



# Improving Students' Reading Comprehension Skill by Using CIRC

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## Abstract

The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method is a cooperative learning method used to develop language skills such as reading and writing in the classroom at the high school level. This study used a Quasi-experimental design because it aims to investigate whether the teaching technique has a significant impact on students' reading comprehension. In this study, eleventh grade students of SMA 6 Palopo in the academic year 2023/2024 were selected as the object of research. Students in the experimental group after the treatment were in the good and quite good classification, while the control group was in the quite bad classification. The mean scores of the experimental group and control group in the pre-test and post-test were 74.11 and 64.11, respectively, with standard deviations of 16.885 and 13.833. After treatment with the CIRC method, the mean scores of students in both groups were higher than those in the non-CIRC treatment group. The results showed that the treatment in the control group and the experimental group showed significant improvement in students' reading comprehension achievement. In conclusion, the application of Cooperative Integrative Reading Composition has shown promising results in improving students' English learning, especially in reading narrative texts.

**Keywords:** *Circ 1; Improving 2; Reading Skill 3 (Alphabetical)*

## Introduction

English is the most commonly used language by international agents and companies, because English is the first world language, considered the world's first lingua franca and is the most widely used language in the world in international trade, diplomacy, popular entertainment, international telecommunications and scientific publishing, as well as publishing newspapers and other books. According to some experts, English in Indonesia has a role as a foreign language. This is because its use is limited to formal communication, such as in business and higher

education(Sofyan, 2021). English is one of the most widely used languages in the world. To be able to master this language well, there are four main skills that must be mastered, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Listening skills are very much needed in communicating in English. By listening actively, we can understand conversations or instructions better. Speaking skills are also important to be able to communicate fluently and effectively. When speaking, we need to pay attention to intonation, vocabulary, and correct grammar. In addition, reading skills are also important for understanding texts in English such as articles or books. By reading regularly, we can improve our understanding and vocabulary. Reading is one of the four English language skills. This English language skill is a very much needed skill. Improving Students' Reading Comprehension Using the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Technique(Simarmata, 2023).

Currently, the importance of reading is expected to continue to increase in knowledge in the future. People or students must be able to master English and need competence in understanding English texts. This means that reading is a very important skill in learning English. In teaching reading, it is not easy to make students understand the text. Many students cannot understand the text so that the objectives of the English teaching and learning process cannot be achieved easily. They found difficulties caused by several things, such as teaching techniques, media, and methods. Based on (Jusriati, 2023) she stated that besides teaching method, teaching media is also a crucial taking in teaching and learning processed because if coal make it more effective.. Many students think that reading is the easiest skill then speaking, writing and listening, but in real society reading is not as easy as they think. After reading a text, most students have difficulty finding the meaning of the text or students do not know the topic (Rahayu et al., 2018).

The researcher conducted an observation at SMA 6 PALOPO; Researchers found that at SMA 6 Palopo, many students still have difficulty understanding English texts, which has an impact on their academic achievement. Reading comprehension is an important skill in learning English, but most students face obstacles in capturing main ideas, understanding text details, and drawing conclusions from the reading and have problems using English to communicate. Therefore, when teachers interact with students in the teaching and learning process, there has to be an intertwine of English and Indonesian so that students can understand better. One of the causes of the low English language skills of SMA 6 PALOPO students is because the lack of understanding from internal and external factors. Internal factors include student motivation and interest. External factors include teaching methods, parents, friends, facilities, environment, and others. At SMA 6 PALOPO, teachers use textbooks only as a tool to support students' English learning activities.

The researcher offers techniques that must be applied that are appropriate in teaching reading because each student's technique has different abilities in recognizing words and interpreting the meaning of the text correctly.

Seeing the conditions above, a technique is needed that can motivate students to be interested in understanding reading material. One teaching technique is Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC). CIRC is a cooperative-based learning technique, designed to develop reading, writing and other language skills in the upper grades of basic education. CIRC techniques present a structure that enhances not only opportunities for direct instruction in reading and writing but also application of writing techniques. This technique aims to explain how to understand how to read a text as well as organize students' understanding by writing their own understanding on a worksheet. If teachers use it, students will have many opportunities to practice reading comprehension. Students will gain knowledge based on input from CIRC. Referring to the benefits or applying a technique in reading class, it is hoped that the CIRC technique can increase students' reading comprehension in class XI.

