The Use of Comic to Improve Students’ Reading Comprehension Skill at Junior High School
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Abstract
The objective of this experimental study is to know the achievement of students reading comprehension after implementing comic as learning media. The population was all of the eighth grade students of SMPN 17 Banda Aceh. The sample was the students of class VIII-9 (experimental class) and VIII-6 (control class). True Experimetal Design is used in this study. The writer conducted pre-test, treatment and post-test to collect data, and used gain score calculation. The mean score of pre-test in experimental class was 62 and post-test was 75.6, while the mean score of pre-test in control class was 36.8, and post-test was 59.2. The gain score of experimental class was 9.78, while control class was 8.11. It indicated that there was an improvement of students’ achievement both of classes. However, the improvement of students’ achievement in experimental class is higher than control class. Moreover, the analysis of t-test showed that \( t_{\text{score}} > t_{\text{table}} \) or \( 2.36 > 1.68 \) at the level of significance 0.05 with the degree of freedom (df) 25. It is clear that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. It means that comic is effective media in teaching learning recount text.

Keywords: Comic, Reading Skill, Recount Text

1. INTRODUCTION
Based on the 2013 curriculum, it is mentioned that there are four skills in English that must be mastered by Indonesian students, they are speaking, writing, listening and reading. Reading is one of the important skills which must be learned by students in order to master English well. It is one of the language skills that cannot be separated from other language skills. Reading skill is tested in National Examination, so the students must have a good reading comprehension in order to pass the exam.

Based on the writer’s experience during his internship program started from February to May 2016 at SMP Negeri 17 Banda Aceh, the writer found that the students were still having difficulties in understanding what they read. So, to find out the weaknesses of students in reading, the writer had conducted a preliminary study on March 22nd, 2016 in which the writer gave students a reading test. The result showed that the students’ ability was still low especially in vocabulary mastery and identifying reference, however they are good in identifying main idea, identifying supporting detail
and making inference. From 18 students, the writer found that 10 students were unable to answer the questions related to vocabulary and 8 of students were unable to answer question dealt with identifying reference.

Besides, the writer found that in learning reading, the media used by the students was restricted only from the text books. In fact, there are many sources of media that can be applied by teachers in teaching reading. In the classroom, the teacher has an important role to make a lesson of learning English to become fun. The use and utilization of the media is one of ways to increase students' reading skill, such as using comic media to improve students’ reading ability. Comic is classified as the visual category. The purpose of the utilization of the comic is to improve students’ achievement through the images.

The comic is very interesting in the students’ life. Sudjana & Rivai (2007) state that the comic and pictures can be used effectively by teachers to generate interest, develop vocabulary words and reading skills as well as broaden interest in reading. In addition, there are some previous studies related to teaching reading by using comic. Rokhayani & Utari (2014) conducted this study and the result showed that comic increase students’ achievement in reading comprehension. Liu (2004) states that in increasing reading comprehension for second language learners, comics have been shown to the most effective way. Rolidah & Abdullah, (2013) further say that English comic will give valuable effect on ability to infer something in reading.

Based on the problem formulated above, the current research investigates the use of comic media to improve students’ reading comprehension skill for junior high school. In line with the case, the researcher has formulated the researcher question as follow: “Can comic improve the students’ reading comprehension skill?”.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Reading Comprehension

According to Serravallo (2015, p. 43), reading comprehension is reading by thinking and understanding for knowing the implicit content from the text. Armbruster (2000, p. 41) also defined that the real purpose for reading is comprehension. The readers are not really reading if they just read the words but do not understand what they are reading and do not get the meaning behind the text. The way make the student to be able to comprehend the text, students must perform a lot of comprehension strategies in order to transform strategies into skills (Nunan & Richards, 2015, p. 70). The writer thinks that reading is the activity that involve thinking and understanding written form with the purpose is comprehension, to gain comprehension students should do exercises.

