

## Conference Paper

# Literature Circle and Critical Reading Across EYL Learning Strategies

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### Abstract

The results of survey of Program of International Student Assessment (PISA), it was evident that in 2009 Indonesian lower secondary school students' literacy ranked 57 out of 65 countries obtaining 396 (compared to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/OECD scoring 493), and in 2013 achieved the same score while OECD increased, 496 (Indonesia Curriculum Document, 2013). Inasmuch as the empirical evidence, and a few studies on this, the study was conducted aiming at improving students' critical reading through literature circle strategy adopting a quasi experimental design by comparing two strategies, conventional and literature circle, for two intact groups in post test at primary school implementing a blended curriculum (Tuckman, 1978; Creswell, 2008). The subjects were composed of 42 students of Grade 5, 5 A for the control group and 5B for the experimental one. The instruments used consisted of posttest for the critical reading competence, observation sheet, underlying relevant documents, interview guide, and questionnaire, and all were validated and tried out. Based on the results of t-test ( $.002 < .05$ ), it revealed that in the significance level of .05 the null hypothesis was rejected meaning that literature circle strategy was verified effective and meaningful in improving the students' critical reading, specifically in making judgments and producing a summary. It is recommended that the strategy should be implemented as early as primary school, especially for the upper classes to improve their critical thinking for future life.

**Keywords:** Literature circle strategy, critical reading, across learning strategies, English for Young Learners

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## 1. Rationale

The emergence of Southeast Asian Economic Community in the millennium era has great impact on the domain of education in Indonesia. For this era, education is considered a powerful weapon to improve the quality of human resources to be domestically and globally competitive. Therefore, through the efforts of the Ministry of Education and Culture in collaboration with the Board of Standards of National Education have attempts to launch a modified curriculum called 'Curriculum 2013' in order to prepare young generation to become more spiritually, socially, knowledgably and skillfully competent in

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leading and managing the country in 2045, a period of a hundred year in independence (Indonesia Curriculum Document, 2013).

As empirical evidence, based on the results of survey of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Program of International Student Assessment, it was evident that in 2009 Indonesian lower secondary school students ranked 57 out of 65 countries joining the prestigious competition, obtaining 396 (compared to OECD scoring 493), and in 2013 achieved the same score while OECD increased, 496 (Indonesia Curriculum Document, 2013). In other words, from the international viewpoint Indonesian young people's literacy is categorized low, and this was strengthened by a survey by Sugihartati (2016) claiming that most primary school students in Surabaya City (East Java)

have rarely paid a visit to the city main library to read indicating that young learners are not literately interested in reading yet. Another empirical evidence by Ki Supriyoko (2004 as quoted by Sugihartati, 2016) displayed that there was a positively significant correlation between reading interest and reading habit & reading competence. Thus, low reading interest might result in low reading competence. These were also highlighted by a study conducted by Cambridge Center *Universitas Negeri Malang* (2015) revealing that the students joining the international standard reading test (Checkpoint) reached level 4 out of the maximum level 6. All in all, the Indonesian youth' reading skills are still far from being expected, so an immediate action should be handled. Since 2016 the Indonesian government has started off a program, the so-called 'School Literacy Movement' (*Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*) with three-phase action, namely, Phase 1 refers to Reading for Habit Formation in which students are trained to read a non subject matter reading material in 15 minutes prior to class session daily; Phase 2 with Developmental Reading where they are encouraged to make a brief summary of what they have already read, and Phase 3 Subject- Matter-Based Reading in which they are triggered to read more subject-matter based reading materials (*Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*, 2016).

In order to realize the government literacy policy, there should be efforts to support this movement to stimulate young learners to read critically what they are reading, one of the strategies is popularly named 'Literature Circle Strategy (LCS)', a reading strategy which has been long implemented in developed countries as American and European schools as early as primary level to raise literacy. In 1993 school children, especially immigrants, in Chicago, America accomplished low reading competence and the government took immediate action via LCS in that the children are trained to get used to reading by analyzing and evaluating reading materials with peers under with/out tutors' monitor. The readers are not only required to find out or remember facts but also

practice high order thinking skills like making inferences/conclusions, hypothesizing, making judgements of what they have read (Daniels, 2002). Further Long and Gove (2003) postulated that through literature circle strategy students were more engaged in interpreting a story from different points of view via in-depth peer discussion.

