

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING
AND COMPOSITION (CIRC) TO TEACH WRITING
VIEWED FROM STUDENTS' CREATIVITY**

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ABSTRACT

The research was conducted at finding out whether (1) CIRC is more effective than Direct Method; (2) the eighth grade students of SMP N 2 Cepu Central Java who have high creativity have better writing skill than those having low creativity; and (3) there is interaction between teaching methods and students' creativity to teach writing. This research was done in SMP N 2 Cepu Central Java. The subject of the research is the eighth grade students in the academic year of 2012 – 2013. The method which was applied in this research was experimental Study. The samples were taken by using cluster random sampling technique. The class 8F was used as the experimental class and class 8E as the control class. Each of the classes consisted of 30 students. The data were obtained from students' score of creativity test and score of writing test. To analyze the data, researcher used descriptive analysis, ANOVA, and Tukey test. The result of the research shows that: (1) CIRC is more effective than Direct Method in teaching writing for eighth grade students of SMP N 2 Cepu Central Java; (2) students who have high creativity have better writing skill than students who have low creativity; (3) there is an interaction between teaching methods and students' creativity in teaching writing at the eighth grade students of SMP N 2 Cepu Central Java. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that CIRC is an effective method to teach writing viewed from students' creativity at the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Cepu Central Java. Recommendations are addressed to English teachers and future researchers. English teacher should consider utilizing CIRC due to the benefits of the method. For future researchers, it is suggested to conduct more sophisticated research on the same topic.

Keywords: CIRC, Direct Method, Creativity

A. Introduction

Indonesian Government through the 2006 curriculum of Senior High School states that the students are able to communicate in oral and written and are able to achieve the literacy level. The English Foreign Language students are also expected to have not only receptive skills (listening and reading) but also productive skills (speaking and writing). The students have to understand kinds of the text: descriptive, narrative, procedure, and recount.

Writing is one of English skills besides listening, speaking, and reading. According to Coben and Reil (1989: 2), writing is a communicative act, a way of sharing observation, information, thoughts or ideas with ourselves and others. Writing is usually directed to others for a specific purpose. For students, it can provide the opportunity to express themselves through a written form. Writing can also develop the writer's understanding of an issue by organizing their ideas on a piece of paper.

Harsyaf (2010: 3) states that writing is transforming thoughts into language; it means that we need to think about the content of our writing first and then arrange the ideas using appropriate language (e.g. grammar and vocabulary). Consequently we must learn about organizational skills in writing. To produce a piece of a good writing demands standard forms of grammar, syntax, and word choice. Besides, writing needs good mechanics, organization of paragraph, content the writer's process, and purpose.

Byrne (1984: 43) states that writing is transforming thought into language. It means that in writing, the writers have to express their thought through sentences. This statement is supported by Paul and Goione (1973: 25), who state that writing is translating the idea from a thought into a word and writing it. And then when someone reads it, he/she will translate it back into a thought. So writing is a process of translating idea from someone's thought into someone else thought. In addition, Nunan (2003: 88) says that writing involves both physical and mental act.

Eventhough witing skill is important, it does not get enough attention and proper time allocation in the teaching and learning process. Byrne in Matthews (1985: 89) mentions that most teachers consider that class time should be almost entirely devoted for developing oral skill except for few exceptions, such as activities closely linked to some forms of oral work.

However, writing is not just about accuracy. It is also about having a message and communicating it successfully to other people. To do this, we need to have enough ideas, organize them well and express them in an appropriate style.

Based on the researcher's experience in writing class, the students frequently get difficulties in writing. There are many grammatical errors in the students' writing. Some of them write fragments, run-on sentences, and misplaced modifiers instead of sentences. The students also are not interested in writing class. They feel that writing is a boring activity. Another difficulty is that students cannot manipulate the language well and they lack confidence. Most of them do not know what to write and if they do, they do not know how to write it. They are not able to organize their ideas accurately in the written form. Therefore, to have a good writing, language learners should be provided an appropriate strategy when starting to write a composition.

