

## THE STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE USE OF COMIC IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH

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SUBMISSION TRACK	A B S T R A C T
Submitted : 10 July 2023 Accepted : 27 July 2023 Published : 1 August 2023	This qualitative research is intended to find out students' views about whether comic media can be used as a medium for learning English. This research was conducted at SMPN 2 Dau Satu Atap involving 22 students of grade 7. The researcher as a key instrument used interviews to obtain the required data. Students were asked whether students had ever read comics; students' feelings when reading comics; and students' views on the use of comics as a medium for learning English. The data were obtained through interviews, then transcribed, read through, and classified student answers. The final finding, which was interpreted in terms of comics, was that there were 16 students who liked reading comics and 6 students who did not like comics. There are more than 73% of students in grade 7 who like to read comics and students say they are interested in using comic media as a medium for learning English.
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### Introduction

English is considered a foreign language in Indonesia and has become part of the curriculum and an important subject at most levels of education (Agustin, 2021). English education in Indonesia aims to develop students' English skills so that they can speak, read, write, and understand English effectively. In addition, English education in Indonesia also aims to improve students' ability to use English as a means of communication in business, technology, science, and art fields in formal education. English is carried out based on a structured curriculum. This covers language components and language skills.

Regarding the complicated language components and language skills which need to be carried out the teacher should be careful in selecting teaching materials, teaching techniques, and teaching media. Teaching materials are the most important source of material for teachers. Varied teaching materials can increase student activity. besides that, there is research that states that teaching materials can improve students' critical thinking skills (Aini, 2021). However, teaching materials also require a complement, namely teaching technique. Choosing the right teaching technique will result in achieving teaching and learning objectives more effectively and efficiently. These two things will be more complete when added the selection of the right teaching media. Good teaching media is the media that is able to foster students' interest in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, teachers need media in new learning to increase student motivation so that students are interested in learning English (Islam, 2022).

The current learning media is very varied, one of which is comics. Many studies have shown that classroom activities using visual teaching media used in the learning process produce better results in the context of increasing student interest and participation (Topkaya & Yilar, 2015). Comics are a series of images arranged according to the goals and philosophy of creation and there are words to convey the message of the story. Comics also have various design elements such as space, images, text, dots and dots, lines, shapes, sounds and values, colors, and patterns, and texture (Spamyta et al.,

2022). Learning comics are comics that convey learning messages through words and pictures that are arranged consistently to illustrate stories (Eka et al., 2021). It can be said that comics are an organized collection of images that contain stories that aim to convey messages and comics have their characteristics from other readings.

Several studies reveal that the use of comics has a very good effect on the results of interest and value in learning English. The first study said that learning vocabulary using comics can be a good motivation. Students are encouraged to expand their vocabulary. This will make them more enthusiastic and not make them sleepy in class. Classes can also be more active. In addition, there are also research results which show that students are more interested and motivated to improve their reading comprehension using Webtoons (Erya & Pustika, 2021). Research on the use of comic media was also carried out (Juliana, 2021), that learning vocabulary using comics can be a good motivation. Students are encouraged to expand their vocabulary. This will make them more enthusiastic and not make them sleepy in class. Classes can also be more active. This is evidenced by the lower pretest scores compared to posttest scores. Therefore, it can be concluded that students can well accept the use of digital comics as a medium for learning English to improve student competence (Ahsanah & Utomo, 2020). It can be concluded that the use of comic media in classroom learning will have a good impact. All of these studies stated that the scores obtained by students experienced a significant increase. In addition, the use of comics for learning media can increase student motivation in learning and make the class more active. Therefore, the use of comics as a learning medium can be said to be successful and suitable for increasing students' motivation in learning English.

