

# The New English Education College Students' Rubric Evaluation on Their English Read-Aloud

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**Abstract.** Reading aloud has been very familiar for educational and English teaching study. As usual, read-aloud as the way to know students' competence in pronouncing words of English. A few research discussed about students' read-aloud competence in reading English text with rubric evaluation. Then, the evaluation can be used as the guidance for teaching intervention on students' reading skill. The aim of this study was to describe the read-aloud rubric evaluation on the aspects of pronunciation and clarity, fluidity, volume and intonation with expression for the new students of English education program. The rubric was adopted from *i-Rubric*. Both girl and boy students were engaged in this study. They were about 50 students all. As noted on the results of the study, the level of score in good categories was on the aspect of students' volume of reading aloud, but on the three other aspects was on the level of fair. The students' percentage on category of Excellent-Good read-aloud volume was 60% and Excellent-Good read-aloud pronunciation and clarity was only 44%. This was proved that new college students still need more intervention on their reading skill by read-aloud activities in the classroom activities because read-aloud could guide students to enhance their adaption of information processing skill, vocabulary pronunciation, speed of reading, intonation and comprehension.

**Keywords:** read-aloud, rubric evaluation, college students

## 1 Introduction

The capability of learners' reading and writing is called literacy. If learners have good ability in reading, they will create their knowledge from reading into text by writing. Learners with no experience in reading will have nothing to be put on their writing. The writing problem mostly happened because of a lack of vocabulary and information to be written. Why do learners need reading as their input? Reading is necessary for constructing meaning from many kinds of information to be understood and to be creative. Then, after doing this skill, students can save information on their memories to create an up to date information to others. Reading can be in the form of reading aloud or silent reading as investigated by Farizna (2018). This means that reading aloud is also important to make listeners interested to listen attentively and to build their concentration. While one student reads aloud the text, then other students listen to his reading, this activity is significant to persuade others' comments about the reader's pronunciation,

reader's intonation, and also reader's fluency. Not only reading at random ways, but reading also has a program on how to read correctly and fluently, and an appropriate strategy to understand a text (Hanane Oueini, Rima Bahous, 2008). Therefore, doing varieties of reading strategies on how to read-aloud enhances the development of learners' literacy ability.

Related to the literacy development in Indonesia, according to Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) in the year 2015, it is said that the students' reading competence was on the rank of 62 from 70 countries as the survey results with 540 thousand respondents in 15 years old students (Damarjati, 2019). This was only statistical data based on the research of the PISA test but actually other research should be done to check whether the data includes the whole students' interest in reading. Another opinion from Ramadhani (2020) supports this data which tell us about reading interest problems in Indonesia. The writer's opinion mentions that "the expression of you are, what you read" is not merely a joke but this is true. The low reading students' interest in Indonesia happened because of their unwillingness to read and an incorrect mindset of reading just for a hobby. The two reasons for students' reading reluctance proved that students' development literacy in Indonesia was needed to be improved. Farida (2012) also writes the reluctant results of students' reading in Widyatama University of Bandung because of external and internal factors such as reading demands, reading culture, limited references, full of activities, and students' inferiority.

Based on the information above, the problems of reading interest should have solutions rapidly. The Indonesia government had built so many libraries in order to persuade students on many different levels to take their interest in reading but the public response is not as good as the government's prediction. In Indonesia, there are about 153,6 thousand libraries from Central Statistical Data according to Jayani (2019). Then, the library visitors based on the ages category from Statistical Development Library as mentioned by (Aksara, 2020), the number of visitors to the library is around 50% for ages 17 to 25 years old and 33,3% for ages 36 to 45 years old. As a result of this data, there are about 80% of visitors as library visitors in Indonesia. This number of visitors couldn't prove that visitors' reading aloud competence was good because of this data. The data just showed the visitors' statistical data of the library in Indonesia.

The habit of reading is different from the competence of reading. Reading competence is about students' techniques on how to recognize and analyze some words and how to appreciate the cognitive perception behind the words. In this movement, vocabulary mastery has a significant role (Keo, 2017). The competence of reading includes word recognition, spelling, reading fluency, phonics decoding, phonological skills, spelling, comprehension, word recognition, reading fluency, and vocabulary mastery. However, the reading habit is a long term activity to be a tool of personality development and enhance the emotional satisfaction of individuals (Ms. Kushmeeta Chettri, 2013). In correlation to the different meaning of reading competence and reading habit, this study focuses on the reading competence which students' have before taking the class of Intensive Course program at University. So, in trying to know the ability of students' reading competencies, this study investigates on evaluating students' reading aloud competency before continuing learning reading skills in the University class. This study focuses on the research on finding students' ability in reading aloud in terms of their pronunciation, fluency, intonation, and voice volume.

