

## ***THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGLISH COMIC IN TEACHING GRAMMAR (PRESENT AND PAST TENSE)***

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### ***Abstract***

*The goal of this study is to find out the effectiveness of English comic as media in teaching students' grammar. This study used One Group Pre-test and Post-test design. The result of the T-test computation showed that  $t_{observed}$  was higher than  $t_{table}$  ( $12.368 > 2.042$ ), with the degree of freedom 30, the probability (Asymp.Sig.2 tailed) was lower than the level of significance ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Based on the result, it can be concluded that there is significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. It means that media of English Comic was used in teaching students' grammar (simple present and past tense) is effective.*

***Keywords:*** Effectiveness, English comic, students' grammar

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

English language is the most necessary subject for being learnt. English may not be the most spoken language in the world, but it is the official language in a large number of countries. It is estimated that the number of people in the world that use in English to communicate. English is the dominant business language and it has become almost a necessity for people to speak English if they are to enter a global workforce, research from all over the world shows that cross-border business communication is most often conducted in English. Its importance in

the global market place therefore cannot be understated, learning English really can change our life. Although learning English can be challenging and time consuming, we can see that it is also very valuable to learn and can create many opportunities.

The reasons why English should be the medium of instruction at schools and university is that it helps students find a high quality jobs for students to find. In business life, the most important common language is obviously English. In addition to this, especially, high-quality jobs need good understanding ability and speaking in English.

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Therefore, companies can easily open out to other countries, and these companies generally employ graduates whose English is fluent and orderly. For example, the student who is graduated from a university, which takes English as a major language, will find a better or high-quality job than other students who don't know English adequately. In other words, the student who knows English is able to be more efficient in his job because he can use the information from foreign sources and web sites. In addition, many high-quality jobs are related with international communication and worldwide data sharing. In other words, English makes accessing information easy for students. As they know that for many years, English has been the common worldwide language, and it will be in the future. For this reason, if you want to follow trends, new gadgets and technology, modernization of the developing world, you have to know English whatever age you are in.

One of the elements of language that is important is grammar. Grammar is important because it is the part of language that makes it possible for us to talk about language. Grammar names the types of words and word groups that make up sentences not only in English

but in any language. And knowing about grammar means finding out that all languages and all dialects follow grammatical patterns.

Grammar is central to the teaching and learning of languages. It is also one of the more difficult aspects of language to teach well. Many people, including language teachers, hear the word "grammar" and think of a fixed set of word forms and rules of usage. They associate "good" grammar with the prestige forms of the language, such as those used in writing and in formal oral presentations, and "bad" or "no" grammar with the language used in everyday conversation or used by speakers of no prestige forms (Knapp:2005)

In the study of language, grammar occupies a central position. But there is also practical reason to emphasize the study of grammar (Greebaum :2009).

Considering to the importance of grammar for the students to master, it is very important for the teacher to apply the best way to teach grammar especially tenses in order to achieve the objectives stated on the curriculum. Referring to this, Thornbury (2002) states that students' learning depends on the effectiveness of the teacher techniques. Therefore, the use of various teaching techniques is necessary for motivating students to learn English, as

well as for adjusting the material and avoiding the students' boredom.

Most of Junior High School students think, that grammar subject is the most difficult part in learning English language. They are asked to recognize so many tenses and other rules of English language. This circumstance makes the students feel more bored and lazy to learn grammar in English. As we know that most of English teacher do not use an attractive media or tool to help their students in learning grammar.

According to Greebaum (2009) Linguistic communications are channeled mainly through our senses of sound and sight. Grammar is the central component of language. It mediates between the system of sounds or of written symbols, on the one hand, and the system of meaning, on the other.

The idea that grammar is a set of rules, often seen as arbitrary or unrealistic, is only one narrow view of grammar. Such a view is based on the belief that: Grammar must be explicitly taught; Grammar is absolute and fixed, a target or goal that speakers need attain in order to be "good" speakers or writers of the language; grammar is inherently difficult and confusing, its mysteries only apparent to teachers, language mavens, or linguists ( Decapua:2008).

