



# The Use Of Pictured Comic 父与子 [Fù Yǔ Zi] to Practice The Mandarin Reading Skills Of Grade X Students Of SMAN 2 Kota Malang

## 《父与子》（Fù Yǔ Zi）图像漫画在提升玛琅市第二国立高级中学十年级学生汉语阅读能力中的应用

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**Abstract:** The ability to master foreign languages is essential in the globalization era, and Mandarin is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. However, many high school students in Indonesia still experience difficulties in reading Mandarin texts, particularly in recognizing pinyin, hanzi, and comprehending the meaning of a passage. This study aimed to explore the use of the illustrated comic 父与子 [Fù yǔ zi] as a learning medium to improve students' reading skills in Mandarin. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, with research conducted at SMAN 2 Malang involving grade X students as participants. Data were collected through classroom observations and questionnaires, supported by validated instruments consisting of observation sheets and response forms. The findings revealed that the use of 父与子 comics facilitated students in understanding main ideas, identifying character relations, recognizing humor, and grasping moral messages in the stories. The short and simple dialogues in the comic also helped students to learn new vocabulary and retell the story more easily, while the illustrations created a more engaging and interactive classroom atmosphere. Questionnaire results further confirmed positive student responses, as the majority reported increased interest, motivation, and comprehension when learning through comics. In conclusion, the 父与子 comic proved to be an effective and enjoyable medium for teaching Mandarin reading skills, with significant contributions to vocabulary enrichment and learning motivation. The study recommends teachers to apply comics as alternative reading materials, while future research may expand the scope by comparing with other visual media and exploring speaking and writing skills.

**Keywords:** Mandarin Language, Reading Skills, Comic Father and Son 《父与子》, Learning Media, Learning Motivation

**To cite this article:** Wulandari, R. P., Sakti, K. F. L., Retnantiti, S. (2026). The Use Of Pictured Comic 父与子 [Fù Yǔ Zi] to Practice The Mandarin Reading Skills Of Grade X Students Of SMAN 2 Kota Malang. *Journal of Chinese Language and Culture Studies*, 5(1), 10.17977/um073v5i12026p27-44.

Submit: 14 January 2026



Revised: 15 April 2026

Accepted: 1 June 2026

**摘要:** 在全球化时代, 掌握外语能力十分重要, 而汉语是世界上使用最广泛的语言之一。然而, 印尼许多高中生在汉语阅读方面仍然存在困难, 尤其是在拼音、汉字的识别以及篇章理解方面。本研究旨在探讨漫画《父与子》在提高学生汉语阅读能力中的应用效果。研究采用描述性质性方法, 在玛琅市第二高级中学进行, 以高一学生为研究对象。数据通过课堂观察和问卷收集, 研究工具包括经专家验证的观察表和问卷。研究结果表明, 《父与子》漫画能够帮助学生理解文章的中心思想、识别人物关系、把握幽默元素以及领会故事中的道德寓意。漫画中简短而简单的对话有助于学生学习新词汇并更容易复述故事, 而生动的插图则营造了更有趣和互动的课堂氛围。问卷结果进一步显示, 大多数学生对使用漫画学习持积极态度, 认为其提高了学习兴趣、动机和理解能力。研究结论认为, 《父与子》漫画是一种有效且有趣的汉语阅读教学媒介, 在词汇积累和学习动机方面具有显著作用。研究建议教师将漫画作为阅读教学的补充材料, 而未来的研究可进一步比较其他视觉媒体的效果, 并拓展至口语和写作能力的培养。

**关键词:** 汉语, 阅读能力, 《父与子》漫画, 学习媒体, 学习动机

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak more than one language fluently is an essential skill for young people to possess in this era of globalization. According to Huang Yao-Hui (dalam Rohmatillah, 2013) More than a billion people worldwide speak Chinese. Based on data published by UNESCO in 2008, Mandarin is the second international language after English, and its learning is increasingly integrated into formal education systems in various countries, including Indonesia, thru the improvement of the national Mandarin curriculum for high schools/Islamic high schools in 2004. As part of the required foreign language curriculum from kindergarten to university, students learning Mandarin (Musdalifah et al., 2023) It has four components as benchmarks for proficiency in Mandarin, as stated by Musdalifah et al., (2023) are as follows: (1) listening skills (听力)[*tīnglì*], (2) speaking skills (口语) [*Kǒuyǔ*], (3) reading skills (阅读)[*yuèdú*], and (4) writing skills (写作)[*xiězuò*], These four components are interconnected and inseparable in the process of learning Mandarin.

