



The Effect of the CIRC Learning Model on Fiction Text Reading Comprehension Skills in Grade 5 of SDN 3 Langon Jepara

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Abstract

Mastery of the Indonesian language is recognized as a crucial determinant of students' reading comprehension abilities. Initial observations at SDN 3 Langon showed that comprehension levels remained below expectations, primarily due to the limited use of varied instructional strategies and the continued dependence on conventional, teacher-centered methods. A cooperative, integrated reading approach serves as an alternative that emphasizes student participation and collaborative engagement, making it a potentially effective means of improving comprehension outcomes. This study examines two core questions: (1) whether a measurable difference in reading comprehension exists before and after the implementation of the cooperative reading approach, and (2) the extent to which the approach influences the reading comprehension achievement of fifth-grade students. A quantitative pre-experimental design with a One-Group Pretest-Posttest format was applied to 25 students selected through saturation sampling. Reading comprehension performance was evaluated using an analytical rubric, and the data were processed through T-tests and regression analyses in IBM SPSS Statistics. A statistically significant improvement was identified ($p < 0.001$), with mean scores increasing from 50.40 on the pretest to 78.40 on the posttest. Regression findings indicated that the implemented cooperative reading strategy contributed 21.4 percent to the variance in students' enhanced reading comprehension, as reflected in an R value of 0.214.

Keywords: *Indonesian language, CIRC model, Reading skills*

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language learning covers four skill aspects, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these four skills, reading is the main asset for every student to obtain written information (Wirandari & Kristiantari, 2020). The role of reading is very important and cannot be underestimated, because the communicative process involving knowledge, perception, and sensitivity largely depends on this ability (Mirasol, 2024). Reading is an ability that involves cognitive and visual processes, where students string letters together into sentences to



understand the content of the reading correctly (Putri et al., 2023). Thus, reading activities are an integral part of the learning process (Handayani & Munir, 2024).

One important aspect of reading is reading comprehension skills. This ability involves the process of extracting information both verbally and in writing (Falah et al., 2024). This skill not only helps students understand texts, but also supports critical thinking and analytical skills. Furthermore, reading comprehension is the key to accessing information and knowledge in various fields (Damayanti et al., 2025). This ability enables students to grasp the content and understand the concepts and meaning of the text (Muliawanti et al., 2022). Thus, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is not just a reading activity, but also contributes to improving critical thinking skills and obtaining useful information.

One of the reading comprehension activities in elementary school is reading fiction texts. These texts are literary works that contain dialogues, thoughts, and the author's reactions to the surrounding environment (Claudia et al., 2021). These texts often tell about the reality and imagination desired by the author (Kusniawati et al., 2021). This literary work can be categorized as imaginative writing that aims to entertain and educate (Mubarok, 2021). Thus, reading comprehension activities involving fictional texts are not only beneficial for developing reading skills but also for shaping the character of students.

The development of students' fiction reading comprehension skills requires a systematic approach through an appropriate learning model. In this process, the active role of teachers in designing and implementing various activities to achieve specific learning outcomes is very important (Wulandari, 2024). The variety of learning models makes the presentation of learning materials more interesting and easier for students to accept (Nisah et al., 2021). One model that can be applied to teaching is the cooperative model (Fakhriyah et al., 2024). Among the various cooperative learning models, CIRC is an effective choice for students' reading comprehension skills (Zaenuddin et al., 2024). This learning model is based on the idea that students work together in learning and are responsible for their group activities (Rahmi & Marnola, 2020). The stages of the CIRC learning model according to Lubis are orientation, organization, concept introduction, exploration and application, publication, and reflection (Lubis et al., 2022). These stages are suitable for improving fiction text comprehension skills, as they encourage students to think critically and creatively and promote social awareness among students (Mentari et al., 2024). With this, it is hoped that it will have an effect on the activities carried out.