The first or only verb in the verb phrase is marked for tense, person, and number. According to Greebaum (2009), tense is a grammatical category referring to the time of the situation; the tense is indicated by the form of the verb. There are two tense forms: present and past. There are three persons: first person (the person or persons speaking or writing), second person (the person or persons addressed), and third person (others). There are two numbers: singular and plural. For all verbs except be, there are two forms for the present: the -s form and the base form. The -s form is used for the third person singular, that is with he, she, it, and singular noun phrases as subject.

The researcher sees that the students of junior high school are less interested in learning grammar especially for tenses in English. This fact is caused by first; the students do not know the importance of grammar. Second, the media which is used is not interested. Third, the student is still confused to analyze and recognize the tenses in every sentence especially complex sentence.

We can find so many media or tool that can be used to teach English, especially in learning grammar. One of the media is English Comic, comic is a

form of visual art consisting of images which are commonly combined with text, often in the form of speech balloons or image captions. Originally used to illustrate caricatures and to entertain through the use of amusing and trivial stories, it has by now evolved into a literary medium with many subgenres (Greebaum:2009). Children enjoy reading comics, so it makes perfect sense to use such a resource to enhance English language learning. Using dialogues created for audiovisual materials that reflect curriculum requirements of English language teaching and learning, it is possible to create supplementary gap-fill activity cartoons to recycle content in line with a required schema of words (adapted from Graham:2011)

Comic strip which present a short, manageable context to demonstrate a grammar point (such as tense), given that comic strips present a series of discrete, related events happening in the same discourse context. The authentic language and limited scope of comics enable students to focus on the grammar point ( adapted from Okello, S., Jaquays, J., Tomas, S. 2013) Comics are miraculous; it will help the teacher to seize the students' attention. And also the students will be happy and

laugh in the same time. The teaching of grammar will be far from tiresome but will be more and more fun.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

Research is a process in which you engage in a small set of logical steps. It is also important because it suggests improvements for practice. Armed with research results, teachers and other educators become more effective professionals (Creswell: 2012). Creswell (2012) stated that an experimental design is the traditional approach to conducting quantitative research and also to establish possible cause and effect between independent and dependent variables.

In this study, there is only one class as experimental group. This research used One Group Pre-test and Post-test design. In this design, observation is done twice, i.e. before and after treatment. First observation done before treatment is called pre-test and second observation done after treatment is called post-test (Arikunto, 2006).

Arikunto (2006) stated, if someone wants to observe the entire of the element in the research area, this research is called population research. In this study, all the member of population was taken as sample, which consist of 32

students of second grade in SMP Al-Fajar. Descriptive analysis is a technique uses by a researcher to describe the difference between before and after a treatment by using a simple descriptive statistics (Sugiyono, 2010). The analysis was by mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum score of both test.

One of the base assumptions of statistic computation is that the data must fulfill the qualification of normal distribution. To analyze the normality distribution of the scores, the researcher used Kolmogorov-Smirnov formula in SPSS in 16.0 for windows. In this study, there are two data collected; pretest scores and posttest scores of students' grammar test. According Sugiyono (2010) data can be analyzed by giving the quantitative data. The researcher uses Pair- Samples T-test formula in SPSS 16.0 for windows to know the effectiveness of the English comic as media in teaching grammar tense (present and past tenses).

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### Pre-test

The obtained scores of pretest was analyzed by using SPSS 16.0 for windows to find the mean, the standard deviation, the maximum score, and the

minimum score. The computation data distribution of pre-test is shown in table 1.

**Table 1 Data Distribution of Pre-test**

Participant Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard	Minimum Score
32	64.00	5.54	53	71

In this research, the total numbers of the students is 32. The table above shows that the highest score in the pretest was 71 and the lowest score was 53. The mean score in the pretest was 64.00 and the standard deviation was 5.54.

#### Post-test

The obtained scores of post-test was analyzed by using SPSS 16.0 for windows to find the mean, the standard deviation, the maximum score, and the minimum score. The computation data distribution of pre-test is shown in table 2.

**Table 2 Data Distribution of Post-test**

Participant Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard	Minimum Score
32	70.50	4.21	65	79

In this research, the total numbers of the students is 32. The table above shows that the highest score in the post-test was 79 and the lowest score was 65. The mean score in the post-test

was 70.50 and the standard deviation was 4.21.

**Normality**

A normality test is used to analyze whether the data distribution is normal or not. It is decided to use 0.05 for the significant value in this test. The normality test was conducted by using Kolmogorov-Smirnov formula test in SPSS 16.0 for windows. The result of the normality test for the pre-test and post-test can be seen in the table 3.