Al Mahiyagsi et al., (2022) stating that reading is an important part of learning Mandarin. Reading requires more than just decoding spoken words; there are aspects of intonation and pronunciation in reading that have the most significant impact on reading fluency. Because if there are errors in these aspects of reading, it will greatly affect the outcome of the translation. According to Al Habsy et al., (2020) Reading can provide beneficial information for a person's life. Reading, as stated by Jumarni et al., (2020) t is the capacity to sharpen one's understanding. Having a high reading ability allows someone to acquire knowledge, which is the primary goal of reading.

There are different tones and pronunciations for each word in Mandarin, making reading the language significantly different from reading Indonesian. Han characters and reading styles are two ways in which Chinese and Indonesian differ from each other. According to Musdalifah et al., (2023) fluency, intonation, and pronunciation are the three components that make up Mandarin.



(*hànzì/汉字*). According to Adji, (2017) this is demonstrated by the fact that some students can read a limited number of Chinese characters but have difficulty understanding the provided material, whether from books or the original sources used for real-life conversations.

As stated by Rezqi et al., (2022), the main goal of learning Mandarin in high school is to cultivate skills in written and spoken communication, as well as the ability to understand and express abstract ideas and emotions. According to Rezqi et al., (2022) in Mandarin language learning in high school, students still experience difficulties in reading vocabulary within a Mandarin sentence. The difficulties experienced by students can become obstacles in the classroom learning process, so students need creative, engaging, and efficient media. Another aspect of language skills will be impacted if reading and vocabulary comprehension in Mandarin are not addressed immediately.

The conditions described above are similar to the conditions of Mandarin language learning at SMAN 2 Kota Malang, because based on the results of preliminary research, 40-45% of students still lack proficiency in reading pinyin or hanzi. According to the Mandarin language teacher at SMAN 2 Malang, HSK 2 is still the main exam for Mandarin language proficiency. Class X at SMAN 2 Malang uses learning modules created by the teacher or **online** materials as their primary source for Mandarin language instruction. At SMAN 2 Malang, the teacher uses **PowerPoint** for Mandarin lessons, and they have never used comics as a visual aid for learning.

Rohmawati & Wibisono (2020), stated that compared to learning without instructional media, learning with instructional media appears more effective and innovative when done in the classroom. As one example of the many types of learning media, comic books are a visual learning tool that can assist in the educational process. Comics are a popular, easy-to-understand, and highly efficient form of visual communication (Siregar, 2018).

Next, the researcher provided the teacher with a reference to the comic *Fù yǔ zǐ* for use as a learning medium in Mandarin language instruction. According to the teacher, the comic was deemed suitable for use in Mandarin language learning because it has attractive visual elements and lighthearted content, making it capable of capturing students' attention.

illustrated comic *Fù yǔ zǐ* is one of the Mandarin-language comic illustrated created by Zhang Leping and adapted from the work of German artist Erich Ohser, who used the pen name E. O. Plauen, from 1934 to 1937. Although it originates from Germany, this comic is very popular in China and has been translated into Mandarin because it contains moral and universal values. This comic depicts the relationship between a father and his son in a humorous and touching way. Researchers also showed the comic titled *Fù yǔ zǐ* to one of the students at SMAN 2 Malang during the pre-research phase. According to students, by looking at the characters, dialog, and plot, it is easier for them to remember the story compared to reading narrative text without pictures. Based on this background, research needs to be conducted on the use of the comic 《父与子》 [*Fù yǔ zǐ*] to practice Mandarin reading skills in Mandarin language learning at SMAN 2 Malang.

## 2. METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. This research method is used to describe and explain phenomena, events, or situations in depth based on non-numerical data, such as words and behaviors (Sugiyono, 2020) his aims to deeply describe students' activities in Mandarin language learning using the comic 《父与子》 [*Fù yǔ zǐ*] as a medium. The research was



conducted at SMAN 2 Kota Malang with the subjects being tenth-grade students, chosen because they are suitable for Mandarin language learning and have heterogeneous reading skills.