Based on the observation result in the preliminary study conducted by the researcher in the eighth grade students of SMP N 2 Cepu Central Java, it was found that the students had problems in organizing ideas when they were asked to write a text. Some of them did not know how to start writing and what to write. As a result, the students had poor ability in writing text. They were bored and unmotivated to join the writing class. In other words, the students were passive in the classroom. Besides that, the classroom atmosphere was individual competition and the students did the writing assignments individually. They were not accustomed to sharing ideas. They never worked cooperatively when they were writing.

Considering the above conditions, the researcher proposes a research entitled the effectiveness of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) to teach writing viewed from students' creativity. Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is assumed as an effective method to solve the English Foreign Language classroom's problem on writing and give benefit to the learning process such as in motivating students, improving social interaction in the classroom, creating a positive learning environment, and improve students' writing achievement.

CIRC is a comprehensive program for teaching reading and writing/language arts (Slavin, 1995: 106). In the CIRC, students cooperate, interact, share material, and help each other to achieve the goal. Here, the students understand that they have different roles of specific tasks to allow opportunities for all group members to participate. It is a comprehensive program for teaching reading and writing in which students are assigned to teams composed of pairs of students from two or more different level. Here students work in pairs within their teams on a series of cognitive engaging activities. During the class, students engage in a writer's workshop, writing drafts, revising and editing one another's work, and preparing for publication of team or class books.

CIRC program consists of three principal elements: basal-related activities, direct instruction in reading comprehension, and integrated language arts/writing. In CIRC activities, students follow a sequence of teacher's instruction, team practice, team pre-assessment, and quiz. Students do not take the quiz until their teammates have determined that they are ready.

In teaching writing, during language arts periods, teacher use a specific writing curriculum especially developed for the program. Here, students participate in a writer's workshop, writing their own topic. After that, the teacher present ten minute lessons at the beginning of each period on writing process, style or mechanic, for example brainstorming for topics, conducting a peer revision conference, eliminating run-on sentences, or using quotations. Here, students spend the main part of period planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing their writing. Informal and formal peer and teacher conferences are held during this time. Here, the teacher directs the lessons on specific aspects of writing, such as organizing ideas and ensuring noun-verb agreement, and the students practice and master these skills in their teams.

To implement CIRC, there are several procedures to be done, such as grouping students, establishing seat arrangement, designing lesson plan, setting the learning objectives, and designing appropriate media. According to Sabarun in *Jurnal Studi Agama dan Masyarakat* (2009: 111-112), the implementation of CIRC in teaching writing is divided into three stages: prewriting, whilst writing, and post writing.

Prewriting activities involve selecting and developing the topic, and writing the first draft. Before coming to the topic discussed, the teacher asks students questions related to the topic. This is done in order to direct the students to the topic, and to build on student's previous experience. To implement CIRC in prewriting, the teacher gives a sample of a text. Then, he or she asks each group to analyze the text given. Each group has to find the topic, the supporting details, the concluding sentence, and the transition signals used in the text. In this stage, each student discusses and share ideas within group members. Next, the teacher assigns students to make a text by list the interesting topics. Then, they are assigned to discuss and share the topic selected with their group members. Each member of a group gives comments and suggestions to his or her member's topic. There are two writing activities in whilst writing. Drafting and revising. To implement the CIRC in whilst writing, the teacher assigns the students to write the first draft and revise their compositions in close collaboration with group members. In this case, students draft composition after consulting group members about their ideas and organizational plan, and work with group members to revise the content of their compositions.

Post writing stage includes editing, writing and reporting the final draft. Editing a paragraph is the last stage in the process of writing. Editing refers to correcting grammatical errors, rewriting misspelled words, and changing punctuation. To implement CIRC in the post writing stage, the teacher assigns each student to write the final draft based on member's comments, suggestions, and revisions.

