



CIRC for Improving Reading Comprehension Skill in 4th Grade Elementary School Students

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Abstract. This study aims to determine whether the learning design using the CIRC type in cooperative learning model can improve reading comprehension skills in fourth grade students of elementary schools. This study focused on the steps of the CIRC type of this model emphasizes student's teamwork in finding the main ideas of some texts. The learning process is centered on student and their group activities. Meanwhile, teacher provides some guidance for each group. This study used a quasi-experimental method and used a non-equivalent control group design. This research was conducted in 4th grade elementary students in one of school in Lampung Tengah Regency (22 participants). The result shows that the design of CIRC type in cooperative learning models can improve the reading ability of 4th grade elementary students' understanding.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning, CIRC, Reading Comprehension, 4th Grade Elementary Students

INTRODUCTION ~ As we know that reading is one of the skills that students should accomplished, especially in elementary school. Basaran (2013) explain that reading is a process mostly with cognitive aspects including the perception of written symbols to know letters voice, the comprehension of information, relating this information both with interlocutors and other prior knowledge; it also encompasses emotional and psychomotor behaviors. In the first place, we might know that the beginner reader has their own conditions or steps to accomplish their ability in reading. The essential first step for a beginning reader is to learn to match printed forms to phonological representations (Saphiro, Carrol, & Solity, 2013). It shows that reading itself required a lot of hard work from the beginning.

According to Khoirunisa *et al.* (2016), the reading comprehension level of literacy is higher than the level of basic literacy skills.

Furthermore, according to multicomponent views of reading comprehension, readers aged 7 to 12 years draw on language knowledge and cognitive processes at the word-, sentence-, and discourse-level when constructing this representation (Oakhill & Cain, 2012; Perfetti, Landi, & Oakhill, 2005; Vellutino, Tunmer, Jaccard, & Chen, 2007). Readers ought to decode words, retrieve their meanings, combine these into larger units such as clauses and sentences guided by syntactic knowledge, and integrate information across different parts of the text, often drawing on background knowledge to infer information that the author has left implicit. Thus, comprehension of explicitly stated information (literal comprehension) and implicitly stated information (inference) are involved in the construction of the situation model (Silva & Cain, 2015).



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On the other hand, student's skill in reading comprehension could affect the school achievement. The reason is students need to understand and to comprehend various subjects at school (Mullis, et al., 2007). Moreover, reading is a critical matter because a great deal of formal education depends upon being able to read with understanding (Hulme & Snowling, 2011).

We know that reading could not be separated from comprehension. Meanwhile, successful comprehension also requires the reader to integrate individual word meanings into a coherent sentence level representation and to integrate sentences to create a global understanding (McNAMARA, Ozuru, Floyd, 2017).

Nowadays, the existing curriculum emphasis on student-centered teaching approach (require use strategies, methods, or techniques). Unfortunately, students are often placed in classroom situations where they have little opportunities to reap the benefits from interacting with others (Gillies, Boyle, 2010).

To minimize it happened during the class, teacher could start to find a better way. Durukan (2011) said that one of the approaches parallel to this teaching approach is cooperative learning. By working cooperatively, students develop an understanding of the unanimity of purpose of the group and the need to help and support each other's learning which, in turn, motivates them to provide

information, prompts, reminders, and encouragement to others' requests for help or perceived need for help (Gillies, 2003a).

Slavin (2005, p. 200) explains that CIRC is a comprehensive program to teach students especially in reading, writing, and the language arts in upper grade in elementary school.

Internal structure of CIRC technique consists of elements such as knowing individuals well, establishing proper groups, ensuring inter-group communication, using materials appropriate for the content in a timely and orderly manner, supporting groups, fostering cooperation, group and individual assessment. The teacher is the primary actor who realises, regulates and supports these phases (Durukan, 2011).

METHOD

Method used in this research is Quasi-experiments. This usually tests the causal consequences of long-lasting treatments outside of the laboratory. Assignment in quasi-experiments is by self-selection or administrator judgment (Cook, 2015) and used nonequivalent control group design (Creswell, 2014). The subjects of this research are 22 students of 4th grade elementary students in one of school in Lampung Tengah Regency.

Meanwhile, research procedures started from preliminary studies by observing and literature review, chosen control group and experimental group, and provide



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explanations related to learning process using CIRC.

RESULTS

The result of this study is a follow up of preliminary studies which are then formulated into a guideline which will be communicated to the teacher who will apply the learning using CIRC.

3.1 Observation Result

The observations obtained showed that the learning process that took place was still not conducive and the approach taken by the teacher was still not appropriate. The teachers simply conveyed material or theories, gave some examples, and provide instruction for students to work on the problems that exist. In addition, the teacher just using textbooks those are already available in schools. Not only that, several points were also found which show that; 1) students do not understand the reading content; 2) students are still having difficulty to understand the reading content implicitly; 3) students have not answered the question appropriately according to the reading content; and last 4) students are still having trouble determining the main idea of the reading content.

3.2 Literature Results

This model includes the indicators to be achieved by students in 4th grade of elementary school. Those are:

1) The ability to identify

- students are able to identify the main ideas
- students are able to identify supporting ideas
- students are able to identify detailed information of the text
- students are able to identify the meaning of words
- students are able to identify direct opinions

2) The ability to recall

- students are able to recall the main ideas
- students are able to recall the causal relationships

3) The ability to analyze

- students are able to give the main idea of the text
- students are able to classify
- students are able to draw a conclusions

3.3 Guidelines

After conducting some reviews, here are guidelines that will be given to teachers which refer to indicators that need to be achieved by students:

Table 1. Guidelines for The Teacher

Steps of CIRC applied in learning	Indicators
Pre-reading stage, 1) The teacher divides students into one group consisting of 3-4 students heterogeneously; 2) The teacher provides a text and Student Worksheets which	The ability to identify - students are able to identify the main ideas



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are appropriate to the level of child development. The text consists of more or less five paragraphs, 3) The teacher explains the steps to students that must take during learning activity. **Reading stage**, 4) The first student, as a group of readers, reads a and the reading group listens and corrects the readings of his friends, 5) The teacher gives an example of determining the main sentence, 6) Students and teacher do question and answer about the text. **Post-reading stage**, 7) Student group representatives were given the opportunity to retell the story (contents of the text), 8) Students discuss to work on the instructions in the worksheet, 8) Each group reports the results of their work in front of the class, 9) Students respond to reports on the results of the other groups, 10) The teacher gives feedback on the results of each group's work, 11) Students and teachers draw conclusions or the results of group work that students have done.

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DISCUSSION

The indicators mentioned above are adapted from Turner (1981). Learning activity using CIRC is expected to help students comprehend the whole text. Students can achieve each indicator by discussing with their group. Students can share their thought and it will hopefully help to increase student thinking skill, participation, and motivation in some reading activities ahead. Furthermore, CIRC contains various elements that can support students' skills in the language aspect. They can identify the difficult words/sense of some words in reading and understanding them together in one group (Khoirunisa, 2016). Hopefully, the guidelines

arranged could be a helpful for the teacher to do every step of learning using CIRC.

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