

MILLENNIALS IN VISUAL: APPOINTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ISSUES IN INDONESIA THROUGH DIGITAL STRIP COMIC ON INSTAGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe students' responses and reactions regarding digital comics using the Instagram platform. The approach in this research is qualitative with descriptive research type. Data collection was carried out through a survey of 50 students at the University of Borneo Tarakan and 119 students from the University of Lambung Mangkurat. The results of student responses and reactions were positive. Students respond to comics in terms of format and relevance. Meanwhile, students react to comics based on attractiveness and satisfaction. Research is limited to describing students' responses and reactions, without measuring the effectiveness of comics in learning

Keywords: *Digital Comics Strip, Instagram, Respons, Reaction*

INTRODUCTION

Comics as a story medium are very influential in the field of education. Comics are a medium that is easily adapted in various teaching and training, because comics as a medium have advantages in a deep visual aspect (Berkowitz & Packer, 2001; Lazarinis et al., 2015; Walner, 2019; Lubis, 2018). Clark & Paivo (1991) stated that comics provide many benefits in dual coding theory, which states that visuals/images play an important role in cognitive operations. They also add that recognition in dual coding theory can be presented in two ways, namely: visual and verbal. In the next opinion, Mayer & Moreno (1998) stated that an effective strategy in teaching requires a

simultaneous presentation of narrative and visual, where comics meet the requirements of such a presentation.

The history of the use of comics as a learning medium began in the early 1930s, many educators in America used comics in learning and provided many data regarding the use of these comics in improving student learning outcomes (Gruenberg, 1944; Hutchinson, 1949). On the other hand, scientists consider comics to have a bad impact on literacy so that a contra and pro-community emerge in the use of comics in education. There are many pros and cons issues related to the use of comics. Teachers who use comics in learning are decreasing. Until finally in the 1970s, "brave" teachers emerged who

started using comics named R.W Champbell and R. Schoff (Koenke, 1981). Also in 1992, Art Spiedelman's comic book "Maus" about the Holocaust won the Pulitzer (Sturm, 2001). Winning comic books in the prestigious Pulitzer Prize proves that comics are artistic works that deserve to be used as references in learning.

Nowadays, comics have been widely used in the learning process, especially related to material related to social science and science. Koutníková (2017) in his study of the role of comics in science learning states that the use of comics is a modern learning strategy. Comics can be integrated into research-oriented learning through conceptual pseudo-didactic instruction. Trnova et al., (2013) also stated that the use of comics in learning makes the learning process more meaningful, relevant to students' thinking patterns, and can increase interest in learning.

The development of comics in Indonesia itself initially emphasized historical content. However, the effects of Chinese and Western cultural influences shifted the genre that was raised in comics in Indonesia, wherein that year comics with the action and superhero genres became very booming (Rahmanadji, 2012). It is not clear since when comics began to be used in the learning process in Indonesia. In the 1990s, research by Christina (1997) related to the development of learning comics in Javanese upload-upload learning might be said to be the starting

point for the introduction of comics in learning. Furthermore, from 2000 to the end of 2020 many variations of comic content were developed, for example, the development of junior high school science comics (Puspitorini, 2014), accounting comics (Mediawati, 2011), plant taxonomy comics (Abrori, 2014), comics on nervous system content (Wahyuningsih, 2012). In fact, some researchers designed comics in bilingual form (Luthfi, 2014; Budiarti, 2013; Muliani, 2019). Not only used in the learning process, but comic media is also used as a medium for socializing health to the community (Hamida & Zulaekah, 2012).

The wider use of comic media nowadays, comics are not only enjoyed in printed form but also digital form. Digital comics are becoming widely known in Indonesia through websites and online forums. Digital comics in Indonesia began to reach their peak when social media platforms (*Facebook* and *Instagram*) and comic applications (*Webtoon*, and *Ciayo*) were able to accommodate comic artists and introduce their work. Besides, comics have become a pop culture among millennial smartphone users.

