AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION IN USING IRAS (INTERACTIVE READ ALOUD STRATEGY)

Salma Hira[1], Siti Ngaisah [2,] Ekka Zahra Puspita Dewi[3]
Universitas Madani Indonesia[1,2,3]
e-mail: salmahira03@umina.ac.id, ngaisah@umina.ac.id, zahradewi@umina.ac.id

ABSTRAK

Membaca berarti membuka suatu teks yang menyajikan informasi baik dalam media cetak maupun non cetak. Kegiatan membaca selalu dibutuhkan oleh siswa untuk memahami materi yang diajarkan oleh gurunya. Saat ini banyak siswa yang sangat enggan untuk membaca teks apalagi buku. Mereka kurang berminat untuk membaca seperti buku pelajaran atau buku bahasa Inggris. Bacaan seperti komik, novel dan cerpen lebih diminati oleh siswa masa kini. Itulah sebabnya sebagai peneliti kami berusaha menggali informasi dari siswa secara langsung untuk mencari data. Data ini terkait dengan bagaimana siswa belajar membaca di kelas bahasa Inggris dan teknik apa saja yang digunakan guru bahasa Inggris untuk membuat mereka tertarik. Di sini peneliti menganalisis penggunaan strategi membaca nyaring interaktif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah guru bahasa Inggris dan siswa kelas satu di Sekolah Dasar Islam Al Islah. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan rancangan studi kasus. Studi kasus dalam penelitian ini memiliki subjek yang unik yaitu siswa kelas I SD Islam Al Islah yang kebetulan masih dalam masa transisi dari Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini ke jenjang Sekolah Dasar. Tentunya kemampuan dalam memahami suatu teks masih belum optimal. Sehingga mereka membutuhkan bimbingan dari guru Bahasa Inggrisnya dalam meningkatkan penguasaan teks bacaan. Informan penelitian ini adalah guru dan siswa kelas I SDI Al Islah dengan menggunakan instrumen wawancara, lembar observasi dan dokumen. Dari observasi tersebut ditemukan data bahwa guru Bahasa Inggris menggunakan langkah-langkah yang terdiri dari: membuat rencana pembelajaran, aturan strategi, materi strategi, media pembelajaran, evaluasi dan umpan balik. Berdasarkan penjelasan di atas, strategi membaca nyaring interaktif berkontribusi pada pemahaman siswa terhadap bacaan. Strategi ini dapat meningkatkan keterampilan mendengarkan siswa, mengenal ungkapan, memperkaya kosakata, memotivasi siswa untuk membaca teks bahasa Inggris, dan berhasil dalam pemahaman bacaan.
Kata Kunci: *Analisis, Kemampuan Membaca, Strategi Membaca Nyaring Interaktif*

ABSTRACT

Reading means opening a text that presents information, whether in print or non-print media. Students are always required to understand the material taught by their teachers. Currently, many students are very reluctant to read texts, especially books. They lack interest in reading textbooks or English books. Reading materials such as comics, novels, and short stories are more popular with today's students. Therefore, as researchers, we strive to gather information directly from students to gather data. This data relates to how students learn to read in English classes and what techniques English teachers use to engage them. Here, the researchers analyzed the use of interactive read-aloud strategies. The subjects of this study were English teachers and first-grade students at Al Islah Islamic Elementary School. The research method used was a qualitative case study design. The case study in this research has unique subjects: first-grade students at Al Islah Islamic Elementary School, who are still in the transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School. Naturally, their ability to comprehend texts is still not optimal. Therefore, they need guidance from their English teachers to improve their mastery of reading texts. The informants for this study were teachers and first-grade students

of SDI Al Islah, using interviews, observation sheets, and documents as instruments. The observations revealed that English teachers used the following steps: creating lesson plans, developing strategy rules, developing strategy materials, developing learning media, evaluating, and providing feedback. Based on the explanation above, the interactive read-aloud strategy contributes to students' reading comprehension. This strategy can improve students' listening skills, recognize expressions, enrich vocabulary, motivate students to read English texts, and improve reading comprehension.

Keywords: Analysis, Reading Ability, Interactive Read-Aloud Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension stands as a cornerstone of academic success and lifelong learning. It is a multifaceted cognitive process that involves not only decoding words but also constructing meaning, making inferences, and critically engaging with a text. In an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, such as in Indonesia, developing strong reading skills from an early age is paramount. It serves as the primary gateway for students to access a world of information, master other academic subjects, and develop the linguistic competence necessary for global communication. Therefore, fostering effective and engaging reading instruction in elementary schools is not merely a curriculum goal but a fundamental necessity for building a solid educational foundation for every child (Hasniyati et al., 2024; Isnata, 2025).

