

## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMIC LEARNING MEDIA AS INNOVATION IN IMPROVING LANGUAGE SKILL FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is producing materials in the form of comic to improve language skill for early childhood. During this time, materials in language learning used by some early childhood teachers in Ponorogo have not been specially designed in accordance with the characteristic of the school and its students. Comic belongs to new innovation in learning media which is innovative and creative in the process of improving language skill on early childhood. The method of the study is research and development. This study is conducted in kindergarten and aisyiah bustanul athfal. Technique of analyzing data which is used by the researcher to process the data is descriptive and content analyses. The data got are quantitative and qualitative data. Scores got by the researcher from the questionnaire was about the need of developing comic and the assessment of the product development which were described by using mean descriptive technique. The researcher interprets and calculates the mean of need level and the result of product trial, then the result is explained qualitatively.

**Keywords:** Comic, Improving Language Skill, Early Childhood

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this modern era, education becomes one of aspects. It is needed to be considered on its plan and evaluation, in this case, especially for early childhood. In general, education in Indonesia nowadays has started to grow and made improvement, but for early childhood learning, sometimes it becomes ruled out. As the one needed to be considered is just elementary school until high school learning. In other hand, essentially, teaching level on early childhood also needs innovative and creative learning media to improve learning quality. Therefore, in this study, it will discuss deeply related to the developing of learning media.

Comic media is used as a solution to learning media on early childhood education, because comic media so far connotes as something related to unserious, casual, entertainment, funny, the pictures which are often disproportionate but touching, and others that are not difficult. It is true because comic media can be used casually whenever and wherever (Nurgiyantoro, 2005:409). Beside that, comic media can give a lot of benefits for language learners. Because of its easiness and simplicity, comic media can accommodate all interactive learning activities such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

Based on the background of the study, it can be explained the problem statement which is about how the improvement of comic learning media as innovation of language skill improvement on early childhood is. The aim of this study is to develop comic learning media as innovation for improving language skill on early childhood. The result of the study is expected to give benefits for adding science repertoire especiall developing comic media as innovation in improving language skill on early childhood.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Learning Media**

The word *media* comes from roman *medius* which literally means middle, mediator, or conveyer. Gerlach and Ely, (1971) which is cited by Arsyad Azhar, (2005:3) said that if media comprehended broadly is human, material, or event which establish a condition that make students can acquire knowledge, skill, or attitude.

According to Fleming, (1987) in Arsyad Azhar (2005: 3), media shows its function or role which is organizing effective relationship between two main parties in the process of learning and the content of materials.

*Heinich* and friends (1982) cited in Arsyad azhar (2005:4) stated that the term medium as a mediator who transmits information between source and receiver. In line with this restriction, Latuheru, (1993) in Arsyad Azhar, (2005:4) give media restriction as all form of mediator which is used by human for conveying idea or opinion so that idea or opinion being stated will be received by the receiver.

Meanwhile, *Gagne* and *Briggs*, (1975) cited in Arsyad azhar, (2005:4) implicitly said that learning media include tools which is used to convey teaching material which consist of book, tape recorder, cassette, video, camera, film, slide, photograph, television, and computer.

*National Education Association* defines media as the form of communication both printed and audio-visual and its tools, so that media can be manipulated, seen, heard, or read Arsyad azhar, (2005:5). Based on opinion from those some experts, so it can be concluded that teaching media is materials, tools, and method or technique which are used in teaching and learning process which intent that the interaction process of educative communication between teachers and students which take place appropriately and usefully. Something can be said as learning media if it is used for transferring messages with the education or learning goals.

### **The Use of Learning Media**

Acquirement of knowledge and skill, the changes of attitude and behavior can happen because of the interaction between new experience and previous experience they have. According to *Bruner*, (1966: 10-11) there are three levels of learning mode, they are: inactive, iconic, and symbolic. These three levels of experience have interaction in getting new experience.

One of descriptions which is most used as theoretical basis reference of media used in the process of teaching and learning is *Dale's cone of experience* (Dale, 1969). This cone is specific elaboration from concepts of three levels of experience which is stated by *Bruner* as the previous explanation.

Someone learning outcome acquired from direct experience, the fact in the environment of one's life through mock objects untill abstract. Getting to the top of the cone, more abstract the delivery media of the message. It should be noted that this order does not mean the process of teaching and learning started from direct experience, but from the kind of experience that best suits the need and ability of the students by considering situation of learning. *Edgar Dale* who is popular with his experience cone stated that 75% of someone learning experience is acquired from eyes, 13% from ears, and the rest are from other sense.

### **Function and Benefit of Learning Media**

In the process of teaching and learning, the two important elements are teaching method and learning media. Those two elements relate each other. The choice of one of certain teaching method will influence kind of appropriate learning media, though there are still other aspects which must be considered in selecting media, those are learning goal, kind of task and response expected from the students to be mastered after teaching and learning and learning context which include characteristic of the students. Nevertheless, it can be said that one of the main function of learning media is as teaching aid that also influence the climate, condition of learning environment organized and created by the teacher.

