

## The Use of Digital Comick Media in Improving the Reading Ability of Grade V Students of State Elementary School

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### ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by students' low reading ability and interest in understanding the contents of the text, which is reflected in learning outcomes that have not reached the minimum completion criteria. This study aims to strengthen the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade elementary school students by utilizing digital comic media, which integrates text and images in an intriguing and meaningful way. This Classroom Action Research (CAR) was carried out in two cycles, where each cycle consists of the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The research subjects were 23 fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 1 Poka in the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Data were collected through observation, tests, and documentation, then analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The results indicated a substantial improvement in students' reading comprehension skills in every cycle. The average pre-test score was 48.68 with a completion percentage of only 13%. After the implementation of cycle I, the average increased to 63.03 (43% completion) and reached 76.51 with 100% classical completion in cycle II. This improvement occurred in all aspects of comprehension, including character identification, story content comprehension, and message interpretation. As a major contribution, this study demonstrates that the use of digital comics has proven effective in improving students' reading comprehension learning outcomes, as well as fostering students' interest in reading and active participation in the learning process. Digital comics are suggested as a novel approach to mitigate the issue of inadequate reading comprehension skills in elementary education.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental aspect of every individual. Language serves as a cultural component and a symbol for human communication (Aliyeva, 2023; Fedorenko et al., 2024). Language comprises symbols, including words or signs, to communicate meaning among individuals or groups (Purba & Sidebang, 2023; Tektigul et al., 2023). Moreover, language serves as an essential instrument in human

contact, enabling the transmission of information, ideas, and emotions. Humans utilize language to transmit information and receive diverse messages, both for themselves and others (Lubienetzki & Schüler-Lubienetzki, 2022).

In the educational sector, namely within schools, the Indonesian language is a mandatory subject that must be implemented from the elementary through the university level (Intiana et al., 2023). Simultaneously, the Indonesian language taught in elementary schools encompasses various fundamental abilities, specifically hearing, speaking, reading, and writing (Linggasari & Rochaendi, 2022). In the Indonesian school curriculum, the Indonesian language is prioritized as the foundational subject, necessitating its precedence over all other topics (Nasir & Muhammad, 2024; Wulandari et al., 2025). The Indonesian language is a subject taught at all educational levels (Putri et al., 2023). Despite modifications to the curriculum, the status of the Indonesian language as a subject remains indispensable and cannot be abolished, as it is a mandatory component of the Indonesian language curriculum framework. The instruction of the Indonesian language fundamentally involves equipping students with proficient and accurate language abilities that align with their intended roles and purposes (Alisnaini et al., 2022; Khair & Misnawati, 2022).

One of the most important language skills in learning is reading (Magdalena et al., 2021). Reading is a process of recognizing writing through symbols and signs with the aim of obtaining information and understanding, gaining pleasure, filling spare time, and providing critical assessments of other people's work (Suparlan, 2021). In addition, through reading, a person will obtain information, knowledge, and new experiences (Aprilia et al., 2021; Sarika et al., 2021). Reading learning implemented in school is divided into two parts, namely introductory reading for lower grade students and comprehension reading for higher grade students (Rombot et al., 2020).

Reading comprehension is an activity of reading to absorb information from text and understand or know the implied meaning of the text so that it can be conveyed properly to the reader (Azhari et al., 2019; Kaganang, 2019; Putri et al., 2024). In addition, reading comprehension skills are essential for every individual, including elementary school students (Rifa'i et al., 2024). Reading comprehension differs from ordinary reading, as it involves reading and subsequently comprehending the content of the text under consideration.

Additionally, reading comprehension is an essential competency that students must master in elementary school, particularly in fifth grade, as a prerequisite for understanding all the subject matter presented (Smith et al., 2023). This ability extends beyond simply reading words to also critically processing, interpreting, and deriving meaning from text. However, challenges often arise in teaching reading, particularly in school environments with limited resources or monotonous teaching methods (Husda et al., 2025; Mardiana et al., 2021).

