IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH CIRC STRATEGY AT THE EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS OF MTsN KEDIRI 1

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ABSTRACT

CIRC is a school-based program that targets reading, and writing. All activities follow a cycle that involves teacher's presentation, team practice, peer pre- assessment, additional practice, and testing. This study was aimed to describe the way of CIRC strategy improve the eighth grade students' reading comprehension reading comprehension achievement of MTsN Bandar Kidul Kediri.

The study was conducted to the students of VIII-H MTs N 1 Kota Kediri using CAR. The procedure was started from doing preliminary study, panning, implemented the treatment and observation whether the cycle went on or not. The data collection method is gotten from test, questionnaire, and teaching observation checklist.

In the first cycle, the score gotten was 73.95. The students score average in reading comprehension is 78.49 in the second cycle. In the second cycle, there was no student got score under 75.00. The improvement of the score was possibly caused by some factors. They were: choosing the balancing member of each group, giving guided vocabularies, and mastering main idea and inferences before the analyzing the text and composing the text. Constructing recount text in the last meeting of cycle also helps the students learn to understand recount text deeply.

Key Words: CIRC, Reading Comprehension

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading recount text comprehension has become the problems among students. Mostly teachers when they teach reading recount text in the class usually take position in front of class. They just explain the lesson or ask the questions in front of class and fell that the students in the behind understand their explanation. In the reality, there are many students sitting in the behind do not understand teacher's explanation even though they are silent. These conditions were identified as the students had been thought that reading is the difficult skill for them to master. From reading process, on the students' mind, they had been filled fully by many words that they had to understand for catching main idea, specific detail, synonym, inferences and explicit and implicit information. The students had paradigm that they have to find many new vocabularies that they had not known before and also they had to understand language featured used. Those steps absolutely seems as like the hardest process that make them bored to face reading text.

Besides that, some students were passive during the class. They even showed no interest toward the subject. Then, their low cooperation completed their negative respond to reading class. The students' passivity in the classroom was indicated as students kept silent during teaching learning process and they also had no respond when they were asked questions. In addition to their passivity, the students also showed no interest toward reading class. Furthermore, their low cooperation was identified as they had no courage to share

ideas with friends; tended to work individually, and talked with their topics out of the discussion. In VIII-H grade students, there are 25 students get under 75 as the criteria of success (KKM). Their score is around 50-70.

From the discussion above, the researcher is interested in carrying out a research dealing with reading comprehension using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) strategy. CIRC is a school-based program that targets reading, writing. The three principle program elements are direct instruction in reading comprehension, story-related activities, and integrated language arts/writing instruction. Having above as a background, the researcher would like to have the research which title is "Improving Reading Comprehension Achievement through CIRC Strategy at the Eight Grade Students of MTsN Bandarkidul Kediri 1".

II. METHOD

Madden (2004) studies that CIRC is teaching technique that focuses on two skills, reading and writing. This two skills drill students' mastery of language arts. The technique guides teachers in motivating students to work in group at the same or different reading level.

CIRC technique activities are suitable to increase students reading comprehension. It is noted by her three main elements of the technique, there are basic activity, direct teaching of reading comprehension, and language art (Sharan, 1999).

As Durukan's (2010: 102-109) research, CIRC technique is realization of cooperative learning that accommodates reading, writing and other language skills. He adds that skill-based reading groups approach encourages development of this technique.

Slavin (2005:45) defines C I R C technique as a teaching technique that focuses on reading and writing to realize comprehensive program. Novel or

narrative texts are used to accommodate students' improvement in reading and writing skill. This technique is different from other cooperative technique since students take part in teacher's activity to check students understanding.

Whereas, in http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EPTW/eptw4/eptw4c.html states that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is a comprehensive program for teaching reading and writing/language arts. Cooperative integrated reading and composition (CIRC) technique, one of the learning techniques based on cooperation, is designed to develop reading, writing and other language skills in the upper grades of primary education. CIRC technique presents a structure that increases not only opportunities for direct teaching in reading and writing but also applicability of composition writing techniques (Açıkgöz, 1992; Yaman, 1999).

CIRC technique is developed to support traditionally- used "skill-based reading groups" approach. Firstly, reading groups are established in the classroom. Next, students are paired off within the groups. When the teacher works with a reading group, couples try to teach each other meaningful reading and writing skills by using reciprocal learning technique. They help each other in performing basic skill-building activities (such as oral reading, contextual guessing, asking questions, summarizing, writing a composition based on the story, revising-correcting composition). In general, team books are published at the end of this process. Teams are rewarded for all reading and writing assignments on the basis of the average performance of group members. Thus, equal change for achievement, group support for achievement, and the performance, all basic components of cooperative learning ensure realization of personal responsibility (Senemoglu, 1997; Slavin, 1980).

Thus, the elaboration to define CIRC has been provided. Concluding some experts notice, CIRC is one of teaching techniques as realization of cooperative method. This technique encourages students' improvement of reading, writing and language art skill.

