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*Phone Number: 081362355988*

*Accepted on June 2013*

*Academic Journal*

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## **THE APPLICATION OF COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING AND COMPOSITION TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMPN 14 PEKANBARU IN COMPREHENDING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS**

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### **Abstract**

*Reading is one of language skills that should mastered by the students to improve their knowlegde. There are many problems that face by the students when they learn about English, in term of reading. In this research, the writer want to solve those problems by using CIRC. It is one of learning techniques that can apply by teacher in the class. This research conducted to improve reading ability of the second year students of SMPN 14 Pekanbaru in comprehending descriptive texts. So, the writer applied this techique in the class not only to improve the students' score in reading comprehension, but also to create an interesting classroom activity. The purpose of this research was to improve reading ability of the second year students in order to get score as 78. It was based on KKM at SMPN 14 Pekanbaru. It is an action research. The writer gave a pre test to the students before applying CIRC in order to know the pre test score in comprehending descriptive texts. After conducting pre test, the writer began to apply CIRC technique in teaching learning process. After that, the writer gave a test by using multiple choice at the end of cycle 1 but the result was unsatisfying. So, the writer tried to continue to cycle 2. In the result of post test, the writer found the improvement score because it was higher than KKM. From the result, the writer regarded that the students have comprehended descriptive texts.*

**Keywords** : *Reading Comprehension, Descriptive Text, CIRC technique*

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of four language skills that has important role for the students. One's academic success has a strong correlation with reading. One who has a good achievement in classroom usually like to reading. That is the reason why the reading ability should be built as early as possible. In reading, learners are actively responsible for making sense and catch the ideas of the texts. Unlike speaking, reading has different way in interaction with the readers because the writer is not available. That interaction will see in getting all the information from the writer.

During teaching practice at SMPN 14 Pekanbaru, the writer found the problems which faced by the students. The writer found the facts that the students got low score in reading. The minimum criteria of achievement (KKM) of English subject at SMPN 14 Pekanbaru was 78. Some of students got the score under KKM. It almost 70% students who got the score under KKM. That problems caused by their lack of vocabulary and also the way of teaching by the teacher who can't create attractive class that can support them to learn. That's why, some of students were passive to follow the lesson. Consequently, they failed to interpret the content of the text.

In SMPN 14 Pekanbaru, descriptive text did at the first semester. The writer decided to choose decriptive text in this study because it is a text which lists the characteristics of something e.g. to create a particular mood, atmosphere or describe a place so that the reader can create vivid pictures of characters, places, objects etc. It gave the students an opportunity to open their knowledge about everything. Beside that, as a feature, description is a style of writing which can be useful for other variety of purposes to engage a reader's attention, to create characters, to set a mood or create an atmosphere and to being writing to life.

The purpose of this research was to improve the students' reading ability by applying CIRC technique in comprehending descriptive texts of the second year students of SMPN 14 Pekanbaru. So, the researcher really focus on improving the students' score by applying CIRC technique in learning process.

In order to solve the problems the students face when they are doing learning activities, the writer used CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) which can help the students to improve their score. CIRC is a comprehensif program teaching reading and writing in high class elementary school and low class in junior high school (Slavin, 1986). CIRC is one certain cooperative learning model of teaching to solve the students' problem in reading and writing. The goal of this technique is to enhance the motivation, performance and develop social skill for group work of students. CIRC is a technique that works in two sides. One side is reading and another side is writing.

Reading can't separate with writing. Good reading texts provide good models for writing, and provide opportunities to introduce new topics and to study language (vocabulary, grammar and idioms). Burnes (1991) states that reading is comprehend written discourse. Reader engages in an exchange of ideas with an author via the text in an interactive process. It is the process which transfer meaning from writer to readers that then we call it as message. The transfer process will run well if the reader can catch the writer's message. Message itself can form as writer's ideas, opinions, knowledge, facts, feeling, etc.

