

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH  
COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING AND COMPOSITION  
TECHNIQUE TO THE EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP SWASTA  
KATOLIK BUDI MURNI 1 MEDAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

Reading is not only about pronouncing written words correctly but also comprehending the text. It is not surprising the students have difficulties in reading comprehension because they do not understand the language. Therefore the teacher must try to help the students comprehend the text. One thing the teacher can do is to find a technique to teach this reading comprehension. Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition can help the students to improve their reading comprehension and to arouse their motivation. The aim of this study is to find whether Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition Technique works effectively on improving students' reading comprehension and to know what students' responses after being taught by using this technique. The subject of this study is the eighth grade students of SMP Swasta Katolik Budi Murni 1 Medan in the Academic Year of 2018/2019 were consist 25 students of class VIII C. This study was conducted by applying Classroom Action Research (CAR), which was performed in two cycles ( cycle I and cycle II). The instruments of collecting data were Quantitative data (reading comprehension test) and and qualitative data (field notes,obervation sheet,questionnaire)The result of reading comprehension tests showed that the mean of the students' score increased from pre-test (20 %), formative test (52 %), post-test (76 %). The field notes, observation sheet and questionnaire showed that the students are interested in the learning teaching process through CIRC Technique and this study run well. It was found that this technique could improve students' reading comprehension. It is suggested that English teacher should apply this technique in teaching reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** reading comporehension, cooperative integrated reading and composition technique (CIRC), classroom action research (CAR)

**I. INTRODUCTION**

English is an international language that is used by people to communicate in the world and it plays an important role in our life. Almost all countries have adopted English as a compulsory subject at schools. The national education has decided that English as a foreign language is taught in Indonesian schools. It learned started from primary schools up to university. In Indonesia, English subject has been included in the curriculum fromJunior HighSchool and also as the one subject that is examined in the National Examination. It means that English cannot be ignored by the students. In learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia, the students are supposed to master the four language skills in order to use English well. Those are listening, speaking, reading and writing. They are equally important

because those skill are related to each other. One of receptive language skill is reading. Reading is such an activity in which people get information, knowledge, and ideas from written text.

Reading is an important way which can improve the students general skill in English. It can improve the vocabulary, and the writing. According to the statement, students can get information and can support other skills in English by applying reading skill. According to Brown (1982:136) a person must be able to understand what the author writes in order to be an effective reader. It means that the readers have to catch the information which writer writes so that can be seen the benefits in doing reading. Today almost the students i have been thought only read but they do not think how to comprehend. To comprehend, a reader must have a wide range of capacities and abilities. These include cognitive capacities, motivation, and various types of knowledge. In order to produce good ability in reading comprehension, students need to use appropriate method or technique in learning reading.

Reading comprehension is a multi component, highly complex process that involves many instructions between readers and what they bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables related to the text. According to Klingner et al (2007:4) Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of complex processes that includes word reading, word knowledge and fluency.

From the definition above, the writer concludes that reading comprehension is a process to read a text in order to get information from the text. It means that when we read, we have to understand the information in the text. There are some texts that the students learn in junior high school. They are descriptive text, narrative text, procedure text, report text, spoof text and etc. Based on the English syllabus of the eighth grade junior high school in second semester, the students are expected to able to comprehend recount text.

Based on writer's experience in SMP Budi Murni 1 Medan when she did the internship program to the eighth grade students, when they learning reading text, the students still have the crucial difficulties in comprehending the contents of the text. They cannot pronounce, spell, identify, and understand all words in any kind of text. They do not know what the text tells about, and then there are many unfamiliar words, difficulties in finding the main idea, the meaning of word phrases and sentences in the text.

To solve the problem above, the teacher should find technique to improve the students' interest and motivation in reading. The English teachers are expected to find an appropriate technique to make the students understand and enjoy to read the text. Based on the explanation above this research is focused on finding an alternative technique in teaching reading. It is expected to makes students enjoy in learning. The students should feel fun in classroom during the learning process. One of techniques that can be applied to teach reading is Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (henceforth CIRC)

According to Durukans (2011), CIRC technique is one of the learning techniques based on cooperation, is designed to develop reading, writing and other language skills. CIRC technique presents a structure that increases not only opportunities for direct teaching in reading and writing but also applicability of

composition writing techniques. He adds that skill-based reading groups approach encourages development of this technique.