Data collection methods include:

- a. Questionnaire: This is a data collection technique that involves providing a set of written questions or statements to respondents for them to answer.
- b. Careful observation is observation that has been systematically designed, about what will be observed, when and where (Sugiyono, 2013)

Two people acted as observers to assist with the implementation of the research. While student reactions to comics as a learning tool were confirmed using questionnaires, data on student activity during the learning process was collected thru observation. Observational data sheets (8 statements) and questionnaire data (10 statements) form the research instrument. The title of the comic book series studied 《父与子》 [Fù Yǔ Zǐ] is as follows:



Figure 1. Script 1 《人靠衣装》 [Rén kào yīzhuāng] - Humans depend on clothes



Figure 2. Script 2 《烟花雪茄》 [Yānhuā Xuějiā] - Firecracker cigar





Figure 3. Script 3 《自己捡手杖》 [Zìjǐ jiǎn shǒuzhàng] - Take your own stick



Figure 4. Script 4 《大龙虾》 [Dà Lóngxiā] - Large lobster



Figure 5. Script 5 《快乐的生日派对》 [Kuàilè de Shēngrì Pàiduì] - Happy Birthday Party

There are three steps to analyzing data: data reduction, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions with experts and triangulation (Rijali, 2018). In its application, the researcher selected and simplified the data from observations and questionnaires during the reduction stage, then presented it in narrative and table form to facilitate interpretation. Next, the researcher drew conclusions based on findings that were verified thru data triangulation and discussion with experts. There are three steps used to check the data collected for this study:

1. **Data Reduction:** Specific observational data and questionnaires related to students' reading abilities were used for data reduction in this study. This process includes grouping data based on reading skill indicators (vocabulary comprehension, text content, and text-image relationships) and simplifying information. In this process, no data is reduced, so all the data obtained is used in data presentation.
2. **Data presentation:** The data from the observations and questionnaires are presented descriptively in the form of tables and narrative descriptions. The data encompasses all findings related to students' reading skills during learning using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ Zǐ], including their active understanding of the text content, their ability to connect images with sentences, and students' responses to the ease of understanding the text, practicing vocabulary, and learning motivation. No data is reduced; instead, it is used to enhance the analysis of research findings.
3. **Drawing Conclusions and Verification:** The research objectives and analytical findings provide the basis for compelling conclusions.



### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Result

This section presents the findings of the data analysis, which includes the steps taken to teach Mandarin reading comprehension to tenth-grade students at SMAN 2 Kota Malang using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ], as well as the students' reactions to the use of the comic. Among the professors who teach Mandarin language education, they have given their approval for the group's final report. Here are the upcoming presentations.

##### 3.1.1. The Process of Using the Comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] to Practice Mandarin Reading Skills of Grade XII Students at SMAN 2 Malang City

Based on the findings of both observers, the researcher followed all the procedures outlined on the observation sheet from the beginning to the end of the learning activity. At the beginning of the learning activity, both observers noted that the researcher opened the lesson with greetings and a prayer, conducted an aperception by asking students about their experiences reading comics, and conveyed the learning objectives and benefits of using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] in Mandarin language instruction. Additionally, the students also listened to the researcher's explanation of a short story titled 锻炼身体 (Duànliàn Shēntǐ).

Researchers divided the students into small groups to read and debate the content of the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] during core activities, as observed by both observers. The group work results show that most students were able to identify the main idea of each panel quite accurately, such as the theme about the importance of maintaining health in the story 锻炼身体. Students were also able to connect the relationships between characters thru facial expressions, body language, plot, and setting depicted in the comic, thus understanding the dynamics of the interaction between the father and son in the story.

