

**THE USE OF ENGLISH COMICS IN READING COMPREHENSION (An
Experimental Research at Eighth Year Students of SMPN 11 Mataram in the Academic
Year 2018/2019)**



A JOURNAL

BY

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The Use of English Comics in Reading Comprehension (An Experimental Research at Eighth Year Students of SMPN 11 Mataram in the Academic Year 2018/2019)

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ABSTRACT

This final project is about the effect of English comic in reading comprehension at the eighth year students of SMPN 11 Mataram in the academic year 2018/2019. The objective of this research is to find out whether there is any significant difference in the improvement of students' mastery in reading comprehension using comics and without using comics. The researcher used an experimental method with pre-test and post-test design with treatments for this research. The population of this research were all of the eighth year students with total sample of 58 students from two classes, VIII E as the experimental group and VIII B as the control group. The technique used in analyzing the data was the *t-test* formula. The results of this research showed that the mean deviation of the experimental group's pre-test and post-test was higher than the control groups. It was also supported by the *t-value* which was higher than the *t-table*. Therefore, the Null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a) which stating that the English comic is effective in improving student's reading comprehension was accepted. Based on this finding, it is suggested that English comic can be used by English teachers as an alternative reading materials to improve the students' reading comprehension.

Keywords : *english comic, reading comprehension, junior high school students, experimental research. experimental group. control group.*

PENGGUNAAN KOMIK BAHASA INGGRIS PADA PEMAHAMAN BACA (Sebuah Penelitian Eksperimental Pada Siswa Kelas Delapan SMPN 11 Mataram Tahun Akademik 2018/2019)

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ABSTRAK

Tugas akhir ini membahas tentang pengaruh komik berbahasa Inggris pada pemahaman baca siswa kelas delapan SMPN 11 Mataram tahun akademik 2018/2019. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah ada perbedaan signifikan dalam peningkatan penguasaan siswa dalam memahami bacaan saat menggunakan komik dan tanpa menggunakan komik. Peneliti menggunakan metode desain eksperimental dengan sebelum-tes dan setelah-tes, dan juga perlakuan untuk penelitian ini. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah seluruh siswa kelas delapan dengan jumlah sampel 58 siswa dari dua kelas, kelas VIII E sebagai kelompok eksperimental dan kelas VIII B sebagai kelompok kontrol. Teknik yang digunakan dalam menganalisis data adalah formula *t-test*. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan selisih rata-rata dari sebelum-tes dan sesudah-tes kelompok eksperimental lebih tinggi dari kelompok kontrol. Hasil penelitian ini juga didukung oleh *t-value* yang lebih tinggi dari *t-table*. Oleh karena itu, hipotesis Null (H_0) ditolak dan hipotesis Alternatif (H_a) yang mengatakan bahwa komik berbahasa Inggris efektif dalam meningkatkan pemahaman baca siswa diterima. Berdasarkan temuan ini, bisa dinyatakan jika komik berbahasa Inggris dapat digunakan oleh guru bahasa Inggris sebagai bahan bacaan alternatif untuk meningkatkan pemahaman baca siswa.

Kata kunci: *komik berbahasa Inggris, pemahaman baca, siswa menengah pertama, penelitian eksperimental, kelompok eksperimental, kelompok kontrol.*

INTRODUCTION

Based on the Curriculum 2013, teaching reading as a part of the English subject aims to help the students comprehend reading materials. In reading comprehension, the message to be imposed in the written form is the most important element that the students must recognize, because the primary purpose of reading is to know the thoughts expressed in the printed material. Therefore, reading with comprehension is an only way for the students to achieve what they want to know from the reading material. However, reading comprehension in English is a challenging task for Indonesian students because we know that teaching English especially at Junior High School students is not easy. The students think that English is a new language for them and some teachers also considered that reading is not a favorite activity for most students. The problems can appear when the class consists of a big number of students, a noisy class that can disturb the students who really want to study which will influence the students' concentration to the subject given in class, and lack of interest in reading English text. A condition like this can make the students feel bored, and not interested in studying English.

