

Digital Comics as Learning Media to Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery

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Abstract

Digital comics as learning media are greatly required for students' vocabulary mastery. The purposes of this research are: (1) to figure out the implementation of digital comics used as learning media for students' vocabulary mastery; (2) to find out the significant effect of digital comics used as learning media on students' vocabulary mastery and (3) to investigate the students' perception on the digital comics as learning media for students' vocabulary mastery. This research used a quantitative method with a quasi-experiment design. The participants involved in this study were Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Patikraja. The samples were purposively selected using certain criteria. The data were collected using tests, questionnaire, and observation check-list. The data were then analyzed using independent t-test. The result showed that digital comics was successfully implemented supported by the students' activities such as reading comics, understanding story, finding words, translating words, and presenting the work. Digital comics as learning Media significantly influenced the students' vocabulary mastery supported by the significance value of 0.000 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Students also argued that digital comics gave positive effects supported by the students' total response percentage of 96.2%. The conclusion showed that digital comics positively and significantly influenced the students' vocabulary mastery.

Keywords: Digital Comics, Learning Media, Vocabulary Mastery

INTRODUCTION

Learning new words is the most important part of picking up any language, and English is no exception. Vocabulary is an essential feature of each language, making its study a crucial component of any language curriculum (Zhou, Huang, & Xie, 2019). It is alluded that vocabulary is an important component before mastering the other skills in learning English. Students from other countries, like those in Indonesia, still struggle to master English language, particularly when it comes to memorize vocabulary and the meanings of current phrases (Maharani, 2021). It means that the problem faced by foreign students was memorizing the meanings of vocabularies. Based on the preliminary observation conducted by the researcher at SMP N 2 Patikraja, the students in 8th grade still had several problems in learning English, the problem comes from

use of monotonous methods by the teachers and the lack of vocabulary knowledge by the students. The preliminary observation result showed the teacher only taught by using printed materials, and researcher also examined the students work and examination scores. Students felt difficult to learn a language caused by a lack of vocabulary.

Learning new vocabulary is crucial for students when studying English as a foreign language. According to Sitinjak, Rajagukguk, Yolanda and Tampubolon (2022) stated that fundamental skill that is essential for students to learn if they want to study a foreign language is vocabulary. It implies that vocabulary is fundamental skill that important for the foreign students. In order to effectively teach English, teachers of English must be able to arrange pedagogical and curricular activities. The quality of educators supports in preserving high accuracy in

the teaching and learning process (Ritakumari, 2019). It alluded that a successful of teaching and learning process must involve the teacher' quality. Teacher must employ a proper method to enhance the students' interest. If they want their students to be engaged in the classroom, teachers need to employ novel methods of instruction (Maharani, 2021). It means that new methods in teaching process can support the students' activeness.

In fact, there are several ways and processes for language education that can be used to teach vocabulary. Media for learning can help students learn. Media can be used in almost every subject to enhance classroom activities (Ritakumari, 2019). It implies that media can be flexibly used to support learning. Teachers must know how effective material teaching in order to give a knowledge that suitable for students, and also keep their active in the learning activity. Teachers need to be able to engage their students in class discussions and keep their attention by making the lessons interesting (Manik, Manurung, Barus, & Padang, 2022). It can be known that the relation between teacher and students are correlated to keep the lesson interesting.

Teachers may employ the learning media such as Digital comics. A comic is a form of art that uses a fixed order of static images (Manik et al., 2022). It implies that comic is structural images in an art form. Nowadays, comics are also available in digital form. Digital comics are widely available on the internet and in smartphone apps, but they have not yet been acknowledged as educational resources (Saputri, Sunardi, & Musadad, 2021). It alludes that digital comic rarely to be used in the teaching and learning

activity. Digital comics are the comic that published only on the internet or website that can be opened through smartphone. At the time when they teach vocabulary in the English subject, students can read the entire of the digital comics on their smartphones. From this strategy, it can help students in improving their vocabularies mastery.

Based on the preliminary observation, researcher found several problems that occurred in the class, especially in speaking skills. The first problem is students were lack of knowledge in understanding and mastering the vocabulary in learning English. A study from Purwitasari (2022) indicated that many learners found the language learning process way difficult due to their limited vocabulary. Second, teacher still uses conventional teaching methods in the classroom. It tends to make students feel bored. Research conducted by Dickinson, et al. (2019) supported the problem that happened in the class, they found that teachers only employed text books and workbooks when teaching vocabulary. Based on those problems, the researcher considered to find a solution. The researcher thought that digital comics could be applied to solve the problems in teaching English.