Students that are involved in cooperative learning achieve many social and academic benefits. Cooperative classrooms are classes where students group together to accomplish significant cooperative tasks. They are classrooms where students are likely to attain higher levels of achievement, to increase time on task, to build cross-ethnic friendships, to experience enhanced self-esteem, to build life-long interaction and communication skills, and to master the habits of mind (critical, creative and self-regulated) needed to function as productive members of society. http://www.pgcps.org/~elc/learning1.html

In http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/EPTW/eptw4/eptw4c.html states that the results of three separate studies indicate that CIRC has a consistent and educationally significant effect on the reading achievement of students in the elementary grades. More specifically, significantly greater gains were made in CIRC-Reading classes than control classes on the California Achievement Test's reading scales for comprehension and vocabulary, and on individually administered Durrell Informal Reading Inventory scales.

Jacob, in Kohn (1994) offers many potential benefits beyond enhanced L2 acquisition. These benefits include increased self-esteem, greater liking for school, enhanced inter-ethnic ties, and improved complex thinking. Furthermore, CL offers one small ray of hope that we can move away from the all-too- present unhealthy forms of conflict and competition that plague our world today.

The study was a Collaborative Classroom Action Research which focused on a particular group of students in a certain classroom. An action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by the participants (the teacher, the students, and principals) in the social (including educational) situation in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices; (b) their understanding of these practices; and (c) the situation (and institution) in which these practices carried out (Carr and Kemmis, 1986: Rohmah, 2004)

Thus, the classroom action research in the study was implemented for the purpose of improving the rationality and justice of teaching recount text by using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC). The implementation was expected to improve the students' recount text reading skill.

The technique is called the model of CAR in which has some steps those are: planning, acting, observation, and reflecting.

III. RESULT
3.1 Cycle I

The researcher examined the result of the students' reading test using multiple choice questions consist of 20 questions as in appendix 5. The test was done at March, 15th, 2012. The correct answer of the every student was multiplied 4 to get the final score.

The result of the test showed the increasing in result. The data is as figure below:

Table 4.1
The First Treatment Table

First Treatment

N	Valid	43
	Missing	0
Mean		73.95
Std. Error of Mean		.773
Median		75.00
Minimum		60
Maximum		85
Sum		3180

From the table above that it could be concluded that the average score was 73.95.

Referring to the criteria of success, the study was considered successful if criteria of success could be achieved. The study met the criteria of success if the mean score of the students' work could reach 75.00. With 73.95, it means that the study was categorized in unsuccessful.

The failure was possibly caused by a number of factors. First, the students could not identify the main idea and supporting details. Second, some students were confused with inferences. Then some students were not active in the discussion might cause students understanding the text less. Besides that, several students had lack of vocabulary. They did not take several important point from the text given, so it mean that they had not comprehended the text yet. It influenced to their discussion and presentation.

Noticing all problems identified, the researcher decided that the implementation of the action in cycle 1 still needed to be improved and revised. Therefore, it had to be continued to cycle 2. But, from all works, some good results could be noticed after applying CIRC technique. First, by using CIRC technique, the students more comprehended to understand recount text. On preliminary step, the students did not comprehend well the text. It can be seen from their answering some question based on the text. After applying CIRC technique, they had more willingness to find the answer and comprehend the text. And on the next step, they made a recount text. It gives good effect for their understanding and helps them to arrange their idea well. Second, by implementing the technique, the mean score of students' work is better than the preliminary result.

3.2 Cycle II

Based on what the researcher had done, the researcher analyzed the result of the second treatment and observation. From the result based on the test and the questionnaire, the researcher got the data as bellow:

Table 4.2
The Second Treatment Table

Statistics

Second Treatment

N	Valid	43
	Missing	0
Mean		78.49
Std. Error of Mean		.716
Median		75.00
Minimum		75
Maximum		90
Sum		3375

From the table above that it could be concluded that the average score was 78,49.

The researcher taught the students the using of CIRC strategy in the main activity in teaching recount text using emphasizing from the data gotten in the second treatment, the students score average in reading comprehension is 78.49. Here there is increasing in students reading comprehension achievement. In the second cycle, there was no student got score under 75.00. Besides that, most of students also became active in discussion.

Then based on the questionnaire gotten as in the appendix 25, the researcher got the data as follow: 91% students follow the discussion, 86% students could understand main idea, 91% students assumed that CIRC helped them in understanding CIRC, 89% students could understand inferences, 89% students could understand synonym and antonym, 82% students thought that their friend helped them when they got problem. Then 84% students assumed that the teacher would help students, 89% students were active in the CIRC process, 93% understood the presentation from other groups, and 68% students could give suggestion to other group's presentation. From the average, it was gotten that 86% students thought that CIRC improved their reading comprehension ability strongly.

