COMIC STRIP: A MEDIA TO TEACH ENGLISH

Rizky Vita Losi¹, Sri Wahyuni², Sisi Rosida³, Putri Zahra⁴

¹,²,³Science and Technology Faculty, University of Pembangunan Panca Budi, Medan, Indonesia
⁴Islamic and Humanities Faculty, University of Pembangunan Panca Budi, Medan, Indonesia

domains: rizkyvitalosi@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id, yuke@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id², sisi@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id³, putzahra251@gmail.com⁴

ABSTRACT
When students are asked to write or read any English stories, then they need to learn about vocabulary as well. Writing skill challenges foreign students to be creative to create stories, while reading skill invites students to be good at comprehending the text. Recent studies have claimed in preference for the use of comic strips in language learning. The current study will go into detail about the use of comic strips as a learning medium, its advantages, and the effect to English learning at class. This literature review used George's (2008) model as a research method. The information was gathered from research articles about the use of comic strips in learning languages that were published in trustworthy international journals and recognized national journals. According to the review, prior research has shown that using comic strips in language learning can benefit students with their vocabulary, writing, and reading skills.

Keywords: Story board, Language learning, English language skills

1. INTRODUCTION
For learning and teaching any language, effective language teaching practices are essential. English teachers can use a variety of instructional techniques to bring up the material and personalize their classes (Losi & Nasution, 2022). English is the language of communication at all educational levels. English proficiency is a must for mastering the language. They are all interconnected. Listening, reading, speaking, and writing are the four components of English. From the lowest to the greatest level, there are different learning levels that are thought of as the key. Utilizing the four communication skills becomes primarily dependent on the requirements of effective communication. Grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciations are some more elements of the English language that must be taught. These elements are crucial since they provide the basis for comprehending anything said or written in English.

During the teaching-learning process, the teacher assumes the role of the main key in the classroom. The teacher provides the students with opportunities to think and refine their thoughts about the material. All teachers in the world need to be really professional. Maintaining the setup, strategy, and teaching method in the classroom requires professionalism. The teachers share the materials with the students using the proper media in an effort to make the information understandable and comfortable for the students. These days, educational media is developed. Modern media are used by people for everything, including teaching and learning (Rokhayani et al., 2014).

One of the challenges students confront in reading comprehension is their poor level of vocabulary knowledge. They also encounter new words and syntax that are unquestionably foreign to their native tongue. Because of their limited language skills and the fact that some pupils are completely "blind" to English, it is difficult for them to estimate and predict the correct cues underlying the texts. Students also struggled with integrating word-to-word meanings into meaningful ideas and understanding the text as a whole, despite the fact that they could understand each word on its own.

The writing abilities in written English is quite poor due to a variety of issues, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Because they lack the necessary foundational knowledge and interest in writing, it is also related to another fundamental issue with learning to write. In order to increase their students' interest in and proficiency in writing, teachers must identify the most successful ways. The lack of media that can provide them a broad view of the tale they wish to write is the primary issue that contributes to their lack of interest in writing.

Language skills and vocabulary go hand in hand since vocabulary is crucial to a complete comprehension of the language. Language's vocabulary is made up of all the information regarding the definitions and applications of words. If language structures are the skeleton of language, then vocabulary is the vital organs and the flesh, according to Harmer (2007).
The majority of pupils concur that the language's limited vocabulary makes it challenging to learn. They find English words to be very strange because they are challenging to learn. Each word has a unique pronunciation, and the written form corresponds to the sound differently. For instance, the word "buy" is pronounced "bui" in Indonesian but "bai" in English. Growing up and both mean the same thing, for instance, there are other words that have the same spelling but a distinct meaning, such as like and like. The employment of words in diverse contexts, such as "buying now," "bought yesterday," and "will buy tomorrow," might cause students to lose their bearings when it comes to their command of the language (Poai, 2018).

Comic strips are regarded as teaching media since they are printed materials used in the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. Comic strips are used by educators as both resources and media. A comic book's narrative describes specific details of the educational atmosphere. The characters' words can be copied by the students to improve their spoken English. The main factor in maintaining pronunciation can be the teacher (Darsalina et al., 2016).