## **Literature Review**

### **Reading**

Reading activities bring many benefits to human life. People can obtain a lot of information through reading. (Brigitta Septarini Rahmasari<sup>1</sup>, 2017) stated that some descriptive studies of elementary reading instruction found that literal comprehension was overemphasized over interpretive and inferential understanding.

This means that in order to improve knowledge, students need to improve their reading comprehension skills. Reading Skills is used to develop students' knowledge. Reading has many benefits. Many experts have tested the influence of reading comprehension strategies and reading comprehension skills on reading comprehension and concluded that reading comprehension strategies play an important role in understanding texts. Reading strategies are techniques or methods that readers use to better understand the material given to them.

According to (Abdurashitova & Fazlidinova, 2019), reading comprehension strategies are mental tasks that students use to extract meaning from text. In fact, reading is important for students no matter how advanced they are academically, but the problem is that most students are unable to properly understand the overall meaning of texts, especially academic materials that contain long paragraphs and many unknown words. Because understanding is a difficult process and requires students' background knowledge.

## **Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension is one of the language skills that must be mastered by elementary school students, especially high school students. This activity allows students to actively obtain information. It is called receptive because through reading a person receives information, gains knowledge and gains new experiences (Fitriana, 2018).

The learning model that teachers can use when teaching is the collaborative learning model. The collaborative learning model can be used in cooperative learning, students learn to accept and respect the opinions of their peers through group interaction.

There are many classes on cooperative learning. The cooperative learning model that can be used when teaching reading is the CIRC type. CIRC requires students to master the main ideas of discourse along with other reading and writing skills.

In learning reading comprehension, teachers can use the CIRC learning method. The main aim of using the CIRC method in learning is to improve students' reading comprehension and improve poor student learning outcomes.

Mochtar said CIRC's main goal is to help students learn to read with broad comprehension at the upper grade level, especially when using collaborative teams. Students learn how to discuss and identify the five elements of a story: characters, setting, problem, problem solving efforts, and problem solving (Mochtar, 2019)

This method aims to make it easier for students to understand learning, and as a result of learning can improve their ability to read and understand the content of fairy tales.

From the description above, the problem can be formulated as follows. How to use the CIRC method. to improve students' ability to read and understand the content of children's stories.

## **CIRC**

CIRC is a collaborative method that incorporates the latest techniques from practical curriculum to reading instruction. CIRC is a comprehensive program for teaching reading and her writing/language arts. It consists of his three main components: story-based activities, direct instruction in reading comprehension, and integrated language arts/writing.

CIRC technique is a cooperative learning method used to develop language skills such as reading and writing in the upper grades of elementary school. The CIRC method represents a structure that not only increases the possibility of direct instruction in reading and writing, but also increases the applicability of the composition writing method .(Darmayanti, 2014)

At CIRC, students are taught in reading groups and then return to mixed ability teams to practice partner reading, prediction, character identification, setting, problems and problem solving, summarizing, vocabulary, reading comprehension and story-based writing.

The researchers used the pretest results as a guide to different grouping the students during treatment. After pretesting and learning about students' reading comprehension skills and prior knowledge, researchers administered narrative reading treatment to students using the CIRC method. (Aziz, 2020)

The steps and activities to implement this method in the experimental group were presented as follows. In this step, the researcher started with pre-reading activities, during-reading activities, and post-reading activities. Reading activities are student activities in which teachers prepare students for assignments and familiarize them with the topic. The researcher conducted an activity during reading in which the teacher explicitly explained the content, grammatical features, and general structure of the story. The students were then asked to complete the reading task in groups with each group consisting of four or five students. The final step is a post-reading activity. This Her activity requires students to present a group work report to the class. The researcher then gave her a conclusion and a test (worksheets were distributed to the students).

## **Method**

In this study, the researcher used quantitative method. This study used Quasi-experimental design because it aims to investigate whether teaching techniques a significant impact on students' reading. This study has one independent variable and one dependent variable. The independent variable in this research CIRC method, and the dependent variable in this study was Student's Reading Skill.

The population of this research is the Eleventh-Grade student of SMA 6, Palopo in academic year 2023/2024. In this research, the researcher chose one class XI A, consisted of 35 students as the sample. This research used Random sample technique. Which divided into two groups: Control and Experiment Groups. Next in collecting the data the researcher used reading Comprehension Test that consists of 20 questions tasks based on a pilot study. The reading test is performed the same way before and after the test. Each correct answer will be given 5 points. an incorrect answer given 0 point.