The ability to read aloud is the entrance of knowledge and science for getting some references for information in producing a text. As defined by Karlin (1972) that reading is a complex skill that individual uses to derive meaning from the printed page, and the ability to sound out printed words ordinarily is not the best reading that a student is capable of doing. This study showed that reading is multifarious, consequently, while students are reading aloud, they

have to correlate intellectual intelligence and emotional in understanding the text. Why should we be reading aloud? Reading aloud has functions as written by Huang (2010) and those functions are practicing pronunciation, enhancing oral English, understanding English text deeply, strengthening knowledge of English, and improving the learning atmosphere in a classroom. Reading aloud here means not only read louder in loud voice but also train pronunciation whether correct or incorrect. These findings are supported by Cash (2017) that reading aloud makes better composing ideas for learners and also better vocabulary acquisition. Another findings of the investigation are five reasons that's why doing to read aloud for high school students is important. Those important reasons are to read aloud were fun, it allows students to truly hear the story, it makes students engage in reading material, it helps us being good readers and being a better teacher. In Cash (2017) research findings proof that reading aloud is necessary for University students especially students who take English Study Program.

English reading aloud for University students is valuable although sometimes it is problematic. Some previous studies also supported this statement in their findings related to reading aloud activities. The first study is reading aloud as an effective instructional strategy by Layne (2015) which is written that the strategy could support literacy growth and development across grade levels and across the curriculum. In this study, the writer shows that the instructional strategy of reading aloud is valuable in enriching the students' literacy ability for all grades. Another supporting study is done by Harvey, S & Goudvis (2017) in introducing the reading aloud for the literary work mostly interesting for students over some information texts. This study is still informing that reading aloud activity is attractive in terms of literary texts because the vocabularies are still persuading readers to read them. This is in line to with William P. Bintz, (2020) that reading aloud significantly more as an instructional strategy than an intervention technique, the use of literary over informational text. Then, Bintz (2020) on his study, he writes that teachers mostly used reading aloud articles as the learning tool. This activity was a better intervention for students in low achievement to comprehend the text well. Other findings from this study were the steps of reading aloud started from a literary text, then information text, and finally hybrid text. This activity could be done by all students in different majors, levels, any students and professionals but it is not an effective technique in improving the students' scores in the high-take students' tests.

Hereafter, the current study reports read aloud analysis to University students who take an English study program and they are analyzed by a rubric of read-aloud. The analysis focuses on new student recruitment who took the first time their major in Sultan Agung Islamic University in Semarang. The rubric is taken from i-Rubric (2020) website which shows the reading aloud rubric for students in French. In this present study, the writer analyzed by using the same rubric on the competence of reading aloud through new students of Indonesian English learners at the English Study Program of Unissula Indonesia. This study is focusing on the three research questions as follows, firstly, how students read-aloud ability analysis related to i-rubric, secondly, how many percentages of students' capability based on reading aloud aspects such as pronunciation with clarity, fluidity, volume, and intonation with expression, and thirdly what should be acted by lecturers for the different group of students' read-aloud competencies. Next is to give a detailed response and elaboration to the students' ability percentage of read-aloud into their personal competence then categorized them into different groups for better intervention on students' read-aloud ability founded on the rubric.

## **2 Methodology**

This present study belongs to the qualitative research method of descriptive analysis. The descriptive design of the analysis was to elaborate on the students' competence related to the reading aloud rubric. Descriptive analysis is to describe an object of research-based on the collected sample and to summarize the result of analysis into a comprehensive statement Sugiyono (2017). This research was to describe and interpret the students' read aloud ability which happened on New students of the English Education Program at Unissula Semarang. This study is describing and explaining what was happened to the object as noted by the read-aloud rubric and as defined by Scott W. Vanderstoep and Deirdre D. Johnston (2009). The reading aloud analysis is addressed to give rates on students' capability in reading aloud of an English text when the first time they are going to come into the English Study Program classroom. The object of the study is the first semester students of the English Education study program of Unissula Semarang year academic 2019/2020. There are about 50 students to be investigated in the read-aloud rubric. There were only two boys at this level and the others were girls. They took an English education study program at the University because of their interest and some others because of parents' suggestions.