Edmund (2014) provided instructions on how to instruct pupils using comic strips as a teaching tool. Before reading, first. Here, the teachers share copies of the comic with the class as a whole. Then they give the pupils a few minutes to browse the comic without reading the text. Following that, teachers ask students to predict the comic’s subject matter and main characters. Additionally, the teachers should remind the students that comics use both words and visuals, as well as how they interact, to convey information. Predictions must be made by the pupils based on visual cues. The students are required to come up with a few questions regarding the comic and write them down for the class to respond to later. The second occurs when reading. Together, the teachers and students read the entire story and then engage in discussion utilizing the facts and questions provided.

Inquiries about the pupils' prior knowledge and experience with the reading material were made. The questions in this portion also center on vocabulary from the comic strips, the meanings of which the students should be well-versed in. After reading comes the third. During this stage, the teachers go through the students' prior questions and provide group responses. The pupils then complete the worksheet individually or in groups after it has been distributed by the teachers. The teachers next go over the assignment and talk about the students' responses.

A comic is a story that is illustrated. According to Smith (2006), comic strips are a type of comic that is published in newspapers. These comics make use of panels, which typically have a maximum of three or four and a minimum of one. The same cast of characters may be featured in these strips, but the accompanying narrative are frequently designed to stand alone. While a comic is essentially a series of comic strips that fill several pages. While the storylines found in comic books are, like those found in comic strips, intended to stand alone, comic books are generally a part of a serial story, and frequently need that the reader be familiar with earlier issues.

Students who don't truly enjoy reading or have a fear of failure or disappointment may be more motivated to regulate their reading after reading comic books. A pupil feels some degree of control over the reading process while they are reading for enjoyment. In contrast, there is less potential for originality and innovation when studying a literary work, which causes the students to become bored and fail to comprehend what they are reading (Maulana & Fitrawati, 2018).

The lettering is the second component. Any text found on a comic book page qualifies. Important words are highlighted in bold type, whereas yelling is typically represented in the dialogue by large letters and whispering by small letters. Lettering for dialogue and captions is often all uppercase. Lastly, there is the balloon. Word balloons and thought balloons are the two types of balloons. A word balloon is a bounded object with dialogue inside of it, typically with a tail pointing in the direction of the speaker. A thought balloon, on the other hand, is a bounded shape that represents a character's silent thoughts. Thought balloons frequently have tails that resemble bubble trails and cloud-like boundaries. There are numerous shapes for balloons. They can be used to many personalities or moods.

Both verbal and nonverbal cues are equally significant in a comic strip. Illustrations' hints aid in conveying implicit messages. The adage "a picture is worth a thousand words" perfectly describes how comic strips are made. Translators should render both verbal and nonverbal messages accurately and appropriately because readers of comic strips determine the true meaning by examining both the narrative and nonnarrative information. This will help the target audience understand the message more fully and effectively. Additionally, comic strips can be thought of as the condensed form of comics.

Here are several comic strip principles that could serve as justification for teachers to incorporate comics into their lesson plans: (1) Comics are entertaining, stimulating, and energizing; (2) They foster a wide range of skills, including cognitive, intellectual, social, and cultural; (3) Can be used to teach children in a variety of academic levels; (4) Can be used to teach a variety of academic subjects; (5) May aid in the development of higher-order thinking abilities (such as sequencing, predicting, inferring, synthesizing, analyzing, and evaluating); (6) Increase student engagement with multimodal texts, (7) Make students aware of the various multimodal
communication and construction methods, and (8) Good teaching resources for a target language include: (9). Content that is visually depicted is considerably simpler to process, comprehend, and recall. (10) Can be applied to the instruction of speaking, listening, writing, and reading abilities (Snyder, 1997).

There are several programs that are user-friendly for students and straightforward to use. (1) Panels, gutters, balloons, and captions are a few of the elements that make up a comic, according to Saraceni. Each page typically consists of a number of panels, which are rectangular frames. (2) Each panel is separated from the others by a gutter, which is a blank space. (3) The balloon: One of the key elements of comics is the usage of balloons, in which text is inserted and superimposed into the panel that holds the images. Although other forms of print, including children's books and advertisements, often employ words and images together, only comics make use of balloons.