Based on my experience when I was teaching the students at SMPN 11 Mataram, there were several problems that exist when the learning process takes place among them as follows: 1) The low ability of students to understand reading is seen from the students who difficult to find the main idea and difficult to answer the problem of a reading text. 2) The learning process of English (reading) is still centered from the teacher and rarely uses a fun learning model for students. 3) The implementation of English learning does not provide opportunities for students to learn more actively, think critically, and creatively.

From various facts found from my teaching experience, it can be concluded that:

1. Reading learning still uses less innovative learning approaches.
2. Students rarely read English texts making the low level of reading comprehension content.
3. Students' low understanding makes the students difficult to answer given problem.

That is why teachers need to find a solution to solve this problem, so they can make the effective class. The first step to create an effective class is providing interesting and easy reading material that can make the students understand. Easy reading material will prevent the students from translating word by word content which can lead the students to an overall understanding of reading content, or at least an understanding of sentences. In addition to providing and making the students understand about the material, teachers should select new, interesting, and familiar readings. The role of teachers is very important to help the students determine what kind of reading should be. The teachers also should create a fun classroom atmosphere in the reading class.

There are several ways to help students to improve their reading comprehension. One of the ways is by using interesting teaching materials. In this study, the writer wants to use English comic. As Hornby (2002) describes, the comic book is a sequence of drawings arranged in interrelated panels to display brief humor of narrative form, often serialized with text in balloons and captions. In addition, Liu (2004) states that comics are visual highly texts; they are effective, especially for reading comprehension for second or additional language learners. In summary, comic can attract the students' attention longer than blocks of print because the format is equal parts of pictures and texts. By prioritizing reading as a goal

of student mastery, the existence of the current media can contribute positively to the child and make them feel happy. The use of media can help children develop their language skills and help children in interpreting and recalling the stories that are in it. Therefore, this present study is conducted in order to answer the research problem are a) how is the result of using English comics as a medium of teaching reading comprehension? And b) is comic effective as a medium of teaching reading comprehension?

The objectives of this research is a) to find out whether there is any significant difference in the improvement of students' mastery in reading comprehension using comics and without using comics and b) to identify the effectiveness of English comics as a medium of teaching reading comprehension.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Definition of Reading

Harris et al (1980:5) define reading as a process of meaning elaboration or thinking in relation to written symbols. The recognition and comprehension written symbols are influenced by reader's perception skill, experience, language background, mind sets and reasoning abilities as they anticipate meaning on the bases of what has been read.

Reading becomes an important part of language teaching, and it has complicated problem. Some teachers considered that reading is not a favorite activity for most students. Therefore, English teachers should find strategies to overcome this problem. They are expected to find appropriate strategies or activities to make students understand reading text and moreover enjoy reading.

The Function of Reading

1. Intellectual function

With a lot of reading, we can increase the level of intellect, foster our reasoning power.

2. Function Booster Creativity

The results of our reading can encourage, mobilize us to work, supported by this breadth of insight and vocabulary selection.

3. Practical Functions

Reading activities are carried out to obtain practical knowledge in life.

4. Religious Function

Reading can be used to nurture and improve faith, extend the mind, and get closer to God.

5. Informative Function

With a lot of reading, we get more information faster.

6. Recreational Functions

Reading is used as an entertaining effort, making exciting excursions.

7. Social Function

Reading activities have a high social function when performed orally or loudly.

The Principles of Teaching Reading

1. Develop Reading Lessons in Three Parts.

- *Pre-reading Activities.*

Students have great difficulty jumping into new texts without any background support.

- *During-Reading Activities.*

To guide the student more active in reading, and to encourage them to check their comprehension about the text.

- *Post-reading Activities.*

Post-reading activities are used to help students to think about and respond to texts they have read.

2. Explicitly Teach Reading Strategies.

Explicit teaching involves teaching comprehension strategies one at a time, allowing students to practice and apply the strategy while teachers provide explicit feedback and reviews, and allow for independent practice.