The instrument of this study is the English read-aloud rubric from i-Rubric (2020) and an English Text from the Intensive Course Book of Unissula (2016). The procedures of doing the present research were firstly listing all the names of students at random. They are all at the same level with no differences at first. Then, ask them to read the given text one by one without any preparation and in a particular room only one student and a lecturer with a read-aloud rubric as guidance. They directly read the text naturally without any directions before. After that, put a score of their competence in reading aloud by giving notes on the rubric. Next, select students into four different groups based on read-aloud rubric scoring results. After getting the students' competencies in the number of students and in the percentage of each category scores, finally, analyze the students' all competencies based on the rubric and prepare the next intervention program on the subject lecture of the Intensive Course of Reading. The last step, divide students into two groups and two different classes to make the lecturer easy to give materials based on the read-aloud competencies result.

### 3 Finding and discussion

By way of previously mentioned, the present study used a read-aloud rubric to elaborate learners of English Education Study Program competence in relation to give more attention to their strengths and weaknesses of reading aloud. The rubric is identified with four categories of competency like excellent, good, fair, and poor. The aspects are written on the rubric like pronunciation and clarity, fluidity, volume, and intonation with expression. In each aspect of read-aloud has the category of excellent, good, fair, and poor. The rubric shows if the student has got poor pronunciation and clarity, this means that the student mispronounces the words of English on the text more than five words, the student is struggling and difficult to understand the text. At that point, the pronunciation aspect is poor and the point of his/her pronunciation is two. Below was a downloaded table of the Read-Aloud rubric to be analyzed.

**Table 1.** Read-Aloud Rubric was adopted from i-Rubric

<b>Category</b>	<i>Excellent (5pts)</i>	<i>Good (4pts)</i>	<i>Fair (3pts)</i>	<i>Poor (2pts)</i>
<b>Pronunciation and Clarity</b>	All words were	Most of the words were	Words were spoken clearly,	Words were difficult to

	pronounced correctly and spoken clearly	pronounced correctly and spoken clearly (1-2 errors)	Some words were mispronounced (3-4 errors)	understand, Most words were struggling or mispronounced (more than 5 errors)
<b>Fluidity</b>	Use an appropriate reading speed. There are no lapses, hesitation, or wavering in the pace. Punctuation pauses are present.	Use an appropriate reading speed. There are few lapses, hesitation, or pace wavering. Punctuation pauses are present most of the time. (2-4 errors)	Use an appropriate reading speed most of the time. There are some lapses, hesitation, or pace wavering. Punctuation pauses are present most of the time. (4-6 errors)	The reader rarely keeps the appropriate speed. There are many lapses, hesitation, or pace wavering. No punctuation pauses are present (more than 6 errors)
<b>Volume</b>	The intensity of the voice is clear and audible all through the reading. No fluctuations are perceived.	The intensity is clear and audible most of the time (1-2 errors)	The intensity is somewhat clear and audible but some words or sentences are barely imperceptible. (1-2 errors)	The volume is not in the audible range, many words or sentences are barely imperceptible. (more than 5 errors)
<b>Intonation with expression</b>	The student keeps the required tones. Does not overdo it or exaggerate. Does not sound monotone or artificial.	Adequate tones most of the time. Does not overdo it or exaggerate.	Adequate tones some of the time. Occasionally does sound monotone, artificial or exaggerate	Rarely adequate tone. Does sound monotone, artificial or exaggerate.

Sources : *i-Rubric*, [www.rcampus.com](http://www.rcampus.com)

