

Corresponding author. Email: puan.Dyka@yahoo.com

Telp: 082381699006

Accepted on 7 June, 2013

Academic Journal

THE USE OF COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING AND COMPOSITION (CIRC) TO
IMPROVE THE READING COMPREHENSION OF THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF
MAN 1 PEKANBARU

DYKA SUFRA DHELA
MAHDUM
WIRDAH BURHAN

Abstract

The main part of learning a language is the language skill. In learning English, the students will learn four language skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is considered as an important aspect in language learning, reading is a process of decoding message which readers own experience and knowledge. In teaching learning process, reading is a must for students in adding knowledge. Without having reading skill, it will be useless for the student to follow the class and they will be lack of knowledge. The problem that the writer intends to discuss in this paper is concerned with the reading ability of the second year students of MAN 1 Pekanbaru. The observation and interview which were conducted in pre research showed that the English text is difficult to be understood by the students for they did not have a sufficient reading skill to comprehend the texts. It is happened because the students are lack of enthusiasm in involving themselves in the English lesson and lack of vocabularies that make them difficult in interpreting and understanding the message of the text. To solve the problem, the teacher should improve her teaching technique from the old method to the new one. Steven & Slavin (1995) mention that problem of reading can be solved by doing Cooperative Integrated Reading and composition (CIRC). The reason for choosing the method because, it could help the teachers to create a very good way in teaching English. The teacher should utilize a teaching method that is attracting to teach reading. Which includes materials, comfortable environment, self-confidence teachers, etc. In other words, the better the teachers in using this strategy, the more interest the students in reading subject.

Keyword : *Reading ability, CIRC, improve*

INTRODUCTION

In order to have good English, the learners learn two important aspects of foreign language. Firstly, language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Poulstone and Bruder (1976:2003 in Syafii, 2007:98) point out that the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They cannot separate each other because they put into the forms of language skills. Secondly, language components are like grammar, phonology, and vocabulary. It means to master English, we must learn language skills and language components.

One of the language skills is reading which is considered as an important aspect in language learning because it is one of four skills that language learners should learn. Reading is a process of decoding message which readers own experience and knowledge. As in Howell (1983:182) defines reading comprehension as an interactive process through which the reader uses code, context analysis, prior knowledge, vocabulary to understand the text.

Based on (**Goodman.1976:Smith.1982**), reading is an active cognitive process of interacting with print and monitoring comprehension to establish meaning. Reading is the instantaneous recognition of various written symbols, simultaneous association of the symbol with existing knowledge, and comprehension of the information and ideas communicated.

The reading comprehension skill is important for students in acquiring the English language skill. This can be seen in the teaching learning process. There are many books on science and technologies are written in English. This means that learners are expected to be able to understand the English written information in the book used. Hence, the reading ability is significantly needed by the student. Without having reading skill, it will be useless for the student to follow the class and they will be lack of knowledge.

An observation and interview were conducted in pre research with the English teacher in MAN 1 Pekanbaru. The English text is difficult to be understood by the student for they do not have a sufficient reading skill to comprehend the texts given.

It is happened because the students are lack of enthusiasm in involving themselves in the English lesson and lack of vocabularies that make them difficult in interpreting and understanding the message of the text or the author's idea, the strategies that teacher uses are asking students to read the texts, translate the texts, answer the questions of the texts and collect students' task. As a result, the students' achievement in reading comprehension is not satisfied.

It can be looked from the result of reading quiz which is followed 35 students, only 28% or 10 students got up to 65 and the rest got below 65, it mean that many students are still below KKM (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum).

However the English text is difficult to be understood by the student for they do not have a sufficient reading skill to comprehend the texts given. An observation and interview were conducted in pre research with the English teacher in MAN 1 Pekanbaru. It can be looked from the result of reading quiz which is followed 35 students, only 28% or 10 students got up to 65 and the rest got below 65, it mean that many students are still below KKM (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum).