3. Help Students Develop Vocabulary Skills.

Vocabulary is a main component of literacy and affects the overall understanding of what is being learned.

Comic

According to Scott McCloud in his book “Understanding Comics (1993)”, comics are juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer.

Strengths of Comic in Education

1. Motivating

Through comic as a medium the teacher can give motivation to the students to learn English in more enjoyable and interesting ways.

2. Visual

The interest of students in comics’ picture emphasizes the potential of visual medium. Comics’ visual quality increases learning.

3. Popular

Comic is a popular reading for children. If we ask the students, whether they have read comic or not, most of them would say, “yes.”

The Benefits of Comic

1. Add Vocabulary

Students are able to decipher the meanings of unknown vocabulary based on the context of the pictures.

2. Increase Inference

When reading a comic, the reader must be able to infer what is happening between each panel

3. Create Confidence

Comics are often recommended for struggling readers because the combination of images with text leads to easier comprehension which creates confidence in reading skills.

4. Develop a Sense of Sequence

Reading comics develops the ability to keep track of and understand a sequence of events.

5. Improve Visual Literacy

Images have specific meaning, and reading comics make students more familiar and comfortable with understanding these visual clues.

6. Comics are Fun to Read

It is great to read books to increase literacy skills, but the most important part of reading is to have fun with it.

Reading Comprehension

Thinker (1975;5) states that reading comprehension is not just reading with a loud voice but also to establish and understand the meaning of words, sentence, and paragraph sense the relationship among the ideas. As it is, if a student just reads loudly, but cannot understand the content of the passages, it means he/she fails in comprehending the passage.

Since comprehension is an important element in reading, the researcher would like to give the techniques of reading comprehension. According to Harris and Sipay (1980), techniques of reading comprehension are:

- 1) Scanning; quickly going through a text to find a particular piece of information.
- 2) Skimming; quickly running ones' eyes over a text to get the gist of it.
- 3) Extensive reading; reading a longer text, usually for one's own pleasure.
- 4) Intensive reading; reading a shorter text, to extract specific information.

Previous Research

The researcher takes previous related study as a comparison to this research, there are: "The Use of English Comics to Improve Students' Ability in Story Retelling (*The Case Study of 8th Students of SMPN 1 Bojong Pekalongan in the Academic Year 2006/2007*)" which was conducted by Royanti, the students of State University of Malang in the academic year 2007. On her study, she analyzed about medium/media of language teaching. According to Royanti, teaching reading through English Comics in class is more effective, because there is significant difference in improvement of students' ability in story retelling between the group using English Comics and the one without using English Comics. The group that used English Comics as medium in story retelling improve a lot with the average scores 77, 2 higher than the students who did not use English Comics with medium 69, 0.

The second study is "Improving The Students' Reading Comprehension Of Narrative Text Through Story Mapping" (*A Classroom Action Research of the Second Grade of MTs Tarbiyatul Falah*)" by Muhamad Romli in the academic year 2014. According to the result of any tests, it could be summarized that there was a significant difference before and after implementing story mapping method in teaching narrative text. It means that using story mapping in teaching reading is helpful, especially in improving students' reading comprehension of narrative text. It can be shown from the result of pre-action test and some post-action test.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The goal of this research is to find out the effect of using comic in teaching reading comprehension. According to Arikunto (1985; 57), “Experimental research is a study to know whether there is an effect or not to the subject that is given a treatment”. This research was consisted of experimental group and control group. The implementation of using comic was used in the experimental group, while in the control group was not using comic as a media. By using experimental and control group, it was identified how much comics can affect the students reading comprehension. This research used a pre-test and a post-test for data collection. This research was applied in SMPN 11 Mataram.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

1. Using English Comics as a Medium

The researcher took two weeks to do all the process of data collection. Starting from giving the pre-test, giving the treatment, and the last is giving the post-test. The pre-test was given earlier before the treatment began which was intended to know the students’ reading comprehension. Then, the researcher gave different treatments for both groups. At the end of the process, the researcher conducted a post-test which was aimed to find out the students’ understanding after the treatment. The same type of actions and procedures were applied in taking students’ score for the pre-test and post-test.