When emphasizing on developing a cooperative method, namely the CIRC method, to improve students' reading ability, it is important to choose an analysis method that is suitable for the type of data to be obtained and the purpose of the study.

In addition, careful statistical calculations must be made to ensure accurate and reliable analysis results. In this study, data was processed using a scoring rubric. The data analysis used is a normality test that determines the activities

evaluated. The activities are adjusted to the competencies and learning objectives to be achieved. The standardized grading scheme A, B, C, D. The letters are given a percentage of 100% or a grading name such as "Very Good", "Good", "Fair", "Lack", or "Fail".

Classification	Range of score
Very Good	95 - 100
Good	85 - 94
Fair	75 - 84
Lack	45 - 74
Fail	0 - 44

(Sudiati et al., 2018)

## Results

### General Research Findings

To determine how effective the CIRC method is on Improving Students' Reading Comprehension. The researcher used a quasi-experimental research design. Data results were obtained by giving tests to the experimental class and control class after treatment. The subjects of this study were divided into two groups. There were 17 students as the experimental class and 18 students as the control class where one class consisted of 35 students. Researchers gave a test as a research instrument. as a research instrument. The test was given before students were given treatment. Then the researcher gave treatment to the experimental class using the CIRC method and the control class using the conventional method. And finally, the researcher gave a post-test to the experimental class and control class.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Students' Pretest of experimental and Control Group

Classification	Range of score	Experimental		Control Group	
		N	%	N	%
Very Good	95 - 100	0	0	0	0
Good	85 - 94	0	0	0	0
Fair	75 - 84	2	12.00	1	6.00
Lack	45 - 74	12	70.00	13	72.00
Fail	0 - 44	3	18.00	4	22.00
<b>Jumlah</b>		17	100	18	100

Table 1. Shows that before being given the treatment, most of the students' pretest results in the experimental group were in the less classification. The overall percentage of the experimental group categorized as low achievers of 100% (17 students) shows that, 2 students (12.00%) are in the Fair classification, 12

students (70.00%) are in the Lack classification, and 3 students (18.00%) are in the Fail classification, In the control group, table 1 shows that most students are in the sufficient classification where the percentage of pretests in the control group categorized as clever is 1 students (6.00%) in the Fair classification, 13 students (72.00%) are in the Lack classification, and 4 students (22.00%) in the Fail classification.

In the control group there are no students who are in the two classifications Very good and Good. Based on the aggregate percentage of both the experimental and control groups, it shows that low-achieving students are greater than high-achieving students. Both were predominantly in the fair and lack classifications.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage of Students' Posttest of experimental Group and Control Group

Classification	Range of score	Experimental		Control Group	
		N	%	N	%
Very Good	95 - 100	2	12.00	0	0
Good	85 - 94	3	18.00	2	11.00
Fair	75 - 84	6	35.00	3	17.00
Lack	45 - 74	4	23.00	10	55.00
Fail	0 - 44	2	12.00	3	17.00
<b>Jumlah</b>		17	100	18	100

Table 2. Illustrates that most of the students in the experimental group after treatment was in the good and good enough classification, while the control group was in the good enough classification. Where the percentage of posttests in the experimental group that fell into the good category was 2 students (12.00%) in the very good classification, 3 students (18.00%) in the good enough classification, 6 students (35.00%) in the fair classification, 4 students (23.00%) in the lack classification, and only 2 student(12.00%) who were in the fail classification. Where as in the control group based on the aggregate percentage shows that, students' scores tend to be evenly distributed in the classification of very good, good, fair, lack, and fail. Where there are only 2 students who are included in the good enough classification (11.00%), 3 students are included in the fair classification (17.00%), 10 students are included in the lack classification (55.00%), and 3 students are included in the lack classification (17.00%). No one is categorized as very good.

