

## The Implementation of CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) Method to Improve Students' Writing Skills in Explanation Text

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana proses penerapan metode CIRC (*Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition*) dapat meningkatkan keterampilan menulis pada materi *Explanation Text* pada siswa SMA Negeri Semarang tahun pelajaran 2022/2023 yang terdiri dari 36 siswa. Penelitian dilaksanakan di SMA Negeri 2 Semarang. Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas XI MIPA 8 yang berjumlah 36 orang. Kegiatan penelitian dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus. Masing-masing siklus memiliki empat tahapan yaitu perencanaan, pelaksanaan, pengamatan dan refleksi. Data dalam penelitian ini dikumpulkan melalui tes dan observasi. Setelah data terkumpul, analisis data dilakukan. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan siswa dalam menulis pada materi *Explanation Text* meningkat. Hal ini dapat terlihat dari analisis data pada setiap siklusnya. Hasil pretest menunjukkan bahwa ada sejumlah 16 siswa atau 44% siswa yang nilainya belum tuntas. Pada siklus I terjadi peningkatan yaitu ada 26 dari 36 siswa yang sudah tuntas atau sekitar 72%. Sedangkan pada siklus II terjadi peningkatan dari siklus I yaitu sejumlah 31 siswa atau sekitar 86% yang sudah tuntas. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan menulis siswa terjadi peningkatan dari setiap siklusnya. Berdasarkan hasil Penelitian Tindakan Kelas tersebut maka penulis mengambil kesimpulan bahwa penerapan metode CIRC (*Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition*) dapat meningkatkan keterampilan menulis pada siswa kelas XI MIPA 8 di SMA Negeri 2 Semarang.

**Keywords:** Keterampilan menulis, CIRC, *Explanation Text*

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out how the process of applying the CIRC (*Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition*) method can enhance students' writing ability in *Explanation Text* for Semarang State High School students in the 2022/2023 academic year, consisting of 36 students. The study was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Semarang. The subjects of this study were 36 students of class XI MIPA 8. The research activities were carried out in two cycles. Each cycle has four stages: planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The data in this study were collected through tests and observations. After the data is collected, data analysis is carried out. The results of this study indicate that students' skills in writing on *Explanation Text* increase. This can be seen from the data analysis in each cycle. The pretest results showed that there were 16 students, or 44% of students, who had not completed of standard minimum criteria of Achievemnet (KKM). In cycle I there was an increase, namely there were 26 out of 36 students who had completed of minimal score criterion (KKM), or around 72%. Whereas in cycle II there was an increase from cycle I, namely a total of 31 students, or around 86% who had completed it. This indicates that the students' writing skills have increased with each cycle. Based on the results of this Classroom Action Research, the researcher conclude that the implementation of the CIRC (*Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition*) method can improve writing skills in class XI MIPA 8 students at SMA Negeri 2 Semarang

**Keywords:** Writing ability, CIRC Method, *Explanation Text*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The actualization of learning language skills can be seen in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English subjects. Among those four language skills, writing skills are an integral part of the overall learning process experienced by students while studying at school. The ability to write requires a variety of knowledge and skills. The writer must have the ability to choose a topic, keep it within that focus, develop ideas, and present them in sentences and paragraphs that are arranged logically and systematically in order to write even a short essay. Writing ability is one of the most effective skills for conveying ideas or creative ideas, as are language skills that must be mastered by everyone. This is due to the fact that not everyone knows how to write and tends not to practice writing. They think that writing is difficult. Therefore, students' writing skills need to be considered by educators. This will also help students succeed academically. Students' skills must be motivated from an early age, so that they are encouraged to be skilled in writing.

