

The Effect Of The Pq4r Strategy On The Reading Comprehension Ability Of Grade IV Students MIS Istiqomah Medan

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill that must be mastered by elementary school students, particularly in Islamic schools where understanding religious texts forms an integral part of the curriculum. This study aims to determine the effect of the PQ4R (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, and Review) strategy on the reading comprehension abilities of fourth-grade students at MIS Istiqomah Medan, especially in relation to texts relevant to Islamic religious education. The research employed a quantitative approach using a one-group pretest-posttest design involving 14 students. The data were collected using an essay-based reading comprehension test. To analyze the data, a paired sample *t*-test was used to compare the pretest and posttest results. The findings indicated a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension scores, with the average score increasing from 27.86 (pretest) to 86.5 (posttest). The paired *t*-test produced a significance value (2-tailed) of 0.000, indicating a strong positive effect of the PQ4R strategy. In conclusion, the PQ4R strategy is proven effective not only in enhancing general reading comprehension but also in supporting students' understanding of Islamic texts. Therefore, this strategy is highly recommended for use in Indonesian language instruction within the madrasah educational context.

Keywords: PQ4R Strategy; Reading Comprehension

A. Introduction

Indonesian is one of the most important subjects, this is due to the very strategic role of Indonesian, namely as the language of instruction for education and the national language (Putri et al., 2025). One of the main abilities developed in Indonesian language subjects is language skills, which include an individual's ability to interact orally and in writing. (Scott, 2019). Language also functions as a tool for communication and self-expression, as well as a means of understanding and conveying meaning. (R. T. Siregar & Devianty, 2024). In the context of learning Indonesian, there are four language skills that are the main focus, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. (Anas & Sapri, 2022). One of the most important skills is reading, particularly reading comprehension. This ability enables students to deeply understand the content of a text, derive meaning, and relate it to their own experiences or knowledge. In madrasahs, Indonesian language learning is inseparable from the Islamic context. One way to integrate Islamic values into learning is through the selection of reading materials containing Islamic Religious Education content. For example, texts used in reading

comprehension exercises can include exemplary stories of the Prophet and his companions, stories of wisdom, or materials reflecting moral and religious values. This integration not only strengthens students' reading skills but also supports the strengthening of religious literacy and character formation in accordance with Islamic teachings. Therefore, developing reading comprehension skills in madrasas needs to be directed not only at improving students' academic abilities but also at enriching their religious insights. In this context, effective learning strategies such as PQ4R (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, and Review) can be a relevant approach to helping students understand Islamic texts more deeply and meaningfully.

Reading is often regarded as the gateway to knowledge, serving as a crucial tool for intellectual and personal development. The more frequently an individual engages with reading materials, the broader their horizons and depth of understanding become (Siagian et al., 2025). Reading is not merely a mechanical process of recognizing words but a complex cognitive activity involving the extraction and construction of meaning from written texts (Elvia & Halimah, 2024). Through reading, students gain access to a wide array of information that contributes to their academic growth and critical thinking. The ability to read with comprehension is therefore essential for students, particularly in educational contexts that emphasize both general knowledge and character development (Hasibuan & Rambe, 2022). Argue that reading enables students to absorb various forms of knowledge and develop intellectual insight. Moreover, reading encompasses visual and cognitive processes, including decoding written symbols and interpreting their meanings through thoughtful reflection (Fitriah et al., 2024). Beyond acquiring information, reading also functions as a means of enjoyment and intellectual stimulation. It encourages readers to evaluate new information critically, connect it with prior knowledge, and apply it meaningfully in everyday life (Balqis et al., 2021). In Islamic educational institutions such as madrasahs, reading also plays a central role in strengthening religious literacy. By engaging with texts that contain moral and spiritual lessons, students not only enhance their reading comprehension skills but also internalize values that are essential to Islamic education.

