

MEANINGFUL LEARNING MODEL THROUGH CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING; THE IMPLEMENTATION IN ENGLISH SUBJECT

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ABSTRACT

Teaching English in the Indonesian National Curriculum demands a change in the learning paradigm towards student-centered, participatory, and contextual learning. However, there are still many teachers who do not know the true nature of English learning. Thus, it causes problems in English language teaching. This research aims at 1) determining the learning process using meaningful learning through contextual teaching and learning, and 2) improving student learning outcomes after being taught using the learning model. This study was conducted at eighth grade of SMP Islam Pecangaan, Jepara regency in which it consisted of 18 students and one English teacher. The design was collaborative classroom action research with two cycles, where in each cycle consisting of four steps; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The data were collected through observation, interview and test with qualitative and quantitative analysis. The finding indicated that the implementation of the meaningful learning model through CTL could 1) improve the students learning completeness from 44% in the first cycle to 89% in the second cycle, 2) improve the learning process carried out by teachers in the aspects of advance organizer, progressive differential, contextualization and constructivism, meaningful learning development, and evaluation, and 3) improve students learning outcomes in each cycle.

Keywords: *meaningful learning; contextual teaching and learning; teaching model*

The implementation of the 2013 curriculum in Indonesia demands a paradigm shift in classroom learning where the learning orientation is from teacher-centered to student-centered, the learning methodology is from explanatory to participatory, and the

learning approach is from textual to contextual. In addition, the assessment process has also changed, which emphasizes more on competency-based assessments by replacing test-based assessments into authentic based assessments (Retnawati et al.,

2016). It is also in line with Maba (2017) where the learning activities on the curriculum focus on the students' participation, the content standards, process standards and graduate competency standards, and even assessment standards.

This paradigm also influences the direction of English language teaching in schools where English language competence is directed so that students are able to master discourse competence. Discourse competence is a competence which comprises the linguistic, sociocultural, actional, and strategic competence (Ediger, 2001). In addition, in English language teaching, students are asked to master and comprehend a text which is realized in two contexts, namely the cultural context and the situation context (Rukmini, 2010) where cultural context gives rise to genre as purposeful social processes realized through language and situation context helps students choose words and grammar to communicate successfully.

The problem that arises in English language teaching is the low absorption of students towards the material being taught. Students' low English proficiency makes difficult for teachers to come up with lively English class (Sabrina, 2020). In addition, students find it difficult to relate the material being taught to the context of their daily lives (Selvianiresa & Prabawanto, 2017) which results in the students are not being able to learn meaningfully from the material presented by the teacher. On the other hand, sum of students in a class consisting of forty to fifty students asks teachers to use traditional teaching model and individual learning model rather than appropriate teaching model (Khan & Ahmad, 2014).

Referring to the fact, English teachers are asked to find appropriate English teaching model to improve students' English proficiency. The use of teaching model is hoped to be able to enhance students learning (Brown, 2007). One of the teaching models which is appropriate to be used is meaningful learning through contextual teaching and learning in teaching and learning process. The

concept of meaningful learning was first proposed by Ausubel (1963), who stated that only when learning is interrelated with a learner's previous life experiences, as present in their cognitive structure, and the learning content is compatible with that structure, can learning be claimed to be meaningful (Huang & Chiu, 2015). Agra et al. (2019) add that meaningful learning theory (MLT), is a promising strategy in a formal teaching situation, which consists of non-arbitrary and non-literal interaction of new knowledge with relevant prior knowledge. Meaningful learning will be carried out well if it is implemented through contextual teaching and learning. This is because CTL is a learning approach in which students are directly involved in the learning process related to students' real-world situations (Merawan et al., 2021) and students may attain a deeper understanding so that they can contribute to their emotional development, intelligence and higher-order thinking skills (Haerazi et al., 2019). Studies which were conducted by Ihsan et al. (2019), Hakkarainen (2011), Koh (2017) and Annamalai et al. (2018) showed that if the contextual teaching and learning approach is used with other learning models, it can stimulate students to be active in learning. Besides that, CTL can also improve students' self-regulated learning (Merawan et al., 2021), motivation in reading comprehension (Haerazi et al., 2019), and critical thinking ability and character (Lestari et al., 2021). From synthesizing the problem in English Language teaching and the advantage of meaningful learning through CTL, this study aims at 1) describing the learning process using meaningful learning through contextual teaching and learning, and 2) improving student learning outcomes after being taught using the learning model.

Meaningful learning is a learning model that has emerged several years ago and relates to Jean Piaget's theory about cognitive development and learning. It is most commonly described as the intentional connecting of new information to anchored ideas or prior knowledge, particularly if the new knowledge is personally relevant and

experiential (Perlman et al., 2010). It is also an educational concept that means binding of new knowledge with preliminary information and mapping cognitive structure according to new learnings and transferring them to daily life (Meydan, 2018). Ausubel in (Koh, 2017) stated that meaningful learning refers to learning that involves the active participation of students in experiences that are cognitively. In meaningful learning, there are five stages that have been triggered for a long time, namely 1) inquiring and reviewing of preliminary information about the newly learned subject, 2) the new learned subject should be analyzed with regard to each concept, argumentation, thesis, sources, and others, 3) comparing the newly learned concepts, argumentation and thesis with preliminary information and to explore similarities and discrepancies between them, 4) recognizing and pursues variations made by newly learned subject in his cognitive structure and make self-regulation, and 5) transferring the new meanings and knowledge to use them and to solve problems in daily life (Meydan, 2018).