LCS addressed to young learners, according to Piaget (as quoted by Cameron, 2001) and Pinter (2012), are due to several reasons as follows: (1) children ranging the age of 7 up to 11 years old have accomplished 'performing operation' meaning that they are able to carry out such tasks as combining, separating, composing, folding and multiplying; (2) they learn how to practice high order thinking like deductive/inductive thinking, analyzing, and synthesizing; (3) they are able to think abstractly and reflectively; and (4) they can solve problems. These are supported by Kohlberg (as quoted by Clark, 1984) postulating that (1) the children 's development of cognitive reasoning at this age is focussed on cognitive reasoning enabling them to think critically; and (2) therefore, they start learning their surroundings, and differentiating fiction and non fiction world.

Due to the low level of literacy of Indonesian lower secondary school students, it is indispensable to train literacy competence earlier, therefore, this study is then conducted to experiment LCS to promote young learners' critical reading in order to empower their high order thinking skills like inferring, formulating hypothesis, making judgements and writing a summary. This was empirically verified by Klinger, Vaughn dan Schumm (1998) disclosing that through their experiment the subjects in the experiment group achieved higher score in peer discussion compared to those of the control group, but the two groups reached the same competence in comprehending the content course of Social Studies (Daniels, 2002). Further, Marshall (2006) found out that (1) LCS resulted in promoting critical reading skills for high achievers, and (2) was worth for those with high reading interest.

## 2. Method

Since the study was aimed at experimenting a reading strategy called 'literature circle strategy' to promote young learners' critical reading in order to brush up their critical reading skills, a quasi experimental study in posttest design was adopted as a critical reading strategy is experimented at primary level of education and two intact classes were involved (Tuckman, 1978; Creswell, 2008). The two intact groups, Grades 5A & 5B were employed as the samples of the study, 5A as the control group (C Group) and 5B as the experiment group (E Group) respectively. The conventional teaching strategy which lacked of critical reading skills was addressed to the C Group and the literature circle

strategy for the E Group of the Laboratory Primary School of State University Malang, each of which consisted of 21 first semester students of the academic year 2016-2017. Both groups belonged to the international class program (ICP) in which a blended curriculum was implemented, a synergy of national and international framework for three subjects, i.e., English, Mathematics and Science. The C Group was managed by the classroom teacher and the E Group by the researcher and her assistant as an observer. Thus, the dependent variable of the study was the students' reading scores, and the independent variable the two kinds of reading strategies. In order to collect the data, a reading posttest was administered as the main source of data, whereas, a questionnaire for the students, interview guide for the stakeholders and documents functioned as the supporting data. All instruments underwent try-out and were addressed to the fifth graders with similar nature as the subjects of the try-out.

For the pre-experiment, the students' reading test was obtained from the English teacher's assessment journal and based on the statistical computation, it was discovered that the reading mean score for the C Group was 85.9 and the E Group 87.7. In other words, the mean gap between the two groups was not great (1.6) due to several reasons; (1) they were selected students, (2) they were under treatment of the same experienced English teacher, (3) they were exposed to identical reading materials, and (4) the samples had learned English since the first grade. The two groups were given different treatments and separately observed. After the tenth session they were both tested and the reading test results were statistically compared using t-test at the level of significance of 0.5 to examine the effectiveness of the strategy.

### 3. Findings and Implications

#### 3.1. Lab Primary School of Universitas Negeri Malang

The Laboratorium Primary School was founded in 1970s and since 2009 the school has been affiliated to the university so it is under the university management since then, implying that the school management should be in line with the university's vision, mission and goals functioning as the educational referent. As a lab school, therefore, innovative practices are expected, and one of which is the birth of international class program starting from nursery level up to upper secondary school applying a blended framework, a synergy of national and international content in CLIL context (Rachmajanti & McClure, 2011). Three ICPs were treated as the subjects of the study, one as the try-out group and two as the experiment ones.

