# INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF THE READ, ASK, PARAPHRASE (RAP) STRATEGY ON STUDENT'S ACHIEVEMENT

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## Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of the Read Ask Paraphrase (RAP) strategy in enhancing students' reading skills. Utilizing an experimental and quantitative approach, two groups were selected: an experimental class employing the RAP strategy and a control class using traditional methods. The sample selection was conducted through cluster random sampling, and data were collected via a reading assessment. The research subject is the first-semester Islamic Family Law students at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Raden Intan Lampung. The analysis using the t-test revealed significant differences between the groups (t-test > t-table at 0.05 and 0.01 levels: $4.09 > 2.00 < 2.66$), supporting the alternative hypothesis. Students in the experimental group exhibited notable improvements in reading skills, with an average score of 72.30 compared to 61.03 in the control group. This study highlights the RAP strategy's effectiveness in English instruction, suggesting its potential for enhancing reading proficiency. The implications of this research suggest that educators should consider incorporating the RAP strategy into their teaching practices to foster improved reading outcomes.

**Keywords:** Experimental Class, RAP Strategy, Reading Skill

## INTRODUCTION

English holds a mandatory status at the university level in Indonesia. Within the contemporary globalized context, English functions as a lingua franca extensively employed in daily interactions and across diverse nations (Sujarwo et al., 2023). Given its indispensability in daily affairs, the study of English demands earnest attention from all individuals. Proficiency in English entails not only mastering vocabulary but also employing language in authentic contexts, in addition to the four core language competencies: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. This underscores the indispensable role of language in fostering social bonds and facilitating effective communication. A language must either be formally designated as the official medium for foreign language instruction or be accorded precedence. Both children and adults undertake its acquisition within educational settings, utilizing it subsequently as their primary mode of communication (Damiri et al., 2022).

Reading proficiency assumes paramount importance in education as it fosters grammatical acumen, encourages thinking in English, and augments vocabulary. Reading is a multifaceted process encompassing lexical comprehension, cognitive abilities, and linguistic proficiency (Andeska et al., 2021). Its integration into daily routines is indispensable, offering students avenues for acquiring knowledge, deriving enjoyment, and honing problem-solving skills. Thus, students stand to benefit significantly from the ability to comprehend texts across diverse formats, a skill indispensable for achieving various educational objectives (Yulistiani et al., 2020).

Moreover, reading literacy encompasses additional dimensions. The primary objective of instructional tasks and reading exercises is to enrich students' knowledge base. Mastery of English necessitates the ability to engage with a spectrum of texts and comprehend written information (Zalukhu et al., 2022). Furthermore, many students encounter challenges in comprehending English

texts due to the language not being their native dialect. For instance, Indonesian students often grapple with vocabulary peculiarities, hindering their comprehension (Zulianti & Hastomo, 2022). Additionally, discerning salient information within texts poses another hurdle. Therefore, proficiency in these facets is imperative to facilitate comprehension and accurate responses to queries.

Instructive strategies adopted by English educators should be tailored to the instructional process, aiming to foster engagement and achieve learning objectives effectively. Employing specific pedagogical approaches serves to enhance student engagement, elevate teaching efficacy, and facilitate comprehension. The Read, Ask, Paraphrase (RAP) strategy, endorsed by experts, emerges as a viable method for teaching reading comprehension (Zahra & Fitrawati, 2017).

The RAP strategy facilitates the retention of key concepts and details gleaned from texts, encapsulating the essential elements of reading (Surayatika, 2018). Its implementation involves sequential steps, encompassing reading, self-inquiry, and paraphrasing. This strategy offers a straightforward yet effective means to integrate comprehension enhancement into existing curricula (Leidig et al., 2018). Moreover, paraphrasing cultivates active learning, enhances attentiveness, and fosters innovative thinking, according to previous studies.

