
The Effect of Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) on Students' Reading Comprehension of Essay at English Study Program of University of Pasir Pengaraian

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ABSTRACT

Essay is the most important part learned and comprehended by sixth semester students of English study program of University of Pasir Pengaraian. Even though essay is not subject, however it is essential part of writing and reading. It is learned in critical essay. Thus, to improve their skill, a research was needed. The purpose of this research was to investigate whether students who were taught by Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) have better reading comprehension of essay than those who were taught by small group discussion. This research was quasi experimental research. It was nonequivalent control group design; post-test only design. The treatments were only done in experimental class while control class was taught as usual. Population and sample of this research were same. It consists of two classes. They were thirty nine students. Control class is taught by small group discussion and experimental class is taught by cooperative integrated reading composition (CIRC). Reading comprehension test; essay question form was used to collect the data. The data were analyzed by using independent t-test. The finding was students who are taught by cooperative integrated reading composition (CIRC) have better scores (comprehension well) than those who are taught by small group discussion. The finding enriches theories about technique in teaching critical essay subject.

Keywords: Effect, Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC), Reading, essay

Introduction

Reading is one of the essential skills for university students. To get the information and knowledge, the students should master reading skill to comprehend about what they read, the message, and meaning about. In other word, the aim of reading is to get message and meaning of text. Part of reading process is reading comprehension. It involves students' background knowledge, vocabularies, grammar, and reading strategies in process of extracting and constructing meaning of text or essay. Reading is greatly important for English education students. It is one of their

subjects. They learn reading subject four times. It is started from first to fourth semester. They had learned many kinds of text even essay. Essay is something written in presenting a topic. Essay has organization, structure, and elements. Students must comprehend it in order to be able to write critical essay and as source to write academically.

Students were expected to comprehend essay in order to be able to write critical essay. Nevertheless, students have problem in comprehending essay. Based on the result of observation and teaching experience at English study program, the

students did not comprehend the essay well. It could be seen from the result of their last mid semester. Twelve of thirty nine students (30.8%) were not able to find main idea. Eight of them (20.5%) used inappropriate words while writing the answer of questions related essay. Fifteen of them (38.4%) failed to identify essay construction and structure. Others (10.2%) did not finish their answer.

Therefore, the lecturers have to find other technique. According to some experts, one of the techniques predicted to help them is cooperative learning. One of them is Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) It will develop students' reading comprehension of essay and also be influenced on student writing. This technique leads the students work cooperatively in pairs to read for each other, summarize, write responses to literature, and practice their spelling, decoding, and vocabulary development skills. Therefore, this research focuses on examining the effect of CIRC on students' reading comprehension of essay. In other word, whether CIRC gave result on writing critical essay.

In reading, comprehension becomes an important process. As Sheng (2000:18) argues reading is the process of recognition, interpretation, and perception of the written or printed material while comprehension is the understanding of the meaning of the written material and covers the conscious strategies that lead to understand. It means that reading comprehension is understood as a written text means extracting the required information from as efficiently as possible. Dhakal (2010:17) states that reading comprehension involves the process of extracting and constructing the meaning of the texts and the readers involve actively in this process and use

their background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge and the strategies to understand the text.

Hughes (2005:166) gives some indicators of reading comprehension, such as: identify topics, main idea, detail (stated and unstated detail), reference, and vocabulary in context. Zainil (2010:125) also explains that there are five essential skill of reading comprehension such as identifying topic; it is one thing a paragraph about, main idea; it is what the author want the reader to know about the topic, supporting detail; they are facts and ideas that explain or prove the main idea of paragraph, reference; they are words which substitute for other or phrases and they usually refer back to ideas that have already been expressed in paragraph, transition; they are linking words or phrases that a writer uses to lead the reader from one idea to another; example: time-sequence (first, later, next), enumeration (first, second, third), cause and effect (because, thus, consequently).