The writer is expected to be able to motivate the students through certain ways, help the students to understand the material easily because every student has different idea about the text and they can share in group. Moreover, in this section they can share about the appropriate themes which are related to the material. Then, the team mate can help the other to give suggestion or comment. This technique is open opportunities for the students to become more active in learning and the students will have much deeper understanding on the reading text they have read. Therefore, the teacher hopes that the students will enjoy their learning activity.

Some previous researches in using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition have been presented to improve reading skill. The first research was conducted by Ayu Widya Hapsari (2013) entitled "Teaching Reading Comprehension by Using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Method to the Seventh Grade Students of SMPN 1 Kerambitan in Academic Year 2012/2013". The result of this research shows that CIRC can improve the students reading comprehension. It is shown from the increase of mean scores of pre-test and post-tests, compared to the mean score of pre-test which is 46,61, Then, the mean score cycle 1 was 51,60 and in test cycle 2 was 73,23. The second research was conducted by Tiur NurFitria (2012) entitled "Improving Student's Reading Comprehension through Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition of the Eighth Grade Students of MTs Negeri Bendosari Sukoharjo in the Academic Year 2012/2013". It is shown from the increase of mean scores of pre-test and post-tests, compared to the mean score of pre-test which is 52.3, in test cycle 1 was 64.7 and in test cycle 2 was 75.5. Both of the research findings have shown good results of applying CIRC Technique.

Based on the explanation above, the writer decides to conduct a research entitled Improving students' Reading Comprehension through Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Technique to the Eighth Students of SMP Budi Murni 1 Medan.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Reading**

In daily life, reading skills play an important role in facilitating people to comprehend the written material. We can get those information or knowledge from various sources, such as: books, novels, poems, magazines, newspapers and any other. If we read more, we will be able to get more information and knowledge. According to Anderson et. al (1985: 17) reading is a process in which information from the text and the knowledge possessed by the reader act together to produce meaning. Good reader skillfully integrate information in the text what they already know.

Aebersold and Field (1998:15) state that reading is what happens when people look at the text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text, further, the text and the reader are the two physical entities necessary for the reading process to begin. Thus, there is an interaction between the text and the reader that constitute actual reading.

Reading involves a reader, a text and a writer. Reading skills are developed in an active process. This process involves the surface representation encoded by a

writer and ends with interpretation of the written text and interchanges between the writer and the reader. If the writer is careless, the reader may not get the message. If the writer makes demand that the reader cannot fulfill, the message will not be received, even though to another reader it might be clear. If the reader is careless, reading will result in incomplete interpretation. The reader tries to interpret the text through his/her own experiences, but they may differ from the writer's experiences. This explanation proves that reading is not just an active process, but also an interactive one.

Based on the definition above, the researcher concludes that reading is a means of communication between the reader and the writer so that the reader understands what the writer says in a certain text, and then the reader reads these graphic symbols as the message representation. Besides it, reading has some basic aspects that reading for active, interactive process that go on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension.

### **Types of Reading**

According to Patel and Jain (2008:117) there are four types of reading, those are intensive reading, extensive reading, aloud reading and silent reading.

#### **a. Intensive Reading**

Intensive reading is related to further progress in language learning under the teacher's guidance. Intensive reading will provide a basis for explaining difficulties of structure and for extending knowledge of vocabulary and idioms". It will also provide material for developing greater control of the language in speech and writing. It means that intensive reading is done to get specific information. The goal of this reading is active use of language.

#### **b. Extensive Reading**

Harmer (2007:99) states that "extensive reading refers to reading which students do often (but not exclusively) away from the classroom. They may read novels, web pages, newspapers, magazines or any other reference material. It can be called reading for pleasure or joyful reading". This reading can enrich learners' knowledge and help learners to develop their active vocabulary. Learners have a main role in this reading activity. Through this reading, the good reading habit can be developed.