After having finished the data collection, the researcher then computed the pre-test and the post-test scores of both groups. In scoring the students’ worksheets, the researcher calculated the correct answers of the 10 items of reading comprehension test.

Table 4.1

Students' Raw Score in the Pre-test and the Post-test of the Experimental Group and the Control Group

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP			CONTROL GROUP		
Subject	Pre-test	Post-test	Subject	Pre-test	Post-test
X1	50	70	Y1	50	70
X2	40	60	Y2	70	80
X3	30	70	Y3	80	90
X4	60	80	Y4	70	80
X5	60	80	Y5	40	60
X6	60	80	Y6	80	90
X7	50	70	Y7	70	80
X8	60	80	Y8	60	70
X9	30	70	Y9	70	90
X10	40	70	Y10	70	80
X11	40	80	Y11	50	60
X12	80	100	Y12	40	70
X13	70	80	Y13	40	50
X14	40	70	Y14	40	60
X15	70	90	Y15	80	90
X16	50	80	Y16	50	70
X17	40	70	Y17	70	90
X18	80	100	Y18	70	80
X19	80	100	Y19	40	60
X20	60	80	Y20	60	70
X21	40	70	Y21	50	70
X22	50	80	Y22	60	70
X23	60	80	Y23	70	90
X24	30	70	Y24	70	80
X25	70	80	Y25	70	80
X26	60	80	Y26	50	70
X27	50	70	Y27	60	70
X28	30	60	Y28	70	80
X29	70	100	Y29	70	80

Table 4.2**Tabulation of the Pre-test and the Post-test Standard Score of the Experimental Group and the Control Group**

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP			CONTROL GROUP		
Subject	Pre-test (X1)	Post-test (X2)	Subject	Pre-test (Y1)	Post-test (Y2)
X1	50	62	Y1	50	62
X2	44	56	Y2	62	68
X3	38	62	Y3	68	74
X4	56	68	Y4	62	68
X5	56	68	Y5	44	56
X6	56	68	Y6	68	74
X7	50	62	Y7	62	68
X8	56	68	Y8	56	62
X9	38	62	Y9	62	74
X10	44	62	Y10	62	68
X11	44	68	Y11	50	56
X12	68	79	Y12	44	62
X13	62	68	Y13	44	50
X14	44	62	Y14	44	56
X15	62	74	Y15	68	74
X16	50	68	Y16	50	62
X17	44	62	Y17	62	74
X18	68	79	Y18	62	68
X19	68	79	Y19	44	56
X20	56	68	Y20	56	62
X21	44	62	Y21	50	62
X22	50	68	Y22	56	62
X23	56	68	Y23	62	74
X24	38	62	Y24	62	68
X25	62	68	Y25	62	68
X26	56	68	Y26	50	62
X27	50	62	Y27	56	62
X28	38	56	Y28	62	68
X29	62	79	Y29	62	68

Table 4.3
Deviation and Square Deviation Tabulation of the Experimental Group

Subject	Pre-test(X1)	Post-test(X2)	Deviation Score of Pre-test and Post-test (dx)	Square of the Deviation Score (dx ²)
X1	50	62	12	144
X2	44	56	12	144
X3	38	62	24	576
X4	56	68	12	144
X5	56	68	12	144
X6	56	68	12	144
X7	50	62	12	144
X8	56	68	12	144
X9	38	62	24	576
X10	44	62	18	324
X11	44	68	24	576
X12	68	79	11	121
X13	62	68	6	36
X14	44	62	18	324
X15	62	74	12	144
X16	50	68	18	324
X17	44	62	18	324
X18	68	79	11	121
X19	68	79	11	121
X20	56	68	12	144
X21	44	62	18	324
X22	50	68	18	324
X23	56	68	12	144
X24	38	62	24	576
X25	62	68	6	36
X26	56	68	12	144
X27	50	62	12	144
X28	38	56	18	324
X29	62	79	17	289
SUM	$\sum X1 = 1.510$	$\sum X2 = 1.938$	$\sum dx = 428$	$\sum (dx)^2 = 7.024$

