

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the rationale or background of the research, research questions, research objectives, scope of the research, and the significance of the research as an introduction to the objectives and limitations of the research.

1.1 Rationale

Semantics, as one of the branches of linguistics, is an interesting field to be learned and analyzed. Semantics is the study of meaning in language. Kreidler (2002) defined semantics as the systematic study of meaning. Semantics is a discipline of linguistics that focuses on the meaning of words. Semantics is the examination of meaning in human language. According to Castillo (2015, as cited in Van Thao & Regita Sinaga, 2020), “Language has meaning”. This means that humans should understand the meaning of the language that they use, whether it is in spoken or written communication.

According to Lyons (1981, as cited in Hulu, 2023), meanings are ideas, or concepts which can be transferred from mind of the speaker to the mind of the hearer. Knowing the meaning of an utterance is important when communicating a certain message through language. Semantic study is one way to analyze the meaning of language that can help people to get clear meaning and information in both spoken and written form, especially for those who are not native speakers of a certain language.

In addition, Pateda (2010) states that there are 29 types of semantic meanings. One of the meanings in semantics is contextual meaning. The situation, that is, the location, time, and setting in which the language is used, relates to contextual meaning. Therefore, the only way to understand its meaning and definition is to pay attention to other word units that are next to it. Contextual meaning is a fascinating kind of meaning to research. It is intriguing since its meaning will become clear after the sentence is connected to its circumstance or context. This meaning is not limited to comprehending the word or sentence. It may also relate to the context,

timing, and environmental influences on language use. However, it must also be connected to the sentence's situation or context. Thus, contextual meaning can be found in many literary works, including those that are presented in a student's textbook.

A textbook is an instructional tool used in teaching-learning processes. As a learning resource and learning medium, it is a valuable resource. A textbook is a written document that provides information about a specific subject for students. It provides both content and instructional resources (Purnama & Chandra, 2023).

Aprilia and Ambarwati (2023), argue that educators can benefit from textbooks in several ways, including as a curriculum, a source of inspiration for classroom activities, a supply of material, and a core source. In addition, Cunningsworth (1995) states that textbooks are beneficial in teaching-learning processes as most goals and objectives have already been served in the set of activities based on what the students need to learn.

Cunningsworth (1995) lists several purposes of textbooks, including providing written and spoken content, exercises, communication exchanges, vocabulary, grammar, and self-directed learning in addition to encouraging students' independence. As one of the significant materials in the teaching and learning process, textbook provides various genres of text as learning materials. The texts served are provided in line with students' needs and competence. One of the genres provided and taught in the textbook is narrative text.

Narrative text is a work of literature that tells a story to entertain the audience and commonly uses the past tense. Examples of narrative texts include myths, fables, legends, fairy tales, science fiction, fantasy, and science fiction. As the structure, it must include orientation, complication, and solution. (Lumbantungkup, Sitorus, Siahaan, & Hutabarat, 2022). Besides its purpose of giving entertainment, narrative text can also engage the readers or listeners to observe about a certain issue. It can also convey a message or lesson and attract the readers' and listeners' emotions. (Magfiroh, Herdiawan, & Rofi'i, 2021).

It can be said that narrative text implies messages in a story that demand understanding from the readers or listeners. Therefore, students, to get the message implied in the text, must have a good comprehension of the context of the story. Sucihati (2021) says that analyzing contextual meaning helps to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpreting the words used by the authors of a text. Therefore, understanding contextual meaning in narrative texts in the teaching-learning activity will help students to better understand the message or moral value of the stories related to their lives.

Several previous studies have investigated contextual meaning in various types of texts, such as songs, poems, films, short stories, and quotes. For instance, Van Thao and Regita Sinaga (2020) examined contextual meaning in *The Ugly Duckling* dialogue, while Rabi'ah, Anggraeni, and Wulansari (2023) focused on lyrics in *Part of Your World*. Similarly, Sari (2023) conducted a semantic analysis of contextual meaning in narrative texts found in a 10th-grade English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2013. Her study revealed that situational context was the most dominant type found across the texts.

However, there is still limited research that focuses on narrative texts within English textbooks developed under the most recent curriculum, the Independence Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka). This curriculum is designed to enhance students' English proficiency across six key areas: listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting in various contexts (Pouw & Mulyanti, 2023).

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture's official teacher platform (guru.kemdikbud.go.id), tenth-grade students are expected to read and respond to various text types—including recounts, reports, expositions, procedures, narratives, and descriptions—with the goal of gaining information and developing inferential skills. They are also encouraged to recognize implied meanings and authorial intentions. Therefore, mastery of contextual meaning in narrative texts becomes essential in helping students meet these curriculum objectives.

A previous study conducted by Sari (2023) examined contextual meaning in narrative texts from the 2013 curriculum textbook. However, her research was limited to identifying meaning in isolation, without comparing how contextual meaning functions across different narrative genres.

Based on this gap, the present research offers a new contribution by analyzing narrative texts from the *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* textbook (2023), which aligns with the Independence Curriculum. It not only identifies types of contextual meaning using Mansoer Pateda's (2010) theory but also compares how these meanings manifest across three different genres: folktale (*Timun Mas*), historical romance (*Titanic*), and fairy tale (*The Two Elves*). By doing so, this research aims to provide deeper insights into how contextual meaning supports reading comprehension and interpretation. It is therefore relevant for teachers, students, and curriculum developers seeking to integrate semantic awareness more effectively into English language education.

1.2 Research Questions

The research questions formulated for this research are:

1. What types of contextual meanings are prevalent in the narrative texts provided in the English Textbook *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* for tenth grade?
2. What similarities and differences can be found in the use of contextual meaning across different narrative texts in the English Textbook *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* for tenth grade?

1.3 Research Objectives

The research objectives related to the research question above are:

1. To identify contextual meanings prevalent in the narrative texts provided in the English Textbook *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* for tenth-grade

2. To find out the similarities and differences in the use of contextual meaning across different narrative texts in the English Textbook *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris* for tenth grade.

1.4 Scope of The Research

A qualitative method is employed in this research, with the scope limited to narrative texts found in *SIAP Merdeka Belajar Bahasa Inggris*, the English textbook for 10th grade in Indonesia, which is arranged according to the current national curriculum, the Independence Curriculum, or *Kurikulum Merdeka*. This book is chosen as it is the recently published English textbook as the guide of the teaching-learning process in Indonesia based on the currently applied curriculum, Independence Curriculum or *Kurikulum Merdeka*.

1.5 Significance of Research

The results of this research are expected to give some benefits and advantages as explained below:

1. Theoretically

From a linguistic perspective, this research contributes to a semantic analysis by exploring how contextual meaning is constructed and varies across different narrative texts.

2. Practically

The results can be beneficial for some people as follows:

a. English Teacher

Practically, the findings of this research can support English language teaching by helping teachers recognize how contextual meaning operates in narrative texts. Teachers can use this knowledge to develop more effective strategies for improving students' comprehension. By focusing on the most prevalent types of contextual meaning, teachers can better guide students in understanding implied messages, recognizing cultural nuances, and interpreting texts beyond their literal meanings.

b. Students

By examining the contextual meaning in narrative texts, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how language functions in different contexts. It highlights how linguistic elements, cultural references, and situational factors influence meaning, which is essential for developing students' reading comprehension and critical thinking skills.

c. Other Researchers

The result of this research can be useful to be a reference for other researchers who are interested in this topic and are facing related issues.

To further support the objectives outlined in this introductory chapter, the following chapter will present relevant theoretical foundations that guide the analysis of contextual meaning in narrative texts.