in the area or university partner schools, (Bartlett L. A., 2015).

EGRA can diagnose the difficulties experienced by children in early grades in reading, (Gross J. , 2009). With the known difficulties faced by children in reading, then a program can be arranged to help them. EGRA has also been proven valid to collect preliminary data that can be used to compile a program to improve reading skills in early grades. As of 2010, EGRA has been implemented in 50 countries in 30 different languages. This widespread use shows that EGRA is a good instrument for describing children's reading skills in early grades, (D. Wagner, 2011).

EGRA tests include: (1) reading letters, (2) distinguishing initial sounds (phonemes), (3) reading meaningful words, (4) reading meaningless words, (5) reading fast and understanding reading, and (6) listening to readings. Aside from reading skills, EGRA can also show a child's reading speed and understanding of the reading content, (A. a. A. W. Gove, 2011).

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study was conducted by implementing a quantitative research methods and using a survey research designs. This study is taking sample from population of primary school student in Serang City of Banten Province. The sample taken is taken in two primary schools in partner sub districts and two-comparison school in sub districts. The sample are decided from the representative of a type A school with more than 500 number of students and B type school of primary with less than 500 students number. The district decided from the cluster project of strengthening the primary school in reading project with different sub district as a disseminating program. The number of schools was eight schools; each school was taken with a random sampling of 20 students so that 160 students were elementary students in the early grades.

The researchers used EGRA tests, include: (1) reading letters, (2) distinguishing initial sounds (phonemes), (3) reading meaningful words, (4) reading meaningless words, (5) reading fast and understanding reading, and (6) listening to readings. Aside from reading skills, EGRA can also show a child's reading speed and understanding of the reading content.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In doing the initial assessment for early grade reading, the researchers accompanied by four assessors in each school for a day assessment. The duration in doing EGRA test about 20 minutes for the main procedures. The test was conducted in 4 days for eight schools. After conducted the test, the researchers analyzed the data from the assessment and the results reading assessment by computing the summary for each section of the test.

For the additional data that has been analyzed by the researches, that was found that, not all the students used Indonesian language for daily communication in the family with their parents, brothers, and sisters and with their relative. They used also native language, for Bantenese or Serangnese liked Banten-Java Language called Bebasan, (87% used bahasa and 73% bebasan). It will influenced or effected the situation and circumstances for learning Indonesia Language in case of reading skill especially for early grade students in primary level.

For another data was 78% students of primary school had sources of books beside textbook of subject for school. The availability of the sources of the books beside the texts book will affect their reading habit and practices through reading activities both in school and on their daily at home with their family. In the section asking for the assist from parents or brother and sisters for having reading activities at home, it was found that 70 students of primary school having any assist of parent; mother and father and their brothers or sisters at least the adults learner for assisting the students to read books or texts beyond their text books for subject matter in the school.

In other side, the researchers found that 70% spent their time for about 1-2 hours for reading books at home. This is become their constructive activities or hobby for their reading skill and teaching and learning in primary school. When the researchers found the data for about 83% students chosen reading as their hobby. Almost all the students for about 93 % clearly stated that they were agreeing to be assessing by the numerator in the early grade reading assessment.

**Table 1. EGRA Data**

No.	Students' identification	%
1.	Language used at home: Indonesian language	87
2.	Language used at home: mother tongue or native language	73
3.	Having sources of books beside textbook of subject for school	78
4.	Any assist from parents or brother and sisters	70
5.	The average age of the students 6-7 years	88

6.	The time allocation for reading books 1-2 hours per day	70
7.	The initial statement for assessment	93
8.	Reading as students hobby	83

The first section was spelling letter or alphabet. Based on the finding, it was found that students had difficulty pronouncing as many as 100 random letters of the alphabet that had to be spoken or mentioned within 3 minutes. The average child has a speed of 2 minutes 02 seconds in reciting the 100 alphabet letters. This is caused by the process of learning to read by the teacher not based on letters but words.

**Table 2. EGRA Results**

Number of alphabet/letter/questions	Students' speed/%	Notes
100	2.02	100 letter in 3 minutes
30	3'	32 words in 3 minutes
30	3'	20 words in 3 minutes
5	88	Answering 5 question in a text correctly
5	80	Answering 5 question in a or story given and retell the story correctly

For the second were reading the meaningful words. Based on the finding, it was found that students were good in reading meaningful words within 3 minutes. The average child has a speed of 3 minutes in reading meaningful words were 32 words. This is caused by the base on learning reading was a word especially meaningful words.

The third section was reading the meaningless words. Based on the finding, it was found that students were difficult in reading meaningful words within 3 minutes. The average child has a speed of 3 minutes in reading meaningless words were 20 words. This is caused by the base on learning reading was a word especially meaningful words.

