



Unlocking Reading Potential: Does English Comics Webtoon Impact Students' Narrative Text Comprehension?

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi seberapa efektif webtoon komik berbahasa Inggris sebagai alat pengajaran untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca pemahaman siswa dibandingkan dengan pendekatan pengajaran tradisional. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi-eksperimental dan teknik pengambilan sampel acak sederhana untuk memilih partisipan. Penelitian ini melibatkan dua kelas: Kelas X-MIPA 2 ditetapkan sebagai kelompok eksperimen, dan Kelas X-MIPA 1 ditetapkan sebagai kelompok kontrol. Penelitian ini melibatkan total 52 siswa. Pre-test dan post-test digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data, yang kemudian dianalisis secara statistik dengan menggunakan prosedur t-test. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan adanya perbedaan yang signifikan secara statistik dalam kinerja akademik antara kelompok eksperimen dan kelompok kontrol. Terdapat peningkatan yang signifikan dalam skor pemahaman membaca siswa setelah perlakuan selesai. Statistik uji yang dihitung (uji-t) adalah 6,44, yang lebih besar dari nilai kritis 1,68. Temuan penelitian ini mengarah pada penerimaan hipotesis penelitian (H_a) dan penolakan hipotesis nol (H_0). Efektivitas penggunaan webtoon komik bahasa Inggris sebagai media pembelajaran untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca pemahaman siswa kelas sepuluh di MAS Ulumuddin, khususnya yang berkaitan dengan teks naratif, disoroti dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan penting bagi para guru yang mencari metode yang menarik secara visual untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca di kelas. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi-eksperimental dan menggunakan teknik pengambilan sampel acak sederhana untuk pemilihan peserta. pemahaman membaca di kelas.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study aimed to examine the effectiveness of English comic webtoons as an instructional tool for improving reading comprehension abilities to traditional teaching methods. The study used a quasi-experimental design and a simple random sampling technique to select participants. The study included two classes: Class X-MIPA 2 was designated as the experimental group, and Class X-MIPA 1 was designated as the control group. The research involved 52 students in total. Pre- and post-tests were used to collect data, which was then statistically analyzed using the t-test procedure. The study's findings revealed a statistically significant difference in academic performance between the experimental and control groups. There was a significant improvement in the students' reading comprehension scores after the treatment was completed. The computed test statistic (t-test) was 6.44, which was greater than the critical value of 1.68. This study's findings led to the acceptance of the research hypothesis (H_a) and the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). The effectiveness of using English comic webtoons as an instructional medium for improving the reading comprehension skills of tenth-grade students at MAS Ulumuddin, specifically in relation to narrative texts, is highlighted in this study. This study provides important insights for teachers looking for visually appealing methods to improve reading comprehension in the classroom. The study employed a quasi-experimental design and utilized a simple random sampling technique for participant selection. reading comprehension in the classroom.

1. INTRODUCTION

As a global lingua franca, English plays a crucial role in facilitating international communication (Rahman & Saputra, 2021), and has been incorporated into the Indonesian educational system or curriculum one year after the independence day. In Indonesia curriculum, there are four essential skills to master; speaking, listening, reading, and writing and two main components to be added; vocabulary and grammar. One of the very fundamental skills in secondary level is the ability to comprehend text. Therefore, instruction for equipping students with proficient reading skills is required. Since reading has a multifaceted activities that encourage a mindset of continuous learning, it compels individuals to consider,

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comprehend, assess, compare, discover, interpret, evaluate, and share knowledge with each other (Pustika & Wiedarti, 2018).

According to (Manuaba, 2017), within the realm of written communication, a wide variety of text types exist, each designed for specific purposes. One such form is narrative text, which is meticulously crafted to captivate and entertain its audience, regardless of whether they are readers, listeners, or viewers (Jaya, 2017). The latest curriculum placed a special focus on the development of reading comprehension skills, particularly in the context of senior year of high school. The primary goal is for students to be able to analyze the structure of narrative texts and identify their central themes and ideas (Nastiti, 2020). Students frequently struggle with a lack of background knowledge, a limited vocabulary, and a lack of motivation, making such texts in English difficult to comprehend (De La Cruz & Paula, 2023). In a spotlight of these obstacles, the researchers attempted to revolutionize the teaching and learning process in an effort to make it more engaging, enjoyable, and comprehensible.

