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## Chapter I

### Semantics Contextual Learning

Fitri Amilia, Indri Astutik

#### A. Introduction

Teachers plan concepts of learning activities to achieve learning objectives. The selection of learning activities, learning media, materials, and other learning items demonstrates this. To accomplish the learning objectives, all teachers prepare all learning resources. The learning objectives in a semantics class, for example, are that students can 1) identify and 2) analyze different types of meanings (Amilia, 2022). Associative is one of the meanings examined in semantics. Associative refers to the meaning of a word that occurs owing to a link between the word and the external state of a language (Amilia & Anggraeni, 2018). Connotative, collocative, social, emotive, and reflective meanings are all examples of associative meaning (Mwihaki 2004). For example, the term dove is connected with devotion or fidelity, while the color red is associated with bravery. Why is it, exactly? The terms have associations with things outside of the language that are shaped by societal conventions and cultures. Thus, to assess students' comprehension, teachers must create an instrument as part of the assignment, such as a summary, a paper, or a brief article. Teachers will be able to determine the correctness and completeness of the students' comprehension based on the outcomes of the assignments.

The majority of teachers, according to the findings, do learning illustrations. They create lesson plans, instruct students, and analyze their progress. This is a semester-to-semester dynamic steady beat.

The observations, on the other hand, reveal some prevalent student issues. Students comprehended the topic, but not the purpose of learning it in the actual world. Students, for example, do not yet comprehend the role of these talents

after examining several languages. They will not utilize or teach other languages to their students once they become potential teachers.

The phenomenon is not limited to colleges; it also occurs in secondary institutions. According to the findings, senior high school students do not comprehend or profit from learning resources in schools. Anecdotal texts, for example, are examined in Indonesian classes. An anecdote is a collection of amusing or hilarious stories that carry criticism for the audience. Students do not realize the benefits in their daily life after understanding or even compiling the stories.

Non-contextual learning is most common in exact sciences like mathematics, physics, etc. A collection of articles, then, is put together to provide useful information. Contextual learning is defined as an approach that improves students' capacity to establish connections and learn functions, as well as their motivation to study (Ulya, Irawati, & Maulana, 2016). The contextual method is believed to be able to incorporate student-centered learning in a series of autonomous learning programs. According to research, contextual learning can improve students' active engagement and communication abilities (Suhartoyo, et al., 2020).

This phenomenon denotes learning issues that have an influence on education's meaning. Learning material is essentially a notion with no practical application that students in schools and colleges must grasp. The phenomenon is in direct opposition to the goal of education, which is to make knowledge useful (Johnson, 2002). In addition, ideas and knowledge that are connected with experiences will produce meaning. For example, to understand the conceptual meaning of the word mountain, students must know it in real life, so that students can easily mention the concept of the word mountain as an analysis of its meaning. Students whose daily lives are far from mountains, will have difficulty mentioning the concept of a mountain. This essence is mentioned in the concept of contextual teaching and learning.

This tendency is not limited to Indonesian-language content. Some course and lesson materials are taught, comprehended, and mastered, but the substance of doing so is restricted to paper and class. Students have not been able to use them in their daily lives.

Many research studies have previously focused their emphasis on contextual learning studies. Suryaman (2008) constructed Indonesian language textbooks, Amilia (2017) exhibited the construction of contextual texts for students in Jember, and Dewi and Primayana (2019) investigated the quality of students' comprehension utilizing contextual learning.

The implementation of contextual learning and students' responses to the technique in semantics class were the main differences between this study and the three prior investigations. Thus, the implementation process, its challenges, its assessment, and the students' responses to this contextual learning would all be known. The benefit of this study was the opportunity to interpret the usefulness of each item offered as a means of using the language in everyday life and as a resource for aspiring Indonesian language teachers in schools.

## **B. Method**

Contextual learning is used to solve the problem of learning's meaninglessness in the previous lesson. The findings of the examination and reflection process had led to this meaninglessness. As a result, in the odd semester of 2022, contextual learning was applied to semantics class. Students were required to have semantic competency through the use of contextual learning. This skill is defined by the precision with which one chooses diction in spoken language, as well as the use of content of various sorts of meaning in poetry and writings. The participants in this study were 38 fourth-semester semantics students. The contextual learning process might serve as a platform for future learning in other courses.

