



Using Context Clues Strategy Toward Students' Reading Achievement of the Multimodal Descriptive Text in “Kurikulum Merdeka”

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to determine whether there are any appreciable differences in reading proficiency between students who are taught to understand multimodal descriptive texts utilizing context clues and those who are not. This study is experimental in nature. The target audience for the study is 8th graders at SMPN 38 Padang for the 2022–2023 academic year. By using cluster random sampling, a random sample was taken. There were 60 participants in this study: 30 from Class VIII.B and 30 from Class VIII.D. Class VIII.D was chosen as the control group in this study whereas Class VIII.B served as the experimental group. The experimental group received instruction using context clues as a reading approach to help them understand the material. In contrast, the method was not taught to the control group. Multiple choice tests were used by the researcher to conduct the pre-test and post-test. The test was administered by the researcher to gauge students' reading achievement and comprehension. To determine whether the hypothesis was accepted or not, the t-test was performed. Findings demonstrate that students who are taught to infer the meaning of difficult words and comprehend the text by using context clues when reading multimodal descriptive texts have better reading comprehension than students who are trained to use dictionaries. By using the text's description, example, and synonyms as a guide, pupils will have an easier time understanding unfamiliar words. Context hints in reading instruction have a positive impact on students' learning outcomes rather than using a dictionary. Students in the experiment class and students in the control class demonstrate significantly different reading achievement levels.

Keywords: *Context Clues, Multimodal Descriptive text, Reading achievement, “Kurikulum Merdeka”*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading in the education context is one of the important skills needed in supporting the success of learning process. All students must be enrich their English knowledge by reading some books in order to get the information. Students who study English as a second language are required to learn about English from all angles. By reading much about culture and language used will help students to be easier mastering English. According to Nuttal [1] states that reading is communication process of interpreting words, phrases, clauses and sentences where the writer and the readers interact through the text. The explanation in line with Burns [2] that reading is readers' thinking process getting information of the text. The writer main goal produce text is to share the important information

involved and explained in the text. The readers can get the information and writer's message by interpreting graphics symbols that represent linguistic features and relate to readers' knowledge of the reading text. Thinking process will take place when readers can detect written symbols, analyse the words, respond, and learn information through reading process.

Reading a text involves understanding both its broad and specific information. According to Silberstein [3], in order to understand the meaning of the text, readers must engage with graphic symbols, their reading abilities, and their word knowledge. He describes reading as the students' activity to preview the text by creating predictions about the words, linking to prior knowledge, connecting to experience, and connecting to the situation in real life. The students' success in

learning English can be affected by their reading abilities. To understand and comprehend the reading text, students must possess strong reading abilities. In order to understand the meaning of the text, there is a relationship between reading the text and reading ability. Then, it will make them easier to catch the content and the writer intention in the reading text.

Based on the survey from Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and Ministry of Home Affairs in 2021, In terms of literacy levels, Indonesia is ranked 62 out of 70 nations, placing it among the worst 10 in the world. This data in line with the real condition at school. Indonesian students as English foreign language learners feel hard to comprehend the text with different language features and structure. As a matter of fact, the students often find difficulties to comprehend their reading text. The students find it challenging to understand the text they just read. From the writer's discussion with some Junior High School students in Padang, it was obvious that the majority of the students had similar reading difficulties. From the content they just read, they are unable to glean broad and specific information. A great number of students have limitation in English vocabulary, knowledge and culture. Based on the previous reason Many students have trouble understanding the meaning of unfamiliar words. The primary factor in the reading process is that how the reader can gain the reading goals by considering who reads, how we read, what we read, and where [4] [5].

Goodman [6] states: "Reading is a participatory activity between languages and thought, this process involves three factors, namely, background knowledge, language features, conceptual abilities and strategies used". One of the crucial elements that may have an impact on how well students understand the content is reading strategy. There are some reading strategy that can support the students to master reading skills. Selecting appropriate reading strategy can determine the success of students reading achievement. According to Brown [7], strategies are unique approaches to solve problems or modes of operation for accomplishing a certain purpose, as well as deliberate designs for regulating and manipulating specific information. The strategy used by the teacher to make planning about what material and manner applied in the learning process. The effectiveness of learning is greatly influenced by the teaching-learning process.