Hamali, (1986) said that the use of learning media in the process of teaching and learning can raise new desire and interest, motivation and learning stimulus, even bring psychological effect to the students. The use of learning media in the step of learning orientation will help learning process becomes effective and able to raise motivation and interest from the students. Learning media can also help students to improve comprehension, present data attractively and reliably, make easy of interpretation and condense information.

## **Comic Review**

Talking about comic, something comes to our mind is funny reading, unique, full of pictures, designed to make it interesting. Comic is communication messages wrapped in the form of story so that it is easy to read (Nurgiantoro, 2005:410). At first, comic relates to everything funny, it comes from Netherlands word *komiek* which means “comedian”. From old greek, the term comic comes from the word “comicos” which is a work formed from “cosmos” that means “joking” (Rahadian, 2005).

So, comic is often connoted with funny things. The humorous elements can be seen from the pictures that are not proportional but effective. Nurgiantoro, (2005:409) in KBBI (1994) said comic interpreted as story with pictures (in magazine, newspaper, or in the form of book) which in general it is easy to comprehend and funny. Pictures in the comic are as semiotic sign and symbol of other thing in the pictures, which in fact can be viewed as a static picture.

## **Types of comic**

As types of other literature genre, comic can also be divided into some chategories depends on the point of view. Viewed from performance aspect, comic can be divided into *comic strip*, *comic books*, and *graphic novels* (Rahadian, 2005).

### *Adventure and Humorous Comics*

Adventure and humorous comic is the most favored comic for children. Humorous comic is comic that its content show something funny which can make the reader laughing. Humorous comic can be in the form of comic strip and comic book. Comic strips can be published in Bobo magazine which display character of Bobo (story with the picture of Bobo) and Bonna (Bonna the little elephant with its long trunk), Donal Duck, and so on. The examples of humorous comic in the form of book are *Doraemon* and *Crayon Shinchan*.

Adventure comis is comic that shows the story of adventure. The characters in the comic usually are the characters of looking for, catching, defending, fighting, and other actions. The characters in adventure comic are dominated most by children. In magazine, it is often found adventure comic which is in the form of serial comic such as *Kung Fu Boy (Takeshi Maetawa)*, *Dragon Ball (Akira Toriyama)*, and so on.

### *Biographical Comic and Scientific Comic*

Biographical comic is intended as life story of historical figures in the form of comic. The biography usually has been written in the form of biographical book which is solely as verbal symbol. Even if there is picture in that book, its function is just giving illustration concretely and explaining verbally, so that the book will be more interesting.

Scientific comic is emphasized in the process of invention and its finding. Scientific comic is comic which its content more about conceptual description without any biographical element. For example: comic strip which is published regularly in *kompas* every sunday entitled “being smart with Cero”, with the main character “Cero” in different subtitles in every publication. Overall, this comic is a story. Scientific element showed is relatively simple and related to daily life which is necessary to be known not only by the children but also adults.

### *Comic Strip and Comic Book*

Comic strip only consists of some pictures, but viewed from its content this comic has explained a whole idea. Absolutely because its few pictures, the ideas delivered are also not much and usually it only involves one matter. Such as response to various events and current issues of the comic strip can be easily found in various kid magazines and newspaper. Kid magazines as said before such as Bob, kis fantasy, and educational kinderganten magazine, constantly contain comic which more or less has same title. For example: “Bobo”, “Cerita Dari Negeri Seberang”, “Paman Kikuk”, and Bonna “Gajah Kecil Belalai Panjang”.

Comic book is comic which is in the form of book, and one book is usually endless. There are comics which shows continued story and not. For example: *Kung Fu Boy (Takeshi Maekawa)*, *Dragon Ball (Akira Toriyama)*, *Crayon Sinchan (Yoshito Ushui)*, *Doraemon (Kanjiro Kobayasi)*, dan so forth.

In this research and development, comic book is comic which becomes the worthiest comic to develop. The development of learning media by using comic book is based on the reason that comic book is the most popular in society. With its attractive appearance, it is expected comic learning media can be easily accepted by the students. Besides of that, comic book can explain the material more because of the long story made.

### **Advantages of comic**

The advantages of comic as learning media for Indonesian foreign speaker are: by its interesting pictures and animations, students will be more motivated in learning Indonesia. The interesting color can make students prefer comic as media in the process of learning. The balance of font and picture size can make it comfort to be learned by anyone. Material used in the comic has been adjusted to the level of Indonesian learning in the school. The size of comic which is small make it practical, simple, and interesting to be learned whenever and wherever.

By using comic, the learners will be stimulated or being curious to know more in comprehending Indonesian sentence structure. Indonesian comic will ease in memorizing vocabularies and grammatical rules presented in the comic. Besides used as learning media, comic can also be used as exercise for reviewing all target structure in the material. Through learning media in the form of comic, so that the process of teaching and learning in the school will be students centered, then the students will be better in their sentence structure, more creative and innovative in having communication with others.

