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The Effectiveness of Using E-Comics to Enhance Arabic Reading Skills: A Quasi-Experimental Study at Nurul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta

Achmad Cholip[1], Azmy Ali Muchtar[2], Tahir Wijaya[3]
[1,2,3] Universitas Islam Jakarta, Indonesia
Corresponding E-mail: Cholipasrory258@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of e-comic media in improving the Arabic reading skills of eighth-grade students at Nur Al-Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta. The study was motivated by students' low interest and limited proficiency in Arabic reading, as well as the lack of interactive learning media used in classroom instruction. A quantitative approach employing a quasi-experimental method with a one-group pretest–posttest design was applied. The sample consisted of 25 eighth-grade students. Data were collected through observation, documentation, and pretest–posttest assessments and were analyzed using a paired-sample t-test. The findings revealed a significant improvement in students' reading performance, with the mean score increasing from 62.16 in the pretest to 72.60 in the posttest. Statistical analysis indicated that the calculated t-value (13.865) exceeded the critical t-value (2.0638), with a significance value below 0.05. Therefore, e-comic media was found to be effective in enhancing students' Arabic reading skills.

Keywords: *e-Comic Media, Arabic Reading Skills, Educational Media.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki efektivitas media e-komik dalam meningkatkan kemampuan membaca bahasa Arab siswa kelas 8 di SMP Islam Nur Al-Hikmah, Jakarta Timur. Penelitian ini dimotivasi oleh rendahnya minat dan kemampuan membaca bahasa Arab siswa yang terbatas, serta kurangnya media pembelajaran interaktif yang digunakan dalam pembelajaran di kelas. Pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode kuasi-eksperimental dengan desain pretest-posttest satu kelompok diterapkan. Sampel terdiri dari 25 siswa kelas 8. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, dokumentasi, dan penilaian pretest-posttest dan dianalisis menggunakan uji t sampel berpasangan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan dalam kinerja membaca siswa, dengan nilai rata-rata meningkat dari 62,16 pada pretest menjadi 72,60 pada posttest. Analisis statistik menunjukkan

bahwa nilai t yang dihitung (13,865) melebihi nilai t kritis (2,0638), dengan nilai signifikansi di bawah 0,05. Oleh karena itu, media komik elektronik terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan membaca bahasa Arab siswa.
Kata kunci: *Media Komik Elektronik, Kemampuan Membaca Bahasa Arab, Media Pendidikan.*

Introduction

The rapid development of information and communication technology has contributed to fundamental transformations in the field of education, as the use of digital media has become an urgent necessity in the contemporary educational process. In the era of digitization, traditional educational methods are no longer able to meet the needs of learners, especially learners who belong to a digital generation that tends to visual and interactive content. Among the modern digital educational media that have emerged in the educational field is the e-comic media, Tuaima, Rushdi Ahmed (1989). It is a digital educational method that relies on integrating images and illustrations with texts and dialogue in an interactive story format that aims to facilitate the delivery of educational content in an attractive and enjoyable way, which contributes to increasing learners' motivation towards learning.

In the context of teaching the Arabic language, reading skill is one of the skills that represents the main gateway to acquiring linguistic knowledge and understanding Arabic texts. A number of experts have defined reading skill as the learner's ability to recognize letters, words, and sentences, read them correctly, understand their meanings, and link them to the linguistic and moral context of the text. Taima, Rushdi Ahmed (1989). The skill of reading is not only limited to correct pronunciation, but also includes comprehension, comprehension and analysis, which makes it one of the most complex skills in learning the Arabic language, especially for non-native speakers.

However, the reality of education shows clear problems in teaching Arabic reading skills. Many students experience difficulty in understanding Arabic texts and lack motivation to read. This is caused by some teachers' reliance on traditional methods that lack variety and innovation, in addition to difficulties in Arabic vocabulary and sentence structure for students. According to Aini (2023), the main obstacles in learning Arabic often stem from teachers' reliance on monotonous conventional methodologies, which are exacerbated by students' limited vocabulary and the complexity of the language's syntactic structure. The results of various educational studies indicate that low reading ability is closely related to the failure to utilize modern educational media that are appropriate to students' characteristics and psychological and cognitive needs (Istiqomah & Sopian, 2025).