Table 4.4
Deviation and Square Deviation Tabulation of the Control Group

Subject	Pre-test(Y1)	Post-test(Y2)	Deviation Score of Pre-test and Post-test (dy)	Square of the Deviation Score (dy^2)
Y1	50	62	12	144
Y2	62	68	6	36
Y3	68	74	6	36
Y4	62	68	6	36
Y5	44	56	12	144
Y6	68	74	6	36
Y7	62	68	6	36
Y8	56	62	6	36
Y9	62	74	12	144
Y10	62	68	6	36
Y11	50	56	6	36
Y12	44	62	18	324
Y13	44	50	6	36
Y14	44	56	12	144
Y15	68	74	6	36
Y16	50	62	12	144
Y17	62	74	12	144
Y18	62	68	6	36
Y19	44	56	12	144
Y20	56	62	6	36
Y21	50	62	12	144
Y22	56	62	6	36
Y23	62	74	12	144
Y24	62	68	6	36
Y25	62	68	6	36
Y26	50	62	12	144
Y27	56	62	6	36
Y28	62	68	6	36
Y29	62	68	6	36
SUM	$\Sigma Y1 = 1.642$	$\Sigma Y2 = 1.888$	$\Sigma dy = 246$	$\Sigma (dy)^2 = 2.412$

Thus, we can compute the mean deviation (M) and the sum of square mean deviation ($\sum X^2$ and $\sum Y^2$) of both groups as follow:

- 1) The mean deviation and the sum square mean deviation of the Experimental Group.

$$Mx = \frac{\sum dx}{Nx}$$

$$Mx = \frac{428}{29}$$

$$Mx = 14.8$$

$$\sum X^2 = \sum (dx)^2 - \frac{\sum(dx)^2}{Nx}$$

$$\sum X^2 = 7.024 - \frac{(428)^2}{29}$$

$$\sum X^2 = 7.024 - \frac{183184}{29}$$

$$\sum X^2 = 7.024 - 6.316$$

$$\sum X^2 = 708$$

- 2) The mean deviation and the sum square mean deviation of the Control Group.

$$My = \frac{\sum dy}{Ny}$$

$$My = \frac{246}{29}$$

$$My = 8.4$$

$$\sum Y^2 = \sum (dy)^2 - \frac{\sum(dy)^2}{Ny}$$

$$\sum Y^2 = 2.412 - \frac{(246)^2}{29}$$

$$\sum Y^2 = 2.412 - \frac{60516}{29}$$

$$\sum Y^2 = 2.412 - 2.086$$

$$\sum Y^2 = 326$$

2. The Effectiveness of English Comic as a Medium

The result of the computation observably showed that the mean deviation of the experimental group was higher than the control group. However, to see if the two groups were “significantly different”, a t-test statistical computation was needed.

T-test Value

In this section, the researcher calculates the t-test value. If the t-test value was higher than t-table critical value, it means that the students in experimental group was treated by using comic was getting better than the students in control group in reading comprehension achievement. It is also means that this experiment succeeds. On the contrary, if t-test value is lower than t-table critical value, it means the students in

control group were getting better than the experimental group's students, it means the experiment was failed.

