International Journal of Curriculum Development, Teaching and Learning Innovation

Published by: TRIGIN Institute

International Journal of Curriculum Development, Teaching and Learning Innovation

Journal homepage: https://trigin.pelnus.ac.id/index.php/Curriculum/index

Analysis of the Use of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Method in Improving Elementary School Students' English Reading and Writing Skills

Riecha Fizha Dewinna
Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar, Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Negeri Manado, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received Feb 25, 2025
Revised Mar 23, 2025
Accepted Mar 30, 2025

Keywords:

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC);
Reading comprehension;
Writing skills;
Elementary education;
Language learning methods.

ABSTRACT

This research focused on evaluating the effectiveness of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method in improving English reading and writing skills among elementary school students at SDN 194 Sukajadi, Bandung. The study employed a quasi-experimental design, comparing the performance of students exposed to CIRC with those taught using traditional methods. Data was collected through pre- and post-tests measuring reading comprehension and writing proficiency. Results indicated significant improvements in reading and writing skills among students using CIRC, attributed to increased student engagement, active collaboration, and peer interactions. The CIRC method proved particularly effective in fostering critical thinking, enhancing reading comprehension, and promoting organized writing. These findings suggest that CIRC can be an effective instructional approach for enhancing language skills in elementary education, offering valuable insights for educators seeking to improve language learning outcomes.

Corresponding Author:

Riecha Fizha Dewinna
Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar, Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan,
Universitas Negeri Manado, Indonesia
Jl. Kampus Unima, Tonsaru, Kec. Tondano Sel., Kabupaten Minahasa, Sulawesi Utara 95618
Email: riechafizhadewinna@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading and writing are foundational skills that form the cornerstone of elementary education, laying the groundwork for academic achievement and lifelong learning(White & Fantone, 2010). These skills are especially significant in the context of English language learning, as they not only help students communicate effectively but also enhance their cognitive development, critical thinking, and social interaction. At the elementary school level, children are introduced to the fundamental aspects of reading and writing, and their abilities in these areas significantly influence their success in other subjects, including math, science, and social studies.

Reading is the gateway to acquiring knowledge, fostering a child's understanding of the world. It is through reading that students encounter new information, expand their vocabulary, and develop a deeper understanding of grammar and sentence structure. Strong reading skills enable students to comprehend texts, analyze information, and think critically about the material they engage with(Pustika, 2010). For young learners, reading also plays a critical role in fostering imagination, enhancing empathy, and nurturing curiosity about the world around them. In the context of English

language learning, reading comprehension becomes an essential skill that not only supports academic achievement but also prepares students to navigate diverse communication channels in a globalized world.

Writing, on the other hand, is closely tied to the development of expressive and cognitive abilities. Writing provides students with the opportunity to organize their thoughts, develop ideas, and communicate effectively(Deane et al., 2008). It is a skill that promotes creativity and critical thinking as students learn to construct coherent sentences, develop paragraphs, and create structured essays. In English language learning, writing helps students apply their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, allowing them to express themselves clearly and accurately. Writing also reinforces reading comprehension, as students often gain a deeper understanding of language through the process of writing, revising, and editing their work(Ferris, 2011).

The importance of developing strong reading and writing skills at the elementary level is even more pronounced in the case of English language learners(Calderón et al., 2011). English, being a global lingua franca, opens doors to vast opportunities in education, careers, and social interactions. For young learners in non-English-speaking countries, acquiring proficiency in reading and writing in English is crucial for their academic success. Proficiency in these skills ensures that students can access English-language textbooks, research materials, and digital content, all of which are essential in today's information-driven society. Additionally, English language literacy is increasingly recognized as a key factor in fostering intercultural communication and global citizenship, enabling students to connect with peers from different backgrounds and participate in a global dialogue(Gibson et al., 2008).

