

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

In learning English, one of language skills that must be paid more attention by students is reading because an effective learning process is done through reading. Smith (2004) states that reading is the most natural activity in the world. It means that reading comes naturally to people, as if it is a fundamental and instinctive activity. It implies that humans have an inherent capability and inclination to read, much like other natural actions such as speaking or walking. Reading is viewed as a seamless and effortless process that integrates into daily life, highlighting its importance and prevalence in human experience. In addition, it has a close relationship with the knowledge and information they get through reading books, readers must understand and remember what they are reading.

Reading is thinking and understanding and getting at the meaning behind a text. Based on the definition, reading is a process involving complex reasoning in determining the material, including the reader's intellectual behavior such as comprehension, which helps put ideas and information into place to receive the reading text. Reading is an active process that requires a great deal of practice and skill (Moreillon, 2007). Reading has many benefits for students because it gives them basic knowledge and information about the world they do not know. Also, reading comprehension is the activity of understanding and extracting information from the text. Reading comprehension is the act of creating meaning with the text (Johnson, 2008). Based on this definition, it can be concluded that when students

read the text, they must express the text's main idea to create meaning or understanding as a result.

In reading comprehension, some students have difficulties in comprehending the contents and the components of reading any students face challenges in developing strong reading comprehension skills. These difficulties can stem from a variety of factors, such as limited vocabulary, lack of engagement, or insufficient reading strategies. Specifically, some students struggle with comprehending the contents and the components of a text, which can hinder their overall understanding. For example, some students find it difficult to identify the key components, such as the main idea, supporting details, or the author's purpose. As a result, they may not fully comprehend the content or message of what they are reading, affecting their overall performance in reading comprehension tasks.

Based on interviews with English teachers at SMPN 1 Ubud, some students have difficulty understanding the content and components of reading, such as finding the main ideas, meanings of words, phrases or sentences, textual meanings, and textual references from texts. They do not know what they should write to make a paragraph. This makes the student confused when reading a text. They spend more time understanding the text. Thus, it makes the student unmotivated and bored in the reading activity. This makes the students not understand a descriptive paragraph.

To solve the problems above, many strategies for teaching reading can be applied in classroom teaching. There are strategies that teachers can use to teach and improve students' reading comprehension, especially reading comprehension, called RAP strategy. RAP is an abbreviation of Read-Ask-Put which is used to

improve reading comprehension through questioning and paraphrasing. Students read a passage or text and then ask questions to help summarize what they have read in their own words. Teaching reading comprehension can be done more easily (Hagaman et al., 2010). By implementing a RAP strategy, it will help students find and remember the main ideas in the text. This strategy encourages students to actively process the information in the text and is more likely to remember what they read. When this strategy is successfully implemented in the classroom and the learning process, students can improve their reading comprehension and learn faster.

By considering the benefits of the RAP strategy to stimulate and engage students' reading comprehension, the researcher suggested that the RAP strategy be applied in this study to improve the reading comprehension of the seventh-grade students in SMPN 1 Ubud. By applying this strategy, the reading comprehension problem of students can be overcome. This strategy helps the student improve their memory for important information. The research has shown that students' comprehension and memory scores improve the quality and quantity of paraphrased statements they make when reading a text. As a result, by looking at the result from the observation above, the researcher is also highly interested and motivated to use RAP strategy to improve reading comprehension of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Ubud.

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background of the study, the seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Ubud still faced difficulties in learning and comprehending activities. The research problem can be formulated as follow: can reading comprehension of the

seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Ubud in academic year 2024/2025 be improved through the RAP strategy?

1.3 Objective of Study

According to research, the reading comprehension of the seventh-grade students in SMPN 1 Ubud needs to be improved. Based on the problem that has been stated previously, the aim of this study is to determine if the implementation of the RAP strategy can enhance the reading comprehension of seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Ubud during the 2024/2025 academic year.