**Table 3 The Normality Test Result Of Pre-test and Post-test**

	Sig
Pre-test	0.285
Post-test	0.571

After the pretest scores had been calculated by using Liliefors (Kolmogorov-smirnov) formula in SPSS 16.0 for windows, the researcher found that the probability (Asymp.Sig.) of the pre-test was 0.285 which was higher than the level of significance (0.05). However, since the probability (p) is lower than the level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted. While if the probability (p) is higher than the alpha, so the null hypothesis is rejected. Based on the description above, it can be concluded the students' score in the pre-test were normally distributed. And for post-test, the

probability (Asymp.Sig.) was 0.571 which was higher than the level of significance (0.05). It means that the null hypothesis is rejected in other word the students' score in the post-test were normally distributed.

**Hypothesis Testing**

To prove the effectiveness of using English Comic as media in teaching grammar (present and past tense), the researcher used Paired Sample T-test formula in SPSS 16.0 for windows. The result of the t-test is described in the table 4.

**Table 4 The Result of T-test**

Resource	to	tt	Df	P(Sig.)
Result				
Pre-test	12.368	2.042	30	0.000
Significant				
And				
different				
Post-test				

According to the table 4, it shows that  $t_{observed}$  was higher than the  $t_{table}$  ( $12.368 > 2.042$ ), with degree of freedom 30 and level of significance 0.05. In other word, the probability (Asymp.Sig. 2 tailed) was lower than the level of significance ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Because  $t_{observed} > t_{table}$  and  $p < 0.05$ , it can be concluded that the null hypothesis of no difference was rejected. This result indicated that after the English comic was used to teach

grammar (present and past tense), the obtained of posttest scores were significantly different with pre-test scores.

We can conclude that teaching grammar by using English comic is effective for the students. The students' posttest scores were higher than the students' pretest scores. It shows that there was significant difference on their scores after and before the treatment. According the result of computation above, it shows that there was an improvement after the students received English comic as media in learning grammar. It means that English comic is effective in teaching the grammar for the students.

This study result was in line with Huddleston (2005) incorporating comic strips and cartoons in grammar lessons can be an exciting and effecting way for students to learn the material. The comic strips are used for distinguishing nouns and verbs, sentence sequencing, and can be a great tool for teachers in ESL (English as a Foreign Language). In addition, by incorporating comic strips in classroom, which present a short story and manageable context to demonstrate a grammar point (such as tense), by given that comic strips that present

series event will help the students to focus on the grammar point.

Moreover, the result of the research proved that English comic is effective media to be used in teaching grammar. The use of cartoon and comics in teaching has several advantages : they give life to those boring and they promote students engagement, they improve students learning, they seize the students' attention , and they also enhance students communicative and linguistic competences. Image is a powerful educational tool. Comics are probably more able to combine story and information simultaneously and more effectively.

Beside from the advantages given, there were also some disadvantages of using English comic as media in learning grammar that was using comics stories to teach brings up a potential for story content to be seen as inappropriate for certain age groups. Controversial topics come up in school, and comics can offer a unique way to address the students if they are handled with care. In addition the result of this study showed that the use of media of English comic is effective in teaching students' grammar.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The computation results gave the evidence that the students achieve an improvement in their posttest score. It can be seen when the posttest scores of the students were compared to the pretest scores. The result showed that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores (posttest > pretest) ( $70.50 > 64.00$ ).

It means that media of English Comic was used in teaching students' grammar (especially simple present and simple past tense) is effective. In addition, the result of t-test shows that  $t_{\text{observed}}$  was higher than the  $t_{\text{table}}$  ( $12.368 > 2.042$ ), with degree of freedom 30 and level of significance 0.05. In other word, the probability (Asymp.Sig. 2 tailed) was lower than the level of significance ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Because  $t_{\text{observed}} > t_{\text{table}}$  and  $p < 0.05$ , it can be concluded that the null hypothesis of no difference was rejected. This result indicated that after the English comic was used to teach grammar, the obtained of posttest scores were significantly different with pre-test scores. In the other words, that teaching grammar by using English comic is effective for the students. Moreover, English Comic is able to motivate the students to focus more in grammatical

structure, and it will make the teaching and learning process be more interesting.

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