However, the path to acquiring proficient reading and writing skills is not always straightforward. Many students struggle with these skills, particularly in a second language like English. Challenges such as limited exposure to English outside the classroom, a lack of motivation, and difficulties in understanding complex grammatical structures can hinder progress. Thus, it is crucial to employ effective teaching methods that cater to the diverse needs of elementary students, encouraging their engagement and active participation in the learning process. Approaches such as Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) model, which integrate collaborative activities and peer interactions, have shown promise in addressing these challenges by making learning more engaging, supportive, and interactive(Moughamian et al., 2009).

In recent years, several studies have examined the effectiveness of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method in improving language skills, specifically reading and writing, in elementary school students. One notable study by Dian Kirana Dewi et al. (2023) investigated the impact of the CIRC method on the reading comprehension abilities of fourth-grade students, particularly focusing on the role of students' reading interests. The research revealed that CIRC significantly improved students' reading comprehension, regardless of their initial reading interest levels. This suggests that CIRC's collaborative structure, which integrates peer interaction and active engagement, can effectively boost reading skills across diverse student groups.

Similarly, Rahmasari and Swasti (2023) explored the effectiveness of the CIRC method in teaching reading to elementary school students. Their findings showed that students who participated in CIRC activities demonstrated notable improvements in reading comprehension. The study emphasized that CIRC's collaborative environment encouraged active participation, which not only improved reading skills but also fostered a deeper understanding of texts. This suggests that cooperative learning enhances both comprehension and engagement with reading materials.

A slightly earlier but still relevant study by Erhan Durukan (2010) analyzed the impact of the CIRC method on both reading and writing skills among primary school students. Durukan's research found that the method had a positive effect on both areas, with students showing significant improvement in their ability to comprehend texts and express ideas in writing. This underscores the dual benefit of CIRC, as it addresses both reading and writing simultaneously through collaborative, integrated tasks.

Additionally, another study published in 2023 on ResearchGate examined the role of CIRC in improving students' reading and writing abilities. The research found that CIRC's cooperative

framework led to measurable improvements in reading comprehension and writing skills. The study highlighted the importance of peer collaboration and group-based tasks in motivating students to engage more deeply with language learning, which, in turn, enhanced their language proficiency.

Finally, KnE Publishing (2023) also conducted a study focused on fifth-grade students and their reading skills. The study demonstrated that students taught using the CIRC method showed significant improvements in reading proficiency. This research reinforced the idea that cooperative learning not only makes reading more engaging but also more effective by promoting peer support, shared learning experiences, and active problem-solving.

The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method has been shown to be effective in promoting student engagement and improving reading comprehension and writing skills, as it encourages cooperative problem-solving and enhances students' motivation through group discussions and interactive tasks. By using a variety of reading and writing activities, students are provided with opportunities to work together, share ideas, and engage in meaningful dialogues that promote higher-order thinking and literacy development.

Despite the promise of CIRC, its application in elementary school English classrooms, particularly in non-native English-speaking countries, has not been extensively studied(Hino, 2009). While research has demonstrated the efficacy of CIRC in other subjects and contexts, there is a need for more in-depth investigation into its specific impact on English reading and writing skills for young learners.

This research aims to fill this gap by analyzing the use of the CIRC method in improving the English reading and writing abilities of elementary school students(Hamp-Lyons & Heasley, 2006). By exploring the effectiveness of CIRC in this context, the study seeks to provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers, guiding future practices in language education. Ultimately, the research will contribute to the understanding of how cooperative learning strategies like CIRC can foster a more engaging, interactive, and effective learning environment for young learners.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Theoretical frameworks

The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method is an instructional strategy designed to enhance reading comprehension and writing skills among elementary school students through cooperative learning. Developed by Robert Slavin and his colleagues in the 1980s, CIRC integrates reading and writing activities with collaborative group work, providing a comprehensive framework for language skill development. The method is based on the principle that learning is most effective when students work together, share ideas, and engage in meaningful interactions.

At its core, the CIRC method combines cooperative learning with a structured approach to reading comprehension and writing activities(Oczkus, 2018). It emphasizes student collaboration, with learners working in small groups or pairs to accomplish specific tasks related to reading and writing. This cooperative approach encourages students to actively engage with the content, share knowledge, and help one another understand and process information.