The students belonging to ICP are not the same as those of the regular classes inasmuch as (1) they are recruited through strict selection; (2) the minimum score of English proficiency is 70 as entry behavior; (3) they have received extra English course since Grade 1. Also, they are exposed to national and international frameworks; (4) the first graders are immersed in a bridging course for three months to improve their proficiency; (5) English lesson is taught three times a week instead of only twice a week (70 minutes for each session) for the four macro skills (*Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing*); (6) there are additional hours for reading comprehension class starting at Grade 4 via teacher-made reading materials to fulfil the students' needs; (7) whereas, for Science and Mathematics, they attend 2 (two) sessions in a week. However, at Grade 3 the number of hours are multiplied, becoming 4 (four) sessions in a week; (8) Science and Mathematics concepts are introduced in Indonesian language for Grade 1, but the review and feedback are in English. The higher the grade, the least the use of Indonesian language, (9) basic syntactic and other linguistic components of English are exposed through contextual learning experiences using teacher-made worksheets for English, Science, and Mathematics, (10) the admittance of internationally-based formative and summative examinations for English, Science, and Mathematics subjects; and (11) most teachers hold international certification (Lab School Guideline, 2009; Zen et al., 2017).

### 3.2. The Results of Observation of the Treatments

Prior to the statistical computation of the two groups, some research assumptions were fulfilled, i.e., both groups had interval data for the reading scores obtained- 78-91 for the C Group and 78-100 for the E Group. Next, based on the normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk formula, it turned out that the two groups scored .749 for the C Group and .861 for the E Group (Sig. >.5) meaning that the scores were normally distributed at .5 level of significance. Finally, the two-group scores were verified homogeneous as a result of test of variance homogeneity reaching the significance value of .486 (>.05). In summary, the research samples had met the normality curve, data homogeneity and homoscedasticity.

Based on the fulfillment of research assumptions, two proposed strategies were then experimented that is the conventional reading strategy (CRS) was addressed to the C Group and the literature circle strategy (LCS) to the E Group respectively, both promoting critical reading skills. Both groups were exposed to identical reading materials and at the end of the experiment a reading comprehension posttest was administered.

For the C Group, the CRS was implemented for 10 (ten) times with the following procedures. As a warm-up activity, a preliminary observation was conducted to see the way of how the English teacher taught critical reading skills to the 5A students. Next, the teacher started using the texts provided, among others, *The Shoemaker and the Elves* (fiction), *Ladislao Biro* (non fiction), *Keeping Clean* (non fiction), *The Little Pet Dragon* (fiction), and *How a Battery Works* (non fiction) accompanied by questions in low order thinking skills (LOTS) and high order thinking skills (HOTS) like asking specific information, explicit information, implicit information, moral value. In the course of the reading session mostly the teacher was active asking questions to the students who sometimes asked difficult words to her. The activity of analyzing the texts was mostly conducted on individual basis.

On the other hand, for the E Group (5B students), the LCS as treatment was implemented as many as 10 (ten) times as well with the same reading materials (fiction and non fiction passages). In this strategy, 4 (four) students work in a group to discuss a reading text, each of which should experience 4 (four) different roles as a word finder, a question asker, a story mapper, and a summarizer to digest the reading text. Commonly speaking they had to work on a text, each of them taking a designated role (Daniels, 2002; Candler, 2012). Prior to the experiment the reading texts were all statistically measured using Flesch-Kincaid method to examine the level of readability, and its results were the following: *Sophia's Day* (84), *The Shoemaker & the Elves* (93.4), *Ladislao Biro* (77.9), *Keeping Clean* (87.3), *A Pet Little Dragon* (86.7) and *How a Battery Works* (62.1). In brief, they all belonged to fairly easy-to-average texts ranging from values of 62.1 to 93.4.

Afterwards, the texts were experimented in LCS phases. Phase 1, **modelling** with two texts *Sophia's Day* and *The Shoemaker & the Elves* was conducted in two consecutive days that is, first, the texts were read silently, and then they were instructed to find words considered difficult in a monolingual dictionary provided. Later, some oral questions were addressed to them, and those who could answer raised his/her hand. The questions focused on 5 items related to explicit, specific, and implicit information like making inferences, hypotheses, judgement. At the end of the session, they were taught how to summarize the texts.

