

**APPLYING CIRC TO IMPROVE THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' READING
AND WRITING ABILITY TO NARRATIVE TEXT
AT SMAN 1 KAMPAR TIMUR**

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Abstract

This classroom action research was aimed to study the improvement on the ability of the second year students of SMAN 1 Kampar Timur in reading and writing narrative text by implementing Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method. Besides, this research was also aimed to identify the factors that caused the improvement on students reading and writing after being taught by Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method. This study consisted of two cycles of classroom treatment, in which one cycle consisted of four stages, namely Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection. The proficiency test (Pre-test and Post-tests) was used for measurement, and also a set of observation sheets and field notes were used to gain the record of the classroom activity during the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method treatment. The subject was class XI IPA¹ with 37 students at SMAN 1 Kampar Timur. After two cycles of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method treatment, it was found that the students with the treatment could gain a better reading and writing ability in the post-tests. However, the statistically significant differences of the score results of the two cycles were found on the Post-test 2, where about 81.08% of the students reached the school minimum standard of English subject in reading narrative text, and 43.24% in writing. Moreover, the students's activeness during the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method treatment also improved from one meeting to others. Regarding the effectiveness of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method on the students' attitudes, the observation sheets and field notes results showed that the students had positive attitudes towards the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method and that the approach could help them read and write better and make the class more interesting.

Keyword : Classroom Action Research, Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method, Reading, Writing

INTRODUCTION

Reading and writing skills are very important in the context of language teaching and use. Writing is the most concrete and systematic of the language skills. The more developed the writing skill, the more systematic the individual's overall use of language. By this way, a person can speak, read and listen in a more accurate and effective way (Bryson, 2003). Writing is also the most difficult one to master. It is stated by Richard and Renandya (2010) that writing is the most difficult skill for learners to master. Among language skills, reading together with writing is the first skill to be learnt. It is also known that, in the learning process, there is a high correlation between reading comprehension and academic achievement (Durukan, 2010).

It is stated in syllabus for Senior High School based on the latest curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan, 2006), the students grade XI are expected to be able to comprehend and to write text in form of report, narrative, spoof, analytical exposition and hortatory exposition text accurately. However, the students still get difficulties to comprehend and to write the texts especially narrative text which is chosen by the writer in this study. Based on the result of a small survey done by the writer, the students' average grade is still below minimum criteria (MMC). Among 37 students, there were only 6 students who reached MMC (70). It means only 16.21% of the students whose grade reached MMC. The rest (83.78%), the students' average still below MMC. Briefly, the students' reading and writing ability is still problem.

The writer hypothesized that there were some difficulties faced by the students in reading and writing. First, the students' problem in reading is difficult to comprehend the text. Then, since they are not interested in reading the text, they have very limited idea which affects their writing ability. The students also have problems in writing due to the lack of reading text in English. They get difficulties to start writing and to express their idea. They are also not interested in writing and get bored with learning English especially writing. Another problem is that students have very limited vocabulary. Then, they are also passive in teaching and learning process. At last but not least, they are lazy to do their task.

In order to solve and to improve the students' ability in reading and writing, Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method seems the effective way that the teacher could implement in the classroom. Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is a teaching method used in cooperative learning intended to develop the students' Reading comprehension and writing ability of the texts (Slavin, 1991).

Johnson and Slavin (1955) from John Hopkins University describe that CIRC consists of three principal elements: basal-related activities, direct instruction in reading comprehension, and integrated language arts and writing. In all of these activities, the students work in heterogeneous learning teams. The cycle of these activities involves teacher presentation, team practice, independent practice, peer pre assessment, additional practice, and testing.

Then, CIRC can improve students' ability to work cooperatively with their friends. CIRC also can improve students' writing skill and language art because in CIRC students plan, revise and summarize their story in a collaborative team.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher had gathered data and information about the students' problem in reading and writing narrative text through the small survey, and planned to solve the difficulties faced by the students in reading and writing by implementing Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method. This research contained of 2 cycles to see any the improvement of students' writing ability in hortatory exposition text during the implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method.

