



**IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY USING  
CONTEXTUAL CLUES STRATEGY IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT IN TENTH  
GRADE OF  
SMA N 2 MRANGGEN**

*Manuscript*

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By :

Ericho Fajar Hidayat

F2B014003

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE  
UNIVERSITY OF MUHAMMADIYAH SEMARANG**

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## APPROVAL


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Advisor I



Muhimatul Ifadah, S.Pd, M.Pd  
NIK 28.6.1026.182

Advisor II



Testiana Deni W, S Pd, M.Pd  
NIK 28.6.1026.168

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY USING CONTEXTUAL  
CLUES STRATEGY IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT IN TENTH GRADE OF SMA N 2  
MRANGGEN**

**Peningkatan Kosakata Siswa Menggunakan Contextual Clues Strategi Pada  
Descriptive Text Pada Kelas X Sman 2 Mranggen**

Ericho Fajar H<sup>1</sup>, Muhimatul Ifadah, S.Pd, M.Pd<sup>2</sup>, Testiana Deni W<sup>3</sup>

English Education Departement University of Muhammadiyah Semarang

Jl. Kedungmundu Raya No. 18 Semarang

Ericko.walker@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT**

The pre-observation done in SMA N 2 Mranggen showed drilling and memorizing used by the teacher in teaching vocabulary in learning descriptive text. The strategy made the student bored in learning English because the teacher always repeat the word to convince them that they understand. The teacher admit they have less strategy to improve students' vocabulary. This research process implement five steps in the research. They were preliminary research, planning the action, implementing, observing, and reflecting the observation. From the data, this research was considered successful since the score performed significant improvement or more than 75 had been achieved. The students' vocabulary test score had shown the improvement from pre-test until post-test 22.2% to 77.7%. The students who got 75 or above are also increase from 8 to 28 students. From the data, the strategy implementation gave a significant improvement toward students' vocabulary mastery. Besides, the students also showed positive feedback toward the implementation of the strategy. Their activeness during teaching and learning process responding the question given by the teacher and the activeness in involving the learning process. Overall, it can be concluded that contextual clues in descriptive text is help students' in learning vocabulary in more interesting way.

**Keyword: Vocabulary, Descriptive Text, Contextual Clues**

## INTRODUCTION

Reading and vocabulary are two aspect which should be mastered by the students. Moreover, vocabulary is hard to be taught because some teachers are tend to teach the material and ignore to teach vocabulary. Reardon (2011) states that English vocabulary is immersed when teaching language skills and using and understanding English words will create progress in those skills. It means that vocabulary is an essential skill that should be mastered followed by others English skills. Vocabulary needs to be mastered by the learners since it becomes the core component of language proficiency followed with all language skills. Those statement are also proven by Ragini (2011) on his paper under the title “Reading and Guessing Meaning in Context”, it is shown that guessing the vocabulary and contextual meanings is the first step in understanding a written message. Besides, vocabulary learning strategies create multiple benefits in acquiring accurate word meaning through the help of context (Hirai, Borrego, Garza and Kloock , 2010). The statement means that through contextual clues, students are helped to understand the words easily. Context clues provide information about how a word fits in a sentence and with the ideas discussed in it. In other words, figuring out what a word means by looking at the words or phrases nearby (Hartmann & Blass, 2007). It is also in line with Praveen (2017) stated that contextualization helps learners to understand and effectively use in learning the target language. Furthermore, according to research conducted by Nation (2001) believes that employing contextual clues to learn vocabulary incidentally is the most important of all sources of vocabulary learning, which focus on meaning rather than form such as extensive reading, taking part in conversations, listening to stories, many shades of meaning of words used in a particular context can better be mastered if context clues are provided.

Through expecting unfamiliar vocabulary in descriptive text, I tried to the problem where the students are difficult to figure out the similar meaning by using

contextual clues. I found the same problem during my observation in SMAN 2 Mranggen, students' thought it is difficult to distinguish the appropriate meaning. I observed a class which had a problem related to vocabulary. It was class X MIPA 2 which consisted of 36 students. This class was heterogeneous in terms of English proficiency level. Before I did my observation, I gave vocabulary test to identify the problem. I found that most of the students faced difficulties in finding sufficient meaning from certain words in reading text by using contextual clues strategy. It is not only how the student found out the meaning, but also how they comprehend the text. It is also in line with College, 2015 which stated that comprehension in reading plays an important role in both personal and professional life. On the other hand, English reading comprehension tasks have proven to be a challenging for students due to their lack of vocabulary. It is also related with the problem faced by me about how to define the sufficient meaning in a text. In addition, this is also in line with the score in vocabulary test given. The test focuses on the target words in a text.