In order to be able to write well, students must expand their thinking, hone their analytical abilities, and make sensible and accurate distinctions. In the writing process, students must pay attention to their focus on important aspects such as reading structure, linguistic elements, objectives, the needs and perspectives of readers, and the evaluation of communication between writers and readers. (National Commission on Writing in American Schools: 2003). Regarding the explanation above, according to Meyers (2002:2), writing is an activity, the process of finding and processing ideas, applying them to written form, rearranging, and revising them. In teaching English, writing is often associated with writing paragraphs or texts. In fact, most students need guidelines for composing good texts. In other words, when creating a document, students arrange it based on its genre and pay attention to aspects of writing.

The 2013 curriculum was created with the intention of achieving national education goals, specifically: "The development of the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens." The components of the 2013 curriculum in the learning process are integrated through a scientific approach consisting of observing, questioning, associating, experimenting, and communicating activities. The implementation of the 2013 curriculum consists of these four aspects that must be applied in the learning process. One of

them is the material contained in the 2013 curriculum, which produces explanation texts. According to Pardiyono (in Gultom 2013: 5), "explanation text is a text that explains the process of the occurrence of a natural or social phenomenon". Explanation text is one of the materials contained in the syllabus for class XI SMA Negeri 2 Semarang in the 2013 curriculum. Thus, one of the abilities of students that needs to be mastered in learning English is the skill of writing explanation texts.

Writing is one of the skills in learning English that must be mastered by students. Furthermore, writing is the most complex and recent skill mastered by someone. Writing is a person's skill in expressing ideas to others in writing (Nurgiyantoro, 2011:422). A similar opinion was also expressed by Suparno and Mohamad Yunus (2009:1.3) who stated that writing is a request for messages through written language as a form of communication activity with other parties. Tarigan (2013:3) defines writing as a skill to communicate indirectly with other people. It was further explained that writing is a productive and expressive skill. Writing is deriving or depicting graphic symbols that describe a language that is understood by someone, so that other people can read these graphic symbols if they understand the language and graphic images (Tarigan 2008: 22). Writing is essentially composing, namely giving shape to everything that is thought, and everything that is felt, in the form of a series of words, especially written words that are arranged as well as possible so that people who read them can easily understand and benefit from them. One type of text in English is an explanation text.

Rogers (2005:1) states that writing is one of the most significant achievement skills. This allows us to record and convey information and stories from outside directly. Meanwhile, according to Langan (2006: 20), writing does not only talk about sharing, but also the process of writing that will make a lot of writing that makes the reader interested. That is, writing is composing messages to get people interested in reading them. Furthermore, writing requires a long process, starting with planning, drafting, writing, and revising.

One of the basic competencies that must be achieved by the students of high school class XI in the 2013 Curriculum English Subject syllabus is the activity of producing explanation texts. Producing activities are part of writing skills or producing writing that requires students to be more creative, innovative, and expressive in expressing ideas. From a learning point of view, Sumarwati (2010: 623) defines

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writing as the potential to transform ideas and thoughts in a wide range of ways for students to interact, both with teachers, subject matter, and fellow students. The more frequently students are given the opportunity to develop activity and creativity through writing, the more skilled these students will be in terms of writing.

Based on some of the opinions above and related to learning, it can be concluded that writing is a productive and expressive skill in the form of expressing ideas or ideas using written language for a wide range of students (a person) to interact, both with the teacher, subject matter, and fellow students. Therefore, writing is a very important skill, especially in education.

Explanation text is a type of text in English that explains a process. Talking about the process, this text is almost the same as the procedure text. However, if the procedure text explains how to do something (process), this text explains how a process occurs. That way, we can know that explanation text serves to provide information to the reader about a process.

Explanation text has a structure consisting of parts that show a causal relationship. Anderson in Sailirrohmah (2015: 35) states that explanation text is composed of descriptions in introductory paragraphs, sequences of sentences that tell how or why, and conclusions.