This research is limited to exploring students' views on the use of comics in learning English. From the results of the interviews it is known that most students like comics, but students have never received learning to use comic media as a medium for learning English. In previous research, most said that research only focused on the effectiveness of comics in increasing students' reading scores and interest, but did not discuss students' difficulties when using comic media as a learning medium. Therefore, this study will provide insight into students' views when using comics as a medium in learning English. Where there are students who say that they cannot read comics and understand the stories in them. So that students only see from the pictures contained in the comic. Therefore, when the teacher wants to use comics as a medium for learning English, this needs to be considered. Apart from that, this research also tells how to properly educate students through digital literacy media because as we know that the task of a teacher besides teaching is as an educator. This is in accordance with research which states that teachers are people who have very broad knowledge, are skilled, and have noble personalities where teachers become models for students as good role model (Andi, 2017).

The researcher wants to explore further the students' views on the use of comics as a medium for learning English to support previous research and existing theories related to the use of learning media, especially comics. Each student must have a different perspective on comics used as learning media. This will be a reference for teachers to use comic media as a medium for learning English.

### **Research Method**

This qualitative aim is to see students' views on the use of comic media in the learning process. This qualitative research is limited to students' views when given comic

media during the English learning process. In addition, this study also measured the extent to which students' interest in learning increased when given media to assist the learning process in class. In order to make this research more specific, this research is focused on describing students' views on the use of comic media in the learning process in class, especially English lessons at SMPN 2 Dau Satu Atap Malang for the academic year 2022/2023, the number of classes is 22. In practice, the researcher engages 7th grade students. In-depth interviews with all students to obtain the required data. The questions revealed in the interviews included whether students read or not; how do students discover comics; students' views on the use of comics in teaching and learning English.

This study used qualitative interview data analysis techniques, researchers used data analysis applying the strategy from Sugiyono (2019), the first step to obtain data obtained by researchers using interviews because this study wanted to explore students' views on the use of comics as a medium in learning English. Furthermore, the data obtained from interviews is transcribed so that the data can be arranged properly. After that, the researcher can read carefully the transcribed data and the data can be divided or classified according to the results of the student interview answers. Data is written in the form of narrative descriptions to make it easier to understand. Finally, the data obtained can be drawn from the purpose of this research.

## **Result and Discussion**

From the results of interviews conducted with students, the researchers got the answer that there were 16. Students who like to read comics. The average comic read is Naruto, Detective Conan, One Piece, Doraemon, and many other comics. Students who have read comics have various reasons why they read comics. The first reason students like the storyline of the comics that students read is that the storyline is not boring and beyond expectations. Students prefer comics that have action, romance, slice of life, mystery, and sci-fi genres. The average male student likes comics in which there are elements of fighting and mystery. In addition, exciting adventures where the characters they like always discover new things. Students are also made curious when the comics they read are still not finished. Usually students who like and follow the storyline from the beginning, often speculate about the continuation of the comics they read so that students make theories about storylines that are still unclear and become mysteries that have not been explained by the author. This makes students willing to wait to be able to read the continuation of the story they read.

Apart from the story aspect, students like comics because comics are always identical to pictures and that is the main attraction of comics. Almost all students who read comics like the pictures in comics. These pictures can help readers, especially students, to understand the intent of the storyline and at the same time the message the author wants to convey. Students really like characters from comics, and almost every last sheet in their notebooks contains a picture of a character they like. In addition to pictures, comics are also equipped with various speech bubbles, and almost every movement and sound is written in detail. So that students can clearly imagine the contents of the comic they are reading. So, with pictures and reading, it is very comfortable and entertaining for students to read comics. This is in line with research which states that picture story books are said to be effective in increasing students' interest in reading (Tarigan, 2018).

There are 6 students who don't like reading comics, and students who don't like reading comics feel very confused about reading comics. As we know how to read comics

is different from books or reading in general. Reading comics always starts from the right panel to the left and from top to bottom. This makes students who have never read comics unable to understand the storyline properly and don't even know the meaning of the story being told. These students prefer to read books that they think are easy to read and understand such as novels and picture story books. Most of the novels that students read always tell about the daily lives of teenagers. Students feel that the story contained in the novel is very easy to understand and can easily understand the storyline well. It is said that adult books always present fresh themes that describe the daily lives of young people in addition to using vocabulary that is simple enough for students to understand (Puspitasari, 2019). Therefore, books that contain about the daily lives of teenagers tend not to discourage students from reading. Students will read to the end because students can understand the story in the novel because it is the same as what students are feeling.

