



IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH COMIC BOOKS

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Abstrak

This study is aimed to developing students' reading comprehension through comic book of SMP 8 Banda Aceh. It was conducted to know how to improve reading comprehension by comic book. The method used in this study was quantitative research. The research design of the study was pre-experimental design. The primary data were pre-test and post-test from the test that given to the students and the form of observation sheet. The model used in collecting the data was pre-test and post-test. The students score in cycle 1 was 45 which did not reach average score of KKM 70 it means that the researcher did next cycle. In cycle 2, the researcher did same thing but more emphasize in giving the example of finding main idea and important detail of a text and improved the lack of step in cycle 1 and did test 2. In test 2 the students' reached 81 score which means they reached the average score of KKM and this research was success. In the conclusion, comic book helped students' reading comprehension considerably based on the study's findings.

Keywords: *Reading comprehension and comic book.*

PENDAHULUAN

There are several media in teaching reading that can build students' motivation in the class in transferring knowledge and here the researcher used comic books as the media to improve students' comprehension. Comic books play an essential role to support the reading comprehension. It can be the effective media in increasing students' reading comprehension. Rokhayati and Utari (2014) stated that the use of comic books as an English teaching media for students was effective. Thus, comic books as the media in teaching students' reading comprehension should be implemented in the English classroom. Comic books create messages through story line and pictures. It has some benefits such as: helping students to comprehend the contents of the text, helping them to improve their ideas, increasing their interest in reading.

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Artemyeva (2014) argues that in comic, readability measures are determined not only on words, but also on pictures. Here, pictures support the words to make the contents of the text becomes more comprehensible. The researcher chose this media because the researcher thinks it is something that each of individuals like to read because there are many pictures and researcher believe that this media can be maximal in receiving the knowledge from the teacher and will be succeeded in the practice. The pictures become the illustration that assist the student to undergo the reading comprehension. How so? the illustration stands for the assistance to the students in defining or discovering the main topic being highlighted in every part. As the result, student will easily understand the aim of the text that has been written in the book.

There are some previous study related to this research that the writer conducts. The first is from Winda Apriani, Machdalena Vianty and Bambang A.L with the title *The Use of English Comic Book Series in Teaching Reading Comprehension*. The research conducted by a Quasi-Experimental study of the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 32, Palembang. The quasi-experimental research designed were used two classes there are experimental class and control class. The population was 170 seventh grade students; the sample was 68 students (34 students" experimental class and 34 students; controlled class). The research was conducted through the following procedures: pretest, applying treatments, and giving post test. The data were analyzed by using t-test. The result of the research confirmed that the use of English Comic book series could be used as a reading material to improve students reading comprehension. It was seen from the data analysis and independent sample t-test showed that the mean difference of the pre test and post test of the experimental group were significant ($p < 0.05$). Thus, it is effective to use English comic book series in teaching reading comprehension.

The second one is the research is from Zuhrotun and Pratama from UNDIKMA Mataram entitled "Using Comic Strips To Improve Students' Motivation and Reading Comprehension at MA. RAUDLATUSSHIBYAN NW BELENCONG". This research was aimed to know how comic strip can improve students' motivation and reading comprehension at MA. Raudlatusshibyan NW Belencong in academic year 2017/2018. The research design was classroom action research. It consists of one cycle, and the cycle consists of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The data were collected by using reading tests and questionnaire. The result study shown that comic strip improved students' motivation and reading comprehension.

The percentage of students that got very high motivation after using Comic Strip in learning reading is 55% and 45% got high motivation. The result of the mean in post-test at cycle 1 is 77,9 while the students' highest score was 88 and the lowest score was 52. The result of the test shown the abilities of the students were improved. There were 17 students or 85% out of the 20 students who reached the score of KKM while the rest of them there were 3 students or 15% failed. It is indicated the improvement of student's reading comprehension and their motivation of English learning process.

The last one is the research is entitled "The Effectiveness of Using Comic Strips in Teaching Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text (A Quasiexperimental Study at Second Grade Students of SMPN 2 Tangerang Selatan in Academic Year 2017/2018)" conducted by Rossa Junia Utami from Syarif Hidayatullah Islamic University. The purpose of this study is to understand whether the use of comic strips in teaching learning activities is effective to the students' reading comprehension, especially in narrative text. The method used in this research was quantitative design with a quasi-experimental study. The population in this study were 330 students from SMPN 2 Tangerang Selatan with two sample classes which have 30 students in each class. Both classes were assigned into experimental and control class. Experimental class was taught by using the media as supporting instrument in order to comprehend the narrative text with comic strips meanwhile, control class was taught with traditional teaching method by the teacher. The data was collected through pre-test and post-test.