Based on the theories, it can be concluded that there are three stages in teaching writing by CIRC. They are prewriting, whilst writing, and post writing. In prewriting, the teacher assigned the students to list the interesting topic. In this sense, they are assigned to share ideas with their own group members. Before coming to the topic discussed, the teacher asks students questions related to the topic. This is done in order to direct the students to the topic, and to build on student's previous experience. In whilst writing, the teacher assigns the students to write the first draft and revise their compositions in close collaboration with group members. In the post writing, the teacher assigns each student to write the final draft based on member's comments, suggestions, and revisions.

In this research, Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) will be compared with Direct Method. Nearly all teachers believe that students are bored when they study English in the conventional classroom-atmosphere which puts them as passive learners rather than active learners. In writing class, the students only receive teacher's message rather than actively involved in learning process. Students are only expected to pay attention to teacher's presentation, do the exercises in the classroom and finally do the independent exercises at home. These phases are the principals of Direct method.

Besides teaching methods, the students writing skill is also influenced by creativity. Creative behaviour is facilitated by creating a nonpunitive atmosphere in the classroom, by providing challenges or offering difficult task, and by the stimulation of curiosity (Rockler, 1988: 48-49). As a teacher, creativity is behavior that can be facilitated and encouraged in the classroom. To enhance the creativity atmosphere in the classroom, the teacher can provide opportunities for the students to work together on project, especially in writing activities.

Actually, creativity cannot be measured by using creativity test and cannot be associated with personality types. The teacher can see the students' creativity when the teacher gives the students task, such as writing tasks. In writing task, the students are asked to compose a text and develop the text to be a good text. The process to make the text to be a good text, sometimes is not easy for some students. The students must be creative in developing the ideas, writing interesting things, and using grammar, vocabularies, punctuation, etc. Creativity cannot be seen only from students' writing result, but also in the process of composing the text.

B. Literature Review

The objectives of the study are:

1. Finding out whether or not CIRC is more effective than Direct Method to teach writing.
2. Finding out whether the students who have high creativity have better writing skill than those who have low creativity.
3. Finding out whether there is interaction between teaching methods and creativity to teach writing.

C. Research Methodology

The design of this research is experimental research. The research was conducted in the eighth year students of SMP N 2 Cepu. It is located at Jl. Kampung Baru-Karangboyo No.53 Cepu. The population of this research was the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Cepu in the academic year of 2012/2013.

The sample of this research was the students of VIII^F which consisted of 30 students. This class was the experiment group. In this class, teacher taught writing using CIRC. And the control group of this experiment was the students of VIII^E. It consisted of 30 students. In this class, teacher taught writing using DM. The researcher took these classes randomly. The technique used to get the sample is cluster random sampling.

The data that researcher used in this research are the result score of creativity test and score of writing test. For the creativity test, the researcher takes creativity score of eighth grade students from the student's creativity test. To know the students' writing skill the writer used tests. The test is used to obtain the data of the students' writing skill.

To analyze the writing test, the researcher used analytical scoring rubric. In order to have more objective result of the scores, the students' writings are scored by two persons, researcher and other person who understands how to score writing (inter-rater technique). Classroom evaluation of learning is best served through analytic scoring, in which as many as five major elements of writing are scored. The Scoring Standard based on Reid (1993: 236-237) design an analytical scale that specifies five major categories and a description of five different levels in each category.

To analyze the data, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis are used. Descriptive analysis is used to know the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation of the score of test. The normality and homogeneity of the data should also be known, it is done before testing the hypothesis.