To achieve this goal, the researchers employed English webcomics as an innovative instructional media for teaching reading subject in the EFL classroom. As explained by Shim et al. (2020), the South Korean-originated English Comic Webtoon is currently popular, and known as a dynamic digital platform that integrates captivating visuals and compelling narratives impeccably. Further, this combination of visuals and text is a popularly used for assisting EFL teachers in delivering their instruction that resonates with students' interest (Erya & Pustika, 2021). Therefore, to bridge the gap in narrative text comprehension, particularly in the current digital age, this platform was chosen due to its accessibility and engagement during teaching-learning process (Kim, 2023). Many researchers in this field demonstrated that this digital comic is appropriate, transformative and potential, as they replace monotonous pictures with dynamic and animated representations (Yecies et al., 2020; De La Cruz & Paula, 2023). Besides, it enhances the reading experience and fostering a more profound understanding of the students in different level (Manuaba, 2017). Thus, in this sense, the introduction of this webtoons is a very promising step toward creating a richer and more effective learning settings for students. Because it is not only allowing them to comprehend the complexities of narrative texts but also instils a love of reading and learning in them.

In a similar vein, many researchers claimed that the integration of webcomics into educational content represents a significant step forward in the effort to improve students' English language experience as well as their level of proficiency in the language (Fauziah & Nasrullah, 2023; Shim et al., 2020; Pratiwi et al, 2022). In this way, students will have a much time to comprehend the complexities of narrative texts using this ground-breaking approach, which not only accommodates the owners of this digital age (Gen-Z), but also offers an interactive and highly engaging method for doing so (Widiyarti et al, 2023). This is in line with the findings of more extensive research, which shed light on the potentially transformative nature of digital comics. These findings emphasize the shift from traditional still images to dynamic and animated representations, highlighting the capacity of this medium to go beyond the boundaries of traditional category.

The understanding of narrative texts is given a new facet by webcomics, which are online comics characterized by their vivid visual elements and immersive storytelling (Pratiwi et al, 2022). Moreover, students can visualize the plot, characters, and settings in ways that static images cannot. This dynamic medium encourages students to not only read but also experience the narrative, resulting in a more in-depth understanding of the text's structure and content. Furthermore, according to research, the transformative power of digital comics is based on their adaptability to different learning styles. According to Dar et al. (2023), they improve the understanding and utilization of both visual and kinaesthetic learners by providing animated representations of the information. In addition to that, the interactivity of webcomics can foster a stronger relationship between students and the narrative text, which can encourage active participation, as well as critical thinking (Yecies et al., 2020).

2. METHODS

Through experimental research, this particular study employed an analytical approach. Experimental research is a method for systematically testing hypotheses through a measurement of variables. According to Ary et al. (2021), the choice of experimental design has a direct impact on the internal validity of the study, or the ability to draw valid conclusions regarding the effects of an experimental treatment on the dependent variable. The purpose of experimental designs is to conduct controlled tests of causal processes. Typically, one or more independent variables, in this case, exposure to English comic webtoons, are manipulated in order to determine their effect on dependent variables, such as reading comprehension.

The researcher utilized a quasi-experimental design for this study. All tenth-grade students at MAS Ulumuddin, a school located in Uteunkot subdistrict, Lhokseumawe, comprised the study's target

population. This school has nine classrooms in total. Class X MIPA 1, Class X MIPA 2, and Class X MIPA 3, which include a total of 77 students, comprise the research's primary population. Class X MIPA 2, composed of 26 students, was chosen as the experimental group for the research, while Class X MIPA 3, also composed of 26 students, was selected as the control group.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Table 1. Students' Pre-test Score for Experimental and Control Group

Experimental Group								Control Group								
30	30	30	30	35	35	35	35	30	30	35	35	35	35	35		
40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	35	35	35	35	40	40	40		
40	45	45	45	50	50	50	50	40	45	45	45	45	45	45		
				55	60							45	50	55	55	55

Table 2. Students' Post-test Score for Experimental and Control Group

Experimental Group								Control Group								
70	70	70	75	75	75	75	75	60	60	65	65	65	65	65		
75	75	75	75	75	80	80	80	65	65	65	70	70	70	70		
80	80	80	85	85	85	85	90	70	70	75	75	75	75	75		
				95	100							75	75	80	85	85

The tables show the collection of data from both the pre-test and post-test assessments, the researchers employed a statistical formula to determine the existence of a significant impact associated with the use of English comic webtoons as a learning medium for teaching students reading comprehension, particularly in the context of narrative text. The dataset included two distinct groups: an experimental group of 26 students and a control group of 26 students. In the experimental group, the researcher used English webtoon comics as a reading comprehension teaching instrument. The control group, in contrast, only received regular lecture-based reading comprehension instruction (with skimming and scanning technique). To thoroughly evaluate the data derived from the pre-test and post-test, the researcher selected to use the t-test statistical formula.

This formula was found suitable for determining whether or not the usage of different instructional strategies (comics webtoon) could be attributed to a significant difference in reading comprehension outcomes. In particular, the data presented in this paper focused on the students' pre- and post-test performance. To provide a clear explanation of the research findings, the scores of both the experimental and control groups were rigorously separated in a table, displaying the distribution of scores from lowest to highest.