Based on the calculation, this research showed that using comic strips is effective in teaching-learning narrative text. This conclusion was supported by the mean of post-test in experimental class which got 70.40 while the control class was 68.17. It means that the post-test mean of experiment class was higher than the control class ($70.40 > 68.17$). therefore, the statistics showed that $1.937 > 1.67 = t_{observed} > t_{table}$ which proves that the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the Null Hypothesis is rejected. In conclusion teaching reading comprehension of narrative text by using comic strips is effective on students' reading skill.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research will use quantitative approach. In conducting the research, the researcher will use one class of the first year students at SMP N 8 Banda Aceh. Before using comic book material, the students will take a pre-test before the first meeting to determine their reading comprehension skills. The treatment will then be delivered to the

kids. After using comic book media, students took a post-test to assess how well they could read. The sort of pre-experimental design used in this study, according to Sugiyono (2005), compares the outcomes after and before treatment.

The population in this research was all students of class XI of SMP Negeri 8 Banda Aceh, and the total population was 65 students. The population was divided into 3 classes; class VII IPA1, IPA2, and IPS1. The sample will be taken from the first grade of SMP 8 Banda Aceh.

Quantitative research is the process of gathering data using instruments such as test instruments and inventory, questionnaire and observation sheet. The data will be analyzed by using some criteria in assessing writing and some statistical formula. In analyzing the data, t-test will be used to find out the effectiveness of using comic media in developing students' reading comprehension through narrative text. There are several steps to prove the hypothesis, as the following formula

The result of the test classified into five categories based on criterion evaluation that suggested by Brown (2011) as follows: excellent, very good, good, enough, and bad.

Table 1. The classifications of test score:

Score	Value	Category
90-100	A	Excellent
80-89	B	Very good
65-79	C	Good
55-64	D	Enough
0-54	E	Bad

After all components are assessed and calculated, the researcher will classify the students' reading comprehension of narrative text based on the score that students obtained through the result of pre-test and post-test. After the students' speaking ability is assessed by using some criteria, the researcher will use some statistical procedures to calculate data as explained in bellow:

1. The first step is the researcher put the scores of the pre-test and post-test gained from the students' worksheet. It aim to ease the researcher processing the data.
2. The second step is the researcher calculated the mean from all scores both pre-test and post-test. The mean refers to the average of the score. It is the most common statistic that aims to measure the center of a numerical data which sum of all the data divided by the number of samples. By calculating the mean of the score, then the researcher knew the average of the data and could compare with the minimum

score of the writing examination whether the students' average scores pass the minimum criteria of writing or not.

The formula is as follow: $\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xi}{n}$

Where:

X_i : the sum of all data

n : the number of samples

3. Next, the researcher will analyze the data through t-test to find out whether the difference of the scores between pre-test and post-test was significant or not. The

formula is: $t = \frac{md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$

Where: T : Significance test

MD : The main of gain

$\sum x^2 d$: Sum of quadrate of deviation

N : The Number of Students

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research findings

In this case, the researcher's findings were presented. As mentioned in the previous chapter, planning, acting, observing, and reflecting were the steps involved in cycle 1 and cycle 2 of action research. Each cycle was reflected in order to determine the action's outcome.

In this stage, the researcher devised a plan of action based on the reading comprehension issues that the students were having. In this instance, the lesson plan was created by the researcher using the teaching materials. In order to determine the students' aptitude and whether or not their test results have improved from cycle 1 to cycle 2, the researcher additionally created post-test 1.

The action of this cycle was conducted on November 14th , 15th , 16th 2022. In this step, the researcher acted as the teacher based on the lesson plan. The English teacher acted as the observer who observes the activity during the teaching and learning process.

The first meeting was started by giving them a pre-test to know their reading ability. After that, the researcher began to explain background information the importance

of the lesson, and students preparing to learning, after that the researcher divided the students in to four groups and tell about comic strips, which used to learn the next meeting, and explained comic strips. In this step, the researcher built excellent interaction and communication with the students to make them feel enjoy and build their background understanding. Then, the researcher allowed the students to ask questions related to the materials that they had not understood.

