

The Need for Development of Early Reading Instruction Tools for First-Grade Students

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Abstract : Indonesian language learning includes four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of those skills that first grade students need to master is reading skill. Learning to read in the early grades must start from the basic stage, which is early reading. Early reading skill determines the success of reading comprehension. Some studies reveal that Indonesian students' reading skill is still poor. Students' early reading skill is directly influenced by the quality of instruction. One attempt by educators to improve the quality of early reading instruction is selecting and determining instruction tools to be used in the early reading teaching and learning process. Early reading instruction tools selected should be fun, challenging, meaningful and motivating students to improve their reading skill.

Early reading instruction tools along with the right method greatly determine the quality of learning process. Good quality learning process can improve students' reading skill. Steinberg method is a method considered capable of improving the quality of early reading instruction.

Key Words: Development, instruction tools, early reading, Steinberg method.

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I. Introduction

Fatimah (2015) in her research argued that, the first-grade students in Kolaka regency had poor early reading skill as it is still below the minimum standards set by each school. This is due to the low quality of the early reading teaching and learning process.

One of the efforts made to improve the quality of the first-grade students' early reading learning process is to develop early reading instruction tools. With good planning, early reading instruction will be carried out effectively, efficiently and will achieve optimum results. In order to be more directed in their use, and to achieve expected goals, the reading tools developed must use an appropriate method. Based on the description above, the problem of this research is formulated as: How is the need for development of valid, practical and effective Early Reading Instruction Tools Based on Steinberg Method in Elementary Schools? Thus, the objective of this research is: to describe the need for development of valid, practical and effective Early Reading Instruction Tools Based on Steinberg Method in Elementary Schools.

II. Literature Review

Development of Instruction Tools

Development is a creative work done systematically to increase the repertoire of knowledge that is used to design various applications. According to Sugiyono (2011, p.407), developmental research is a research method used to produce a specific product and to test the effectiveness of the product. Van Akker (2010) describes developmental research based on two objectives: (1) development to obtain product prototype, and (2) formulation of methodological suggestions for designing and evaluating the prototype. Based on the above description, it can be concluded that development of instruction tools is a form of directed and systematic procedure to produce a device based on the existing development theory. Thus, development is a series of activities undertaken to produce something, in this case instruction tools, based on one of the development theories selected. Trianto, (2009, p.179) suggests that instruction tools are a number of materials, tools, media, instruction and guidelines to be used in teaching and learning process. Instruction tools (which include syllabus, lesson plans, and instructional materials) refer to tools or equipment used to implement processes that enable educators and learners to carry out teaching and learning activities.

The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System Article 39 (paragraph 2) asserts that: "Educators are professionals who plan and implement learning process, assess learning outcomes, guide and train learners, and carry out additional tasks and continually improve their academic achievement and competency". This can be interpreted as that teachers as educators have the authority and obligation to plan and implement learning process professionally so that there is no more reason for them to

not make lesson plans and apply them to learning process, measure the success of the learning process, and carry out other professional duties as educators.

Instruction tools will affect the success of learning process in classroom because it provides convenience and can help teachers prepare and carry out good quality teaching and learning activities. Faisal (2015) adds that by developing instruction tools effectively and creatively, the process of reading learning will be implemented effectively and achieve optimum results. Therefore, instruction tools are absolutely needed by a teacher in managing teaching and learning.

Early reading instruction tools needed in managing learning process can be in the form of Syllabus, Lesson Plan, Instructional Materials, and LKPD (student worksheet). This research investigates the validity, practicality, and effectiveness of early reading instruction tools developed.

Early Reading

Solchan (2008, p.65) states, "the term *early reading* is used because this type of reading marks a transition from playtime in kindergarten or from home to school." Based on this statement, early reading is the basis or foundation of learners in mastering other skills. This is because early reading is the initial stage of reading process. According to Tarigan (2011, p.261), early reading is a mechanical skill considered to be in the lower order. It includes: (1) introduction of letters; (2) introduction of linguistic elements (phonemes/graphemes, words, phrases, clause patterns, sentences, etc.), (3) introduction of spelling and sound correspondence (ability to articulate written materials or to bark at print); (4) slow reading.

According to Dalman (2013, p.85), early reading is an initial skill that must be learned or mastered by a reader. Early reading is the starting level for people to be able to read. On the other hand, Sulastri (2008) states that "early reading is the ability to recognize, understand, and voice the written symbols". Thus, reading at this stage is one part or component of written communication. "The process of written communication involves symbols of sounds of language that are converted into written symbols or letters" (Tampubolon, 2008, p.5).