The researcher also found some interesting answers about students' feelings when reading comics. There were 12 students who said reading comics was fun. What students mean by fun is the storyline and pictures contained in comics. Students more often read comics that have more action plots. Students will imagine being a character from the comic insofar as students follow the movements and words of the characters they like. In addition, students who like to read comics are more curious because most of the comics they read are still unfinished. This makes students think critically and come up with theories about the comics they read about the continuation of the comics that will be released next week.

Furthermore, it was different from the 12 students earlier, there were 4 students who liked reading comics but these students felt normal. This student feels that reading comics is just to fill his free time, both after school and before going to bed. In addition, students read comics quickly, meaning that students only see pictures but do not read them in detail. These students tend to change comics and don't wait for the comic they read to be released. For these four students reading comics is just entertainment and nothing more. Therefore, these students feel normal and there is nothing special about the comics they read.

For the latter, there are 6 students who do not like comics. As above, the reason students don't like reading comics is because reading comics is difficult. There are students who stated that

"It's better to read novels because reading novels is very easy to understand, besides that the stories are also interesting because romance is more or less the same as my life."

There are also those who say it's better to just watch animated series than read comics because these students are lazy to read comics, besides that I understand much more about animated comics than having to read them.

Next, the researcher asked about students' views on the use of comics as a medium for learning English. Students who like to read comics answered that comics can be used as a medium for learning English. This is of course very interesting because the comics they like are used as a medium for learning English. This is a very new thing because students have never received comics as a medium of learning, especially English. Students who like comics answered that comics could be used as a medium for learning English. These students have their reasons. There are students who say that by using comics students can add to their English vocabulary because in comics, the activities carried out by the characters in the comics are clearly described and supported by bubble text. Furthermore, there were students who said that they did not want the comic to be filled with pictures and colors so that it would not be boring to read. In addition, students'

interest in participating in class lessons will definitely increase because students who like to read comics are more than half of the total number of students. This of course will have an impact on students in capturing the material taught by the teacher well. This is consistent with comics which can increase student motivation in the teaching and learning process because comics have images that students like and can improve student learning discipline (Riau & Alim, 2020).

In addition to the answers from students who liked comics above, there were answers from students who did not like comics. Students stated that comics might be difficult to use as learning media because comics were created to entertain readers. In addition, these students had the same answer, that is, students could not read comics properly and correctly. Every time students read a comic, they repeat it until they are reluctant to read it again. This certainly will affect students in knowing the material presented by the teacher, content, and the deepest storyline in comics. Students say that they will be greatly disadvantaged because they will be hampered in understanding the material and it will affect their grades. Furthermore, students also said that most of the comics have stories in which there are lots of fantasy stories with lots of fights. This can be imitated by students, of course it will have a bad impact on students because it imitates what is in the comic. From the students' opinions above, there are things that need to be considered in using comics as learning media in the classroom. As stated by the students above, students who have never read like reading comics because students cannot understand it properly because they find it difficult to read comics. This does not rule out also happening to students who have read comics. This is not in line with research which states that comics can make it easier for students to learn English in a fun way, help them communicate thoughts visually, and make it easier for them to understand dialogue. (Zul Aini and Sugirin, 2019). Therefore, the teacher must think of ways so that students are comfortable reading and can easily understand the material that the teacher wants to convey. The teacher can number each panel in the comic to make it easier for students to read comics or the teacher can explain how to read comics properly and correctly. Thus, students who do not know how to read comics properly will know how to read comics. Therefore, the material can be conveyed properly and learning objectives will be achieved. Then the selection of plots will also play an important role in student understanding, the teacher can use stories that are chronological or sequential according to the time of occurrence. Stories that are easy to understand will make it easier for students to grasp the material and will make an impression or be easily remembered in students' memories. This of course will have a positive impact because students' interest in reading will definitely increase the grades obtained and the target grades will definitely be easily fulfilled. In addition, the discipline of reading in students will grow by itself. However, it should be noted that good learning media must be followed by good teaching methods as well. Therefore, the teacher must be able to condition the class so that the class feels comfortable and enjoyable so that the class conditions are conducive and students can receive the material well. This is consistent with research which states that students will understand the material well because the teacher makes students feel happy in class (Jannah et al., 2023). Therefore, the teacher must be clever and understand how the condition of the students is so that the teaching and learning process in the classroom can run well.