#### **c. Aloud Reading**

Aloud reading is a type of reading engaged the eyes to read and the brain to understand content of the text. When students read the text and they pronounce a word or sentence incorrectly, teacher can check and correct it.

#### **d. Silent Reading**

Silent reading is a type of reading not necessary to move our lip. So, it is only involve understanding the text by looking at the text without saying it. Silent reading is able to expand students rapid reading with full understanding.

From those statements, the writer can conclude there are four types in reading that is interactive, extensive, aloud reading and silent reading.

### **Cooperative Learning**

According to Slavin (1995:287), cooperative learning is instructional methods in which students work together in small groups to help each other to learn. Meanwhile, Burden (1999:99) states that cooperative learning is a means of grouping students in small, mixed-ability learning teams. The teacher

presents the group with a problem to solve or task to perform. Students in the group then work among themselves, help one another, praise and criticize one another's contributions, and receive a group important performance's score.

Based on the notion of cooperative learning above, the writer conclude that cooperative learning is very good for improving student to study hard and can develop new idea for get good students and make understand to give job for other friend in the team and active to study, help, and responsibility in the team can make better team than the others.

### **The Strategies of Cooperative Learning**

According to Norland and Said (2006:21) Cooperative learning consists of groups of students working together in a cooperative, as opposed to competitive, manner to complete a task, an activity, or a project. While working together, the students have meaningful interaction with one another in the target language. The following are detail explanations about the strategies of cooperative learning:

- a. To implement cooperative learning, the teacher must decide whether cooperative activities will help meet the goals of the class. The teacher must also decide which type of cooperative activity to use. Cooperative activities might include peer tutoring, jigsaw activities in which different members of the group have different information that they must put together to find the results, group projects in which students work together to accomplish a task, and group projects in which students work independently but come together to complete the task. Then the teacher decides on one of many cooperative techniques to use, such as games, role play, drama, projects, interviews, information gap activities, or opinion exchange.
- b. The teacher decides how to put the groups together. Teacher might do this by counting off; by placing students in mixed-proficiency, or different or same language groups; or by allowing the students to choose their own partners. In general, the teacher should decide this ahead of time.
- c. Once the teacher has decided on cooperative activity, he or she explains to the group members what they will do. Sometimes each person in a group will be assigned a role such as recorder, leader, or negotiator. At times, it may also be necessary to model the technique and to explain why they will be working in groups. Then divide the class into groups.
- d. Students begin, and the teacher checks with the groups to make sure that they understand what they are supposed to be doing. The teacher monitors the groups by walking around to make sure they stay on task if this is an in-class activity. He or she is also available to answer any questions or problems that may arise.
- e. When the group is finished with its activity, which may take several minutes to several weeks depending on the activity, there should, in most cases, be a final product or discussion. Generally the final product, or parts of it, should be shared with the whole class. This might take the form of a formal presentation, a discussion, or a chance for everyone to ask questions.

### **Recount Text**

According to Gerot and Wignell (1998:194) recount text is "a text which retells events or experiences in the past and it has a social function to retell events for the purpose of informing and entertaining". A recount text has an orientation, a

series of events in chronological order, personal remarks on the events, and a reorientation that “rounds off” the sequence of events.

Gerot and Wignell (1998:195) state that there are four language features of recount text :

- 1) The recount text has a title which summarized the text.
- 2) The recount text has specific participants
- 3) The basic of recount text consists three parts : orientation, events in chronological order, concluding comments expressing a personal opinion regarding the events described.
- 4) Events are described using past tense and adverbs to add more detail to the verbs.