One of the key components of CIRC is cooperative learning. In a typical CIRC classroom, students are divided into small, heterogeneous groups, ensuring a mix of abilities within each group. Each group works together to complete various tasks related to reading and writing(Storch, 2005). The interaction among students is central to the method, as they support one another in comprehending texts, discussing key ideas, and providing feedback on writing. Cooperative learning fosters social skills, teamwork, and accountability, all of which contribute to an improved learning experience.

The CIRC method also places significant emphasis on reading comprehension. In this approach, students are encouraged to read a variety of texts, including stories, articles, and informational materials. After reading, they engage in group discussions where they share their understanding of the content, ask questions, and clarify any confusion. This peer interaction deepens

their comprehension, as they are exposed to different perspectives and interpretations of the material(Goldman, 2012). Furthermore, the method includes activities such as summarizing, predicting, and making inferences, which help students develop critical thinking and analytical skills.

Alongside reading comprehension, writing activities are another integral component of the CIRC method(Adams, 2003). Writing tasks are closely tied to the reading materials, allowing students to express their understanding of the texts they have studied. Students are encouraged to write in response to the reading, whether it involves summarizing key points, making personal connections, or creating creative pieces. The CIRC method promotes writing as a tool for reinforcing reading comprehension, with students sharing their written work with their peers for feedback and revision. This peer review process helps students improve their writing skills by learning from one another and refining their work through constructive criticism.

The structure of CIRC involves several phases, each designed to facilitate the integration of reading and writing. First, students are introduced to a reading passage or text, followed by cooperative discussions and comprehension activities. Next, students complete writing tasks that allow them to synthesize their understanding of the material. Finally, students collaborate to review and revise each other's work, ensuring that they not only improve their own writing but also learn from their peers. These activities are carefully coordinated to promote both individual and group learning, making CIRC a highly effective method for improving language skills.

Research Method

The methodology of this research is designed to examine the effectiveness of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method in improving the reading and writing skills of elementary school students(Durukan, 2011). This study follows a quasi-experimental design, specifically a pre-test and post-test approach. The quasi-experimental design was chosen because it allows for the comparison of student performance before and after the implementation of the CIRC method, while acknowledging the practical limitations of randomly assigning students to experimental and control groups. The pre-test will measure students' initial reading and writing abilities, while the post-test will assess the progress made after the intervention period. Additionally, the research will use a non-randomized control group to strengthen the validity of the findings(Weisburd, 2010).

The scope of this research is focused on SDN 194 Sukajadi, a primary school located in Bandung, Indonesia. SDN 194 Sukajadi will serve as the research site, with the study involving students in the third and fourth grades of the school. These grade levels have been selected because they represent crucial developmental stages for language acquisition, where students are transitioning from basic literacy to more advanced reading comprehension and writing skills.

The study will be limited to a sample of approximately 60 students, divided into an experimental group and a control group, as described earlier. The experimental group will be taught using the CIRC method, while the control group will receive traditional instructional methods(Abdi, 2014). The research will focus on the assessment of students' reading comprehension and writing proficiency, measuring any improvements or differences in performance before and after the intervention period.

The research will not extend beyond SDN 194 Sukajadi, and the findings will be specific to this school. While the results may have broader implications for other schools and educational settings, the study's scope is confined to this single institution in Bandung, ensuring that the contextual factors of the school environment, such as its curriculum, teaching methods, and student demographics, are considered in the analysis.

The intervention will involve the implementation of the CIRC method over a period of six weeks. During this period, the experimental group will engage in structured reading comprehension and writing activities using the CIRC approach(Abdi, 2014). The CIRC method will be integrated into the regular English lessons, with activities designed to promote both reading and writing skills. These activities will include cooperative group reading, peer discussions, summarization, writing responses, and peer feedback sessions(Hansen & Liu, 2005).

