

Contextual Meaning Analysis of Narrative Texts in The 10th-Grade English Textbook *Siap Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris*

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the contextual meanings found in three narrative texts—Timun Mas, The Two Elves, and Titanic—from the 10th-grade English textbook SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris. Based on Mansoer Pateda's (2010) theory of contextual meaning, this study identifies and interprets eleven types of contextual meaning: Personal Context, Situational Context, Purposive Context, formal or informal context, Mood Context, Context of Time, Context of Place, Object Context, Completeness of Context, Linguistic Context, and Language Context. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, with data gathered from selected narrative texts in the textbook. The analysis involved the stages of data reduction, data verification, and drawing conclusions. The findings revealed that all three texts contained multiple types of contextual meaning, with situational and Mood Context being the most frequently identified across the texts. The analysis shows that understanding contextual meaning is essential for interpreting narratives deeply, as meaning is influenced by characters' identities, emotional states, intentions, cultural background, and narrative settings. This research contributes to the semantic study of English learning materials and highlights the value of context-based interpretation in narrative comprehension.

Keywords: semantics, contextual meaning, narrative texts, English textbook

Submitted	Reviewed	Revised	Published
14 June 2025	17 September 2025	15 December 2025	29 December 2025

Introduction

Semantics is the study of meaning in language, focusing on how linguistic forms convey meaning either directly or contextually. Kreidler (2002) defines semantics as the systematic study of meaning, while Griffiths (2006) adds that semantics explores the interpretation of language elements outside of their use in communication.

Within this field, contextual meaning becomes a key aspect that emphasizes how meaning is shaped by situational, emotional, and cultural factors surrounding the language use (Sucihati, 2021). Unlike lexical meaning, which focuses on dictionary definitions, contextual meaning highlights how a word or phrase can vary depending on who says it, when, where, and with what intention (Rabi'ah, Anggraeni & Wulansari, 2023)

Pateda (2010) argues that contextual meaning is the same as situational meaning, which is constructed by the relation of utterances and context that can appear in many forms or types. Hamidah and Oktaviani (2024) state that contextual meaning is the process of understanding words and phrases in the context of the text, historical setting, and significance in culture. In terms of semantics, "contextual meaning" refers to how a word, phrase, or sentence is interpreted based on its usage context. (Rasuh, Posumah, & Rombepajung, 2024)

Mansoer Pateda (2010) defines contextual meaning as the meaning of a word or expression that emerges only when it is interpreted in its specific context. He outlines eleven types of contextual meaning, which serve as the framework for this study:

1. **Personal Context** – This context demands that the speaker choose words that the listener can easily understand, depending on factors such as gender, age, socio-economic status, and educational background.
2. **Situational Context** – Speakers, in this context, must choose words whose meaning is influenced by the situation in which the communication takes place.
3. **Purposive Context** – Purposive context shows how speakers choose words to express a specific goal or intention. For example, someone who wants to ask for help might say "please" to convey politeness and request assistance.
4. **Formal/Informal Context** – Concerns the degree of formality depending on the setting or relationship between interlocutors.
5. **Mood Context** – Mood context refers to how the emotional state of the speaker or listener affects the choice and interpretation of words. An angry or irritated person might reflexively use strong or inappropriate language.

6. **Context of Time** – Context of time refers to how meaning is shaped by when an event occurs, such as mealtime, bedtime, or other time-related routines.
7. **Context of Place** – Context of place involves how physical or social settings influence the meaning of an utterance. People may adjust their language depending on whether they are in a school, a market, or a religious place.
8. **Object Context** – Object context refers to how the subject or item being discussed affects the words and meaning used in an utterance.
9. **Completeness of Context** – This context is about how completely the speaker speaks and how completely the listener listens. Talking with someone with poor hearing can be a misunderstanding during the conversation. As an illustration, someone who cannot speak clearly may say *'It's pig'* when they actually want to say *'It's big'*. That can create a misunderstanding for the listener.
10. **Linguistic Context** – Linguistic context is influenced by language structure, grammar, punctuation, and diction.
11. **Language Context** – Language context relates to the speaker's and listener's mastery of the language used. When one party lacks cultural or linguistic familiarity, meaning may be misunderstood.

