

Incidental Vocabulary Learning Through Audio-Assisted Comic: An Experimental Study on Vocabulary Gain

Abdullah Husni Mubarak¹, Slamet Asari², Ratchanee Thiprak³

Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik¹,

Dosen Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik²

Guru Bahasa Inggris, Anubanchumchon Phukradeung School³

ahmubarak677@gmail.com

Abstract

Comic start to gain popularity and many people start to read it for different purpose. In education field, researchers tried to see the potential of comic in improving student's ability in many areas. This study aimed to investigate the effect of using comic to gain incidental vocabulary, specifically in at-home situation where people usually read a comic. A pretest-posttest design was administered to 34 junior high school students in Thailand. A VKS (Vocabulary Knowledge Scale) was used to assess their result about 15 target vocabularies. The control group only read the comic while the experimental group read and listen to the comic. The result proved that the students who learned incidental vocabulary through reading and listening obtained better score than the students who were only reading. The students who read and listen obtained mean score of 33.94 while the students who only read obtained 25.06 during the post-test. It can be concluded that students who learned incidental vocabulary learning through comic by reading and listening gained better vocabulary than those who did not.

Keywords: audio-assisted reading, incidental vocabulary, comic, EFL, vocabulary gain, outside classroom

Introduction

Comic is one of educational tool that people began to use in academical context (Akcanca 2020). Many people tried to use comic as one of the teaching media because comic becoming to be more popular and suitable for any range of age. Other than that, comic has been used to teach children to adult using different genre according to their needs, which greatly valuable (Mustikasari et al. 2020; Sari et al. 2021; Vasileva and Golubev 2019). Normally, the topics are presented using common materials like text, but by using comic a better experience could be obtained when reading the materials. Since comic has visual element or picture, it could also aid students in comprehending the story easier than just normal text or passage.

In general, reading comic usually done during leisure time, or outside of school. This reveals that outside classroom teaching and learning can present and provide interesting atmosphere. Ainun Munzilin et al. (2021) suggest that learning outside the classroom creates interesting and fun activities. People read literary work like comic, novel, poem, story, and more during leisure time. They also read something like texts, e-mails, religious books, and more (Neugebauer 2013). A study in USA about middle schooler's reading motivation and how their behaviour changes over time indicated that their motivation to read increased and they get used to read outside of school (Cantrell et al. 2018). It can be concluded that building a reading habit for students outside of school is beneficial for them as it can make them get used to read more often.

Despite many research done in similar topic, there has been very little information about research covering incidental vocabulary learning through comic in at-home setting. This study aims to seek an opportunity to explore this area to see the prospect of incidental vocabulary learning using comic in at-home setting.

Literature Review

Incidental Vocabulary Learning Through Comic

There are two ways of how to learn vocabulary, it could be by intentionally learn it or incidentally. Intentional vocabulary learning means that the learners have the intention to learn it through multiple ways. While incidental vocabulary learning means that it's a by-product of meaning-focused activity (Stuart Webb, 2020). Webb also mentioned that reading for obtaining information, enjoyment, or interest could help to improve incidental vocabulary learning. Comic is one of teaching materials which could intrigue the students to learn has been used to teach students in many areas including language. Not only that, previous researchers also investigated incidental vocabulary through comic, which shown a positive result (Aliyar and Peter 2022; Arast and Gorjian 2016).

However, even with empirical evidence that incidental vocabulary learning through comic has positive result, the previous research only covering within school environment. It still remains unclear when it comes to at-home setting. In classroom setting, the students normally learn intentionally, and with clear and direct instructions. However, in at-home setting there are many different factors that could be considered such as indirect instruction, supervision, and more. This is why this study tried to explore the prospect of incidental vocabulary learning using comic in at-home setting.

Audio-Assisted Reading

Audio-assisted reading now becoming more accessible due to the advancement of technology. Audio-assisted reading proved to make the students perform better and get better result than silent reading (Chang and Millett 2015; Milliner 2019). There are many benefits to the students could obtain by implementing audio-assisted reading like make the reading more interesting. Not only that, audio-assisted reading could also help the students to recognise the

sound of the words, or the way of how the words pronounced (Kirchhoff and Mision 2022; Nakashima, Stephens, and Kamata 2018). It can also help as scaffolding to improve student's comprehension (Kirchhoff and Mision 2022).

Audio-assisted reading as a media for teaching and learning has also been used for extensive reading to support students' comprehension. This media can assist teacher and students to increase teaching quality as well as learning process. As suggested by Masuqi et al. (2021) who claim that the use of media in the teaching and learning process can improve competence teacher professionalism which will have a positive impact on improving the quality of students. It means that items like novel, comic, etc would also be benefitted from using audio-assisted reading, especially EFL students who need more exposure to the phonological of the language. However, the latest research which covering incidental vocabulary learning trough comic still has not considered this. That is why, in this study the author would like to see how audio-assisted reading in comic help the student to develop their vocabulary. This study aims at finding out the significant effect of incidental vocabulary learning through comic for EFL students in at-home setting.