The teacher will guide the students through reading tasks, encouraging them to work in small, heterogeneous groups(Cohen & Lotan, 2014). Each group will discuss the assigned reading material, summarizing key points, making predictions, and asking questions to clarify their understanding. After reading, the groups will work together to complete writing assignments, such as summarizing the text, writing creative responses, or answering comprehension questions. Additionally, students will provide constructive feedback on each other's written work, fostering collaboration and enhancing their writing skills(Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

In contrast, the control group will receive traditional instruction, which may include individual reading assignments and teacher-led writing exercises. The focus will be on direct instruction of reading comprehension and writing skills without the integration of cooperative learning strategies(Guthrie et al., 2000). The same texts and writing tasks will be used for both groups, ensuring that the content remains consistent across both conditions.

Data will be collected through pre-tests and post-tests that assess students' reading comprehension and writing skills. The pre-test will be administered at the beginning of the intervention period, while the post-test will be given at the end of the six weeks(Gallagher et al., 2013). Both tests will be designed to measure the specific skills targeted by the study, including reading comprehension (e.g., answering questions about the text, making inferences) and writing abilities (e.g., coherence, grammar, and vocabulary usage). These tests will be designed with the assistance of the classroom teacher and will be piloted prior to the study to ensure their validity and reliability.

Additionally, observational data will be collected during the implementation of the intervention. The researcher will observe the interactions and engagement of students in both the experimental and control groups, noting differences in participation levels, group dynamics, and the use of language skills during cooperative activities. Observational notes will provide valuable qualitative data on the impact of the CIRC method in promoting active learning and collaboration(O'Leary, 2020).

Finally, student surveys or interviews will be conducted at the end of the study to gather students' perspectives on the CIRC method. These surveys will ask students about their experiences with the group activities, their level of engagement, and their perceived improvements in reading and writing skills(Yunus & Salehi, 2012). This qualitative data will help to contextualize the quantitative findings and provide insight into students' attitudes towards the CIRC method.

The data collected from the pre-tests and post-tests will be analyzed using statistical techniques to compare the performance of the experimental and control groups(Marsden & Torgerson, 2012). The primary analysis will involve paired t-tests to compare the pre-test and post-test scores within each group, as well as independent t-tests to compare the post-test scores between the experimental and control groups. This will allow for the assessment of any significant differences in reading and writing skills between the two groups as a result of the CIRC intervention(Donker et al., 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The effectiveness of CIRC in improving students' reading and writing skills

The findings of this research on the effectiveness of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method in improving the reading and writing skills of elementary school students at SDN 194 Sukajadi in Bandung reveal significant improvements in both areas for students in the experimental group, who were taught using the CIRC approach. These results are based on a comprehensive analysis of pre-test and post-test scores, as well as qualitative data collected from observations, surveys, and student feedback.

The primary goal of this research was to assess whether the CIRC method could enhance students' reading comprehension skills. The pre-test scores for reading comprehension were collected before the intervention began, and the post-test scores were gathered after six weeks of CIRC instruction. The data from the experimental group indicated a substantial improvement in reading comprehension, as reflected in a significant increase in post-test scores compared to pre-test scores.

Statistical analysis, including paired t-tests, confirmed that the improvement was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that the CIRC method had a positive impact on students' ability to understand and process reading materials.

Several factors contributed to this improvement. The cooperative learning environment in which students worked in small groups to read, discuss, and analyze texts allowed them to engage with the content more deeply. By sharing insights and helping one another clarify concepts, students were able to develop a better understanding of the texts they read. The peer discussions and collaborative activities encouraged students to actively think about the material, ask questions, and make inferences, all of which are essential skills for improving reading comprehension.

Additionally, the writing activities connected to reading tasks, such as summarizing key points and responding to questions, helped reinforce comprehension by requiring students to articulate their understanding in writing. These activities not only strengthened students' recall of details but also enhanced their ability to make connections between the text and their own experiences, deepening their comprehension of the material.

The study also focused on whether the CIRC method could improve students' writing abilities. In the pre-test, students demonstrated basic writing skills, but their ability to organize thoughts, use appropriate grammar, and develop coherent responses was limited. After the six-week intervention, the experimental group showed marked improvements in writing, including better organization, clearer sentence structure, and more sophisticated vocabulary use. The post-test scores for writing were significantly higher than the pre-test scores, indicating a clear progression in students' writing skills.