One method for assisting pupils in understanding the meaning of new words in the text is to teach reading with context clues. Context clues, which help readers understand the meaning of the text, can be found in words, phrases, and sentences. Using contextual clues, the teachers can give example, explanation, synonym, antonym and give situation describe the unknown words. Reading comprehension, according to Klingner [8], is the process of comprehending the meaning of words, the context, and connecting between ideas and background knowledge with the text. The main focus in reading activity is comprehending the text, get

the literal and implied meaning of the text. To determine the meaning of terms unfamiliar words, readers can use context clues in surrounding sentences to comprehend the text. These cues can be found in the sentence that contains the word, the sentences that come before it, or the sentences that come after it [9]. Students are invited by context clues catch the idea of the text by thinking critically and logically. Students can determine the meaning of unfamiliar words without dictionary. context clues are helpful and give maximal impact for students who have many vocabulary and familiar with some kinds of clues provided in sentences. Contextual cues, according to Baumann J.F., Font. G., Edward. E.C. & Boland E. [10], provide a notion or hint as to what a word's possible meaning might be. Such hints can be discovered in the text around the unknown word as well as in optical illusions. One approach that can be used to teach reading is the use of context clues. The teacher can create fresh and comfortable atmosphere language learning by having fun and informal setting using context cues.

Nowadays, The Government implement new curriculum in order to support the improvement of education in Indonesia. One of the main point in the "Kurikulum Merdeka" is introduction to the new kind of genre of the Multimodal text. Multimodal text is a text that uses more than one system of communication. Multimodal texts provide systems of visual, audio and textual communication because when working together, engagement and the audiences interest level will increase. The text present in this study is multimodal text which focus on descriptive text. By using multimodal descriptive text, it is expected to attract students interest in learning process, they will feel enjoy, fun and give more attention in learning. The researcher used the explanation to guide her research, which was titled Using Context Clues Strategy Towards Students' Reading Achievement of the Multimodal Descriptive Text in "Kurikulum Merdeka." The research questions: Is there a significant impact of the context clues technique on students' reading proficiency for multimodal descriptive texts?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Context Clues

Context clues is an aids giving to the readers understand the meaning of unknown words by guessing meaning from the context and relate to their knowledge. Context clues involve the explanation of the unfamiliar words, the synonym, antonym, definition, and giving example. From the clue given, it is expected that the reader can guess and get the meaning of the unfamiliar words. By using the aids in the text, students are easier acquire meaning of the unknown words in a text. Context clues are taught during the teaching reading, it can be in cooperative learning or in group and in guided reading instruction. The teacher usually implement it in the classroom by using authentic texts related to the topic. Reardon [11] states that context clues give information of the unknown vocabulary of the text by

receptive explanation which is easy to be understood. Context clues can be word, phrase, clause, , graph, table, picture and side notes which involve in the text.

Caldwell [12] explains that Good readers typically use context to identify words because they have a vast sight vocabulary and a firm grasp of their language's letter-sound system. In fact, a quality of good readers is their capacity to swiftly and precisely recognize words out of context. A mechanism in the understanding process is context. Furthermore, Scott Thornbury [13] assumes that readers can get the meaning of the text by guessing the unknown words through the hints surrounding the sentences. The students can acquire the reading skills better than only looking for unfamiliar words' meaning in the dictionary. According Mikulecky and Jeffries [14] context clues as the hints for readers to guess the meaning of unknown words by recognizing words surrounding to the context. Reading strategy is helpful for the students grasp the meaning of the text. This in line with Chin [15] explains that reader must acquire the reading strategy in understanding the meaning of unknown words.

Furthermore, Hiebert and Khamil [16] describe that there is significant different result between students taught reading with context clues and without the strategy. The students have good reading comprehension and contextual analysis to reveal hidden word meanings. Pennock [17] states that context clues are aids of pronunciation and meaning explain about unfamiliar word. By looking at words and sentences that come before and after, reader can determine the hint or aids as the meaning of the text. The linguistic information (words, phrases, clauses, and sentences) and non-linguistic information (illustrations, typographic elements), which is presented in the context of sentences, can be utilized to infer the meaning of a word, according to Dorn and Carla Soffos [18].

Boonchun [19] stated that the study's use of context cues consisted of the following seven strategies:

1. Definition and explanation are clues or a technique for estimating the meaning of a word using its definition and context-based description, which can assist the reader in doing so.
2. Punctuation clues is using sentence to infer a word's meaning. The use punctuation acts as a kind of indication, making it simpler to determine a word's meaning.
3. Contrast and comparison clues as one of the method for determining the meaning of word by looking for contrast and comparison clues.
4. Restatement and synonym clues is a summary and a substitute, The purpose of clue is to reiterate meaning of a challenging term using a word with close meaning.
5. Example is hints state or provide extra information about challenging term by using an example, allowing the reader to infer the meaning based on the example.
6. General Information is hints that relevant to the issue the reader is reading; they likely show that the reader is able to understand the topic and word's meaning.