The score distribution list, which ranges from lowest to highest scores, is critical in analysis tests that involve the homogeneity test, normality test, and t-test. Prior to performing statistical analyses, the data must be carefully sorted from lowest to highest. Pre-test scores for the experimental group ranged from 30 to 60, while pre-test scores for the control group ranged from 30 to 55. The experimental group's post-test scores ranged from 70 to 100, while the control group's scores ranged from 60 to 85.

To determine the homogeneity of the data, the researchers carefully examined each variable within the experimental and control groups. This required calculating the mean, standard deviation, and variance for both groups, enabling the identification of the variances with the largest and smallest values. These variance values are essential for determining the homogeneity of the collected data. The homogeneity test included the application of the standard value distribution for educational levels, which was then compared

to the results of the homogeneity analysis. This comparison was crucial in determining the level of reading comprehension.

If the value of the f -test was lower than the critical value from the f_{table} , this indicated that the data were homogenous. On the other hand, it was determined that the data were not homogeneous if the value of the f -test was higher than the critical value of the f_{table} .

As it ensures that the validity of subsequent statistical evaluations, the homogeneity of the data is an essential component of the procedure that is employed for evaluating it. Through the process of variance calculation and comparison, the researcher was trying to determine whether any significant distinctions existed between the experimental and control groups. The researcher aimed to identify any significant differences between the experimental and control groups through the utilization of variance calculations and comparisons. Furthermore, a more comprehensive assessment of homogeneity was made possible through the application of standard distributions for academic achievement in this evaluation. The level of reading comprehension was ascertained with the assistance of a predetermined critical value comparison at a 5% level ($\alpha = 0.05$) to these data. Finally, it can be stated that homogeneous data were identified using an f -test value below the critical value, while heterogeneous data were identified using an f -test value exceeding the critical value. This critical evaluation directly contributes to the enhancement of the research findings' validity and reliability.

Assessing whether the analysed data of a study agrees to or shifts from a normal distribution is a critical function of the test for the normality of the data. As a consequence of this, the researchers analyse the post-test results for both the experimental group and the control group using basic statistical metrics such as the mean, the variance, and the standard deviation. According to the findings of this study, the students who were assigned to the control group ended up receiving a mean score of 70.57, with a variance of 6. This analysis not only sheds light on post-treatment outcomes, but also provides insight into how these variables interact and influence the treatment, thereby providing valuable information regarding data diversity.

The data normality test is a crucial step in research, as it reveals whether the under-examination data follows a normal distribution. Using metrics such as mean, variance, and standard deviation, the post-test results of both the experimental and control groups are analysed thoroughly in this context. The calculated post-treatment mean score of 70.57 for the control group represents the group's performance after the treatment, while the variance value of 6.68 represents the diversity of the data. These statistics not only help evaluate the effects of the treatment, but also provide a deeper understanding of how variables interact within the study, thereby enhancing the researcher's understanding of the treatment's effects on the student population.

Table 3. Mean Score, Variance, and Standard Deviation from Both Group Post-test result

Group	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation
Experiment	79,42	54,65	7,39
Control	70,57	44,65	6,68

Based on the table above, it is determined that $L_o = 0.0211$ to be the highest score of $|F(z_i) - S(z_i)|$ with $\eta = 26$ and based on the significant standard $\alpha = 0,05$ of the liliefors table, it is determined that $L_{table} = 0.1699$. The data is considered normal if $L_o < L_{table}$ while $L_o < L_{table}$ that is $0,0211 < 0,1699$, it can be concluded that the data is normal.

Based on the preceding table, it is determined that $L_o = 0.0024$ to be the highest score of $|F(z_i) - S(z_i)|$ with $\eta = 26$ and based on the significant standard $\alpha = 0,05$ of the liliefors table, it is determined that $L_{table} = 0.1699$. The data can be said normal if $L_o < L_{table}$ while $L_o < L_{table}$ that is $0,0024 < 0,1699$, thus it can be concluded that data is normal.

After a careful examination of homogeneity and normality, the crucial next step in the research is to conduct the t-test. Notably, this study includes 26 students in both the experimental and control groups, for a total sample size of 26. The results of the statistical tests demonstrate the efficacy of using English webtoon comics as a tool to improve students' reading comprehension of narrative texts in Class X at MAS Ulumuddin. In light of the homogeneity and normality data, the experimental group's pre-test mean score was 41.15, while the control group's pre-test mean score was 40.96. After treatment, the average post-test

score for the experimental group rose to 79.42, while the average score for the control group was 70.57. Notably, this increasing trend in post-test scores demonstrates the efficacy of the treatment.

