

The Effect of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Learning Model on Students' Learning Motivation and Reading Comprehension Skills

Wahyuni ^{1*}, Yusmah ², Muhammad Hanafi ³, Nuraini Kasman ⁴, Andi Sadapotto ⁵

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang

*Corresponding Author: Wahyuni

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Article History	Abstract
Original Research Article	<i>This study investigates the effectiveness of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) learning model in enhancing students' learning motivation and reading comprehension among upper-grade students at SD Negeri 14 Batarang, Indonesia. The research employed a quantitative quasi-experimental design with two groups: an experimental class taught using the CIRC model and a control class taught using conventional methods. Data were collected through tests, observation, and documentation, and analysed using descriptive statistics, paired-sample t-tests, and independent-sample t-tests. The findings revealed that the CIRC model significantly improved students' motivation and reading comprehension skills compared to conventional instruction. The average motivation score in the experimental group increased from 68.47 to 89.73, while reading comprehension scores rose from 67.53 to 92.00. Statistical tests confirmed significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the experimental and control groups. The study concludes that the CIRC model is an effective pedagogical strategy for fostering both cognitive and affective learning outcomes in primary education.</i> Keywords: Cooperative Learning, CIRC, Learning Motivation, Reading Comprehension, Elementary Education
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Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited. Citation: Wahyuni, Yusmah, Muhammad Hanafi, Nuraini Kasman, Andi Sadapotto. (2025). The Effect of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Learning Model on Students' Learning Motivation and Reading Comprehension Skills. UKR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (UKRJAHS), Volume 1(issue 8), 170-172.	

1. Introduction

Reading comprehension forms a fundamental skill essential for academic success, particularly in primary education. It supports learners' ability to process information, think critically, and acquire new knowledge. However, Indonesian students continue to face significant challenges in literacy, as evidenced by the 2021 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report, which placed Indonesia below the OECD average in reading proficiency. This indicates the urgent need for innovative instructional strategies that can effectively enhance both reading skills and motivation among elementary students.

The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) model, developed by Slavin (1995), integrates reading and writing within a cooperative learning framework. It promotes active participation, collaboration, and accountability, encouraging students to construct meaning through peer discussion and shared learning experiences. Previous studies (Triana & Zulkifli, 2023;

Zainuddin, 2023) demonstrate that CIRC enhances students' reading comprehension and intrinsic motivation. Nevertheless, few studies have examined its simultaneous impact on both motivation and comprehension within Indonesian elementary contexts.

This study aims to address that gap by exploring how the CIRC model influences students' learning motivation and reading comprehension in upper-grade classrooms. The research contributes theoretically to cooperative learning literature and practically to improving literacy instruction in alignment with Indonesia's *Merdeka Curriculum*, which prioritises student-centred learning and literacy development.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension involves the ability to extract, interpret, and evaluate meaning from written texts.

According to Harris and Kusumawati (2020), comprehension operates at multiple levels: literal, inferential, critical, and evaluative. These stages move from understanding explicit information to making judgments about text quality and relevance. In early education, developing these abilities is crucial for fostering long-term literacy competence (Yulia & Saputra, 2021).

2.2 Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)

CIRC is a cooperative instructional model designed to integrate reading and writing activities through teamwork. Based on Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory, CIRC emphasises the role of social interaction in learning. Students work in small, heterogeneous groups to read texts, discuss ideas, and compose written responses collaboratively. Lestari and Wahid (2023) highlight that this approach supports deeper comprehension and strengthens motivation by creating an engaging, interactive environment.

2.3 Learning Motivation

Motivation plays a central role in learning engagement and achievement. According to Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, intrinsic motivation arises from curiosity and personal satisfaction, while extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards or pressures. In reading instruction, motivated learners are more persistent, focused, and likely to employ effective comprehension strategies (Fatimah & Rahmat, 2022).

2.4 CIRC and Learning Motivation Interaction

CIRC fosters both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The model encourages peer collaboration, accountability, and recognition of team performance—factors that strengthen students' sense of belonging and responsibility. Zainuddin (2023) and Sari & Dewi (2023) found that the social dynamics of CIRC significantly improve students' enthusiasm and engagement in literacy tasks.

3. Methodology

This research adopted a quantitative quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group. The study population comprised 30 upper-grade students at SD Negeri 14 Batarang, divided equally into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received instruction through the CIRC model, while the control group used conventional teacher-centred methods.

Data Collection: Data were gathered through reading comprehension tests, motivation questionnaires, classroom observations, and documentation.

Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics were used to describe trends, while paired-sample and independent-sample t-tests

were employed to assess pre- and post-test differences and determine statistical significance ($\alpha = 0.05$).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Learning Motivation

Before the intervention, both groups exhibited low motivation levels (mean = 60.67 for control, 68.47 for experimental). After implementing the CIRC model, the experimental group's mean motivation rose to 89.73, while the control group only increased to 67.40. The paired-sample t-test revealed significant improvement in the experimental class ($p < 0.001$). The independent-sample t-test confirmed that CIRC had a greater effect on motivation ($t = -17.336$, $p < 0.001$). These results indicate that cooperative and interactive activities enhance students' enthusiasm and participation.

4.2 Reading Comprehension

Students' reading comprehension in the experimental group improved from a mean score of 67.53 to 92.00, whereas the control group increased modestly from 64.53 to 77.53. Statistical tests revealed a significant difference between the two groups ($p < 0.05$), confirming the superior effectiveness of the CIRC model. These findings align with Triana and Zulkifli (2023), who noted that integrating reading and writing encourages students to engage deeply with texts and enhances understanding.

4.3 Discussion

The results demonstrate that CIRC effectively enhances both motivation and comprehension by creating a learning environment that values collaboration, autonomy, and shared responsibility. The interactive group work and writing integration elements align with constructivist principles, allowing students to co-construct meaning through dialogue and practice. Moreover, the motivational gains observed support Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), as students experience competence and relatedness through cooperative tasks.

CIRC's emphasis on social learning and peer interaction may explain its success in improving both affective and cognitive outcomes. Students are motivated not only by intrinsic interest in reading but also by the collective responsibility to support their teams, which promotes persistence and engagement. These findings underscore the model's adaptability to literacy education in diverse contexts, including resource-limited schools such as SD Negeri 14 Batarang.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) learning model significantly enhances both learning motivation and

reading comprehension among upper-grade primary students. The integration of cooperative learning, reading, and writing activities fosters active engagement, critical thinking, and collaborative skills. The model's success reflects its alignment with constructivist and motivational theories, providing a strong pedagogical basis for literacy instruction.

Implications: Educators should consider adopting the CIRC model to improve students' literacy outcomes and motivation. Future research may explore its long-term effects across different grade levels and subject areas.

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