Based on the background information and above statement, the researcher is interested in conducting the research entitled "The Effect of Digital Comics as Learning Media on Students Vocabulary Mastery". The purposes of this research are: (1) to figure out the implementation of digital comics used as learning media for students' vocabulary mastery; (2) to find out the significant effect of digital comics used as learning media on students' vocabulary mastery and (3) to investigate the students' perception on the

digital comics as learning media for students' vocabulary mastery.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a quantitative method. The confirmatory scientific method is typically used in quantitative research because its emphasis is on testing theories and hypotheses (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). It implies that hypothesis and testing theories were correlated to the quantitative method. The researcher used Quasi Experimental Design with Experimental and Controlled Class for the research. When the researcher must employ existing groups rather than random samples, quasi experimental design is used (Gray, 2014). In this research, quasi-experiment research is a design of the research which employ the existing groups rather than random samples.

In this research, the researcher made the procedures before did the research. The first step was identifying the problem of the research. The researcher had to find out the research background before conducted the research. The second step was developing the research instruments. The researcher developed the instruments to collect the data. In this step the researcher did the instrument validity to make sure that instruments valid as the research instruments. The third step was collecting the research data. The data was collected by several instruments such as tests consists of pre-test and post-test, observation check-list, and questionnaire. The tests were delivered to both groups (experimental and control group) but the treatment only to the experimental group. The fourth step was analysing the data. After collect the data, the researcher started to analyse the data by using IBM SPSS program and Excel. The fifth step

was presenting the data, the research had to present the result of the research in a form of written and presented to examiner.

In this research, the researcher employed the treatment into one group to find the effect on it. The experiment group only got the treatment. In experimental group, the researcher utilized Digital comics Webtoon as media in learning while in the controlled group used regular or conventional teaching. The population of this study was eighth-grade students at SMP N 2 Patikraja in the academic year of 2022/2023 with 203 students. The samples were taken from two classes: VIII E as experimental group and VIII F as control group. In choosing the sample, the researcher considered the following criteria: (1) students who are less participative in the learning process; (2) students who have less of understanding the English materials; (3) students who have low scores in English. The researcher asked to the Eighth-grade English teacher for giving the recommendation of the class that still need to improve the vocabulary skill. The samples were chosen based on the results of students' examination score to find out the students' level of vocabulary mastery. The range of the scores made as the criteria for selecting the samples are 53-58.

Each class consists of 27 students which selected by using criteria in purposive sampling. On the advice of the English teacher and taking into account the outcomes of the students' examinations, the researcher selecting class VIII E as the experimental group and class VIII F as the control group. There was a total of 34 students from two classes, yet on the standardized test, there were only 7

students from VIII E and VIII F who had scores that were lower than the school's exam score means. On the standardized test, the students who received grades that were lower than the school's mean were removed from the sample. Researcher also gave the consent letter before conducted the research. The data were collected by using tests, observation check-list, and questionnaire. The numerical data were collected by using tests and questionnaire, while the descriptive data collected by using observation check-list.

FINDING(S) AND DISCUSSION

The data was acquired through the process of carrying out several experiments. The testing process was carried out not once but twice, consisting of a pre-test and a post-test. The researcher used an observation checklist to observe how the treatment was carried out and filled out a questionnaire at the last session of the research project. This came after the researcher had given participants a pre-test before the treatment and a post-test after the treatment.

Based on research, the research findings were as follows the implementation of digital comics used as learning media for students' vocabulary mastery in the experimental group was carried out successfully. It was evidenced by the observation data. The use of digital comics as a vocabulary learning media was the primary topic of the observation, which centred on the study treatment that it was. The observation results are divided into eight parts. The first meeting used to deliver the pre-test and the eighth meeting used to deliver the post-test after the treatment by using digital comics as learning media on students' vocabulary mastery in experiment group. The

treatment itself was implemented during the second until seventh meeting in the experimental group. Each component of the treatment, including the opening, main activity and the closing, was conducted by the researcher who appeared as the class's teacher.