These categories allow for a comprehensive and nuanced analysis of how meaning is constructed beyond the lexical level. In this study, they serve as analytical lenses to classify and interpret utterances in selected narrative texts.

In English language education, especially for EFL learners, understanding contextual meaning is crucial to develop deeper reading comprehension and to interpret messages beyond the surface. This is particularly relevant in the narrative genre, which frequently employs figurative language, emotional shifts, and implicit cultural references (Lumbantungkup, Sitorus, Siahaan & Hutabarat, 2022). Narrative texts are not only meant to entertain but also to convey moral values and emotional resonance, which often rely heavily on the reader's ability to interpret context-based meaning (Magfiroh, Herdiawan & Rofi'i, 2021).

Narrative texts are structured stories that aim to entertain, inform, and convey moral values through imaginative or real events. They are typically characterized by a clear orientation, complication, and resolution (Listia, Halim, Nasrullah & Amelia, 2024). Language features commonly found in narrative texts include the use of past tense, action verbs, and subjective pronouns (Syafitri & Swondo, 2024). Narrative texts often rely on implicit meaning, symbolism, and emotional depth, which makes them ideal for analyzing contextual meaning.

In the context of the Independence Curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*), narrative texts are part of the core materials for 10th-grade English learners. The curriculum encourages students to interpret texts critically, understand implied messages, and relate content to their personal and cultural experiences (Pouw & Mulyanti, 2023). This makes the ability to grasp contextual meaning an essential component of reading comprehension and language mastery.

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (guru.kemdikbud.go.id), 10th-grade students are expected to comprehend a variety of text types—including narratives—and develop the ability to interpret implicit information and the author's intent. To meet this objective, awareness of contextual meaning is essential, especially in narrative comprehension.

Various studies have explored contextual meaning in different types of texts. Van Thao and Regita Sinaga (2020) analyzed contextual meaning in a short story dialogue, while Rabi'ah et al. (2023) examined song lyrics using semantic theory. Other works have focused on song lyrics (Wijaya & Rosita, 2023; Rasuh et al., 2024), poetry (Hamidah & Oktaviani, 2024), and even social media quotes (Sitinjak, Sinambela, Nababan, Sihotang & Hutagalung, 2023). However, few studies have investigated narrative texts in school textbooks, especially those aligned with the Independence Curriculum.

A study by Sari (2023) analyzed contextual meaning in narrative texts from the 2013 curriculum textbook, but it lacked comparative analysis across genres and did not use the most updated curriculum materials. This gap highlights the need for research that examines contextual meaning across different types of narrative texts in current educational resources.

Building on this gap, the present study explores how contextual meaning is constructed across three narrative texts—*Timun Mas*, *Titanic*, and *The Two Elves*—taken from the textbook *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* (2023), which is designed following the Independence Curriculum. By applying Mansoer Pateda's (2010) classification of contextual meaning, this study not only identifies the types of context present but also compares their distribution across three different narrative genres: folktale, historical romance, and fairy tale.

Accordingly, this research addresses the following questions:

1. What types of contextual meaning are found in the selected narrative texts?
2. How do the occurrences of contextual meaning vary across different genres of narrative texts?

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design, aiming to explore the types of contextual meaning found in selected narrative texts and how they differ across genres. A qualitative approach was chosen to allow in-depth analysis of textual meaning within its natural context (Furidha, 2023).

The data source consisted of three narrative texts—*Timun Mas*, *Titanic*, and *The Two Elves*—taken from the textbook *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* (2023), which is designed based on the Independence Curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*). These texts were selected purposively due to their genre variation (folktale, historical romance, and fairy tale) and contextual richness.

Data collection was carried out through document analysis, which is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents in printed or electronic form. It involves the analysis and interpretation of data to extract meaning, comprehend, and generate empirical knowledge. (Bowen, 2009)

The analysis process involved three stages, following Miles, Huberman, and Sadalman's (2014) model of qualitative data analysis.

1) Data Condensation

Data condensation is an essential part of qualitative analysis that involves selecting, simplifying, focusing, and transforming the raw data collected from various sources, such as documents, transcripts, or written texts.