Brown (1982) says that a person must be able to understand what the author writes in order to be an effective reader. It means that the readers have to catch the informations which writer writes so that it can be seen the benefits in doing reading. The readers need to open

their knowledge to built reading ability, because sometimes the readers able to understand every sentence but, they may still unable to make sense of the text whole. Academically, reading is also one of the most important skills. Some students regard that reading is quite easy to learn. In fact, most of them failed to achieve good score. Moreover, the students' success or failure depends largely on the ability to read because of students' activities related to reading process. That's why, that problem should solve because it is a part of teachers' job.

In increasing reading ability for the students, there are some ways which do by the teacher. Some experts have provided some methods, techniques and strategies to help the teacher in teaching learning process. One of them is Cooperative Learning. This is a method which makes students work together in groups whose usual size is two to four members. However, cooperative learning is more than just putting students in groups and giving them something to do (George M Jacobs, 1997). It means that even they divide into groups, but each member has a duty and responsible towards the groups. All the member have to participate in doing groupwork so that it can motivate the students to give the best of them. But, before recognizing the technique the students have to know about the components of reading comprehension first in order to make it easier for students to comprehend the text. It is important for students to know components contained in reading texts.

King and Stanley (1988) state that there are five components of reading comprehension may help the students to read carefully. First, Finding factual information. Finding factual information requires readers to scan specific details. The factual information questions are generally prepared for students and those, which appear with WH question word. There are many types of questions: reason, purpose, result, time, comparison, etc in which of the answer can be found in the text.

Second, Finding main ideas. When reading is important to look at the organization of the passage. Each paragraph is organized in such a way that it has a main idea, which is often contained in the first sentence of paragraph. The rest of the paragraph support and develops this main idea. Sentence which usually contain the main idea are called topic sentences. The main idea is usually expressed as a complete thought and the main idea usually indicates the author's reason or purpose for writing and the message he or she wants to share with the reader. The readers could develop his/her guessing ability to the word which is not familiar with him/her by relating the close meaning of unfamiliar words to the text and the topic of the text that is read.

Third, Guessing vocabulary in context. Guessing vocabulary in context means that the students could develop his/her guessing ability to the word which is not familiar with him/her by relating the meaning of the unfamiliar word to the context in the text.

Fourth, Identifying references. Reference words are usually short and very frequently pronoun, such as: it, she, he, this, etc. Recognizing reference words and being able to identify the words to which they refer to will help the reader understand the reading passage. The reference could be to something which already been mentioned or to something which is going to mentioned.

Fifth, Identifying inferences. Identifying inference is a skill where the reader has to be able to read between lines. King and Stanley divide into two actions: draw logical inferences and make accurate prediction.

Some experts have introduced several interesting views of reading comprehension concept. They believe that reading comprehension is not only simple decoding process but

also rather a very complex process. Sweet and Snow (2003) define reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning. Furthermore, Burnes (1996) measures that in reading comprehension the reader interacts with the message encoded in the text to generate an understanding of an author's message.

Johnson and E. Slavin (1995) describe that CIRC consists of three principal elements: based-related activities, direct instruction in reading comprehension, and integrated language arts and writing. The cycle of these activities involves teacher presentation, team practice, independent practice, peer assessment, additional practice and testing. In doing independent practice, the students will do some activities individually. All of these activities, students work in heterogeneous learning teams. There are eight major components of CIRC.

The first is reading groups. In this grouping stage, the teacher needs to divide the students into groups. The members of the groups are at least four students. The students are dividing into groups based on their ability in reading and writing, they are mix between the high one and the low one.

The second is team. In the team stage, the teacher needs to divide the students' group into several teams. One group has 4 members, they will divide into 2 teams. Each team consists of two students. In this case, the teams will work together to finish their job in the team section.

The third is story related activities. In this case, the students not only work in their team but also they work individually in order to increase their ability in reading writing. The steps of this stage are partner reading, story grammar and story-related writing, word out loud, word meaning, story retell, and spelling.