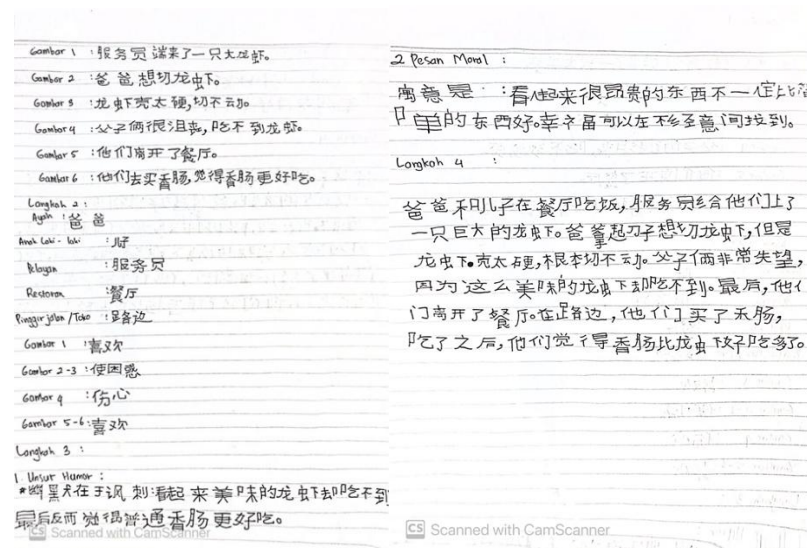


Figure 6. Results of Group Assignment 1 《大龙虾》 [Dà Lóngxiā]



Based on the analysis of student worksheets on the comic theme 《大龙虾》 it was found that students demonstrated a fairly good understanding of the plot and characters in the comic. Students are able to identify the main characters, namely the father, son, and waiter, and determine the setting of the events in the restaurant and by the roadside according to the visual context. The main idea of each panel has been written sequentially, even tho it's in the form of simple descriptive sentences.

Additionally, the students successfully interpreted the element of humor thru the father and son's failure to cut the large, delicious-looking shrimp, creating an ironic situation when they ended up enjoying a simple meal of sausages at the end of the story. The moral message concluded is also appropriate, namely that something that appears luxurious is not necessarily better than something simple.

Overall, the students' narratives demonstrate a consistency between the written content and the comic's storyline, and reflect the achievement of indicators for understanding plot, characters, humor, and moral messages. However, the language structure can still be further developed to be more coherent according to task requirements. Nevertheless, the results of this study indicate positive development in reading comprehension skills thru the medium of Mandarin comics.

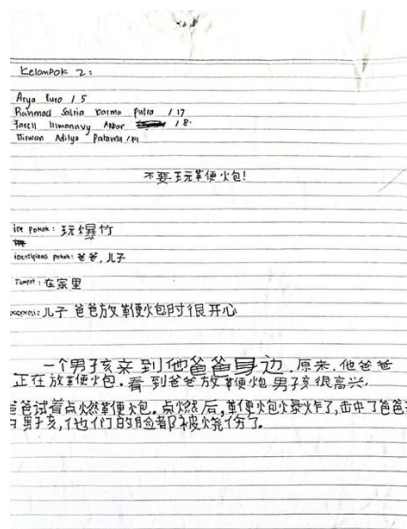


Figure 7. Results of Group Assignment 2 《烟花雪茄》 [Yānhuā Xuějiā]

Based on the analysis of Group 2's worksheets, it is known that the students have demonstrated a basic understanding of the comic title 《烟花雪茄》. In general, the content of the students' writing reflects the sequence of events in the comic, namely the moment when a child gives an object to their father, the father tries to light it, and then an explosion occurs, causing both of them to be exposed to smoke. This indicates that students are able to grasp the overall essence of the story. However, errors were found in identifying the main object of the story. The student interpreted the object the child gave to the father as firecrackers 鞭炮 [biānpào / petasan], even tho in the original comic, the object was a cigar 雪茄 [xuějiā / cerutu]. This error doesn't disrupt the overall narrative flow, but it does indicate that students still need reinforcement in understanding the cultural context and specific vocabulary within Mandarin-language visual texts.

Additionally, students have not fully followed the task structure according to the research indicators. Some components of the analysis, such as explicit character identification, setting determination, character expression breakdown, and moral message elaboration, have not been written separately as requested in the work instructions. The narrative constructed only includes retelling, but is not yet complete with explicit dialog or humor analysis.

Nevertheless, the students' ability to construct simple narratives in Mandarin indicates that they have grasped the main plot of the story. With further guidance and clarification of visual details, the students have the potential to complete all components of the task more fully.



Figure 8. Results of Group Assignment 3 《自己捡手杖》 [Zìjǐ jiǎn shǒuzhàng]

Based on the analysis of the group 3 worksheets, it is known that the students have demonstrated a good understanding of the comic 《自己捡手杖》 the content of the students' writing aligns with the storyline, characters, and moral messages found in the comic. Students are able to identify the main idea of each panel in sequence, and accurately recognize narrative elements such as characters, setting, and character expressions. Additionally, students successfully interpreted the elements of humor and the moral value of self-responsibility that are at the heart of the story. The rewritten narrative also demonstrates a coherent and cohesive command of the Mandarin language. Overall, the results of Group 3's work demonstrate a high level of alignment between the students' text and the content of the comic, and reflect the achievement of reading comprehension skills indicators in Mandarin language learning thru the medium of comics.