One of the current challenges faced by Islamic elementary schools (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*) is the low reading comprehension ability of students, particularly in understanding procedural texts and religious-themed readings. In grade IV, students are expected to read and comprehend various types of texts in Indonesian language lessons, including narratives, expositions, and procedural texts, some of which are integrated with Islamic values. However, many students still struggle to extract meaning from texts, identify key information, and connect what they read to prior knowledge or daily life applications. This issue not only affects their academic performance in Indonesian subjects but also hinders the development of religious literacy, which is essential in madrasah education (Muliawanti et al., 2022). Indonesian remains a core subject that trains students in four key language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, reading comprehension is crucial because it supports students' ability to acquire information and expand their intellectual and spiritual understanding. Reading comprehension is not a passive activity, but a complex cognitive process that requires careful attention, reflection, and the ability to connect new information with existing knowledge (Suhartini & Samsudin, 2022). To address these challenges, the

implementation of effective reading strategies is needed. One such strategy is PQ4R (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review), which is designed to enhance students' understanding by guiding them through structured stages of reading and reflection. Studies have shown that the PQ4R strategy helps students engage more deeply with texts, remember information better, and improve their overall comprehension skills (Friska et al., 2023). In the context of madrasah, the PQ4R strategy can be particularly valuable not only for improving reading comprehension of general Indonesian texts but also for helping students understand Islamic content embedded in the curriculum. Therefore, investigating the application of the PQ4R strategy among fourth-grade madrasah students is important to ensure both academic success and the strengthening of religious character (El Fuaddah et al., 2024).

Reading comprehension or *Reading for understanding* is a form of reading activity with the main goal of understanding the content of the message contained in the reading (Salam et al., 2022). Reading comprehension is where the reader applies his cognitive realm to think, analyze and finally understand what he has read. Gaining as much understanding as possible from what has been read is the goal of reading comprehension (S. P. Siregar & Rambe, 2024). Based on the opinions of some of the experts above, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is a student's process in understanding a reading. Students can easily remember the information they have obtained and students can relate it to the knowledge they already have so that it is easier for students to rewrite or reconvey what they have read.

Reading comprehension has a good impact on the success of the learning process. The indicators in reading comprehension are as follows: 1) students' ability to grasp the content of reading; 2) students' ability to summarize the content of the reading by finding the main idea in each paragraph; 3) students' ability to answer the content of questions about the content of the reading; and 4) students' ability to retell the content of the reading in their own sentences in a coherent language (Suandi et al., 2023). The ability to read and comprehend has an important role, but there are still many problems encountered in students. As the first observation that the researcher has made to fourth grade students of MIS Istiqomah Medan, that there are still many students who only read without knowing the meaning of the reading. Many students read repeatedly to understand the content of a reading but still do not understand it, so the success rate of student comprehension is known when the student can repeat the content of a reading text. Knowing the above problems, the researcher will apply another strategy to achieve the goal of reading comprehension, namely by using the PQ4R strategy where this strategy will involve all students to play an active role in the learning process.

The PQ4R learning strategy was developed by Thomas and Robinson in 1972. PQ4R's strategy includes, *Preview* (read a snippet), *Question* (asks), *Read* (read), *Reflect* (Reflection), *Recite* (Questions and answers), and *Reviews* (repeat thoroughly) (Husain & Sumadi, 2024). The PQ4R learning strategy is one part of the elaboration strategy. The elaboration strategy is the process of transferring details so that new information will become more useful and more meaningful. Elaboration strategies help move new information from short-term memory to long-term memory by creating a relationship between new information and existing information (Kusumawati, 2022). The PQ4R strategy aims to improve reading ability in terms

of the ability to understand reading structures with high concentration when reading and can be used to remember information for a long period of time (Saltari et al., 2024).

Reading comprehension is a vital skill in elementary education, as it forms the foundation for students to access and process knowledge across various subjects. In Islamic elementary schools (madrasah ibtidaiyah), this skill holds dual importance not only for supporting academic performance in core subjects like Bahasa Indonesia, but also for fostering religious understanding through the reading of texts that reflect Islamic values. One specific genre of text that plays an important role in both contexts is procedural text, which teaches students how to follow steps logically be it for performing religious rituals (e.g., ablution, prayer) or for carrying out tasks in daily life. However, many madrasah students struggle to comprehend such texts, indicating a need for more effective teaching strategies. One promising approach is the PQ4R strategy (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review), which aims to enhance comprehension by guiding students through a structured reading process. The PQ4R method encourages active engagement with the text and develops critical thinking by prompting students to ask questions and reflect on what they have read.