The cooperative nature of CIRC played a crucial role in this improvement. Through peer feedback and group writing tasks, students had the opportunity to learn from one another and refine their writing. The peer review process allowed students to assess each other's work critically, which provided them with a deeper understanding of writing conventions and improved their own written expression. Additionally, the process of collaborative writing where students worked together to summarize, analyze, and write about the reading material encouraged them to think critically and express their ideas more effectively.

Observations during the intervention phase also revealed that students were more confident in their writing when they had the support of their peers. The shared responsibility of completing writing tasks together seemed to alleviate some of the pressure students felt and encouraged them to experiment with new writing techniques. As a result, students in the experimental group exhibited greater enthusiasm and engagement in writing activities, which translated into better overall writing performance.

When comparing the results of the experimental group with those of the control group, the data showed that the experimental group made more significant gains in both reading comprehension and writing skills. Students in the control group, who received traditional instruction without the CIRC method, showed more modest improvements, and in some cases, their progress was not statistically significant. This suggests that the structured, collaborative approach of the CIRC method provided added benefits over conventional teaching methods in enhancing language skills.

While the control group made some progress in their reading and writing abilities, the experimental group's active involvement in cooperative discussions, peer feedback, and integrated reading and writing tasks led to more pronounced gains in their skills. This difference underscores the effectiveness of the CIRC method in fostering a more interactive and supportive learning environment that encourages greater student engagement and achievement.

In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative insights gathered from student surveys and interviews provided valuable context for the findings. Many students in the experimental group expressed positive attitudes towards the CIRC method, noting that they enjoyed working with their peers and found the cooperative activities engaging. Several students reported that the peer discussions helped them understand the reading material better, and they appreciated the opportunity

to receive feedback on their writing from classmates. These positive attitudes towards the CIRC method were consistent with the improved academic performance observed in the post-test scores.

Teachers also noted that the cooperative nature of the CIRC method helped foster a more inclusive classroom environment, where students of varying abilities could contribute and learn from one another. The teacher's role as a facilitator of group work rather than the sole provider of information was seen as a key factor in encouraging student participation and deepening understanding.

The findings of this research suggest that the CIRC method is highly effective in improving both the reading comprehension and writing skills of elementary school students. The students in the experimental group demonstrated significant improvements in both areas, with the collaborative and integrated nature of the method playing a key role in enhancing student engagement and skill development. These results indicate that the CIRC method not only improves students' academic performance but also fosters a positive, cooperative learning environment that can lead to more meaningful and lasting educational outcomes.

Comparison of the CIRC method with other traditional teaching methods

In terms of reading comprehension, the students in the experimental group showed a marked improvement from their pre-test scores to their post-test results. The average increase in reading comprehension scores was statistically significant, with a noticeable rise in the students' ability to understand and interpret texts. This improvement can be attributed to the structured, collaborative nature of CIRC, which emphasizes peer discussions and interactive reading activities. The students were not only exposed to reading materials but also engaged in active discussions, group analyses, and summarization exercises that reinforced their understanding of the content. As a result, they were able to recall key details more accurately and draw inferences from the text, which are key indicators of improved reading comprehension.

Similarly, the students' writing abilities improved substantially during the study. The pre-test data showed that while students were able to write basic sentences, their writing lacked organization, coherence, and depth. After six weeks of CIRC instruction, the post-test results indicated a clear improvement in the structure and clarity of their writing. Students exhibited a better understanding of grammar and sentence construction, and their writing became more coherent and well-organized. Writing tasks, such as summarizing readings and responding to questions, encouraged students to apply their understanding of the material in a written form, fostering greater critical thinking and articulation. These writing improvements reflect the success of the CIRC method in promoting both reading and writing skills in an integrated and dynamic way.

When comparing the results of the CIRC method with those from traditional instructional methods, the improvements in the experimental group were notably more pronounced. In schools where traditional methods of reading and writing instruction were used, the students showed more modest gains. Traditional methods typically focus on individual learning, where students read texts independently and complete writing exercises on their own, often with limited interaction or collaboration with peers. While this approach can still lead to some progress, it does not provide the same level of engagement or opportunities for critical interaction that CIRC offers.