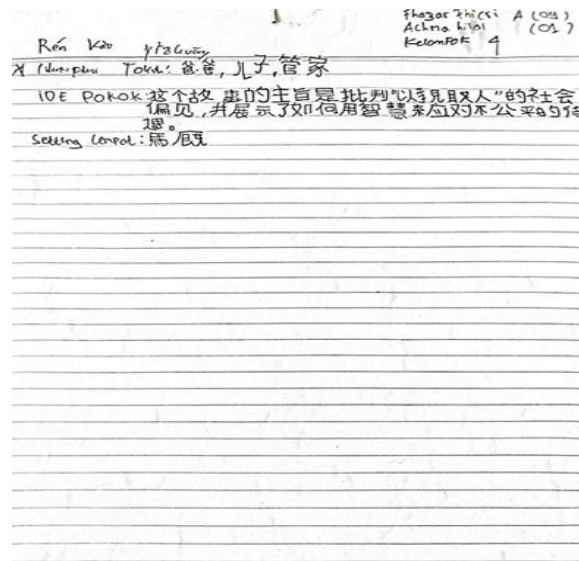


Figure 9. Results of Group Assignment 4 《人靠衣装》 [Rén kào yīzhuāng]

Based on the analysis of group 4's worksheets, it is known that the students have attempted to understand the comic 《人靠衣装》. Students are able to recognize the main theme of the story and attempt to deeply interpret the moral message related to social injustice. However, the content of the students' writing does not fully align with the visual flow of the comic because the main ideas written are still abstract and do not depict concrete events in each panel. Additionally, most task instructions such as complete character identification, character expression descriptions, and the composition of dialog and retelling in Mandarin have not been completed. Thus, the results of group 4's work indicate a good conceptual understanding of the story, but they still need guidance to present their analysis in a coherent manner according to the task structure and indicators of Mandarin comic comprehension reading skills.





Figure 10. Results of Group Assignment 5 《快乐的生日派对》 [Kuàilè de Shēngri Pàiduì]

Based on the analysis of the group work sheets from **group 5**, it is known that the students have demonstrated a good understanding of the comic 《快乐的生日派对》. The content of the student's writing aligns with the storyline, characters, and moral messages found in the comic. Students are able to identify the main idea of each panel in sequence, accurately describe the order of events, and recognize characters and settings within the visual context. Additionally, students can interpret the elements of humor and the value of family togetherness, which are the main messages in the comic. The retelling composed using simple Mandarin demonstrates the students' ability to understand and express the story's content in a coherent manner. Thus, the work of group 5 demonstrates a high level of alignment between the written content and the comic, and reflects the achievement of reading comprehension skills indicators thru the medium of Mandarin comics.

Generally, research indicates that students have understood the lesson content. However, group task studies revealed that Hanzi characters were still written carelessly. This indicates that although the understanding of concepts is already quite good, the skill of writing Chinese characters accurately still needs to be improved.

From the results of this group work, it is known that using the comic 父与子 not only helps students understand the reading material but also trains their ability to interpret meaning, construct sentences, and retell the story in Mandarin. Finally, students and researchers reflected on their work together. Their views are consistent with this action. As stated by Lasmini (2019) reflection in learning is very important because it allows instructors and students to assess the processes that have occurred, thereby improving learning outcomes in the future. Students were also given the opportunity to fill out a questionnaire thru Google Forms as a means of providing feedback on the learning. The researcher then concluded the lesson with a greeting and a thank you. Based on the explanation above, it appears that all learning steps using the comic media 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] proceeded according to the lesson plan that had been prepared. The findings from the observations clearly show that using comics as a visual medium helps engage students more actively in learning to read Mandarin.

