

COMIC STRIP AND READING INTEREST: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

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Abstract

This article was investigating the effectiveness of comic strip toward reading comprehension of students from eleventh grade of high school. The students were classified into high reading interest and low reading interest group. Each group was presented with a text completed with comic strip or text only. The data from 61 immediate recall protocols were analyzed by using Two-way ANOVA. The result revealed that the samples from below and above average reading interest group that treated with comic strip achieved better than the students who were treated with text without comic strip.

Key Words: comic strip, reading interest, reading comprehension.

INTRODUCTION

The common problem or difficulty that students face in studying reading is identifying the meaning. It means that the learners are not able to convey the message that that implied in the text. Since the research finding in L1 or L2 related to the comic strip indicated the superiority to increase reading comprehension skill, media comic strip consider as significant media in teaching reading. Liu (2004) stated that providing text and comic strip at the same time facilitate learners understanding the text. The using of comic strip while teaching reading comprehension is one way to eliminate the English learners' difficulty when studying reading comprehension.

Dual Coding Theory (DCT) claimed that the activating of two sensory in processing information; verbal system and nonverbal system claimed an effective in acquiring new information (Clark & Paivio: 1991). Basically, dual coding theory work with two systems, they are verbal system and nonverbal system. Verbal system is processing input or information in form of text and sound in sequent while, nonverbal system is processing input or information in form of pictures, diagram, chart, and animation holistically (Paivio: 2006). Some studies under the theory of DCT already have done by some researchers.

Some studies about comic strip helping students to increase understanding in studying reading comprehension has already proven. The analysis of study found out that comic strips were successful in increasing students' comprehension skills. Park, et al (2011) stated that to understand deep meaning, pictures play important role for the reader rather than ordinary text. The combination between pictures and text are helpful in stimulus students in interpreting meaning. The context that the students derived from the text while they are reading is not enough to encourage them in catching the message on the text. According to Hadley (2001, p. 150 cited in Liu, 2004: 228) "The visuals may have helped improve comprehension because they provided additional contextual information".

The effectiveness of comic strip on students' reading comprehension has been proved by Jun Liu from University of Arizona. University students who are classified into advanced and poor level students are involved as sample in this research. All level groups of students were tested by using either hard or easy level text. The text was completed comic strips and the other text was not. The finding stated that comic strip is superior in increasing students' comprehension. The examination of Immediate Recall Protocols (IRP) notified that advanced university

students who received hard level text with comic strip achieved better than who received hard level text without comic strip (Liu, 2004).

Excellence of comic strip on university students, reading comprehension also stated by Ali Merc in his research finding on 2013. This study invited 167 intermediate Turkey students which are grouping into high level intermediate students and low level intermediate students. Low level intermediate students group was divided into two and each group was treated with text without comic strips or text with comic strips. The same treatment was applied for high level intermediate students group. The result of data analysis showed that the students who were treated by using comic strips achieved better on reading comprehension than those who were treated by using text without comic strips. The students in all degree of English expertise and level of difficulty text that tested with comic strip obtained higher score than text without comic strip (Merc, 2013).

Majidi and Aydinlu claimed in his research that visual aids statistically contributed significant effect of Iranian students' reading comprehension. Ninety-six Iranian students were involving to through three phases of test; a PET test, a pretest and a posttest of reading comprehension. One-way ANOVA was applied in revealing that contextual visual aids were effective on Iranian students' reading comprehension (Majidi & Aydinlu, 2016).

Seventy-nine students were invited in this researcher. The students were grouping into four groups and received different treatment. The researcher provided four treatment; short text with pictures, long text with pictures, short text without pictures, and long text without pictures. The finding of the research presented that the length of the text had no significant effect on students' reading comprehension but, the students who received text with pictures performance better. Jalilehvand (2012) found that the length of text did not afford on reading comprehension but, comic strip afford significant impact on reading comprehension

The study about reading interest in relation with reading comprehension is already conducted. The study revealed that reading interest can influence students' reading comprehension skill. Squires (2014) found that students with great reading interest evidence high excellence in reading comprehension than students with poor reading interest.