Ideally, the early elementary English classroom should be a vibrant and interactive environment where reading is portrayed as an enjoyable and meaningful activity. Effective instruction for young learners transcends simple phonics drills or vocabulary memorization; it immerses them in rich literary experiences that spark their imagination and curiosity. The ideal approach involves teachers actively modeling fluent reading, using expressive tones, and creating a shared, social experience around texts. This helps build a positive association with reading and lays the groundwork for intrinsic motivation. In this optimal setting, students are not passive recipients of information but active participants in the process of making meaning, which is crucial for developing deep and lasting comprehension skills (Barber & Klauda, 2020; Efriza et al., 2023; Valera, 2024).

However, the reality in many EFL classrooms often falls short of this ideal. The process of teaching English reading, despite years of implementation, does not always yield satisfactory outcomes (Aminudin, 2010). Instruction can be dominated by passive, teacher-centered methods that focus on translation or rote learning, failing to engage students actively. A common phenomenon observed is that young students show a marked reluctance to engage with academic texts, such as textbooks, while showing greater interest in narrative forms like comics or stories. This indicates a significant gap between the students' natural affinity for stories and the pedagogical methods used in schools, leading to low motivation and underdeveloped reading comprehension skills.

To bridge this gap, educators need strategies that leverage students' natural interest in stories while systematically building their comprehension abilities. One of the most powerful pedagogical tools for this purpose is the read-aloud. When a teacher reads a text aloud, they provide a fluent and expressive model that students can internalize. This practice exposes children to vocabulary and sentence structures that may be beyond their independent reading level, thereby expanding their linguistic repertoire (Kalb & van Ours, 2014). More importantly, it transforms reading from a solitary, often frustrating task into a shared, enjoyable experience. This shift in perception is a critical first step in nurturing a positive attitude towards reading and building the confidence needed for independent comprehension.

While traditional read-alouds are beneficial, their effectiveness can be significantly enhanced through a more structured and interactive approach. This leads to the innovation at the core of this study: the Interactive Read-Aloud Strategy (IRAS). IRAS is not simply about reading a text to students; it is a deliberate and purposeful instructional framework where the teacher strategically plans pauses throughout the reading. During these pauses, the teacher prompts students to make predictions, ask questions, visualize scenes, and make connections to their own experiences. This dialogic interaction transforms students from passive listeners into active co-constructors of meaning, deeply engaging their critical thinking skills and fostering a more profound understanding of the text (Hilmi, 2024; Isnata, 2025).

The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on the implementation and analysis of IRAS within a unique and critical context: first-grade students at an Indonesian Islamic elementary school. While the benefits of read-alouds are well-documented, there is a need for more in-depth, qualitative research that explores the practical application of the *interactive* component for very young EFL learners who are in a crucial transitional phase from kindergarten to formal schooling. This case study aims to fill that gap by providing a rich, detailed account of how a teacher prepares and implements IRAS, and how students perceive and respond to this strategy. It moves beyond simply asking *if* it works, to understanding *how* and *why* it works in this specific environment (Maba, 2018; Ruijia et al., 2023; Syukur et al., 2025).

Therefore, this study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the use of the Interactive Read-Aloud Strategy (IRAS) and its contribution to the reading comprehension of first-grade students at Al Islah Islamic Elementary School. The research seeks to answer how the English teacher designs and implements the strategy, from planning and material selection to evaluation and feedback. Furthermore, it will explore the students' experiences and perceptions of learning to read through this interactive method. By examining this unique case, the research intends to provide valuable insights for educators on how to effectively foster reading comprehension and motivation in young EFL learners, turning the reading process into a successful and engaging journey.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was designed using a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because its primary objective was to conduct an intensive and in-depth analysis of a single unit, namely the learning process in a unique classroom. The focus of this case study was to capture the complexity of a specific phenomenon: the implementation of the Interactive Read Aloud Strategy (IRAS) in teaching reading. The research location was an Islamic elementary school, with all first-grade students and the English teacher who taught the class. This subject selection was based on the uniqueness of the elementary school learning context and the aim of exploring in-depth how the IRAS strategy was implemented and received by students and teachers in this specific learning environment.

To collect systematic and comprehensive data from the field, the researchers used several types of data collection instruments and techniques (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The first instrument was an interview guide, which was used to guide in-depth interview sessions with the English teacher and students. These interviews aimed to elicit in-depth information about their feelings, experiences, and perspectives on the use of the IRAS strategy. The second instrument was an observation sheet, which the researchers used during direct classroom observations during English lessons to record student enthusiasm and interactions. The third instrument was a checklist-style questionnaire administered to students to elicit structured responses regarding the learning activities they had participated in.