Knapp and Watkins in Sailirrohmah (2015:32) explained that "explaining has two main orientations: to explain why and to explain how, often both will appear in an explanatory text". Explanation has two main orientations: to explain why and to explain how an event can occur. The function of explanatory text is to explain how the process of a certain event occurs. The process is explained using a logical sequence, as well as scientific understanding and interpretation. In the explanatory text, there is an expansion of factual questions to find out the reasons and course of an event. Why (why) and how (how) are critical-analysis questions that also require critical-analytic answers that lead to an explanation of the event.

Based on the results of the diagnostic test in class XI MIPA 8 SMA Negeri 2 Semarang, it shows that the ability to write explanation texts is still low and needs to be improved. This is, of course, influenced by various factors. Based on the findings of observations made during teaching and learning activities, there were several identified problems, including students finding it difficult to express and develop ideas in the form of writing explanation texts into

complete writing in accordance with the structure and language of explanation texts. Students tend to be passive in learning to write explanation texts; and since interest and motivation in the subject are still low, students' proficiency in the subject is low. In addition, through the observation process during learning, there are still many students who experience confusion in developing their essays, and not all students are capable of finishing the assignment correctly.

The methods utilized in learning activities, educators, and strategic are some elements that have a significant impact on the success of a lesson. The learning method used in English lessons must be more interactive, creative, innovative, foster students' potential to think critically, and avoid teacher-centered teaching methods or teaching methods that only provide verbal explanations. This aims to maximize the potential of superior individuals. (Kurniawan, S. J., Kumara, A. R., & Bhakti, C. P 2019).

Currently, there are many learning methods, one of them is the CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) method. The lack of writing practice is one of the factors contributing to students' lack of skill in writing. One interesting teaching method that can improve students' abilities is the CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) method. This method was discovered by Dr. Robert Slavin in 1987. According to Madden, Slavin, & Stevens (1986), CIRC is a comprehensive method for students to develop their abilities in reading and writing. This method includes two skills, namely reading and writing. Where reading is integrated with writing to help students work in groups during the learning process. Slavin (1995) states that the main purpose of activities at CIRC is to use time effectively, where students work in cooperative teams coordinated by reading groups to achieve goals. The CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition) method is a comprehensive method for teaching reading, writing, and language arts. This method is certainly not necessarily used in the learning process, there needs to be compatibility between the method and the learning material to be taught.

The CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) learning method was first developed by Stevens, et al in 1987. This method can be categorized as an integrated composition learning method. Shoimin (2014: 51) argues, "CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) is an integrated composition of reading and writing in groups. The CIRC method is an integrated composition of group reading and writing. The CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) method is a special learning

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model for language subjects in order to read and find main ideas, or discourse themes. This is in line with Huda (2015: 221), "In CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) learning, each student is responsible for group assignments. Each member of the group shares their ideas to each other to understand a concept and complete tasks so that long-term understanding and learning experiences are formed.

The use of learning method is believed to influence student learning outcomes. Accuracy in the use of learning method will create an interesting learning atmosphere and can motivate students to be more active in the learning process. The CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) method has steps that must be carried out by the students. Shoimin (2014: 52-53) explains that there are six steps in the process of implementing the CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) learning method, as follows: 1) Form groups of four students heterogeneously. 2) The teacher gives discourse according to the topic of learning. 3) Students work together to read to each, find the main ideas, provide responses to discourse, and write on sheets of paper. 4) Presenting/reading out the results of the group. 5) Closing.

Thus, when the teacher tries to teach this strategy, it is necessary to emphasize that the pictures or diagrams that are made do not need to be perfect, too good, or too detailed. Things that need to be drawn or diagrammed are the most important parts that are thought to be able to clarify the problem at hand. The following question is underlined in the current study: 1). How is the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method implemented in improving writing comprehension? 2) How is writing comprehension improved by the Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) method?

## 2. METHOD

This study was applied the Classroom Action Research design in order to improve students' writing skills of explanation text through CIRC method. This research conducted in two cycle, and each cycle included planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Kemmis and Taggart cited in Arikunto 2006). Pre-test and post-test, survey questionnaires and observations are all part of data gathering procedures for practical education. This study was carried out during Practical Teaching (PPL) II from March 2023 to June 2023.