The fourth is partner checking. After they complete the activities, their partners will ask them to do a student's assignment to ensure that they have completed the activities. Then, the fifth is tests. At the end of three class period, students are given a comprehension test on the story, asked to write meaningful sentences for each vocabulary word, and asked to read the word list aloud to the teacher. The sixth is direct instruction in reading comprehension. One day each week, students receive direct instruction in specific reading comprehension skills, such as identifying main ideas, understanding causal relations and making inferences. Then, the seventh is Integrated Language Arts and Writing. The last is Independent Reading and Book Reports. Students are asked to read a trade book of their choice for at least twenty minutes every evening. They also complete book reports regularly, for which they also receive team points. Independent reading and books reports replace their homework in reading and language arts.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research is a classroom action research. Kemmis and Mc. Taggart (1988) said that action research is a form of collective self reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situation in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and situations in which the practices are carried out. It means that the action research is done in order to give information about the situation where the research is applied. Since it was social and educational condition, it was commonly applied for the problems that are faced by the participants in the classroom.

Kemmis and Mc. Taggart (1988) state that there are four fundamental aspects of the action research, they are planning, acting, observing and reflecting. So, in classroom action research, the researcher gave the pre test to the students, then analyzed the result of the pre test and gave treatment. After giving a treatment, there would be post test that is given to the students with the same number of instruments as pre test to know the increasing of the students' reading ability after taught by using kinds of learning technique. If the result of post test showed improvement and reached the criteria of successful action, the treatment will be stopped and it did not to continue to the next cycle. Actually, this research is held with a purpose to solve problems in teaching learning process and improve students' ability exactly by applying CIRC technique and made steps that would be done in the research.

The participants of this research were the second year students of SMPN 14 Pekanbaru class VIII 6 with 31 students. In order to get the data for the study, the writer has to find the suitable research instrument. Test is one of the instruments to measure students' ability. The writer and researcher collects the data by distributing the test to the students. The test consists of the topics of descriptive texts. The students are asked to answer the questions dealing with descriptive texts comprehension. The test consists of four passages contained five questions related to the passage. The test was in the form of multiple choice. The result of the pre test and post test were analyzed as final data for this research.

In this study, the writer prepared the observation sheet. The data was collected by using observation sheet. In this case, the teacher and the students were objects of the observation. There are several indicators which would be observed while in teaching and learning activity. It was referred by put a mark/tick to statements of process reading have been done.

In order to get the data, the writer used two kinds of collecting data. They are quantitative data and qualitative data. In collecting quantitative data, the writer used multiple choice a test for students. The tests were consist of four passages. Each passage has five questions. So, the number of the tests were 20 questions. In this case, the technique of collecting data was differentiated into two ways that was pre-test and post-test. Pre test was aimed to know the students' ability at the starting point or before apply of CIRC in teaching reading descriptive texts while post test was aimed to know the students's ability after apply CIRC.

After that, the writer analyzed the qualitative data which done by the collaborator. The collaborator observed the teacher and the students activities in the classroom. After the collaborator finished her job, she would discuss the result of her observation to the teacher in order to help the teacher in solving the problems that appear in teaching.

In the data analysis technique, the writer used two techniques. They are quantitative data and qualitative data. The first is quantitative data. In analyzing the data and to find out the students progress in reading activity by using CIRC, the writer find out the students' individual score by dividing the correct answers to the number of items and multiply it with maximum score of the test (Delva in Dwi Sugiartini, 2010).

Then, to know the mean score of the students' ability, the data will be calculated by dividing the sum of the score to the number of the students in the classroom (Anas Sudijono, 2010).

To know the level of student's ability in comprehending descriptive texts by using CIRC technique, the researcher used percentages grading based on the following classification (Harris, 1986):

**Table 3**  
**The level of students' reading ability**

Number	Score	Classification
1	81 – 100	Excellent
2	61 – 80	Good
3	41 – 60	Average
4	21 – 40	Poor
5	0 – 20	Very Poor

Then, to know the variability of the data, the writer finds out the standard deviation by finding out the root of multiplied number of the students in the class to the result of  $X^2$  (midpoint-2) multiplied with frequency subtract the result of each midpoint multiplied with its own frequency, then divided by the number cases (Anas Sudijono 2010).

To know the range of error that happens with the sample, the writer find out the standard error by dividing the standard deviation to root of number students subtract by one.

The formula of the t-test is derived from Anas Sudijono (2010). At first, we have to now standard error of the first mean and second mean by computing the square of standard error of the first mean to the square of standard error of the second mean. So, from that calculation, it will see the result of t-test by dividing the result of the first mean (*before teaching the method*) subtract by the second mean (*after teaching the method*) to standard error of the first mean and second mean.