From the result above, if the researcher compared with the criteria of success in chapter three, the researcher did not need to go on to the next cycle. It could be stated that the researcher had success in improving student's reading comprehension using CIRC strategy in teaching recount text.

IV. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings gotten, it can be concluded that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension ability in recount text. The improvement can be identified from the increasing scores of each cycle.

In previous study has explained that recount text is a text that supports students to improve their skill in reading, it had explained that teacher has to make students amused, so text has to be chosen accurately, students are allowed to ask or open the dictionary if they get difficulty to find the unfamiliar words. Reading comprehension can be improved by reading more and more.

As stated above, Sharan (1999) says that CIRC technique activities are suitable to increase students reading comprehension. It is noted by her three main elements of the technique, there are basic activity, direct teaching of reading comprehension, and language art.

Besides that Slavin (2005) defines CIRC technique as a teaching technique that focuses on reading and writing to realize comprehensive program. Novel or narrative texts are used to accommodate students' improvement in reading and writing skill. This technique is different from other cooperative technique since students take part in teacher's activity to check students understanding.

By observing the students' reading skill from preliminary study, improving their reading skill both on the first and the second cycle, they are significance development in the students' reading skill. In pre – observation only 18 of students are success, there are 24 students gets the score under the criteria of success, and in the first cycle only 22 students are success, and there are 14 students are fail, it is still not success, because their score are under the criteria of success, so teacher as researcher does the second or the last cycle that shows 100% students reached criteria of success.

The table of development students study from preliminary study, cycle 1, and cycle 2 can be seen in table below.

Table 4.3
Comparison between students' preliminary study, first and second cycle score

		Preliminary Study	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
N	Valid	43	43	43
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		70.58	73.95	78.49
Minimum		50.00	60.00	75.00
Maximum		85.00	85.00	90.00

From the table above, the numbers of students are 43. Students' mean, minimum score and maximum score improved, students' reading comprehension of recount text through CIRC are successful. Mean in preliminary study is 70.58, minimum score is 50, and maximum score is 85, they are under the criteria of success, and then, in cycle 1 after applying the strategy, the students' score are getting better, mean is 73.95, minimum score is 60.00, and maximum score is 85.00, some of students are still under the criteria of success, so teacher as the researcher did the cycle 2, he got the score of students improved, mean is 78.49, minimum score is 75.00, and maximum score is 90.00. Due to this condition, the researcher stops the research in the second cycle, because it has reached success criteria. The findings of the study are deal with some theories about magnet summaries strategy. As Durukan's (2010: 102-109) research, CIRC technique is realization of cooperative learning that accommodates reading, writing and other language skills. He adds that skill-based reading groups approach encourages development of this technique.

In short, CIRC strategy helps the students not only in reading but also in writing understanding. Therefore, by using this strategy to the students will help them in discussion to find out their problem in reading and overcome it with their group. This technique also helps them to make recount text which will make them understand deeply in recount text after they read they will practice it in writing process.

The improvement of the score was possibly caused by some factors. They were: choosing the balancing member of each group, giving guided vocabularies, and mastering main idea and inferences before the analyzing the text and composing the text. Constructing recount text in the last meeting of cycle also helps the students learn to understand recount text deeply.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION
5.1 Conclusion

In applying CIRC, the researcher made successful in improving students reading comprehension especially in recount text in the second cycle. The procedures applied were: First, the researcher divided the class into some groups by dividing the clever students and low students in very group. After that the researcher in the first meeting emphasizing in how to find main idea and inferences related to the text given. He also gave the example and method on how to find out main idea and inferences. In the second meeting the researcher gave the text with the question asking genre, main idea, supporting details, inferences and synonym. Then in the third meeting the researcher asked the group to make recount text by giving vocabularies related to the topic given.

The improvement of the score was possibly caused by some factors. They were: choosing the balancing member of each group, giving guided vocabularies, and mastering main idea and inferences before the analyzing the text and composing the text. Constructing recount text in the last meeting of cycle also helps the students learn to understand recount text deeply.

By applying CIRC strategy, which helped students' reading comprehension not only in reading but also in writing, the students could improve their comprehension in reading a recount text.

5.2 Suggestions

In accordance with the findings, suggestions are given to the students, the teachers, the readers and the future researchers.

The students are recommended to solve problems using CIRC strategy to be activate and work together in discussion, so the it is easier to comprehend the text in reading class.

For the teacher is suggested that CIRC strategy can be applied not only in junior high school level but also in senior high school and university level. Therefore, if the teachers want to achieve more target score, they should apply it on their reading class by teaching how to make and use it.

For the readers, this research can be additional knowledge and information relates to improving students reading ability. It can be inspiration in teaching learning relates to reading skill.

It is recommended that the future researchers follow up the study by conducting action research on improving the students' reading comprehension achievement in other types of text, such as descriptive, narrative, report, and other texts through the same strategy since there are still many problems in teaching reading.

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