Previous studies have shown that the PQ4R (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review) strategy has a significant impact on improving students' reading comprehension. For example (Zaituni & Apriliana, 2023). Conducted a study on fifth-grade students at Cijambu I Elementary School and found that the PQ4R strategy increased student engagement, critical thinking, and curiosity when learning non fiction texts. Similarly (Azkiyyah et al., 2021). demonstrated the effectiveness of the PQ4R strategy in improving fourth-grade students' reading comprehension in Purwakarta through data analysis that showed a strong behavioral change during intervention phases. Another study by (Pratiwi, 2023). n fifth-grade students at UPTD SD Negeri 32 Baru also confirmed that the PQ4R strategy yielded very high effectiveness, with learning success indicators reaching 90.6%. While these studies confirm the general effectiveness of the PQ4R strategy, most of them focus on narrative or non-fiction texts in general, with limited attention to procedural texts. This highlights a gap in the literature, particularly in the context of Islamic elementary schools (madrasah ibtidaiyah) where structured, purposeful reading is needed not only for academic literacy but also for supporting character and religious development. Procedural texts, such as how-to guides, instructions for performing rituals (e.g., ablution, prayer), or step by-step actions in moral decision-making, are crucial in developing systematic, analytical, and applicable thinking in students. These texts require readers to follow logical sequences and understand cause effect relationships, which align with the goals of Islamic education to produce disciplined, thoughtful, and action-oriented individuals. In madrasah settings, the mastery of procedural text comprehension supports not only academic performance in Bahasa Indonesia but also functional religious literacy.

Given this gap, the present study aims to examine the influence of the PQ4R strategy on reading comprehension with a specific focus on procedural texts in an Islamic educational context. By targeting fourth-grade students at MIS Istiqomah Medan, this study offers a new contribution to the field by connecting an established reading strategy with the unique needs of Islamic school learners. This research also aims to provide practical guidance for teachers in

implementing the PQ4R strategy effectively. The results are expected to enrich pedagogical practices, increase student motivation to read, and improve comprehension skills particularly in understanding procedural texts that support both academic and religious learning. Ultimately, this will contribute to enhancing the overall quality of instruction in Indonesian language learning at the madrasah level

This study addresses that gap by specifically investigating the influence of the PQ4R strategy on fourth-grade students' comprehension of procedural texts in an Islamic educational setting—MIS Istiqomah Medan. Unlike previous research, this study emphasizes the dual function of procedural reading: as a literacy skill and as a means to reinforce religious values. It aims to provide a more contextualized understanding of how PQ4R can be implemented effectively in madrasahs and to offer practical guidance for teachers seeking to improve students' reading comprehension, especially with texts that have moral and spiritual relevance. By doing so, this research contributes not only to the academic discourse on reading strategies in elementary education but also offers a pedagogical model for enhancing literacy and character development in Islamic schools.

B. Method

This study used a quantitative approach with a One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design. This design involved one experimental group without a control group. Observations were conducted twice: before treatment (pretest) and after treatment (posttest). The treatment in this study was the application of the PQ4R (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review) strategy in the reading comprehension learning process (Andriany & Saputra, 2022). The choice of this Pre-Experimental design was based on the limitations of the field situation, such as the limited number of classes and the unavailability of a matching control class. Although this design has major weaknesses, namely the lack of control over external variables and threats to internal validity (e.g., history, maturation, and testing), this design remains relevant for understanding changes that occur within a treatment group. The advantages of this design are its simplicity of implementation and resource efficiency, making it suitable for application in the context of small research scopes. (Rahmawati & Hardini, 2020). This study involved 14 fourth-grade students at MIS Istiqomah Medan, selected using a non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling.

