

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' SKILL ON CONTEXT CLUES AND THEIR READING COMPREHENSION SKILL

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Abstrak—Penggunaan petunjuk konteks dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca sehingga pembaca mudah memahami kata sulit dan memperluas kosa katanya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) mengidentifikasi kemampuan petunjuk konteks siswa, (2) mengidentifikasi kemampuan pemahaman membaca siswa, (3) menentukan hubungan antara kemampuan petunjuk konteks siswa dengan pemahaman membaca. Penelitian menggunakan desain penelitian korelasi dengan pendekatan kuantitatif. Sampel penelitian adalah 70 siswa kelas 11 yang didapat dengan *convenience sampling*. Pengumpulan data menggunakan tes dengan *worksheet* petunjuk konteks dan kemampuan pemahaman membaca. Hasil temuan menunjukkan adanya keberagaman pada nilai kemampuan petunjuk konteks dan kemampuan membaca siswa. Kemampuan siswa tertinggi dalam petunjuk konteks antonim dengan persentase 67,85%. Petunjuk konteks definisi dan contoh mendapatkan persentase terendah 59,28%. Kemampuan siswa tertinggi dalam pemahaman kosa kata dengan persentase 62,85%, dan ide pokok mendapatkan persentase terendah 60%. Hasil nilai signifikansi 0,000 dan korelasi Pearson 0,970 mengindikasikan adanya hubungan yang sangat kuat antara kedua variabel.

Kata Kunci—petunjuk konteks, pemahaman membaca

Abstract— The use of context clues can improve reading comprehension by understanding difficult words and expanding readers' vocabulary. This study aims to (1) identify students' context clues skill, (2) identify students' reading comprehension skill, (3) determine the correlation between students' context clues and reading comprehension skill. A quantitative approach with a correlation research design was used. The sample was 70 students obtained by convenience sampling. Data was collected by test using worksheets. The findings showed diversity in students' score. The highest student score in context clues was in antonym with a percentage of 67.85% and in reading comprehension was in vocabulary with a percentage of 62.85%. The lowest percentage are definition and example, 59.28%, also the main idea with the percentage of 60%. The results of the significance value of 0.000 and Pearson correlation of 0.970 showed a very strong relationship between both variables.

Keywords—*context clues, reading comprehension.*

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INTRODUCTION

Language is an important part of human life. It is a primary tool we use to share information, ideas, and feelings with others. Without it, we would be limited to basic gestures and facial expressions, making complex interactions nearly impossible. Language allows us to express ourselves clearly and precisely, fostering understanding and collaboration. Through language, we also connect with friends, family, and colleagues on a deeper level.

English is considered the world's lingua franca which is a common language used for communication between people from different native languages. This makes it essential for international diplomacy, business negotiations, and travel. The needs of English for a specific purpose forces people to learn English well in this globalization era. Studying and working abroad are surely requiring English skills. Even to get a better job or to achieve a better carrier in local or international companies, people who have an English educational background or proficient in English is preferred for acceptance.

English language has an important role in Indonesia. It is studied as a foreign language and has been studied as a subject in school. This refers to the status of English language in Indonesia. English is not just encountered casually but is a formal subject taught in Indonesian schools. This means there's a dedicated curriculum with structured lessons and learning plans with specific learning objectives, textbooks, and assessments to develop students' English language skills. In studying English, there are four skills that has to be mastered, namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking.

Reading is an important skill. Reading appears to be more important than other skills, especially for those studying English as second or foreign language (Grabe cited in Isma & Nur, 2023: 13). Reading exposes learners to grammatically correct and naturally used English in various contexts. They encounter diverse vocabulary, sentence structures, and writing styles, enriching their understanding of the language. Through consistent reading, learners encounter new words repeatedly, aiding in vocabulary acquisition and retention. They also learn words in context, understanding how they're used and their nuances. Moreover, reading exposes learners to proper sentence structures and grammar patterns. While memorizing grammar rules is valuable, seeing them used naturally reinforces their understanding and application.

Reading is a necessary skill that should be followed up with comprehension. Reading comprehension is an active process in which the reader is required to participate (Apriliyanti, Tarigan, and Pangaribuan cited in Safika & Fauzana, 2023: 34). Reading comprehension requires considerable reading skills, namely word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and past knowledge, in order for the reader to learn from the passage (Zainal et al cited in Nurhaeni, 2022: 2). Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill crucial for academic success and lifelong learning. It allows individuals to extract

meaning from written text, fostering knowledge acquisition, critical thinking, and effective communication.