1.4 Limitation of Study

This study is focused on the use of the RAP strategy to improve reading comprehension of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Ubud in Academic Year 2024/2025". Reading comprehension in this study is limited to identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference. This research is focused on the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum. The focus of learning is on the activity of identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference through RAP strategy. Competency requires students to understand knowledge (facts, concepts, and procedures) based on their curiosity. In this study, reading comprehension focuses on finding general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference.

1.5 Significance of Study

This research is focused on improving the reading comprehension of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Ubud in the academic year 2024/2025 through the implementation of the RAP strategy. In this study, research is highly expected

to produce meaningful and important theoretical and practical results and information on the importance of introducing RAP as a teaching method in reading comprehension.

Theoretically, the findings from studies using the RAP strategy can be expected to support developing reading comprehension. The information and theory provided in this study can be used to strengthen existing references. The results can be used as a theoretical proof of Implementation of theory based on the problem faced in teaching reading. Furthermore, it is hoped that the results of this study will be fruitful. It is a theory and can be used as a reference for further research related to RAP in improving student comprehension of seventh-grade students of SMPN 1 Ubud.

Practically, the significance of this study is expected to give feedback to the teacher, student, and another researcher. By applying this strategy, teachers can solve the problem of improving the reading ability of students, especially finding the main idea, specific information, and word meaning correctly. This research can add to teachers' knowledge of effective reading classrooms. For the student, this can improve reading, especially comprehension, and understanding of specific information in the text.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

It is necessary to define the key term used in this study. To avoid misunderstandings about this study and to have a clear understanding of the content of this study, it is assumed that it will be important to the readers when they read this study. There are some operational definitions for the key terms used in this

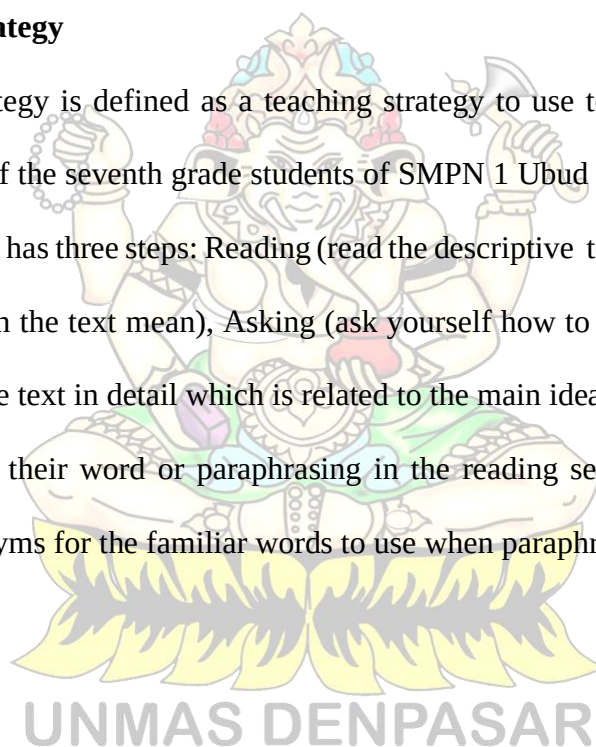
study. The operational definition of the key terms can be briefly and concisely summarized in the following explanation.

1.6.1 Reading Comprehension

In this study, reading comprehension is defined as the ability of the seventh-grade student of SMPN 1 Ubud in academic year 2024/2025 in finding out general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference on the descriptive text.

1.6.2 RAP Strategy

RAP strategy is defined as a teaching strategy to use to improve reading comprehension of the seventh grade students of SMPN 1 Ubud in academic years 2024/2025, and it has three steps: Reading (read the descriptive text and think about what the words in the text mean), Asking (ask yourself how to find the main idea and content of the text in detail which is related to the main idea), and Putting (put the main idea in their word or paraphrasing in the reading section), the student record the synonyms for the familiar words to use when paraphrasing.



CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Theoretical review is related to the theory that is used in this study. The main purpose of this chapter is to present theoretical considerations related to the scope of this study from an expert perspective. The theoretical review strengthened the research by supporting the theories of the experts. The theoretical frameworks discussed in this research are reading comprehension, relevance to English language teaching, and RAP strategy. They could be explained in detail as follows.