The students in the eleventh grade at MIPA 8 SMA Negeri 2 Semarang volunteered to

participate in the research. According to Sugiyono (2016: 120), the characteristics and numbers possessed by the population are included in the sample. The sample is a portion of the population. The population for this study is one class consisting of a total of 36 participants.

The researcher used pre-test, post-test, and survey questionnaire in this study. The pre-test will give in the first meeting before using the implementation of *CIRC (Cooperated Integrated Reading and Composition)* method in a classroom. Then, the researcher implemented *CIRC (Cooperated Integrated Reading Composition)* in the teaching-learning process and give a post-test in each cycle. Not only pre-test and post-test, but the researcher also give a questionnaire in class to get the description data of the student's response of using *CIRC (Cooperated Integrated Reading and Composition)* for the learning process.

Quantitative data in the form of pre-test and post-test results will be assessed with a range of values (0-100). Indicators of achievement of students' writing competence include; content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic use (punctuation, spelling, capitalization). Students are considered complete when they obtain scores above the standard minimum criteria of achievement (KKM). KKM achievement of students' writing competence is 75.

The data obtained from the non-test (student behavior records) is collected as a supporting attachment. The data from test and non-test results were interpreted by the researcher and collaborators to make plans for the next cycle. Conclusions are drawn based on data from student success tests and changes in behavior obtained from the non-test.

If the data is divided into two types, namely quantitative and qualitative data, the data analysis also uses both. Quantitative data is processed using descriptive presentation. The scores obtained by students are averaged to determine their success both individually and classically according to predetermined targets. Qualitative data obtained from observations is classified based on the aspects that are used as the focus of analysis, which is then associated with quantitative data as a basis for describing the successful implementation of learning activities marked by the increasing active role of students in learning.

During the scoring process, the researcher evaluated and analyzed the data using a scoring rubric adapted from Heaton (1983:146) The following categories were used for the evaluation and analysis:

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Category	Description	Level	Score
Content	Relevant to the topic	Excellent to very good	30-27
	Mostly relevant to topic but lacks of detail	Good to average	26-22
	Inadequate development of topic	Fair to poor	21-17
	Not relevant to topic	Very poor	16-13
Organization	Ideas clearly stated and supported, well organized (generic structure), cohesive.	Excellent to very good	20-18
	Loosely organized but main ideas stand out, not well organized (generic structure)	Good to average	17-14
	Ideas confused or even no main ideas, bad organization (generic structure)	Fair to poor	13-10
	Does not communicate, no organization (generic structure)	Very poor	9-7
Vocabulary	Effective word/idiom choice and usage	Excellent to very good	20-18
	Occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage, but meaning not obscured.	Good to average	17-14
	Frequent errors of word / idiom form, choice, usage.	Fair to poor	13-10
	Little knowledge of English vocabulary, idiom and word form.	Very poor	9-7
Language use	Few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns or prepositions.	Excellent to very good	25-22
	Several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns, or prepositions.	Good to average	21-19
	Frequent errors of agreement, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns or prepositions.	Fair to poor	17-11
	Dominated by errors.	Very poor	10-5
Mechanics (punctuation, spelling, capitalization)	Few errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	Excellent to very good	5
	Occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing.	Good to average	4
	Frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing.	Fair to poor	3
	Dominated by errors	Very poor	2

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section aims to provide an answer the research question of whether or not the CIRC method significantly enhances students' writing explanation text. In order to answer the research questions, pre- and post-test designs were employed by the researcher. The XI grade of SMAN 2 Semarang served as the study sample. This study focused on one XI MIPA 8 class as its one and only subject.