It was identified that; $M_x=14.8$, $M_y=8.4$, $\sum X^2 = 708$, $\sum y^2 = 326$, and $N=29$, then value of t-test could be calculated as follow:

$$t = \frac{M_x - M_y}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2 + \sum y^2}{N_x + N_y - 2} \left[\frac{1}{N_x} + \frac{1}{N_y} \right]}}$$

$$t = \frac{14.8 - 8.4}{\sqrt{\frac{708 + 326}{29 + 29 - 2} \left[\frac{1}{29} + \frac{1}{29} \right]}}$$

$$t = \frac{6.4}{\sqrt{\left[\frac{1.034}{56} \right] \left[\frac{2}{29} \right]}}$$

$$t = \frac{6.4}{\sqrt{[18.4][0.06]}}$$

$$t = \frac{6.4}{\sqrt{1.104}}$$

$$t = \frac{6.4}{1.05}$$

$$t = 6.095$$

Discussion

1. The Result of Using Comics as a Medium

It was found that the mean deviation of experimental group's pre-test and post-test (14.8) was higher than the control group's (8.4). It also showed that the t-test value was 6.095. Given the significance level of 0.05 (95%) and 0.01 (99%) and with degree of freedom (*df*) of 56, it was determined from the *t-table* that the critical value was 2.003 at the level of significance 0.05 and 2.666 at the level 0.01.

t-test	t-table		
	<i>Df</i>	0.05	0.01
6.095	56	2.003	2.666

Thus, since the t-test (6.095) was higher than the t-table at both level of significance (2.003 and 2.666), the Null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the Alternative hypothesis or (H_a) was accepted. This result proved that English comic with picture and color is effective to improve the reading comprehension of the eighth year students of SMPN 11 Mataram in Academic Year 2018/2019.

2. The Result of the Effectiveness of English Comics as a Medium

In this case, the students of the experimental group who read the comic with picture and color were mostly assisted by the availability of the combination of text itself with the presence of visual case which apparently helps them better in learning and comprehending the line and the content of the story.

On the other side, the control group did not show a significant improvement in reading comprehension with a short text story. The students of the control group could comprehend only a little from the text because of the unavailability of the pictures facilitation. Consequently, they had to look at the dictionary for many times to

discover the meaning of difficult word to help them comprehend the text. It is therefore seemed less effective compared to the one with pictures assistance.

Concisely, those interpretations of theories above strongly asserted the Alternative Hypothesis, which then simply concluded that English comic with pictures significantly improve the reading comprehension of Eighth Year Students of SMPN 11 Mataram in Academic year 2018/2019.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

1. Conclusion

In relation to the findings and discussion on the research, it can be concluded:

1. The result of this research showed the differences between the group using comics and without using comics. This research showed that the students in experimental group which is treated by using comic got better improvement in reading comprehension achievement differ from the control group which is treated with non-comic (short text story).
2. The value of *t-test* was higher than the *t-table*. It indicates the Null Hypothesis (Ho) which stating that there is no significant result students in reading comprehension before and after giving treatment is rejected. The Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) stating that there is a significant difference of the students' reading comprehension before and after presenting reading material by using English Comics is accepted.

2. Suggestion

In this study, the researcher would like to offer some suggestions to improve the students' ability in reading comprehension in order to get better result.

- 1) For the students
 - a. It will very useful for the students to read more to improve their skills in English. They can choose any kinds of English Comics, such as Comics Book, Comics Series, Comics Strips, and so on.
 - b. Any English reading texts can enrich their vocabulary, and can add their knowledge of English sentences structure as well as English Culture.
- 2) For the Teacher
 - a. It is important that the researcher use various kinds of reading texts to teach reading at school especially in teaching narrative text. Usually, reading is such kinds of activities that often bore the students. Thus, the use of various materials such as English Comics will always give the students fresh and new condition. Hopefully, it can also motivate the students and make them more interested in doing reading activity.
 - b. The English teacher is expected to be creative in inventing new ideas by using any other materials to teach reading. They should have a good choice in selecting material based on the students' education level and interest. To make it more effective, the use of some kinds of those materials should be accompanied with appropriate method of teaching.
- 3) For the Next Researcher
 - a. Hopefully, there will be a better improvement for the next research.

- b. The researcher hopes that the other researchers can use this as a reference to conduct further research on the same field. It is really possible to make more effective ways in teaching reading comprehension.
- c. Since the writer only used comic series for the research, the next researcher can use the other types of comic such as comic books and comic strips, so there are many types of comic that students can learn.

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