Method

An experimental design was implemented to compare incidental vocabulary learning of 34 Thailand EFL students from Anubanchumchon Phukradung School through comic in at-home setting. The first group was reading comic by reading only while the second group read the comic while listening. Both of them have the same pre-test and post-test. Both groups were given access to the comic namely "Fushigi Neko no Kyuu-chan", it's a short comic with 4 panels/boxes with simple words/phrases. The author decided to use this comic to match their level so that it would be suitable for them and not too difficult to understand. Both groups were given the access, and they can access the comic whenever they wanted from home. The comic regularly updated every week up to 8 weeks. There were total of 50 chapters, and the comic was updated 6-7 chapters every week. Each week, they were requested to read the comics given to them at least twice a week. The research was conducted from September until October 2022.

VKS (Vocabulary Knowledge Scale) proposed by (Wesche and Paribakht 1996) which later validated by (Karakaş et al. 2012) was used to assess student's vocabulary learning progress of 15 target words before and after the treatment. This five-point test was also used by several other scholars to assess the development of vocabulary in similar topic (Arast and Gorjian 2016). The VKS was translated to Thai language which had been confirmed by their teacher so that they can understand the instructions clearly. The test has 5 points (1-5), the score obtained are equal to the points, and if they answer wrong, the score will be deducted by one. For example, if the students answer point 4, and they give wrong answer, then the score will be reduced by one.

Data Analysis

The data from this study obtained from analysing the student's performances from VKS test. Normality and homogeneity test were applied because the sample amounted less than 50 participants. Shapiro-Wilk test used because its more effective in detecting non-normality within sample <50. Table 1 shows that the groups who read comic and read comic while listen were normal, because the significance values (.106 and .487) were more than the alpha value (0.5), thus it can be concluded that both groups were normal.

Table 1

Normality statistics

Shapiro-wilk

	Statistics	Df	Sig.	
Read while listen	.912	17	.106	
Silent read	.952	17	.487	

Table 2 shows that between students who read comic and who read while listen were homogenous. The significance value of the homogeneity test result was .159, which is more than the alpha value (0.5) thus, the groups were homogenous.

Table 2

Homogeneity statistics

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.074	1	.97	.159

Table 3 shows the mean difference obtained from the two groups and their changes which describe as below:

Table 3

Descriptive statistics

Group	Pre-test mean	Post-test mean	Change	Std. Deviation	
				Pre-test	Post-test
Read while listen	19.18	33.94	14,76	2.223	8.158
Silent read	18.76	25.06	6,3	2.325	6.240
Difference	0,42	8,88	8,46		

From the table, we can see the students who learn incidental vocabulary trough reading while listen to comic gained mean score of 19.18 during the pre-test with standard deviation or SD of 2.223 and 33.94 during their post-test with SD of 8.158. Meanwhile the other group who only read comic gained mean score of 18.76 during pre-test with SD of 2.325 and 25.06 during post-test with SD of 6.240.

Table 4 shows the independent T-test result obtained from the two groups, which describe as below:

Table 4

Independent T-test statistics

	Levene's test					
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Equal variances assumed	4.060	0,52	3.566	32	.001	8.88235
Equal variances not assumed			3.566	29.946	.001	8.88235

It can be understood from the table above, that the significance level (sig. 2-tailed) is .001 which means, its lower than 0.05, which can be concluded that the H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. It means that the two groups are not equal, and there is significant difference between the two groups. It means that the incidental vocabulary learning of the students who read and listen to comic gained more vocabulary than those who did not.

Discussion

This study has explored incidental vocabulary learning of EFL junior high school students through comic in at-home setting with different treatments. One group read the comic while listening, and the other is read-only group. The finding indicated that when provided with comic and audio to assist the learner in learning incidental vocabulary, students showed an improvement in learning incidental vocabulary than the students who were not. The students who read and listen to the comic showed better result than students who only read. This finding in line with research conducted by Chang and Millett (2015) and Teng (2018) which reported that students who read-while-listen achieved better progress than the students in only-read condition. The students who read and listen to the comic reported that they can enjoy the comic easily because the audio helped them when they were reading. The comic chosen was short and suitable for them, so when given more help through audio, they could understand it easier.

Although the finding of previous research conducted by Kirchhoff and Mision (2022) indicated that reading while listening could distract the reading process, or affecting the reading quality, it could be the fact that the reading materials used was heavy or too much. Given the situation where the reading materials were not heavy like short comic, it could make the reading process much enjoyable while listening. The author also noticed that the students also enjoyed reading the comic, and showed a positive attitude towards it. When asked about their opinion about read and listen to the comic, they replied with many responses. Some said that it was fun because its like watching a short video, some also reported that they learned how to pronounce words that they did not know how to pronounce it before. From this finding, it can be seen that audio-assisted comic could help the learner to improve their pronunciation aspect. This finding was also found in research by Kirchhoff and Mision (2022) which stated that their students felt an improvement in pronunciation aspect.