Early reading can be interpreted as an early-stage reading process that involves introduction, understanding, and voicing of language symbols by involving visual and cognitive activities that will lead learners to reading comprehension.

Steinberg Method

Steinberg method (1982, p.197) is a way to teach early reading to learners through four stages (steps), namely:

Step I. a word and its meaning

Example: reading a word with a picture (a picture or object),

Step II. learners understand a word without a picture

Example: Tomato.

Step III. Reading a phrase/sentence.

Example: This is a tomato

Tomato is red

Step IV. Reading a short text.

Example: Tomate

This is a tomato

Tomato is red.

Red tomatoes are used in cooking.

A tomato is good for health.

Tomatoes contain vitamin C.

According to Steinberg (1982, p.197), there are five basic principles that can optimize the children's reading. These five principles include reading material involving meaningful words, phrases, and sentences, reading depends on speech understanding, reading does not depend on teaching a new concept or language, learning to read should be fun.

Assessment of Instruction Tools Quality

The assessment of instruction tools refers to curriculum quality criteria proposed by Nieveen (in Nurdin, 2007): (1) validity; (2) practicality; and (3) effectiveness. Therefore, instruction tools of Early Reading Based on Steinberg Method developed in this research are considered to be qualified if they meet the following criteria: (1) according to expert and practitioner's judgment, theoretically the instruction tools can be

implemented properly (valid); (2) developed tools can be well implemented in the field (practical) using indicators of instruction tools implementation, and teacher response; and (3) the implementation of the tools provides optimum results (effective) by using indicators of mastery and achievement test, and students' responses.

III. Research Method

This research employed qualitative descriptive method. this method is used to describe the data that has been collected and analyzed. this research was conducted in kolaka regency. a preliminary study was conducted at sdn (state elementary school) 2 lamokato. the subjects were early reading instruction tools including syllabus, lesson plan, and instructional materials to be developed. the subjects of testing were the first-grade students of sdn 2 lamokato.

The data or information collected and analyzed in this research is qualitative data. The source of qualitative data is in the form of words and actions, the rest is data in the form of documents. Sources of data in this study include primary data and secondary data.

Data were collected using observation, document review, and questionnaire. Observation was conducted to obtain information on the process of early reading learning in the first grade. Document review was conducted to obtain data on early reading learning from the curriculum, instruction tools used and learning process. Questionnaire was used to obtain data on instructional materials used by first grade teachers in Kolaka regency. Technique of data analysis used at this stage is a qualitative analysis in terms of various aspects.

IV. Results and Discussion

I. EARLY READING TEACHING AND LEARNING CONDITION

Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 67 of 2013 on the basic framework and structure of elementary school curriculum, the 2013 curriculum is implemented through integrated thematic learning. Integrated thematic refers to integration between subjects or integration in one subject. This indicates that not all materials that support a competency in a subject can be easily integrated into a theme that integrates some subjects.

Each theme in textbooks for first-grade students combines many subjects, including Bahasa Indonesia. This is because every grade including first grade is equipped with all basic competencies. This means that the formation of early reading skills is not optimal.

Early reading is one of the materials in Bahasa Indonesia subject. In the 2013 Curriculum, the aspect of early reading has not been clearly defined. The basic competencies and aspects of knowledge and skills assume that first-grade students are already able to read.

From the statements in some basic competencies, early reading includes determining vocabulary through short text. This can be seen in Table 4.1 below:

Table.4.1. Basic Competencies of Early Reading

No	Core Competencies 3 (Knowledge)	Core Competencies 4 (Skills)
1	3.4. Determining the vocabulary of parts of the body and the five senses as well as their treatment through short text (in the form of drawings/pictures, simple slogan writing, and/or song lyrics and environment exploration.	4.4. Explaining (in the form of pictures and writings) about parts of the body and the five senses and their treatment using Indonesian language vocabulary with the help of local language orally or written.
2	3.5. Identifying the vocabulary on how to maintain health through short text (in the form of pictures, writings, and simple slogan writing) and/or environment exploration.	
3	3.6. Describing vocabulary about various types of objects in surrounding environment through short text (pictures, writings, and/or song lyrics) and/or environment exploration.	
4	3.7. Determining vocabulary relating to the day and night cycle through short text (pictures, writings, and/or song lyrics) and/or environment exploration.	4.7 Explaining the day and night cycle in the text and pictures using Indonesian vocabulary with the help of local language
	3.9. Detailing the vocabulary and expressions used for self-introduction, introducing family and other people orally and written with the help of local language vocabulary.	
5	3.10. Describing the vocabulary of familial	

6	relationships through pictures/family tree charts in Indonesian or local language. 3.11. Listening to children poems/song lyrics (containing expressions of admiration, pride, respect for parents, and compassion or friendship) for pleasure.	
7		

Based on the 2013 curriculum analysis, it can be concluded that early reading skills will not grow optimally due to some weaknesses as described previously.