Genre can be recognized from three rhetorical structures. They are social function, schematic structure, and language features. Genre differs in terms of their social purposes for which a cultural interacted. They also differ with respect to the stages or schematic structures through the social processes are achieved. The social function of recount text is to retell past events or experiences. There are three generic structures of recount text:

- 1) Orientation Provide the setting and produces participants. It provides information about who, where, when.
- 2) Events Telling what happened, present event in temporal sequence. It is usually recounted in chronological order. Personal comments and evaluative remarks, which are interspersed throughout the record of events.
- 3) Re-orientation Optional-closure of events. It is rounds off the sequence of events.

### **Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition**

According to Slavin (1995: 74-75) CIRC is a comprehensive program for teaching reading and writing. Students work in four-member cooperative learning teams. They engage in a series of activities with one another, including reading to one another, making predictions about how stories will come out, summarizing stories to one another, writing responses to stories, and practicing spelling, decoding, and vocabulary. They also work together to master main ideas and other comprehension skills, then students writing and preparing for publication. Three studies of CIRC program have found positive effects on students’ reading skills, including improved scores on standardized reading and language tests.

CIRC Writing/ language art is a comprehensive approach to writing and language art based on a writing process model, with the same teams used in CIRC Reading serving as peer response groups. Students work together to plan, draft, revise, edit, and ultimately publish composition. Teachers present mini lessons on style, content, and mechanics of writing, which are integrated with students writing.

According to Slavin (1995: 200) in CIRC Reading, students are taught in reading groups and they are asked to focus in collaborating their ability teams to work on a series of cooperative activities, including partner reading, making prediction, identification of characters, setting, problems and problems solution, summarization, vocabulary, spelling, reading comprehension exercise, and story related writing.

### **III. RESEARCH METHOD**

In this research design is quantitative and qualitative research and completed by an Classroom Action Research (CAR). Quantitative research is use to quantify the problem by way generating numerical data or data can be transformed into useable statistic. Quantitative Data uses measurable data formula facts and uncover pattern in research. Qualitative research is also use to uncover trends in thought and options, and dive deeper into the problem .Qualitative data are obtained from interview and observation. Quantitative data are obtained from students' pre-test and post-test.Slavin(2005:6) states that classroom action research is any systematic inquiryconducted by teacher, researchers, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching or learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn. It means that CAR is aimed to overcome problems in teaching-learning process in order to improve educational practice.

The writer uses Classroom Action Research by Burns et al (2012:2) state that Class Room Action Research is a part of a broad movement that has been going on education generally for sometime. It means that Class Room Action Research is a process of research by the teacher for repairing and improving the learning in the classroom.They are planning, acting, observing and reflecting. In this research, the writer in classroom action research acts not only as the researcher but also as a teacher, a planner, making of pre-test, a lesson plan, post-test in each final cycle, analyzing and reports the result of the research.

#### **IV. DATA ANALYSIS**

##### **The Data Analysis**

There are two types of data which were analyzed to find out of the result of improving students' reading comprehension by using Cooperative Interated Reading and Composition Technique, they are quantitative and qualitative data.

##### **Quantitative Data**

The quantitative data was taken from the test result of students, namely pre-test before treatment, formative test after cycle one, Post-test after cycle two. The complete result of the students' score in every test can be seen from the table and the histogram of score interval and frequency.

From the result of the students' score, it is concluded that the students mean score increases. It could be seen from the mean score in pre-test,formative test,and post-test.In pre-test,the students' mean score is 50,2 while the students' mean score in the formative test is 67 And in post-test is 77,6 Then the mode and median of the students' score In post-test are Higher than pre-test.It means that there is development of the students' reading comprehension on narrative texts through Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition.

##### **The Qualitative Data**

The qualitative data were taken from field notes and abservation sheets. The qualitative data are elaborated as follows :

##### **The First Meeting (Pre-test ) : Friday,May 18,2018**

In the first meeting the writer met the eighth grade students of SMP Budi Murni 1 Medan, and the writer was accompanied by Mr. A Mahulae as the English teacher at the school.The writer started the meeting by greeting and explained the

purpose of her coming to school in order to conduct a research for accomplishing her Sarjana's thesis.