On social media, especially Instagram, many comic strips (short comics in 3-5 panels) have appeared recently. Digital comic strips on Instagram generally contain humor, daily life, and social criticism. This comic strip attracts many millennials to follow the comic account. Digital

comic strips are very easily accepted by millennials because they are easy to language and are in line with the lives of millennials.

Based on this, it is necessary to develop comic strips using the Instagram platform within the scope of the social criticism genre related to educational problems. The problems of education in Indonesia are very complex. Problems are not only limited to problems in regulations and curriculum, even technical matters such as implementation are also one of the most unique problems (Afifah, 2015). This uniqueness needs to be conveyed to a wide audience, especially to students so that they can provide comments on these problems. Besides, their responses and reactions regarding the digital comic strip need to be assessed from the student's point of view. These responses and reactions will feed into comic revisions, and can be used on a broader scale.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

a. Digital Comics

There are many mistakes in interpreting digital comics because there are many definitions of digital comics as printed comics that have been converted into digital form. In essence, the “digital” character in a comic has a very specific meaning. At present, there have been many changes in printed comics that have been converted into digital format in the

form of e-books. These changes cannot be called digital comics, but rather printed comics that are digitized (Aggleton, 2018). Digital comics are comics that are made to be read digitally (digital-born). Usually, these comics have their own platforms, such as *Webtoon* and *Ciayo*. Even some digital comics adapt hyperlinks, animation, and sound.

The digital nature of comics is explicitly related to publication format and collection considerations. Gallinger et al. (2017) stated that collecting and storing printed versions is easier than digital versions because the printed versions generally have two formats (print & digital). Furthermore, Aggleton (2018) stated that digital comics in terms of publication format only have a distinctive digital format, while printed comics have two types of publication formats, namely print and digital. He also stated that the arrangement of printed comic panels in printed and digital forms did not differ in the format in terms of their constituent elements. Many printed comics have new forms that have been adapted in digital format, judging from the panels, word balloons, and other elements are considered digital comics (Garrish, 2011; Halsband & Grimm, 2018). However, some printed comic publications in digital form have not been modified for the purpose of legal storage (Johnston, 2017; Aggleton, 2018)

Digital comics have begun to be widely recognized by the public since 2010. The decline in sales of printed comics and copyright issues (rampant illegal scanlation) are the beginning of the shift to changing the format of printed comics to digital comics (Thompson, 2014). The price factor is also a problem that has shifted the consumption of printed comic readers to digital comics. Most digital comics are much cheaper than printed comics, some digital comics are even provided free of charge.

In the western market, digital comics started with the publication of digital comics by several large publishers such as Marvel, which launched Marvel Digital Comics Unlimited. Then there are many comic application platforms such as Image Comics, and comiXology (cloud-based digital comics) (Marvel, 2011; comiXology, 2014; Image Comics, 2014). Meanwhile, in the Asian market, the most well-known digital comic platforms are Webtoon and Web Manga. The Webtoon platform is more focused on digital comic format only. Even the digital comic format on Webtoon has influenced many other digital comic platforms outside Asia (Kim & Yu, 2019).

b. Use of Comics in Learning

The use of digital comics in the learning process has been widely used by teachers since 2010. The use of digital comics has had a huge impact on

increasing student motivation in the classroom (Deligianni-Georgaka & Pouroutidi, 2016). Research by Layla (2020) stated that at least 93% respond positively to digital comics in the learning process. In addition, he also stated that digital comics can improve students' writing skills.

The development of digital comics was initially limited to distributing comics in the form of Portable Document Format (.pdf) files and the Joint Photographic Experts Group (.jpeg). Slowly, the dissemination began to be improved in the learning process into several types of distribution media. For example, research by Hidayah et al. (2017) combined visual and audio features in the form of digital comics through the help of a moving animation maker application (Sparkol Videoscribe, and Videopad). Another example, Primandita & Indrojarwo (2016) developed interactive digital comics in the form of applications on mobile devices.