The Jakarta Post (2016) published that the result of study in 2016 organized by Central Connecticut State University found that Indonesia was in 60th of 61 countries related to reading interest. It indicated that promoting reading habit in Indonesia especially, among students in all level is needed to be realized. Reading can lead the students into higher ability in their life. Book is sources for students in finding any information they need. Awareness of supporting and promoting reading habit to the students in school is strongly importance to do in family, school, and social environment. Government, as a policy maker, has importance role in owing literacy movement. Government should do effective decision to grow students' reading habit; such provide interesting book and accessibility to reading book as a part of literacy program. Controlling and continuing literacy program is the other importance thing that must be done by the government to make sure that the program is working. School environment is also has responsibility in supporting of reading habit among the students. Providing appropriate library and interesting book is one of program that can school be done in promoting reading habit in school.

In this study, the visual image as additional contextual information that connected with level of students' reading interest fills the gap of previous research. The findings of this study would give significant contribution for society, especially individuals or groups who work in education fields. English is a language which is used widely in the world, so the methodology and media that is used at school for the teaching and learning process must be developed. This study is trying to answer the need of effective media in teaching and learning English, especially teaching reading skill. The teachers with fresh graduate predicate and who do not have much experience also need to be made aware of this research. They can start the class better, even with poor experiences, by taking in the results of this research. In providing reading media for students, comic strips must be considered as an effective reading material. Government, author for school reading book, public and school library can provide that comic strip as supplementary material or even main material in teaching skill of reading

The goal of this research was investigating effectiveness of using comic strip on students reading comprehension. The other goal is investigating whether level of reading interest influences the effectiveness of comic strip on students reading comprehension. This study also examines interaction between students' reading interest with comic strip.

METHOD

2 (Text: text only, comic strip) _ 2 (Reading interest: high, low) factorial design, in this case, is research designed in a way where the researcher was able to examine the effectiveness of comic strips on students' reading comprehension and also measure the relation among the variables.

Participants/Subjects

In this research, sixty-one students of SMK N 1 Lumajang form eleventh grade were involved. The researcher decided invited Sixty-one students from Akuntansi class only based on the institution policy. After filling the questionnaire to reveal degree of reading interest, the students classified into high reading interest group with score above average and low reading interest group with score bellow average. The average score is 60. There are 24 students classified as high reading interest and 37 classified as low reading interest.

Data Collection Method,

The students were classified into their groups (high reading interest and group with low reading interest) and furthermore, the high reading interest group was split into 2 sub-groups where each sub-group received text with comic strips and other received text only. The same treatment was given to the low reading interest group. The students allowed reading the text over and over in ten minutes. After ten minutes, the researcher recalls the text and comic strips and the students provided with a piece of paper in different color indicating their group;

White : High reading interest + with comic strip

Yellow : High reading interest + text only

Green : Low reading interest + with comic strip

Blue : Low reading interest + text only

When they are ready, the students were allowed to start writing down on the paper any information they get and remember from the text they have read. They have ten minutes to write. In this case, writing was not considered as productive test but, comprehension test so, the students were allowed to write in L1 or L2 or both of them.

Data Collection Instrument,

In acquiring the data about students' reading interest whether it is high or low, the researcher compiled a questionnaire. The questionnaire was regarding into students' English capability so, it was written in Bahasa Indonesia as students' mother tongue. The questionnaire consisted of thirty items that is designed to reveal the students' reading interest. In each item in the questionnaire followed by four columns to represent answer absolutely agree with score 4, agree with score 3, disagree with score 2, absolutely disagree with score 1. Students with score above average classified into high reading interest and students score below average classified into low reading interest.