Failure to develop reading comprehension skills will have a devastating impact on students' educational outcomes at all levels (Saputri, 2024; Sudharsono et al., 2025). Students with poor reading comprehension struggle to solve narrative-based problems, analyze instructions, and process new information, ultimately hindering their overall

academic achievement (OECD, 2019). Therefore, systematic and innovative efforts to improve reading comprehension must be a top priority in primary education (Lange, 2019).

Although the urgency of reading comprehension has been emphasized, reality on the ground reveals significant challenges. Based on initial observations, interviews with classroom teachers, and analysis of student learning outcomes data at Elementary School 1 Poka, it was found that fifth-grade students experienced significant difficulties in literacy, particularly reading comprehension. A preliminary study conducted by the author found that the fundamental problem faced by fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 1 Poka was reading comprehension.

The issue of low reading comprehension at State Elementary School 1 Poka was found to stem from two main factors: (1) Fifth-grade students exhibited a low level of interest and motivation in reading. They tended to be passive when faced with long, dense texts presented without attractive visual support. The lack of experience reading books outside of class hours also worsened their ability to build up the knowledge schemes needed to interpret new texts. Students often only focused on pronouncing words without trying to grasp the meaning contained within. (2) The dominant learning method used by teachers was still conventional, namely, assignments to read texts from textbooks followed by answering questions. The learning media used was limited to printed texts. This media often failed to bridge the gap between abstract texts and students' ability to visualize them, thus limiting their understanding, especially in complex aspects such as interpreting moral messages, understanding character motivations, or analyzing conflicts in stories. Additionally, during the learning process, the fifth-grade teacher reported that the main difficulties experienced by students included difficulty identifying key information in the text. The teacher has tried various conventional methods, such as discussions and exercises, but the results have not been optimal. Therefore, the fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 1 Poka require a more innovative learning strategy to enhance their reading comprehension skills.

To address the challenges hindering the learning process at State Elementary School 1 Poka, innovative learning media are needed that are suited to the cognitive and psychological developmental characteristics of students aged 10-11 years, namely those that are visual, interactive, and engaging. Digital comics offer an ideal platform (Yulianti et al., 2025). Digital comics combine narrative (text) with powerful visualizations (images), thus breaking down the complexity of the text, helping students visualize the story, and making it easier to understand (Apostolou & Linardatos, 2023). The use of this media is expected to transform reading learning from a passive activity into a more enjoyable, interactive, and meaningful experience.

Digital comics are an electronic-based learning medium that presents visual narratives through a combination of text and illustrations in digital format (Bianca et al., 2024; Fitri et al., 2023). In addition, digital comics are also an effective and interesting learning medium because they combine visual elements, characters, conversations, and storylines that are applied using electronic devices such as laptops

and tablets, thereby having the potential to improve literacy skills and create a better learning environment for students (Amaliyah & Rande, 2024; Mursalin et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, according to Baihaqi et al. (2025), the integration of comics into the learning process is designed in such a way as to provide an engaging learning experience that is more appealing and stimulates students' interest in the learning process. Not only that, but comics also-based educational media can be used to make the teaching and learning process more effective, increase interest in learning, and improve students' reading comprehension skills. The learning media that can be used in comics, known as media education, is learning media that conveys educational stories in the learning process (Afriana & Prastowo, 2022; Nafala, 2022). Comics can be used as effective and educational learning media.

Research on the use of comics and visual media in reading instruction is not new. However, this study offers significant novelty, particularly in the context of its practical contribution and solution to specific problems in Indonesian educational settings, particularly at Poka 1 Elementary School. Furthermore, while extensive research on instructional media has been conducted, this study offers novelty specific to the context of the medium's location and focus, making it a unique contribution. Its novelty lies in the detailed documentation of the impact of digital comics on measurably improving all aspects of reading comprehension (character identification, content comprehension, and message interpretation). This contribution provides empirical evidence that digital comics can facilitate critical comprehension, not just interest.