Recent studies have shown that the use of digital media, particularly e-learning tools, significantly improves students' reading skills at various levels of education. A meta-analysis by Zhu, Zhang, and Irwin (2024) showed that digital reading instruction

significantly impacts second-language vocabulary acquisition, both on immediate and delayed tests, through the use of various digital learning resources such as lexical glosses, audio, and adaptive learning systems. Furthermore, digital text-based interventions designed to support learning have been shown to have a moderate impact on improving reading comprehension compared to conventional learning. The use of digital multimedia also helps simplify text presentation, clarify meaning through the combination of text and images, and increase student motivation, engagement, and interaction during the learning process. These findings align with Multimedia Learning Theory, which states that the integration of words and visuals can improve comprehension compared to text presentation alone.

Based on the results of observations at Noor Al-Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta, regarding the implementation of the use of learning media, researchers found that Arabic language teachers have not used interactive learning media in the learning process and teaching methods are still monotonous, dominated by lecture methods that make students feel bored, have difficulty, and there is no feedback, especially in Arabic reading skills. This causes students' understanding of Arabic reading skills to decline. This can be seen from (1) the weak ability of students to read the Arabic language presented. (2) The weak ability of students to express everyday Arabic expressions, (3) and the lack of interest of students in learning Arabic. To address this research gap, this study aims to conduct quantitative research to measure the effectiveness of using eco-friendly materials in improving learners' Arabic reading skills.

Therefore, Arabic language teachers are required to be more creative in using learning media so that students become more enthusiastic in learning Arabic and believe that Arabic is an easy subject to understand. One solution to overcome this problem is to use interactive and fun learning media, namely by using e-comics. The purpose of using e-comics as a learning medium to improve reading skills includes: (1) Improving students' memory, e-comics help students read Arabic better through repetition and understanding the context. Students can easily connect words with the definitions or instructions mentioned. (2) Practicing reading skills in a fun way, learning using e-comics provides a fun and interactive learning experience, so that students feel more motivated to read Arabic. (3) Increasing interactive participation in learning, this media allows students to participate interactively, both individually and in groups, thereby increasing their participation in learning. (4) Increasing student concentration. (5).

The reason researchers use e-comics as a learning media is because e-comics are a learning media that is suitable for use in teaching Arabic to improve Arabic reading skills. E-comics can help Arabic teachers in the process of teaching Arabic reading to

be more interactive and less boring. Based on the research background that has been explained, researchers are interested in conducting scientific research entitled The Effectiveness of Using E-Comics to Enhance Arabic Reading Skills: A Quasi-Experimental Study at Nurul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta.

Method

In this study, the researcher used a quasi-experimental approach. Quasi-experimental research is research that manipulates or controls natural conditions by creating artificial conditions (Sogyono, 2016). The design used in this study was a single-group pretest-posttest design. In this design, the test is given twice, before and after the intervention. The test given before the intervention is called the pretest. First, the researcher gave the pretest to the students. After the pretest, the researcher provided an intervention in the form of teaching Arabic reading skills using e-comics. Then, after the intervention was completed, the researcher gave the students a posttest. The research population in this study consisted of 25 8th-grade students at Nurul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta. Data were collected during the 2025-2026 academic year..

The sampling method used in this study is non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is a sampling method in which not every element or member has an equal chance of being selected as a sample (Soujiyono, 2016). In this study, the non-probability sampling method was used to determine the sample size by applying saturation sampling. Saturation sampling is a sampling method in which all members or the entire research population are sampled (Soujiyono, 2016). The researcher used observation, documentation, and testing as data collection methods in this study. Data were analyzed using a paired sample t-test.

Result and Discussion

1. Result

A. Pre-Test Results

A pre-test was conducted before the implementation of the electronic comic learning media to measure the initial Arabic reading skills of eighth-grade students at Nurul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta. The analysis showed that of the 25 students who took the pre-test, the highest score was 80, while the lowest score was 45. The total score for all students was 1,554, with an average score (M) of 62.16. Based on the assessment criteria used in this study, this average score falls into the acceptable category.

