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Development of E-Comic Kulturunterschiede as a Learning Media for German Culture

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Abstract
This development research aims to develop a product in the form of digital e-comic Kulturunterschiede as a medium for learning German culture. The purpose of developing this e-comic is to provide a visualization of cultural differences between Indonesia and Germany. The digital e-comic Kulturunterschiede contains cultural learning in the form of comics that contain Indonesian culture and German culture, besides that, it also presents practice questions. The development of this e-comic is expected to train reading (lesen), and speaking (sprechen) skills. The method used in this research is research and development with a research model following the Richey, Klein and Nelson type one model. The author uses qualitative descriptive data analysis techniques with the target users being Malang State University students who have taken Landeskunde courses. Further development of this e-comic is to develop with more diverse and interactive topics, as well as further research on the effectiveness of comics as a medium for learning German.

Keywords: *German language, e-comic, cultural comparison*

Introduction

Language is an important part of reflecting a country's culture, history and identity and is an essential tool for communication. It focuses on the human need to convey feelings, ideas and thoughts both orally and in writing. In the current era of globalization, learning a foreign language is also a platform for self-development, broadening cultural horizons, and improving analytical skills.

German is one of the foreign languages taught in formal education in Indonesia, including at the secondary school level (SMA/SMK/MA) and in higher education institutions, particularly within German Language Education and German Literature study programs. Under the Merdeka Curriculum, German language learning offers more than just vocabulary and grammar instruction; it also opens pathways to deeper cultural and historical insights, encouraging students to become not only proficient speakers but also culturally literate individuals.

German language learning in the Merdeka Curriculum provides ample space to explore the richness of this language. This curriculum not only emphasizes mastery of vocabulary and grammar, but also provides a deeper understanding of German culture, its history, and

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the values inherent in the language. This, German learners will not only become foreign speakers, but also cultural explorers who appreciate and understand their background.

In recent years, comics have emerged as a powerful and engaging medium in education. Their unique combination of visuals and text provides a compelling tool to facilitate language learning in a more interactive and enjoyable way. As Daryanto (2010) notes, comics can stimulate creativity and imagination, making them effective instruments for reading comprehension and textual analysis. Beyond their traditional print form, comics have also transitioned into digital media, allowing learners to access content across various platforms and devices, thereby enriching the learning environment.

The development of comics in the context of German language learning is also an interesting area of research. Through the use of comics, researchers can combine the power of visuals with German text, creating an engaging and effective learning experience. This research focuses not only on the development of German cultural materials in the comics themselves, but also on their effectiveness in improving German comprehension and language skills.

Method

This research uses research and development methods using qualitative descriptive data analysis. Development research is defined as an effort to develop and produce a product, namely materials, media, tools, and learning strategies that are used to address classroom learning rather than testing theory (Haryati, 2021). Haryati also said that this R & D method is quite effective for improving learning practices. As a result, to solve learning problems through the manufacture of certain goods, research and development is essential. Negara and Putrawangsa (2017) expressed another opinion by describing development activities as a process to make legitimate, effective, and practical types of interventions carried out in a structured and systematic manner. This activity also contributes theoretically and practically during the cycle of design activities, design trials, evaluation and design improvements. The author used the Richey, Klein, and Nelson model development model for this research and development. There are two types of Richey, Klein, and Nelson development models, according to Hariyanti (2019). The first model concentrates on developing products, programs, or tools as well as evaluating and validating the products that have been developed (Arifin, 2011). The second model concentrates on the application of the media that has been developed to identify. The model used in this research is the Richey, Klein and Nelson type one development model. The product to be produced in this research is German cultural learning materials in the form of e- comic.
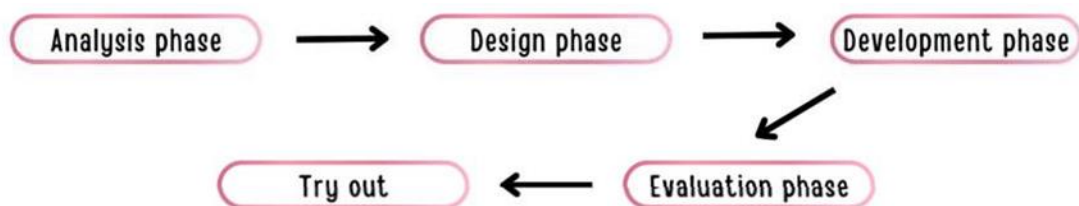
1: Development Stage Chart Figure

The data used in this research and development is quantitative descriptive data in the form of validation results and input from material experts and media experts. Input from material experts and media experts is used as material for media revision. In addition, to test the feasibility of the media, the author conducted product trials for Malang State University students who had taken *Landeskunde* courses.