ANOVA test is used to find out the significant difference between two groups of means. The data are analyzed using multifactor analysis of variances 2x2. H_0 is rejected if $F_o > F_t$. The design of multifactor analysis of variance is as follows:

Table 1
Factorial design 2 X 2

Teaching Method Creativity	CIRC (A ₁)	Direct Method (A ₂)	
High (B ₁)	A ₁ B ₁	A ₂ B ₁	B ₁
Low (B ₂)	A ₁ B ₂	A ₂ B ₂	B ₂
Total	A ₁	A ₂	

Note:

- A₁ : The mean score of writing test of experimental class which is taught using CIRC
- A₂ : The mean score of writing test of control class which is taught using DM
- B₁ : The mean score of writing test of students having high creativity
- B₂ : The mean score of writing test of students having low creativity
- A₁B₁ : The mean score of writing test of students having high creativity who are taught using CIRC
- A₂B₁ : The mean score of writing test of students having high creativity who are taught using DM
- A₁B₂ : The mean score of writing test of students having low creativity who are taught using CIRC
- A₂B₂ : The mean score of writing test of students having low creativity who are taught using DM

After analyzing the data by ANOVA, the researcher used Tukey HSD (Honestly significant difference) test. Tukey test is used to test the significance of unplanned pair wise comparisons. To know whether there is significant difference or not, q_o is compared with q_t . If q_o is higher than q_t , it can be concluded that there is significant difference. Then, to know which one is better, the means are compared. If the CIRC has higher score than DM, it means that CIRC is more effective than DM to teach writing.

D. Research Findings

This research used data gained from the students' writing scores taken from the experimental class treated by using CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition), and control class by using DM (Direct Method). After the writing scores were gained, they were then sorted in accordance with their creativity.

After classifying the data into their groups, the researcher analyzed the normality and the homogeneity of the data. The summary of the normality using *Lilliefors* test shows that all of the values (L_o) gained are lower than L_{table} . Therefore, it can be concluded that all of the populations based on both teaching methods and creativity levels were normal. The result of homogeneity test shows that χ_o^2 (4.14) is lower than χ_t^2 (7.81). Then, it can be summarized that H_o is accepted and the data are homogeneous.

The data analysis is done by using multifactor analysis of variance 2 x 2. H_o is rejected if F_o is higher than F_t ($F_o > F_t$), it means that there is a significant difference and an interaction. After knowing that H_o is rejected, the analysis is also continued to know the difference between the two groups and cells using Tukey test. To know which group is better, the mean scores of groups and cells are compared. The summary of the data is presented as follows:

Table 2
The Summary of a 2x2 Multifactor Analysis of Variance

Source of variance	SS	Df	MS (SS/df)	F_o	$F_t(.05)$
Between columns (Teaching method)	106.667	1	106.667	4.52662	4.016
Between rows (Creativity)	160.067	1	160.067	6.79277	4.016
Columns by rows (Interaction)	129.067	1	129.067	5.47722	4.016
Between groups	395.8	3	131.933		
Within groups	1319.6	56	23.5643		
Total	1715.4	59			

The summary of a 2x2 multifactor analysis above shows that:

- a. The impacts of employing teaching methods (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition and direct method) upon the students' writing skill.

As it is seen from the result of two-way ANOVA with the same columns, the value of F_o is compared to the F_{table} in which $df_{numerator}$ is 1 and $df_{denominator}$ is 56 at the level of significance $\alpha=0.05$. Based on the table, the value of F_o is 4.52, while the value of F_{table} is 4.01. It means that H_o is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition differs significantly from direct method in their effect on the students' writing skill. Based on the mean score, it is seen that the mean score of the students who are taught by using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (81.43) is higher than the mean score of the students who are taught by using direct method (78.76). It means that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition is more effective than direct method to teach writing.

- b. The effect of creativity level upon the students' writing ability.

Based on the result of two-way ANOVA with the same rows, the value of F_o is compared to the F_{table} in which $df_{numerator}$ is 1 and $df_{denominator}$ is 56 at the level of significance $\alpha=0.05$. Based on the table, the value of F_o is 6.79, while the value of F_{table} is 4.01. It means that H_o is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that the difference between students' writing skill of those subjects with high creativity and those with low creativity is significant. Based on the mean score, it is seen that the mean score of the students who have high creativity (81.73) is higher than the mean score of the students who have low creativity (78.46). It means that the students who have high creativity have better writing skill than the students who have low creativity.