The observation result showed that students actively participated in the class. They became enthusiastic and interested in applying this method because of the media assistance during learning. Then, several activities from students in main activity on treatment such as: (1) reading comics, students in a group did a case-based assignment from the digital comics. They opened their gadgets, after that searched webtoon (digital comics) and choose the appropriate comics based on the instruction of assignment. They had to read comics during allotted time (5-10 minutes); (2) understanding story, when the students started to read, they also must understand the story of the comics. They wrote the summary of story based on their understanding; (3) finding words, they also could find the new words inside the comics. Each student in a group must find the new words; (4) translating words, after they already collected the new words, they had to find the meaning by translating the words; and (5) presenting the work, each group must present their results from the discussion and then the other groups gave questions, corrections, and comments. Those steps were supporting the implementation of digital comics used as learning media for students' vocabulary mastery.

In accordance with that, the statistical test results showed a significantly different score. The significance of students' test scores is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. the result of tests mean score

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean		Std Deviation
			Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test
Student's score results	Experiment group	27	69.04	79.78	6.936
	Control group	27	66.22	69.85	5.611

Table above displayed pre-test and post-test results for the experimental and control groups. In the experimental group, the difference gap between pre- and post-test mean scores was 10.74, whereas in the control group, it was just 3.63. There was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups, suggesting that the experimental group performed better on average scores.

The data (students' test score) must first be tested for normality and homogeneity before inferential analysis may be performed. Both the normality and homogeneity tests were conducted to ensure that the sample data follows a normal distribution. The results of each test were bigger or higher than 0.05. The result demonstrated a normal distribution of the data. To determine the significance of the results, the researcher calculated the data using the Independent Sample T-Test. The result is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Independent T-test result

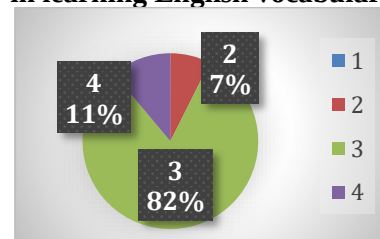
Significance 2-tailed value
0.000

The significance value was shown to be 0.000 as can be seen in the table above. If the probability value is very low (less than 0.05), it may be concluded that the means are considerably different from each other (McCormick, et al., 2015). The conclusion that there was a significant difference in students' means of the test after giving the treatment in the

experimental group which taught using Webtoon digital comics.

The students' perception also supported the result of this research. Students filled the questionnaire after the treatment finished. It was taken in the last meeting (8th meeting). The content of the questionnaire was the statements which represent the treatment activities. Ten statements are related to the students' feedback from the treatment in eight meeting. They had to answer the question based on their perceptions on the use of digital comics for students' vocabulary mastery. They gave the responses toward the digital comics which expected to be used as an effective, interesting and useful learning media. The total response was 92.6% students. Then they argued that digital comics gave positive effect. The result is presented in chart 1 below.

Chart 1. Digital comics motivate students in learning English vocabulary



The chart represented that there was no student (0%) chose strongly disagree. There are 2 students (7%) disagree, 22 students (82%) agree, and 3 students (11%) strongly agree. The highest percentage was in the answer of agree (82%). The result showed that mostly students thought that "digital comics motivate me to learn vocabulary."

The questionnaire showed that students liked digital comics for vocabulary acquisition. Most of the students agreed to all questionnaire statements. Students learned vocabulary well with digital

comics. On the basis of all of the statements and charts made above, it is possible to draw the conclusion that all of the questionnaire's responses and items were agreed upon. It indicates that the students who took part in the experiment thought the utilization of digital comics as a kind of educational media was interesting, beneficial and may assist them in developing their vocabulary skills.

CONCLUSION(S)

It can be concluded that digital comics positively and significantly influenced the students' vocabulary mastery. The implementation was successful. It supported by the students several activities, such as reading comics, understanding story, finding vocabularies, translating words, and presenting the work. The test results supported the significant difference and effect on the students' vocabulary mastery. The significance value was 0.000 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Students in experimental group argued that digital comics positively influenced the students' vocabulary mastery.

The utilization of digital comics as learning media had resulted in positive effects in terms of students' acquisition and mastery of vocabulary. The students' enthusiasm for participating in the classroom setting as evidenced by their participation during the teacher's utilization of digital comics was a learning media aimed at enhancing their vocabulary skills. A significant proportion of students within the experimental group demonstrated agreement and interest in utilizing digital comics as an instructional media. Students exhibit higher levels of motivation to acquire vocabulary when

utilizing digital comics due to its engaging and attracting nature as a type of media. The data reveals that a significant majority of students (96.2%) expressed agreement on the interesting and beneficial quality of digital comics as a tool for vocabulary acquisition.

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