Table 1.1
The Data of Daily Test

The data of daily tests	Number of the students	Number of the students who get ≥ 65	Percent	
			complete	Not complete
Dt-1	35	10	28%	72%
Dt-2	35	15	40%	60%

To solve the problem, the teacher should improve her teaching technique from the old method to the new one. Steven & Slavin (1995) mention that problem of reading can be solved by doing Cooperative Integrated Reading and composition (CIRC). As we all know reading and writing are two skills belong to written cycle. It is a school-based program that targets reading, writing, and language arts but in this study researcher focus on target reading. All activities follow a cycle that involves teacher presentation, team practice, peer pre-assessment, additional practice, and testing. Students are encouraged to cooperate and help one another, because students' scores on individual assessments are summed to form team scores. Three studies of the CIRC program have found positive effects on students' reading skills, including improved scores on standardized reading and language tests (Stevens et al, 1987; Stevens & Slavin, 1991, 1995).

METHODOLOGY

This study is an action research that is done in the classroom for the purpose of improving or increasing the quality of learning and teaching practices. It is a kind of research activity that is designed, implemented, and evaluated by the teacher himself/herself in the classroom (Azhar, 2007 : 2).

Action research is a cycle process. It means that a researcher can apply certain treatment in order to improve the students' ability. The researcher can give more treatment until the goals of the goals of the treatment is reached. The implementation of CIRC could be seen as in the following table:

Table 2.1
The implementation of CIRC

No	Teacher's Activities
1	Grouping students of four heterogeneously.
2	Opening, explaining purpose and the important of material and get students ready to study by applying CIRC
3	Present the lesson.
4	Hand out student's worksheet to each group and ask students to work with it.
5	Guiding and getting students to move to others' group work
6	Guiding and getting students to get back to their own group.
7	Asking every group to discuss and rehash the result of their work.
8	Getting students to hand in the student's worksheet.
9	Giving evaluation

In order to analyze the data and to find out the students' progress in reading comprehension, the writer used the following formula:

$$M = \frac{X}{N} \times 100$$

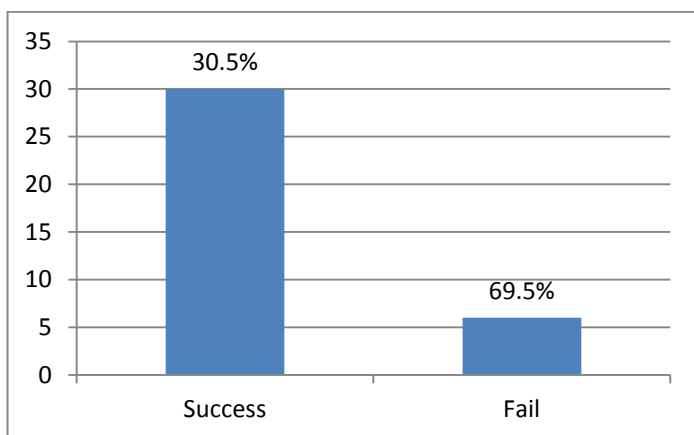
M = Individual Score
X = Number of Correct Answer
N = Number of Items

(Harris et al 1986; 79)

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

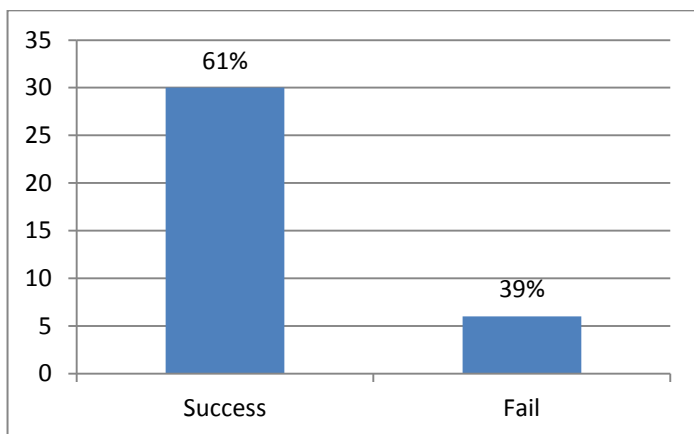
The objective of the study is to find out the significant of the students reading ability after being taught by using the CIRC method. The data was collected by giving reading test to the students individually after they were taught by the method for three meetings in the cycle. After the data had been collected, the writer came to the steps of analyzing the data.

