

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RAP STRATEGY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti apakah ada peningkatan signifikan pada keterampilan pemahaman membaca siswa setelah penerapan strategi RAP. Pendekatan penelitian ini adalah kuantitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 33 siswa tingkat pertama SMA. Tes membaca digunakan sebagai alat pengumpulan data. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan *Repeated Measure t-test*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan signifikan pada kemampuan membaca siswa dengan tingkat signifikansi 0.05. Hal ini menandakan bahwa strategi RAP dapat diterapkan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan pemahaman membaca siswa.

Abstract. The objectives of the research were to find out whether there was a statistically significant difference of the students' reading comprehension achievement the students were taught through RAP strategy. The approach of the research was quantitative. The subjects were 33 students of the first grade of SMA. The reading tests were used as the research instrument. The data were analyzed by using *Repeated Measure t-test*. The result showed that there was a statically significant difference of students' reading comprehension with the significant level 0.05. This suggests that RAP strategy facilitates the students to improve their achievement in reading comprehension.

Keywords: *reading, reading comprehension, RAP strategy*

INTRODUCTION

English is one of international languages which plays an important role in the world. Four basic skills in English that should be mastered by the students are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Based on the four language skills, listening and reading are regarded as receptive skills while speaking and writing skills are considered as productive skills. However, reading skill becomes very important in the education field because it helps the students learn to think in English, build English vocabulary, encourage students to focus on grammar and punctuation.

Reading is a complex conscious and unconscious mental process in which the reader uses a variety of strategies to reconstruct the meaning that the author is assumed to have been intended, based on data from the text and from the reader's prior knowledge (Mikulecky, 2011 : 5). Reading is considered as an important aspect for students because it provides many useful informations. Reading is also the most important skill for EFL learners especially in academic context because students need to comprehend and deal with all reading aspects and difficulties. Reading is not a simple skill in learning English, it is difficult to master. This stands to reason for reading involves determining main idea, identifying specific informations, reference, inference and vocabulary. Furthermore, reading in Senior High School becomes one of the most important skills to be tested in daily test, mid-semester test, semester-test, school examination and national examination (UN) as well. In order to achieve those important goals, the teacher should be successful enough in making the students comprehend the text well.

The student's failure in reading when they study at school can be caused by their motivation in studying especially reading. Student's motivation in studying reading is low. Since the motivation is low, so they have some difficulties in reading comprehension. They cannot comprehend the content of the text well. They cannot grasp the information of the text they read. Since they cannot grasp the information of the text, they are not able to get the main idea of each paragraph they read. The students are also unfamiliar with the word used in

the text or they lack of vocabularies. However, the main factor that causes students uninterested in reading is the technique for teaching reading used by the teachers is not appropriate to their need.

Therefore, teachers should use an appropriate strategy to make the teaching process interesting so that they can achieve the purpose of teaching learning process. The purpose of using strategy is to make the students easy to learn and understand the lesson. Besides making the student easier to comprehend, using a strategy in comprehending a text can make the teaching learning process more effective and make the students more active. There are various reading strategies that can be used in order to assist the students' comprehension level as the goal of reading activity. In this study, the writer proposed to apply RAP strategy because it provides meaningful stages; Read the text, Ask the main idea of the text, and Put the idea into the reader's own word.

RAP strategy can enhance a learner's skills for identifying main ideas, and it can effectively enhance reading comprehension. Watson et al. (2012: 79) stated that the RAP strategy also allows students to engage in self-questioning by looking at the first sentence and deciding whether or not the sentence highlights the main idea of the paragraph; does it tell what the paragraph is about? If the first sentence is not indicative of the paragraphs main idea, a student must engage in the process of looking for repetitive word patterns. Jitendra and Gajria (2011: 1) indicated that asking one's self what the main idea of a paragraph is has resulted in the improvement of reading comprehension and maintenance. Instruction in main idea strategies using direct instruction meshed with the self-questioning strategy increases reading comprehension ability. A strategy that is used for students who have average decoding skills but struggle with comprehension is RAP strategy. This strategy can be used for students at any grade level but is most commonly used in the primary grades and older students who have cognitive disabilities. RAP is an acronym that stands for read, ask and paraphrase. During *reading*, students are taught to read just one paragraph. At the end of the paragraph, they *ask* themselves questions about what they read, the main idea, and details about the paragraph. They then summarize the information

by *paraphrasing* it into their own words. This strategy can increase the ability of the students to comprehend the text and also make the students easy to grasp the information from the text. In comprehending the text using RAP strategy, the students do not only know how to comprehend but also help the students to be more active and critical in comprehending a text. Moreover, there were two previous research which proved that RAP strategy could improve students' reading comprehension (Rinjani, 2014; Dahlia, 2014).

Referring to the explanation above, this research will try to apply RAP as a strategy in teaching reading on descriptive text of Senior High School students. Therefore, the objectives of this research are (1) to find out how far the students' ability in comprehending descriptive text is significantly improved after being taught by using RAP strategy, and (2) to find out the aspect of reading which improves the most after RAP strategy applied in teaching learning process.

METHODS

The approach of the research was quantitative. The design was one group pre-test and post-test design. The population of the research was students of the first grade of SMA Negeri 15 Bandar Lampung and the sample of the research was class X Science 1 consisting of 33 students. The activities were started from administering pre-test, doing treatment, and administering post-test.