Before conducting the treatment in cycle 1, the reading and writing proficiency of the class had been tested with by Pre-Test, where the students would had one narrative text to be read and written in the form of summary. In addition to this, together with the collaborator, the researcher prepared the lesson plans for one cycle of treatment, topics that would fit the school curriculum, and also a set of observation sheets and field notes for recording the teaching and learning activities during the treatment. The researcher used the score in Pre-Test as a guidance to group the students heterogenously during the treatment.

After giving pre-test and knowing the students' proficiency, the researcher gave them treatment in reading and writing narrative text by implementing Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method. The steps of implementing the method were drawn as follows:

1. The teacher determines the group and gives a narrative story to the students.
2. Students read the text and take turn for reading aloud with their partner.
3. The students list new/difficult words.
4. The teacher asks the students to guess the meaning of new words or look at dictionary.
5. Students test one another on a list of spelling words, and help each other to master the list words.
6. The students discuss the story.
7. The students answer the comprehension questions.
8. The teacher asks the students to write a summary of the story.
9. The teacher asks students to edit one another's work by using peer editing.

The implementation of the action was followed also by the observation process of which the result was delivered into observation sheet. The students' and the teacher's

activities were recorded by the collaborator in the observation sheets, and the situation in the class was recorded in the field notes during the treatment.

After conducting the treatment and recording the activities during the treatment in the observation sheets, then the result was collected as raw data of the research and was analyzed to find out whether the students showed a good progress in reading and writing a narrative text or not. Both researcher and observer analyzed the activity in cycle 1 through the observation sheets and field notes. The observer gave comments about the teacher's performance and added any other improvement in applying the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method in the classroom.

Then, Post-Test 1 was conducted at the end of cycle 1 of this actional research by purpose of knowing students' achievement after getting the constructive treatment by the researcher. Post-Test 1 was consisted of a topic that the students should read, comprehend, and write the summary of the text. The researcher decided to continue to the cycle 2 if the result of the quantitative and qualitative data in the cycle 1 did not show a significant improvement yet. In this cycle 2, the researcher still applied Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method with any other additional strategy based on the result of reflection in the cycle 1 to improve the ability of students in reading and writing skill.

In addition to this, the quantitative data of this research was collected through the reading and writing test (Pre-Test and Post-Test), and the qualitative data was collected by the recording of activity during the treatment by using the observation sheets and field notes.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

A. Qualitative Data

Here are the compilation data of the improvement of students' reading and writing ability from cycle 1 to cycle 2:

Table 1. The classification of Students' Reading Score in All Test

Rank	Level of Ability	Pre Test	Post Test (Cycle 1)	Post Test (Cycle 2)
80 - 100	Good to Excellent	1	1	6
60 - 79	Average to Good	10	30	30
50 - 59	Poor to Average	5	6	1
0 - 49	Poor	21	0	0
Total		37	37	37

The table above showed that there was significant improvement on the students' score. It can be seen that the students' score was very low on pre test. There was a student who reached good to excellent level. However, only ten students could reach average to good level. The rest was in poor to average and poor level. After conducting Pot test (cycle 1), there were an improvement with the students' score. There were 30 students in good to average level. Then, there was no student in poor level. In post test cycle 2, the number of students in good to excellent level increase from 1 to 6 students. There was only 1 student in poor to average level, and no student in poor level. It was a significant improvement from the post test (cycle 1).

Then, to see the increasing of the students' score in writing, here is the table shows the results of each test.

Table 2. The classification of Students' Writing Score in All Test

Rank	Level of Ability	Pre Test	Post Test (Cycle 1)	Post Test (Cycle 2)
80 - 100	Good to Excellent	0	0	2
60 - 79	Average to Good	1	16	35
50 - 59	Poor to Average	13	21	0
0 - 49	Poor	23	0	0
Total	Total	37	37	37

The table above showed that there was significant improvement on the students' score. It can be seen that the students' score was very low on pre test. There was no student who reached good to excellent level in pre test and post test (cycle 1). Then, in pre test only 1 student could reach average to good level. While in post test (cycle 2) there were 16 students who reached average to good level, and there was no students in poor level. In post test (cycle 2), there were a significant improvement with the students' score. There were 2 students could reach good to excellent level, and 35 students in good to average level. Then no student were in poor to average and poor level.