2.1.1 Reading Comprehension

Reading is a source of information and pleasurable activity and a means of consolidating (Patel & Jain, 2008). it can be said that reading skill is very important. Reading is a source of joy, reading gives the student satisfaction, when they read the text, they learn new words, and learn new insights from various reading texts. Reading is also someone's ability to understand the meaning of the symbol contained in the written text. Reading plays an important role in human life in a variety of activities, where people do read activities to get the solution to their problems. Reading is very important in education, especially for students who want to improve their knowledge.

According to Brown (2004), reading is likewise a skill teacher expects learners to acquire. Furthermore, Smith (2004) states that reading is the most natural activity in the world. It can be seen from how people can read information indirectly every day. Reading is a very personal thing, how well the reader reads depends on

the reading and personal resources and reading is the most useful and important skill. Reading skills are more important than speaking and writing. Reading is the source of knowledge and happiness and reading is the most important thing in every language class.

Reading has the important purpose of discovering the meaning of the sentences read and enhancing students' understanding of what they are reading. Moreover, reading has many purposes. Students read to learn from informational texts such as non-fiction and content books. Reading text also provides opportunities to study languages such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and how we construct sentences, paragraphs, and text (Harmer, 2001). Moreover, Brown (2004) states that reading is likewise a skill that teachers simply expect learners to acquire in foreign language learning and understand the meaning easily.

Comprehension arises from a series of cognitive processes and activities, including word decoding, lexical access, syntactic processing, inference generation, reading strategies, and post-reading activities (McNamara, 2007). To understand a text, the reader must be able to recognize the words in the text. This helps the reader's ability to connect the meanings of multiple random sentences into a coherent meaning. That is why the reader tries to understand what is written in the text. Comprehension identifies the intended meaning of written or spoken communication (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

McNamara (2007) states that comprehension arises from a series of cognitive processes and activities, including word decoding, lexical access, syntactic processing, inference generation, reading strategies, and post-reading activities. The reader must be able to recognize the word in the text to comprehend

the text. This can be useful to help the reader 's ability to get the meaning of several random sentences into a whole meaning. So, the readers try to understand what is in the text. Richards and Schmidt (2002) state that comprehension identifies the intended meaning of written or spoken communication as well as they add that contemporary theories of understanding emphasize that it is an active process drawing both on information that contained in the message (bottom-up processing) and background knowledge, information from the context, and the listeners and speaker purpose.

According to Smith (2004), comprehension may be regarded as relating aspect of the world around us, including what we read, to the knowledge, intentions, and expectations we already have in our head. "Reading and learning to read have a clear purpose." Hile Snow (2002) states that comprehensions are the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Comprehension is when the reader gives meaning and construct to a text. While understanding as a strategic process is a process to adjust the reading to suit the purpose of the reader and the type of text.

According to Serravallo (2010) reading comprehension is the process of understanding the meaning of the text and understanding what they have read. It is the process of understanding the meaning of the text with interaction and involves written language. Reading comprehension is not about knowing and remembering the meaning of the text, but reading comprehension it is about how the readers or students build a meaning of the text. It is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involves written language. Besides that, when the teacher in teaching and learning process in the classroom

teach their students reading comprehension, it can make the students easily to find the main idea of the text, specific information, textual meaning, textual reference and word meaning.

Reading is very important to improve the student's skills in learning. According to Patel and Jain (2008), reading is a more important and useful skill than speaking and writing. There are several aspects to reading comprehension, including understanding the meaning of the context, grammatical structure and vocabulary. If the students want to be able to read the text correctly and fluently, they need to practice reading very often, then the students are allowed to explore the language that they learn. It is making students feel enjoy during reading and get the information and share what they read in the text. Moreover, students can share the result about what they have after reading the text.