The researcher classified the students score according to the Minimum Standard Criteria Achievement (KKM) score. The Minimum Standard Criteria Achievement (KKM) score at SMA 2 Semarang in detail as follows:

Classification	Score
Passed of KKM	$\geq 75$
Unpassed of KKM	$< 75$

Before applying CIRC method, the writer gave a assessment diagnostic to the students to know the students' base competence. The students' assessment diagnostic assessed by two raters. After the score from the raters were collected, the writer accumulated the score to obtain the students' base competence. Below is the students' score after the writer combined the result of the two raters:

**Table.2** The Students' Assessment Diagnostic Score

No.	Score	F	P (%)
1.	$\geq 75$	16	44%
2.	$< 75$	20	56%
Total		36	

From the table above, it could be concluded that only 16 of 36 students who were able to reach score  $\geq 75$  as the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. It means that only 44% who reached  $\geq 75$  and the rest 20 students (56%) had score  $< 75$  before the writer implemented Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC) method.

After giving assessment diagnostic, the writer started cycle 1 and applied CIRC method in order to improve students' writing ability. The writer asked observers to observe the teaching and learning process during the class. The writer began to do the meetings and at the end of Cycle 1, the writer conducted post-test to know the students' achievement in writing explanation text. Below is the students' writing score sfter the writer combined the result of the two raters:

**Table.3** The Students' Post-Test Score in Cycle 1

No	Score
1.	79
2.	82
3.	71
4.	78
5.	82
6.	82
7.	82
8.	76
9.	75
10.	86
11.	71
12.	68
13.	76
14.	76
15.	87
16.	81
17.	76
18.	78
19.	78
20.	82
21.	64
22.	80
23.	78
24.	81
25.	61
26.	76
27.	65
28.	79

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29.	68
30.	86
31.	83
32.	83
33.	70
34.	73
35.	75
36.	70

The researcher obtained from the table above that in post test cycle 1 the lowest score is 61 and the highest core is 87. Furthermore, there was 26 students who completed the KKM while 10 students couldn't complete the KKM.

**Table.4** The Students' Post-Test Score in Cycle II

No	Score
1.	75
2.	85
3.	77
4.	67
5.	85
6.	76
7.	92
8.	80
9.	83
10.	88
11.	82
12.	77
13.	82
14.	81
15.	92
16.	83
17.	84
18.	84
19.	74
20.	71
21.	76
22.	79
23.	81
24.	80
25.	74
26.	81
27.	79
28.	80
29.	85
30.	88
31.	87
32.	85
33.	77
34.	67
35.	82
36.	84

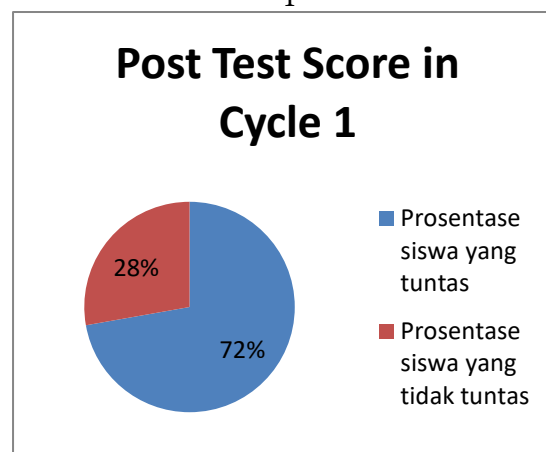
As a result of the learning process, the researcher obtained that the lowest score is 67 and the highest score is 92. Furthermore, there was 31 students who completed the KKM, while only 5 students couldn't complete the KKM. Below table to make simple in showing percentage of results students' score.

**Table.5** Percentage of Post Test Score in Cycle I

No.	Score	F	P (%)
1.	$\geq 75$	26	72%
2.	$< 75$	10	28%
Total		36	100%

From the table above, it could be concluded that 26 of 36 students were able to reach score 75 as the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. It meant 72% reach  $\geq 75$  and the rest 10 students (28%) had score  $< 75$ .