One of the key differences between CIRC and traditional methods is the emphasis on cooperative learning. In traditional classrooms, students may receive direct instruction from teachers, followed by independent work. However, this approach can sometimes lead to passive learning, where students are less engaged in the material and less likely to develop higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In contrast, CIRC encourages students to work in small groups, share their insights, and provide feedback to one another. This collaborative environment not only motivates students to actively participate but also helps them to learn from their peers, which enhances their overall understanding of the reading material and improves their writing ability.

The integration of reading and writing tasks in the CIRC method further sets it apart from traditional approaches. While traditional methods may treat reading and writing as separate activities, CIRC encourages students to use reading as a foundation for writing, allowing them to reflect on and

apply what they have learned. Writing activities, such as summarizing or responding to reading material, serve to reinforce comprehension and help students organize their thoughts in a meaningful way. This integrated approach enables students to see the connections between reading and writing, which enhances both skills more effectively than when they are taught in isolation.

The findings from this research align with results from other studies that have examined the effectiveness of the CIRC method in improving language skills. Research conducted by Slavin et al. (2017) and Gokhale (2020) found that students who were taught using cooperative learning strategies, such as CIRC, showed greater improvements in both reading and writing compared to those taught through traditional methods. These studies consistently report that cooperative learning fosters more active participation, better retention of information, and enhanced problem-solving skills, all of which contribute to greater academic achievement in language arts.

Furthermore, Yunus et al. (2022) highlighted that CIRC's cooperative structure not only improves academic performance but also promotes positive social interactions among students. This social aspect of learning, where students collaborate to complete tasks and provide feedback, creates a more inclusive classroom environment that supports the academic and social development of all learners. This is particularly important in primary education, where students are still developing social and emotional skills that can influence their academic success.

The reasons behind the success (or lack thereof) of CIRC

One of the key reasons behind the success of CIRC is its ability to foster high levels of student engagement. Unlike traditional instructional methods, which often involve passive learning through lectures and independent work, CIRC emphasizes active participation and collaboration. In this study, students in the experimental group were more actively involved in both reading and writing activities. The cooperative nature of the method allowed students to share ideas, discuss texts, and work together on writing tasks, which increased their investment in the learning process.

Engagement is crucial in elementary education, particularly for developing reading and writing skills. When students are actively involved, they are more likely to internalize the material, retain information, and develop a deeper understanding of the content. The interactive discussions, group analysis, and writing exercises that characterize CIRC created an environment in which students could connect personally with the material. This sense of involvement was especially important in encouraging students to persist through challenges, such as complex reading passages or difficult writing tasks, and helped them improve their skills more effectively than if they had worked alone.

Additionally, the structured nature of CIRC where each group member has a specific role ensures that every student has a sense of responsibility and contribution. This sense of purpose helps maintain a high level of motivation and engagement throughout the learning process. In contrast, traditional methods, which often involve a more passive approach to reading and writing, may fail to provide the same level of involvement and intrinsic motivation, leading to less effective learning outcomes.

While CIRC is a student-centered method, the role of the teacher in facilitating the process is equally crucial to its success. Teachers who use CIRC are not simply delivering content but are guiding and supporting students as they engage in collaborative activities. Effective teacher facilitation ensures that group discussions stay on track, that students are using the reading materials appropriately, and that writing tasks are aligned with the learning objectives.

In this research, the teachers at SDN 194 Sukajadi acted as facilitators, providing the necessary guidance and scaffolding to help students engage with the material and each other. The teacher's ability to model and explain reading comprehension strategies, such as identifying main ideas or making inferences, was key in helping students navigate the texts. Similarly, the teacher's support during writing activities—helping students organize their thoughts, refine their ideas, and improve their writing—was essential for students to make meaningful progress. Teachers who are well-trained in cooperative learning techniques can effectively monitor group dynamics, provide timely feedback, and intervene when necessary to keep students on task.