2) Data Display

Data display refers to the organized presentation of data that allows researchers to draw meaning and take action. In this research, after data condensation, the selected contextual meaning findings were displayed in tables, which showed the frequency and distribution of various contextual meaning types found in each narrative text.

3) Drawing Conclusions

This step involves interpreting the data to uncover both explicit and implicit meaning. It requires the researcher to analyze beyond surface-level content and consider cultural, emotional, or situational nuances.

Findings

This study identified eleven types of contextual meaning in three selected narrative texts from the *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* textbook: *Timun Mas*, *Titanic*, and *The Two Elves*, based on the classification by Pateda (2010). The total frequency of contextual meanings found in each text is summarized below.

Table 1. Frequency of Contextual Meaning Types in Each Narrative Text

Context Type	Timun Mas	Titanic	The Two Elves
Personal	1	3	4
Situational	4	3	6
Purposive	2	2	3
Formal/Informal	0	0	0
Mood	4	4	5
Context of Time	3	2	3
Context of Place	2	3	1
Object	6	1	3
Completeness	0	0	0
Linguistic	0	0	1
Language	2	0	0
Total	24	18	26

The most dominant types across all texts were situational context and mood context. These were especially important in conveying character emotions and narrative tension. The contextual meanings appeared with varying frequency and relevance depending on genre, narrative style, and character interaction. The following discussion summarizes key findings with representative examples from each context type.

- 1) **Personal context** emerged through characters' identities, professions, and social status. For instance, in *Timun Mas*, the line "*They were diligent farmers and always worked hard in the paddy fields*" reflects the characters' humble background. Similarly, in *Titanic*, Cal offering Jack dinner in "first class" underscores class difference and subtle power dynamics. In *The Two Elves*, the shoemaker's poverty and moral character are foregrounded, shaping the reader's sympathy. Across texts, personal context added social and psychological depth.
- 2) **Situational context** was highly prevalent, especially in *Timun Mas* and *Titanic*. Meaning is constructed based on narrative conditions—such as danger or transformation. In *Timun Mas*, "*Run, Timun Mas! Save your life!*" gains its urgency from a chase scene. In *Titanic*, Jack saving Rose from falling into propellers becomes heroic only in that specific moment. In *The Two Elves*, a shift from poverty to prosperity is understood through context-driven change.
- 3) **Purposive context** was seen when characters' intentions guided interpretation. In *Timun Mas*, the mother's plea "*Take this bag. It can save you...*" reflects a protective motive. Ruth's encouragement of Rose's marriage in *Titanic* serves financial security, not emotional wellbeing. In *The Two Elves*, the wife's desire to "*show gratitude*" reveals a moral purpose behind her actions.
- 4) **Mood context** appeared in all texts, capturing emotional shifts. In *Timun Mas*, sadness on Timun's birthday conveys grief and fear. Rose's distress over forced marriage in *Titanic*, and the elves' transition from confusion to joy in *The Two Elves*, show how emotions shape reader understanding.
- 5) **Context of time** grounded events in temporal meaning. References like "*On her 17th birthday*" (*Timun Mas*), "*Southampton 1912*" (*Titanic*), and "*before Christmas*" (*The Two Elves*) help establish urgency, tradition, or anticipation, shaping the tone and expectation of the narrative.

- 6) **Context of place** contributed to the atmosphere and symbolism. “*Not far from a jungle*” in *Timun Mas* evokes isolation and folklore; “*a third-class party*” in *Titanic* signals social freedom; and “*a corner behind some clothes*” in *The Two Elves* creates suspense and intimacy.
- 7) **Object context** was dominant in *Timun Mas* due to the role of magical items like cucumber seeds. In *Titanic*, the “Heart of the Ocean” necklace symbolizes class and control, while in *The Two Elves*, handmade clothes represent gratitude and transformation.
- 8) **Formal/informal context** and **completeness of context** were generally absent or minimal. The texts are third-person narratives with little real-life dialogic interaction, resulting in little contrast of register or incomplete communication.
- 9) **Linguistic context** was found only in *The Two Elves*, through poetic language and rhetorical questions that shaped meaning. In contrast, *Timun Mas* and *Titanic* used standard sentence structures with little linguistic play.
- 10) **Language context** was unique to *Timun Mas*, where words like “*terasi*” rely on Indonesian cultural knowledge. The other texts used universally understood English expressions, minimizing language-specific interpretation.