The target word used was the daily vocabulary. However, they faced difficulties to find a sufficient meaning in a context such as the word *when*. When the students looked up the English dictionary, the word *when* had more than one meanings, they were *asking question (what time)* and *during*. The students should concern on that word and find the appropriate word from the context. Most of them answered *during* rather than *what time*. In addition, the score of the vocabulary test also showed that the students had limited vocabulary. Most of their score was still under the SKM (Standart Kriteria Minimum) which is set by the school regulation. On the other hand, to analyze test items, there are some criteria of a good test according to some expert. A good test should have (1) Validity, (2) Reliability, (3) Level of difficulty, (4) Discrimination Power, and (5) The Quality of Options. This research was concerned with the whole with test items designed by MGMP. Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument really measures the objective to be measured and suitable with the criteria (Hatch and Farhady, 1982:250). In addition,

the reliability refers to the consistency of measurement that is, to see how consistent test scores or other evaluation results are from one measurement to another (Gronlund, 2000:193). We used validity and reliability as a support data.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

I implemented Classroom Action Research (CAR) to in giving treatment and contextual clues to teach to the students. I focused on some words which have different meaning depending on the context given in order to give deep meaning to the students in terms of vocabulary used in several English texts. The pointed words are chosen based on the students' level. Questioning and language engagement were also needed in order to strengthen the learners' understanding.

This research covered two cycles consisted of five stages which were preliminary research, planning the action, implementing, observing, and reflecting the observation.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1) The Implementation of Contextual Clues in Extensive Reading**

During the implementation of the strategy, the teacher and I collaborated to supervise the student for making sure they did the test without any cheating. I conducted five meetings and gave an additional meeting in each. First, in the preliminary research the teacher did observation and gave a pretest to the student. After that in meeting 1, I explain about contextual clues and descriptive text. Then, in the meeting 2, I explained the tenses used in the descriptive text. Meeting 3 and 4, I had an exercise and discussion toward the explanation before. And the last meeting, I had a final test and reflection.

Besides, the additional meeting was used for giving additional explanation toward the difficulties faced by the student.

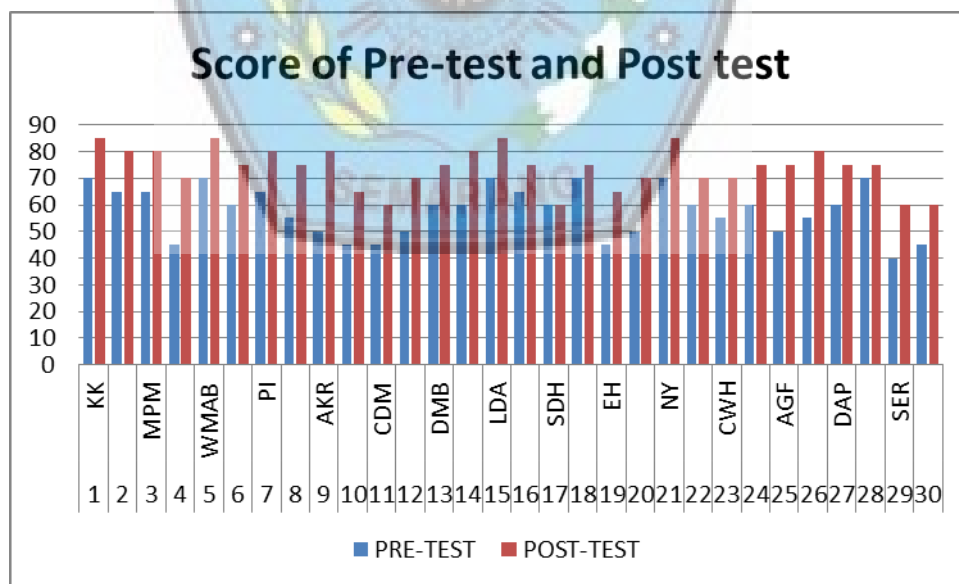
## 2) Student's Response On Learning Vocabulary Using Contextual Clues

Student's response on learning vocabulary using contextual clues during teaching and learning process showed that the student gave a positive response by following my instruction. On the other hand, the student also did active to give and answer the question.