The CIRC learning model is a cooperative learning model that integrates reading comprehensively and divides it into important parts. This model has been proven effective in improving language skills, especially reading and writing

(Nasim et al., 2024). In addition, CIRC can also improve speaking and listening skills through cooperation among students (Mulyono et al., 2024). In this integrated learning model, students are involved in group reading and writing activities, as well as sharing ideas to understand a concept and form a lasting learning experience (Fitriani & Nurjamaludin, 2020).

Observations conducted on July 7, 2025, in the 5th grade of SDN 3 Langon in the first semester showed that 60% of students had problems with reading comprehension, especially in reading fiction texts. Many students at SDN 3 Langon Jepara had difficulty understanding the content of the reading material, with problems including determining the main idea in a paragraph, connecting information between paragraphs, and the ability to retell the content of the text. This low level of reading comprehension skills was also influenced by a lack of innovation in the learning models applied by teachers.

Referring to the above problems, it is necessary to apply a learning model that can improve reading skills and interest in understanding fictional texts. A more interactive learning model that involves student participants can be a solution to improve the quality and effectiveness of learning as expected (Burhan et al., 2022). The learning model that is suitable for providing a solution to the above problems is the CRIC learning model (Said, 2024).

The CIRC learning model has the potential to improve overall reading comprehension skills and actively engage students in the learning process. Several previous researchers have proven that there was a significant change in reading skills after implementing the CIRC learning model in grade 3 at SDN Singkawang (Nani et al., 2022). Another study also shows that the CIRC learning model supported by digital storybooks has proven to be effective, with an average increase from 57.25 to 78.50 (Maharani & Liansari, 2024). Meanwhile, another study revealed that the effect of the CIRC learning model on the learning outcomes of grade 8 MTs 4 Bima increased by 28.57% after being given the learning model treatment (Sartika et al., 2022). Although the three previous studies showed positive results, there are differences in context and scope with this study.

Revious studies have focused more on phase b or phase d and utilized additional media. Meanwhile, this study focuses on fifth-grade students in the context of the independent curriculum, without additional media, to observe the effect of the CIRC learning model on reading comprehension skills in fiction texts. Thus, this study is novel in its application of the CIRC learning model in the context of Indonesian language learning in the development of students' literacy and cooperation skills in accordance with the latest curriculum.

METHOD

This study is a quantitative study, using a one-group pretest-posttest design from a pre-experimental design because the experiment only used one class. The study population consisted of fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Langon, and the study sample consisted of 25 students. The technique used to select the sample was saturated sampling, because this study used the entire population in the class to participate in the experiment with a one-group pretest-posttest design (Saniyah et al., 2024).

The data for this study were gathered through testing. The one-group pretest–posttest design employed in this research follows the sequence in which an initial measurement is taken prior to the introduction of the CIRC learning model (O1). The intervention, consisting of the application of the CIRC model across three instructional sessions (X), is then administered. After the intervention is completed, a second measurement (O2) is carried out to evaluate changes that occurred following the treatment.

Data analysis techniques use four steps. First, a normality test is conducted to check whether the data is normally distributed. Second, after the data is declared normal, a T-test for paired samples is conducted to test a value as a comparison to determine whether there is an impact from the use of the CIRC model after and before treatment this is done using IBM SPSS Statistics version 30

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research took place at SDN 3 Langon Jepara and involved 25 fifth-grade students who learned fiction texts using the CIRC model. The study used a one-group pretest–posttest approach. Students first completed a pretest to identify their initial reading comprehension level. After the CIRC model was introduced in the lessons, a posttest was given to see how much progress had been made. The assessment instrument was a multiple-choice test that had already passed validity and reliability checks. The data were then processed using descriptive statistical analysis, which is presented in the following table.