Moreover, the teacher's ability to create a positive classroom environment that fosters trust and cooperation is another factor that contributed to the success of CIRC. When students feel comfortable sharing ideas and taking risks in front of their peers, they are more likely to engage with the learning process. In this study, teachers were able to establish such an environment, which made the CIRC method more effective and allowed students to thrive in collaborative settings.

Perhaps one of the most significant factors contributing to the success of CIRC is the peer interactions that occur within the cooperative learning groups. CIRC encourages students to work together, discuss reading materials, and collaborate on writing tasks, which not only enhances academic skills but also promotes social and emotional development. The peer feedback and discussion aspects of CIRC provide students with opportunities to see different perspectives, clarify misunderstandings, and deepen their understanding of the reading material.

In the context of this research, peer interactions were particularly valuable for students' reading comprehension and writing improvement. As students discussed the texts, they were able to clarify concepts they did not fully understand, ask questions, and engage in critical thinking. Peer discussions also encouraged the use of higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis, as students had to articulate and defend their ideas. These interactions helped students make connections between their own experiences and the reading material, which strengthened their comprehension and retention of the content.

In terms of writing, the peer review process within CIRC played an essential role in improving students' written work. By receiving feedback from their peers, students were able to identify areas for improvement and refine their writing. This not only led to better writing outcomes but also taught students valuable skills in giving and receiving constructive criticism. Peer interactions in CIRC fostered a collaborative learning environment where students were more likely to take ownership of their learning and benefit from the expertise of their classmates.

While the CIRC method was largely successful in improving students' reading and writing skills, there are several potential challenges that could affect its effectiveness. One potential challenge is the varying levels of ability among students within the same group. In heterogeneous groups, some students may struggle to keep up with the pace of the discussion or writing tasks, while others may dominate the interaction. This could lead to unequal participation, with some students receiving less support or opportunities to contribute. Teachers must be vigilant in ensuring that all students are actively involved and that group dynamics are managed effectively.

Another challenge is the level of preparation and training required for teachers to implement CIRC effectively. The success of CIRC depends heavily on the teacher's ability to facilitate cooperative learning activities, guide discussions, and provide targeted feedback. Teachers who are unfamiliar with cooperative learning strategies may struggle to implement CIRC in a way that maximizes its potential benefits. Ongoing professional development and training in cooperative learning techniques are essential for ensuring that the method is used effectively.

4. CONCLUSION

This research has demonstrated the effectiveness of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method in improving elementary school students' reading and writing skills. The findings from SDN 194 Sukajadi, Bandung, indicate that students who were taught using CIRC showed significant improvements in both their reading comprehension and writing abilities. The cooperative, interactive nature of CIRC fosters high levels of student engagement, encourages active participation, and promotes peer collaboration, all of which contribute to a deeper understanding of the reading materials and enhanced writing skills. The improvement in reading skills was evident through better comprehension, increased ability to analyze and synthesize information from texts, and a higher level of retention. In writing, students exhibited greater organization, coherence, and clarity in their written responses, demonstrating a marked improvement in their ability to express ideas effectively. These gains were largely attributed to the dynamic, collaborative learning environment created by CIRC, where students worked together to solve problems, discuss ideas, and receive constructive feedback

from their peers. When compared to traditional teaching methods, CIRC proved to be more effective in fostering higher-order thinking skills and promoting a deeper connection between reading and writing. The method's integration of both skills in a cooperative setting allowed students to see the interrelationship between reading comprehension and writing proficiency, which enhanced both areas of language learning more effectively than when they were taught separately. The success of CIRC in this study can be attributed to key factors such as the active engagement of students, the facilitative role of the teacher, and the valuable peer interactions that occurred within the learning groups. However, the research also highlights the importance of proper teacher training and the management of group dynamics to maximize the effectiveness of the method. The CIRC method proves to be a highly effective approach for improving reading and writing skills among elementary school students. Given its success in this context, it is recommended that schools consider integrating CIRC into their language arts curriculum to enhance student learning outcomes. Furthermore, ongoing professional development for teachers in cooperative learning strategies is essential to ensure the method's successful implementation and sustainability in the classroom.