### 3.1.2. Response of 10th Grade Students at SMAN 2 Kota Malang to the Use of the Comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] as a Media for Learning Mandarin Reading

Based on the results of a questionnaire administered to 17 tenth-grade students at SMAN 2 Kota Malang, it was found that the majority of students responded positively to the use of the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] as a medium for learning Mandarin reading. A total of 17 students agreed that comics helped them understand the main idea of the reading material, while 15 students felt that comics made it easier to connect with the characters, understand humor, complete simple dialogs, retell the story, and acquire new vocabulary. Additionally, fourteen students said they could identify the moral principles of the story, and sixteen students that discussion groups were very important for understanding the reading. Table 1 below presents the findings.



Table 1. Results of the Student Questionnaire on Comic Usage 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ]

No	Question	Agree	Disagree
1.	Using the comic [父与子] helped me understand the main idea of the comic script.	17	0
2.	Using the comic [父与子] made it easier for me to connect the relationships between the characters (figures, expressions, body language, plot, and setting)	15	2
3.	I can relate the content of the comic story to elements of humor in the context of everyday life.	15	2
4.	I can identify the values or moral messages contained in the comic.	14	3
5.	I can complete the comic strip with simple dialog in Mandarin.	15	2
6.	I can easily retell the content of the comic strip [Father and Son] with the script title above.	15	2
7.	The short sentences under each comic panel [父与子] made it easier for me to read Mandarin because the language is light and easy to understand.	15	2
8.	By using the comic [父与子] I learned new Mandarin vocabulary for everyday life.	15	2
9.	Group discussions help me understand the content of comic stories better.	16	1
10.	The use of comics in Mandarin language learning makes me more interested and motivated to study Mandarin.	15	2

Based on this data, some students who chose "disagree" on the questionnaire generally had quite reasonable explanations. Some people find it difficult to follow the storyline because they are not yet accustomed to reading Mandarin text, even with the help of illustrations, so they cannot grasp the relationships between characters or expressions well. Some students also admitted they didn't understand the humor in the comics due to cultural differences, making it difficult to relate to their daily experiences. Additionally, some feel they are not yet able to construct simple dialogs or retell the content of comics due to limitations in vocabulary and understanding of Mandarin grammar. Some other students mentioned that they found group discussions less helpful because they were more comfortable learning individually, so they didn't feel they gained much new understanding from the collaboration. These are the things that cause a small percentage of students to answer "disagree," even tho the majority of students feel that using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] in Mandarin reading instruction is beneficial.



### 3.1.2.1 Comic Usage 《父子》 [FÙ YŪ Zǐ] In Understanding the Main Idea

Students in class X at SMAN 2 Malang, who served as research subjects, stated that using the comic 《父子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] helped them understand the main idea of the reading material. Visual media in the form of comics is considered more interesting because it presents short text accompanied by illustrations, making it easier for students to connect the storyline and identify the main ideas. The use of real learning materials can enhance students' understanding of abstract ideas, as stated by Shoimah (2020).

The results of the study thru questionnaires showed that 17 students stated that using the comic 《父子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] made it easier for them to understand the main ideas in the story. No students stated that they were unable to support learning because the comic's storyline is simple and supported by clear illustrations, making it easier to understand. This data shows that overall, comics play a positive role in guiding students to focus on the core of the reading material, while also helping them practice their Mandarin reading skills.

Because it is important for readers to understand the central concepts of Pratiwi (2022), reading, she argues that the capacity to identify the main idea is an important reading comprehension skill. Because of the dense language and relevant visual depictions in visual media like comics, children might find it easier to grasp central concepts.

### 3.1.2.2 Comic Usage 《父子》 [FÙ YŪ Zǐ] In Connecting Relationships Between Characters

X grade students of SMAN 2 Malang, as research subjects, stated that the comic 《父子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] helped them understand the relationships between characters thru facial expressions, body language, and a simple storyline. The humorous characterization of the father and son makes it easier for students to understand the interactions in the story, allowing them to see the connections between the characters more clearly. This is in line with the opinion of Lestari and Ari Suriani (2025) who explain that image media can provide concrete visual experiences, thus strengthening students' understanding of the material being taught.

The questionnaire results show that 15 students stated that the comic 《父子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] helped them understand the relationships between characters, while 2 students were less supportive because they still found it difficult to understand the characters' facial expressions and body language in the comic. Both students admitted they focused more on the text than the images, so visual details didn't help much in understanding the storyline. Additionally, limited vocabulary makes it difficult for them to fully grasp the meaning of conversations between characters, making the relationships between the characters unclear to them.