Table 1. *Statistic Descriptive Test*

	N	Descriptive Statistic					
		Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Reading Comprehension Pretest	25	30	75	1260	50.40	12.155	147.750
Reading Comprehension Posttest	25	50	100	1960	78.40	12.725	161.917
Valid (listwise)	N 25						

Descriptive statistics were used to present a comprehensive overview of the data analyzed. N is the number of samples used, which consisted of 25 fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Langon Jepara. The results of the analysis in the table show that the pretest average was 50.40, while the posttest average increased to 78.40. The minimum pretest and posttest scores were 30 and 50, respectively, while the maximum scores increased to 75 and 100. Thus, the use of the CIRC model had an effect on reading comprehension skills. Furthermore, the Shapiro-Wilk normality test yielded the following results:

Table 2. Normality Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Reading Comprehension Pretest	164	25	.082	.952	25	.295
Reading Comprehension Posttest	165	25	.076	.964	25	.502

a. Liliefors Significance Correction

The normality test results above use the Shapiro-Wilk test, because the sample data is less than 50. The data can be said to be normal if H_0 is greater than 0.05. From the above statement, it can be concluded that the collected data is normally distributed. The significance value of the test is 0.502, which exceeds the significance limit of 0.05. The analysis is continued using the t-test. This test is used to compare fiction reading comprehension skills at the pretest and posttest stages after implementing the CIRC learning model.

Table 4. Paired Samples T- test

	Paired Samples Test							Significance	
	Paired Differences					t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Lower	Upper								
Pair 1 Pretest Membaca Pemahaman - Posttest Membaca Pemahaman	-28.000	12.910	2.582	-33.329	-22.671	-10.844	24	<.001	<.001

The t-test results show a t-count of 10.844 and a t-table of 1.71088, so that $t\text{-count} > t\text{-table}$, which means that the CIRC learning model has a significant effect on the fiction reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Langon Jepara. The two-sided p-value for reading comprehension skills was < 0.001 , while $\alpha = 0.05$, so H_0 was rejected and H_1 was accepted. Hypothesis testing shows that there is a change in students' reading comprehension skills before and after using the CIRC learning model. After conducting a Paired Samples T-test, an Regresi analysis was performed to identify whether the independent variable (X) of the CIRC model significantly affects the dependent variable (Y), namely reading comprehension skills. The results of the regression test using IBM SPSS Statistics are shown in the following table:

Table 5. Regression
Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	830.416	1	830.416	6.251	.020 ^b
	Residual	3055.584	23	132.851		
	Total	3886.000	24			

a. Dependent Variable: Reading Comprehension

b. Predictors: (Constant, Model CIRC

The analysis produced a significance value of 0.020, which falls below the 0.05 threshold. This outcome indicates that the use of the CIRC learning model (variable X) exerts a measurable influence on the reading comprehension abilities of fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Langon Jepara (variable Y).

Table 6. Anova Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.462 ^a	.214	.180	11.526

a. Predictor: (Constant), Model CIRC

The table indicates the magnitude of the relationship between the variables studied. Based on the R square value of 0.214, the application of the CIRC learning model accounts for 21.4 percent of the improvement in the reading comprehension abilities of fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Langon Jepara.

This research was carried out to examine how the CIRC model influences students' ability to understand fictional texts. The implementation spanned three structured sessions designed to observe changes throughout the learning process. The first session began with a pretest consisting of 20 multiple-choice items aimed at assessing students' baseline comprehension levels. The pretest results revealed an average score of 50.4, which falls into the low category. These findings show that many students initially struggled to grasp the content of the reading passages. At this early stage, student participation was limited, with several learners displaying passive attitudes, reduced concentration, and hesitation in sharing interpretations or responses related to the text. The learning activity continued with the application. During the orientation stage, the teacher provided an introduction and preliminary knowledge related to the fictional text material and explained the learning objectives. Next, the students were divided into five heterogeneous groups. The teacher then introduced new concepts about the intrinsic elements of fictional texts using the student book. Students in each group discussed to identify the intrinsic elements in the story "The Friendship of the Eagle and the Rabbit" and wrote down the results of the discussion on the worksheet. After the discussion, each group presented the results of their discussion in front of the class. This

learning model aims to increase motivation while reading and build students' confidence (Arisqa et al., 2025). The application of the CIRC learning model in the first meeting resulted in an increase in student activity. They were more active in discussing and sharing their understanding in groups. Although some still needed guidance from the teacher, their involvement showed a significant increase compared to before the application of the CIRC learning model.