This study makes a strong contribution by demonstrating a highly significant increase in reading comprehension at Poka 1 Elementary School. These drastic results confirm that digital comics are a highly effective and applicable intervention model in this elementary school setting. This study provides a structured implementation model for classroom action research using digital comics. This model serves as a practical reference for other teachers in similar schools to address literacy issues by utilizing digital technology that is easily accessible and relevant to the visual needs of today's students.

Overall, this study strengthens the existing literature by presenting specific empirical evidence and measuring the effectiveness of digital comics, making this intervention model relevant, applicable, and proven to be highly successful in improving reading comprehension of fifth-grade students at state elementary school 1 Poka. Building upon the background above, this classroom action research aims to test and empirically prove the effectiveness of the application of digital comic media in strengthening the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 1 Poka, which is measured through an increase in learning outcome scores, classical completion percentage, and an increase in students' interest and learning activity from cycle I to cycle II.

2. METHOD

The type of research used in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR), which is a systematic study of various actions taken by teachers, from the preparation of a plan to the assessment of actual actions in the classroom in the form of teaching and learning activities, to improve the learning conditions. CAR enables teachers as researchers to evaluate and improve learning strategies in a real classroom context (Siregar et al., 2025). This research was conducted in two cycles to ensure the achievement of the established success indicators. The procedure used in this study was divided into two research cycles, with each cycle applying the procedures of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The Classroom Action Research Procedure is presented in Figure 1.

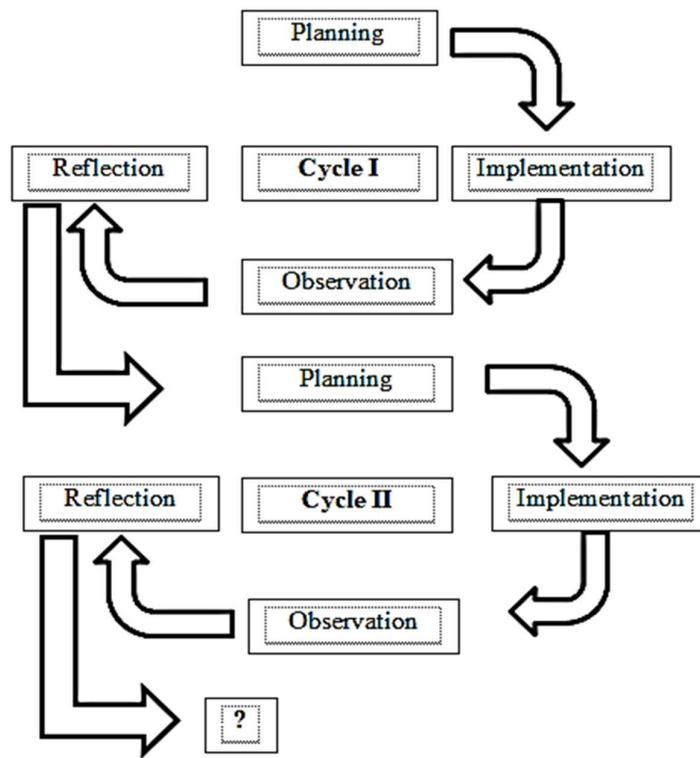


Figure 1. Classroom Action Reserch Procedure

This research procedure is divided into two action cycles (Cycle I and Cycle II), where each cycle aims to correct weaknesses found in the previous cycle. Cycle I is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Cycle I Stages

Stages	Activity Description
Planning	Develop a Lesson Implementation Plan (RPP) using digital comics. Prepare relevant digital comic materials. Develop observation instruments, tests (Cycle I Post-test), and field note sheets.
Implementation	Implement reading comprehension learning using digital comics according to the lesson plan. The teacher guides students in reading and

Stages	Activity Description
Observation	analyzing digital comics (e.g., identifying characters, plot, and messages). Observe the learning process, student activities, and their responses to the digital comics using a prepared observation sheet (conducted by an observer/fellow teacher). Record any obstacles and challenges that arise.
Reflection	Analyze test results (Cycle I Post-test) and observation data. Determine whether success indicators have been achieved. If not, formulate an improvement plan for Cycle II.