The course would be recalled because of its utility in learning linguistic competency.

## C. Discussion

### 1. The Application of Contextual Learning

#### The Process of Contextual Learning Application

This odd semester 2022 semantics course was an online learning course. The learning tool for the course was Zoom Meeting. Learning contracts or online learning guidelines were created to provide students with a productive learning experience. The students in the semantics class were required to turn on their cameras throughout class. Students who switched off their cameras would be dismissed from class, unless they had a poor signal. This rule has been shown to be quite effective. The rule forced students and the lecturer to engage because they were both in the same class for the same reason: to learn together.

Other lecturers on the FGD forum stated that the learning quality had decreased. This was evident in the learning activities and the results. The FGD forum decided that high online learning quality could be attained by incorporating real (face-to-face) learning rules (contracts) into online learning. In this aspect, cameras were instruments that allowed the two parties to share their attention. Furthermore, students were required to listen and pay attention to the discussion's progress, as well as take turns speaking. This regulation was implemented as the microphones were turned on and off as needed. Clothes that convey preparedness were used to signify readiness. Many students and lecturers continued to disregard this dress preparedness in this setting.

The reflection indicated that semantics course had implemented rules to achieve a good learning quality, high learning activities, and real learning experience. The illustration designated that the planning of semantics course could be used as a stepping point in developing students'

online interaction. Thus, online learning activities were meaningful and reliable.

Conceptual, lexical, denotation and connotation, synonym, antonym, homonym, associative, affective, and reflective meanings of words and phrases are among the semantics elements that were designed contextually. Concrete examples were utilized as students' experience in language activities and learning to transfer the function of comprehending the content of types of meaning. The practices were held by renewing the students' actions through a zoom meeting talk or dialogue.

Let us take an example in denotation and connotation discussion. The concept of denotation and connotation refers to meaning conformity in lexical/conceptual meaning, and the power of meaning taste of a word (Amilia & Anggraeni, 2018; Chaer, 2021; Parera, 2004). The concept of denotation and connotation is easy to understand and exemplify. However, in speaking and writing of language practices, the function of denotation and connotation is not quite understood. Through contextual learning, students translated the function of understanding the content. One of the examples was the activity of writing poems in Ramadan (fasting month). Students were assigned to write free sentences through chat box on zoom meeting.

Through the chat box, students wrote clauses and free sentences about Ramadan. Students might write clauses and sentences which contain denotation and connotation meanings. Below were the students' writing.

- 1) Ramadan bulan suci
- 2) Bulan penuh berkah
- 3) Bulan ampunan
- 4) Menahan lapar
- 5) Menahan haus
- 6) Menahan emosi
- 7) Mendapatkan pahala

From the seven clauses, students analyzed the clauses which have denotation and connotation. Then, the clauses were written to a poem below.

### **Ramadan**

Selamat datang  
Di bulan penuh berkah  
Bulan ladang pahala  
Bulan suci

Saat kita menahan diri  
Menahan emosi  
Menahan haus  
Menahan lapar  
(A student collaboration poem)

A flash poem could be composed in just 10 minutes. From the poem, students identified denotation and connotation stanzas. Then, they analyzed the beauty of the poem based on denotation and connotation theories of a poetry.

The results of the editing of the flash poem were as follows:

### **Ramadan**

Selamat datang → **Ramadan itu**  
Bulan suci → ↑Suci  
Di bulan penuh berkah → ↓penuh berkah  
Bulan ladang pahala → ladang pahala

Saatnya kita menahan diri → Mari menahan diri  
Menahan emosi → Menahan emosi  
Menahan haus → Menahan **dahaga**  
Menahan lapar → Menahan lapar  
(A student collaboration poem)

The above presentation illustrated that students were able to use their understanding of denotation and connotation concepts to edit their poem to produce a more beautiful poem.

After a flash editing, then, the lecturer presented the results of research studies discussing the denotation and connotation in poetries. One of them was a research article (Widianti, Mukhlis, Susanto, & Rivaldi, 2020) which signify that a unique poem conceives denotation and connotation to strengthen the depth of meaning of it. There was also a student's thesis which analyzes denotation and connotation of students' writing (A'yuni, 2020). Based on the examples and analyses, the benefit of understanding the concepts of denotation and connotation was the students had the whole concepts and used them in the language practices and language learning.