However, there are still some problems related to reading comprehension. Based on PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) publication in 2022, Indonesia report revealed a reduction in reading compare to PISA 2018 report with the score from 371 to 359 and Indonesia ranked 71st out of 81 countries and territories assessed in reading (Oecd, 2023). In line with that report, observation that made by researcher showed that the majority of SMA Negeri 2 Nganjuk students had problems reading texts containing difficult words. They also tended to use dictionary when they read English text to find the meaning of the unfamiliar words. Nonetheless, they can't rely on dictionary all the time. There are certain times when they are not able to use a dictionary all the time, such as during exams or during English proficiency test. Some common sources of difficulty for students in reading include a lack of knowledge of content words, a lack of appropriate background knowledge to learn from content, and a lack of effective reading strategies to assist them in efficiently comprehending texts for their grade level (İlter, 2019: 2).

In order to help students, learn effectively, especially in reading comprehension, teachers searched for the finest methods and tactics to help them understand the knowledge they should gain from reading. Many methods and approaches were taught and used in the classroom, but only the proper ones that will make learning more pleasant and stress-free for both teachers and students. Effective methods minimize stress for both teachers and students. Teachers don't have to struggle with managing chaos or ineffective lessons, and students feel confident in their ability to learn and succeed. One of the best strategies for growing and improving reading comprehension is the usage of context clues, which make it easier for readers to understand unfamiliar words and expand their vocabulary (İlter, Mauliza et al., Putri and Fitrawati cited in (Oclarit & Casinillo, 2021: 374).

Context clues are defined as words found around an unknown word that provides clues that reveal the meaning of the unknown word. The clues can appear before and after the unknown words. The goal of using context clues as a reading strategy is to help readers deduce the meanings of terms they are unfamiliar with (Karbalaie, Amoli, & Tavakoli, 2012). There are five types of context clues, namely definition or explanation, synonym or restatement, antonym or contrast, example and general or inference (Nurhaeni, 2022: 20).

There are some advantages of context clues. First, the intention of vocabulary acquisition. Vocabulary mastery surely has a big point in understanding the sentence. Context clues are supporting sentences for providing information on the meaning of difficult words. For instance, a sentence that has meaning which the readers do not even comprehend (Uzer, 2019). If the reader is unfamiliar with a word or only knows a small portion of it, they can still understand it by using context clues and the reader can expand their vocabulary to help them understand unfamiliar words (Rynette cited in Hong

& Lanh, 2023: 6075). The next advantage is context clues can stimulate critical thinking of reader. Using creativity is necessary while working with context clues. Readers must remain alert and concentrated when processing and deducing information when they start using context clues. It will encourage the reader to think critically in an indirect way. Using a logical method like this will encourage readers to think more critically and thoroughly so that they fully understand the content of the paragraph (Herinovita, Delfi, & Aruan, n.d: 4). Context clues can also help student in pronouncing words correctly when reading (Khairani, 2022). Context clues can help the students confirming how to pronounce a word they're attempting to decode. It can also determine the proper pronunciation of phrases with multiple meanings and resolve ambiguities (Apa Innaci & Sam, 2017: 40). Lastly, using context clues also saves students time when looking up new words in dictionaries. It is not necessary for students to look up new words in the dictionary every time they encounter them. Students cannot select the appropriate meaning for a given situation unless they pay attention to the context in which a phrase is employed. In result, students may complete tests more quickly and simply (Innaci & Sam cited in Hong & Lanh, 2023: 6075)

There are several relevant findings that were discovered. A research by Sungchaniya Wongwiwattana and Sasa Watanapokakul on undergraduate students (Years 1-4) in the Faculty of Liberal Arts at a university in Thailand in semester two showed a significant correlation between students' ability to infer word definition and context clues types they used. Moreover, the students showed positive opinions towards the use of context clues to infer the meaning of vocabulary and provided some interesting ideas regarding the teaching of context clues for ESL/EFL teachers and English major program committees (Wongwiwattana & Watanapokakul, 2021). Dr. Samir Jumaily's research in 2021 on Cambridge IGCSE students found The findings of this research was a lot of progress in the use of figurative language was noticed by using context clues in sentences (Jumaily, 2021). A research by Sarilila Utama on 8 grade students of 10 Juniot High School Depok showed that students who were taught by using context clues are better than the ones taught by using dictionary. In order to comprehend difficult words, students were easier in determining the example clues (Utama, 2019) . Cynthia O. Jomocan and Ma.Judy B. Legaspi's research on grade 10 students of public high school in the Division of Bacolod City showed a Kruskal-Wallis and Post hoc Dunn's test revealed a significant difference in the context clues knowledge and reading comprehension skills when respondents are grouped according to class programs. Spearman Rank Correlation determined that there is a significant relationship between context clues knowledge and reading comprehension skills (Jomocan & Legaspi, 2021).