### **Language skill**

In language learning, there is language activity that is activities of using language. In this case, language element such as vocabularies, form and meaning of words, form and meaning of sentences, pronunciation, and spelling are not taught alone as separated elements, but they are explained in language activity. Language activities involve listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Those four language activities are used in communication, which is when one person connects to another. Language in communication is used for sharing ideas, feeling, opinion, imagination, and etc, so that there will be response. According to Suryaman (2009: 27), language activities are carried out simultaneously in other activities, both physical and spiritual activities. Language activities are carried out simultaneously by using hands, feet, head, five senses, and so on. These activities are also carried out simultaneously with the activities of feeling, thinking, imagining, and so on.

### **Language Education For Early Childhood**

According to Berko Gleason in Santrock (2007), language is organized and the rules describe the ways that language can have meaning. Babies between the age of 8 – 12 months, indicate their comprehension of their first words frequently. It is very long to have them to pronounce their first words, they have communicated with their parents through their own gestures and voices. Evenly, babies understand fifty words in the age of 13 months, but they cannot say as many words as they reach the age of 18 months (Menyuk, Liebergott and Schultz in Santrock, 2007:358). In the age of 18 months, babies can say fifty words, but in the age of 2 years they have said 200 words. This rapidly increasing of words, which is started in the age of 18 months is called *vocabulary spurt* (Bloom, Litter and Broughton in Santrock, 2007:359).

When babies begin to move in the stage of two words, their knowledge about meaning is also increase rapidly (Bloom in Santrock, 2007: 361). Vocabularies which children have in the age of 6 years range from 8000 to 14.000 words (Clark in Santrock, 2007:361). Based on some studies,

6 years children learn 22 new words a day (Miller in Santrock, 2007: 361). Basically, before learning to read, children learn to use language to say nothing. In that age, they learn to organize and pronounce sounds (Berko Gleasin in Santrock, 2007: 354). Therefore, based on that phenomenon, language learning in children should be delivered comprehensively and related to the activities of reading, listening, writing, and speaking.

## **DISCUSSION**

Substantially, all levels of school both high school, elementary, as well as early childhood school need learning media which are innovative, creative, and effective. In other hand, the form and content of the media are easy and simple which can facilitate students in getting information in that learning media. Media that can be used as learning reference for early childhood education is comic. Comic is one of the learning media which accentuate visual or funny pictures that systematically arranged to be an interesting story. This is in line with Nurgiantoro, (2005:410) who says that comic is communication messages wrapped in the form of story so that it is presented easily. Comic is also presented in the form of book which can contain whole story that completed with various practices, summary, and cultural notes related to the learning material.

In the process of this development of learning media, it is needed some steps for achieving goals to create effective and interesting learning media. The steps are need analysis, material validation test by material experts, media validation test by media expert, and product trial in small scale and big scale. This is done for getting the best result as according to students needs especially for teaching early childhood. In line with the simplicity of comic, so it is appropriate to be implemented in improving language skill for early childhood education. According to Clark in Santrock (2007:361), vocabularies that children of 6 years have are 8000 to 14.000. Based on some studies, 6 years children learn 22 new words a day (Miller in Santrock, 2007: 361). Based on those explanations, comic is appropriate for improving language skills which involve reading, listening, writing, and speaking on early childhood.

Those four language skills can be implemented by using comic media. Reading skill in early childhood teaching through this comic can be by spelling words one by one repeatedly. Reading practice repeatedly through that comic can help students more fluently in spelling words. Listening practice in this early childhood teaching can be done by other's help and in this case is teacher or parents for reading the comic, and then children listen carefully. Evaluation of listening practice can be done by giving feedback or questions to the children. If children's comprehension is good or they have good concentration, they will be able to answer the questions well. Writing skill can also be practiced by using comic. The way of practicing is through writing words one by one correctly in the assignment provided. The last skill is speaking. The way of practicing speaking is by interacting through question and answer. If the children can communicate well, answer the questions correctly, and can retell by using good language, it means that the four skills are success. Therefore, this comic learning media can be said as solution for improving language skill in teaching early childhood.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the description about media development process of the comic learning, it can be concluded that developing comic learning media needs analysis which is given to the comic user. The next step is arranging the learning material in the form of comic media. Further process is validation test of the material and validation test of the media by some experts. Trial to the user in large and small scales is done and then the result is analyzed. All steps must be done in order so that the result will be maximal and accordance with the goal. This comic media is suitable to be used as learning media for early childhood because the materials are simple, having easy form, having funny pictures, it is also colorful which is liked by children, portable, equipped by kinds of practices for improving four language skills, and easy to learn. Based on

the components, this comic media is suitable and effective to be used as learning media for early childhood.

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