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For media validation, the author used a semi-open questionnaire. The first questionnaire consisted of seven assessment components and four criteria filled in by media experts. The seven elements are: type of font chosen; composition and combination of colors; clarity of instructions for use; ease of use of the media; suitability of images; suitability with media background; and overall media appearance. The criteria that can be selected in the questionnaire are as follows: 1 = Not suitable; 2 = Less suitable; 3 = Suitable; 4 = Very suitable. Furthermore, the second questionnaire was filled in by material experts. This questionnaire also consists of seven components and four criteria. The components in the questionnaire include presentation of material; suitability of content to the actual situation; accuracy of speech; clarity of content; and suitability of exercise questions. The data obtained was then calculated with the formulaΣ x 100% and presented in percentage form. The media is declared not feasible if the results obtained are 1-25%, less feasible if the results reach 26-50%, quite feasible if the results reach 51-75%, and feasible if more than 75%.

Apart from material experts and media experts, the author also used an open questionnaire to test the feasibility of the product through a trial which was held on April 20, 2024. The target users are Malang State University students who have taken the Landeskunde course as many as 30 people. The components asked in the questionnaire include: ease of use of the media, clarity of material content, ease of practice questions, the role of media in the learning process, and media quality.

Results

E-comic *Kulturunterschiede* is a digital product developed in order to visualize cultural differences between Indonesia and Germany as a medium for learning German. This e- comic displays various cultural aspects of the two countries through an interesting and easy- to- understand comic format. In addition, this e-comic is also equipped with practice questions designed to train reading and speaking skills in German. Rachmawati and Irawan (2024) highlight that educational technologies not only support effective language learning but also enhance students' professional skills.

Please use 12-point bold for first-level headings, 10-point bold for second-level headings, and 10-point italics for third -level headings with an initial capital letter for any proper nouns. Leave one blank line (1.5 times spaced) before and after each heading. (Exception: no blank line between consecutive headings.) Please margin all headings to the left.

Figure 2. Comic Display

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In the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic, users will be taken to explore various situations and contexts of everyday life in Indonesia and Germany. Each episode of the comic illustrates relevant cultural differences, such as customs, traditions, social norms and cultural values that distinguish the two countries. Through a combination of text, images, and dialog in the comic, users are introduced to a wide array of cultural content presented in an engaging and informative manner.

Figure 3. E-Comic logo

Analysis of User Responses to E-Comic

During the evaluation stage, the researcher collected data through a questionnaire given to a number of students as potential users of the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic. The questionnaire was designed to evaluate various aspects of the e-comic, including usefulness in understanding cultural differences, quality of content, adequacy of practice questions, and effectiveness in practicing German language skills.

The results of the data analysis of the user responses showed some key findings:

a. Most respondents felt that the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic succeeded in providing a clear visualization of the cultural differences between Indonesia and Germany. They considered the comic as an effective means to understand the cultural context in an interesting and accessible way.

b. Most respondents gave a positive assessment of the quality of the e-comic content. They stated that the information presented in the comic was relevant and informative, and helped them to understand the different cultural aspects between the two countries.

c. Most respondents stated that the practice questions provided in the e-comic were quite useful in practicing reading and speaking skills in German. However, some respondents also wanted more variety of exercises and more involvement in interactive exercises.

d. The majority of respondents stated that the e-comic was effective in practicing German reading and speaking skills. They felt that the comic content and practice

questions helped them to improve their understanding and use of German in culturally relevant contexts.

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of E-Comic as German Language Learning Media

In addition to evaluating user responses to the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic, this study also aims to measure the effectiveness of this e-comic in achieving the predetermined German language learning objectives. This evaluation is done by comparing the achievement of learning outcomes before and after the use of e-comic, as well as identifying factors that affect its effectiveness.

a. Data analysis showed a significant improvement in students' cultural understanding after using the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic. They were better able to identify cultural differences between Indonesia and Germany and understand the social and cultural implications of these differences.

b. The evaluation results also showed a significant improvement in reading and speaking skills in German after the use of e-comics. Students reported an improvement in their ability to understand German texts and express their opinions orally in the language.

c. During the process of using e-comic, there was an increase in students' motivation to learn German. They are more motivated to learn and participate in learning activities because e-comics present interesting content and are relevant to everyday life.

d. Although the e-comic was successful in increasing student engagement in learning, some respondents expressed a desire for more interactive engagement in the e-comic, such as quiz or game features that can increase user interaction and engagement.

Recommendations for Improvement and Further Development

Based on the findings from the data analysis, there are several recommendations for further improvement and development that can be done to improve the quality and effectiveness of the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic as a German language learning media:

a. Adding a Variety of Problem Exercises
Responding to user requests, researchers can add a variety of practice questions in the e- comic, including challenging interactive practice questions.

b. Increased Interactive Engagement
E-comics can be enriched with interactive features, such as quizzes, games or simulations that can increase user engagement and reinforce the learning process.

c. Further Content Development
In addition to expanding the topics covered in e-comics, researchers can also develop more in-depth and complex content to enhance users' understanding and learning experience.

d. Advanced Trial
To ensure the effectiveness of this e-comic in various learning contexts, further trials are needed involving larger and more diverse samples, including users with different language proficiency levels.

e. Evaluation of Long-term Effectiveness
In addition to measuring the achievement of learning outcomes directly, research also needs to evaluate long-term effectiveness to see the impact of using e-comics on students' cultural understanding and German language skills over a longer period of time.