## 3) Significance different of student's vocabulary mastery

Based from the simple random sampling, I was conducted tryout the instrument in X MIPA 4 of SMA 2 Mranggen. On other hand, the sample of this research was conducted in English group of SMA 2 Mranggen which consisted of 30 students. The score of pre-test and post-test was followed by the table.

**Table 1. The Score of Pre-test and Post-Test in**



**Table 1.1 The Mean, Median, Mode, Std. Deviation and Sum of**

	Statistics	
	pre test	post test
Valid	15	15
Missing	0	0
Mean	58,33	76,33
Median	60,00	80,00
Mode	45 <sup>a</sup>	80
Std. Deviation	9,386	7,432
Minimum	45	60
Maximum	70	85
Sum	875	1145

Based on the data above, I found that the total score of the pre-test was 875 the mean was 58,33 , the median was 60,00, the mode was 45, and std. deviation was 9,386. While the post-test, the total score was 1145, the mean was 76,33 , the median was 80,00 , the mode was 80, and the std. deviation was 7,432.

#### **4) Students' Response On Learning Vocabulary Using Contextual Clues**

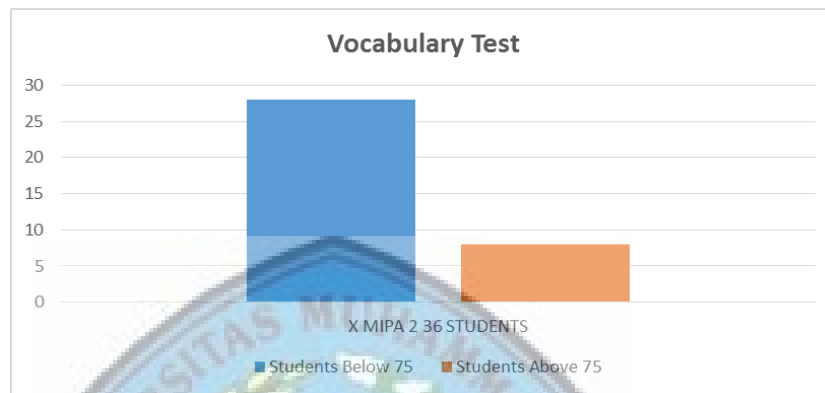
Student's response on learning vocabulary using contextual clues during teaching and learning process was showed that the student gave a positive respond by following my instruction. On the other hand, the student also did active to give and answer the question.



## 5) Students' Improvement in Vocabulary Mastery

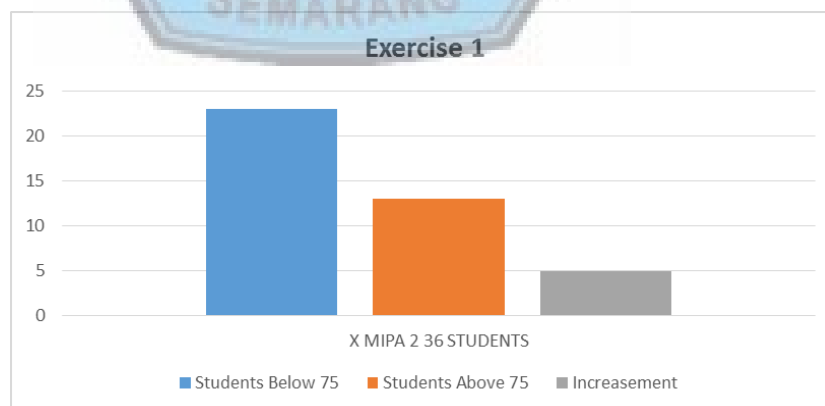
### 5.1 Cycle 1

#### a. Vocabulary Test



The result of the vocabulary test showed that the students vocabulary mastery was below the minimum score. The average score of the class was 57,6. The graphic represent the student in blue color and score in red color. The data showed that graphic 1 only 8 out of thirty six or 22.2% students got 75 or above. While in graphic 28 out of 31 students or 77.7% got below 75.

