



Using CIRC Method In Teaching Reading Comprehension On Descriptive Texts

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of the function Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Method in the proses of teaching and learning in reading comprehension on descriptive text. A pre-experimental analysis was carried out at SMAN 1 Batukliang Kabupaten Lombok Tengah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat with the analysis subjects being eleven grade pupils of class B for the 2024/2025 academic year who were selected using the cluster random sampling method to meet the investigation target. Based on the results of the analysis, it shows that the use of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Method has a very significant influence on pupils' reading comprehension on descriptive texts as shown by an improvement in pupils' scores on the post-test and students' learning behavior towards reading activities. In conclusion, this research proves that teaching reading comprehension on descriptive texts using the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique was effective.

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1. Introduction

Reading is a challenging one to develop by pupils who are non-native English speaking pupils from the four english skills. Reading skill is important as it has something to do with the reading comprehension which deals with the conscious and unconscious thinking process of constructing the intended meaning and done by bringing along the readers' background knowledge related to the text they read (Mikulecky, 2008). However, in reality, many pupils demonstrate problems related to low reading comprehension. The lack of vocabulary affects the results of the student learning process. Reading is effective if pupils are able to understand the text. This is an important aspect for success

in language learning, the use of appropriate techniques in teaching reading comprehension must be considered.

There are some types of text that should be taught and comprehended by the pupils based on the English syllabus of School Based Curriculum (KTSP) for the eleven grade pupils. Descriptive text is one of the texts. Descriptive text describes a particular person, place, or thing in details which can sometimes be visualized by the readers of the text (Djuharie, 2007). The subject of the text should be described in such a vivid detail so that the readers can easily form a precise picture of what is being described. Like many other types of text, descriptive text has distinctive language features which make it differ from other text type. Those language features include specific nouns to identify the person, place, and things being described, noun phrase, a variety of kinds of adjectives, figurative language such as simile or metaphor to give illustration of comparison, and the use of Simple Present Tense. Such features provide details that help the readers imagine the subject being described.

In descriptive text, reading comprehension requires pupils to be able understand text based on its generic structure, namely identification and description, which generally consists of several paragraphs that pupils use must be able to identify five components of reading, namely main idea, specific information, reference, inference, and the meaning of words in context. However, quite a few pupils have not ability to understand comprehensively the text. Two main aspects that might interfere with pupils' reading comprehension abilities being the pupils himself or herself and his or her reading process. Lack of pupils' Vocabulary apparently has a big influence on their understanding of the text. From the text, the pupils also have difficulty to guess the meaning of difficult words. Sometimes teachers have to look for texts with words that are easy and familiar to pupils so that they can understand the text easier. Teachers usually use conventional learning models such as lectures, questions and answers, and taking notes in teaching and learning process particularly in reading. Pupils who do not understand the teacher's explanation can not do the assignment easily, while pupils who understand usually have ability to do it. At SMAN 1 Batukliang there were many pupils have difficulty in material of reading particularly in reading comprehension on descriptive text especially on eleven grades.

Based on the problem above, the researcher wants to use the method to solve the problem. So, the appropriate teaching methods are needed. Pupils' difficulties in understanding reading are not trivial. One of them is Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method. The method

emphasizes on the group work where the students will have a series of activities including partner reading, Treasure Hunt activity, word meaning, story retell, and direct instruction in reading comprehension (Slavin, 1991). Assigning team activities in Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is considered a suitable way to promote reading comprehension since in working cooperatively in pairs, team and groups, the pupils will be able to maximize their learning process. In Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method, the pupils are put in mixed-ability cooperative teams with one low, two medium, and one high achieving pupil in each team. This is done so that there will be an exchange of information among the pupils in team in which each pupil is accountable for their own study and also facilitate pupils' contribution in the learning of others. It is further supported by Felder and Brent (2007), that in heterogeneous team, the weaker students gain from seeing how better students approach problems, and the stronger students gain a deeper understanding of the subject by teaching it to others.

The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method provides a series of engaging activities in which pupils will be able to develop their ability to read and comprehend the given texts with other pupils in an assigned group work activity. The features of CIRC are integrated within a lesson cycle which, according to Slavin (1991), is started from forming teams, conducting basal-related activities as follows; partner reading in which the students sit side by side in pairs and read the text. As they read, they cooperatively underline the new or difficult words they found in the text. The second activity is word comprehension, then Treasure Hunts or text comprehension. The pupils with their partners discuss the responses to a list of questions about the text listed on Treasure Hunt sheet during this step. This activity ensures comprehension of the text by all pupils. The next activity is story retell and composition. The pupils compose a summary of the main point of the text with their partner after answering the questions. The summary has to cover the generic structure of the descriptive text which includes identification and description part. Many studies have been conducted to explore the effectiveness of the use of CIRC method to improve pupils' reading comprehension skill in line with the importance of using an appropriate method to promote reading comprehension. Junariyah (2014), who conducted a pre-experimental research on the second year students of MTsN Rajeg, Tangerang in academic year 2013/2014, revealed that the use of CIRC is effective to make the students motivated in doing reading activity. It is also in line with the finding of study by Gupta and Ahuja (2014) on the impact of the CIRC method on reading comprehension achievement in English among seven graders which revealed that the CIRC method gave a significant improvement in their reading comprehension achievement than the students who are instructed through traditional

