

## **The Use of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Method in Improving Writing Ability of Narrative Text of the Second Year Students of SMAN 4 Pekanbaru**

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**Abstract:** *This classroom action research was aimed to find out if the use of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Method could improve the writing ability of the second year students of SMAN 4 Pekanbaru. The participants were 31 students. The procedures applied were: (a) dividing students into pairs, (b) asking students to read to each other the story, (c) asking students to correct their teammates' error, (d) asking students to answer the questions related to the story in team, (e) asking students to pronounce the difficult words listing, (f) asking students to find the meaning of the difficult words listing, (g) asking students to write a draft composition of narrative texts related to the passage, (h) asking students to edit one's another's work by using peer editing, (i) asking students to finish their writing based on their teammates' revision. The data was collected by using of tests, observation sheets, and field notes. The level of achievement in this research was 85, based on the standard minimum criteria of achievement of English subject in SMAN 4 Pekanbaru. The research finding showed that the implementation of applying CIRC as the teaching method could improve students' writing ability both at the first, second, and third cycle. Based on the data analysis that is obtained, the students' score was improve from 60,32 in the pre-test, to 74,62 in post-test 1, to 83,29 in post-test 2, and up to 87,68 in post-test 3. Therefore, the implementation of CIRC method could improve students' writing ability of the second year students of SMAN 4 Pekanbaru.*

**Keywords:** *CIRC Method , Writing Ability, Narrative Text*

## INTRODUCTION

The teaching of English includes four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Since almost every aspect in students' daily life is carried out in writing forms, such as in doing exercise, homework, reports, papers, and even final exam, writing is regarded as one of the most important English skills for being successful in education. To support students' ability in writing, they are not only have to understand the components related to writing but also have to understand how to use that components in correct writing form. The National Commission on Writing in American's Schools and Colleges (2003) states that writing requires students to stretch their minds, sharpen their analytical skills, and determine valid and precise distinctions. During this complex process, students must maintain their focus on important aspects such as organization, form and features, purposes and goals, audience needs and perspective, and evaluation of the communication between the author and reader.

At the level of Senior High School, writing skill is often a serious problem because it is not only influenced by the components of writing but also by the capabilities of students to put their ideas into words in meaningful form and understandable by themselves and others. One of the goal of teaching English in writing context is to develop students' competencies in mastering the genre, understanding, and producing some kind of texts. However, based on the interview result of the English teacher of second year students, the writer found that the students' writing ability on her classes was still under the minimum criteria of achievement (85).

According to the English teacher who had been interviewed by the writer, the problem of the students was on organizing their sentences to be a good paragraph. The students rarely revised their writing because they preferred to write quickly and then played their gadgets. The teacher also revealed that the students sometimes used new vocabulary incorrectly so that, they used the words inappropriately for what they mean in writing. In addition, based on the interview result of some students, they said they faced some difficulties in writing, such as having lack of background knowledge in gaining the main idea to write, how to develop the main idea, how to choose appropriate words in expressing their ideas, and how to avoid any grammatical errors. These problems happened because the teacher often teaches them reading skill and speaking skill more than writing skill itself. Thus, the main problems of the students lie on the lack of applying teaching method which caused the students did not really interested to write and thought that writing is a bored activity, so that their achievement in writing became low.

Based on Curriculum 2013, there are several scope of writing activities that should be taught on the second year students of Senior High School at the first semester. They are folklores, opinion column, speech or public speaking, a play or drama, and personal letter. In this research, the writer will focus on Folklores. Refers to Encyclopedia Britannica (1998), folklores usually have morals and lessons for life. Folklores or tales are traditional stories that are passed on from one generation to another. These stories teach lesson of life. Every culture around the world has a unique way of expressing traditions, beliefs, and values through folklores. Since folklores are related to Narrative texts, it can be classified as legends, oral history, tall tales, and fables.

As Mukerto, et al (2007) says, narrative is a kind of text that tells a story and usually presents characters involved in some action or conflict. According to Sudarwati and Grace, the social function of narrative texts is to amuse or entertain and to deal with actual/imaginative experience in different ways. The generic structure or text organization of narrative texts can be divided into three parts. The first is orientation. Orientation refers to the setting and the character of the story. The second is complication. It refers to a series of events in which the main character of the story attempts to solve the problem. The third is resolution. It refers to the end of the story, whether it is happy ending or sad ending.