The RAP strategy is implemented by structuring reading activities into three sequential steps: reading the text, asking questions about the main ideas and supporting details, and paraphrasing the content into the student's own words. This strategy aims to enhance reading comprehension by promoting active engagement with the text. For example, students in the experimental group using RAP showed significantly better reading comprehension compared to a control group taught with conventional methods (Veronika & Sihombing, 2015). Similarly, Zahra & Fitrawati (2017) noted improvements in student attention and enthusiasm towards reading comprehension when using RAP, and Indriani et al. (2022) found significant gains in students' comprehension of narrative texts through this method. The strategy's effectiveness is further supported by studies such as Zalukhu et al. (2022), which demonstrated improved text recall and comprehension among primary students. Overall, RAP helps students become more meticulous readers, fosters questioning for deeper understanding, and aids in information retention through paraphrasing

Numerous empirical investigations underscore the efficacy of the RAP strategy in enhancing students' reading proficiency (Indriani et al., 2022; Surayatika, 2018; Veronika & Sihombing, 2015; Zahra & Fitrawati, 2017; Zalukhu et al., 2022). Furthermore, the strategy holds promise in addressing reading comprehension challenges among learners (Hagaman et al., 2010). The urgency of this research arises from the mandatory status of English at the university level in Indonesia and its critical role in global communication, making effective English education essential. Despite numerous studies on the RAP strategy's efficacy in enhancing reading proficiency, there is a lack of research focusing specifically on first-semester Islamic Family Law students at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Raden Intan Lampung. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of the RAP strategy on their reading comprehension, addressing their unique challenges with English vocabulary and comprehension.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The researcher employed a quasi-experimental study as a strategy to improve students' reading skills. A quasi-experimental study was an experimental study in which people were not randomly assigned (Nunan, 1992). Instruction took place in an experimental setting, using RAP strategies to teach reading skills. In the control class, the researcher used conventional strategies to judge whether RAP strategies had an impact on students' reading ability. This research had two variables: an independent variable and a dependent variable. RAP use was the independent variable (X), and student reading ability was the dependent variable (Y).

The variable was the whole topic that was the subject of inquiry or observation. A variable was a phenomenon that was the subject of research and hence had to be observed or explored. Research variables were anything that was picked up by the researcher to be investigated in order to gather knowledge about it and then develop conclusions (Sugiyono, 2009). Sugiyono (2009) stated that "Population was the field of globalization and consisted of subjects or subjects with certain qualities and characteristics that researchers chose to study and draw conclusions from." The population was decided

to be in the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Raden Intan Lampung. The research subject is the first-semester Islamic Family Law students at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Raden Intan Lampung. The researcher used cluster random sampling for choosing the research sample.

The researcher used quantitative studies to assess the effectiveness of RAP strategies. To confirm the data, the researchers performed tests. Data collection was done in three steps. First, when preparing for the exam, 40 multiple-choice questions were drawn from the TOEFL test. Second, the researcher administered the test and derived a score based on the students' results after the test. Third, the researchers compared the posttests of the experimental and control classes. In this research, the researcher used the t-test formula to test the hypothesis. If ttest > ttable, the significance was 0.05 and 0.01, and the acceptance criterion was Ha.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**
*Findings*

This research was conducted from September to December 2023 at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, during the academic year 2023/2024, focusing on the first semester of Islamic Family Law students. The researcher collected data from two distinct classes. During the investigation, two hypotheses were formulated: 1) there is a significant influence of using the Read, Ask, Paraphrase (RAP) strategy on students' reading ability, and 2) the average score of students' reading ability taught through the RAP strategy is higher than those who learn through conventional methods. The researcher employed a graph to illustrate the students' scores in the reading-learning process. Figure 1 illustrates the scores of students in the experimental group, while Figure 2 depicts the scores of students in the control group.
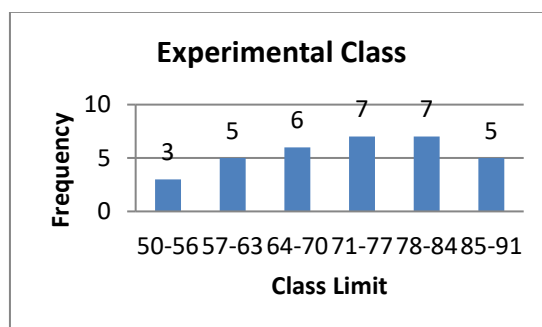