Cycle II is implemented if the successful indicators in Cycle I have not been optimally achieved. Cycle II is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Cycle II Stages

Stages	Activity Description
Planning	Revise lesson plans and teaching strategies based on the results of Cycle I reflections (e.g., increasing discussion duration or replacing comics with more complex ones). Develop test instruments (Cycle II post-test).
Implementation	Implement corrective actions using the improved digital comic media. Focus on improving weak understanding aspects.
Observation	Conduct in-depth observations of improvements in student engagement, interest, and understanding following the corrective actions.
Reflection	Analyze test results (Cycle II post-test) and compare them with those from Cycle I and the pre-cycle. If the classical success indicator (100% completion) is achieved, the study will be terminated.

This study was conducted at State Elementary School 1 Poka, with the research subjects being 23 fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 1 Poka, consisting of 14 female students and 9 male students. Meanwhile, the research instruments used were observation sheets for student activities, reading comprehension test questions, and documentation. The data analysis technique used was the student learning outcome analysis technique with the following formula.

$$\text{Learning Outcome} = \frac{\text{score obtained}}{\text{score total}} \times 100\%$$

**Table 3.** Student Learning Completion Criteria

No	Value Interval	Value	Classification
1.	85-100	A	Very Good
2.	70-84	B	Good
3.	55-69	C	Fair
4.	40-54	D	Poor
5.	< 39	E	Very Poor

Qualitative data from observations and reflections were analyzed through the following stages: (1) Data Reduction: Sorting and focusing on important data related to the effectiveness of digital comics. (2) Data Presentation: Presenting data in narrative form, tables, or graphs. (3) Conclusion Drawing: Drawing conclusions regarding the successes and obstacles of the action, which were then used as a basis for reflection and improvement in the next cycle. This research was declared successful if it met the following indicators:

1. Increase in the average class grade from pre-cycle and Cycle I to Cycle II.
2. Achievement of classical learning completion of at least 75% to 80% (the ideal target) in Cycle II.
3. Increased student activity and interest in learning (qualitative data) during the learning process using digital comics.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

This research results section presents the findings obtained through classroom action research conducted in grade V of State Elementary School 1 Poka. The results are presented based on quantitative data analysis from reading comprehension tests and qualitative data analysis from observations of student learning activities during two action cycles.

#### Description of Reading Comprehension Test Results (Quantitative)

##### Pretest Results

**Table 4.** Pretest Results of Students' Reading Comprehension Ability

No	Student Name	Aspects Assessed			Final Score	Description
		Students can identify characters in story texts	Students can understand the content of story texts	Students can express the message contained in story texts		
		0-30	0-40	0-30		
1.	A.R	30	20	20	70	Good
2.	C.F	20	30	20	70	Good
3.	D.O	30	20	20	70	Good
4.	A.H	30	20	10	60	Fair
5.	C.L	20	20	20	60	Fair
6.	C.S	30	20	10	60	Fair
7.	D.L	30	20	10	60	Fair
8.	S.M	20	30	10	60	Fair
9.	A.R	20	20	10	50	Poor
10.	A.T	10	20	20	50	Poor
11.	C.A	10	20	20	50	Poor
12.	E.D.R	20	20	10	50	Poor
13.	F.R	20	20	10	50	Poor
14.	H.W	30	20	0	50	Poor
15.	Z.R	20	20	10	50	Poor
16.	B.K	5	20	20	45	Poor
17.	M.B	30	0	10	40	Poor
18.	K.M.T	20	20	0	40	Poor
19.	K.M	10	20	0	30	Very Poor
20.	K.H	10	20	0	30	Very Poor
21.	Y.J	20	0	10	30	Very Poor
22.	E.A	5	20	0	25	Very Poor
23.	K.K	10	0	10	20	Very Poor

No	Student Name	Aspects Assessed			Final Score	Description
		Students can identify characters in story texts	Students can understand the content of story texts	Students can express the message contained in story texts		
		0-30	0-40	0-30		
Average		19,56	18,26	10,86	48,68	Not Yet Completed