One of teaching method which is interesting and can improve the students' ability is Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC). This method is created by Dr. Robert Slavin on 1987. According to Madden, Slavin, & Stevens (1986), CIRC is a comprehensive method for students to develop their ability in reading and writing. This technique covers two skills, reading and writing, in which reading integrated with writing to help students work in group in learning process. Slavin (1995) states that the main purpose of activities in CIRC is using time effectively in which the students work in cooperative teams that are coordinated by reading groups in order to achieve the goals.

According to Slavin (1995), the development of CIRC which is focused simultaneously on curriculum and on instructional is an attempt to use cooperative learning as a vehicle for introducing state of the art curricular practices derived primarily from basic research on the practical teaching of reading and writing. CIRC can be used for understanding about spelling, vocabulary, decoding, and main idea. Students are assigned to teams composed of pairs of students from the same or different reading groups. Students work in pairs on a series of cognitively engaging activities including reading to each other; summarizing stories to each other; writing responses to stories; and practicing spelling, decoding, and vocabulary. Students work in teams to understand the main idea and master other comprehension skills. During the language arts periods, students also write drafts, revise, and edit one another's work, and finish their writing.

Based on the previous research done by Erhan Durukan (2011) which aimed to analyze the effect of CIRC method on students' reading comprehension and written expression skills, the result of the research showed that there was an improvement that could be achieved by the students. The students' score in reading and writing ability were increased after applying CIRC method.

According to Slavin (1995), there are several advantages of using CIRC Method. They are: (1) Trains students to cooperate with friends in order to meet objectives in such areas as reading comprehension, vocabulary, decoding, spelling, and writing. (2) Increases the students' opportunity to read aloud. (3) Helps students to learn applicable reading comprehension skill. (4) Trains students to plan, revise, and edit the compositions in collaboration with teammates. (5) Language mechanic instruction is completely integrated with and subordinated to writing. (6) Writing is integrated with reading comprehension instruction both by the incorporation of writing-process activities in the reading program and by the use of newly learned reading comprehension skills in writing instruction.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Participants*

The participants of this research were the second year students of SMAN 4 Pekanbaru. For this purpose, class XI SAINS 3 became the subject of the research. This class consisted of 18 female students and 13 male students so that there were 31 students at all.

### *Instruments Techniques and Analysis*

Two methods of collecting data were used in this research. There were quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was collected by using writing tests which consisted of pre-test and post-test. The writer conducted pre-test to find the students' writing ability before applying CIRC Method. After doing pre-test, the students taught by using CIRC Method. After that, the writer conducted post test to find difference achievement of students' ability. Besides, the qualitative data was gathered through observation sheets and field notes. Observation sheets were used to record the teacher's and students' activities during teaching and learning process. The observation sheets were divided into teacher's observation sheet and students' observation sheet. Field notes consisted of important data that recorded by the observers. It included all the research activities, comments, suggestions, and advices from the observers.

In analyzing and measuring the quantitative data, the writer adapted the Turnitin Common Core State Standard Rubrics system. Five aspects assessed in the writing test were: (a) Exposition, (b) Narrative Technique and Development, (c) Organization and Cohesion, (d) Style and Convention, (e) Conclusion. The rating of score arranged among 1 up to 5. Besides, in analyzing and measuring the qualitative data, the writer adapted Gay (2000) technique which consisted of some steps. They were: (a) Prepared the data, (b) Read the Data, (c) Describe the Data, (d) Classifying, (e) Interpreting, and the next step is writing a report of research in order to explain the research.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Before applying CIRC Method, the writer gave a pre-test to the students to know the students' base score in writing narrative text. The students' pre-test assessed by two raters. After the score from the raters were collected, the writer accumulated the score to obtain the students' writing ability. Below is the students' score after the writer combined the result of the two raters:

**Table 1. The Students' Pre-Test Score**

No.	Score	F	P (%)
1.	≥85	13	41,94%
2.	<85	18	58,06%
<b>Total</b>		31	100%

From the table above, it could be concluded that only 13 of 31 students who were able to reach score ≥85 as the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. It means that only 41,94% who reached ≥85 and the rest 18 students (58,06%) had score

<85 before the writer implemented Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method.