technique. The analysis of the two studies showed that the use of CIRC method can effectively enhance pupils' reading comprehension ability.

The researcher wanted to analyze the effectiveness of using the CIRC method in teaching reading comprehension in descriptive texts, and therefore the researcher conducted a pre-experimental analysis on eleven grade pupils of SMAN 1 Batukliang in the 2024/2025 academic year based the background explained above. In short, by carrying out this research, the researcher obtained quite a lot of information which is expected to help teachers maximize their teaching process and develop pupils' reading comprehension abilities using the CIRC method. Teachers need to pay more attention to how they can use CIRC to manage the classroom effectively so that pupils will be actively engaged, working together with their classmates to improve their reading ability. It is hoped that the more information the teacher obtains from the results of this analysis, the more effective the learning process will be.

2. Methods

In this research, the researcher would like to find out the effectiveness of the use of the CIRC method in teaching reading comprehension, particularly on descriptive texts. To answer the analysis questions, the researcher conducted pre-experimental research because it was considered as an appropriate design to be applied in determining the intended effect of a tested idea or practice or procedure on an outcome or dependent variable (Creswell, 2012: 295). The researcher conducted the procedure of pre-experimental research design which were described in the following steps: (1) Using a pretest (O1) to the experimental group to measure pupils' initial skills in reading comprehension which was judged by their mean scores before the treatment was given, (2) Administering the treatment (X), which was the use of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method, (3) using the posttest (O2) to the changes which occur as the result of the applied treatments judged by pupils' mean score, (4) Comparing O1 and O2 to determine the mean score of the pretest and the post test, (5) Using a statistical formula (t-test) to determine whether or not teaching reading comprehension using the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method is effective, (6) Using the Effect Size formula to investigate the effectiveness of the treatment given on pupils' reading comprehension skills.

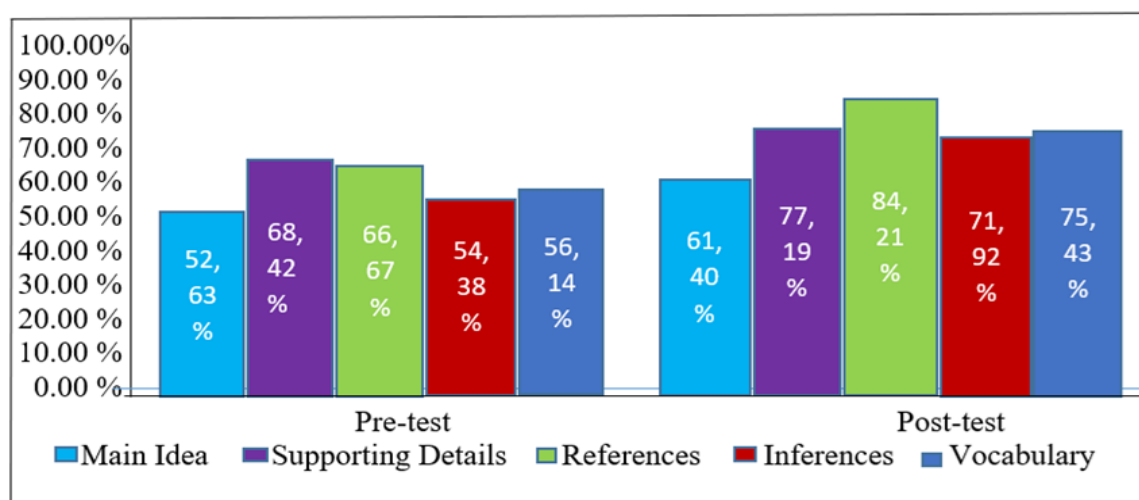
In this research, the pupils of class eleven grade of SMAN 1 Batukliang as the population of the research and the researcher used cluster random sampling techniques to select the samples. Each class has an equal chance of being selected in this case. The researcher took only one class to analyze because this is a pre-experimental analysis. So, there were 50% pupils from 38 pupils of the total number of populations of the research at eleven grades as samples of the research and the researcher took class B of these two classes.