7. Cause and effect use clues in a phrase to explain how something happened and what it means, a writer can help the reader comprehend a term's meaning.

Karbalaei, A. et al. [20] explain that context clues are words used in context of an unknown word serve as hints as to what the word means. Students can discover the meaning of the terms with the use of the text's hints. Students can get a general concept or sense of what a term might signify by looking at the context clues. The hints can be found in the sentence itself or in the sentences that before and follow the unfamiliar word. Thus, the context hints technique enhances students' reading comprehension skills cognitively.

Context clues have some advantages including:

- The Goal of Vocabulary Development
Vocabulary mastery is essential to comprehend the sentence. Context clues are supporting statements that explain the meaning of challenging words. As a result, our ability to understand context clues will naturally increase as we get more proficient with words.
- Stimulate Critical Thinking of Reader
We require creativity while working with context clues. Punctuation and keywords will give hints to predict new words. Readers must read the text in detail and carefully.
- For Critical Reader, Knowing the meaning of unfamiliar words by their context is simple rather than opening the dictionary.
Context clues are aids involve in the text, that can be used to decipher the new terms' definitions that can be found in the words, clause, phrase, sentence or passage. This because of dictionary is not always available everywhere when we read. Predicting and guessing from context invite the reader to be critical thinking. The reader needs to be aware of the fact that many words can mean many things.
- Any polysemous word's meaning will depend on the context.
Context determines the definition of any polysemous word. A phrase or word with several distinct but connected senses is said to be polysemic. Polysemy judgments can be challenging because the criteria for polysemy is the nebulous concept of relatedness. Examining etymology words can be beneficial in figuring out its polysemy, it's another method to go about it as, as words become entangled in their etymologies, what was once a good means to discern between meanings may no longer be so. This is due to the fact that language change occurs naturally as people utilize previously existing terms in new contexts. Some words that seem unrelated have a shared historical background, Dictionary editors frequently rely on speakers' intuitions to determine if a word is polysemic when etymology is in conflict.

2.1.1. Advantages

1. A list of terms and definitions is not required to be memorized by the students.
2. They learn the definitions of words used in various passages.
3. They only employ the skill while reading books, newspapers, or other texts that include challenging words.
4. They read and comprehend common terminology without the need for detailed definitions; in most cases, this allows them to keep reading.
5. Make readers more self-assured and independent by encouraging them to learn how to take chances in their reading.
6. They read the material that will be tested and comprehend the terms' exact meanings.

2.1.2 Disadvantages

We must acknowledge that beside the advantages, there are also disadvantages of using context clues strategy in learning reading. It will be challenging for children with a limited vocabulary to comprehend the sentence's clue. It means that successful inference of meaning from context is correlated with student vocabulary size. Students may struggle to understand the meaning of unfamiliar terms if they lack knowledge of the many parts of speech or lack the necessary expertise to determine whether a word is a noun, adverb, verb, or something else entirely. Because they don't grasp the clue, they won't be able to choose the unknown word's definition that fits the context. Finally, They are using dictionaries to search up the definitions of the new words. Students may find it challenging to employ the context clues technique if they are unsure of the connection between the phrase and the clause that uses the unfamiliar word. Students won't comprehend the context, and they'll misunderstand the meaning of the unfamiliar word.

2.2 Reading Achievement

Reading is the activity getting information from the text. According Hornby [21] reading is an intensive process to get the meaning by integrating words in the sentence based on the context accurately. For the reader to fully understand the reading content, they must have good word and visual perception. Reading is the activity getting meaning from written text. Readers interact with the writer by understanding the messages of the text. In line with Schmidt and Richard [22] describe that understanding a printed text's meaning requires reading it. Understanding the text means reader can interact with the writer and know what is the writer intention writing the text or book. Reading requires a wide range of cognitive abilities, including the ability to recognize letters and words, understand syntax, and identify distinct text kinds and text structures. According to the description given above, reading is a process that involves obtaining information and understanding the text's meaning while also utilizing the reader's reading ability.

Reading achievement is one of the main goals for the students in learning. Based on the assessment standard of education in our country created by government, the result of teaching learning process is the level of achievement gained by the students. The score can describe the effectiveness of the learning process. In junior High school students, almost 60% of learning process has high relationship with reading process. Reading achievement refers to how the students able to use the skills implemented in the process of learning. The effectiveness of the learning process showed by the students' mark printed in their school report.

2.3 Multimodal Descriptive Text

Multimodal Descriptive text is when descriptive text integrates two or more systems of semiotic.