2.2 Recount Text

According to Grace & Sudarwati (2005, p. 61) recount text is a text to tell something that happened in the past time. This statement is supported by Siswanto, (2005, p. 201) who states that recount text is the text to tell someone’s experience and use simple past tense. Based on Curriculum 2013, the term of recount text describes an event which happened in past time, and the purpose of this text is to entertain the audiences. There are three characteristics of recount text or usually called generic structure, those are; orientation, events and reorientation (Anderson, 1997, p. 50). There are five different types of recount text according to Barwick (1999, p. 4-5), however, there are only three types that are introduced to junior high school students based on 2013 curriculum; Personal recount, factual recount and imaginary recount.
2.3 Media
Soeparno (1987, p. 1) states that teacher needs media to establish an effective communication, media also help teachers as resource in delivering the information to students as receiver. There are some functions of media, the first function is to attract students’ attention. The second function is to make the lesson especially English lesson more understandable. The third function is to reduce the length of time, and last one is to make students more active in learning process (Sudjana & Rivai, 2007).

2.4 Comic
Shadely (1990) state that comics are shaped series of pictures while each box of which is a sequence of a story. Such images include speak balloons sometimes still accompanied by narrative explanation. Cary (2004, p. 33) states that comic can be used as a means to help students deal with difficulties in complex language in language learning especially.

2.5 Scientific Approach
According to Ministry of Education and Culture (Permendikbud, 2013) the scientific learning is the learning to adopt the scientific measures in building the knowledge through the scientific method. The purpose of scientific approach in 2013 curriculum is learning process. The scientific approach is expected to be golden way of developing attitude, skill and students’ knowledge. Scientific approach does not only focus on developing students’ competence but also develop the knowledge and thinking skills to support students’ creativity.

3. METHOD
3.1 Research Method
The research design used in this study is quantitative research. The experimental design used in this study is True Experimental Design. To assess the improvement of students’ reading comprehension, both groups was given pre-test and post test, but they received different treatment.

3.2 Population and Sample
The population of this study was the students of 8th grade in SMPN 17 Banda Aceh. From nine classes, two classes had been choosen to be sample. The writer used random sampling technique by drawing lottery number, since each class in the population had equal opportunity to be the sample. The classes were labeled into experimental group (VIII-9) and control group (VIII-6).

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis
In collecting the data, the writer had done three main activities. They are pre-test, experiment and post-test. The pre-test was conducted before the treatments and the post-test was conducted after the treatments. The purpose of this test is to know students reading’ ability before the researcher implemented comic. In pretest, the writer distributed 10 test items of multiple choices with four options. The questions were about all reading aspects, namely; vocabulary mastery, identifying reference, identifying main idea, identifying supporting detail and making inference.

The writer gave two days treatment to the students. The writer started the treatment by teaching students in experimental class through comic, while in the control class was taught by the English teacher by using picture. Before starting the learning process, the writer asked some questions related to recount text, for example what they know about
recount text, including communicative purpose, generic structure, and language features. Next, the writer explained some aspects of reading comprehension.

At the second meeting, the learning process began by reviewing the previous material and media used. Then the class was divided into six groups of four students for each group. Next, the writer gave one topic about “An Amazing Day in The Beach” and asked the students to discuss the topic within their group. The writer asked the students to answer the question of the text given.

After conducting the treatment, the writer conducted the post-test. The questions were about all reading aspects, namely; vocabulary mastery, identifying reference, identifying main idea, identifying supporting detail and making inference. Post-test was given to find out the differences of the students’ reading comprehension achievement after giving treatments.

To analyze the collected data, the writer used statistical formula as Sudjana (2005). The components of the formula namely; mean score, standard deviation and hypothesis testing.