The second meeting was conducted using the CIRC learning model with audio-visual media. During the orientation stage, the teacher gave an introduction and explained the learning objectives. Next, the students formed heterogeneous groups. Before the students entered the discussion stage, the teacher first showed a video to reinforce the students' understanding of the material. Next, the teacher provided an explanation of the fictional text in the video. Then, the students formed groups to discuss and analyze the differences in the intrinsic elements of the two fictional texts. The students in each group worked on the questions in the worksheets that had been distributed. After the discussion was over, each group presented the results of their discussion in front of the class. The discussion was interactive, with students working together to help each other understand the reading. The results of the second meeting showed an improvement in fiction text comprehension skills compared to the first meeting. Students were very enthusiastic about the learning process; they found it easier to understand the reading and were able to compose coherent explanations.

The third meeting was the final stage in this series of research activities. At this stage, activities were carried out using the CIRC learning model. During the orientation, the teacher gave a brief explanation of the learning objectives. The next activity was to form heterogeneous groups. Then, the teacher presented the material using PowerPoint. After that, the teacher distributed different texts to each group to be discussed and analyzed in terms of their intrinsic elements and main ideas. Next, the students worked on the questions in the student worksheet. The discussion was interactive, with the students being very active and exchanging opinions. This activity greatly improved their fiction reading comprehension skills in determining the message, evaluating the characters' attitudes, and actively participating in discussions.

The posttest results showed an average score of 78.40, which was a significant increase compared to the pretest score of 50.40. These results indicate that the CIRC learning model had a positive effect on fiction text comprehension skills. This condition reflects the active involvement of students in the process of reading, analyzing, and expressing opinions within the group. This is reinforced by the Paired Samples T-test results showing a t-count of $10.844 > 1.71088$ t-table with a

sig value <0.001 , indicating a significant difference before and after the application of the CIRC model. This shows that there is a positive effect on this study. Regression analysis contributed 21.4%, establishing that most of the improvement in students' reading comprehension skills was influenced by the application of the CIRC learning model.

These findings align with theoretical perspectives suggesting that the CIRC model enhances students' reading comprehension abilities, in part because it encourages the development of critical thinking (Nawawulan et al., 2023). The model's application proved effective as it promotes active student participation and requires learners to present the results of group discussions to the class, thereby increasing engagement (Nofrianni, 2023). When students are directly involved in collaborative learning activities, their motivation and enthusiasm tend to rise, contributing to better comprehension results.

Previous studies have concluded that the CIRC learning model has an impact on reading comprehension skills, enabling students to understand information from reading materials and communicate their understanding in writing (Maharani & Liansari, 2024). This finding is in line with other studies that reveal that the CIRC learning model can improve group cooperation and increase learning motivation, thereby improving reading comprehension skills (Fitriani & Nurjamaludin, 2020). Furthermore, the CIRC learning model can stimulate students to be more diligent in completing tasks collaboratively (Reinita & Jannah, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that a significant improvement in the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Langon Jepara was produced through the application of the CIRC learning model. The students' mean score was increased from 50.40 on the pretest to 78.40 on the posttest. A significant difference before and after the treatment was confirmed by the t-test analysis ($t_{count} 10.844 > t_{table} 1.71088$, sig < 0.001). In addition, the ANOVA test indicated that 21.4 percent of the improvement in students' understanding of fictional texts was explained by the use of the CIRC model. Through the structured stages of CIRC, increased engagement, greater confidence in expressing ideas, and better interpretation of literary content were demonstrated by the students.

Based on these findings, the CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) model is recommended for use as an instructional alternative in Indonesian language learning for grade 5 at SDN 3 Langon. Student self-confidence and comprehension skills are expected to be strengthened through active involvement encouraged by this approach. This study may also be used as a

reference for future research on broader educational levels to support national efforts in improving literacy from early schooling.

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