The second instrument was a text. The researcher provided one kind of text. The researcher, non-native English teacher, constructed the text for eleventh grade of senior high school. The text was arranged based on the comic strip was adapted from online website, www.comicsenglish.com. The text length quite short, 148 words with limitation based on the content reliability. One English-native speaker and one local English teacher helped researcher to make correction and modification to the text. The native English speaker has experience in teaching English in Indonesia as Peace Corps volunteer for two years for grade ten to eleven of senior high school. The local English teacher is teaching in senior school and also a lecture in private university. After the correction, the text becomes relevance the content and inline with the comic strip. The text was completed with comic trip. It is adapted form online website. www.comicsenglish.com. Based on the policy written on the website, the comic strip is free to be shared and adapted. The modification was purposed to reduce written information but still ensure the comprehensibility.

Data Analysis

Data that collected in this research was Immediate Recall Protocol (IRP). IRP is assessing reading which allows the test taker responds a reading by rewrite the information from the text based without any outside factor that contribute on students' comprehension. This assessment is considering as a comprehension test and not a productive test in case, the test taker allowed rewriting in L1 or L2. Every recall protocol was grouping into acceptable pausal units (every unit depends to a pause of normally speed oral reading). The pausal units can be form a sentence, phrase, or even word. The interrater reliability was (.762).

Three raters rated the students paper test (the researcher, a local English teacher and English native speaker). The value of unit ranked into number from 1 to 4. The students' score were grouping based on their group. One point for the unit with the most simple linguistic structure and four for the most complicated one. The interpretations of numerical values are adapted form Liu (2004). Score 4 (the information is fundamental for the story); score 3 (the information is important but not fundamental); Value 2 (the information is supplementary and support the story); and Value 1 (the information is unimportant). In analyzing statically, IBM SPSS (Two Way ANOVA) was an appropriate technique to use in analyzing the data.

RESULTS

Two-way ANOVA analyzed the data statistically. The result in figure. 1 The Participant's Mean Score showed that comic strip contributed significant effect across the groups, high and low reading interest group. Students with high and low reading interest who received text with comic strip scored higher than who received text only. Students who received text only with high reading interest scored higher than the students with low reading interest.

Figure. 1- The Participant's Mean Score

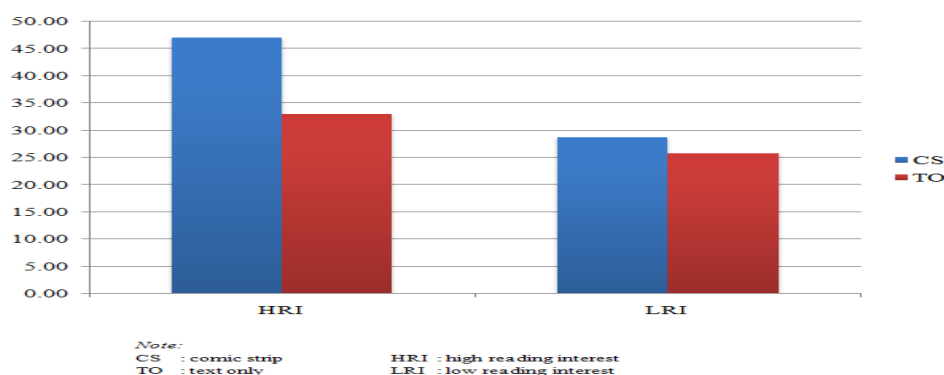


Table. 1 Test of Between-Subject Effects showed the sig. of the effectiveness comic strip. The data revealed that sig. .026 < .05, it means that there is significance difference between students who were treated with comic strip and students who were treated with text only.

The sig. of the influence of reading interest toward comic strip is at .001 level. The data revealed that sig. .001 < .05, it means that there is significance difference between students with high reading interest and students' with low reading interest on reading comprehension achievement.

The data showed that the sig. of interaction between comic strip and student reading interest is sig. .143 > .05, it means that there is no interaction between two variables. Figure 4.2 estimated marginal means of reading comprehension. It also proved that there is no interaction between comic strip and reading interest.

The comic strip has significant contribution on students' reading comprehension especially, on students with high reading interest. In other word, the analyses revealed that the using of comic strip would be more effective on students with high reading interest.