#### a. Meeting 1



The data shows that thirteen out of thirty six students or 36.1% got 75 or above while the rest 23 students or 63.9% got below 75. The result of exercise 1 was increase from 8 to 13 out of 36 students who got 75.

### b. Meeting 2



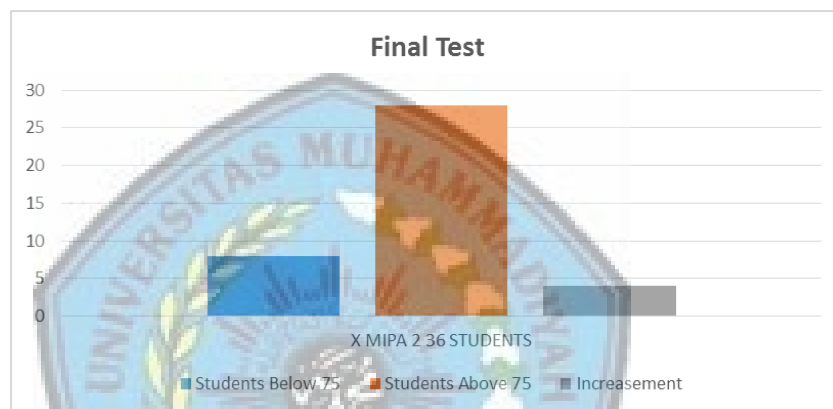
The data showed that the students who got 75 or above performs better than the previous meeting. Twelve students or 33.3% got 75 or above while the rest, 24 students or 66.6% got below 75.

## 2. Cycle 2

### a. Meeting 3

In meeting 3, I had a treatment to improve the vocabulary mastery. I held a discussion about the previous exercises which consisted of four texts with the exercises for each group of students and I instructed the students to stay in their groups in the previous meeting. Then, to make sure they were understood, they had to raise your hand to answer the question. The additional meeting also discussed the same topic and exercise given by the teacher.

### b. Final Test

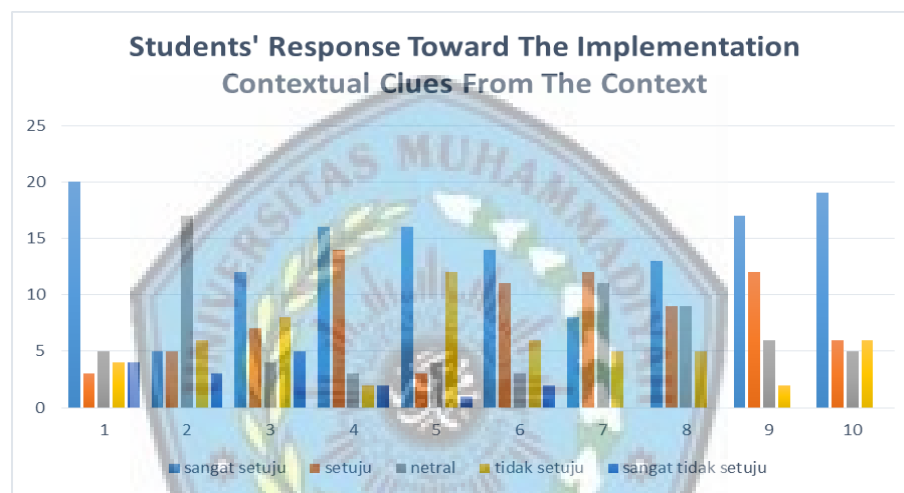


The data showed that the students who go score 75 or above is increasing. Twenty eight students or 77.7% got 75 or above while the rest 8 students or 22.2% was get under 75.

The data gathered from the result of analyzing the students' performance showed that the students' score improved. In vocabulary test, only 8 out of thirty six or 22.2% students got 75 or above. In meeting 1 or exercise 1 the students who got 75 or above was thirteen out of thirty six students or 36.1%. In meeting 2, or exercise 2 the result showed that students who got 75 or above was Thirteen students or 36.1%. The post test result showed that the students who got 75 or above was twenty eight students or 77.7%. The percentage showed that the criterion of success had been achieved.