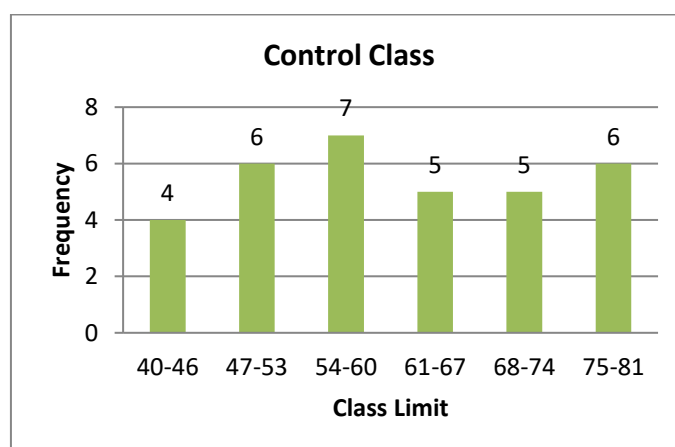Figure 1. The Score of Students Experimental Class



Figure 2. The Score of Students Control Class

The researchers conducted a normality assessment to ascertain the conformity of the observed data to a normal distribution. Through this investigation, it was established that the data adheres to a

normal distribution, as indicated by a X2 ratio < X2 table criterion. The findings are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 1. The Result of Normality Test

| Group | $X^2_{ratio}$ | $X^2_{table}$ (0,05) | $X^2_{table}$ (0,01) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental Class | 2,14 | 7,81 | 11,34 |
| Control Class | 5, 76 | 7,81 | 11,34 |

Subsequent to assessing normality, the researcher proceeded to evaluate homogeneity. The homogeneity examination aims to establish whether two or more sets of sample data originating from the same population manifest equivalent variations. In essence, the homogeneity test endeavors to ascertain whether the data collection being scrutinized exhibits uniform characteristics. The criterion for the homogeneity test stipulated that the data would be considered homogeneous if the fratio was less than the ftable, with significance levels of 0.05 and 0.01. Conversely, if the fratio exceeded the ftable at the 0.05 and 0.01 significance levels, the data would be deemed non-homogeneous. This study was determined to be homogeneous, as evidenced by the comparison of 1.09, 1.80, and 2.31, where the fratio values fell below the corresponding ftable values. The results are depicted in Table 4 below.

Table 2. The Result of the Homogeneity Test

| Group | $t_{test}$ | $t_{table}$ (0,05) | $t_{table}$ (0,01) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental and Control Class | 4.09 | 2.00 | 2.66 |

Following the assessment of homogeneity, the researcher proceeded to validate the initial hypothesis asserting the impact of RAP on the reading proficiency of eleventh-grade students, employing the t-test formula. However, the findings indicated that the utilization of RAP did not yield a statistically significant effect on the reading proficiency of eleventh-grade students. Criterion Ha was accepted due to the t-test value surpassing the critical t-table value $(1 – \frac{1}{2} \alpha)$, with degrees of freedom calculated as $(n\_1 + n\_2 – 2)$, at significance levels of 0.05 and 0.01.

Nevertheless, the application of the RAP strategy in the classroom environment remains highly efficacious. It facilitates cognitive development among students, instills inspiration for learning, enhances comprehension of textual material, and facilitates information retention. Furthermore, it augments students' proficiency in articulating ideas and fosters collaborative learning dynamics, thereby rendering the learning process more enjoyable and engaging for them.

Table 3. The Result of $t_{test}$

| Group | $F_{ratio}$ | $F_{table}$ (0,05) | $F_{table}$ (0,01) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental and Control Class | 1.09 | 1.80 | 2.31 |

In the subsequent hypothesis, it was substantiated that students undertaking the first semester of Islamic Family Law at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, who were exposed to the RAP strategy, exhibited superior mean reading scores compared to those subjected to the traditional approach. The researcher conducted a comprehensive investigation to gauge the outcomes of this hypothesis. Through meticulous analysis, it was determined that the mean score of the experimental group surpassed that of the control group (72.30 > 61.03). Moreover, the acceptance of Ha was warranted when the average reading score of students in the experimental group surpassed that of their counterparts in the control group. These results are presented in the table 4 provided below.