As stated by the students above, most of the comics that students read have storylines in the action genre, this can have an impact on students' personalities. Students are afraid that the action scenes or fights in comics will be imitated by their friends.



Students who imitate the scene can hurt their friends and can even have a negative impact on themselves. Therefore, it is the duty of a teacher to also have an important role in educating, setting a good example, and being a role model for students to become individuals who are intelligent and have character, so that they can make students become good people and always act well. The teacher wants to use comic media as a learning medium, the teacher must be good at sorting out characters and stories that will be used as learning media. The thing that needs to be considered, of course, is the depiction of the characters contained in the comic and also the stories contained therein. Teachers should not choose characters that students like just to attract reading interest, but teachers must be good at finding ways so that character education and the material delivered can be conveyed properly. Teachers can draw characters that students like but can be changed in terms of clothing, depiction of character traits, and also dialogue between characters. This is supported by (Ahmad & Yogyakarta, 2019) that comics can describe characters who behave well so that they can change students' personalities for the better. In addition to the depiction of the characters, the plot of the story also needs to be considered. The teacher can make stories about students' daily lives both at school and at home because they are easy for students to understand. Stories set forth in comic form can contain moral messages that can be emulated by students and this can be implemented to the people around them. Thus, students get two lessons both in terms of science and also character education.

The school provides comics in the school library, but the comics provided are incomplete and only in black and white. Therefore, with advances in technology, teachers must maximize existing facilities to make comic media in learning English. This makes it very easy for teachers to make comics because with the internet, teachers can access a website which has features for making comics. Teachers can make comics according to the needs and desired material. This is of course very effective and efficient because without having to have drawing skills a teacher can easily make comics. Websites that can be used to make comics are Pixton and Toondoo. Both websites have quite complete features in helping to make comics. The features provided such as being able to set or create characters, background places, various types of text bubbles, and many others. In addition, comics now do not need to be printed like comic books in general. Comics can be printed digitally and surely this will be even more effective because students can read and learn from comics anywhere and anytime. This is in accordance with research which states that digital comics are more interesting, efficient, and effective in the teaching and learning process (Fitra et al, 2018). Of course this will facilitate the teacher's work and the objectives of learning can be fulfilled properly.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

So, it can be concluded that according to students' views on the use of comics as a medium for learning English, comics can be used as a medium for learning English. The number of students who like comics is very large, this can be used by teachers to use comics as learning media. However, there are a number of things that need to be considered when making comics as a medium for learning English, including the teacher being able to provide clarity on the storyline and also telling students who have difficulty reading comics. There is also content from comics that can influence student character. Teachers must be good at sorting out the selection of characters, the use of dialogue, and the content of comic stories. Teachers can give stories that have a moral message so students can implement them in their lives. Teachers don't have to worry about making

comics, with advances in technology teachers can make comics with the help of websites on the internet. Of course this makes it very easy for teachers and teachers to easily create comics that suit learning needs.

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher would like to make several suggestions for several parties, the first suggestion is for teachers, previous research stated that comics were good for use in English learning media, 73% of the subjects of this study stated that they were interested if learning English used comic media, it was suggested by the teacher to integrate the use of comics for learning media, especially English. secondly for school principals to facilitate the teaching and learning process by providing sufficient literacy, one of which is by providing comics. The third suggestion is for comic makers, comics that are created can at least be read easily by ordinary people and can be marked or numbered as a reading order. Lastly, researchers who are interested in the same topic can use this research as a reference.

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