Furthermore, it is necessary to find out the degree of freedom in order to determine the significant level both in 5% and 1%. To find out the degree of freedom, the result of total number if first sample plus total number if second sample subtract by two.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Before applying the technique, the researcher started her activity by giving pre-test to know the students' reading ability in comprehending descriptive text before they had been taught through CIRC. Then, researcher computed the data and found the result as follow:

**Table 4**  
**The Ability of Students' Pre-Test Score**

No.	Test Score	Level of Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	81 – 100	Excellent	0	0%
2	61 – 80	Good	8	25.80%
3	41 – 60	Average	20	64.51%
4	21 – 40	Poor	3	9.67%
5	0 – 20	Very Poor	0	0%
Total			31	100%

By analyzing the table above where most of the students were in average level (score 41 - 60), it can be concluded that most of the students in that class had low comprehension of reading ability, in this case, in comprehending decriptive texts.

Here is the description of the student's ability in each component of reading comprehension of descriptive texts:

**Table 5**  
**Students' Ability in Each Component of Reading (Pre-Test)**

Reading Component	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
Factual Information	17	20	17	17
Main Idea	19	17	18	17
Vocabulary	21	15	12	19
Reference	23	15	20	18
Inference	14	12	15	23

From the table above, the student's ability in comprehending descriptive texts was still low. It is proved by the average score of the entire students that is. It was far from the minimum criteria of successful action.

After doing Pre-Test, the researcher began to apply CIRC technique to improve student's reading ability in Class VIII of SMPN 14 Pekanbaru. This cycle was conducted in three meetings @ 2 x 45 minutes. After everything was prepared, the researcher began to apply CIRC technique. To get the data, the writer used observation sheet to know the activity of the students in studying descriptive text by using CIRC technique. Here is the result observation sheet:

**Table 6**  
**The Students Activity During Treatment in cycle 1**

No.	ACTIVITY	CYCLE 1		
		1 <sup>st</sup> MEETING	2 <sup>nd</sup> MEETING	3 <sup>rd</sup> MEETING
1	Grouping	31	31	31
2	Teaming	31	31	31
3	Reading	27	27	29
4	Writing	26	28	30
5	Practicing	28	31	31
6	Finding	31	31	31
7	Summarizing	27	29	31
8	Spelling	28	30	31
9	Checking	31	31	31
10	Writing	30	31	31
11	Testing	31	31	31

After giving treatment, The researcher gave the test to the students to know their achievement in comprehending descriptive texts after students had been taught through CIRC technique. Here is the table of the students' achievement in comprehending descriptive text at the end of cycle 1.

**Table 7**  
**Level of Students' Ability in Post Test Cycle 1**

No.	Test Score	Level of Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	81 – 100	Excellent	15	48.38%
2	61 – 80	Good	9	29.03%
3	41 – 60	Average	3	9.67%
4	21 – 40	Poor	4	12.90%
5	0 – 20	Very Poor	0	0%
Total			31	100%

Based on the result of the post test cycle I, it can be said that about 77.41% students get the score that pass the minimum criteria of successful action. Furthermore, the researcher also analyzed the students' individual ability in each component of reading comprehension. Here is the description:

**Table 8**  
**Students' Ability in Each Component of Reading (Post Test I)**

Component Reading	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4
Factual Information	31	27	31	31
Main Idea	28	30	29	31
Vocabulary	30	26	29	27
Reference	27	31	28	29
Inference	29	31	31	29

Based on the table above, we can see that there still many students who didn't answer the all the question correctly. It caused by some of the students did not do the steps of CIRC in comprehending descriptive texts, then the researcher didn't manage the time effectively. Since, the result of cycle the researcher was dissapointing enough, the researcher decided to continue her action into the second cycle.

At the second cycle, the researcher still use the CIRC technique in teaching reading to the students, but now there were some improvenments that the researcher needs to do in her teaching. The researcher hoped that the reflection she made will improve the students ability in descriptive text and their components.