According to the above background, researcher would like to conduct a study entitled " The Correlation Between Students' Skill on Context Clues and Their Reading Comprehension Skill of Eleventh Graders at SMA Negeri 2 Nganjuk" with the aims to (1) identify students skill on context

clues, (2) identify students' reading comprehension skill, and (3) determine whether there is a correlation between students' skill on context clues and their reading comprehension skill.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses correlational research design, which is a quantitative approach where researcher explain and measure the degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables or sets of scores using a correlation statistical technique. The independent variable of this research is students' skill on context clues and the dependent variable is students' reading comprehension skill.

The population of this research is all eleventh grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Nganjuk with the total of 339 students. Researcher used 70 students as the sample of this research that obtained using convenience sampling.

The data collected by a test with worksheets to identify the students' skill on context clues and identify students' reading comprehension skill. Students' skill on context clues measured by using context clues worksheet that adapted from a combination of questions from module by Floriasti, Francoise Grellet, and Hapsarani with some modifications by the researcher. This worksheet consist of 10 questions that contained a combination of five types of context clues, namely definition, synonym, antonym, example, general. Each type of context clues represented by 2 questions. Additionally, students' reading comprehension skill measured by using reading comprehension worksheet that adapted from worksheet bundle by Edmentum and Francoise Grellet with some modifications by the researcher. This worksheet consists of 10 multiple choice questions, 2 questions represent each aspect of reading comprehension, namely drawing conclusion, finding inference, understanding main idea, understanding vocabulary, and finding the detail information (Edmentum, n.d.; Floriasti, n.d.; Francoise Grellet; Hapsarani, n.d.).

The score which obtained by the students, categorized using the scoring criteria as follow:

Table 1. Scoring Criteria

Score	Criteria
81-100	Excellent
71-80	Good
60-70	Fair
0-59	Low

This research used two analysis methods, namely descriptive statistics and inferential statistics using SPSS 24. Descriptive statistics are a collection of methods used to summarize the key characteristics of a dataset. Inferential statistics used to find out the correlation between students' skill on context clues and their reading comprehension skill. The researcher uses the correlation formula by Pearson Product Moment Correlation to examine the hypothesis with the data required to be normally distributed and the correlation is linear. In order to ensure the normality and linearity, the researcher use Kolmogorov Smirnov Test and linearity test. After examined the hypothesis, the researcher used table from Sugiyono

below to interpret the correlation level between independent and dependent variable (Kusnadi & Mutoharoh, 2016: 97)

Table 2. The Coefficient Correlation Table

Coefficient Interval	Correlation Level
0.00-0.19	Very low
0.20-0.39	Low
0.40-0.69	Medium
0.70-0.89	High
0.90-1.00	Very strong

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Descriptive statistics of students' skill on context clues that has been analyzed with SPSS 24 presented by the following table.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Skill on Context Clues

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students' Skill on Context Clues	70	20	100	62.86	22.596

Source: SPSS 24

The data for students' skill on context clues includes 70 observations. The minimum score is 20, while the maximum score is 100. On average, students scored 62.86 in understanding context clues. The standard deviation of 22.596 indicates the variability in skill levels among the students. These descriptive statistics show that there is a diversity in context clues skill levels among the students.

The students' skill on context clues assessed from five types of context clues, namely definition, synonym, antonym, example, and general. The percentage of students' correct answer both in definition and example context clues is 59.28%. The percentage of students' correct answer in synonym context clues is 67.14%. The percentage of students' correct answer in antonym context clues is 67.85%. Lastly, the percentage of students' correct answer in general context clues is 60.71%. This means that the antonym context clues has the highest percentage of students' correct answer and both definition and example context clues has the lowest percentage of students' correct answer. In order to answer the definition context clues question, the students should have sufficient experience to deduce meaning and to avoid them give the wrong answer. However, many students do not have it and that makes the students skill in answering the definition context clues become poor. The students also have difficulty in answering example context clues because they have difficulties in choosing the clues to infer the example of the given word and have difficulties to correlate the given word and its examples.