Although there is some actual dialogue in the balloons, a substantial chunk of it is simply narrative. It implies that a character is speaking (in the first person), which deepens the reader's connection to the narrative. Speech or thought may be reported via balloons. The figure speaking or thinking is indicated by the balloon's tail. (4) The caption: The caption is always a separate entity that appears at the top or bottom of the panel, not inside the panel itself. The captioned text adds details to the speech in the balloons and serves as the narrator's voice.

Comic book illustrations have the power to convey ideas and give speeches shape. By visualizing, we conjure up images in our brains. We form an image in our minds as we read. Using what we already know or have experienced, we interpret what we read. Using sensory images allows us to bring things to life. When kids imagine, they conjure up their own mental "movies." Comic books can be used by teachers to assist students in creating mental movies.

Comic strips have the potential to be used as teaching and learning aids to pique students' interests. Comic strips are one of the more readable, popular, accessible, and communicative visual genres. In summary, comics will be a more effective teaching and learning tool. The use of comic strips in the classroom can be done in a variety of ways. Here is a condensed collection of suggestions drawn from a variety of sources: (1) Students develop a narrative scenario using appropriate images in small groups or independently using digital storytelling. (2) In order to graphically recount a tale they have read, students use comic strips. (3) To explain a subject and get pupils to come up with ideas, use comic strips. (4) In order to teach vocabulary, grammar, communication (the use of language in context), writing, and reading, comic strips can be used in language acquisition (Anida, 2019).

To help learning, teachers have always used images or graphics, whether they were created from scratch or were taken from books, newspapers, or magazines. A picture can take the shape of a photograph, an illustration (usually found in a text book), cue cards (little cards that students use in pair or group work), giant wall pictures (big enough for everyone to view details), flashcards (relatively small cards that we can hold up for our pupils to see), or another type entirely. Additionally, some instructors present computer visuals, slides from a slide projector, or images from an overhead projector, with order to aid with explanation and language practice, the teacher also draws illustrations on the board.

The following are some benefits of using comic strips to teach reading: (1) Assist pupils in effortlessly comprehending the material and context being taught by the teacher. (2) It is hoped that employing comic strips will encourage pupils to read and focus on the subject matter. It will make studying English enjoyable. (3) Comics can assist readers in visualizing concepts correctly. (5) It enhances students' ability to work creatively, (6) It encourages students to express their creativity, and (7) It captures the interest of reluctant readers.

The ability of a comic to inspire students is something that a teacher may use. The primary function of comic books in education is their capacity to pique students' interests. It is preferable to employ comics in conjunction with a certain educational strategy. As a result, using comics as a teaching tool is more effective. A teacher should assist the pupils in locating an engaging comic that is suitable for their age and way of thinking. A teacher should also assist pupils in gaining deeper knowledge and understanding from the comic.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The current study used the findings of other studies and the opinions of experts to address the research questions, adopting George's (2008) library research methodology. The first step in the research process was choosing the subject, which was the use of comics in language instruction. Two study questions about the advantages and difficulties of employing comic strips in language instruction were then put forth. To gather articles, books, and other relevant sources, systematic browsing and skimming were done. The fourth phase involved using Google Scholar as a search engine to locate the sources' references and databases, specifically Semantic Scholar, ERIC, Taylor & Francis Online, and SINTA. The following criteria were used to obtain them due to the abundance of sources that were available.

The chosen publications must first be published in renowned worldwide journals, recognized national journals, and other relevant sources judged reliable to address the research concerns of the current study. Second,
the articles must have been released between 2011 and 2020 to give a more modern perspective. Third, certain keywords were chosen to improve the search results (Wijaya et al., 2021).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Comic strips are undoubtedly a useful educational tool when it comes to teaching languages. The advantages of using comic books to enhance vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing abilities may be shown.

Comic Strips for Learning Vocabulary

Vocabulary is crucial since it is a fundamental component of learning a language (Wijaya et al., 2021). According to Budiman et al. (2018) and Cabrera et al. (2018), vocabulary is one of the essential skills that students need to master in order to learn a language. The reason for this is that vocabulary serves as a link between the language and skills like reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In order to motivate children to acquire new terms, the teacher should set up a learning environment. In this situation, comics are helpful for acquiring vocabulary (Cimermanová, 2015).