Reading practice as the tool used by the researcher to collect the data. The researcher measured pupils' skills in reading comprehension by giving a pre-test and post-test to the experimental group in this research. Multiple choice test has been given during the test. The test requires pupils to identify references, identify supporting details, identify the main idea, make inferences, and translate the meaning of words from the text. The researcher needs to evaluate it based on several criteria before carrying out the test. One of the criteria used is validity which focuses on the interpretation of the scores taken from the instrument but not on the instrument. The researcher used content validity to the test in this pre-experimental analysis. The researcher needs to define the concept first, then develop the content of the item in determining content validity. If the content does not reflect or represent the concept accurately, then there is little or no content validity. The researcher created a specification table to match the test with the concept to be measured. The table makes it easy to create tests that show there is a match between what is tested and what is taught.

3. Analysis and Discussions

Analysis

Pre-test and post-test were carried out to determine the significant effect of this method. Based on the calculation of pupils' scores on the pre-test and post-test, most pupils got eight to eleven correct answers, ranging from 53 to 73. The percentage of aspects of reading comprehension, namely main ideas, supporting details, references, conclusions, vocabulary achieved by the pupils is depicted in the chart below:



Graph 01. Reading Comprehension Aspects of The Students' Achievement Percentage

It was found that there was progress in every aspect of reading comprehension between the pre-test and post-test which resulted in better post-test scores after the method was used based the chart above. From the tabulation of pre-test results, pupils' achievement is categorized as poor. The highest score is 73, and the lowest score is 47, while the average pre-test score based on calculations is 59.5. It was discovered that the pupils' post-test scores improved significantly after the treatment was carried out. The average post-test score is 74, the highest score is 87, and the lowest score is 60. The researcher then calculated the t-test, and was followed by the effect size after the mean of the pre-test and post-test were calculated.

It can be concluded that the t-obtained at 7.82 is significant at the 0.05 level and the 0.01 level, which means that the null hypothesis can be rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is therefore accepted, which leads the researcher to conclude that teaching reading comprehension in Descriptive text using the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method for eleven grade students of SMAN 1 Batukliang in the 2024/2025 academic year is effective based on the description of the t test calculation. The calculated effect size of 1.70 is categorized as high which indicate that there was improvement of the pupils' reading comprehension on descriptive text by using of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method.

Discussion

After the class got three-time treatments used the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method as indicated by the post-test average which was higher than the test average, it was found that there was improvement of pupils' reading comprehension skill significantly based of the data analyzed in previous section. The improvement of the mean indicated that in general the treatment gave good results on pupils' reading comprehension skills, so that the post-test results showed better output than the pre-test. From the tabulation of findings, the t-test calculation shows that the value obtained exceeds the value given, which means that the use of the CIRC method was effective, and in line with that, the results of the Effect Size calculation was categorized as very effective which leads the researcher to conclude that the use of the CIRC method gave effect significant in teaching reading comprehension on descriptive texts significantly.

This research is in line with the existing research which reveals that there a significant difference in pupil' scores before and after using this method as indicated by the results of statistical calculations which showed that the observation t value is higher than the observation t table which consequently results in the rejection of the null hypothesis. Another research finding that supports these results revealed that the group taught with the CIRC method outperformed the other groups significantly on the post-test indicating that the method provided a significant improvement in pupils' reading comprehension compared to the group taught using traditional teaching methods.

Apart from being demonstrated through statistical calculations, the effectiveness of the CIRC method on pupils' reading comprehension was also demonstrated by the pupils' reading process when they were given treatment where they become actively involved in the activities carried out by the researcher. Being active here meant that they were not only sitting, reading, and paying attention to the explanation of the researcher, but with their teammates, they have ability to carry out several activities actively. This is in line with the theory put forward by Slavin who emphasized that this method was considered appropriate for teaching reading comprehension because it provides group work activities where the pupils facilitated each other's learning. During the treatment, the researcher found that pupils could follow CIRC activities easily even though the researcher sometimes had to give instructions more than once to avoid confusion. Pupils who have paired up in teams can get along well and carry out all the intended activities correctly.

With regard to the highly significant effect the CIRC technique gave on pupils' reading comprehension, there were some causes that might have influenced it. The successfully done treatments more or less influenced the results of the research. The researcher tried to carry out the study process based on the plan of the lesson made before since the first treatment. So it can be ensured that this analysis had been going in line with the procedures of what it was supposed to be like. The researcher introduced each step of the CIRC activities during the first treatment to avoid the pupils' confusion. Then the learning topic introduced by the researcher which was descriptive text and showed the pupils a picture related to the topic, and asked the pupils some questions related to the picture. After doing a brainstorming activity, the class was divided into some groups which members were already determined by the teacher. There were 38 pupils as the population of the research at eleven grade and the researcher took only half number of populations of the research as the sample. So, the teacher divided the pupils into some groups, groups 1 were four pupils, groups 2 were four pupils, groups 3 were four pupils, groups 4 were four pupils and only groups 5 were three pupils. The researcher then handed every group to worksheet called "Treasure Hunt Sheet" on Appendix seven on which the pupils would work together on the same descriptive text. In the second and third treatment, these steps and the next ones were repeated.