Condition of Early Reading Planning and Instruction in the First Grade

Information obtained from the observation in relation to early reading instruction includes: (1) teachers already have a syllabus and lesson plan but the aspect of early reading has not yet been priority as the formulation of learning objectives does not specifically include an objective related to early reading, learning activities do not contain stages of students' early reading activities, the teaching methods only include lecture and question-answer methods. (2) The instructional material used is the 2013 curriculum textbook for students published by the government and no teaching materials are prepared by teachers. (3) The material contained in it does not match the ability and cognitive development of students.

1). Early Reading Syllabus and Lesson Plan

The initial conditions of instructional planning developed by teachers are as follows:

- a). Teachers already have a syllabus and lesson plan but the aspect of early reading has not yet been priority as the formulation of learning objectives does not specifically include an objective related to early reading.
- b). Learning activities do not contain stages of students' early reading activities.
- c). Teachers are not creative in formulating learning activities as their teaching methods only include lecture and question-answer methods.

2). Instructional Implementation

Classroom observation indicates that: a). teachers have initiated learning process through greeting and praying. Meanwhile, apperception and motivation to explore the initial knowledge of students so that they get the initial idea about the material to be learned during and after the learning process are not done b). The early reading instruction is implemented conventionally that teachers do not stimulate students' interest and that the instruction is monotonous and not fun.

3) Materials Used for Early Reading Instruction in School

The description of instructional materials used in SDN 2 Lamokato, SDN 1 watuliandu and SDN 2 Kolakaasi as the preliminary study sites is presented as follows:

The type of instructional material used in schools for early reading is the 2013 curriculum textbook published by the government, not instructional materials compiled by teachers. The weaknesses of this book in Bahasa Indonesia lesson include: (1) learning materials are not packaged in accordance with the reading ability and development needs of students as it assumes the first-grade students are already able to read, each material begins with a fairly long text, so that in learning some students find it difficult to follow the learning process. (2) It does not facilitate students' learning related to early reading, (3) it does not reflect a particular method, especially a method for early reading.

In relation to the need for instructional materials based on one of the early reading instructional methods that match the ability and cognitive development of students, the required teaching materials can be inventoried as follows:

- a). Instructional materials should be appropriate to the reading ability and characteristics of students
- b). Early reading instructional materials are based on an instructional method, stages of which are in accordance with early reading Competency Standards
- c). Teaching materials should be communicative, simple, and easy to understand.

From the above description, some weaknesses are described as follows:

The implementation of the 2013 curriculum is done through integrated thematic learning. This suggests that not all materials that support a competency in a subject can be easily integrated into a theme, including early reading material. This means that the formation of early reading skills is not optimal. The basic early reading competencies listed in the 2013 Curriculum of Bahasa Indonesia subject on the early reading aspect

have not been described clearly as the existing Basic Competencies related to knowledge and skills assume that first-grade students have already been able to read, This is reinforced by the theoretical study which concludes that reading skills will not grow optimally in integrated thematic learning (Rusdi, 2013). This is of course not in accordance with the objectives or competence standards, which must be passed in the process of early reading learning in primary school, issued by the Agency for Education Human Resource Development and Culture and Education Quality Assurance (2012), namely: 1) reading aloud syllables and words appropriately, 2) reading simple sentences with correct pronunciation and intonation, 3) reading fluently a few simple sentences consisting of 3-5 words with correct intonation. Meanwhile, the curriculum is regarded as a plan to achieve goals (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2013). In this respect, Saylor and Alexander stated that curriculum is designed to provide a set of learning opportunities to learners to achieve specific goals (1995).