The instruments used were reading comprehension tests. The reading test was administered twice: the first was pre-test and the second was post-test. Pre-test was conducted to know the students' reading comprehension ability before the treatment and post-test was given to know the students' reading comprehension ability after the treatment. The reading test consisted of 30 items in multiple choice. In analyzing the data, repeated measure t-test was used to prove the hypothesis and to know whether this research was significant or not by looking at the results of pre-test and post-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the result of the students' scores in pre-test, it was found that the total

score was 2014. The mean of the data was 61.03. The highest score was 77 and the lowest score was 37. The English's minimal mastery criterion (KKM) of SMA is 72. It can be seen from the result, there are only three students who get score > 72.

After the treatment, the researcher distributed post-test. Based on the result of post test, it was found that the total was 2434. The mean was 73.76. The highest score was 87 and the lowest score was 57. From the data of the post-test score, there were 21 students who got score more than 72. The table below shows the students' mean score of the pre-test and the post-test.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test

Descriptive Statistics

	Min	Max	Mean	Sum
PRE_TEST	37	77	59.55	2014
POST_TEST	57	87	73.76	2434

From the Table 1, it could be seen that the students' mean score of the pre-test and the post-test was improved 12.73 point after the treatment of teaching reading comprehension through RAP strategy. Besides that, the highest score of the pre-test was 77 and the highest score of the post-test was improved to 87, in which the highest score gain was 10. The lowest score of the pre-test was 37 and the lowest score of the post-test was 57, in which the lowest score gain was 20.

Then, the scores from the pre-test and the post-test were analyzed by using repeated measure t-test. The result of repeated measure t-test showed that t-value was 13.457 and t-table was 2.036 because the value of t-value was higher than t-table ($13.457 > 2.036$) and the significant level is lower than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), it means that H_1 is accepted. It can be concluded that there was a significant difference of students' reading comprehension achievement after being taught by using RAP strategy.

Beside that, there were five aspects of reading comprehension measured by using the tests. Table 2. provides the students' mean in the pre-test and the post-test which covered five aspects of reading comprehension.

Table 2. Comparison of Aspects of Reading Comprehension Means

Aspects	Mean Difference
Main Idea	6.143
Specific Information	2.800
Reference	5.667
Inference	4.333
Vocabulary	-1.667

Based on Table 2., RAP strategy improved the students' reading comprehension in all aspects of reading comprehension. Moreover, the students' reading comprehension in finding main idea is the most improved aspect after being taught by using RAP strategy and the students' reading comprehension aspect in vocabulary is the least improved aspect after being taught by using RAP strategy.

Discussion

The result of the research showed that RAP strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension achievement in descriptive text. The students' mean score after being taught through RAP strategy improved significantly. The students' mean score of the pre-test was 61.03. Meanwhile, their mean score of the post-test after being taught through RAP strategy was 73.76, in which students' gain score was 12.73. In accordance with the finding, it could be stated from the students' mean score of the pre-test and the post-test that there was a significant difference before and after being taught through RAP strategy.

Based on the result above, it can be concluded that RAP strategy was successful to improve students' reading comprehension achievement. The finding of this research was also consistent with the previous research conducted by Rinjani (2014) and Dahlia (2014). Rinjani (2014) proved that RAP strategy was effective to improve students' reading comprehension achievement in descriptive text. In addition, Dahlia (2014) who conducted a research about the use of RAP strategy in teaching reading found that RAP learning model could improve students' reading comprehension.

Based on the explanation above, it can be said that RAP strategy was likely successful to improve the students' reading comprehension. In RAP strategy the students should paraphrase the sentence into their own words but still related to the context. Here, RAP strategy gave positive contribution for the students' reading comprehension.

Furthermore, in order to answer the second research question the researcher also analyzed the improvement of reading aspects in the pre-test and post-test. Based on the analysis, identifying main idea became the most improved aspect after the students were being taught by using RAP strategy. The improvement of the students' score was caused by RAP strategy because it made the students ask about the main idea for each paragraph then they express and tell that idea into the sentence using their own words. Boyle and Scanlon (2010: 207) stated that the purpose of this strategy is to help students become actively engaged in reading through searching for main ideas and details in paragraph and then transforming that information through paraphrasing to make it personally meaningful.

RAP strategy provides the stages where students should make the main point of sentences. The students were accustomed to make different sentences from each sentence in every paragraph. They freely express their idea through the paraphrasing sentences. It indicates that the students were familiar in identifying main idea but the students should struggle to find words to make their paraphrasing sentence still related with the idea of the text.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the implementation of RAP strategy can significantly improve students' reading comprehension especially in terms of identifying main idea.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

In line with the data analysis and discussion, the conclusions can be drawn as follows:

1. *Read-Ask-Paraphrase* strategy gives positive impact towards students' reading comprehension achievement. There is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension after being taught through *Read-Ask-Paraphrase* strategy.
2. Main Idea is the aspect that improves the most among the other aspects since the three basic steps of *Read-Ask-Paraphrase* strategy provided the students to gain the main idea of the text.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, the suggestions are as follows:

1. English teachers can use RAP strategy in teaching reading comprehension as one of the appropriate strategies that can be applied in the class. It is because this strategy can improve students' understanding of descriptive texts.
2. English teachers should consider the time allocation for the treatments. There must be well preparation of the material and time allocation, because the material should be delivered and explained to the students completely and clearly.
3. The teacher may apply some regulations in order to control the class to avoid too much noise during the process of learning, because there will be a stage where the students should tell their paraphrasing sentences.
4. English teachers should be able to maintain the students' activity. It is important because sometimes there are some students who cheat from internet. The students who are lazy to think, they decide to search text from internet, and then they copy it. Thus, before this accident happens it is better for the teacher to warn the students.
5. It is suggested for further researchers to apply *Read-Ask-Paraphrase* strategy by using other kinds of text and also different skills. For those who want to conduct the same research, it is highly recommended to find out factors which can influence the application of RAP strategy that is less complicated and more applicable.

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