The finding from this study also in line with the previous researchers who had researched the use of comic to learn incidental vocabulary (Aliyar and Peter 2022; Arast and Gorjian 2016). It was proved that learning incidental vocabulary could also be achieved using audio-assisted comic in at-home setting. This opens the opportunity to try to grow reading habit in EFL students in their home by introducing them to comic.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the the prospect of using comic to learn incidental vocabulary in at-home setting. The finding from this research indicated that, learning incidental vocabulary through reading comic while assisted with audio could help the students to learn it. It is also indicated that reading comic in out of school environment could also help the students to learn incidental vocabulary. Introducing the students to read could make them get used to read outside of the classroom so that they could grow a reading habit by reading something fun like comic. There are many cases where people grow their reading habit starting from reading something simple like comic, magazine, or anything that could provide them an extra excitement or fun when reading.

Reference

- Ainun Munzilin, Ika, Riska Widiyanita Batubara, Nur Fauziyah, and Andi Rahmad Rahim. 2021. "‘SENSORY PLAY’ DI KB PUSPA GIRI INDRO." *Journal of Community Service* 3(1).
- Akcanca, Nur. 2020. *An Alternative Teaching Tool in Science Education: Educational Comics*. Vol. 7.
- Aliyar, M., & Peters, E. (2022). *Incidental acquisition of Italian words from comic books. Reading in a Foreign Language*, 34(2), 2.
- Arast, Omid, and Bahman Gorjian. 2016. "The Effect of Listening to Comic Strip Stories on Incidental Vocabulary Learning among Iranian EFL Learners." *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Learning* 2016(1):1–7. doi: 10.5923/j.jall.20160201.01.
- Cantrell, Susan Chambers, Margaret Rintamaa, Eric M. Anderman, and Lynley H. Anderman. 2018. "Rural Adolescents' Reading Motivation, Achievement and Behavior across Transition to High School." *Journal of Educational Research* 111(4):417–28. doi: 10.1080/00220671.2017.1284737.
- Chang, Anna C. S., and Sonia Millett. 2015. "Improving Reading Rates and Comprehension through Audio-Assisted Extensive Reading for Beginner Learners." *System* 52:91–102. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2015.05.003.
- Karakaş, Ali, Arif Sariçoban, Ali Karaka, and Arif Sariçoban. 2012. *The Impact of Watching Subtitled Animated Cartoons on Incidental Vocabulary Learning of ELT Students British Council-New Connections in EMI Turkey Research Partnership Fund 2020-"Classroom Discourse in EMI Courses in Turkey: On the Dynamics of Translanguaging Practices" View Project Interculturality in English Language Learning and Teaching View Project THE IMPACT OF WATCHING SUBTITLED ANIMATED CARTOONS ON INCIDENTAL VOCABULARY LEARNING OF ELT STUDENTS*. Vol. 12.

- Kirchhoff, Cheryl, and Miguel Mision. 2022. *Audio-Assisted Extensive Reading: Learners' Experience and Attitudes*. Vol. 22.
- Masuqi, Ibrahim, Achmad Syihabuddin, Riskha Aulia, Andi Rahmad Rahim, and Nur Fauziah. 2021. "MENINGKATKAN KUALITAS KOSA KATA BAHASA INGGRIS DI MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH NAHDLATUL UMMAH KETAPANG LOR DENGAN MENGGUNAKAN MEDIA POCKET BOOK." *Journal of Community Service* 3(2).
- Milliner, Brett. 2019. *Comparing Extensive Reading to Extensive Reading-While-Listening on Smartphones: Impacts on Listening and Reading Performance for Beginning Students*. Vol. 19.
- Mustikasari, L., G. Priscylio, T. Hartati, and W. Sopandi. 2020. "The Development of Digital Comic on Ecosystem for Thematic Learning in Elementary Schools." in *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*. Vol. 1469. Institute of Physics Publishing.
- Nakashima, Kohji, Meredith Stephens, and Suzanne Kamata. 2018. *The Interplay of Silent Reading, Reading-While-Listening and Listening-Only*. Vol. 18.
- Neugebauer, Sabina Rak. 2013. "A Daily Diary Study of Reading Motivation inside and Outside of School: A Dynamic Approach to Motivation to Read." *Learning and Individual Differences* 24:152–59. doi: 10.1016/j.lindif.2012.10.011.
- Sari, Y., R. P. Sari, M. S. Sumantri, and A. Marini. 2021. "Development of Digital Comic for Science Learning in Elementary School." *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering* 1098(3):032060. doi: 10.1088/1757-899x/1098/3/032060.
- Teng, Feng. 2018. "Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition from Reading-Only and Reading-While-Listening: A Multi-Dimensional Approach." *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching* 12(3):274–88. doi: 10.1080/17501229.2016.1203328.
- Vasileva, Polina Alexandrovna, and Vadim Yurevich Golubev. 2019. "ECO-COMICS AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL FOR TEACHING ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM AND ESP." *Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes* 431. doi: 10.22190/jtesap1904431v.
- Wesche, Marjorie, and T. Sima Paribakht. 1996. "Assessing Second Language Vocabulary Knowledge: Depth versus Breadth." *Canadian Modern Language Review* 53(1):13–40.