Data collection procedures were conducted through three main methods: observation, interviews, and documentation. Researchers visited classrooms directly to observe the teaching and learning process using the IRAS strategy. Furthermore, researchers collected various forms of documentation to enrich the data. Documents collected from students included study guides, photographs of activities during the learning process, and records of their English class grades. Meanwhile, documents collected from teachers included student lists, Lesson Plans (RPPs), lesson schedules, and syllabi. All data collected from these various sources were then analyzed qualitatively to develop a holistic and detailed understanding of the case study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results

After the researcher conducted an interview with the students, the researcher found that most of students had good interest in using IRAS. According to the interview with the students on Jnauary 17th 2025, the researcher got the students' answer how their feeling when the teacher taught using IRAS in the
The students' listening and meaning construction increased
S5   : *"...membaca itu menyenangkan kalau pakai cara bu ida. Saya juga bisa belajar mendengarkan dan menyusun arti yang benar*
"…reading is interesting if using Mrs. Ida's strategy. I can also study listening and arrange the meaning construction well."

From the samples of students' responses above, the students got some contribution from the use of IRAS (*Interactive Read Aloud*) in their reading skill. Such as interesting situation, having good score, having well pronunciation, knowing expression and gesture enrich the vocabulary and the meaning, well meaning contraction, and good motivation to reading English text. In conclusion, the English teacher was taught using appropriate strategy and success to help the students' difficulties in comprehending the material.

In this study, the researcher conducted an interview with the English teacher in that school. The researcher asked about the preparation of the teacher before the IRAS was applied in the reading class. The researcher then asked about the material used in the IRAS, what kind of text was chosen by the teacher. In addition, the researcher tried to find information about the rule of the strategy. Based on the conversation, Mrs. Ida said that she tried to find the best strategy to increase the students' reading comprehension. The teacher mentions many steps they were:

1. The teacher designed the lesson plan
2. The teacher designed the rule of strategy
3. The teacher designed the material of the strategy
4. The teacher used teaching media
5. The teacher designed the evaluation and feed back

The English language teaching and learning often face the problems related to the teachers who do not have effective method in teaching and the students who get difficulties in learning English because it is unfamiliar language in their social community. According to Aminudin (2010) although teaching English has been taught for many years, the fact shows that the process of teaching English does not always get good output. The English teacher in this school used IRAS as the strategy in teaching reading. After designed the planning and preparation, the teacher set the steps in conducting IRAS.

1. Predicting
    In the first step the teacher asked to the students to make prediction about the theme of the text will be taught.

2. Visualizing

   In the second steps was visualizing. This step involved the ability of students to make mental images of a text as a way to understand processes or events they encounter during reading.

3. Connecting

   In this step made personal connections with the text by using their schema. The students were making connections between the text and their personal experience. The teacher started to read loudly and she stopped at second sentence.

4. Questioning

   This step involved then students asking themselves questions throughout the reading of text. Here, after the teacher finished her reading, she asked the students to answer some of question about the content of the text.

5. Finding Main Idea

   This step Provide a list of words to highlight the text. The students will found clue words for important ideas to interpret the idea of the text.

6. Summarizing

   Teaching students to summarize improved their memory for what was readby the teacher. Summarization can be used to improve the students' focus on keywords and phrases of an assigned text that are worth noting and remembering.

7. Checking Predictions

   After the students made summarization, they will check the predictions in the first step. It helped the students to find meaning in the text. The teacher checked the students' predictions were true or false based on the text.

8. Making Judgments

   The teacher gave opportunity to the students to explain their opinion about the final judgments of each object in the text. In this step, the teacher divided the students become four groups. Based on the result of students' interview, the students' responses to the teaching strategies used by the teacher were so good and interesting.

Discussion

This in-depth qualitative analysis provides a compelling and nuanced look into the successful implementation of the Interactive Read-Aloud Strategy (IRAS) for fostering reading comprehension among young English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners(Kung & Aziz, 2020; Pranoto & Lisnani, 2020). The research, set within the unique context of first-grade students at an Indonesian Islamic elementary school, clearly demonstrates how this pedagogical approach can transform reading from a potentially intimidating task into a dynamic, engaging, and collaborative experience. The findings highlight not only the positive impact on students' cognitive skills but also a significant boost in their motivation and affective engagement with English texts. This discussion will delve into the underlying reasons for the strategy's success, exploring how its systematic, multi-step implementation effectively scaffolds the complex process of reading comprehension and creates a rich environment for holistic language development (Cholilah et al., 2025; Safitri et al., 2022; H. Xu, 2020; Z. Xu et al., 2021).