Before applying the method, the researcher started his activity by giving pre-test to the students. The purpose of giving pre-test was to know the student's ability or the student's base score in comprehending narrative text before they had been taught through CIRC.



From the pre-test result we could see that there were 11 students were successful. They were successful because they got higher than 65 as the minimum standard of the English lesson. On the other hand, there were 26 students failed or got the average score lower than 65. The percentage showed us that there was 69.5 % failed and 30.5 % succeed. It means that the reading ability of the students were not good yet. This result motivated the writer to conduct the research to improve the reading ability of the first year of MAN 1 Pekanbaru.

After the students had been taught through CIRC, at the fifth meeting, the writer want to know the students achievement in comprehending reading texts by giving test to them. The test item which used at the end of this cycle is similar to the previous test. Furthermore, the researcher computed the student's answers in order to know their achievement after they had been taught through CIRC. Based on the raters, the average score of the students' reading ability in first post-test was 65.10, it was higher than 65 as the minimum standard of English score at MAN 1 Pekanbaru. From the research conducted it could be seen that most of the studens succeed in the first post-test than in the pre-test. The result of student's ability in reading in post-test can be seen in the following:



From the pre-test result we could see that there were 22 students were successful. On the other hand, there were 14 students failed or got the average score lower than 65.

The percentage showed us that there was 39 % failed and 61 % succeed. It means that the reading ability of the students were increase.

After doing reflection the researcher began to apply CIRC method to increase their reading ability in comprehending the text for the second cycle. Just like the first cycle, this cycle also was conducted in four meetings (4 x 45 minutes). Still there was a collaborator's help to observe the process of teaching and learning during the class. After all preparation was done, the researcher began to conduct the action. There are nine stages of CIRC. Here is the table that shows students' activities during teaching and learning process in the class:

Table 4.3 Students Activity during Teaching and learning process at the 1st Cycle

No	Students activities	Students' average in the 1 st meeting	Students' average in the 2 nd meeting	Students' average in the 3 rd meeting	Students' average in the 4 th meeting
1	The teacher divides the students into teams in groups	2	3	3	3
2	The teacher explains about CIRC and students take a note	1	2	2.5	3
3	Students are getting and doing the worksheet about text structure in grouping discussion	2	2	2.5	3
4	students pronounce difficult words and find the meaning of difficult words	1	2	2.5	2.5
5	students summarize the text	1	1.5	2	2.5
6	students check their partner's ability in spelling	1.5	2	3	3
7	The teacher creates discussion among teacher and students in order to know the students ability in comprehending the text	1.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
8	Students hand in the worksheet	2.5	2.5	2.5	3
9	Doing evaluation	2.5	3	3	3
Total		15	20.5	23.5	25.5
Total Average		1.6	2.3	2.61	2.83
Criteria		Fair	Average	Average	Good