The pretest results of reading comprehension for fifth-grade students indicated that the researcher evaluated three dimensions of reading comprehension inside digital comic texts. (1) the capacity to recognize characters, (2) the capacity to comprehend the text's content, and (3) the capacity to articulate the narrative's message. The scores acquired for each facet are as follows:

- 1) Identifying Charaters: 19,56
- 2) Understanding the content of the story: 18,26
- 3) Expressing the messege: 10,86
- 4) Total mastery level (sum of the three aspects): 48,68

The overall mastery level of students in reading comprehension during the pretest is 48.68. In Table 4 above, the average student mastery level in the pretest was 48.68. Among the 23 students, just 3 achieved a score of 70 or higher, representing 13%, while 20 students scored below 69, accounting for 87%, in the pretest. The evaluated features included the students' capacity to identify characters in the narrative, comprehend the content of the narrative, and articulate the message conveyed in the narrative. Upon assessing the pupils' initial conditions, the researcher commenced the intervention beginning with cycle I. Each cycle comprised four stages: (1) planning, (2) action implementation, (3) observation, and (4) reflection. At the conclusion of each meeting, the researcher administered a reading comprehension assessment to evaluate the degree of the students' advancement following the intervention.

### *Cycle I Test Results*

**Table 5.** Cycles I Posttest Results on Students' Reading Comprehension

No	Students Name	Aspects Assessed			Final Score	Description
		Students can identify characters in story texts	Students can understand the content of story texts	Students can express the message contained in story texts		
		0-30	0-40	0-30		
1.	A.R	30	30	20	80	Good
2.	C.F	30	30	20	80	Good
3.	D.O	30	20	30	80	Good

No	Students Name	Aspects Assessed			Final Score	Description
		Students can identify characters in story texts	Students can understand the content of story texts	Students can express the message contained in story texts		
		0-30	0-40	0-30		
4.	A.H	30	20	20	70	Good
5.	C.L	30	20	20	70	Good
6.	C.S	30	20	20	70	Good
7.	D.L	30	20	20	70	Good
8.	S.M	20	30	20	70	Good
9.	A.R	30	20	20	70	Good
10.	A.T	20	30	20	70	Good
11.	C.A	20	20	20	60	Fair
12.	E.D.R	30	20	10	60	Fair
13.	F.R	30	20	10	60	Fair
14.	H.W	30	20	10	60	Fair
15.	Z.R	20	20	20	60	Fair
16.	B.K	10	30	20	60	Fair
17.	M.B	30	20	10	60	Fair
18.	K.M.T	30	20	10	60	Poor
19.	K.M	20	20	10	50	Poor
20.	K.H	20	20	10	50	Poor
21.	Y.J	20	20	10	50	Poor
22.	E.A	20	20	10	50	Poor
23.	K.K	10	20	10	40	Poor
Average		24,78	22,17	16,08	63,03	Not Yet Completed

Table 5 above displays the students' reading comprehension skills when using digital comics during the cycle. I did not fully meet the minimum passing criteria (MPC) set. This can be seen from the average scores for each assessment aspect, namely:

- 1) The ability to identify characters in the story text was 24.78.
- 2) The ability to understand the content of the story text was 22.17.
- 3) The ability to express the message contained in the story text was 16.08.

The cumulative average score achieved by students was 63.03. Of the 23 students, only 10 scored above 70, representing 43%, while 13 students scored below 69, accounting for 57%, which is classified as incomplete. The results reveal that most students still struggle to comprehend the content of the story and express its message, but they have demonstrated somewhat better performance in recognizing characters within the narrative.

Therefore, we can conclude that the digital comics-based reading comprehension instruction in Cycle I was not at its best. Consequently, researchers and educators must engage in dialogue on enhancement tactics for learning to be executed in cycle II, focusing on augmenting students' capacity to comprehend narratives profoundly and articulate the messages of stories effectively.