- **Linguistic:** vocabulary, linguistic characteristics, grammatical structure and written/oral expression.
- **Visual:** elements including colour, vectors and viewpoint in still and moving images
- **Audio:** music's volume, tone, rhythm and audio effects
- **Gestural:** face expression, body language and movement.
- **Spatial:** direction, proximity, direction, layout location, organisation of objects in space.

Multimodal texts include posters, picture books, newspapers, comics/graphic, novels, Brochures, print ads, storyboards, digital slide shows (like PowerPoint), social media, e-posters, and e-books are some examples. For example, a billboard mixes written text with still images and spatial design to convey meaning. A multimodal text integrates two or more modalities to express meaning. Each multimodal text has their own duty and purpose in the process of creating meaning and get information of the text [23]. For example, in a picture book, the text and image interact each other but they describe the text in distinct ways. There are many variety of multimodal text appear through the growth of technology to support the learning needs [24]. Young people are frequently exposed to multimodal texts, which can be printed or digital and include things like websites, picture books, written works, publications, television and video games, and graphic novels. These texts often feature a complex interaction between linguistic expressions, visual depictions, visual aspects, and graphics [25] [26] [24].

Fleckenstein [27] states that Readers frequently have increased contact in daily life with multimodal rather than print-based texts. Derivation of meaning in this setting in ways that are described as improvement of multimodal We must to enhance combining conventional reading and writing with multimodal communications in this globalization era. When people engage with numerous texts to derive meaning, they can rely on a variety of semiotic modes, however one semiotic mode may predominate over the others. This is referred to as multimodality [28]. Additionally,

multimodality research has emphasized fresh methods for communicating meaning from texts, highlighting the fact that effectively reading or seeing multimodal texts requires far more multitasking than simply reading a text's words. However, young readers who have not yet refined their formal reading skills may benefit from multimodality, particularly the visual mode, in accessing a book.

Multimodal texts can be printed, real-time, or electronic; multimodality does not always imply the use of technology.

There are some multimodal text type.

First, Paper-based multimodal texts include Textbooks, comics, posters, graphic novels, and picture books are a few examples of multimodal texts that are printed on paper. Second, Live multimodal texts that communicate meaning include dance, performances, and oral storytelling. using a range of communication techniques, including as verbal, spatial, auditory, and gestural language. Third, Multimodal digital texts Digital multimodal texts include, but are not limited to, movies, animation, slide shows, e-posters, digital stories, podcasts, and online sites with links to external pronunciation guides or translations.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is experimental research. The research is conducted to improve students reading achievement in order to support their achievement of English subject at school. It will test the hypotheses about Using Context Clues Strategy Toward Students' Reading Achievement of the Multimodal Descriptive Text. Gay, Mills and Airasian [29] explain experimental research is the only sort of research that can test hypotheses about the effect of using the strategy and the result. The Context Clues is used to teach reading comprehension in the classroom at Eight grade students. According to Gay, Mills and Airasian [29] The population is the group that the researcher is interested in and wants to be able to generalize the study's findings to. The degree to which the findings of one study can be generalized to a different demographic or environment is known as general ability.

The population for this study is made up of eighth-graders of SMPN 38 Padang. It involved 200 students divided into 7 classes. Each class has to 28-30 students that have similarities of reading skills and achievement on reading comprehension. Pre-test-experiment-post-test design was used for the study, which was conducted at SMPN 38 Padang. In the academic year 2022-2023, it involves 60 eighth graders. They were split into two treatment groups at random: Control class and experimental class. To address the study question, the researcher gathers quantitative data during the data collection process. Pre-testing was done for this investigation in order to know the students reading comprehension level and students vocabulary mastery before treatment. Researcher design the module and lesson plan as preparation for treatment during the in-class exercise. post-test carried out following the

therapy. Both the control class and the experimental class underwent pre- and post-testing. The test was multiple choice self-constructed test by the researcher. The test consists of 20 items where participants from two classes had to estimate the meanings of words based on the contextual clues provided in the text. There are four options to choose answer the questions relates to reading comprehension and vocabulary from A to D.

There are several steps in conducting experimental research. According Cohen, Manion and Morrison [30] researchers must follow procedure of test during the experiment which presented in the context. In the first steps, the researcher prepared the pre-test exam questions. Both the experimental class and the control class underwent pre- and post-testing. From the outcome of the pre-test, the teacher construct lesson plan of teaching learning process. The lesson consists of four different topics related to the use of context clues strategy. The teacher instructs the students to view the video and use context clues to analyse the descriptive multimodal text. The teacher then instructs the class to underline any words that they are familiar with. Next step is the students write down the unknown words in their book and find the clues around the sentences. The students guess meaning of unfamiliar words with the clues provided surrounding the sentences. Student were not allowed to use dictionary. They are expected to be critical reader, full of knowledge and learning experience.