From the table, we can see the activeness of students in each activity from the first to fourth meeting in this cycle. In the 1st meeting, there were only 2 students' average in activity "Students form group" but there is an improvement in the 2nd 3rd and 4th meeting since students had known what they should do to form group. For activity "Students listen to teacher's explanation and take a note", the students' averages were 1 in the 1st and 2 in the 2nd meeting. The students did not know how to get the idea of what CIRC because this method is new for them. But after the third meeting their average was 2.5 since the teacher always repeated the explanation during the three meeting. Finally they got 3 in the 4th meeting. Then, for activity "Students are getting and doing the worksheet about text structure" the students' average in the 1st and 2nd meeting was 2 and in the 3rd meeting were 2.5. Students' average was quite good in this phase since they just answer the question in the worksheet. But they could get better score at the 3rd and 4th meeting, their score were 3. For activity "Students pronounce difficult words and find the meaning of difficult words", the students' average in the 1st meeting was 1, 2nd meeting was 2 and in the 3rd and 4th meeting were 2.5. Teacher had difficulty in controlling the class since the made lots of noise in pronouncing the difficult words. For Activity "students summarize the text", the students' average in the 1st meeting was 1, in the 2nd was 1.5, and in the 3rd meeting was 2 while the last meeting the students' average was 2.5. Summarizing could be the most difficult thing for students since they had to arrange sentence by themselves. For Activity "students check their partner's ability in spelling", the students' average in the 1st meeting was 1.5 and in the 2nd was 2 while the 3rd and last meeting the students' average was 3. For Activity "The teacher creates discussion among teacher and students in order to know the students ability in comprehending the text", the students' average in the 1st meeting was 1.5 and in the 2nd 3rd and the last meeting the students' average was 2.5. There was no significant improvement in comprehending the text for they might need more practice in reading comprehension. For Activity "Students hand in the worksheet", the students' average in the 1st 2nd and 3rd meeting was 2.5 and in the last meeting the students' average was 3. For Activity "Doing evaluation", the students' average in the 1st meeting was 2.5 and in the 2nd and the rest of the meeting were 3. Basically there was no problem in evaluation phase because it was held at the end of the class. Students could be more focus before the class end. The researcher did the second cycle as the improvement, as a result :

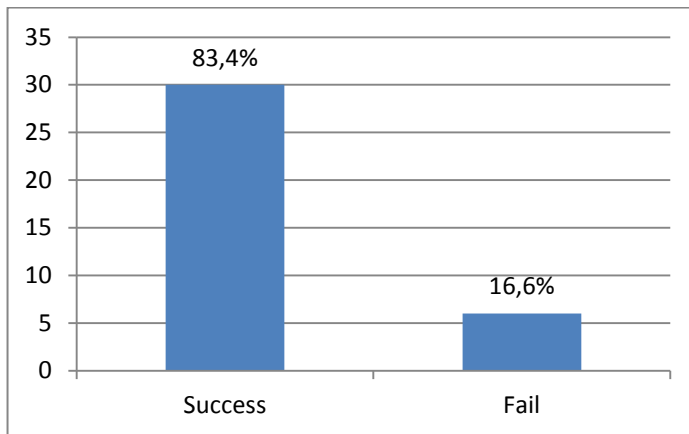
Table 4.6 Students Activity during Teaching and learning process at the 2nd Cycle

No	Students Activities	Students' Average in the 1 st Meeting	Students' Average in the 2 nd Meeting	Students' Average in the 3 rd Meeting	Students' Average in the 4 th Meeting
1	The teacher divides the students into teams in groups	3	3	3	3
2	The teacher explains about CIRC and students take a note	3	3	3	3
3	Students are getting and doing the worksheet about text structure in grouping discussion	3	3	3	3
4	students pronounce difficult words and find the meaning of difficult words	3	3	3	3
5	students summarize the text	2	2,5	3	3
6	students check their partner's ability in spelling	3	3	3	3
7	The teacher creates discussion among teacher and students in order to know the students ability in comprehending the text	2,5	3	3	3
8	Students hand in the worksheet	3	3	3	3
9	Doing evaluation	3	3	3	3
Total		25.5	26.5	27	27
Total Average		2.8	2.9	3	3
Criteria		Good	Good	Excellent	Excellent

In this cycle the result of the ability has improved than before. In the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and the last meeting the students' averages were 3 since students had known what they should do to form group. For activity "Students listen to teacher's explanation and take a note", the students' averages were 3 in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and last meeting. The students had already known how to get the idea of what CIRC after the third meeting in the first cycle because the teacher always repeated the explanation during the previous meeting. Then, for activity "Students are getting and doing the worksheet about text structure" the students' averages in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and last meeting were 3. Students' average was quite good in this phase since they just answer the question in the worksheet. For activity "Students pronounce difficult words and find the meaning

of difficult words”, the students’ average in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and last meeting 3. For Activity “students summarize the text”, the students’ average in the 1st meeting was 2 and in the 2nd were 2.5 while the 3rd and last meeting the students’ average was 3. Summarizing was likely the most difficult thing for students since this skill need writing ability and comprehending the text. Even though they have better score at last. For Activity “students check their partner’s ability in spelling”, the students’ average in the 1st, 2nd was 2 and the 3rd and last meeting was 3. For Activity “The teacher creates discussion among teacher and students in order to know the students ability in comprehending the text”, the students’ average in the 1st meeting was 2.5 and in the 2nd were 3 while the 3rd and the last meeting the students’ average was 3. For Activity “Students hand in the worksheet”, the students’ average in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and the last meeting the students’ average was 3. For Activity “Doing evaluation”, the students’ average in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and the last meeting the students’ average was 3. Basically there was no problem in evaluation phase because it was always held at the end of the class.