One of the keys for students to be able to understand the content of the text is by reading. Reading is one of the keys to get the students success in the future. Reading comprehension is when the readers or students can read, understand, and develop what they have read in their own word. Reading comprehension can also help them to train their minds and to increase their knowledge about the world. The main purpose of reading comprehension is to understand the main idea and understand the meaning of the text (narrative, free text, poetry, or textbook) that readers can conclude in writing or directly. That is makes reading comprehension very important in daily learning. Students can improve their reading skills only with practice, without practice they cannot improve reading skills.

Overall, the theory of reading comprehension covers several important aspects, including the ability to recognize text, integrate information, and use

strategies to support the comprehension process. One strategy that is often used is RAP (Read, Ask, and Paraphrase), which helps readers understand and remember information by reading, asking for meaning, and reformulating the contents of the text in their own words. This strategy is effective because it actively involves students in the process of critical thinking about the text they read, thereby strengthening comprehension and memory. In this study, the RAP strategy was applied to see how much influence it had on students' reading comprehension. The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of RAP in improving reading comprehension skills, especially with a focus on how students can master and internalize information from the text better through the gradual process offered by RAP.

2.1.2 RAP Strategy

RAP is a strategy that can improve students' reading comprehension with and without disabilities and is extremely flexible. It can be used for elementary, middle, and high school students across many content areas (Hagaman et al., 2010). The RAP strategy requires students to use questions and paraphrases to expand their understanding of the material. Questions and paraphrases help students better absorb information by understanding what they are reading. This strategy is used to help students understand and remember what they read and can help the learning process in the classroom. RAP strategy is a reading comprehension strategy that requires students to find the main idea and then paraphrase the information to their own word from the text that they read directly.

Reid et al., (2013) state that the RAP strategy could improve the reading comprehension of the students if the procedures were properly applied. Here are the

procedures for applying RAP in the classroom proposed. The first is the teacher asks students to read the text and then look for the main idea by themselves. The goal is for students to think about what they have read. The second is the teacher asks students to find the main idea of the text and other facts using their own words. In the last one the teacher asks students to look for words that are difficult or not yet understood in the text and the students may ask the teacher about it. In addition, students can take personal notes while reading to make it easier for them to remember what they have read because they do not get help from the teacher.

The RAP strategy, or this three-step strategy, can improve students' reading comprehension and is very flexible. This three-step strategy can improve the reading comprehension of students with and without disabilities and is extremely flexible (Hagaman et al., 2010). This strategy requires students to participate in questions and paraphrases that help improve their ability to read materials and texts. Paraphrasing questions, therefore, allows students to gather information and better understand what they are reading, and can also use the RAP strategy to learn very effectively. RAP strategies can also encourage students to think about ways to improve their reading comprehension. The RAP strategy also benefits the learning process. The benefits are that it allows for collaboration and effort, encourages attention to detail and student participation, requires little teacher preparation, and is simple and easy to explain and understand.

By conducting this strategy, students do self-questioning and process or think the information to their own words. Students actively process the information in the text, which can improve their ability specially to remember what they have read. There are commercially available lesson plans for teaching the paraphrasing

strategy (Reid et al., 2013). Before reading the students were asked to think first “what is the purpose of my reading this text? do I already know or have read this text?” it is very important to conduct the steps of thinking that improve reading skills, because students are asked to remember previous knowledge and students can understand more easily by remember what they have read.

This strategy is effective with the application of specific strategies. Instruction should be continued until the students have mastered the use of this strategy that in using this strategy, teacher must be correct and consistent. RAP strategy also encourages students to think about how they improved their reading comprehension. This strategy also has advantages in the learning process such as provides collaborative work or effort, encouraging attention to detail and student involvement, takes little teacher preparation, simple and easy to explain and understand.

Theories related to reading comprehension emphasize the importance of active reading skills, which involve cognitive processes such as identifying main ideas, connecting information, and thinking critically about meaning. Various strategies have been designed to help students improve this comprehension, one of which is the RAP Strategy (Read, Ask, Paraphrase). The RAP strategy engages readers in three main steps: reading to understand the text, asking questions about meaning and important information, and paraphrasing to reflect on the content of the text in their own words. In this way, this strategy not only helps students understand but also strengthens their memory of the information obtained. In the current study, the RAP Strategy was applied to measure its effectiveness in improving students’ reading comprehension, focusing on how well students can

understand and internalize information from the text in more depth through the step-by-step approach offered by RAP.