The use of comics using applications sometimes has weaknesses in terms of reciprocity and student responses to these comics. Several digital comics in strip form have been developed on social media platforms, especially Instagram. The use of Instagram in comic development provides many advantages, especially in the comments column, where this column can facilitate the interaction between comic writers and readers.

This is certainly a good opportunity if digital comics with educational content are published on the Instagram

This research used a qualitative approach, descriptive research type. Descriptive research is research that attempts to describe phenomena systematically (Nassaji, 2015). The form of descriptive research used was a survey that aims to collect information from informants. The informants in this study were 50 students at the University of Borneo Tarakan, who came from the Biology education study program and 119 students from Lambung Mangkurat University, from the elementary school teacher education study program.

The procedure in the study consists of 3 stages consisting of the preparation stage, the implementation stage, and the final stage. The questionnaire used in the study consisted of two aspects consisting of students' responses and reactions to digital comic strips. The statement in the questionnaire was developed based on research from Lijana et al., (2018). Student responses only emphasize format and relevance. Meanwhile, the students' reactions emphasized Nurlatipah et al., (2015) and emphasized the aspects of attractiveness and satisfaction.

The questionnaires that have been filled out by students were analyzed with the following steps:

platform, where lecturers and students can interact in the comments column.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- a. Score examination to each statement on the questionnaire that has been filled out by students
- b. The score obtained based on the Likert scale were recap and assessed based on the following criteria
 1. Positive statement (strongly agree = 5; agree = 4; quite agree = 3; disagree = 2; strongly disagree = 1)
 2. Negative statements (strongly agree = 5; agree = 4; quite agree = 3; disagree = 2; strongly disagree = 1)
- c. Calculate the score presentation on each aspect with the following formula:

Percentage Score

$$= \frac{\text{question on item score}}{\text{Total score from every aspect}} \times 100\%$$

- d. Score criteria of each aspect based on criteria from Riduwan (2007) are as follows
 1. Score of 0% - 20% classified as very less
 2. Score of 20,1% - 40% classified as less
 3. Score of 40,1% - 60% classified as enough
 4. Score of 60,1% - 80% classified as good

5. Score of 80,1% - 100% classified as very good

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The learning comic developed and tested its responses to students are illustrated in Figure 1. The comics have a size of 15 x 15 cm with a pixel

size of 600 x 600 pixels. The comics are made in the form of comic strips in the form of 5 - 9 story panels depicting educational inequalities based on 2 points of view, both viewpoints of developed areas or border areas or remote areas, educational viewpoints of past and present educational and other viewpoints.



Figure 1. Strip Comic Layout

Based on result from student response related to student responses and reactions are described in Table 1. The responses are measured by a

questionnaire containing response aspects consisting of format and relevance, and reaction aspects consisting of interest and satisfaction.

Table 1. Interpretation Results of Student Responses and Reactions to Digital Comic Strips on Instagram platform

No	Aspect	Indicator	Details	Percentage
1	Response	Format	Visual conformity (image format, readability, balance and color)	86.7% (very good)
		Relevance	Conformity with daily experience or lecture material	85.4% (very good)
2	Reaction	Attractiveness	The increase of student's interest and curiosity due to Story plots and graphics	88.5% (very good)
		Satisfaction	Positive feelings in enjoying comics	89.4% (very good)

Assessment based on student responses related to format and relevance obtained a percentage of 86.7% and 85.4%. Based on the results, the percentage has very good criteria. Regarding format, several aspects are assessed related to image format, legibility, balance and color. Regarding the comic strip format, at least it consists of panels following the provisions of McCloud (1993), where the panels are arranged sequentially and there is text reinforcement in each panel to explain the image. McCloud (2006) also states that there are at least 5 aspects in comic panels, namely: time, frame selection, image selection, word selection, and reading flow selection. The students responded that the comic format got a good score, because comics already use these 5 aspects.