After the modeling phase, each individual student was engaged in the second role, a **word finder**. The word finder was supposed to list difficult words in a text entitled *Ladislao Biro* and wrote down the meaning (synonym and the Indonesian equivalent) in an index card. S/he had to do silent reading about 5- 10 minutes. The words found were then shared with peers and discussed in class. The next role was as a **question asker** constructing LOTS and HOTS-based questions about the text. In this phase, reading

aloud was practiced before answering questions on explicit information (e.g. *What time of the day does the story take place?*), specific information (e.g. *What is silk made by?*), and implicit information like making inferences (e.g. *What can you infer from the story?*), hypotheses (e.g. *What would happen if the amount of X-ray was too much?*), and judgement (e.g. *What word (s) best describe X-ray specialists?*). Since making such questions was not an easy task, this activity was conducted in two sessions. The third role was a **story mapper** being in charge of mapping the content of the text using a mind map which later would be employed by a **summarizer** to write a summary of the text. Whenever every student got used to playing the four roles, the LCS was then put into practice in a group of four using three texts under the titles *Keeping Clean*, *A Little Dragon* and *How a Battery Works*. At the end of the sequential phases, a posttest was administered consisting of 3 (three) fiction and non fiction texts accompanied by some open-ended questions and one task for making a summary.

### 3.3. The Results of Posttest Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Having been engaged in the experiment for 10 (ten) times, the students were then assessed and a posttest containing 3 (three) texts was administered in 60 minutes. The texts were *The Boy Who Biked the World*, *The Cloth of Emperors*, and *How an X-Ray Works* with FK constant values of 85.9, 77.8, and 76.6 respectively, considered average for the EFL 5th graders. The test was conducted on the same day for the two group and resulted in Table 1.

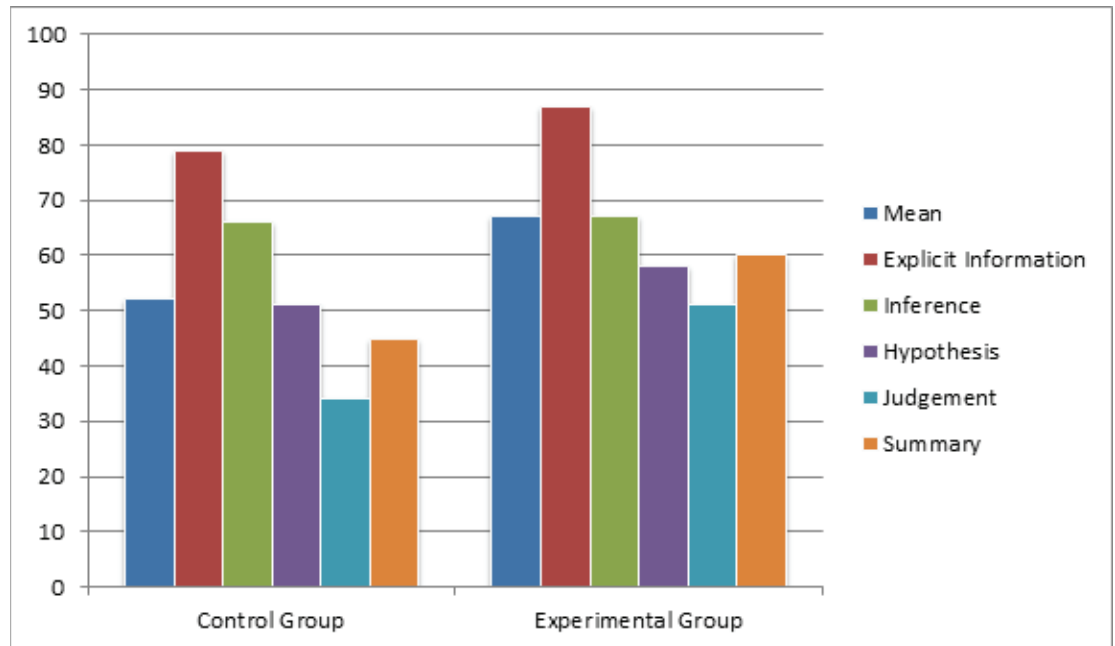
TABLE 1: Posttest Results of the C and E Groups

Variables	Critical Reading (1)		Explicit Information (2)		Inference (3)		Hypothesis (4)		Judgement (5)		Summary (6)	
	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E
Mean score	58	72	6	8	11	15	6	13	4	8	25	28
Gap		14		2		4		7		4		3

Based on the results of analysis in Table 1, it showed that (1) the students' critical reading score in the C Group was 58 and the E Group 72, so there was 14 points as gap; and (2) as a global picture the gaps existed in their sub critical reading competences such as in finding explicit information figuring at 2 points, making inference at 4 points, making hypothesis at 7 points, making judgement at 4 points and writing a summary at



3 points. In general, the E Group scored higher than the C Group as depicted in Figure 1 for the results of the posttests.