4. Finding and Discussion
4.1 The Result of Pretest and Posttest in Experimental Class

The first step in collecting the data, the writer administered the pre-test in experimental class on Tuesday, May 9th, 2017. Data of pre-test was aimed to measure the students’ reading comprehension before treatment was applied. The writer distributed 10 multiple-choice questions in which each question carries 10 marks and then the score was calculated based on the number of correct answers. Meanwhile, the post-test was given in the last meeting on Friday, May 12th, 2017. The post-test was aimed to compare between the pre-test score and the post-test score. So that, it would show their score increase after learning with comic. The result of students’ pre-test and post-test score could be seen as following:

![Figure 4.1 Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Experimental Class](image)

Based on the figure above, it showed that the students’ score are varied, in pre-test of experimental class the highest score for the experimental class was 90 and lowest score was 30. The mean score was 62. The minimum criteria achievement (KKM)
for English subject at SMPN 17 Banda Aceh is 80. Therefore, there were 6 students or about 24% who achieve the passing grade. In post-test, the students score was significantly improved. The highest score was 100 and the lowest score was 40 that can be interpreted 12% students get the highest score and 4% students get the lowest score. There were 16 students or about 64% who passed minimum criteria of achievement (KKM). Thus, it shows that the experimental class students have better improvement of reading comprehension after being taught by using comic media.

4.2 The Result of Pretest and Posttest in Control Class
The writer carried out the pre-test on Wednesday, May 10th 2017 in control class. The result of frequency distribution of post-test score could be seen as follows:

![Figure 4.2 Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Controlled Class](image)

The T-table illustrates that the highest score in pre-test was 90 and the lowest score was 10 whereas the mean score was 36.8. There were only 1 student or about 4% in control class who passed the KKM. Meanwhile, for the post-test the highest score was still 90 and the lowest score was 30. It also tells that 4 students, approximately 16% who passed the minimum of criteria achievement. Nevertheless, the mean score was increased which was 59.2 after had been taught using pictures by teacher.

4.3 The Improvement of Students’ Score from Pre-test and Post-test in Experimental Class and Control Class
The writer calculated the standard deviation of each test, gain score, t-score, and t-table after getting the mean score of both classes. The following table shows the improvement of students’ score in both classes.
Table 4.1 The Improvement of Students’ Pre-test and Post-test in EC and CC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Mean Score of Pre-test</th>
<th>Mean Score of Post-test</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean Score of Gain</th>
<th>T-Score</th>
<th>T-Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>9.78</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>0.324</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, it describes that the gain score of experimental class was 9.78 which is higher than the gain score of control class (8.11). Therefore, the writer concludes that the students’ reading ability significantly improved after taught by using comic.

4.4 Discussion

After the writer did the treatment in experimental class, it was found that the students’ score significantly improved. It happened because the media which was used by the writer could make the students easily to understand the text.

After analyzing all the data collected from both of experimental class and control class by using statistical formula, the writer found different achievement from both classes in terms of their reading ability achievement. In other words, the experimental class got a better achievement than the control class after they learned recount text with comic.

The result is proven by the values of the mean, variance, standard deviation, and combined variance which also assisted the writer to test the hypothesis. By using t-test on the level of significant $\alpha = 0.05$, the degree of freedom $= 48$, and the formula $t_{\text{score}} > t_{\text{table}}$ which is $2.36 > 1.68$, it can be concluded that the $H_0$ is accepted. Thus, there is a significant difference of achievement of the students who were taught by using comic as media of teaching reading comprehension and those who were not taught by using comic.

The finding of this study is similar to the study conducted by Rokhayani & Utari (2014), and Yarso, Salam, & Bunau (2014) that comic media gave significant improvement on students’ reading comprehension, and it helped students’ in solving the problems of reading comprehension as Widhiyastuti (2011) found in her study. However, the writer found some weaknesses in using comic as learning media. First, not all comics can be used as media in teaching reading, it is because some of comics contain inappropriate words for students in junior high school. There are also some pictures in comics contain violence act. Second, not all of students involved in learning process, so that there were some students score did not improve.

All in all, the use of comic can increase the students’ reading comprehension. The use of this media also makes the learning process becomes more interesting and enjoyable as stated by Sudjana and Rivai (2007, p. 68) that comic can be an effective media in teaching learning process and increase students motivation in reading. It was proved by treatments activities. The classroom activities ran well and comic could motivated the students during the teaching and learning process. Comic is media that can make students learn effectively and can be applied easily in learning activity.
REFERENCES


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