Related to legibility in comics, it is closely related to words in the form of word balloons and captions in pictures. Admadireja and Kebudayaan (2012) state that to meet the readability indicators, illustrations are made in sequential panels equipped with word blocks or descriptions on each panel. The word used must also match the image or be able to describe the meaning of an image. The digital comic strip based on the Instagram platform that has been made fulfills these elements, each panel is always equipped with a word to describe the image on each panel.

The next thing that needs to be considered in the format is the selection

of images, choice of words and selection of reading flow. Abrori et al., (2016) stated that the selection of an appropriate image, the choice of words in describing the image and the selection of the storyline play a very important role so that readers can follow the storyline and capture the meaning / meaning in a comic.

Student responses to the relevance indicator are related to the suitability of the topic on the comic strip on the Instagram platform with everyday life or lecture material. The comics used carry the theme of educational problems that often occur in Indonesia. The first problem that was raised was related to the phenomenon of student barriers in taking an educational journey both in cities and in remote rural areas. The second problem is related to the attitude of parents in dealing with delinquency problems of children and adolescents in the 90s and 2010 and above. The theme raised is quite "intriguing" because it often occurs in the world of education. Ahmad (2009) states that digital comics can be compiled by raising the latest issues that are developing in society, so that it is easier for people to follow the flow. This is applied in digital comic strips based on the Instagram platform, so that the indicators of relevance get very good scores.

The reaction aspect on the indicator of attraction scored 88.5% with very good criteria. Assessment on the attractiveness indicator is an

assessment related to story plots and graphics in increasing student interest and curiosity. Rachman et al., (2018) stated that the results of the assessment of reading interest in several reading materials showed that reading material with several visual aspects such as comics is the reading material that is most liked by young people. The selection of comic strips using the

Instagram platform is based on several considerations, one of which is related to the visual aspect. The visual aspect plays an important role in the delivery of stories and messages. The delivery of the message can be seen in the comments of students in commenting critically on the issues in the comics shown in Figure 2.

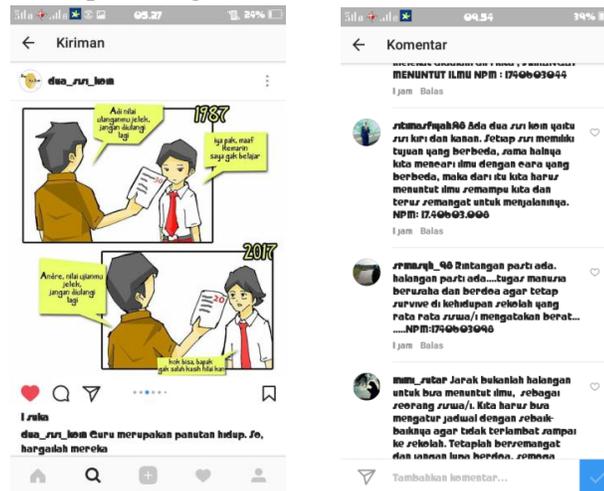


Figure 2. Students' Comments on Digital Comic Strips

The student satisfaction indicator in the response aspect also gets a good score of 89.4% with very good criteria. The response indicator describes the positive feelings of

students in enjoying comics. This is also reflected in student comments in the Instagram comment column. Students respond critically to the issues presented.

CONCLUSION

The results of student responses related to responses to the format indicator were 86.7% (very good), and the relevance indicators were 85.4% (very good). Meanwhile, the reaction aspect of the attractiveness indicator scored 88.5% (very good), and the

satisfaction indicator scored 89.4% (very good).

Some suggestions for the next researcher are extensive testing of digital comic strips so that they can provide an overview of students' abilities, especially in analyzing social problems. If comics have a positive impact, it needs to be disseminated in

their use and can be applied in a continuous learning process.

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