**Diagram.1** Percentage of Post Test Score in Cycle 1



In conclusion, the students' post-test score in Cycle 1 was not satisfied enough because the students who reached score  $\geq 75$  still low. So, the writer continued the reasearch to Cycle II in order to improve the students who got score under the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement, 75 and also to gain the students' ability in writing.

After the writer finished the last meeting in Cycle II, the writer gave written post-test in order to know the students' writing ability being taught by CIRC method. The writer computed the score and found the result which was presented as the following table:

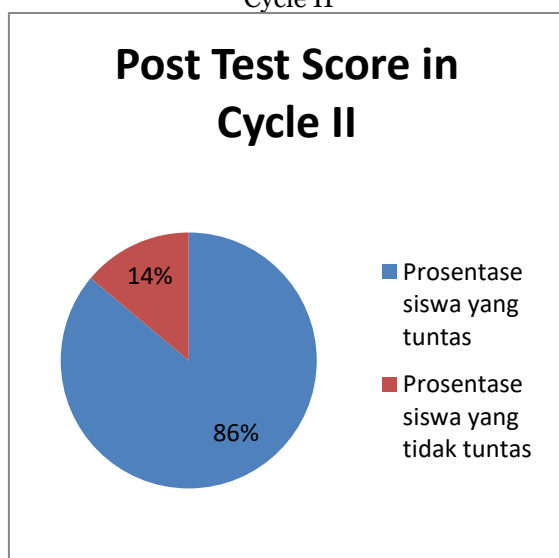
**Table.6** Percentage of Post Test Score in Cycle II

No.	Score	F	P (%)
1.	$\geq 75$	31	86%
2.	$< 75$	5	14%
Total		36	100%

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From the table above, 31 of 36 students were able to reach score 75 as the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. It meant 86% reach  $\geq 75$  and the rest 5 students (14%) had score  $< 75$ . In conclusion, the students' post-test writing ability in Cycle II was satisfied because more than half of students' percentage got score  $\geq 75$ .

**Diagram 2.** Percentage of Post Test Score in Cycle II



Based on the diagram above, the comparison of the pupils' scores between the post test in cycle 1 and post test in cycle II revealed an improvement. In the post test in cycle 1, students who completed the KKM were 72%. Meanwhile, in the post test in cycle II, students who completed the KKM increased to be 86%.

From the results of the observations made, it is known that the implementation of the CIRC learning method to explanation text is effective in developing students' writing skills in explanation text material and their learning interest. Thus, it can be showed that the implementation of this learning method is able to enhance student competency achievements in completing the Minimum Standard Criteria Achievement (KKM) for subjects in senior high school. Therefore, this learning method is recommended as an alternative to increase the quality of learning in senior high schools. In addition, students appear to be more proactive in class, enthusiastic, and participate more in discussions.

The application during the teaching and learning process in the classroom also showed some strength, according to the researcher. Students appeared engaged and interested in learning; CIRC method taught social skills like cooperation, teamwork, and interpersonal

skills. Behaviour changed from passive to engaged students. Additionally, the teaching and learning process moved from being teacher-centered to student-centered.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the implementation of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method can provide significant results in improving writing skills in explanation text material at XI grade of SMA Negeri 2 Semarang. This can be seen from the increase in the number of students who pass Minimum Standard Criteria Achievement (KKM) after the implementation of this learning method. The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method can also increase student activeness during learning process and their ability to understand explanation text writing. This learning method is also able to improve students' ability to think critically, so that it can help improve the quality of learning at senior high schools as a whole.

However, this study has several limitations, such as conducting research in only one school with a limited sample and not conducting research on the long-term effects of implementing the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method. Therefore, for further research activities will be carried out to explore the long-term effects of implementation the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) method to enhance students writing skills in explanation text.

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