B. Quantitative Data

Based on the result of the observation during the cycle 1, it was found that the teacher's and students' performance in the teaching and learning process was not satisfied enough. The weaknesses on the teacher's and the students' performance could be seen from the observation sheets and field notes that was recorded by the observer during the treatment in cycle 1.

The students' activities in the first cycle were not satisfactory because the average of the activeness was 34.26%. In the first meeting, the teacher was still nervous while the teacher taught the students in front of the class. As a result, the teacher's explanation was not clear. Some students talked to their friends when the teacher asked some question to other students so that the students could not be controlled well. It was also hard to make students concentrate because of the disturbance from their friends during discussion.

Furthermore, In the second meeting, the teacher was only guided and helped certain students while students worked in groups. Therefore, the teacher should pay attention to all students while the students worked. The students were also still passive and mostly keep silent while teacher was asked them about the material. Then, the students did not fully understand the material because some of them did not focus on the teacher's explanation. So, Most of students' activities could not be applied well. While in the third meeting, the teacher was relaxed and enjoyed while teaching. Most of the students' activities were done 50% up to 75%.

Based on the result of the observation during the cycle 2, it was found that the teacher's and students' performance in the teaching and learning process was progressively better compared to the cycle 1. This progress in the teaching and learning process could be seen from the observation sheets and field notes that was recorded by the observer during the treatment in cycle 2.

The students' activities in the second cycle were successful because the average of the activeness was 65.74%. The teacher was better than before in teaching and learning process. The teacher also can guide and control the students in the class activity. Moreover, the students' ability in reading and writing was better than the previous meeting (cycle 1).

In conducting this research, the writer found some strengths and weakness during the process of teaching and learning by applying CIRC method in reading and writing narrative text. The strengths that the writer found in class XI IPA¹ of SMAN 1 Kampar Timur as in the following:

1. Students were interested in reading activities. It could be seen from the students' responds in answering comprehension question during the lesson.
2. By using CIRC method, students have a chance to show their opinions and interact with others in a group.
3. By using CIRC method, most of the students have opportunities to learn more from others.
4. CIRC method provided integrated skills that were helpful to improve the students' ability in reading and writing skill.
5. The students were not bored in reading and writing test because in this technique they solve problem together by sharing idea with their friends and by doing peer editing.

While, the weakness of applying this method were as followed:

1. At the first meeting, the writer faced the difficulties in applying the technique because the students did not know the technique implementation yet. It was hard to manage 90 minutes of learning time to do all steps in CIRC method.
2. Then, in the first and second meeting the students were also difficult to write a summary based on what the writer asked because the students have limited vocabulary and cannot express the idea in writing form.
3. The students were too noisy, so it took time to make the students keep silent.
4. The result of this research cannot be generalized to another class

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of this research, the researcher can take the conclusion that the implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method can improve the students' reading and writing ability of class XI IPA¹ at SMAN 1 Kampar Timur. The improvement of the students can be seen from the score of the students in the tests. The students' average score in Pre Test is 42.43 in reading and 45.12 in writing. While, the average reading score of Post Test 1 is 67.02 and the average score of Post Test 2 is 72.84. Then, the average writing score of Post Test 1 is 59.98 and the average score of Post Test 2 is 70.42.

Then, the writer concluded the factors which caused the improvement of the students' ability in reading and writing narrative text. The first, CIRC is a good method in teaching reading and writing because the students could become more active in learning process. The second, Interaction between students could make the students learn more from others. Then, the activities in CIRC method make the students to get involved in teaching learning process because the students not only interact with the teacher but also with other students. In addition, in CIRC method, the students could process as group members who worked together effectively. The last, the students also could help each other in understanding the lesson cooperatively.

IMPLICATION

The result of this research shows that the implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method can improve students' writing skill. Therefore, it is needed to spread this method to other English teachers, as one of the method that can improve students' writing skill.

It is expected that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method can be implemented by English teacher in teaching reading and writing, in order that the students will be more interested and stimulated their motivation in reading and writing.

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