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Discussion

This discussion will discuss in depth the research results that have been presented previously, with a focus on the implications of the findings for the development of the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic as a German language learning medium. The discussion will include an analysis of the success of the e-comic in achieving learning objectives, factors that influence its effectiveness, and implications for further development in the context of language learning.

1. Success of E-Comic in Achieving Learning Objectives

In this study, the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic successfully achieved a number of predetermined learning objectives, such as providing visualization of cultural differences between Indonesia and Germany, practicing reading and speaking skills in German, as well as increasing students' cultural understanding and learning motivation. This success can be seen from the significant increase in students' cultural understanding, German language skills, and learning motivation after using the e-comic.

2. Factors Affecting E-Comic Effectiveness

Several factors can influence the effectiveness of the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic as a German language learning media:
   a. The quality of e-comic content is a key factor in determining its effectiveness as a learning medium. Relevant, informative and interesting content can increase users' interest and understanding of the learning material.
   b. The visual design of e-comics also plays an important role in attracting users' interest and making it easier to understand the content. The use of images, colors, and proper layout can make e-comics more attractive and easy to understand.
   c. The adequacy and relevance of question exercises in e-comics can also affect their effectiveness in practicing language skills. Varied and challenging practice questions can help users to master German better.
   d. The level of interactivity of e-comics can also affect the level of user engagement and learning effectiveness. Interactive features, such as quizzes, games or simulations, can increase users' interest and motivation to learn.
   e. User engagement in the learning process is also a key factor in determining the effectiveness of e-comics. Users who are active and engaged in learning tend to achieve better learning outcomes.
   f. The learning context, including student characteristics, the learning environment, and the teaching methods used, can also affect the effectiveness of e-comics as a learning medium.

3. Implications for Further Development

Based on the findings of this study, there are several implications that can be taken for the further development of e-comic *Kulturunterschiede* and the development of German language learning media as a whole:
   a. Refine e-comic content and design to keep it relevant, informative and engaging for users. This can be done through continuous evaluation of user responses and customization of content to evolving user needs and preferences.

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b.   Adding more interesting and varied interactive features can improve user engagement and learning effectiveness. Such features can be designed to reinforce concept understanding, practice language skills, and increase users' learning motivation.

c.   Collaborating with related parties, such as German lecturers, software developers and graphic designers, can enrich the learning experience and improve the overall quality of the e-comic. This collaboration can bring different perspectives and expertise to enrich e-comic content and design.

d.   Further trials involving a larger and more diverse sample can provide a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of e-comics as a medium for learning German. These trials can also help in identifying potential problems and adapting the e-comic to the needs of diverse users

e.   The development of this e-comic can be expanded by raising more diverse and complex topics in the context of Indonesian and German culture. The development of more in-depth content and diversification of topics can enrich the user's learning experience.

f.   Evaluate the effectiveness of e-comics in the long term to see their impact on students' cultural understanding and German language skills over a longer period of time. This evaluation can provide a deeper insight into the contribution of e-comics in the German language learning process.

Conclusion

This research produces *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic as a German language learning media that aims to visualize the cultural differences between Indonesia and Germany. Through a research and development process involving the Richey, Klein and Nelson type one model, this e-comic was successfully developed with relevant, interactive, and useful content for German learners.

The discussion has highlighted that the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic is effective in improving students' cultural understanding and German language skills. Through a combination of text, images, and practice questions, the e-comic is able to provide an engaging and interactive learning experience for users. However, there are also some challenges faced in e-comic development, such as relevant content design, technology integration, and effectiveness evaluation.

Recommendations (if necessary)

Based on the findings and discussion above, here are some suggestions for further development of the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic and related research:

1.   Adding a Variety of Problem Exercises
    The development of e-comics can be enriched by adding a variety of practice questions that cover various cultural contexts and language skills. These exercises can be designed in an interactive and challenging manner to increase user engagement in the learning process.

2.   Increased Interactive Engagement
    E-comics can be enhanced by adding interactive features, such as quizzes, games or simulations that allow users to actively participate in learning. This can increase user engagement and reinforce the learning process.

3.   Further Content Development

In addition to expanding the topics covered in the e-comic, the development of more in- depth and complex content should also be considered. More in-depth content will help users to deepen their understanding of cultural differences and German language skills.

4. Advanced Trial

To ensure the effectiveness of this e-comic in various learning contexts, it is recommended to conduct further trials involving a larger and more diverse sample. This will help in identifying weaknesses and improvements needed before widespread implementation.

5. Evaluation of Long-term Effectiveness

In addition to measuring the achievement of learning outcomes directly, it is recommended to conduct a long-term effectiveness evaluation to see the impact of using e-comics on students' cultural understanding and German language skills over a longer period of time.

6. Alternative Learning Model Development

This e-comic can also be the basis for the development of alternative learning models that are more innovative and adaptive. The development of learning models that utilize digital technology can help in creating a more engaging and effective learning experience for learners.

By implementing the suggestions above, it is hoped that the *Kulturunterschiede* e-comic can continue to grow and become one of the effective and innovative German language learning resources for students. In addition, further research can also provide deeper insights into the potential use of comics as a second language learning medium.

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