The above read-aloud rubric was addressed to learners in giving elaboration of each student's competence. As mentioned by Barbara R. Foorman, Kevin G. Smith (2017), a rubric is used in three approaches. They are used to develop the materials as new learning material, to purchase some new reading materials which aligned with the lecturer's research, to review some realized instructional materials to conclude how well they bring into line with research in

reading. This present study is suitable for the third approach of the rubric concerns which supports the students' competence results in reading aloud with their strengths and weaknesses to be enhanced better than before the research done in the next meeting on the first-semester lecture. That's why the read-aloud rubric was useful for high school students. From the rubric's statement for evaluating above, the students can be evaluated on their reading completely, so as a result, they can improve their own competence after doing it and knowing the results. There was another study which ever did the read-aloud rubric to their students and found the functions for the students from read-aloud activities. Huang (2010) also writes about the functions of read-aloud in foreign language teaching such as the followings: (1) practicing to pronounce every word accurately by dividing chunks correctly, (2) enhancing oral English to minimize the faults of disfluency, incorrect pauses, inappropriate tones, pitch and volumes, (3) understanding deeply to arise learners' sense and imagination, (4) strengthening students' knowledge in all basic skills of English, and finally (5) creating a classroom new atmosphere to share and care for one another.

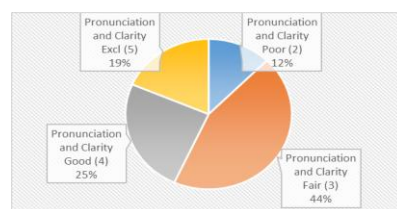
Selecting an English text as the second instrument besides rubric, it had been chosen that the text used the first text form Intensive Book I entitled *Apartments* which taken from ESL read-aloud. The text consists of a hundred words in one paragraph.

#### ***Apartments***

*Many families live in this apartment building. Each apartment has its own kitchen, living room, bathroom, and bedrooms. Some apartments have one bedroom and some have two bedrooms. The apartments on the first floor have a patio and the apartments on the other floors have balconies. All of them have air conditioning. The rent for a one-bedroom apartment is \$950 per month. The rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,125 per month. Tenants must pay a one month security deposit. Gas and water are included in the price. The landlord lives in apartment D. His name is Mr. Lee. (ESL Read-Aloud, 2015)*

The text above was read by fifty students in turns. Each student has different time and speed in reading because they don't know the standard rate of reading and they just read naturally without any rules and steps of how to read. Nowak (2018) writes that reading speed standard was about 200 to 250 words per minute (wpm). Then, the text was given to the student when they entered the class, so, they didn't know the text at first what they had to read. The next activity was reading one by one consecutively in the order of attendance list.

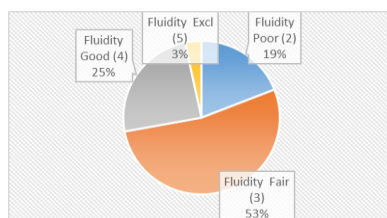
While each student read the text, the rubric was being noted. Then, the note from the activity of each student was the result of the analysis which could be drawn on the graph below;



**Figure 1.** Result of Pronunciation and Clarity from Read-Aloud Rubric

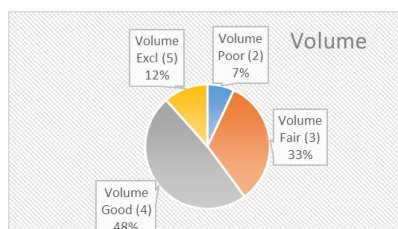
The above figure showed the pronunciation and clarity result of students' reading aloud. Based on this graph, the students' competence in pronouncing the words clearly was still on the fair category. This means that students mostly made mispronunciation in around 3-4 words from the text although most of the students spoke clearly the words on the text. This condition could be proven on the yellow block color on the text of the 'Apartment' above. In the pronunciation and clarity aspect of reading aloud was in the biggest percentage in about 44% on the fair category. The yellow color words on the text above were some words which mostly mispronounced. The poor pronunciation category was still about 12% in which students made more than five errors on their reading aloud and the excellent students' pronouncing on reading aloud was still low in about 19% and this percentage was in about 9 students who got excellent pronouncing. There were 13 students in the good category of reading aloud on the aspect of pronunciation. Most of the students were having poor and fair competence on their pronunciation. Consequently, more training on pronouncing part should be given on the next lecture of Intensive Course Reading.

The second figure below was the result of fluidity aspect on read-aloud rubric which was produced by fifty students of new students of English Education Program.