This data shows that the majority of students feel comic media benefits them in understanding character interactions, although a small percentage of students still experience difficulties because they admit to focusing more on the text than the images, so visual details don't help much in understanding the storyline. Therefore, it's safe to say that using comics helps students better understand character connections in Mandarin reading materials.

### 3.1.2.3 Linking Comic Story Content to Humorous Elements

Students in class X at SMAN 2 Malang, as research subjects, stated that the comic 《父子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] helped them connect the story's content with the humor present within it. The humor that arises thru the interaction between father and child, facial expressions, and everyday situations makes it easier for students to understand the story's meaning while also feeling entertained. This



aligns with the opinion of Tiara & Fauziah, (2022) that children may be more engaged, calm, and enthusiastic when using humor in the classroom.

The questionnaire results show that 15 students stated that the humor element in the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] made it easier for them to understand the story's content, while 2 students said it was less helpful for learning because they felt cultural differences made the humor in the story difficult to understand and irrelevant to their daily experiences. These findings indicate that the majority of students benefit from using humor as a meaning enhancer in reading texts, although a small percentage of students still find it difficult to connect humor with story comprehension. According to Rohmawati and Wibisono, (2020) comics serve as a visual medium that also helps students become emotionally invested in learning Mandarin.

### 3.1.2.4 Understanding the Values or Moral Messages Contained in Comics

The research results show that using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] not only serves as a form of entertainment but is also capable of instilling life values or moral messages in students. Throughout the collection of short stories, children will find direct lessons emphasizing the importance of cooperation, respecting elders, being patient, and appreciating family love. This aligns with Soedarso (2015) view that literary works, including comics, have an educational function because they are able to convey moral ideals subtly thru their stories and characters.

Based on the completed questionnaires, 14 students stated that the comic 《父与子》 helped them understand life values, while 3 students said it was less helpful because they felt more focused on the storyline than the implied moral message. These results indicate that the majority of students can connect what they read to their own personal beliefs, while a minority have not yet fully grasped the moral lessons presented in the book. Based on the explanation above, learning using comics can be an effective medium for instilling positive values thru visual and contextual approaches (Istiqomah, 2025).

### 3.1.2.5 Understanding Simple Dialogues in Mandarin

The research results indicate that using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] can help students understand simple Mandarin dialogs. The dialog in the comic is relatively short, uses everyday vocabulary, and is supported by visual illustrations that make it easier for students to understand the meaning of the conversations. This aligns with Alimuddin (2023) research on comprehensible input, which states that language learners find it easier to understand material when it is presented in a simple, contextual, and appropriate manner for their skill level.

Based on the data, 15 students stated that they could understand simple dialogs in comics well, while 2 students still found it difficult due to limited vocabulary and understanding of grammar. Because the use of light language allows students to connect the text with real-life situations, these findings suggest that comic media may be a good way to introduce simple discussions in Chinese.

### 3.1.2.6 Students' Ease in Retelling Comic Content

The research results show that the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] makes it easier for students to retell the story's content. With clear visual illustrations and short text accompanying the images, students can more easily understand the storyline and recall the sequence of events. This aligns with the view expressed by Wahidin (2025) who believes that visual media can enhance language learners' retelling abilities by facilitating a more systematic reorganization of knowledge.



Based on the questionnaire, 15 students stated that comics made it easier for them to retell the content of the reading material, while 2 students still found it difficult, particularly in constructing sentences independently using Mandarin. This finding indicates that comic media can serve as a bridge for students in honing their speaking and storytelling skills, as comics not only facilitate understanding but also help students remember the details of the events within them (Istiqomah, 2025).

### 3.1.2.7 The Role of Short Sentences in Aiding Reading Comprehension

The research results show that the short sentences in the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] sangat are very helpful for students in understanding the reading content. Simple sentences accompanied by visual illustrations make it easier for students to recognize the meaning of words and sentence structures without feeling overwhelmed by long texts. According to research conducted by Nesa (2024) using shorter sentences to connect the material can actually help less experienced readers understand it better. This is because their focus is on the substance of the message rather than complex linguistic structures.

Based on questionnaire data, 15 students stated that short sentences helped them understand the reading content, while 2 students felt they still needed additional explanation from the teacher to understand the overall meaning of the text. This finding shows that using short sentences in Mandarin-language comics makes a positive contribution to making it easier for students to understand the reading, especially for beginner learners.