Based on the discussed poem, ramadan was the month when the course took place. The characteristic of contextual learning is that it is experienced and is in the environment of students, which is called as learning in real life setting (Kadir, 2013). This theme learning became the material in ramadan (fasting month) so that the students had a strong picture of ramadan because they were in the situation and condition of the month.

Contextual learning comprises seven components, i.e., constructivism, asking, inventing, learning society, modelling, reflection, a true assessment (Dimiyati & Mudjiono, 1999; Johnson, 2007; Nurhadi, 2002). These seven components are the stepping points to develop students' thinking ability which is influenced by the meaning of learning (Tari & Rosana, 2019). The analyses of the seven components of semantics course were presented to exemplify that the course had been using contextual learning.

Constructivism is the combination of behaviorism and cognitivism learning theories. Constructivism is designed to make students understand the meaning of learning and to form a learning experience (Amineh & Asl, 2015). In this research, through discussions and examples of the use of the concepts of



denotation and connotation, students were able to understand the usefulness of the concept of material in writing collaborative poetry. Moreover, the discussion activities helped the students compose a flash poem and edit it to produce a more beautiful poem in the learning activities.

As a series of finding propositions of the learning material, asking questions is a learning process. Students have the flexibility or freedom to learn through asking questions, allowing them to achieve the meaning of learning (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Students had the opportunity to raise questions about the usage of the notion of learning denotation and connotation in collaborative poetry writing through a series of questions. There were two types of question-asking activities: asking fellow classmates or groups and asking the lecturer. It is believed that learning activities and critical thinking will improve as a result of this activity.

The learning community refers to the learning community in the classroom between students and teachers (Hobri, Septiawati, & Prihandoko, 2018). In semantic learning activities, the lecturer tried to revive the learning community with a grouping model. To gain significance and learning experiences, each member of the group learned individually with the group. The learning community worked together to ask questions, listen to, and help each other complete the learning exercise. As a result, the learning community serves as a starting point for the development of critical thinking skills.

The term learning community refers to the interaction between students and lecturers in the classroom (Hobri, Septiawati, & Prihandoko, 2018). The Lecturer used a grouping strategy to try to revitalize the learning community in semantic learning activities. To get significance and learning experiences, each member of the group learned individually with the group. The learning community's role was to inquire, listen, and assist one another in completing the entire learning process. As a result, the learning community served as a starting point for the development of critical thinking skills.

The implementation of learning integrates asking, finding, and learning community. Students raised questions in the learning community throughout activities and eventually discovered meaning for the topics being learned. Finding meaning of the learned concepts indicated that contextual learning succeeded to translate the meaning of learning for each individual of the students.

In semantic learning, modeling refers to the presentation of learning results in groups as well as the reinforcement of the lecturer's information. The students got learning experience in implementing the notion of learning denotation and connotation in collaborative poetry writing through modeling.

Reflection is a self-evaluation technique for determining the quality of current learning (Amineh & Asl, 2015). In this context, both the students and the lecturer performed the reflection activities. The students considered their dedication to study, their aptitude to learn, and their learning experience. Learning designs that generate a meaningful and engaging learning experience were measured through lecturer reflection. The lecturer, in this research, gave an oral reflection at the end of the class. The students were given the chance to reflect on their learning activities. Furthermore, the lecturer created a learning reflection questionnaire to collect information on student reactions to their learning activities.

Teachers' assessment came at the end of the semantic learning activities. An authentic assessment was conducted when contextual learning was used. The lecturer evaluated each student's progress based on the learning activities. The assessment considered not only the final product, but also the unique process of each student's individual learning experience.

Authentic assessment examines learning activities for grasping concepts and applying them to language skills and learning. Language skills and language learning are used in the real world to assess students' understanding of concepts. This semantic learning used three types of assessment methods:

performance assessment, portfolio assessment, and student self-assessment (Zahrok, 2009).