The writer also presented the data of the students' ability from average score according to five aspects of writing as in the following table:

**Table 2. The Students' Ability in Each Aspect of Writing in Pre-Test**

Aspects of Writing	Average
Exposition	3,27
Narrative technique and development	3,03
Organization and cohesion	2,94
Style and convention	2,85
Conclusion	2,98
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>3,01</b>

According to the table above, the students' ability is appraised from scale 1 to 5, the average score of the students for aspect: (a) Exposition was 3,27, (b) Narrative technique and development was 3,03 (c) Organization and cohesion was 2,94, (d) Style and convention was 2,85, (e) Conclusion was 2,98. The lowest aspects were "Style and convention" and "Organization and Cohesion". It meant the comprehension of the students about "Style and convention" and "Organization and Cohesion" was still low.

After giving pre-test, the writer started cycle 1 and applied CIRC Method in order to improve students' writing ability. The writer asked observers to observe the teaching and learning process during the class. The writer began to do the meetings and at the end of Cycle 1, the writer conducted post-test to know the students' achievement in writing narrative texts. Below is the students' writing score after the writer combined the result of the two raters:

**Table 3. The Students' Post-Test Score in Cycle 1**

No.	Score	F	P (%)
1.	≥85	15	48,39%
2.	<85	16	51,61%
<b>Total</b>		31	100%

From the table above, it could be concluded that 15 of 31 students were able to reach score 85 as the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. It meant 48,39% reached ≥85 and the rest 16 students (51,61%) had score <85.

The writer also presented the improvement of the students' average score in post-test 1 based on five aspects of writing as in the following table:

**Table 4. The Students' Ability in Each Aspect of Writing in Post-Test 1**

Aspects of Writing	Average Score
Exposition	4,03
Narrative technique and development	4,29
Organization and cohesion	3,39
Style and convention	3,37
Conclusion	3,48
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>3,71</b>

According to the table above, the students' ability is appraised from scale 1 to 5, the average score of the students for aspect: (a) Exposition was 4,03, (b) Narrative technique and development was 4,29, (c) Organization and cohesion was 3,39, (d) Style and convention was 3,37, (e) Conclusion was 3,48. It could be concluded that the aspect "Organization and cohesion" had good improvement in this cycle. Besides, the lowest aspect was still "Style and convention". It meant the students' comprehension of "Style and convention" was still low, even though the result had been increased from pre-test.

In conclusion, the students' post-test score in Cycle 1 was not satisfied enough because the students who reached score  $\geq 85$  still low. So, the writer continued the research to Cycle 2 in order to improve the students who got score under the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement, 85 and also to gain the students' level ability in writing.

After the writer finished the last meeting in Cycle 2, the writer gave written post-test in order to know the students' writing ability after being taught by CIRC method. The writer computed the score and found the result which was presented as the following table:

**Table 5. The Students' Post-Test Score in Cycle 2**

No.	Score	F	P (%)
1.	$\geq 85$	19	61,29%
2.	<85	12	38,71%
<b>Total</b>		31	100%

From the table above, it could be concluded that only 19 of 31 students were able to reach score 85 as the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. It meant only 61,29% reached  $\geq 85$  and the rest 12 students (38,71%) had score <85.

The writer also presented the improvement of the students' average score in post-test 2 based on five aspects of writing as in the following table:

**Table 6. The Students' Ability in Each Aspect of Writing in Post-Test 2**

Aspects of Writing	Average Score
Exposition	4,32
Narrative technique and development	4,55
Organization and cohesion	3,98
Style and convention	3,85
Conclusion	4,11
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>4,16</b>

According to the table above, the students' ability is appraised from scale 1 to 5, the average score of the students for aspect: (a) Exposition was 4,32, (b) Narrative technique and development was 4,55, (c) Organization and cohesion was 3,98, (d) Style and convention was 3,85, (e) Conclusion was 4,11. It could be concluded the lowest aspects was still "Style and convention". It meant the comprehension of the students about "Style and convention" was still low, even though the result had been increased from Post-test 1.

Based on the data above, the students' post-test writing ability in Cycle 2 was quiet satisfied enough because there was an increasing percentage of the students' score.

The writer decided to continue the research into Cycle 3 in order to gain a better improvement of the students' score in writing and also to gain the students' level ability in writing.

After re-conducting CIRC method, the writer found a significant improvement from previous cycle to cycle. Students had been through the test in order to make sure their ability in writing narrative texts. The test instrument used at Cycle 3 was similar with test instruments used in previous cycles. The students' score was computed as in the following table:

**Table 7. The Students' Post-Test Score in Cycle 3**

No.	Score	F	P (%)
1.	≥85	21	67,74%
2.	<85	10	32,26%
<b>Total</b>		31	100%

From the table above, 21 of 31 students were able to reach score 85 as the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. It meant 67,74% reached ≥85 and the rest 10 students (32,26%) had score <85. In conclusion, the students' post-test writing ability in Cycle 3 was satisfied because more than half of students' percentage got score ≥85.