The distribution of pre-test results shows that the majority of students scored in the 60–69 range. Twelve students (48%) fell into the adequate category, followed by seven students (28%) who scored in the 0–59 range, or failed category. Furthermore, 4 students (16%) obtained scores in the 70–79 range, which is categorized as good, while 2 students (8%) obtained scores in the 80–89 range, or very good. No students obtained scores in the 90–100 range, resulting in 0% of the excellent students.

In general, the distribution of scores indicates that 76% of students were in the failing and adequate categories, while only 24% of students achieved the good and excellent categories. These results indicate that students' Arabic reading skills before implementing e-comics were still dominated by the adequate category. Therefore, the pre-test data served as a baseline for comparing changes in learning outcomes after implementing e-comics in the post-test.

B. Post-Test Results

A post-test was conducted after implementing the e-comic learning media to measure the Arabic reading skills of eighth-grade students at Nurul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta. The analysis showed an increase in scores compared to the pre-test. Of the 25 students who took the post-test, the highest score was 95, while the lowest was 53. The total score for all students reached 1,815, with an average score (M) of 72.60. Based on the assessment criteria used in this study, this average score falls into the good category.

The distribution of post-test results shows that the majority of students scored in the good category. Ten students (40%) scored in the 70–79 range, followed by seven students (28%) in the fair category, with a score range of 60–69. Furthermore, 5 students (20%) achieved scores in the 80–89 range, which falls into the very good category, while 2 students (8%) achieved excellent scores with scores in the 90–100 range. Only 1 student (4%) remained in the failing category, with a score below 60.

Compared to the pre-test results, changes in the distribution of student learning outcomes were observed. The maximum score increased from 80 in the pre-test to 95 in the post-test, while the minimum score increased from 45 to 53. Furthermore, the average student score increased from 62.16 in the pre-test to 72.60 in the post-test, representing an increase of 10.44 points. The distribution of grade categories also showed an increase in the proportion of students achieving the good, very good, and excellent categories, accompanied by a decrease in the number of students in the failing category. These findings

indicate an increase in Arabic reading learning outcomes after the application of e-comic learning media.

2. Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the use of electronic comics (e-comics) positively impacted the Arabic reading skills of eighth-grade students at Nurul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta. This was demonstrated by an increase in students' average score from 62.16 in the pre-test to 72.60 in the post-test, with an average difference of 10.44 points. The results of the paired-samples t-test also showed that the difference was statistically significant ($t(24) = -13.865$, $p < .001$), thus accepting the alternative hypothesis. Furthermore, the distribution of student scores significantly changed. Before the treatment, the majority of students (76%) were still in the failing and fair categories, whereas after the implementation of e-comics, this proportion decreased to 32%. Conversely, the number of students achieving good, very good, and excellent categories increased from 24% to 68%. These findings indicate that the use of e-comics not only improves students' average grades but also improves the overall distribution of learning outcomes, indicating that this medium can support a more equitable improvement in Arabic reading skills. This finding aligns with various studies that suggest digital comics are an effective learning medium for improving reading skills, learning motivation, and student engagement in Arabic learning.

This improvement in reading ability can be explained through the perspective of the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which explains that students learn more effectively when information is presented through a combination of text and images rather than through text alone. In e-comics, visual illustrations serve as a support for verbal information, helping students understand vocabulary, relationships between sentences, and the content of the reading more comprehensively. The contextual presentation of stories also allows students to connect new information with prior knowledge, thus optimizing the knowledge construction process. Thus, e-comics can reduce the cognitive load often experienced by students when reading relatively complex Arabic texts. This explanation is supported by a recent study, which found that digital comics provide a more interactive learning experience through the integration of visual, narrative, and textual elements, thereby improving reading comprehension (maharah qirā'ah) more effectively than conventional media.