The fourth section was reading comprehension. Based on the finding, it was found that students were good in reading comprehension. The average child has a good skill in reading a text and comprehends the content of the text by answering five questions related to the text implicitly or explicitly 88% students were answered the correct.

The fifth section was a listening skill or retelling the story. Based on the finding, it was found that students were good in understanding oral stories well. Their skill in telling back content a story was good. The average child has a good skill understanding the oral story, retelling the story, and answering the question based on the story given were 80%.



Specific finding based on the data of the children asked while they began their process of EGRA assessment shown that the children guided by parents or brothers or sisters were better reading skill. There other finding was the availability of reading books besides textbooks for their reading sources were useful to assess their reading skill. It was proven that learning skills that show children literacy skills: from birth to grade 1 elementary concept of writing, able to show the direction of writing, concept of words or other basic knowledge about writing awareness of pronunciations. They can identify the initial sounds/rhythm; letter segmentation. They are expected to be able to identify the initial or final sound of a word, or separate words into letters (words spoken aloud by the assessor).

Beginning of class 1 Recognition of letters, names and/or sounds  
Mention the name/sound lowercase and uppercase letters, which are randomly presented Syllable naming Recognize syllables correctly presented randomly Read non-words Able to identify non-words from syllables that are presented randomly Read common words Read a list of words taken from a collection of common words that are randomly presented Confirmation and fluency:

End of class 1 to end of class 3 Reading aloud (read paragraphs) and understand reading narrative text or information accurately, without difficulty, at sufficient speed and can answer both literal and veiled questions about the writing they are reading. Dictating Translating sound into writing and spelling it correctly Puzzle or completing sentences Read sentences without making a sound and look for missing words correctly (in the case of puzzles, various options are provided), (Crouch L. , "Why Early Grade Reading: An Economist's Perspective," , 2012).

Based on the data of EGRA in each section the researchers urged that the strategies for teaching reading for primary school students must be begin from teach or telling the students to acknowledge the word from syllabi first before they learn words. This is become their basic knowledge of the words, (Murnane, 2014). They will be able to know about the words well.

They need more input in term reading sources beside their reading textbooks facing the variant level of the student's skill or ability in reading. The researchers urged the text leveling based on the student level in reading skill or ability, (Lilongwe, 2012).

The teacher method of teaching reading must be various in order to engage the student's interest and needs. There are many various levels of students in reading skill that must be facing by the teacher, such as: good in reading skill, middle level in reading skill and the lowest level of reading skill. The teacher also needed to be trained to improve the

quality of teaching reading with various strategies for early grade for primary school students. The strategies that can be used such as reading aloud, reading together, reading with guide and using various sources of reading.

Children who do not learn to read in the early grades have difficulty developing further skills, which are generally obtained by reading. Because they cannot understand written information, cannot follow written instruction and cannot communicate well through writing, these children risk falling further behind than their peers who can read effectively in subsequent classes without intervention, gaps between children who can read well and those who cannot, will become wider, (UN & UNESCO, 2015).

Children who can read well absorb more written information, develop vocabulary and improve understanding, while children who are less able to read will lose motivation, can only read some information and are unable to understand more complex information, (Stern J. , 2014).

## V. CONCLUSION

As conclusion, the results of the research, the students speed with 2.02 minutes for 100 letters, reading meaningful words for 32 words in 3 minutes, reading meaningless words with 20 words in 3 minutes. The meaningless word is still hard to be spelled, (W.D, 2011). There are 88% can read the text, only a few students cannot read the text. The 80% can understand the oral text and understand the test given. The children guided by parents or brothers or sisters were better reading skill. There other finding was the availability of reading books besides textbooks for their reading sources, (D. a. G. A. M, 2015). From the conclusion of this study is the adjustment of reading learning techniques performed by teachers for students that are tailored to the needs of children's reading skills by having a text leveling. The adjustment of the provision of reading material for children is adjusted to the level and interests of each child so that the child's reading ability is getting better and can be useful in teach other subjects, (Bartlett L. A., Problematizing early grade reading, 2015). The teacher must be accomplished by training various strategies in teaching reading such reading aloud, reading together, and guiding reading. For the conclusion and the research results, the significance of this research is the stake holders of the education, both teachers and students in teaching and learning reading in primary school level. The newest ideas of this contribution is the initial efforts to teaching reading by determining students level of reading skill and decided the text leveling and facing and having treatment of the students classification nor only for the students that have already master the reading but also

for the middle and lower skill students in reading by having various method of teaching reading such as reading aloud, reading together, and guiding reading. And providing various reading sources beside textbooks.

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