The next step would mostly be the pupils' part. Carefully the pupils would read the text in a given time in the Partner Reading phase. In pairs, this activity was done. So, together two pupils read the same text. After reading, the writer asked them to underline the words which they thought to be difficult or new for them. So, thoroughly the pupils should have read the text. The pupils record all the words they have underlined on the worksheet and find the meaning of the words in the Word In the meaning phase. The use of a dictionary was permitted in this phase, where the researcher found that the use of a dictionary was permitted in this phase, from there the researcher found that the use of a dictionary does not help much because not all words can be found in the dictionary, so that in each of the three treatments pupils still ask the meaning of one or two word to the researcher because they couldn't find the meaning in the dictionary.

The next step was Treasure Hunt which according to the researcher was the most interesting phase for pupils of all the activities in the three treatments after finding the meaning. In this phase pupils were given several questions and asked to work together with their friends to answer these questions. In this method, working together with friends turns out to be an effective learning process because

pupils in each group can achieve the same learning goals with the help of others, moreover this phase emphasizes that all pupils must understand how to answer questions, so that all pupils in each group must work together. The researcher found that in this phase, some pupils actively gave their opinions on the answers to the questions given, and only a few remained silent. However, when the researcher asked a question to one of the quiet pupils, he was able to answer it correctly. According to the observations of the researcher, the calm treatment became more active in the next two treatments.

The pupils were engaged in a kind of activity called Numbered Heads Together which was part of Treasure Hunt Activity after discussing the answers of the questions. The researcher made sure that all groups had managed to answer the questions before conducting the activity. The pupils in each group were numbered off from one to four. The researcher took part in this activity. She or he called off a number, then the researcher with that number had to stand up, and the researcher randomly chose one pupil to answer the question. The researcher then asked other group whether or not the answer was correct, or that they had different opinion. There was always group who had different responses to the questions in each of treatment, but it was okay that the answers didn't digress from the subject.

The next part would be the most challenging which was Story Retell and Composition, as the researcher discovered that the pupils mostly needed assistance to do it. The pupils in each group summarized the text they had studied in order to make it possible to remember the important points and key information of the text. The researcher helps the pupils highlight the important points of the text like the major and supporting idea in the first treatment. The pupils mostly worked on themselves. In the next treatment, though the researcher was still needed sometimes. The summary of the pupils has to cover the generic structure of descriptive text which was identification part to introduce the subject, and description part to describe the subject. The pupils collected the Treasure Hunt Sheet to the researcher after summarizing the text.

The pupils were getting familiar with the activities of CIRC method in the second and the third treatment. They were more ready and also prepared themselves before the class began. The third treatment was shorter than the two previous treatments due to time limitation. On that day, the activities conducted included Partner Reading, Word Meaning, and Treasure Hunt as the post-test was conducted. The researcher was certain that it facilitated the pupils to comprehend the text well as the sheet guided them to do the required activities systematically through the use of Treasure Hunt

Sheet in this research. The repeated activities in each treatment were actually to improve their reading comprehension which consequently resulted in their improved scores in the post-test than ones on the pre-test. Moreover, the calculation of the Effect Size was categorized as highly effective that led the researcher to reject the Null Hypothesis and concluded that the use of CIRC method on the eleven grade pupils of SMAN 1 Batukliang in academic year 2024/2025 gave highly significant effect in teaching reading comprehension on descriptive text.

4. Conclusion

It was concluded that the use of CIRC method in teaching reading comprehension on descriptive text was effective indicated by the higher mean of the post-test referring to the discussion of the research. The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) activities enabled pupils to actively participate in the learning process and show positive response to the reading activity when the treatments were being conducted. They also have better reading comprehension which could be observed from the result of the treatments, that the pupils were able to outscore significantly on the test after the method was used. Besides that, in this research, the use of group work was able to help pupils learn better in comprehending the text. It was found that the cooperation that built up between the students enabled them to discuss on the subject easily. The pupils have ability to follow the instructions and enjoyable find the learning process for them because the learning proses conducted by the researcher had been systematically arranged. This was what made it consequently resulted in the highly significant result of the Effect Size which responded positively to the research questions formulated by the researcher.

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