Overall, each narrative text demonstrated unique contextual tendencies:

- *Timun Mas* relied heavily on object, situational, and language context, consistent with folktale conventions.
- *Titanic* was dominated by mood, purposive, and personal context, reflecting its emotional and social conflict.
- *The Two Elves* displayed the most varied contextual types, reflecting their fairy tale structure centered on character transformation and moral outcomes.

These findings align with Pateda’s (2010) theory that meaning is inseparable from context, and confirm Sucihati’s (2021) claim that contextual awareness is key to interpreting implied messages. Unlike Sari (2023), who found situational context dominant in general narrative texts, this study reveals that genre-specific factors also determine contextual prevalence, particularly in texts with emotional or symbolic weight, where mood, object, and purpose become more salient. This supports the application of

contextual meaning theory across diverse narrative genres and affirms its value in semantic-based literary analysis.

These findings suggest that contextual meaning is genre-sensitive. Folktales like *Timun Mas* rely more on symbolic objects, while fairy tales and historical romance emphasize emotional and situational depth. This supports Pateda's (2010) view that meaning is inseparable from the context of language use.

The findings of this study highlight that contextual meaning, particularly situational and mood context, plays a significant role in narrative comprehension. According to Pateda (2010), meaning cannot be separated from its context, and the dominance of these two types in the three texts analyzed supports this theoretical claim. As in *Timun Mas* and *Titanic*, utterances acquire meaning only when interpreted through the situation and emotional state of the characters. This affirms what Sucihati (2021) argued—that contextual meaning enables readers to avoid misinterpretation and enhances deeper engagement with the text.

The pedagogical implications of this study are in line with Chotimah & Sabiq (2021), who analyzed contextual meaning in song lyrics and suggested its application in classrooms through the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach. They emphasized that introducing students to contextual meaning, especially in emotionally rich and situationally complex texts, can enhance comprehension and engagement. Although their study focused on songs, the principle of deriving meaning through context is equally applicable to narrative texts, which serve as the primary data in this research. The findings reveal that the narrative texts in the textbook *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* contain abundant situational, mood, and purposive contexts, which align with CTL principles such as relating, experiencing, and applying, encouraging learners to connect texts with personal experiences. This is supported by Utami, Yahrif, Rosmayantia, and Siradjuddin (2023), who demonstrated that CTL improves reading comprehension by grounding abstract concepts in familiar settings, thereby helping students go beyond surface-level interpretation.

Additionally, Ramadansur, Sembiring, Rizky, and Nelvariza (2023) highlight that CTL enhances critical thinking by promoting reflective reading and encouraging students

to analyze implied meanings. This corresponds with how contextual meaning operates in narrative texts, where learners must interpret intent, emotion, and social dynamics through subtle textual clues. For example, understanding mood or situational tension requires analyzing not just the vocabulary, but also the emotional and narrative background. Thus, contextual meaning analysis in narrative texts serves not only as a semantic framework for interpreting stories but also as an effective pedagogical strategy consistent with the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which emphasizes critical thinking, interpretation, and student-centered learning. Teachers can apply this method by guiding students to identify various types of context in reading materials, fostering independent thinking and deeper comprehension.

Conclusion

This study explored the types and distribution of contextual meaning in three narrative texts—*Timun Mas*, *Titanic*, and *The Two Elves*—from a 10th-grade English textbook aligned with the Independence Curriculum. Using Mansoer Pateda's (2010) framework, the analysis revealed that all texts contained multiple types of contextual meaning, with situational and mood context appearing most frequently across genres.

The results show that contextual meaning is deeply tied to narrative genre, character roles, and setting. Folktales emphasized symbolic objects through object context, historical romances highlighted social status and emotion through mood context, while fairy tales focused on transformation and morality through situational context. These variations confirm that contextual meaning is not only present but essential in interpreting narratives, especially in educational contexts.

Overall, the study reinforces the importance of contextual meaning as a semantic and pedagogical tool in enhancing students' narrative comprehension and critical reading skills.

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