Teachers already have a Syllabus and Lesson Plan of Bahasa Indonesia subject but the early reading aspect is not a priority as the formulation of learning objectives does not specify an objective related to early reading. The methods used only include lecture and Question-answer methods. Learning activities do not contain the stages of first-grade students' early reading activities. Early reading skill is the main skill that must be mastered by first-graders. In other words, syllabus should provide an overview of early learning activities oriented to learners as proposed by Trianto (2013) that syllabus is the main product of curriculum development as a written plan in an educational unit that must be related to another product of curriculum development, which is learning process. Syllabus can be referred to as an ideal curriculum (potential curriculum), while learning process is the actual curriculum (real curriculum).

Instructional Materials. 1) Instructional materials used are not in accordance with the reading ability and characteristics of first-grade students. In this case, each material in the textbook used in schools begins with a fairly long text. 2) Instructional materials have not been integrated with the implementation of a specific learning method, especially early reading method.

Learning Process: 1) Stages of early reading are carried out conventionally, dominated by teachers, monotonous and not fun, so that students tend to be passive causing them to feel bored and have lack of opportunity to interact with teachers or their friends in learning. 2) Apperception to explore the initial knowledge of students so that they get an initial idea of the material to be learned during and after the learning process and motivation is not implemented. 3) Early reading stages are implemented not in accordance with the stages of cognitive development of children.

The above findings reinforce the argument that many teachers assume that teaching tasks are a mere routine (Parji, 2008), find it difficult to be innovative in education and that learning is not student-oriented (Chatib: 2011, Muchit: 2008, Amin & Eng: 2003, Tiro: 2011).

Based on the conclusion of the preliminary study, early reading instructional tools based on Steinberg method are needed to be developed as an effort to improve the quality of learning which has an impact on the improvement of the students' reading ability. This is in line with Faisal's (2014) research which reveals that by developing effective and creative learning tools, reading instruction will be implemented effectively and will achieve optimum results. In relation to the use of Steinberg method in the development of instructional tools, Hartanti in her research (2010) concluded that Steinberg method has a positive effect on the development of students' early reading skills.

4) Instructional tools needed by first-grade teachers and learners on early reading instruction

Based on the above findings, instructional tools based on one of the early reading methods are needed which should be able to:

- 1) Integrate the 2013 curriculum with the Objectives or Basic Competencies of early reading so that students achieve the expected goals/competencies of early reading.
- 2) Reflecting learning process that activates the students' schemata and readiness to learn in accordance with the stage of child development called a concrete operational stage in which early reading instruction for first-grade student should start from the concrete to the abstract, from simple to complex. Moreover, they should involve students in learning activities so that children are not told what to do but do it by themselves in the sense that children actively build their own knowledge. Early reading instruction should be designed into activities and games so that learning is fun, students not only learn to read but they have the will to read.
- 3) Be integrated into the design of instructional materials of early reading, the stages of which are in accordance with the stages of early reading, the characteristics of students, easy to learn, and the arrangement of which is well-organized, systematic, interesting, challenging, stimulating, and supporting the activities and creativity of students.

Learning methods that are considered appropriate for use in a device of learning early reading is a method of Steinberg are:

- 1) its stages are in accordance with the Competency Standards of early reading.

- 2) Its principle of learning is meaningful as students learn from the concrete to the abstract, from simple to complex, fun, and learning to read with the vocabulary and structure already known by students.

V. Conclusion

The implementation of the 2013 curriculum suggests that not all materials that support a competency in a subject can be easily integrated into a theme, including early reading material. The basic early reading competencies listed in the 2013 Curriculum of Bahasa Indonesia subject on the early reading aspect have not been described clearly as the existing Basic Competencies related to knowledge and skills assume that first-grade students have already been able to read, This means that reading skills will not grow optimally in integrated thematic learning

In relation to instructional tools used by teachers, the aspect of early reading has not yet been priority as the formulation of learning objectives does not specifically include an objective related to early reading

Instructional materials used are not in accordance with the reading ability and characteristics of first-grade students. In this case, each material in the textbook used in schools begins with a fairly long text and has not been integrated with the implementation of a specific learning method, especially early reading method.

Stages of early reading are carried out conventionally, dominated by teachers, monotonous and not fun, so that students tend to be passive, causing them to feel bored and have lack of opportunity to interact with teachers or their friends in learning.

The development of early reading instructional tools based on Steinberg method is needed to improve the quality of early reading instruction for first-grade students. Effective instruction tools mean that they guide and improve students' early reading skills, from not having the ability or having a little progress to being proficient to read according to the objective of the instruction tools. The early reading instruction tolls based on Steinberg method have a positive effect on its purpose, according to their objectives.

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