**Cycle II Results Test****Tabel 6.** Cycle II Posttest Results on Students' Reading Comprehension

No	Students Name	Aspects Assessed			Final Score	Description
		Students can identify characters in story texts	Students can understand the content of story text	Students can express the message contained in story texts		
		0-30	0-40	0-30		
1.	A.R	30	30	30	90	Very Good
2.	C.F	30	40	20	90	Very Good
3.	D.O	30	30	30	90	Very Good
4.	A.H	30	40	20	90	Very Good
5.	C.L	30	30	20	80	Good
6.	C.S	30	30	20	80	Good
7.	D.L	30	30	20	80	Good
8.	S.M	30	30	20	80	Good
9.	A.R	30	30	20	80	Good
10.	A.T	30	30	20	80	Good
11.	C.A	30	30	20	80	Good
12.	E.D.R	30	20	20	70	Good
13.	F.R	30	30	10	70	Good
14.	H.W	30	20	20	70	Good
15.	Z.R	20	30	20	70	Good
16.	B.K	20	30	20	70	Good
17.	M.B	30	30	10	70	Good
18.	K.M.T	30	30	10	70	Good
19.	K.M	20	30	20	70	Good
20.	K.H	30	20	20	70	Good
21.	Y.J	30	30	10	70	Good
22.	E.A	20	30	20	70	Good
23.	K.K	20	30	20	70	Good
Average		27,82	29,56	19,13	76,51	Complete

Table 6 presents the findings of the posttest for Cycle II on reading comprehension skills utilizing digital comics media among Grade V students at State Elementary School 1 Poka, indicating a significant improvement compared to the pretest results and Cycle I. This augmentation is evident in the accomplishments across each facet of the evaluation.

The average score of pupils in identifying characters in the story text was 27.82 out of a possible 30. This indicates that the majority of pupils successfully recognized characters from the presented digital comic writings. The average score of pupils for their comprehension of the tale text was 29.56 out of a possible 40. This score is the highest among the evaluated aspects, indicating that digital comics can facilitate students' comprehension of the storyline and plot of the reading material more effectively. Thirdly, regarding the capacity to articulate the moral or message of the

narrative, the mean score of students was 19.13 out of a possible 30. This accomplishment demonstrates a notable enhancement compared to the last cycle.

The mean score achieved by students in cycle II was 76.51. This score surpassed the designated learning completeness criteria and fulfilled the success criterion, which stipulated that at least 85% of pupils attain the predetermined minimum passing score. Consequently, it can be stated that the instruction of reading comprehension through digital comics in Cycle II effectively enhanced the reading comprehension abilities of fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 1 Poka.

This achievement demonstrates that the utilization of digital comics in education is highly effective in cultivating reading interest, enhancing understanding of textual content, and assisting students in articulating the moral messages or lessons embedded in the narratives. The utilization of digital comics serves as an innovative educational alternative to enhance the reading comprehension skills of elementary school students.

### **Description of Observation Results (Qualitative)**

Qualitative data was collected through student observation sheets and teacher reflections in each cycle.

#### ***Cycle I Observation Results***

- Interest and Motivation: In Cycle I, student interest in reading material increased dramatically. Students appeared enthusiastic about viewing digital comics. Student attendance and focus levels were better than in the pre-Cycle.
- Participation: Participation in group discussions began to increase, but some students still struggled to interpret moral messages independently without teacher assistance, which was the focus of improvement in Cycle II.
- Media Mastery: Students were able to interact with digital comics, but teachers needed to further explore scaffolding techniques for interpretation.

#### ***Cycle II Observation Results***

Interest and Focus: Interest and focus levels reached their maximum. Students demonstrated full readiness and actively asked questions about story details.

- Participation and Discussion: Significant improvements occurred in the discussion aspect. Students became more confident in expressing their opinions, analyzing character motivations, and drawing conclusions about moral messages from stories presented through digital comics.
- Improved Understanding Aspects: Qualitatively, students showed an even increase in all aspects of reading comprehension, namely (1) Character Identification: Students identified the main and supporting characters (supported by comic visuals). (2) Content Understanding: Students were able to retell the storyline chronologically. (3) Message Interpretation: Students were able to conclude the message or moral value contained in the comic, indicating the achievement of critical understanding.