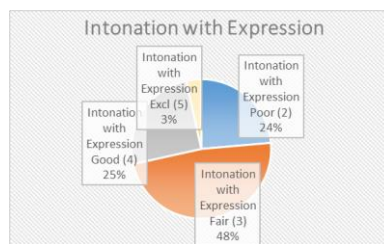
**Figure 2.** Result of Fluidity from Read-Aloud Rubric

This fluidity aspect is portraying the foundation of students' fluency in reading the text. The fluidity itself is the quality of students in reading the statements to be clear, be understandable, and be smooth (Tamara V Russel, 2015). One student can read in the appropriate reading speed with no lapses, hesitation, and space wavering and also can present good use of punctuation on his/her reading, this means he/she has excellent competence in read-aloud. Figure two above presented the students' result of their read-aloud in the aspect of fluidity. 53% students were still on the fair category of their fluidity in reading aloud. This happened because their speed of reading were still around 150-200 words per minute (wpm). They made lapses, hesitation, wavering in the pace, and pauses happened most of the time. As written on Dictionary.com (2020) lapse means a slight error typically due to forgetfulness or inattention, hesitation means a halting or faltering in speech and wavering means to shake or tremble and become unsteady. The figure mentioned that 27 students were fair in their fluidity of read-aloud and the poor one was around 9 students. Then, both fair and poor categories were 36 students who needed more drill of fluidity aspect.



**Figure 3.** Result of Volume from Read-Aloud Rubric

The next figure described the students' volume in reading aloud of the given text. Students made good volumes in reading aloud in this section. They mostly had good volumes of their voice. Generally, as drawn in figure three, students had clear intensity and audible most of the time. This means that there weren't any severe problems in students' volumes of their read-aloud. Students with good category of their read-aloud volumes were about 24 students and the excellent students were about 6 students. So, all of them were 30 students in good and excellent volumes of read-aloud, but in poor and fair categories were about 20 students both. In this part, students with good volumes in read-aloud can do *peer-model* for their other friends who got poor and fair read-aloud volumes. As revealed in Hershberger (2020) that the peer read-aloud is uncomfortable but, potentially, quite illuminating exercise. This means, although sometimes the students' activities to read-aloud made them bored, this way was effective for young writers in composing ideas from unfamiliar vocabularies they had just heard from their pairs. They tend to share their idea in the understanding text together through some unfamiliar words. The lecturer just facilitated and guided them in their sharing activities to train their read-aloud volumes on producing clear words to pronounce well each other.



**Figure 4.** Result of Intonation with Expression from Read-Aloud Rubric

The final section of the analysis was the read-aloud category of intonation with the expression of students' competence. This part described the percentage of intonation with the expression of English Education Program students while they did read-aloud of the text. 48% of students did in fair intonation with expression. Intonation means the tone varying of someone's voice in uttering some words to mark it fascinating to be listened to. There are three kinds of intonation as proposed in Hershberger (2020) like fall-rise intonation, raising intonation, and falling intonation. All of them are beneficial for evaluating students in their reading aloud because intonation has a correlation to students' emotions and expression. When students read the text loudly, to make the text interesting and understandable, they change the voice tone for each word and show dissimilar expression while utter each word. This way is very useful to make listeners engaged and the learning time of read-aloud more interactive. Then, based on figure 4 result, most new students still had fair and poor intonation with expression in implementing their intonation with expression in a read-aloud activity. There are about 36 students needed more practice in intonation. Consequently, preparing teaching intonation to them is very significant in this Intensive Course (IC) reading class. When students can apply how to use different tones of their voice in their English speaking and English read-



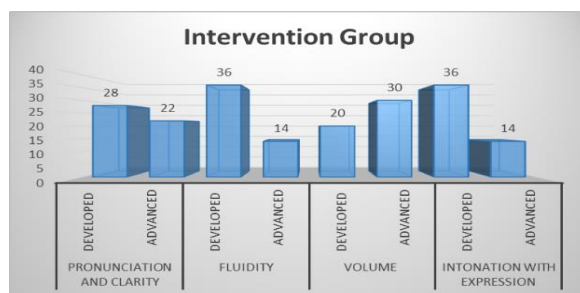
aloud time, this can persuade other friends to always listen to and pay attention to the way they read the text. The other about 14 students in good and excellent competence of intonation with expression can be as peer-model to have more time to read-aloud in front of the 36 students. In this approach, students with poor and fair intonation with expression ability can imitate the 14 students with good and excellent capability.

All read-aloud rubric results above were the new students' performance of their capability in reading English text loudly. As the new students, they need more attention based on the result of their competencies in reading aloud above. There were four competencies mentioned above with different results on each of the abilities. As shown on their abilities of pronunciation and clarity, fluidity, volumes, and intonation with expression, each competence category had a different number of students in each level of scoring as written on the table below.