Before conducting the first cycle, the pre-test was given to measure how far the student's reading comprehension. In this occasion, the writer asked the students to answer the questions about recount text. The questions were in the form of multiple choice items consisting 20 questions from 3 passages with options A,B,C,D and the score is all the correct answer times into twenty. After finishing answering the test, the writer told to the students that the writer would meet the students in the next meeting.

From the result of pre-test, it was found the students' reading comprehension is still low and only 4 students of 25 students could pass the Mastery Minimum Criteria ( Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal ). Thus, the writer decided to do the cycle I and cycle II in the next meeting, and there were eight meeting, 1 meeting for pre-test, 3 meeting for cycle I, 3 meeting for the cycle II and 1 meeting for post-test.

### **Cycle 1**

The following are the elaborations of cycle I.

#### **The Second Meeting (Treatment I) : Saturday, 19 May 2018**

The second Meeting was beginning of cycle I. It started from 10.30 until 12.00 am. The writer opened the class by greeting the students and then checked the attendance list of students. After that the writer started to teach recount text explained about definition, social function, generic structure, language features and other related to recount text and the writer explained it with an example, based on the problem faced by the students toward reading comprehension in recount text taken from result of pre-test. They did not know what the text tells about, and then there are many unfamiliar words, difficulties in finding the main idea. Therefore the writer tried to solve the problems by using CIRC Technique. In this meeting the writer explained briefly about the concept and procedure CIRC Technique.

#### **The Third Meeting :Friday, 25 May 2018**

The third meeting was the second meeting of teaching and learning process in cycle I. It started from 09.45 am until 11.00 am. The writer continued the previous material about recount text. Then, the writer reviewed it by asking students one by one to prove whether the students still remembered material about what the writer explained the last day. After finishing the writer continued explained about CIRC Technique. Then, The writer made some groups based on the different level achievement in pre test score. Afterwards, the writer chose one of the students in the groups as a group leader. She pointed some students to read the text. After finishing read the text the writer asked the students to discuss the text with their group. Identifying the contain of the text by finding the main idea of each paragraph, the generic structure, the purpose of the text, the detail information of the text and verb 2 or to be was/were as the characteristic language feature of recount text. The students also had to comprehend the contain of the text, what the text told about. The students used dictionary to look for the meaning of the difficult word, because most of the students brought dictionary, so the process run fluently. The writer walked around the classroom to control the students' activity each group while discussion time was conducting. After the presentation session was started, each of group came forward to present their discussion result and other group could give



question. To make students' concern toward other group presentation, the researcher prepared some question related with the text was discussed in the end of meeting, and the witer remind the students that in the next meeting there would be a test.

#### **The fourth Meeting (Treatment III) : Saturday 26, 2018**

The fourth meeting was the third meeting of teaching and learning process in cycle I. It started from 07. am until 11.00 am. the meeting was opened by praying together. The writer greeted the students and checked the students' attendance. The writer gave time to students prepare by learning the previous material before Formative test was done. All of the students seemed ready because the writer has said it before. After the writer shared the text, they were asked to do individually. The questions consist of 20 questions, and it was multiple choice questions. At the end of the time, the students were asked to submit their answer. After calculating the students' mean score in the formative test and the result is that the students mean score still low. Thus the write will conduct the cycle II.

#### **The fifth Meeting: Wednesday 30,May 2018**

In this meting of the action in the second cycle , based on result of formative test , the students mean score is 67 and there are 10 students pass the *KKM* . Thus the writer evaluate the weakness in previous meeting. In this meeting , the teacher help the students that still difficult to comprehend the text. The writer reviewed the procedures of CIRC Technique. Next the writer give a recount text and the writer explained definiton, social function, generic structure, language features and other related to recount text again.The writer give some questions related with the example, in the last of meeting the writer and the students conclude all about the material and said good bye.