### 6) The Students' Responses Toward The Implementation Contextual Clues From The Context

The result of the students' responses toward the implementation of contextual Clues from the context clues was the students' questionnaire given after the research. The questionnaire consisted of ten questions. The first question asked about the students' opinion toward the implementation of extensive reading contextually. They were asked whether they were interested in extensive reading through contextual clues from the context or not. The result of the students' opinion whether contextual clue is interesting or not, is described as follows



The chart shows that 72% of students or 26 out of 36 students answered “Yes”. It means that the implementation of contextual clues in descriptive text from the context in the class was interesting for them. However, 7 out of 31 students or 19% of the students answered “No” which indicated that the student was not interesting in learning contextual clues in descriptive text from the context. The other 3 students or 8% of the students answered “Average” because they didn’t agree towards the implementation of extensive reading through contextual clues from the context. The second question asked about the students' opinion whether clustering strategies had helped them or not. They were asked if whether contextual clues improve their skill in vocabulary mastery and reading skill.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **1. Implementation of Contextual Clues on Students' Vocabulary Mastery in Descriptive Text**

Using contextual clues for choosing the right meaning of particular words is a strategy that can be used to improve the students' vocabulary mastery. The students' mastery in vocabulary can be shown by how they guess the new words based on the context. This strategy also can help students to distinguish the meaning of selected word in different contexts in reading texts. This strategy also successfully motivated the students to do their best in reading tasks.

### **2. Student's Response on Learning Vocabulary in Descriptive Text**

During the implementation of contextual clues which was done in five meetings, the students' responses were good. The observation checklist and questionnaire were filled by the student after the implementation and the result was in positive response. In the first meeting, all students paid attention to the teachers' explanation about the descriptive text with its examples of the text and the grammatical use. Then, the students seemed enthusiastic when they practicing using contextual clues with the guidance from the teacher, and they did it well in the second meeting. In addition, the students also gave their best effort on doing their assignment in reading activities in the third to fifth meeting.

### **3) Suggestions**

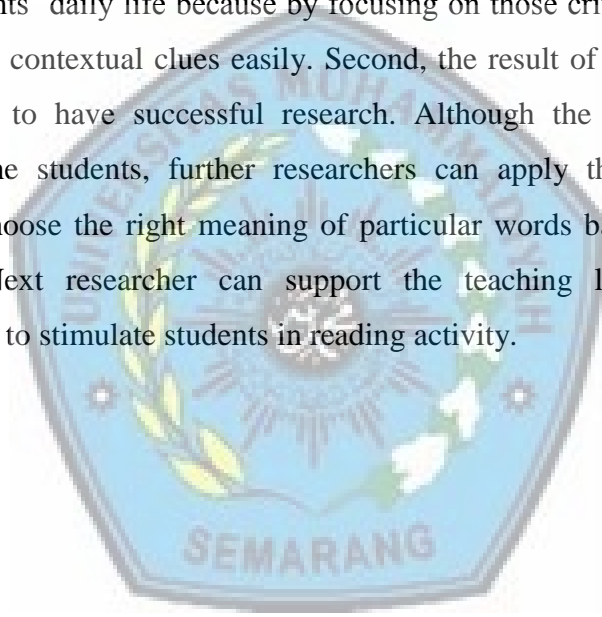
#### **a. Teacher**

The teacher are expected to gain benefit from this research. Some suggestions are given for the teacher. First, the English teacher should teach the students that the meaning of words depend on the context. Vocabulary and reading could not be separated then the teacher should teach the students the right way. Besides, the teacher should create good atmosphere in teaching and learning process.

The good atmosphere could motivate student in learning. Dictionary training is one of the strategies which can help students improve their vocabulary mastery.

#### **b. Further Researcher**

The others is for the further researchers. Next researchers focus on the indicators to implement the strategies and consider the following suggestions to achieve good result. First, the criteria of choosing text should be in average level of difficulties and about students' daily life. In addition, the words and context should cover the students' daily life because by focusing on those criteria, it would help the students get the contextual clues easily. Second, the result of giving additional time also influences to have successful research. Although the additional meeting is proposed by the students, further researchers can apply the strategies of using dictionary to choose the right meaning of particular words based on context to get good result. Next researcher can support the teaching learning process with interesting texts to stimulate students in reading activity.



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