In addition, Cain et.al (2004:32) states that there are three components skill in reading comprehension. They are making inference, comprehension monitoring, and understanding text structure. Green and Pye (1993:40) states that there are some strategies of reading comprehension such as predicting, reading for specific information, evaluating text, dealing with unfamiliar words and text organization, understand the writer style, reacting to the text and extracting main idea and inferring. Then, Farel (2003:20) explains that a strategy refers to how the readers make sense of what they read and what they do when they do not understand something in the text. Furthermore, essay is an important text to be understood by students. They need to comprehend the organization and structure of it.

Essay

Essay is something written in presenting a topic. According to Shiach (2007:10), an essay is a piece of writing that methodically analyses and evaluates a topic or issue. Fundamentally, an essay is designed to get academic opinion on a particular matter. There are many kinds of essay. They are exposition, demonstration, fiction, non-fiction, politic, and so forth. Essay has construction and organization. Moreover, Shiach says that essay organization consists of the beginning, middle, and the end. The beginning is special because it states the thesis in the first sentence. The middle paragraphs contain the meat of essay. Here is where the thesis is exemplified, argued, demonstrated. Each middle paragraph comes from and is somehow related to the thesis. Each develop some central ideas (one per paragraph) that backs up demonstrates, exemplifies, or otherwise expands upon the thesis statement of essay. It is usually stated in a single sentence and often called topic sentence. The ending wraps things up, tie everything together, and create thereby a sense of completion. In the end of essay, summary is one possibility that brings to appoint and thus to impart the sense of ending. It is pulling ideas together and of reminding the reader of the main point made in essay.

Beside organization, essay also has construction. Every essay is constructed of various elements. To understand an essay fully, therefore, one must understand the elements of which is composed. Syafi'i (2004:25) says that essay construction consist of title, structural elements, means support, examples and other concretions, and theme or thesis.

Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC)

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition is technique which is based on cooperation. It is designed to develop reading, writing, vocabulary, and spelling. Slavin (2005:12) states that students in CIRC are assigned to teams composed of pairs of students. They are working a series of cognitively engaging activity such as oral reading, contextual guessing, summarizing, retelling the text, writing composition based on the text, revising correcting composition, practicing spelling, decoding, and vocabulary. Madden (2004:569) states that CIRC guides the teachers in motivating students to work in group in all levels of performance toward a group goal. Then, Farnish (2005) adds that CIRC has three basic elements; text-related activities, direct instruction in reading comprehension, and integrated language. According to Sharan (2005:6), CIRC gives effect on reading and writing skill. The learners work cooperatively in pairs to read for each other, summarize stories, write responses to literature, and practice their spelling, decoding, and vocabulary development skills. Likewise, they develop comprehension and writing skills through reading and process writing workshops. Based on explanation above, it can be conclude that CIRC is one kind of cooperative methods which can be applied in various activities. It is very effective in reading, writing, and language art. As the result, students motivated to finish their task in teaching learning process. CIRC is developing to integrated writing and reading lesson. Moreover, this technique motivates the students and improves' students' reading comprehension and writing/language arts.

Small Group Discussion

Group is a number of people or thing gathered, placed, or acting together or naturally associated. According to Ur (2011:54), small group discussion is a group of three or five students in studying, practicing, or discussing a material or subject in order to meet educational objectives. It means students can freely question, share knowledge. Then, she adds that working in small group increase students’ involvement in the discussion. Students are also likely to be more open with classmate than in large class discussion. Furthermore, Jhonson and Jhonson (2007:80) say that the major reason of small group discussion is to create the opportunities for the students to develop personally and socially. It means by doing a task in small group discussion, the students get a lot of chances in expressing their idea.

Methodology

The type of this research is quasi experimental research. The design was the posttest-only control group design. There was not pre-test given either on experimental or control class. This research

was conducted on sixth semester students of English study program of university of Pasir Pengaraian. They are 39 students. There are 22 students at class A and 17 students at class B. Class A was experimental class and class B was control class. CIRC was applied in experimental class and small group discussion in control class. The instrument of this research is writing test. The questions were arranged based on essay structure (organization) and construction which are adopted from theories of Shiach (2007:50). Essay structures are beginning, middle, and an end. Essay constructions are title, structural elements, means of support, examples and other concretions, and theme. The instrument was valid and reliable.