After using comic strips as the instructional resources, students' vocabulary improved. Their research revealed that second-grade Bae Kudus junior high pupils had made improvements in the vocabulary department. When the Comic Strips materials were used, it also showed that the students were interested in learning to read (Rokhayani et al., 2014). Reading comic strips helped students become more proficient in their language. It has a beneficial effect, which has improved their vocabulary achievement. Through the use of comic strips in the teaching of reading, pupils' vocabulary has improved (Darsalina et al., 2016).

Because comic strips contain images, they can aid students in memorizing words. It can be utilized to boost student focus on instructions and explanations in the classroom, activity during exercise completion, independence, and enthusiasm during activities. During the teaching-learning process, the teacher assumes the role of the main key in the classroom. The teacher provides the students with opportunities to think and refine their thoughts about the material. All teachers in the world need to be really professional. Being professional is necessary to uphold the setup, strategy, and teaching methodology in the classroom (Poai, 2018).

Comic Strips for Improving Writing Skills

The use of comic strips in educational activities has aided in the development of writing skills, but the teacher must make sure that the comics chosen are appropriate for the subject matter and learning goals. Based on the findings, the researcher draws the conclusion that comic strips help pupils' writing abilities (Ulfa & Kareviati, 2021). The usage of comic strips in the writing classroom helps students come up with ideas, gather information for their texts, and finish them. By following some steps, the students are able to produce a strong literary text with the aid of comic strips. Because comic strips are visual and vivid, using them in the classroom helps students become engaged in the teaching and learning process. In addition to encouraging children who have little interest in writing to think, create, and write, comic strips are a great way to write conversation. The students can organize the idea in writing the story through story telling and story boarding in the teaching and learning process utilizing comic strips.

Because they can read the language (conversation, prolog), and because they can characterize the characters using the image, students are more engaged in the teaching and learning process when utilizing comic strips. Since language is so important for connecting with people, especially when writing, comic strips can also be utilized to understand linguistics (Ekorini, 2018). According to Cohn (2012), considering "comics" an object of inquiry would be comparable to linguists concentrating on "novels" rather than studying English, the language in which novels are written. Similar to this, comics' use of sequential images creates their own "visual language" (more on this topic will be covered in-depth later). As a result, linguistic research should focus on the behavioral domains of writing (written/ vernacular language) and drawing (visual language), excluding social categories like "comics," "graphic novels," "manga," etc. Students can also learn how to use language in their writing by studying comic strips.

The student's comprehension of how to employ specific native language expressions can be improved. According to Davis (2006), comic strips can be used to teach a variety of skills, including how to use adjectives to describe characters, how to form different verb tenses, how to write direct speech, and how to introduce paralinguistic lexical terms without a written counterpart. According to Davis, the employment of comic strips can help children understand the vocabulary they use since the visual and the speech work together to a large extent, which means that the majority of the characters' facial expressions represent the discourse's themes.
Additionally, by guessing the phrases in the comic strips based on the image, the children can benefit. According to Davis, using comic strips also contributes to the mechanical aspects of writing, particularly in terms of spelling and grammar.

Pitoj (2012) argues that comic strip stories can serve as a communicative tool for language exposure. The exposure itself may aid pupils in comprehending the specific facts in a reading assignment. It implies that using comic strips can help students fully comprehend the plot of the comics and convey that plot in their writing. Comic strips are advantageous, according to Olson (2007), "because they offer brief conversations in English with pictures that help convey the meaning of the words". The images in a comic strip supporting the principles could perhaps make the content more accessible for a visual learner, especially one who may be below grade level in reading, or a kinesthetic learner who struggles with reading. Comic strips are a more effective teaching tool for writing than picture series, according to the statement.