### Students Response to Contextual Learning

Students had responded well to the implementation of contextual learning by discussing and promoting examples of how to apply the material in the learning activities. They said they had a greater understanding of semantic content and the importance of studying it as a foundation for establishing competency as future teachers.

Based on the learning activities, the following are the students' responses about the clarity of the examples provided.

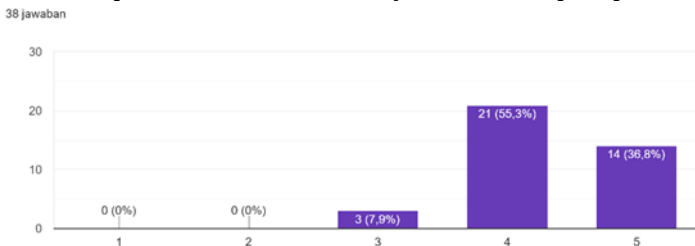


Diagram 1: The Clarity of Examples of the Learning Material in School

According to diagram 1, 7.9% of students thought it was pretty obvious, 55.3 % thought it was clear, and 36.8% thought it was extremely clear. Based on these responses, one of the pillars of learning Indonesian at schools, which was between good and very good, was the description of instances of semantic content. This can be seen in the description of how associative meaning material was used in the collaborative poetry writing process.

According to students, the quality of the lecturer's explanation influenced the clarity of instances of applying associative meaning content in poetry writing activities. The graphic below depicts student responses to the lecturer's explanation quality.

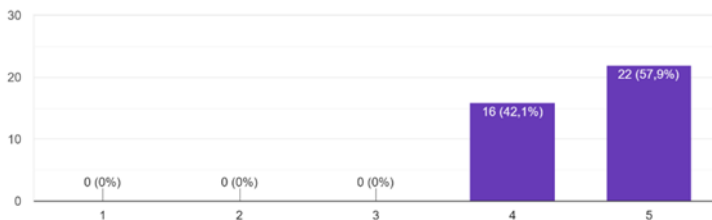


Diagram 2 The Quality of the Lecturer's Explanation

Diagram 2 indicates that the students' responses to the lecturer's explanation were excellent. Learning activities that, based on self-reflection, presented examples of the usage of semantic concerns in learning Indonesian language had never been done before. The absence of reasoning in semantic content research in connection to Indonesian language learning activities inspired this thought. Based on student reflections, this semester's learning was contextualized by examining the types of meaning of each material in order to develop the competency of future educators.

Reflection is a teacher's ongoing attempt to enhance the quality of their students' learning. Reflection, according to Moon (2000), is a strategy for assisting and strengthening learning. It is employed in educational growth and professional development. Furthermore, continuous reflection will assist teachers in improving the quality of student-centered learning. This is in line with Ewing, Waugh, and Smith's (2021) assertion that reflection transforms teachers into change agents for improving learning quality.

The implementation of learning in six meetings in 2022 received excellent results based on a mid-semester review conducted in collaboration with the students. As seen by the students' statements, they were able to comprehend the purposes and benefits of studying semantics in everyday life, whether as students or as future educators. The diagram below shows the students' responses.

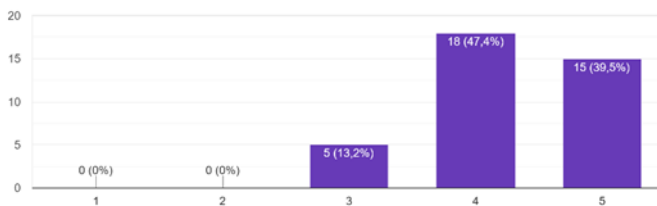


Diagram 3 The Quality of Semantic Content Understanding in Real Life

Diagram 3 indicates that most students were able to generate semantic meaning in everyday life. This could be observed qualitatively in the capacity to know the diction of the word to be used. In semantic studies, each word has meaning and power. The fit and robustness of the word notion are factors in speech and language selection.

#### D. Conclusion

Contextual learning is a student-centered approach to learning. This type of instruction can help students comprehend and apply concepts in the actual world. In this study, the enhancement of language competence and language learning competency was referred to as real life. Furthermore, contextual learning supports the creation of an independent curriculum by empowering students to translate the functions and advantages of learning concepts into their daily lives.

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