Using a significance level of 0.05 and a degree of freedom (df) of 50, the distribution values were compared to the findings in order to determine the level of significance. The critical value was determined by the distribution list to be 1.67591. The t-test statistic was calculated as $t_{test} > t_{table}$, with values of 6.44 exceeding 1.68. This significant result suggests that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, whereas the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The statistical evidence presented here shows that students in Class X at MAS Ulumuddin who are taught using traditional lecture-based techniques and those who are taught using English comic webtoon learning media acquire significantly different levels of reading comprehension.

Discussion

The English webcomic serves as a precious asset for boosting students' knowledge of narrative literature since it is a platform that is both flexible and adaptable. This cutting-edge medium blends aspects of the web with the magnetic allure of comics, fusing together narrative text with graphics that are hard to look away from. English comic webcomics are shown to be an amazing instrument for the dissemination of knowledge throughout the entirety of the educational journey. This is due to the fact that their one-of-a-kind blend of visual and textual representations captivates students' interests.

The findings of the research provide convincing proof of the myriad effects that can be caused by different teaching strategies. Students who were exposed to English comic webtoons demonstrate a greater knowledge of meaning, particularly in the area of narrative texts, when compared to their classmates who got standard lecture-based teaching in the English language. This is especially true in terms of the comprehension of the meaning of narrative texts. This improved comprehension can be attributed to the medium's ability to immerse students in the material, which in turn fosters attentiveness and interest in the learner.

An in-depth examination of the outcomes of hypothesis authentication yields a conclusion that is both straightforward and significant: the alternative hypothesis is accepted, whereas the null hypothesis is firmly rejected. This result demonstrates conclusively the significant difference in academic performance between students taught reading comprehension using English comic webcomics and those taught using lecture methods. It highlights the significant impact innovative, visually-rich mediums have on enhancing students' comprehension and engagement with the learning process.

The analysis of both pre- and post-test results for both groups, conducted before and after the treatment, demonstrates an improvement in the overall performance of the students. However, it is noteworthy that students taught through the innovative medium of English comic webcomics demonstrated a more substantial and notable improvement than those taught through the conventional lecture method. This disparity demonstrates a significant effect on academic achievement between students taught reading comprehension using English webcomic webtoons as a learning medium and those taught through traditional lecture

Not only are the results of this study consistent with those of previous research (Shim et al., 2020; Erya & Pustika, 2021; Kim, 2023), but they also reveal a consistent pattern of significant gains in reading comprehension when English webcomics are incorporated into the instructional process. While there are similarities between this study and previous research, there are also unique aspects. In conclusion, the findings substantiate the effect of English comic webtoons on students' reading comprehension and demonstrate the efficacy of innovative educational approaches in promoting learning outcomes.

The distinctiveness of this research lies in both its object and subject of study. The English comic webtoon, which is the subject of research, adds an original and contemporary dimension to the study. While previous research has touched on the use of English comic webtoon media, this study focuses on a particular aspect: its effect on reading comprehension, particularly in the context of narrative texts. Notably, webtoon comic media has attained immense popularity, crossing age groups from children to adults.

On the subject front, this research departs from its predecessors by adopting a novel approach. Instead of using cellphones to access webtoon content, the experimental group of students in this study utilized computers/laptops. This change presented students with new challenges regarding the operation of webcomics on a new platform. Therefore, the research provides a timely examination of a topic that is a hot topic in the modern era. The inherent appeal of webcomics, combined with their growing popularity, has made the prospect of learning through this medium alluring and interesting. This is consistent with the fundamental principle that the learning process becomes not only more effective but also more enjoyable when individuals engage in activities they enjoy.

4. CONCLUSION

This quantitative and quasi-experimental study, conducted with students in the tenth grade at MAS Ulumuddin, focused on the use of English comic webtoons as a teaching tool to enhance reading comprehension, particularly in narrative texts. The pre- and post-test results indicate that the incorporation of English webcomic webtoons into the learning process has a positive and effective impact.

The use of English webcomic webtoons not only piqued students' interest, but also motivated them, resulting in a deeper understanding of reading comprehension. In addition, it improved students' social attitudes by facilitating group discussions and cooperative learning. Students not only comprehended the text's central ideas and extracted pertinent information, but also experienced the pleasure of learning alongside their peers. This study, therefore, demonstrates that the positive effect of English webcomic comics on teaching reading comprehension stands in stark contrast to the traditional lecture-based approach that students typically encounter. The scores on the pre- and post-tests demonstrate the significant gains brought about by this innovative method. The research demonstrates the effectiveness and appeal of English webcomics in enhancing students' reading comprehension and, consequently, their educational experiences as a whole.

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