For a kinesthetic learner who has trouble reading or a visual learner who may be below grade level in reading, the illustrations in a comic strip that illustrates the ideas may make the material more understandable. The claim is that comic strips work better as a writing teaching aid than picture books (Amrizal, 2022). According to Christina & Ismaniati's (2019) research, since kids enjoy tales and comics are stories, they can utilize them to learn about characters. Character development involves learning, doing, and acclimating to new situations. Since even someone with outstanding knowledge may not behave appropriately if not trained, character education extends beyond facts. In other words, through comic books, youngsters can learn about the character and even apply that knowledge to their everyday life, developing a habit of the character. Results from the use of comics in language training continue to be positive, especially when it comes to how to use comics to teach language skills and competencies (Yusda Humola, 2016; Martages et al., 2017; Megawati & Anugerahwati, 2012; Khoii & Forouzesh, 2010).

The use of comic strips shown an improvement in the pupils' writing abilities. The use of comic strips in the writing process was appreciated by the pupils. The steps were missed by some students who were seated in the back and didn't pay attention to the explanation, thus they tended to write their conversations on the paper first. This study has one major flaw, specifically the internet connection. A few students who were eager to write dialogue and comic strips brought their laptops. Because the software was more challenging to use on a smartphone than it was on a laptop or computer, users did not feel motivated enough (Sulistyawati & Veniranda, 2021). The students appeared excited about using the comic strip to create debate about cause and effect. Because they could combine some images with conversation or captions, students were drawn to the software. Then, when they were done with the assignment, paper, pen, and table, students may write about their ideas and feelings to express themselves. Then, other students expressed interest in the implementation as well, stating that the internet had given them new ideas to consider and allowed them to express those views in writing. The students were instructed to concentrate on the language, substance, dialogue structure, and plot in this writing assignment. The students were then shown samples of comic strips with language that was organized well and used proper syntax, which inspired them to improve upon the previous comic strip.

Comic Strips for Improving Reading Skills

Their reading comprehension may be enhanced by using comic strips. It occurred as a result of the usage of comic strips in the classroom, which increased their support and increased the students’ willingness to learn English and, particularly, to read. The majority of students said that using comic strips to educate and learn English piqued their interest and may have helped them become more motivated (Nafisah & Pratama, 2020).

If comic strips were used as a teaching tool, students’ reading comprehension skills improved. The observation sheet, interview sheet, and diary entries all demonstrated it. The process of teaching and learning was shown to be effective. The kids engaged in the teaching and learning process with energy, enthusiasm, and enjoyment. In summary, the research results demonstrated that comic strips greatly increased pupils' reading comprehension achievement. Based on the study's findings, it is possible to draw the conclusion that using comic books to teach reading comprehension will benefit children (Sari Manik, 2019). Students who are taught using comic strips perform better on tests that measure their ability to understand descriptive text. The researcher of the future is advised to perform additional research on a related topic while enhancing the methods (Handayani et al., 2020).

The ability of kids to read and comprehend narrative text can be enhanced through the usage of comic strips. As a result, the experimental group's students' performance significantly improved. It was possible to draw the conclusion that using comic strips as a teaching tool for reading comprehension of narrative text had a substantial impact based on the findings and discussion in the preceding chapter. The use of comic strips is more successful because it enables pupils to better understand the text by looking at the illustrations prior to reading.
4. CONCLUSION

Comic strips can be utilized in learning languages nowadays as one of the best teaching tools. Numerous research demonstrated the advantages and difficulties of utilizing comic strips in language instruction. All of those research came to the same conclusion: comic strips are good for teaching other languages. The students might learn a language and express themselves visually through comic strips. Additionally, it enhanced the kids' reading and writing abilities as well as their command of language elements including syntax and vocabulary. In this instance, the introduction of modals and pronouns as well as the transformation of direct speech into indirect speech in the speech bubble can be considered as examples of using comic strips to teach vocabulary and grammar (Wijaya et al., 2021).

Comic strips should be used in a balanced way by teachers to suit academic as well as recreational and informal reading needs. Since there are numerous methods for implementing comic strips in the classroom, teachers must also exercise creativity in this area. In order to keep students interested, motivated, and profited from the use of comic strips, teachers must also match the content of the assignment with the students’ competency, readiness, and interests. Moreover, modifications should be made to balance the comic strips’ exposure to reading and writing with requirements that provide the children a chance to improve their English language skills.

REFERENCES


Olson, C. John. (2007). Comic Strips as a Medium for Instruction. California State University Northridge