Students learned with the reading passages prepared by the researcher which applied the context clues strategy. Studying the subject, determining the text's primary idea, and identifying specific details were among the reading comprehension activities that students completed and also by answering questions. The tasks involved guessing the meanings of the unfamiliar words, assessing vocabulary, identifying the text's core theme and supporting details. Similar teaching methods were used in the control class; the main distinction was that the context clues tactic was not used. Both groups completed the post-test at the conclusion of the lesson to determine the outcome of the research, whether there were any differences between the two classes

4. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted in 6 weeks 12 meetings. Prior to beginning the program, a pre-test was given to students the first week to assess their vocabulary and level of reading comprehension. The researcher delivered the research-related curriculum to two classes from weeks two through twelve. The experimental class was instructed using an approach that relied on context cues to infer the text's meaning and extract information from it. The control group received instruction utilizing traditional methods. The data were examined using the descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, and pair samples t-test tools in the SPSS program.

Table 1. Pre-test descriptive statistics of the control and experimental groups' mean scores

Group Statistics					
	faktor	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
X1	Experiment	30	48.17	7.598	1.387
	Control	30	49.50	6.991	1.276

The result is displayed in Table 1 as the overall mean score of experiment class (M=48.17) and control class (M=49.50). It describes the students level of reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery both of two classes are almost in the same average. The mean difference between the two groups was also MD= -26.833 it is very low, under the standard of competence.

Table 2. Post-test descriptive statistics of the control and experimental groups' mean scores

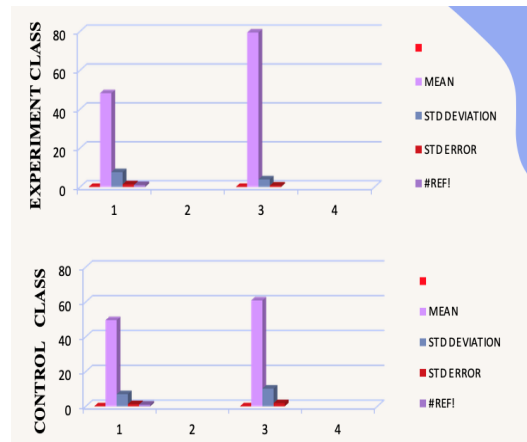
Group Statistics					
	faktor	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
X1	Experiment	30	79.33	3.880	.708
	Control	30	60.83	10.178	1.858

Based on the result depicted in Table 2, the overall average score of experiment class (M=79.33) with the standard deviation (3.880) and control class (M=60.83) with the standard deviation (10.178). It describes that there is significant different shows the result of the students' reading proficiency following treatment.

In pre-test, before treatment, mean of experiment class (M=48.17) then improve to (M=79.33) in post-test. It also happen in control class, In pre-test mean of control class (M=49.50) then improve to (M=60.83) after treatment in the post-test.

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	d f	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	X1 - X2	18.500	11.230	2.050	14.307	22.693	29	.000	

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	X1 & X2	30	-.095	.619



The Independent Sample t-test findings demonstrate that the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances is not significant. The value of Sig (2-tailed) is .619, which is more than .05. This indicates that the hypothesis is true because there is a substantial difference in the reading proficiency of students in the experiment class and the control class. After treatment in the learning process, the students in the experiment class who were taught by using context clues achieved higher scores of reading comprehension rather than the control class, which was instructed using traditional methods. In other words, following treatment, the experimental class's mean score dramatically improved. Contextual hints can be used in reading instruction as a helpful method to promote students' reading abilities of finding out information and forming predictions of unfamiliar words in context [31]. Students that were taught English using the contextual clues technique performed better when predicting word meaning.

5. CONCLUSION

Students at school have a variety of learning styles. They have their own way in learning English. Some of them are visual learning, some others are audio and psychomotor learning. By using multimodal text implemented contextual hints strategy, it will attract students to learn reading. Students have a good response with the research. Researchers must write and innovate the learning module with various kinds of multimodal text in order to improve the treatment process for the next research. This result supports the study conducted by Karbalaei, Amoli, and Tavakoli [32] that indicated college students could better understand the meaning of unknown words they were reading by employing contextual clues. Additionally, according to Nash and Snowling [33] they concluded from their research that pupils' reading comprehension improves when context clues are used to determine meanings.

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