2.1.3 Assessing Reading Comprehension

Reading assessments are used to determine which skills students need to master and which skills need to strengthen. The most common reading assessment is with written text. Students demonstrate understanding by reading standardized test texts and answering questions. In reading, students can go back to the text and review again what they read, something impossible to do for example when listening unless the dialogue is taped or transcribed in some way. Comprehension assessment is usually thought of in relation to reading.

Westwood (2008) states that assessment refers to the process of collecting information from students (e.g., obtaining test scores, and work samples) while evaluation means looking at that information and making some decisions about instructions. He also explained the main characteristics of the evaluation, such as: enabling teachers to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum and make necessary changes to teaching methodologies, learning activities, or resources, identify additional assistance provide information if a student is transferred to another school or referred to a special school hold parents accountable by providing evidence of their child's learning. By providing hard evidence of school achievement levels to hold state education accountable to the authorities.

Brown (2004) states that the various assessment of task depends on the type of reading. In this study, there will be two types of tasks, there are short answer tasks and skimming tasks. Short-answer task is usually used when a reading passage is presented, and the test-taker reads a question that must be answered in a sentence

or two. And skimming task is a prediction strategy used to give a reader a sense of the topic and purpose of a text, and the organization of the text. Assessment of skimming strategies is usually straightforward: the test-taker skims a text and answers questions such as the following. The student's reading comprehension is measured after teaching activities through the RAP strategy in the classroom. In this study, the subjects are given a short answer task in which they identify general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual references. The test was constructed in such a way. Therefore, the researcher gets a clear description of the student's achievement in reading comprehension.

2.2 Empirical Review

An empirical review is a review of previous research that is relevant to current research. This is how to obtain information and theories about previous studies that are still available. The purpose of the demonstration experiment is first to gain a deep understanding of the theory. The researcher selected two relevant researchers as empirical reviews. This part focused specifically on discussing the validation of two previously conducted research papers.

The first research is conducted by Putra (2020) entitled "Implementing RAP Strategy to Improve Reading Comprehension of the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 1 Ubud in Academic Year 2024/2025". The results of this study can be seen from the pre-test and post-test progressive averages. This means that students who struggle with reading comprehension can improve using the RAP strategy. Furthermore, the RAP strategy was able to reduce students' reading errors and increase students' motivation and emotions in the classroom.

In this research there was significant improvement after using the RAP strategy in the classroom. The result of the study was effective and helpful to improving reading comprehension. However, in this research, the reading comprehension test were in the form of multiple-choice question. The test contained 4 options in 40 questions. It could be a problem because the student can find the answer easily without reading the questions seriously and thoughtfully. The students may not know the real answer, but they can answer it randomly. In relation to this study, the construction of short answer task was implemented to finding the general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference.

The second research was conducted by Amelia (2021) entitled “The Use of RAP Strategy to Improve Reading Comprehension of the Seventh-grade Students of SMPN 2 Sukawati in Academic Year 2021/2022”. The results of this study indicate that the RAP strategy may improve reading comprehension. This can be seen from the pre-test and post-test progressive averages. The current study showed that students significantly improved their comprehension. Especially when using the RAP strategy in the reaggregated text. It was also proven that the application of the RAP strategy showed satisfactory results in improving students’ reading comprehension, making it worth implementing. In this research, there are not only advantages but also disadvantages. The researcher not briefly mention the steps to carry out reading strategies and did not utilize measurements in this study. As a result, it confuses students when implementing strategies. In addition, the researcher provided examples and feedback to enhance student understanding. The clear, procedural steps of the RAP strategy enable students to have a better learning experience and maximize their active engagement.

In contrast, my research focuses on providing clear and structured steps for the RAP strategy, ensuring students understand each phase of the process. Additionally, I incorporate more detailed assessments of student participation and active engagement, observing how they respond to each stage of the strategy, which allows for more accurate tracking of their progress and comprehension improvement.