**Figure 1:** Mean Scores of Posttests for All the Sub Competences in Critical Reading

Based on the results in Figure 1, it was descriptively discovered that there were differences in mean scores for the sub competences of critical reading for both the C and E Groups. However, the students in E Group did the posttest more quickly than those of the C Group as shown by the time gap approximately 9 (nine) minutes.

To be statistically accurate, each sub competence (variable) was descriptively computed by SPSS 21 in order to compare the results of posttests as displayed in Table 2 about the impact of the strategies on time of doing the posttest for both groups.

TABLE 2: Descriptive Statistics in Time Difference

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	21	53.6667	5.1316	1.11981
Experiment	21	44.7619	10.66257	2.32676

The result shows that the C Group’s mean score was 53.6667 with the minimum score of 47 and the high score of 60; whereas, the E Group’s mean score was 44.7619 with the minimum score of 30 and the high score of 60. Then, the data were statistically estimated using 2-tailed t-test of independent samples. Table 3 yielded the result of significance.

The result of significance in Table 3 shows that the probability value of.001 was smaller than.005 (.001<.005) empirically signifying that the null hypothesis was not accepted.



TABLE 3: The Result of 2-Tailed Test

t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.
-3.272	40	0.001	8.90476	2.58221
-3.272	38.683	0.002	8.90476	2.58221

In other words, statistically speaking there was time difference in doing the posttest between the C and E Groups, or to say the E Group did the posttest more quickly after experiencing the LCS. Further, it would be verified the impact of both strategies on both groups' critical reading competences as depicted in Table 4.

TABLE 4: Descriptive Statistics in Critical Reading Competences

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	21	55.1905	15.65445	3.41608
Experiment	21	69.7143	12.98901	0.83443

The result shows that the C Group's mean score was 55.1905 with the standard of deviation of 15.65445, 31 for the minimum score and 82 for the maximum score; whereas, the E Group's mean score was 69.7143 with the standard of deviation of 12.98901, 44 for the minimum score and 99 for the maximum score. Then, the data were statistically estimated using 2-tailed t-test of independent samples. Table 5 yielded the result of significance.

TABLE 5: The Result of 2-Tailed Test

t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.
-3.272	40	0.002	-14.52381	4.43888
-3.272	38.683	0.002	-14.52381	4.43888

Based on the result of significance, it revealed that the probability value of.002 was smaller than.005 (.002<.005) empirically indicating that the null hypothesis was not accepted. Thus, statistically speaking there was a difference in critical reading competences between the C and E Groups, or to say the E Group accomplished higher competences after the LCS treatment. Further, it would be verified the impact of both strategies on both groups' sub critical reading competences, firstly, focusing on finding explicit information as seen in Table 6.

The result shows that the C Group's mean score was 6.2381 with the minimum score of 4 and the maximum score of 8; whereas, the E Group's mean score was 6.7619 with the minimum score of 5 and the maximum score of 8. Then, the data were statistically

TABLE 6: Descriptive Statistics in Finding Expicit Information

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	21	6.2381	1.78619	0.38978
Experiment	21	6.7619	1.48003	0.32297

estimated using 2-tailed t-test of independent samples. Table 7 yielded the result of significance.

TABLE 7: The Result of 2-Tailed Test

t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.
-1.035	40	0.307	-0.52381	0.5062
-1.035	38.665	0.307	-0.52381	0.5062

The result of significance in Table 7 displays that the probability value of.307 was greater than.005 (.307>.005) empirically signifying that the null hypothesis was not rejected. In other words, statistically speaking there was no different competence in finding explicit information between the C and E Groups, or to say the E Group did not perform better after experiencing the LCS. Further, it would be justified the impact of both strategies on both groups' critical reading competences, secondly, focusing on finding explicit information as depicted in Table 8.