The study is situated within a critical and challenging educational phase: the transition from play-based early childhood education to the more structured demands of formal schooling. For these first-grade students, learning to read in English presents a formidable dual challenge, requiring them to grapple with a new linguistic system while simultaneously developing foundational literacy skills. The initial observation that students are reluctant to engage with textbooks is a natural and predictable outcome of this difficulty. The success of IRAS in this context underscores a vital pedagogical principle: for young learners, the process must be

Jurnal P4I

supportive, interactive, and socially mediated. By positioning the teacher as an expert guide and a fluent model, the strategy effectively lowers the affective filter, making the text accessible and transforming the learning environment into one of curiosity rather than anxiety (Badhe et al., 2025; Lisyalama, 2025; McQuirter & Meeussen, 2017).

A key factor in the success of this intervention is the teacher's role as a strategic and meticulous planner. The research reveals that the implementation of IRAS was not a spontaneous activity but a carefully orchestrated instructional sequence. The teacher's thorough preparation—encompassing the design of the lesson plan, the specific rules of interaction, material selection, and evaluation methods—formed the bedrock of the strategy's effectiveness. This deliberate approach transformed the simple act of reading aloud into a powerful scaffolding tool. The eight distinct steps, from predicting to making judgments, provided a clear and systematic framework that guided students through the complex cognitive processes of a skilled reader. This methodical guidance ensured that students were actively engaged in manageable, purpose-driven mental tasks, allowing them to build their comprehension skills progressively and with a high degree of support (Ramsa & Rawian, 2021; Yuan, 2025).

The true power of the strategy, as its name suggests, lies in its interactive and dialogic nature. By strategically pausing the reading to prompt predictions, questions, and personal connections, the teacher effectively shifted the dynamic from a monologue to a collaborative conversation about the text. This process of co-constructing meaning is central to its success in enhancing comprehension. Students were no longer passive recipients of a story; they were invited to become active thinkers, problem-solvers, and contributors to the collective understanding. This interactive engagement makes the often-invisible thinking processes of a good reader visible and explicit. It models how to actively question, visualize, and connect with a text, providing students with a cognitive toolkit that they can eventually internalize and apply in their own independent reading endeavors (Mahmood, 2015).

The implementation of IRAS was shown to foster a holistic set of interconnected language competencies, moving far beyond mere reading comprehension. The rich, multi-modal experience of the strategy naturally integrated all four language skills. Students enhanced their listening abilities by attending to the teacher's fluent and expressive reading model. They enriched their vocabulary and understanding of expressions as new words were encountered and discussed within a meaningful context. Their speaking and pronunciation skills were practiced during the interactive discussion phases. This integrated approach is far more effective than teaching language skills in isolated drills, as it creates a rich linguistic environment where meaning is paramount and skills are developed in synergy, mirroring the way language is naturally acquired and used (Oleksiienko et al., 2020).

Perhaps the most significant outcome of this study is the profound positive impact on the affective domain of learning. The students' own words reveal that they found the process "interesting" and "fun," which cultivated a powerful intrinsic motivation to engage with English texts. By transforming reading from a solitary and potentially frustrating chore into a successful, shared, and enjoyable social event, IRAS helps to build a positive reading identity in young learners. For students at this foundational stage, fostering a love for reading and building confidence is just as crucial as developing cognitive skills. The strategy effectively dismantled the initial reluctance and anxiety associated with reading a foreign language, replacing it with a sense of curiosity and empowerment (Angeles et al., 2022; Dash, 2020; Irawan et al., 2025).

In conclusion, this qualitative case study provides powerful, context-rich evidence that a well-planned and systematically implemented Interactive Read-Aloud Strategy is an exemplary pedagogical model for teaching reading comprehension to young EFL learners. It effectively addresses both the cognitive and affective dimensions of literacy development,

proving to be particularly suitable for students in the critical early grades. The implications for teacher education and curriculum development are clear: equipping teachers with the skills to conduct this form of interactive, dialogic instruction should be a priority. By adopting engaging and supportive strategies like IRAS, educators can lay a robust foundation for creating a generation of students who are not only proficient and confident readers but also genuinely motivated lifelong learners.

KESIMPULAN

In this study the conclusion was the teacher had to prepare several things such as: the teacher designed the lesson plan, the rule of the strategy, the material of the strategy, teaching media, the evaluation and the feedback. In applying IRAS (Interactive Read Aloud Strategy) in teaching reading, the teacher used eight steps, such as: 1) Predicting, 2) Visualizing, 3) Connecting, 4) Questioning, 5) Finding Main idea, 6) Summarizing, 7) checking prediction, and 8) making judgments.   Based on this research, those strategies are effective in teaching English because it can help students in developing their reading comprehension mastery.

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