This technique was chosen because the researcher had specific considerations in selecting subjects relevant and in line with the research objectives: students participating in reading comprehension lessons in fourth grade. The data collection instrument was a written essay test consisting of 10 questions administered before and after the treatment (pretest and posttest). Before being used in the main study, the instrument was tested for validity, reliability, discriminatory power, and difficulty level. The testing was conducted using SPSS version 25 software. (Asrulla et al., 2023). Validity testing was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment technique, using data from instrument trials on subjects with similar characteristics to the research sample. Reliability testing used the KR-20 (Kuder-Richardson Formula 20) formula to ensure internal consistency of the items. Discriminatory power was calculated by comparing the scores of the upper and lower groups using the formula:

$$DP: \frac{JA - JB}{N}$$

J A = total score of the upper group,

J B = total score of the lower group, and

N = number of students in one group.

The level of difficulty of the questions is calculated using the formula:

$$TK : \frac{B}{N}$$

B = number of students who answered correctly

N = total number of students.

Data analysis techniques in this study included Normality test (using the Shapiro-Wilk test because the sample size was <30), homogeneity test (using Levene's test), and hypothesis testing using a paired sample t-test to determine whether there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results. All statistical tests were conducted using SPSS version 25 at a significance level of 0.05.

C. Findings and Discussion

1. Findings

This study aimed to determine the extent to which the PQ4R strategy influenced the reading comprehension skills of fourth-grade students at MIS Istiqomah Medan. Data were obtained through a reading comprehension test consisting of 10 descriptive questions administered during the pretest and posttest. The study involved 14 students. The pretest results yielded the following statistical data: mode = 25, median = 25, mean = 27.86, standard deviation = 6.112, and variance = 41.346. These data indicate that students' initial reading comprehension skills were still relatively low, with the average far below the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM). Not a single student achieved the KKM. This indicates that most students lacked effective strategies for reading comprehension, possibly due to previous teaching methods that did not emphasize in-depth understanding of the text.

After the PQ4R strategy was implemented, the posttest results showed a significant improvement. The obtained mode was 94, median 86.5, mean 86.5, standard deviation 6.43, and variance remained at 41.346. Despite the significant increase in scores from a mean of 27.86 to 86.5, the standard deviation and variance values changed only slightly. The standard deviation remaining around 6 indicates that the distribution of student scores was relatively stable both before and after the treatment. In other words, score improvement occurred consistently and evenly across all students. This consistency is important to note because it indicates that the PQ4R strategy is not only effective for some students but is also able to proportionally improve reading comprehension for almost all students in the class. The stability of the standard deviation indicates that there are no extreme differences in improvement between students, thus confirming that the PQ4R strategy is inclusive and adaptive to the learning characteristics of students in the madrasah environment.

Next, a normality test was conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test using SPSS version 25. The test results showed a significance value of 0.128 for the pretest and 0.485 for the posttest. Since both values are greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data are normally distributed. This allows for the use of parametric statistical tests for further analysis. A homogeneity test was conducted to determine whether the pretest and posttest data came from groups with equal variance. The significance value obtained was 0.062 (>0.05), indicating that the pretest and posttest data were homogeneous. To determine the effect of the PQ4R strategy on students' reading comprehension skills, a paired sample t-test was conducted. The test results showed a significance value (2-tailed) of 0.000 (<0.05), indicating a significant difference

between the pretest and posttest scores. Based on the hypothesis testing criteria, this indicates that the PQ4R strategy has a significant positive effect on improving students' reading comprehension skills. Thus, it can be concluded that the PQ4R strategy, consisting of the stages of Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, and Review, has proven effective in improving students' reading comprehension. This strategy provides a systematic thinking structure and encourages active student engagement in the reading process, which is highly relevant to the learning context in madrasas, which require a reflective and directed approach to understanding texts, including religious and scientific texts.

2. Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the effect of the PQ4R strategy (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review) on the reading comprehension ability of fourth-grade students at MIS Istiqomah Medan. The initial findings from the pretest revealed that students' reading comprehension was considerably low, as reflected in the mean score of 27.86. Not a single student met the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM), indicating difficulties in identifying main ideas, answering content-based questions, and retelling the text in their own words. These results suggest that prior to the intervention, students lacked an effective reading strategy, and the instructional approach may not have emphasized deep text engagement or structured comprehension techniques. After applying the PQ4R strategy, students showed a remarkable improvement, with the posttest mean score increasing to 86.5. All students achieved scores above the KKM, demonstrating not only academic improvement but also the effectiveness of the PQ4R strategy in enhancing comprehension.