The writer also presented the improvement of the students' average score in post-test 3 according to five aspects of writing as in the following table:

**Table 8. The Students' Ability in Each Aspect of Writing in Post-Test 3**

Aspects of Writing	Average Score
Exposition	4,48
Narrative technique and development	4,77
Organization and cohesion	4,13
Style and convention	4,23
Conclusion	4,31
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>4,38</b>

According to the table above, the students' ability is appraised from scale 1 to 5, the average score of the students for aspect: (a) Exposition was 4,48, (b) Narrative technique and development was 4,77, (c) Organization and cohesion was 4,13, (d) Style and convention was 4,23, (e) Conclusion was 4,31. Refers to the previous cycle, the aspect of "Organization and cohesion" raised in Cycle 3. It meant that the students' comprehension about "Organization and Cohesion" had been improved.

In this study, the writer found that there was an improvement in students' ability in writing narrative texts which could be seen and compared from the result of pre-test to post-test 1, post-test 2, and post-test 3 as in the following table:

**Table 9. The Improvement of Students' Ability in Writing Narrative Texts**

No.	Score	Pre-Test		Post-Test 1		Post-Test 2		Post-Test 3	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	≥85	13	41,94%	15	48,39%	19	61,29%	21	67,74%
2	<85	18	58,06%	16	51,61%	12	38,71%	10	32,26%
<b>Total</b>		31	100%	31	100%	31	100%	31	100%

Based on the table above, 13 of 31 students (41,94%) reached score  $\geq 85$  and 18 students (58,06%) had score  $< 85$  in pre-test. In post-test 1, 15 students (48,39%) reached score  $\geq 85$  and the rest 16 students (51,61%) had score  $< 85$ . In post-test 2, 19 of 31 students (61,29%) reached score  $\geq 85$  and the rest 12 students (38,71%) had score  $< 85$ . Finally, in post-test 3, 21 students (67,74%) reached score  $\geq 85$  and the rest 10 students (32,26%) had score  $< 85$ . It meant the students' ability in writing narrative texts could be improved by using CIRC Method.

The students' improvements in each aspect of writing from pre-test, post-test 1, post-test 2, and post-test 3 were presented in the following table and chart:

**Table 10. The Students' Improvement in Each Aspect of Writing**

Aspects of Writing	Pre-Test	Post-Test 1	Post-Test 2	Post-Test 3
Exposition	3,27	4,03	4,32	4,48
Narrative technique and development	3,03	4,29	4,55	4,77
Organization and cohesion	2,94	3,39	3,98	4,13
Style and convention	2,85	3,37	3,85	4,23
Conclusion	2,98	3,48	4,11	4,31
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>3,01</b>	<b>3,71</b>	<b>4,16</b>	<b>4,38</b>

Based on the table above, there were some improvements in every aspect of writing. It was clearly seen from the chart above. It proved the increasing average score of students from pre-test to post-test 1, post-test 2, and finally post-test 3. Referred from the previous cycle, the aspect of "Organization and cohesion" was raised at the end of Cycle 3. It meant that the students' comprehension in every aspect of writing had been successfully improved.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data analysis of Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, Post-Test 2, and Post-Test 3 in the previous chapter, it could be concluded that the use of CIRC method gave a better improvement in students' ability of the second year students (XI Sains 3) of SMAN 4 Pekanbaru in writing narrative texts. It was proven by the increase of students' average score from 60,32 in the pre-test, to 74,62 in post-test 1, to 83,29 in post-test 2, and up to 87,68 in post-test 3. There were some factors influenced the increasing of the students' writing ability through narrative texts. They were the interested brainstorming to motivate students, the students' familiarity with the topic, the interesting topic of the texts in every meeting, good cooperation between the writer and the students, and between students with each other, and the students' ability in applying the method that had been taught by the writer. By using CIRC method, the students were easy to compose their own writing because they write based on what they read. Moreover, the students were also given some activities before they write their own writing such as, answer the questions related to the text, discuss the text, and find the meaning of some difficult words listing. In addition, CIRC method was not only about increasing writing ability but also motivated the students' interest in teaching and learning process. This method not only helped students to improve their writing ability in composing narrative texts but also help them to be familiar to interact with others.



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