The results of this study clearly demonstrate that the use of digital comics has been proven effective in improving the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade students

at State Elementary School 1 Poka. Digital comics successfully functioned as a bridge connecting narrative text with visual representations. This visualization helped students build a clearer mental model of the story, in accordance with the principles of multimedia learning. In addition to cognitive improvement (grades), digital comics also successfully increased students' interest and motivation. This increased interest is important because reading is a skill that requires continuous practice, which can only be maintained through students' internal motivation.

## **Discussion**

The findings of a classroom action study conducted over two cycles demonstrated an enhancement in the reading comprehension abilities of fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 1 Poka following the implementation of digital comics themed “Cintaila Lingkunganmu.” This enhancement is evident from a comparison of the pretest, posttest cycle I, and posttest cycle II across three measured aspects: (1) the ability to identify characters, (2) the ability to comprehend the content of the narrative, and (3) the ability to articulate the message of the story.

### **Progress from Pretest Results Cycle I**

In the pretest, the pupils' average score was 48.68, categorized as inadequate. The dimension of character identification achieved the highest score of 19.56, whereas the dimension of content comprehension attained only 18.26, and the dimension of message articulation recorded the lowest average of 10.86. Out of 23 students, only 3 attained a score of 70, the minimum passing grade.

Cycle I showed an enhancement; however, it was not yet ideal. The average student score increased to 63.03; nonetheless, it remained in the incomplete group. Despite an improvement in the narrative text, achieving an average of 24.78, the expression of the message (16.08) remained comparatively low. The quantity of pupils who attained the minimum passing mark of 70 rose to 10 students. This indicates that the utilization of digital comics is starting to yield beneficial effects; yet, enhancement tactics remain necessary, particularly to aid students in comprehending the narrative content effectively. This aligns with the findings of studies conducted by [Marini et al. \(2023\)](#) and [Sari et al. \(2022\)](#), which demonstrate that comic media can enhance literacy skills in primary school kids. Consequently, the utilization of comedic media in education can serve as a useful instrument to enhance engagement, bolster literacy skills, and boost student learning outcomes ([Khotimah & Hidayat, 2022](#)).

### **The Progress Results from Cycle I to Cycle**

Improvements were implemented following the feedback from Cycle I by offering more intense coaching, providing extensive explanations of the storyline, presenting straightforward instances of cause-and-effect links, and encouraging question-and-answer sessions to engage students. These strategic enhancements yielded substantial outcomes in cycle II.

The mean student score rose to 76.51 in the mastery category, surpassing the minimum passing mark of 70. The identification of characters attained an average score of 27.82 (out of a maximum of 30), the comprehension of the story's content achieved 29.56 (out of a maximum of 40), and the expression of the message garnered 19.13 (out of a maximum of 30). The number of students who attained a minimum passing mark of 70 rose to 23, with all students achieving the minimal passing grade. This aligns with the findings of [Rande et al. \(2025\)](#), which indicate that the utilization of digital comics significantly enhances students' reading comprehension skills in Indonesian language topics. Furthermore, [Azizah et al. \(2025\)](#) elucidated that digital comics can enhance the learning experience by making it more engaging and interactive, hence augmenting students' motivation and reading proficiency.

### **Effectiveness of Digital Comic Media Use**

The data analysis indicates that digital comics significantly enhance pupils' reading comprehension skills. This aligns with the research by [Syahfitri and Saragih \(2025\)](#), which empirically demonstrates that the incorporation of narrative visual media, specifically digital comics, enhances students' attention and comprehension of reading materials. Furthermore, visual media, particularly comics, can augment students' comprehension of reading materials by amalgamating text with images, thereby making them more engaging, intelligible, and relevant to everyday experiences.