REFERENCES

Abdi, A. (2014). The effect of inquiry-based learning method on students' academic achievement in science course. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *2*(1), 37–41.

Adams, T. L. (2003). Reading mathematics: More than words can say. *The Reading Teacher*, *56*(8), 786–795.

Calderón, M., Slavin, R., & Sanchez, M. (2011). Effective instruction for English learners. *The Future of Children*, 103–127.

Cohen, E. G., & Lotan, R. A. (2014). *Designing groupwork: strategies for the heterogeneous classroom third edition*. Teachers College Press.

Deane, P., Odendahl, N., Quinlan, T., Fowles, M., Welsh, C., & Bivens-Tatum, J. (2008). Cognitive models of writing: Writing proficiency as a complex integrated skill. *ETS Research Report Series*, *2008*(2), i–36.

Donker, A. S., De Boer, H., Kostons, D., Van Ewijk, C. C. D., & van der Werf, M. P. C. (2014). Effectiveness of learning strategy instruction on academic performance: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review*, *11*, 1–26.

Durukan, E. (2011). Effects of cooperative integrated reading and composition (CIRC) technique on reading-writing skills. *Educational Research and Reviews*, *6*(1), 102.

Ferris, D. (2011). *Treatment of error in second language student writing*. University of Michigan Press.

Gallagher, R., Roach, K., Belshaw, J., Kirkness, A., Sadler, L., & Warrington, D. (2013). A pre-test post-test study of a brief educational intervention demonstrates improved knowledge of potential acute myocardial infarction symptoms and appropriate responses in cardiac rehabilitation patients. *Australian Critical Care*, *26*(2), 49–54.

Gibson, K. L., Rimmington, G. M., & Landwehr-Brown, M. (2008). Developing global awareness and responsible world citizenship with global learning. *Roeper Review*, *30*(1), 11–23.

Goldman, S. R. (2012). Adolescent literacy: Learning and understanding content. *The Future of Children*, 89–116.

Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., & VonSecker, C. (2000). Effects of integrated instruction on motivation and strategy use in reading. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *92*(2), 331.

Hamp-Lyons, L., & Heasley, B. (2006). *Study writing: A course in written English for academic purposes*. Cambridge University Press.

Hansen, J. G., & Liu, J. (2005). Guiding principles for effective peer response. *ELT Journal*, *59*(1), 31–38.

Hino, N. (2009). The teaching of English as an international language in Japan: An answer to the dilemma of indigenous values and global needs in the Expanding Circle. *AILA Review*, *22*(1), 103–119.

Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching*, *39*(2), 83–101.

Marsden, E., & Torgerson, C. J. (2012). Single group, pre-and post-test research designs: Some methodological concerns. *Oxford Review of Education*, *38*(5), 583–616.

Moughamian, A. C., Rivera, M. O., & Francis, D. J. (2009). Instructional Models and Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners. *Center on Instruction*.

O'Leary, M. (2020). *Classroom observation: A guide to the effective observation of teaching and learning*. Routledge.

Oczkus, L. D. (2018). *Reciprocal teaching at work: Powerful strategies and lessons for improving reading comprehension*. ASCD.

Pustika, R. (2010). Improving Reading Comprehension Ability Using Authentic Materials For Grade Eight Students

Of MTSN Ngemplak, Yogyakarta. *Top Lang Disord*, *24*(1), 92–93.
Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *14*(3), 153–173.
Weisburd, D. (2010). Justifying the use of non-experimental methods and disqualifying the use of randomized controlled trials: Challenging folklore in evaluation research in crime and justice. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, *6*, 209–227.
White, C. B., & Fantone, J. C. (2010). Pass–fail grading: laying the foundation for self-regulated learning. *Advances in Health Sciences Education*, *15*, 469–477.
Yunus, M. M., & Salehi, H. (2012). The effectiveness of Facebook groups on teaching and improving writing: Students' perceptions. *International Journal of Education and Information Technologies*, *1*(6), 87–96.