TABLE 8: Descriptive Statistics in Inferencing

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	21	10.9524	3.86622	0.84368
Experiment	21	123,333	3.43996	0.75066

The result shows that the C Group's mean score was 10.9524 with the standard of deviation of 3.86622, 0 for the minimum score and 15 for the maximum score; whereas, the E Group's mean score was 12.3333 with the standard of deviation of 3.43996, 3 for the minimum score and 15 for the maximum score. Then, the data were statistically estimated using 2-tailed t-test of independent samples as displayed in Table 9 for the result of significance.

TABLE 9: The Result of 2-Tailed Test

t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.
-1.223	40	0.229	-1.38095	1.12928
-1.223	39.466	0.229	-1.38095	1.12928

Based on the result of significance, it revealed that the probability value of.229 was greater than.005 (.229>.005) empirically indicating that the null hypothesis was not rejected. Thus, statistically speaking there was no different competence in making inferences between the C and E Groups, or to say the E Group did accomplish higher competences after the LCS treatment. Further, it would be verified the impact of both strategies on both groups' sub critical reading competences, thirdly, focusing on hypothesizing as described in Table 10.

TABLE 10: Descriptive Statistics in Hypothesizing

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	21	7.7619	5.06858	1.10605
Experiment	21	10.381	4.53295	0.98917

The result shows that the C Group's mean score was 7.7619 with the standard of deviation of 5.06858, 0 for the minimum score and 15 for the maximum score; whereas, the E Group's mean score was 10.3810 with the standard of deviation of 4.53295, 3 for the minimum score and 15 for the maximum score. Then, the data were statistically estimated using 2-tailed t-test of independent samples. Table 11 elicited the result of significance.

TABLE 11: The Result of 2-Tailed Test

t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.
-1.765	40	0.085	-2.61905	1.48385
-1.765	39.511	0.085	-2.61905	1.12928

The result of significance in Table 11 displays that the probability value of.085 was greater than.005 (.085>.005) empirically signifying that the null hypothesis was not rejected. In other words, statistically speaking there was no different competence in making hypotheses between the C and E Groups, or to say the E Group did not perform better after experiencing the LCS. Next, it would be justified the impact of both strategies on both groups' critical reading competences, fourthly, focusing on constructing judgments as depicted in Table 12.

TABLE 12: Descriptive Statistics in Making Judgments

Kelompok	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	21	5.1905	4.30835	0.94016
Experiment	21	8	2.64575	0.57735

The result of Table 12 shows that the C Group’s mean score was 5.1905 with the standard of deviation of 4.30835, 0 for the minimum score and 15 for the maximum score; whereas, the E Group’s mean score was 8.0000 with the standard of deviation of 2.64575. 5 for the minimum score and 13 for the maximum score. Then, the data were statistically estimated using 2-tailed t-test of independent samples. Table 13 elicited the result of significance.

TABLE 13: The Result of 2-Tailed Test

t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.
-2.547	40	0.015	-2.80952	1.10328
-2.547	33.206	0.016	-2.80952	1.10328

The result of significance in Table 13 displays that the probability value of.015 was greater than.005 (.015>.005) empirically signifying that the null hypothesis was not rejected. In other words, statistically speaking there was no different competence in making judgments between the C and E Groups, or to say the E Group did not perform better after experiencing the LCS. Next, it would be justified the impact of both strategies on both groups’ critical reading competences focusing on summarizing as depicted in Table 14.

TABLE 14: Descriptive Statistics in Summarizing

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	21	24.9048	8.97165	1.95777
Experiment	21	31.9524	6.27277	1.36883

Based on the description in Table 14, the C Group’s mean score was 24.9048 with the standard of deviation of 8.97165, 8 for the minimum score and 38 for the maximum score; whereas, the E Group’s mean score was 31.9524 with the standard of deviation of 6.27277, 13 for the minimum score and 46 for the maximum score. Then, the data were statistically estimated using 2-tailed t-test of independent samples. The result of significance is elicited in Table 15.