### 3.1.2.7 Acquiring New Vocabulary through Comics [父与子]

The research results show that using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] can help students acquire new Mandarin vocabulary related to daily life. The vocabulary used in the comic is practical, simple, and easy to apply in everyday conversation. According to Arsyitina (2025) students retain more vocabulary when it is presented in a relevant context and tailored to their current skill level.

Based on the questionnaire results, 15 students stated that they learned new vocabulary through the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ], while 2 students felt they still needed additional practice to remember the vocabulary they had learned. This finding suggests that comic media can enrich students' vocabulary, particularly due to its contextual presentation through images, simple dialog, and storylines that are close to everyday life.

### 3.1.2.8 The Benefits of Group Discussion in Understanding Comic Story Content

Based on the research findings, almost all students stated that group discussions helped them understand the content of the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ]. Out of the 17 students present, 16 stated that the discussion activity played an important role in clarifying the reading material, while only 1 student felt less helped because they were more accustomed to studying independently and found it difficult to keep up with the pace of group discussions that require cooperation and active communication. Additionally, there's a possibility that the student lacks confidence in expressing their opinions due to limited proficiency in Mandarin vocabulary, which makes them tend to be passive and not fully benefit from discussion activities.

According to Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), students learn best when they work in groups. This is because students gain a deeper understanding of concepts that were previously challenging for them when they interact with their peers. Cooperative learning, which includes group discussions, allows students to help each other



understand the content and practice communication skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Thus, group discussions in Mandarin language learning using comics are not only beneficial for deepening understanding of the story's content, but also for training students' courage to express their opinions, listen to others, and build cooperation.

### 3.1.2.9 The Influence of Comic Media on Motivation to Learn Mandarin

The research results indicate that using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] has a positive impact on students' motivation to learn Mandarin. Out of the 17 students present, 15 stated that comic media made them more interested and motivated to participate in learning, while only 2 students felt less affected because they still found it difficult to understand the vocabulary and sentence structure in the text, so the illustrations and storyline were not enough to increase their learning interest. This finding suggests that comics, as a visual medium, have a unique appeal that can motivate learning interest, particularly in foreign language learning, which is often considered difficult.

This aligns with Agrifina (2024) opinion, which explains that learning motivation is one of the important internal factors that determine students' learning success. Engaging learning media, such as comics, can be a stimulus that sparks curiosity, enjoyment, and student involvement in the learning process. Additionally, according to Nadila (2025) the use of visual learning media can be motivating because the information presented is more concrete, interesting, and easy to understand. Based on the explanation above, the use of the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] not only helps students understand reading material but also encourages them to be more active and enthusiastic in learning Mandarin.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS 结论

Based on the research findings, the use of the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] Mandarin reading instruction for 10th-grade students at SMAN 2 Kota Malang is implemented thru three learning stages: initial, core, and final. At the core stage, students read and discuss the story's content, identify new vocabulary, and retell the reading material. This comic media helps students understand the main idea, connect with the characters, grasp the humor, and understand the moral message, while the interesting illustrations can create a more lively and interactive learning atmosphere, although some groups are still less active. Additionally, students' responses to using the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] as a learning medium were also very positive. Most students felt helped because this comic uses simple sentences that make it easy to understand, enriches vocabulary, and motivates learning thru group discussions. Only a small percentage of students felt less benefit, mainly due to differences in study habits.

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that Mandarin language teachers utilize the comic 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] as a variation in reading instruction because it can motivate students, divide learning groups evenly, and provide guidance for finding main ideas, vocabulary, and moral messages. The comic book 《父与子》 [Fù yǔ zǐ] can be purchased online. Students are expected to be more active in group discussions and to get used to writing down new vocabulary to enrich their Mandarin vocabulary. For future researchers, it is recommended to investigate the factors that cause errors in writing hanzi, such as teaching methods and practice frequency, so that the results can deepen understanding of improving students' hanzi writing skills. It is also recommended to use other comics such as 阿衰 [Ā Shuāi], 老夫子 [Lǎo Fūzǐ], or 熊出没 [Xióng Chūmò] which also have light, humorous storylines and are rich in moral values. These can serve



as alternative media for learning Mandarin reading skills and as research materials because each comic has different story characteristics, language styles, and visualizations, which can lead to more diverse findings.



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