**Table 9**  
**Students' Activity during treatment in Cycle 2**

No.	Activity	Cycle 2	
		4 <sup>th</sup> MEETING	5 <sup>th</sup> MEETING
1	Grouping	31	31
2	Teaming	31	31
3	Reading	31	31
4	Writing	31	31
5	Practicing	31	31
6	Finding	31	31
7	Summarizing	31	31
8	Spelling	31	31
9	Checking	30	31

10	Writing	29	30
11	Testing	31	31

Based on the table above, we can see that there was an improvement from the students to follow the steps of CIRC.

After the researcher finished the meetings, she gave the post test to the students at the last meeting. The researcher computed the students' score at the second cycle and classified the students' score into several levels.

**Table 10**  
**Level of Students' Ability in Post Test Cycle 2**

No.	Test Score	Level of Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	81 – 100	Excellent	18	58.06%
2	61 – 80	Good	11	35.48%
3	41 – 60	Average	2	6.45%
4	21 – 40	Poor	0	0%
5	0 – 20	Very Poor	0	0%
Total			31	100%

Based on the result of Post-Test Cycle 2, it can be concluded that most of the students in that class had many excellent level of reading ability.

Furthermore, the researcher found that an improvement of the students' ability in comprehending descriptive texts by apply CIRC technique. It could be seen from the students' ability level in comprehending descriptive texts from the pre-test result and post-test result. Below is the chart of students' level in comprehending Descriptive Texts:

**Table 12**  
**Students' Level in Comprehending Descriptive Text**

No.	Test	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
1.	Pre-Test	0%	9.67%	64.51%	25.80%	0%
2.	Post-Test Cycle I	0%	12.90%	29.03%	29.03%	48.38%
3.	Post-Test Cycle 2	0%	0%	6.45%	35.38%	58.06%

The analysis data of post test 1, the writer found the mean score of Pre-Test was 55.96. Then, she found standard deviation and standard error of Pre-Test result with steps were 2.28.

Then, the analysis data of post test 1 First, the writer found the mean score of Post Test Cycle I was 77.58. Then, she found standard deviation and standard error of Post Test Cycle I result with steps were 3.36

Then, the writer found the mean score of Post Test Cycle II was 84.51. Then, she found standard deviation and standard error of Post Test Cycle II were 2.10.

After the writer got standard error for Pre test, Post Test I and Post Test II, she began to find out 'T' observation before found 'T' test was 9.23. Then, the writer is required to find the degree of freedom was 60.

From that *degree of freedom* score (60), it can be concluded that  $t_{table}$  significant 5% is 2.00 while  $t_{table}$  1% is 2.65. Then, the writer compared the score of ' $t_o$ ' (9.23) with  $t_{table}$  significant 5% (2.00) and  $t_{table}$  significant 1% (2.65). Based on the explanation above, the writer found that  $t_o$  is bigger than  $t_{table}$ .

From the explanation above, there was a significant differentiation score between before and after implementing the CIRC technique. It can be concluded that the application of CIRC technique can improve or influence students' achievement in reading activity especially descriptive text.

CIRC technique also succeeded in bringing up a more cooperative and interesting teaching and learning process and help the students to socialize and to take part in the classroom activities.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of the data analysis in previous chapter, the writer concluded that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition was an effective technique in teaching reading because there was an improvement that could be achieve by the students in comprehending descriptive texts. It was clearly proven by the improvement in average score of the student from 55.96 (Pre-test) up to 84.51 (Post – test 2).

Moreover, this technique also helped improve the student's interest and motivation to read because they sit in group and it make them can discuss together in that group. Then, they interested to work with their partner or team, responsible to their job each other in group, so that they will be students who can work individually and cooperatively.

## **SUGGESTION**

Regarding to the result of the research that had been accomplished on the second year students of SMPN 10 Pekanbaru class VIII6, it is very suggested to the English teachers to consider CIRC as an alternative technique to help students in comprehending and understanding the bdescriptive text much better.

The significant result that obtained from the application of CIRC technique in teaching and learning process would bring up a better classroom situation which the teacher and the students involve on and enjoyable classroom activities.

Another suggestion given to the teacher is he or she need to vary the technique that applied in the classroom. The teacher is demanded to be more creative in managing the class and motivating the class.

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