At the beginning of the second meeting, the researcher and teacher guided students to be hurry come to the class. And then the researcher greeted the students and make them feel comfortable before beginning the class. Then the researcher continues to share materials and gave them the different story about narrative text. After the researcher has been shared the material, the students begin to read the material with their groups that has been divided from first meeting and after that, the teacher begins to explain the material, then the teacher and students discuss the material that students have not understood. In this case, the researcher allowed the students to ask about everything they had not understood related to the material. And last time in this meeting, the researcher reminded the students to prepare themselves to do the test in the next meeting with their groups about the narrative text.

In the last meeting of cycle 1, the researcher and the teacher guided them to the class. The researcher gave them some exercise related to the comic strips. Then the researcher asked them to answer some questions in the text narrative. Students worked on multiple-choice quizzes related to the narrative text in comic strips, that the researcher has prepared. In this case, the researcher became a host live to do the post-test 1, and the researcher oversaw the students' work.

Observing During this stage, the English teacher of the SMP 8 Banda Aceh served as an observer who was observed the activities inside the class during the teaching and learning process. To monitor the teacher and students' activities, the observer used an observation checklist prepared beforehand. The observer only needs to give a mark (√) based on the actual situation in the class. For the category obtained from the final score of teacher activities. There are four categories of students' score such as:

No.	Students' Score	Category
1.	100 % - 86 %	Excellent
2.	85 % - 76 %	Good
3.	69 % - 50 %	Less

4.	49 % -0 %	Not implemented
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Percentage of activities = $\frac{\text{Number of teacher activities}}{\text{Score max}} \times 100\%$

$$= \frac{39}{48} \times 100\%$$

$$= 81,25\%$$

From the observation of teacher activities above, the results showed that teacher percentage score was 81% which meant that the teacher teach well. Yet, there are some aspects need to be improved such as the teacher explanation about the concept and step of extensive reading, the teacher instruction to find main idea, important detail and difficult vocabularies, the teacher in helping the students to find out main idea and important detail and soon. Teachers serve as invaluable guides in helping students decipher main ideas and crucial details within texts. Employing various strategies, educators model effective reading techniques, showcasing methods like skimming, scanning, and employing graphic organizers to organize information. They encourage active reading practices, prompting students to annotate texts and engage interactively with the material. Through thought-provoking questions before, during, and after reading, teachers stimulate critical thinking, guiding students towards recognizing the core concepts. Visual tools such as graphic organizers and summarization exercises aid students in visually representing and distilling main ideas and supporting details. Acknowledging diverse learning styles, educators tailor their approaches, ensuring inclusivity for all students.

For the category obtained from the final score of students' activities. There are four categories of students' score such as:

No.	Students' Score	Category
1.	100 % - 86 %	Excellent
2.	85 % - 76 %	Good
3.	69 % - 50 %	Less
4.	49 % - 0 %	Not implemented

$$= \frac{34}{48} \times 100\%$$

$$= 70,38\%$$

From the observation of students' activities above, the results showed that students' percentage score was 70% which meant that the students' participation was well. Yet, there are some aspects need to be improved such as the students' attention to

teacher explanation, the students being active in learning process, the courage of students in asking the question related to the material, the students' opinion when discussing and so forth.

The process of getting mean score

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum xi}{n}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{1170}{26} = 45$$

From the table above, the students who took the test was 26 students. Based on the table, the score was 1170 which was gathered from all students' score. The mean' score was taken from the result of students' total score which divided with the student's number. The mean score was 45. It means the score is low and need improvement in order to make the result better.

Based on the table, the conversion score is technique for processing and converting raw test result into standard score. The total of conversion' score was 1170. The mean of the conversion divide with the number of students and the mean was 45. It means the students ability in finding main idea and important detail still low and need some action to improve it.

The process of getting mean score

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum xi}{n}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{2080}{26} = 81$$

Based on the table, the conversion score is technique for processing and converting raw test result into standard score. The total of conversion' score was 2080. The mean of the conversion divide with the number of students and the mean was 81. It could be concluded that the students' reading comprehension was improved and it meant the post-test in cycle two was success.

Percentage of students' score:

Meeting	Total score	Mean
Before applying strategy	1170	45
After applying strategy	2080	81

The result of research showed that there was improvement of students' score from the test before applying comic strips to test in cycle 1. The students' mean score in pre-test was only 45. Then, after applying using comic strips reading in post- test the students' mean score in reading comprehension was 81. It means that the students' reading comprehension was improved using comic strips.