Table 3. The Mean Score and the Standard Deviation of Students' Pretest of experimental and control group

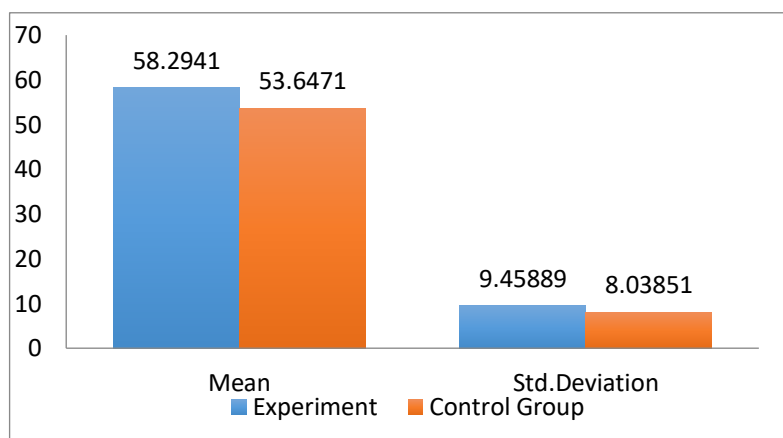


Table 3. Shows that the mean score of the experimental group students' pretest is 58.2941 and the control group is 53.6471. Based on table 3 above, it can be concluded that the average score of the experimental group students is statistically different from the control group. (Adri et al., 2020) states that the difference between the different scores on the average score of students between the experimental group and the control group. the experimental group has a higher score than the control group.

Table 4. The t- test of the Students' Pretest of experimental and Control Group

Experimental & Control Group	N	Alpha( a)	Probability Value
Pretest of experimental and control group	35	0.05	.124

Table 4. Hypotheses were tested using inferential analysis. In this case, the researcher used the independent sample t-test (significance test) (t-test for Equality of Means), which is a test to determine the significance of the difference between the results of students' mean scores on all pre-test and post-test mean scores. Based on the pretest statistical test on the probability value (significant 2-tailed), the probability value is higher than alpha ( $0.124 > 0.05$ ). This means that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students on the pretest. In other words, the students' reading comprehension achievement of both groups before the treatment was almost the same.



Table 5. The Mean Score and the Standard Deviation of Students' Posttest of experimental and control group.

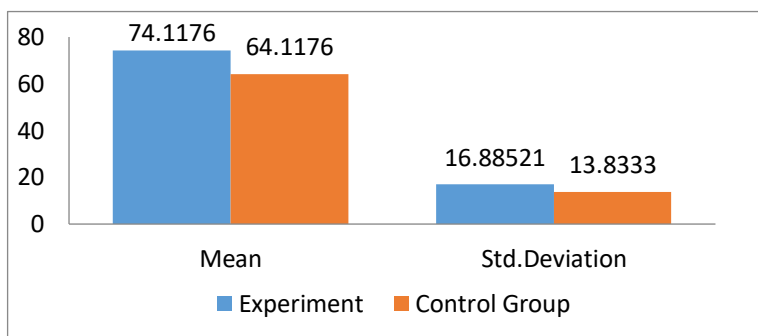


Table 5. Shows that the mean post test score of the experimental group students was 74.11 and the control group was 64.11. The mean score of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group ( $74.11 > 64.11$ ) and the standard deviation for the experimental group is 16.885 and that of the control group is 13.833. This shows that after the treatment, the mean score of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group. This proves that the treatment with the CIRC method provides more improvement in students' reading comprehension achievement compared to the treatment with the non-CIRC method.

Table 6. The t-test of the Students' Posttest of experimental and Control Group

Experiment & Control	N	Alpha (a)	Probability Value
Pretest of experiment and control	35	0.05	.064

Table 6. Shows that the statistical hypothesis is based on the statistical test in the probability value (2-tailed significant). The probability value is higher than alpha ( $0.64 > 0.05$ ). Therefore, the treatment was conducted in both groups. It was concluded that after giving treatment to both groups, using the CIRC method in the experimental group and the non-CIRC method in the control group, the students' reading comprehension achievement in both groups was significantly different. From the description of students' reading comprehension achievement students' reading comprehension in the pre-test and post-test results as shown in tables 1 to 6 above, then in the analysis, it can also be seen the improvement of students' reading comprehension ability in the experimental group and the control group.

### The students' interest in learning reading.

Based on the data analysis the researcher found that the students' interest in learning reading narrative text of the eleventh-year students of SMA 6 Palopo by using CIRC method was positive. The results indicated that using CIRC method in teaching reading narrative text can motivated the students, so this method was

very effective in improving the reading comprehension achievement of the students and enhancing the student's interest in learning English, especially in reading narrative text.