Table. 1 Test of Between-Subject Effects

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Reading Comprehension					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	4141.704 ^a	3	1380.568	7.238	.000
Intercept	62323.201	1	62323.201	326.759	.000
Comic_strip	990.866	1	990.866	5.195	.026
Reading_Interest	2257.974	1	2257.974	11.838	.001
Comic_strip * Reading_Interest	421.305	1	421.305	2.209	.143
Error	10871.706	57	190.732		
Total	81839.000	61			
Corrected Total	15013.410	60			

a. R Squared = .276 (Adjusted R Squared = .238)

DISCUSSION

In line with the finding of research previous study, this research also revealed the superiority of comic strip on students' reading comprehension. The other finding can be stated is there is significance difference between students with high reading interest and low reading interest. The first implication is addressed to education institution especially, the one with power to make education policy. Considering reading habit, the program in increasing reading habit must be force with innovative program. The availability of reading book should become concerned program to grow reading interest among the students at school. The easiness distribution up to date book to school is must be found with innovative way, other than car library that have already exist. In arranging English reading material, comic strip is one of the element that can be considered exist in form of main material or supplementary material especially, related to reading comprehension study.

The implication also addressed to individual who work in education field especially, English teacher in formal or non-formal institution and public or private school. Creative and innovative aids in supporting process to

deliver English material related to reading comprehension skill is challenge that must answered by English teacher. Comic strip can be one of the media that is considered come up in the classroom that help the learners achieved better in learning process. Carrying comic strip in the classroom must be considered some aspects to ensure the effectiveness of comic strip. The aspects can be related to type and purpose of comic strip, students' proficiency and other relevant aspect. The teacher should promote of reading habit among the students in increasing students' reading interest. By increasing reading comprehension skill, personally, it will affect to the students' capability that will make them to be professional in the future.

For English material developers, in designing material should considered visual aids. It can be form of pictures, cartoons, comic strip or other visual. In line with the finding of this research, the visual is able to help the students to retrieve the necessary information for better production as output.

DCT) focused on activation of two human's sensory; verbal and non-verbal (imagery) input. By activating these systems DCT claimed that the information will be received more effective and efficient. At least, there are four research finding that in line with this study; claimed the effectiveness of comic strip toward reading comprehension. Liu (2004) stated that comic strip is superior in increasing students' comprehension. The examination of Immediate Recall Protocols (IRP) notified that advanced university students who received hard level text with comic strip achieved better than who received hard level text without comic strip. Merc (2013) found that students in all degree of English expertise and level of difficulty text that tested with comic strip obtained higher score than text without Majidi& Aydinlu (2016) found that One-way ANOVA was applied in revealing that contextual visual aids were effective on Iranian students' reading comprehension. Jalilehvand (2012) found that the length of text did not afford on reading comprehension but, comic strip afford significant impact on reading comprehension. Squires (2014) found that students with great reading interest evidence high excellence in reading comprehension than students with poor reading interest. It can be concluded that the finding in this research and accompanying with other four researches finding that stated above, this research confirms and strengthen Dual Coding Theory (DCT).

CONCLUSION

Effectiveness of comic strip on students' reading comprehension has already proved in this study. The other finding that can be stated is the influenced of reading interest toward the effectiveness of comic strip where the visual aids of comic strip strongly effective on students with high reading interest rather than to the students with low reading interest. This study revealed that there is no interaction between comic strip and students' reading interest. The result of this research answered the need of media in teaching reading comprehension. The other factor that must be considered supporting the students in studying English is the experience in reading book. Reading habit enriches the students understanding. In this case, level of reading interest is proved influenced the effectiveness of comic strip.

The implication also addressed to individual who work in education field especially, English teacher in formal or non-formal institution and public or private school. Creative and innovative aids in supporting process to deliver English material related to reading comprehension skill is challenge that must answered by English teacher. Comic strip can be one of the media that is considered come up in the classroom that help the learners achieved better in learning process. Carrying comic strip in the classroom must be considered some aspects to ensure the effectiveness of comic strip. The aspects can be related to type and purpose of comic strip, students' proficiency and other relevant aspect. The teacher should promote of reading habit among the students in increasing students' reading interest. By increasing reading comprehension skill, personally, it will affect to the students' capability that will make them to be professional in the future.

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