Result and Discussion

All of the data were gathered from students’ writing test. The test was given on post test in experimental class and experimental class. The data were gathered from 39 students. The result of research finding was analyzed statitically by using SPSS. It could be summarized in the table below;

Table 1

Test	Class	N	Highest	Lowest	Mode	Median	Standard Deviation	Sum	Mean
Post Test	Control	17	80	50	80	80	8.29	1275	75
	Experimental	22	90	75	80	80	5.46	1800	81.81

The table.1 shows that the results of post test of students’ reading comprehension were different. The students’ score of control class ranged from 51-70 was 35.2% while students’ score ranged 51-70 in experimental class was 0%. It means that students’ score of experimental class was

better than control class. Then, students’ score of control class ranged from 71-90 were 64.7% while students’ score ranged 71-90 in experimental class was 100%. In addition, the students’ minimum score of control class was 50 and experimental class was 75. Then, the students’ maximum score

of control class was 80 and experimental class was 90. Moreover, the students' mean score of control class was 75 and experimental class was 81.81. It means that the different was 6.81 point among both of them. The students' standard deviation score of control class was 8.29 while experimental class was 5.46. The different was 2.83 point. The students' sum score of control class was 1275 while experimental class was 1800. It had difference 525 point among both of the them. It means that students' scores of experimental class were higher than students' scores of control class. In conclusion, students' reading

comprehension of experimental class was better than control class.

Furthermore, the normality of data used Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-S test) and variance of samples used *Levene* formula. The result of tests showed that the data either in experimental class and control class were normal distribution and variance of samples was homogenous. To know whether hypothesis of the research was accepted or not, the researcher computed the t-calculated using independent t-test. The result of testing could be seen as below;

Table 2

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
CONTROL CLASS	Equal variances assumed	2.895	.097	-3.235	37	.003	-7.04545	2.17787	11.45824	-2.63267
EXPERIMENTAL CLASS	Equal variances not assumed			-3.059	25.640	.005	-7.04545	2.30346	11.78352	-2.30739

The table shows that t-calculated both of classes were 3.23. Degree of freedom (df) was 39. The t-calculated was compared t table α 1% = 2.704 and t table α 5% = 2.021 with df (39). As the result, t calculated was bigger than t table α 5% and t table α 1% ($2.704 < 3.23 > 2.021$). In addition, Sig (0.004) was smaller than α (0.05). Thus, null hypothesis (H0) was rejected and alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted. It means that Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC)

gave effect on students' reading comprehension. In conclusion, students who were taught by CIRC had better reading skill than those who were taught by small group discussion at sixth semester students of English Study Program of University of PasirPengaraian. The result of students' score in critical essay subject in experimental class was greater than the students' score in control class. It caused CIRC proven helped students in

comprehending essay in order to they are easier write critical essay.

The finding was in line with Slavinn (2005:113). He says that comprehension can be improved by teaching students summarizing, retelling, questioning, clarifying and predicting skills in writing. In CIRC technique the students plan, revise, and edits their composition in close collaboration with their group mate. Madden (2004:569) states that CIRC guides the teachers in motivating students to work in group in all levels of performance toward a group goal. Then, Farnish (2005) adds CIRC motivates the students and improves' students' reading comprehension and writing/language arts. According to Shabaan and Ghaith (2005:6), CIRC gives effect on reading and writing skill. The learners work cooperatively in pairs to read for each other, summarize stories, write responses to literature, and practice their spelling, decoding, and vocabulary development skills. It can be conclude that CIRC is one kind of cooperative methods which can be applied in various activities. It is very effective in reading, writing, and languageart. As the result, students motivated to finish their task in teaching learningprocess. CIRC is developing to integrated writing and reading lesson.

Conclusion

Based on the finding and discussion, the result of study shows that students of experimental class had greater scores than students of control class. It could be concluded that students who were taught by Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) have better reading comprehension of essay than who were taught by small group discussion.

Suggestion

Based on the conclusion above, the English Lecturers are suggested to apply Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) in teaching critical essay subject.

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