## Discussion

The use of the CIRC method in learning to read will help students understand the subject matter in the learning process. This is supported by (Aziz, 2020). He explained that this method can improve students' reading comprehension because some students have new motivations and the use of the CIRC method is more enjoyable than traditional methods. The use of the CIRC method when learning to read increases students' reading motivation. Completely agree with (Aziz's 2020) perspective on the effectiveness of the CIRC method in enhancing students' understanding of the subject matter. Based on my experience, I have witnessed how implementing cooperative learning strategies such as CIRC can have a significant impact on students' level of engagement and understanding. The CIRC method fosters an environment where students feel empowered to actively participate in their learning.

The CIRC method in teaching reading creates a positive classroom environment. The CIRC strategy provides a learning environment where students take on roles in groups and work as a team based on their skills (Sitti Hajerah Hasyim et al., 2022). I fully support the statement made by (SittiHajerah Hasyim et al., 2022) regarding the positive impact of the CIRC method on the classroom environment. From my own teaching experience, I have witnessed how the implementation of CIRC fosters a sense of familiarity and collaboration among students, thus creating an atmosphere conducive to learning. The collaborative nature of CIRC encourages mutual respect and cooperation among students. As they engage in group discussions, share ideas, and solve problems together, students learn to appreciate each other's perspectives and contributions.

The use of the CIRC strategy in learning to examined makes understudies pay more attention and focus more on learning. In this learning, understudies are teaching to work together in arrange to quickly and together take subtle elements of the content. In expansion, the utilize of CIRC as a instructing strategy progresses students' perusing comprehension. The comes about of the study showed that inquire about members or understudies were more fruitful in perusing after utilizing the CIRC instructing method (Zaeni et al., 2020) . I strongly agree with the findings presented by (Zaeni et al. 2020) regarding the CIRC method being chosen because it has a collaborative approach that allows students to work together in groups to understand the text more deeply.

Previous studies have shown that CIRC is effective in improving students' reading comprehension. For example, research by (Darmayanti, 2014) shows that the use of CIRC can improve students' reading and writing skills because students

are given the opportunity to teach each other and discuss the texts they read. In addition, Vygotsky's theory of social learning and interaction also supports the effectiveness of CIRC, because this theory emphasizes the importance of learning that involves social interaction, which can help students understand the material in a more active and contextual way.

In the context of SMA 6 Palopo, CIRC allows students to work in small groups, discuss the texts they read, and teach each other about parts of the text that they have difficulty understanding. This will overcome the challenges they face in understanding the main idea and difficult vocabulary. By helping each other, students can gain a better understanding of the text and improve their reading skills. Meanwhile, the weakness of using the CIRC method in teaching reading is that sometimes students are confused by the teacher's explanations and instructions. This is in accordance with (Aziz, 2020). He said that some students have some problems.

From the observation results, the researcher concluded that the use of the CIRC method in teaching reading is good for the teaching and learning process. The CIRC method procedure is as follows:

### **Paired Reading**

The teacher asks students to read the text and then read the text aloud.

#### **Story Grammar and Story-Related Writing**

The teacher gives students several questions related to the story that are emphasized in the story structure. After getting half of the story, they are asked to identify the characters, setting, and resolution of the story. The teacher provides a list of new words stated in the text. They must practice reading the words correctly. Students try to read the list of words together with their partners until they can read fluently. Story Retell. The teacher asks students to make main conclusions from the text for their partners. All steps in using the CIRC method above are in line with research by (Anwar & Wicaksono, 2020). This shows that for thirty minutes, the researcher initially introduced certain reading comprehension sub-skills.

### **Conclusion**

The implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) has shown promising results in enhancing students' reading comprehension skills. Through collaborative learning activities embedded within the CIRC framework, students are actively engaged in the reading process, fostering deeper understanding and critical thinking. By working together in small groups, students not only develop their comprehension abilities but also cultivate important social and communication skills.

Moreover, CIRC provides a structured approach that accommodates various learning styles and promotes inclusivity within the classroom. By incorporating both individual and group activities. Interactive in nature, CIRC encourages students to become more proficient readers by actively participating in discussions, peer interactions, and collaborative tasks. This not only strengthens their comprehension skills, but also improves their overall academic performance.

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