Table 4. The Average Score of Students Writing test

| Group | Minimum Score | Maximum Score | Average Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental Class | 65 | 80 | 72.3 |
| Control Class | 55 | 68 | 61.03 |

*Discussion*
**The Impact of the RAP Strategy on Students' Reading Proficiency**
Mastering English reading skills encompasses various essential abilities such as spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and writing. Previous research underscores that the integration of reading with writing, speaking, and listening exercises optimally enhances reading proficiency (Istiara & Hastomo, 2023). This underscores the interconnectedness between reading and writing, alongside the acquisition of information through speaking, listening, grammar, and vocabulary exercises.

In a study conducted during the first semester of Islamic Family Law students at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, during the academic year 2023/2024, the researcher observed college students grappling with reading comprehension issues. Recognizing the inadequacies, the researcher implemented the Read, Ask, Paraphrase (RAP) strategy to ameliorate the situation. Zalukhu et al. (2022) support this approach, affirming its efficacy in enhancing reading comprehension among primary school students.

The study yielded a significant outcome, with Ha being accepted, indicating that the mean scores between the experimental and control groups were statistically different. This finding aligns with prior research conducted by Zahra and Fitrawati (2017), which demonstrated the positive impact of RAP on reading comprehension. Specifically, students who received RAP instruction outperformed those taught using conventional methods, corroborating the potential effectiveness of the RAP strategy in improving reading skills.

This research underscores the utility of the RAP strategy in enhancing classroom reading instruction. By addressing students' reading comprehension challenges in the first semester of Islamic Family Law students at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, during the academic year 2023/2024, the RAP strategy facilitated improved reading abilities among students compared to conventional methods. Thus, the study highlights the efficacy of the RAP strategy in bolstering students' reading proficiency.

**The implementation of the RAP strategy yielded higher average scores among students compared to those taught through conventional methods.**
In order to ascertain the efficacy of the RAP strategy, the researcher instructed one class using RAP techniques (experimental group) while collecting data from another class taught via conventional methods (control group). The conventional approach often termed the lecture method, tends to render students passive participants in the learning process (Surayatika, 2018), limiting their active engagement and knowledge development.

In contrast, the RAP strategy fosters active reading engagement by prompting students to identify key ideas and enhance comprehension. By encouraging students to question and interpret textual information, the RAP strategy promotes personalized understanding (Leidig et al., 2018). This dynamic approach significantly outperformed conventional methods, with the experimental group achieving an average score of 72.30 compared to 61.03 in the control group. This finding echoes the results of prior research by Hagaman et al. (2010), which demonstrated significant improvements in reading ability among students instructed using the RAP strategy. In conclusion, the RAP strategy proves effective in enhancing students' comprehension, retention, and communication skills, fostering collaborative learning environments conducive to student engagement and enjoyment in the learning process.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the t-test calculations, it is evident that the utilization of RAP strategies has significantly enhanced the reading proficiency of eleventh-grade students at SMKN in Bandar Lampung during the academic year 2022–2023. With a t-test value of 4.09 exceeding the critical t-table value of 2.00 at a significance level of 5% (0.05) and a t-table value of 2.66 at a significance level of 1% (0.01), the acceptance of Ha is warranted. Additionally, the comparison of average reading scores further reinforces this conclusion, with the experimental class attaining a mean score of 72.30 compared to 61.03 in the control class. Consequently, the efficacy of the RAP strategy in enhancing English reading instruction is apparent.

One major limitation of this study is that it focuses on a specific group, namely first-semester Islamic Family Law students at the Faculty of Sharia UIN Raden Intan Lampung. This focus may limit how applicable the findings are to other student groups or educational settings. Additionally, the study was carried out over a short period from September to December 2023, which might not be sufficient to observe the long-term effects of the RAP strategy on reading skills. Another limitation is the quasi-experimental design, which, although useful, does not control for all potential confounding factors that could affect the results. The study also used only one assessment method, a 40-question TOEFL-based test, which may not fully capture all aspects of reading proficiency. Future research should aim to overcome these limitations by including a more varied sample, extending the study duration, using randomized controlled trials, and employing multiple assessment tools to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the RAP strategy's effectiveness.

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