#### **The sixth Meeting:Saturday 09, June 2018**

The sixth meeting was the second meeting of teaching and learning process in cycle II. The writer continued the previous material about recount text. Then, the writer reviewed it by asking students one by one to prove whether the satudents still remembered material about what the writer explained the last day. The writer asked them to sit in their group. Then the writer give the texts of recount texts. She pointed some students to read the text. After finishing read the texts the writer asked the students to discuss the text with their group. Identifying the contain of the texts by finding the main idea of each paragraph, the generic structure, the purpose of the text, the detail information of the texts and verb 2 or to be was/were as the characteristic language feature of recount text. The students also had to comprehend the contain of the text, what the text told about.Because time is over the writer closed the meeting and they continued in the next meeting.

#### **The seventh Meeting: Friday, 8 June 2018**

The seventh meeting was the third meeting of teaching and learning process in cycle two , the writer opened the class with greet the students. Then The writer asked the students to sit down based on the group . Then, the students moved and gathered with their group. The writer instructed students to give applause as the reward to the group and other group could give question. At the end of the meeting

the writer remind the students that in the next meeting there would be a test so they can prepare themselves at home.

#### **The eighth Meeting: Friday, 15 June 2018**

This meeting was the last meeting of the study, this is the time for the writer to give the students post-test to know the result of reading comprehension by using CIRC Technique. After the writer shared the text, they were asked to do individually. The questions consist of twenty questions, and it was multiple choice questions. They finished the test faster. At the end of the time, the students were asked to submit their answer. Finally, the writer ended the class by thanking and closed by pray.

#### **Observation Sheets**

The writer use an observation sheet to observed all the condition learning teaching process, and it was filled by the collaborator. The collaborator observed during teaching learning process. The observation report was based on the observation sheet in cycle one, namely, the writer could open the class, explain the material and closing the class well, but there was some lack namely, the writer could not manage the time well and when the writer explain some of students do not pay attention. But in the cycle II the writer could do everything well during the learning teaching process. Based on the result of the observation sheet, it was concludes that the students were easier and more interested in reading comprehension.

#### **Questionnaire**

This questionnaire was filled by the students. This questionnaire was given to the students in order to find out the students' responses, the students' achievement, and the students interest during teaching reading comprehension by using CIRC technique.

Based on the histogram, it can be conclude that the students' responses toward learning teaching process of reading comprehension by using CIRC Technique are good.

#### **Discussion**

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition Technique was applied to improve the students' reading comprehension to the eighth grade students of SMP Budi Murni 1 Medan. As the collaborator the English teacher and the writer collaboratively discussed the result of the study. They conclude that the use of CIRC Technique could be the effective way to help students in reading. It was shown in histogram and table 4.4. In which the mean score of each test improved. The mean score of pre-test is 50,2. Formative test is 67 and the post test is 77,6. Those score showed that the second cycle was better than the first cycle. Beside that, the improvement can be seen from the observation sheet, field notes and questionnaire. Most of students were more active and enthusiastic during the process of teaching and learning start from the first to second cycle when the technique was applied.

In conclusion, CIRC Technique was suitable technique to improve students' reading comprehension because this technique gave students a chance more active. Eventhough, the application of this technique requires a long time to implement in the classroom.

As the result, the students' reading score test improved in both of cycle after being taught with Cooperative Integrated Reading an Composition Technique and also have good response and condition to all students in teaching learning process.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS**

After analyzing and discussing the data, the writer draws the following conclusions :

1. The application of *Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition* can improve the students' reading comprehension. It was found out that the students achievement of reading comprehension on recount text improved from pre-test and post-test after *Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition* was applied. The increase of the students' total mean score in pre-test is 50,2 the formative test is 67 and post-test is 77,6 Meanwhile, the students' score percentage who was passed Mastery Minimum Criteria ( Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal ) from pre-test is 20 % the formative test is 40 % and the post-test is 72 %, the students score percentage continuously increased in each test. Therefore, it is concluded the application of *Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition* can improve the students' reading comprehension on recount texts successfully.
2. The students' responses were very good. They felt enthusiastic and motivated after being taught with *Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition*. It could be seen from the qualitative data such as observation, field notes and questionnaires during the study, and the result of questionnaires are Percentage of Strongly Agree is 52,6%, Percentage of Agree is 39,3 % and Percentage of Quit Agree is 8 %.

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