TABLE 15: The Result of 2-Tailed Test

t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.
-2.95	40	0.005	-7.04762	2.38884
-2.95	35.782	0.006	-7.04762	2.38884

Based on the result of significance, it revealed that the probability value of.005 was not greater than.005 (.005=.005), empirically indicating that the null hypothesis

was not accepted. Hence, statistically speaking there was no different competence in summarizing between the C and E Groups, or to say the C and E Groups did not accomplish different competences after the treatments.

In alignment with this, the positive impact of the implementation of LCS on critical reading skills was supported by the E Group students' opinions obtained from the questionnaire. They stated that (1) their competence to read both the fiction and non fiction texts was higher as they were guided to comprehend the content of the texts step-by-step and discussed the details with peers in groups of four in which each of them was assigned to do a specific task like one student had to find difficult words, one respond to questions, one map out the main idea in each paragraph, and one make a summary out of the mind map; (2) they were more competent in understanding the link among paragraphs (coherence); and (3) the texts had enlarged their horizon of knowledge since the content was up to their level of proficiency and content-loaded. Whereas, for the aspect of LCS, they opined that the strategy made them more critical in comprehending texts in a systematic way, and they preferred to work in a small group to discuss the texts. Moreover, they confessed that the strategy encouraged them to read more independently.

### 3.4. Implications of the Study

Referring to the above findings, it implies that, firstly, it is empirically verified that the students' critical reading skills with 'Literature Circle Strategy' are higher than those with 'Conventional Reading Strategy'. We can claim, in other words, that LCS trains readers to be critical in reading process like making inferences, hypothesizing, making judgments and writing a summary of what the readers have digested. These sub competences in critical reading should voluntarily and intensively trained following the procedures recommended by Daniels (2002), and Bloom (2005). Pinter (2011) and (Bruner as cited by Cameron, 2001) have highlighted that children can be drilled to think critically through scaffolding to arouse their motivation. The findings of this study were also strengthened by related previous studies by Klinger, Vaughn & Schuman (1998) and Marshall (2006) postulating that this strategy can promote reading comprehension in more critical way. Secondly, it was found out in this study that the high achievers (approximately 30%) did the posttest faster which means they were aware of the way how to attack a text critically. This idea was supported by a study by Marshall (2006) claiming that LCS is appropriate for the high achievers and for those who are keen on reading. These readers are usually supported by conducive atmosphere as justified by Wigfield (1997)

dan Kristmason (2000) stating that external factors (family and school environments) provide positive impact on learners' reading habit. Thirdly, the students in the C Group got accustomed to responding to some questions with high order thinking skills like how to infer, how to hypothesize, but lacked of practice in writing a summary. Therefore, teachers should expose students to high-order-thinking-skill types of questions. In addition to this, Daniels (2002) is of the opinion that critical reading skills are to be exposed to learners in routine and continuity to build up critical reading habit which is in line with what Krashen (1985) and Collier (1988) postulated that learning a language requires much exposure and consumes lots of time. Finally, sub competences of reading in LCS should be conducted in a graded way as suggested by Daniels (2002) that is critical reading questions have to be practiced and reviewed many times, particularly in an atmosphere where English is as a foreign language, and reading texts are to be well selected to arouse children's interest and motivation (Lehman & Sharer, 1996).

#### 4. Concluding Remarks

It can be concluded that (1) Literature Circle Strategy (LCS) is empirically proved to be effective to promote young learners' critical reading competences covering the questions of finding explicit information, inferencing, hypothesizing, making judgments, and writing a summary out of fiction and non fiction texts; (2) through LCS the students feel easier to work on the responses on the high-order-thinking questions as they have to solve them in groups; If young learners are trained to think critically at earlier age and experience the process over periods of time in intensive mode with gradual scaffolding, they will read critically in the long run because of the already inculcated habit; and ultimately (3) the high achievers benefit more since they are aware of what is trained will be their life skills in the future life. To sum up, LCS may support the Indonesian government in empowering the School Literacy Movement in terms of building critical reading habit for school students in a systematic and guided way. Therefore, this reading strategy should be introduced to school teachers through formal professional training, especially those teaching English to young learners whose English proficiency has reached Level 3/4 of Cambridge Scheme or A2 of CEFR.

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