Students became more active and engaged during the learning process, showed greater interest in reading content, and appeared more confident in expressing their understanding. The stages of questioning and reciting in particular encouraged focus and helped reinforce comprehension through repeated cognitive engagement with the text. A notable aspect of this study is the consistency in student improvement. Although there was a dramatic increase in the mean score from pretest to posttest, the standard deviation remained relatively stable from 6.112 to 6.43. This suggests that the improvement was not limited to only a few students but was spread evenly across the entire class. The relatively unchanged variance (41.346) reinforces this interpretation. In educational contexts, especially in madrasahs that emphasize equity and inclusivity, such uniform gains indicate that the PQ4R strategy is both inclusive and adaptable to various student learning profiles.

Statistical analysis supports these findings. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test showed significance values of 0.128 (pretest) and 0.485 (posttest), both above the 0.05 threshold, indicating that the data were normally distributed. The homogeneity test produced a value of 0.062 (> 0.05), suggesting that the data sets were statistically

comparable in terms of variance. Most importantly, the paired sample t-test yielded a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05), confirming a significant difference between pretest and posttest results. These findings strongly support the conclusion that the PQ4R strategy has a statistically significant effect on improving reading comprehension. From a pedagogical standpoint, the strength of the PQ4R strategy lies in its systematic and metacognitive approach. Each stage is designed to activate students' higher-order thinking skills, starting from previewing to reviewing the material. Particularly in madrasah settings, where reflective learning and comprehension of both general and religious texts are essential, PQ4R provides a structured framework that helps students form meaningful connections between the reading content and their prior knowledge.

These results align with previous studies. For instance (Azkiyyah et al 2021) reported similar findings in SDN Purwakarta, where PQ4R improved fourth-grade students' comprehension. Likewise, (Zaituni et al 2023) and (Pratiwi, 2023) found that PQ4R enhanced students' enthusiasm, critical thinking, and long-term retention of reading material. The consistency of these results across different settings highlights the adaptive and effective nature of the PQ4R strategy in elementary Indonesian language learning. In summary, this study confirms that the PQ4R strategy is not only effective in raising students' reading scores but also fosters deeper understanding and active engagement with the text. It transforms reading from a passive activity into an interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful process. Given its proven impact, the PQ4R strategy is strongly recommended as an alternative instructional method in elementary schools, particularly to strengthen reading comprehension in Indonesian language learning.

E. Conclusion

This study shows that the PQ4R (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, and Review) strategy significantly improves the reading comprehension skills of fourth-grade students at MIS Istiqomah Medan. Statistical data analysis revealed an increase in the average score from 27.86 on the pretest to 86.5 on the posttest. Furthermore, all students achieved scores above the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM), demonstrating the strategy's effectiveness in helping students deeply understand reading content. The stability of the standard deviation and variance scores also indicates that improvements occurred evenly across all students, making this strategy not only effective but also inclusive and adaptive to the diverse characteristics of madrasah students. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the understanding that metacognitive-based reading strategies like PQ4R can activate higher-order thinking skills and help students build meaningful connections between texts and prior knowledge. This strategy also aligns with the reflective learning approach often applied in madrasah contexts, particularly in understanding religious and scientific texts. Practically, the results of this study have important implications for teachers, principals, and curriculum developers. Teachers can adopt the PQ4R strategy as an alternative in Indonesian language learning, particularly to improve students' reading comprehension. School principals can encourage the wider implementation of this strategy through teacher training and the development of literacy-based

learning programs. Meanwhile, for curriculum developers, these results can serve as a reference for incorporating metacognitive strategies such as PQ4R into language curriculum design at the Islamic elementary school (madrasah ibtdaiyah) or elementary school level. Considering the positive and consistent results, the PQ4R strategy is worthy of widespread adoption in Indonesian language learning, particularly at the elementary school and Islamic elementary school levels. This strategy not only improves learning outcomes quantitatively but also encourages active student engagement, increases motivation, and fosters reflective and meaningful reading habits.

F. Suggestions

The PQ4R strategy can be used by teachers as an alternative to a fun and effective reading learning strategy, especially to improve students' understanding of reading texts.

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