Moreover, the average score of the students’ speaking ability in second post-test was 70.55, it was higher than 65 as the minimum standard of English score at MAN 1 Pekanbaru. The result of student’s ability in speaking in post-test can be seen in the following:



From the pre-test result we could see that there were 30 students were successful. On the other hand, there were only 6 students failed or got the average score lower than 65. The percentage showed us that there was 16.6 % failed and 83.4 % succeed. It means that the reading ability of the students was increase significantly. Actually, the improvement reached by the students was also influenced by students’ ability in applying the strategies that had been taught by the researcher by using CIRC. The students’ successes in applying this strategy in their study had been mentioned in chapter II. And the students could also understand the researcher explanation about the materials. In addition, the researcher as a teacher also had help the students to solve their problems in reading comprehension the text by using CIRC. This contribution was suitable with the purpose of CIRC which had been mentioned in the previous chapter. Actually, all of the participants have work together, they could follow all of the procedures in CIRC.

At the end of this cycle, the students’ achievement in reading comprehension by using CIRC was increased and reading ability > KKM (65). In this case, the researcher assumed he was success in applying CIRC in increasing the students’ ability in reading comprehension at MAN 1 Pekanbaru

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the data in the previous chapter, the researcher conclude that CIRC is an effective technique to teach reading comprehension since there was significant improvement to the students' mark in reading to narrative text. The improvement can be seen from the score of the students. In the data, the average score of the first reading test (pre test) is 56.11, while the average score of the second test is 70.55.

So it can be inferred that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) can better increase the students' ability in reading at grade XI, class XI IPA 1, of MAN 1 Pekanbaru in comprehending narrative text.

SUGGESTION

Based on the conclusion above, there are some suggestions might be helpful for the teacher and students in increasing reading comprehension. First, the English teacher has to use the CIRC method in their teaching reading since this method has proven as one of the best methods used to learn speaking English.

Especially for the students, they have to create their own creativity based on the process of CIRC. CIRC facilitate the students with good atmosphere and provide creative ways in teaching reading. This method let the students to discuss, compete with each other, not monotone and create comfortable conditions in the classroom.

REFERENCES

- Azhar, Fadly, Fakhri R, Indah T.P, Supriusman, 2006.
Panduan Penulisan dan Pelaksanaan Ujian Skripsi Pada Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni. FKIP-UR (not publised)
- Harmer, Jeremy. *How to Teaching English: An Introduction to The Practice of English Language Teaching*. London : Longman Group
- Harmer, Jeremy. 2002. *English Language : Study and Teaching Third Edition*. London: Longman
- Johnson, Elaine. B. 2002. *Contextual Teaching and Learning: What it is and Why it's here to say*. California: Corwin Press, Inc
- Nuan, David. *Second Language Teaching & learning*. Hongkong Universitas
- Pang, Elizabeth.S, Muaka, Angaluki, Bernardt, Elizabeth. B, kamil Michael. L.
International Academy of Education : Teaching Reading Education, practices series-12. International beruau Educational and the Academy.
- Robert, Slavin E. (1995). *Cooperative Learning (Theory, Research, and Practice)*.

Second edition. John Hapkin University

Hornby, AS, 1985. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford University Press. Oxford New York.

Harris, Albert, J. 1968. *How to Increase Reading Ability*. New York : David McKay Company.

Johnson, D.W, Johnson, R. T and Holubec,E,J. 1991. *Cooperative in the Classroom*.Edina,Minnesota: Interaction Book Company.