Descriptive statistics of students' reading comprehension skill that has been analyzed with SPSS 24 presented by the following table.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Students' Reading Comprehension Skill

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students' Reading Comprehension Skill	70	20	100	61.71	21.601

Source: SPSS 24

There are 70 observations in students' reading comprehension skill. The minimum score is 20 and the maximum score 100. The mean score of the students is 61.71. The students' varying skill levels are indicated by the 21.601 standard deviation. These descriptive statistics show the variation in the students' reading comprehension skill levels. The students' reading comprehension skill assessed from five types aspects, such as drawing conclusion, finding inference, understanding main idea, understanding vocabulary, and understanding detail information. The percentage of students' correct answer both in drawing conclusion and finding inference is 62.13%. The percentage of students' correct answer in understanding main idea is 60%. The percentage of students' correct answer in understanding vocabulary is 62.85%. Lastly, the percentage of students' correct answer in understanding detail information is 61.42%. This means understanding vocabulary has the highest percentage of students' correct answer and understanding main idea has the lowest percentage of students' correct answer. In order to answer main idea question, the students should understand the concept of general or main idea of the text to make them find the main idea easily and get the correct answer. The students who give the correct answers are those who understand the concept of how to find main ideas. The way to find out the main ideas of the text can also by connecting the other information in the text that related to support the ideas that we assume. When the students don't give attention about the supporting idea, it can make them give the wrong answer.

The normality test results for variables students' skill on context clues and students' reading comprehension are presented in the following table:

Table 5. The Normality Test Results

Variable	Significance value	The normality result
Students' skill on context clues	0.21	Normal
Students' reading comprehension	0.13	Normal

Source: SPSS 24 result

The normality test used Kolmogorov Smirnov test. The decision making in this kind of test based on the significance value with the following criteria:

- a. If the significance value > 0.05 , that means the research data are normally distributed.
- b. If the significance value < 0.05 , that means the research data are normally distributed

Based on the above table, the significance value of both variables are bigger than 0.05 which means the research data are normally distributed.

The linearity test result (Anova table) are presented in the following table:

Table 6. The Linearity Test Result

	Significance value
Deviation from Linearity	0.729

Source: SPSS 24 result

The decision making in this kind of test based on the significance deviation from linearity value with the following criteria:

- a. If the significance deviation from linearity value > 0.05 , that means there is a linear correlation between independent and dependent variable.
- b. If the significance deviation from linearity value < 0.05 , that means there is no linear correlation between independent and dependent variable.

Based on the above table, the significance deviation from linearity value is bigger than 0.05 which means there is a linear correlation between independent and dependent variable.

The results of correlation between students' skill of context clues and students' reading comprehension skill are presented in the following table:

Table 7. The Correlation Result

	Significance Value	Pearson Correlation
Context Clues	0.000	0.970
Reading Comprehension		

Source: SPSS 24 result

The decision making in this kind of test based on the significance deviation from linearity value with the following criteria:

- a. If the significance value < 0.05 , that means there is a correlation between independent and dependent variable.
- b. If the significance value > 0.05 , that means there is no linear correlation between independent and dependent variable.

Based on the above table, the significance value is less than 0.05 which means there is a correlation between students' skill of context clues and students' reading comprehension skill. Furthermore, the above table shows that the Pearson correlation is 0.970. Based on the coefficient correlation table that result shows a very strong correlation level between students' skill of context clues and students' reading comprehension skill.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research findings show that there is a diversity in context clues skill scores obtained by the students, which are 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100. This score varies in categorization which are "Low", "Fair", "Good", and "Excellent". Based on five types of context clues, the antonym context

clues the highest percentage of students' correct answer which is 67.85% and both definition and example context clues has the lowest percentage of students' correct answer which is 59.28%.

The research findings show that there is a diversity in reading comprehension scores obtained by the students, which are 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100. This score varies in categorization which are "Low", "Fair", "Good", and "Excellent". Based on aspects of reading comprehension, understanding vocabulary has the highest percentage of students' correct answer which is 62.85% and understanding main idea has the lowest percentage of students' correct answer which is 60%.

The research findings show the significance value is 0.000 which less than 0.05. That indicates a correlation between students' skill on context clues and their reading comprehension skill. In addition, based on correlation coefficient interpretation table, the result of Pearson correlation is 0.970, which can be concluded that the correlation between students' skill on context clues and their reading comprehension skill very are strong.

Researcher suggest things related to the research findings, research discussion, and the way this research has been carried out. It is suggested that teachers and students discuss many kinds of context clues and how to use and approach them properly when reading the text for them to understand the material. It is also advised that teachers work to increase their students' reading comprehension. Since this research has some limitations, the researcher would like to suggest other researchers to conduct further research and analysis about the factors that influence students' context clues skill and students' reading comprehension skill and students' learning style related to context clues and reading comprehension.

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