This research finding can also be explained through Dual Coding Theory, which states that information is processed through two representational systems:

the verbal system and the visual system. When Arabic text is accompanied by relevant illustrations, students experience two simultaneous information processing pathways, making it easier to understand and remember the reading content. In this study, the images in e-comics not only function as visual complements but also help students interpret the meaning of sentences within the context of the story. Therefore, students do not rely solely on their ability to translate each vocabulary word separately but rather understand the reading content as a whole through the relationship between the text and the illustrations. This explains why post-test scores showed a significant increase compared to pre-test scores. These results reinforce research findings showing that multimedia-based digital comics can improve reading comprehension, information retention, and students' cognitive engagement in Arabic language learning.

In addition to cognitive aspects, the improvement in learning outcomes in this study is also suspected to be influenced by increased student motivation during the learning process. Unlike conventional text-based teaching materials, e-comics present material in the form of more engaging illustrated stories, thereby increasing students' attention and interest in reading. When students feel interested in the material being studied, they tend to read more actively, discuss it with friends, and strive to understand the content independently. This active engagement contributes to improved reading skills, as reflected in post-test results. Recent research also reports that the use of digital comics in language learning can increase student motivation, participation, and self-confidence, making the learning process more effective and learner-centered.

The results of this study are consistent with those of Hijriyah et al. (2022), who developed digital comics for learning to recite the Quran and found them to be feasible, engaging, and effective in improving Arabic reading outcomes. The study showed an increase in students' average scores after using digital comics, indicating that story visualizations help students better understand the text. These results are also supported by research by Sitorus and Taufiq (2025), who developed Webtoon-based comics as a medium for learning to recite the Quran. The study concluded that digital comics can improve students' reading comprehension, learning motivation, and multimodal literacy. Furthermore, a recent literature review on digital comics in learning to recite the Quran also concluded that this medium is an effective learning innovation because it integrates digital technology with a more contextual, interactive, and student-centered learning approach.

However, the results of this study should be interpreted with several limitations in mind. The study used a one-group pre-test–post-test design, therefore, it did not include a control group for comparison. Therefore, although

the statistical test results indicate a significant improvement, other factors beyond the treatment, such as students' learning experience or the intensity of reading practice during the study, cannot be completely eliminated. Furthermore, the relatively limited sample size of 25 students from one school means that the results of this study cannot be generalized to a wider population. Future research is recommended to use an experimental design involving a control group, a larger sample size, and to test the effectiveness of e-comics on other aspects of Arabic language skills, such as vocabulary mastery, speaking, writing, and learning motivation.

Overall, the results of this study provide empirical evidence that e-comics are an effective learning medium for improving Arabic reading skills. The increase in average scores, changes in the distribution of learning outcomes, and significant statistical test results indicate that the integration of visual and verbal elements in e-comics can create a more engaging, interactive, and meaningful learning experience. Therefore, e-comics can be considered as an alternative, innovative learning medium to support the development of Arabic reading skills in junior high schools.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the use of e-comics is effective in improving the Arabic reading skills of eighth-grade students at Nurul Hikmah Islamic Junior High School, East Jakarta. This finding is supported by the statistical analysis, which showed an increase in students' average score from 62.16 in the pre-test to 72.60 in the post-test. The paired-samples t-test showed that the difference was statistically significant, $t(24) = -13.865$, $p < 0.001$, thus rejecting the null hypothesis (H_0) and accepting the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Therefore, the improvement in students' reading skills is related to the implementation of e-comics in the learning process.

The findings of this study indicate that the integration of text, illustrations, and storyline in e-comics creates a more engaging, contextual, and interactive learning experience, thereby helping students better understand the content of Arabic reading materials. Therefore, e-comics have the potential to be an alternative digital learning medium that can support the development of reading skills (*mahārah al-qirā'ah*) at the secondary education level.

Practically, the results of this study provide implications for teachers and schools in integrating innovative digital learning media into Arabic language learning. Institutional support, such as providing teacher training, developing technology-based pedagogical competencies, and providing digital learning facilities and infrastructure, is necessary for optimal implementation of e-comics. Furthermore, further research is

recommended to use an experimental design involving a control group, a larger sample size, and a more diverse school context to obtain stronger empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of e-comics on various aspects of Arabic language skills.

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