- c. The interaction effect of teaching methods and creativity level upon the students' writing skill.

Based on the result of two-way ANOVA with the same cells, the value of F_o is compared to the F_{table} in which $df_{numerator}$ is 1 and $df_{denominator}$ is 56 at the level of significance $\alpha=0.05$. Based on the table, the value of F_o is 5.47, while the value of F_{table} is 4.016. It means that H_o is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is an interaction effect between teaching techniques and creativity upon students' writing skill. Thus, the effect of teaching techniques on performance of writing depends on the degree of creativity.

Table 3
Summary of Tukey Test

Between groups	q_o	$q_t(.05)$	Meaning	Category
$A_1 - A_2$	3.008862	2.89	$q_o > q_t$	Significant
$B_1 - B_2$	3.685856	2.89	$q_o > q_t$	Significant
$A_1B_1 - A_2B_1$	4.346624	3.01	$q_o > q_t$	Significant
$A_1B_2 - A_2B_2$	-1.52004	3.01	$q_o < q_t$	Not significant

1. Because the q_o between columns (3.01) is higher than q_{table} (2.98), the difference of the mean between columns is significant. It means that the effect of teaching writing using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition to the eighth graders of SMP Negeri 2 Cepu in the Academic Year of 2012/2013 differs significantly from that teaching writing using Direct Method. The mean score of the students taught using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (81.43) is higher than the means score of the students taught using Direct Method (78.76). So, it can be concluded that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition is more effective than Direct Method to teach writing.

2. Because the q_o between rows (3.68) is higher than q_{table} (2.89), the difference of the means between rows is significant. It means that there is significant difference between students' high and low creativity level upon the students' writing competence. The mean score of the students having high level of creativity (81.73) is higher than the mean score of the students having low level of creativity (78.46). So, it can be concluded that students having high creativity have better writing competence than the students having low creativity

3. Because q_o between columns high creativity (4.34) is higher than q_{table} (3.01), the difference between the students having high creativity taught writing using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition and the students having high creativity taught writing using Direct Method is significant. It means that the students having high creativity taught writing using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition differs significantly from the students having high creativity taught writing using Direct Method. The mean score of the students having high creativity taught writing using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (84.53) is higher than the mean score of the students having high creativity taught writing using Direct Method (78.93). It means that Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition is more effective than Direct Method for students who have high level of creativity.

4. Because q_o between columns low creativity (-1.52) is lower than q_{table} (3.01), the difference between the students having low creativity taught writing using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition and the students having low creativity taught writing using Direct Method is not significant.

E. Conclusions

The conclusions of the research which are based on the statistical analyses and the findings can be drawn as follows:

1. Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is more effective than Direct Method to teach writing to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Cepu in the academic year of 2012/2013.
2. The students have high level of creativity have higher writing score especially than those having low level of creativity to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Cepu in the academic year of 2012/2013.
3. There is an interaction between teaching methods and students' creativity in teaching writing. This can be seen from the findings of this research that students taught by using CIRC and having high creativity are able to get better writing ability than those having high creativity and taught by using Direct Method. It means that CIRC is more effective than Direct Method to teach writing for students who have high level of creativity. On the other hand, there is no significant different between students who have low creativity who are taught by using CIRC and the students who have low creativity who are taught by using Direct Method. So, there is no significant different between Direct Method and CIRC to teach writing for students who have low level of creativity. It means that CIRC is an effective method to teach writing for the eighth grade students of of SMP Negeri 2 Cepu in the academic year of 2012/2013.
4. By following the steps above, Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition can be applied well in teaching writing. Therefore, the students' writing creativity can be improved significantly. Based on the conclusions and implications above, there are some suggestions proposed for teachers, students, and future researcher

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Aseptiana Parmawati: The Effectiveness of Cooperative

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