B. Discussion

This research was quantitative research which used pre-test and post-test to collect the data. In this research, the researcher used post-test to improve the students' ability in reading comprehension using comic strips. There was two cycles in this research those are cycle 1 and cycle 2 and each cycle has four steps including planning, observing, acting and reflecting. Before applying the action, the researcher prepared the lesson plan, syllabus, test, observation checklist and so forth. In cycle 1, the researcher explained what comic strips is, the step of reading narrative text and the example of it. After that, the researcher did test 1 to know the students' improvement after applying the comic strips, and the students score in cycle 1 was 45 which did not reach average score of KKM 70 it means that the researcher did next cycle. In cycle 2, the researcher did same thing but more emphasize in giving the example of finding main idea and important detail of a text and improved the lack of step in cycle 1 and did test 2. In test 2 the students' reached 81 score which means they reached the average score of KKM and this research was success.

Based on the result above, using comic strips can improve the students' reading comprehension. Employing comic strips as educational tools has proven to be a remarkable method for enhancing students' reading comprehension. By integrating visuals with text, these strips offer a multi-dimensional approach to storytelling, fostering a deeper understanding of narratives and concepts. Students engage in deciphering not just the written words but also the visual cues, honing their inference skills and ability to comprehend implied information. The sequential nature of comics guides readers through a structured narrative, improving their grasp of timelines and sequences. Moreover, the visual appeal of comics captivates student interest, motivating active engagement with the material. This increased enthusiasm often translates into improved comprehension as students eagerly delve into the stories and actively decode the interplay between images and text. Overall, leveraging comic strips as educational aids enriches the learning

experience, encouraging critical thinking and providing diverse reading experiences that significantly contribute to enhancing students' reading comprehension abilities.

The improvement of students' reading comprehension using comic was improved about the use of comic strips to improve students reading comprehension of narrative text to improve reading comprehension. Based on the result of his research, students reading comprehension was significantly improved by using comic as a media in reading class. It can be seen from the result of the post-test where students' score had improved from 45 into 81.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

There are many of factors why students could have difficulty understanding the material they are reading. In addition to having a lack of interest in reading, students also used only a few of vocabulary and showed little knowledge of grammatical usage. These aspects may be minimized by using engaging media, such as comic, which not only capture students' interest as they read but also improve their comprehension of the text's content when combined with supporting visuals.

It is clear from the research findings above that employing comic to improve students reading comprehension was a success. It is evident from the rise in instructors' test and observation sheet scores during each cycle. The students score in cycle 1 was 45 which did not reach average score of KKM 70 it means that the researcher did next cycle. In cycle 2, the researcher did same thing but more emphasize in giving the example of finding main idea and important detail of a text and improved the lack of step in cycle 1 and did test 2. In test 2 the students' reached 81 score which means they reached the average score of KKM and this research was success. The researcher came to the conclusion that employing comic book helped students' reading comprehension considerably based on the study's findings. Finally, the writer concluded that teaching by using comic strips showed a effect in students' reading comprehension on narrative text at the first grade students' of SMP 8 Banda Aceh in academic year 2022/2023.

By applying this comic book media to improve students' reading comprehension, the researcher found some suggestions for teacher, student and researcher. For teachers, Introduce comic books as supplementary reading material or as part of the curriculum. Encourage students to read comics related to the subjects they're learning. For instance, in history class, use historically accurate comics. Ask students to analyze the storyline, characters, and themes. Create assignments that involve interpreting visual cues, understanding dialogue, and summarizing the plot. Additionally, discuss the artistic

choices made by the illustrators to convey emotions and narratives.

Second for students, embrace comic books as a fun and engaging way to improve reading skills. Choose comics that interest you and relate to your studies. Take notes on character development, plot arcs, and visual storytelling techniques. Try summarizing the story in your own words to ensure comprehension. Discuss the comic with classmates or write reviews to strengthen your analytical skills.

Third for researchers: Explore the effectiveness of using comic books in educational settings. Conduct studies to measure the impact of comics on students' reading comprehension compared to traditional text-based materials. Analyze how different genres or styles of comics affect comprehension levels. Additionally, research the psychological aspects—how visuals aid in memory retention and understanding complex concepts.

Overall, advocating for the use of comic books as an educational tool can enrich learning experiences, making reading comprehension more enjoyable and accessible for students. Teachers, students, and researchers can collaborate to further understand the benefits and optimize strategies for using comics in education.

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