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The Use of Online Comic for English Language Learning: Students' perception

INTRODUCTION

The status of English as an international language has made people around the world want to master English. Since English is the most common language spoken everywhere, undeniable that English has become important (Crystal, 2012; Aziza, 2020; Bihari Dash, 2022). English plays a major role in education, which is a crucial arena and many sectors. People all over the world are determined to learning English as a second language. Schools' syllabus included English as a second language in many countries even the Indonesian government has put English as a compulsory subject. Aside from communication, mastering English able to lead to broader insights and opportunities. Therefore, Students need to master English since English is an essential aspect for teaching and learning.

Learning English is challenging for some people in every country. In Indonesia, English serves as a foreign language. Specifically, many learners face challenges in learning English due to several reasons. Based on field observations, the use of English remains limited in Indonesia. English is used as a subject for learning in the classroom without further exploration. The lack of adaptation and familiarity in communicating using English makes learning English less appealing. Thus, the textbooks in some schools are monotonous and uninteresting, making students bored easily. On a broader scale, due to the lack of suitable media to meet the diverse needs of students, almost all students experienced difficulties with pronouncing words, writing, and various grammatical rules (Surmanov & Azimova, 2020). Similarly, the research conducted by (Maulida Nuzula Firdaus, 2023) revealed that students face problems in learning English due to a lack of interactive media and visual support. Teaching materials and media can be carried out easily due to a varied source of open-access technology. Concerning the various language components and language skills that need to be accomplished, teaching materials, media with hints of technology, and these combinations can be a key to overcoming the challenges for students while increasing students' motivation in learning English.

The availability of technology has many benefits to people, including teachers and students. The current learning media are very varied and are slowly shifting from paper-based to digital-based. In the context of English as a foreign language, various studies show that the use of technology in learning media has become an effective solution to developing innovative learning media that are reliable to overcome common problems, such as lack of motivation or limited access to learning resources (Mutiaramses & Fitria, 2022; Wahyudini et al., 2025). In (Wulandari & Widodo, 2024) studies, one innovative learning medium that can improve students' learning outcomes in English was the digital comic.

As explained by (Wicaksono & Hartatik, 2023), Comics are a collection of organized pictures, including text, based on the creators' goals and ideas to tell a story and share a message. It consists of words, phrases, and short sentences (Kohnke, 2021) to tell a story. Online comic popularity has increased significantly since many online comic platforms have grown. There are various online comic websites and applications out there which are free to access, such as Webtoon, Tapas, Tappytoon, and so on among all, Line Webtoon is mostly used. This online comic can be accessed on every device, such as smartphones, laptops, or computers. By using online comics in language learning, students are able to enhance their English skills with enjoyable visual content. The researcher found that this media would be more effective to learn English than reading a whole plain text that might be boring for learners. By using online comics, learning a language, especially English, will be more engaging and effortless since most of the language used in comics is easy to understand and practical in real life.

Online comic platforms are effectively used as a learning medium for learning English, as shown by various previous studies. The benefits of using online comics are the attractive images and the stories they present. Easily accessible everywhere, it is able to support the English learning process and support the creation of innovation (Ghulam et al., 2023). Several researchers argue that comics offer a comprehensive text and visual illustrations that effectively support the learning process and can be applied in various learning contexts (Fauziah & Nasrullah, 2023). Using comics as a medium is examined by (Azizah & Hamid, 2022) and has an effect to improve students' vocabulary and reading comprehension significantly. Research on the use of comics as a medium was also carried out by (Juliana, 2021), who found that learning vocabulary using comics is able to motivate learners to memorize and gives them the courage to expand it. It is evidenced by the highest score in the post-test. Another study also showed positive results, as the students' vocabulary ability improved significantly when using comics. They gave the responses toward it, which were expected to be used as an effective, interesting and useful learning media (Al Farissi et al., 2024).

However, the previous studies looked at the use of comics as a way to teach language and mostly tested how comics are able to improve only certain aspects, such as vocabulary mastery,

reading skills, students' interest, and others, with a limited research area. Several studies have focused only on secondary school students, without studying students' views, difficulties, or broader perspectives of students regarding learning English using comics. It appears that there is still a gap in the existing literature; thus, the studies are relatively limited and are expected to build on existing research. Based on the research background above, each student may have a different and unique viewpoint regarding the media in their learning process. The researcher aims to explore further students' perspectives on the use of Online comics in learning English. Building on previous research and existing theories about the comic media.

This study was conducted to determine the response of students, especially college students, to the use of comics in learning English. This study expected to provide new insights into whether students find comics helpful as a learning tool, how they perceive its effectiveness in supporting their English learning, find out in detail and extensively what students have gained from learning English using comics.

Research Methodology

In this study, the research method conducted with qualitative method. Qualitative methods focus on perspectives, meanings, and underlying reasons, thereby generating discoveries and understanding within a phenomenon (Lim, 2025). The purpose of this method is to pave the way for advancing logical research practices with a balanced perspective based on both knowledge and reflection.

This study deploying open-ended questionnaire to discover students' perspectives on the use of online comics in learning English. The participants were 20 English young learner students at one of the University in Cimahi who likes to read or use online comic for learning English purposes and 10 of them were taken as a sample of this study to be analyzed.

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