The utilization of digital comics not only cultivates students' interest in reading but also aids in their comprehension of cause-and-effect relationships in narratives and facilitates clearer conclusions. This is apparent from the steady rise in average scores across all categories, particularly in comprehension of the story's content. This category achieved the highest score of 29.56 in the cycle. This aligns with the findings of research conducted by [Syarah and Oktari \(2025\)](#), which indicate that the utilization of digital comics positively influences student learning outcomes. [Latifah and Sunanto \(2025\)](#) propose the creation of a more interactive, adaptable, and contextual digital comic model, employing innovative technologies such as augmented reality (AR) to enhance the efficacy of learning in elementary schools.

### **Qualitative Findings Analysis: Improved Comprehension and Affective Aspects**

Qualitative data from Cycle I and Cycle II observations indicate that improvements occurred not only in total scores but also in more complex aspects of reading comprehension, namely plot identification, content comprehension, and moral message interpretation.

- **Breaking Down Text Complexity:** The comic format, with its panels breaking the story into a structured visual and narrative sequence, helps students organize information and understand the chronological flow. This aligns with previous research findings ([Hutchinson, 2018](#)), which found comics to be an ideal tool for teaching sequencing and narrative comprehension.

- **Increased Engagement:** Qualitative findings show a significant increase in student active participation and discussion in Cycle II. This improvement demonstrates that digital comics successfully create an interactive learning environment. Students were more willing to share their interpretations of character motivations or conflicts because they had a shared visual representation of the story.

These research findings are consistent with numerous studies supporting the effectiveness of visual and digital media in literacy. [Candrayani et al. \(2024\)](#) research, for instance, showed that using digital comics can greatly improve learning outcomes in elementary schools. These findings suggest that teachers at State Elementary School Poka 1, and other schools with similar challenges, can use digital comics as a viable and effective solution to improve reading comprehension. We should strategically integrate this media not only as a reading tool but also as a tool for discussion and text analysis. Despite the positive results, this study has limitations as classroom action research, namely limited generalizability. The researcher's (teacher's) intensive classroom intervention may have contributed to the high effectiveness. Therefore, to test the generalizability of the findings, we need to conduct further research with an experimental design that compares control and treatment groups in different locations.

Overall, the discussion confirms that the use of digital comics not only captures students' attention but also fundamentally facilitates the cognitive processes needed for comprehensive reading comprehension. The success in achieving 100% completion demonstrates that digital comics are a powerful tool for addressing literacy barriers in elementary schools.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The study focuses on the use of digital comics to enhance the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade students at State Elementary School 1 Poka. The use of digital comics has been proven effective in improving students' reading comprehension skills. This success is demonstrated by the increase in students' average scores from the pretest (48.68) to cycle I (63.03) and a significant increase in cycle II (76.51). The achievement in cycle II has exceeded the minimum passing criteria. Digital comics have a positive impact on students' interest in reading and their comprehension. Digital comics are considered an attractive, interactive, and contextual medium, therefore minimizing students' difficulties in understanding the content of reading material and expressing the message of the story. The success in cycle II shows that the improvements made after reflection in cycle I were effective. More focused planning and implementation successfully overcame existing obstacles, particularly in terms of understanding the content of the story text and expressing the message of the story, therefore achieving the learning objectives. Furthermore, digital comics not only improved cognitive scores but also successfully fostered students' interest in reading and active participation. This improvement occurred across all aspects of comprehension, including the ability to identify characters, comprehend story content, and interpret messages or moral values. Overall, this study confirms that

digital comics are a viable and effective learning innovation for improving students' reading comprehension skills at the primary school level.

As a suggestion, fifth-grade teachers are advised to integrate digital comic media continuously, not only in Indonesian language lessons, but also as an introductory medium or summary of material in other subjects that require narrative understanding (for example, history or science). Teachers should increase in-depth discussion activities that focus on visual analysis and interpretation of moral messages contained in comics, not just answering factual questions. For further research, it is recommended to conduct further research with experimental designs (for example, the pre-test post-test control group design) to compare the effectiveness of digital comics with conventional methods more rigidly and test the generalizability of the results in various locations. In addition, further research can focus on the extent to which digital comics can improve students' higher order thinking skills (HOTS), such as the ability to evaluate and create, which are advanced stages of reading comprehension.

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