**Table 2.** The Number of Students' Read-Aloud Competencies

Category	Pronunciation and Clarity				Fluidity				Volume			Intonation with Expression				
Score Level	Exc	Good	Fair	Poor	Exc	Good	Fair	Poor	Exc	Good	Fair	Poor	Exc	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of Students	9	13	22	6	1	13	27	9	6	24	16	4	1	13	24	12
Percentage	19%	25%	44%	12%	3%	25%	53%	19%	12%	48%	33%	7%	3%	25%	48%	24%

As seen from the above table, the number of students in different competence is different based on the evaluation of the read-aloud rubric. To make it easier in describing the figure above, the percentage of each category can be divided into two groups namely Advanced Group and Developed Group. Using the two names here, the lecturer divided the students into two classes based on their competencies of the scores level. The advanced students were students who got excellent and good scores and the developed students were from fair and poor students' competency. Categorizing them into two groups means to make the lecturer easy to give intervention in a different style for different competencies. The two classes which was categorized based on the competencies can be seen from the following figure



**Figure 5.** The Competency Category after Final Grouping

The figure above is the final group used by the lecturer in giving intervention to students while the read-aloud class began in the classroom. The lecturer divides students into developed and advanced groups for every meeting in the classroom with a different number of students in different categories of the read-aloud scoring rubric. Therefore, lecturer gives intervention to

students based on the group division with the different focus of the topic of intervention. Then, this method can be used by other researchers for future research in investigating the impact of intervention for each aspect of read-aloud with two students' groups by *peer-model* between advanced and developed group.

#### 4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the new students of English Education Program who entered the University should get a natural competence evaluation before entering the real lecture for better outcome on the process of teaching and learning. As investigated in this study, by using read-aloud rubric to evaluate students' competence before they were taught the reading materials of Intensive course program in the classroom. By getting information about students' competency in reading aloud of English text, lecturer can create an interactive teaching and learning to motivate, to educate, to create habits and new atmosphere of students' experiences, and to improve students' lack of competency on a particular aspect in English reading. The above results of read-aloud rubric shows us that each aspect of read-aloud can not be mastered by every student in an excellent score. Each student had got different score in different category. The result of pronunciation and clarity of new students was on fair category as the most students' had and 12% students were on poor category. In this both categories, students need drill of pronouncing English words.

On the fluidity aspect, 53% students had fair category and 19% students had poor category. Both categories presented that new students of English Education program required to develop practicing how to read in a standardized speed in about 200-250 words per minute (wpm). Learning the basic point of fluency on read-aloud for new students could enhance students' knowledge of using the appropriate pronunciation of English words. Punctuation understanding for better read-aloud must be trained frequently. Then, on the category of students' volumes on their read-aloud was mostly on good score. Most of the students here tend to be peer-model for their friends to train pronouncing words in clear and audible intensity most of the time. Peer-model to read-aloud for others is enriching the instruction of language arts and constructing a community of readers as written by Short (2019).

Finally, on the last aspect of intonation with expression, students mostly presented fair and poor intonation on their reading aloud of the text. In this part, lecturer had a chance to drill the students' voice tone together with students with good and excellent competence on reading aloud. Students with good and excellent intonation shared the way they read-aloud to students with fair and poor competence. Although there were two groups, Advance and Developed groups, at last as the result of evaluation and scoring by rubric, they can share each other for training their friends for better abilities in read-aloud activities. The advance shared to the developed for being role model to do read-aloud activities in the classroom.

This study also presents a pedagogical implication for all English lecturers who taught reading skills by evaluating before acting. This technique is better because understanding students' competence in advance before learning can give an additional inspiration for lecturer to prepare materials, sources and method to teach creatively to reach the target competency as the students' outcome. Preparation for teaching based on students' necessity is necessary for all educators to reach the target of learning outcome. Another important thing for this study is to give lecturers ideas to create read-aloud classroom activities as students' individual habits at home. It is hoped that this research can be one better recommendation for English lecturers to do similar analysis to their students in English text reading aloud. As a final point, the study also recommends a technique to know students' competency and the necessity for learning to read

because each aspect of the read-aloud rubric was showed the students' interest in a low level of English reading aloud. This is proved by the total number of students who got a good and an excellent point on each read-aloud rubric's aspect.

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