To apply Ausubel's theory in teaching, there are several principles and concepts that are needed to pay attention to 1) advance organizer, 2) concept elaboration, 3) superordinate learning, and 4) integrative adoption (Ausubel, 2000). First, early conditioning in learning directs students to the material they are going to learn, and helps them to recall relevant information that can be used to help impart new knowledge. Second, during meaningful learning takes place, there needs to be the development and elaboration of general concepts into specific concepts. Third, superordinate learning is a cognitive structure process that grows towards differentiation, occurs since the acquisition of information and is associated with concepts in the cognitive structure. Finally, the subject matter is structured in such a way that the teacher can use the conceptual hierarchy up and down as long as the information is presented. Therefore, meaningful learning is a process of relating new information to relevant concepts contained in one's cognitive

structure. This concept explains that in a student there is already an organization and clarity of knowledge about something.

To emphasize that the meaningful learning model is truly based on the real-life context of students, the learning model is delivered through contextual teaching and learning (CTL). This is in line with Lan & Grant (2021) who stated that the essential component of successful foreign language learning are 1) learners' active involvement, 2) authentic context, and 3) meaningful and social interaction. In other words, only if a learner actively involves in meaningful and social interactions in authentic contexts will successful language acquisition happen, and creating the authentic contexts and social occasions needed in an FL educational setting to encourage learners to actively get involved in meaningful interactions is always a challenge to FL teachers and researchers (Lan & Grant, 2021).

Contextual teaching and learning was first initiated by Vygotsky (1978) with his sociocultural theory. The theory includes three key themes: (1) cultural-psychological tools, especially language, mediate human actions, including thinking and speaking; (2) learning is a process of internalization, especially through communicative interaction; and (3) the development is a dynamic and historical process in which the nature (settings) and human have a mutual influence. Sociocultural theory emphasizes not only the importance of a learner's perception but also the internal dialogue and interpersonal interaction in the process of knowledge development (Lan & Grant, 2021).

Contextual teaching and learning is defined as an approach which aims to help students understand the meaning of teaching materials based on the context of personal, social and cultural so that they have the knowledge/skills to actively construct their own understanding regarding the material given (Haerazi et al., 2019). Contextual teaching and learning involve students actively figuring out knowledge based on their experience, making

the learning process more meaningful (Lestari et al., 2021).

METHOD

<< | 28

The design of this research was classroom action research. It was a cyclical proses of think-do-think to research and create thing (Naughton & Hughes, 2009). This research involved action and reflection (Mcniff, 2002) (Cohen et al., 2007). In conducting classroom action research, researchers used collaborative classroom action research where it aimed at improving students learning and individual professional practices (Alba, 2015). Nunan (2002) argued that the three defining characteristics of action research are that it is carried out by practitioners (classroom teachers) rather than outside researchers, secondly it is collaborative, and it aims at changing things.

This collaborative classroom action research design refers to Kemmis and McTaggart as cited by Firdaus & Amaniarsih (2018) and which includes four main steps, namely 1) planning, 2) acting, 3) observing, and 3) reflecting. These steps were carried out in two cycles in implementing the teaching model. According to Cohen et al. (2007), the design could be used in variety of areas for example; teaching method, learning strategies, evaluative procedures, attitudes and values, continuing professional development for teachers, and others.

This research was carried out in two cycles where in each cycle there were three stages, namely 1) planning, 2) implementation and observation, and 3) reflection. In the first cycle, before planning, the researcher conducted a pre-research activity with the aim of knowing the material that had been taught by the teacher in the classroom.

This research was carried out in the odd semester of the 2021/2022 academic year at Islamic Junior High School Pecangaan, Jepara Regency. The subjects of this study were eighth grade students and one English teacher. The students consisted of 10 female students and 8 male students. The material

being taught is about giving and asking for information related to the imperatives, prohibitions, and appeals in which it is in accordance with basic competence number 3.3 in the syllabus for English subjects.

There were two methods of data collections in this study, namely: 1) qualitative data and 2) quantitative data. Qualitative data were obtained through observations which was carried out during the learning process in the classroom where teacher and students were observed using an observation checklist. In addition, the researchers also conducted interviews with English teachers which aimed at clarifying the findings at the time of observation. Quantitative data were obtained through tests carried out by students in each learning cycle. The test was in the form of multiple-choice tests.

The data of observations and interviews were analyzed qualitatively by using the Miles and Hubberman formula. Meanwhile, the test was analyzed quantitatively by using the following formula:

$$CLA = \frac{\sum N}{\sum S} \times 100 \%$$

CLA = Classical learning achievement

$\sum N$ = Number of students who completed

$\sum S$ = Sum of all students

Quantitative performance indicators

Students are said to be complete in English lessons if the scores obtained are above 70 and the class completeness level is at least 70%.

Qualitative performance indicators

This research is said to be successful if there is a change in student behavior in a positive direction during the learning process using the model.

FINDINGS

Pre-Cycle

This research began with observations in class to find out the material that has been taught to students and their participation in learning. Based on the results of observations, students were less enthusiastic in learning because the learning process carried out by

the teacher was only based on textbooks without applying the appropriate teaching model or strategy. In addition, based on the results of the scores of English subject, it was found that the students' average learning completeness was still low where there were still 65% of students who had not completed the last assessment carried out by the teacher. Moreover, the material presented by the teacher to the students had arrived at the basic competency material number 3.3. Therefore, in planning the material being taught was 3.4 about asking and responding invitations.

Cycle 1

In planning, the researchers prepared a lesson plan, the material delivered by using a meaningful learning model through CTL, and an assessment consisting of 10 multiple-choice questions.

At the implementation stage, the teacher carried out learning activities according to the learning stages consisting of the opening phase, core phase, and closing phase. In the learning process, the teacher applied a meaningful learning model through contextual teaching and learning which had been carried out through several activities. In the opening phase, the teacher carried out an advance organizer stage where there was a delivery of learning objectives and motivation. In this activity, the teacher 1) conveyed the material that would be studied by students, 2) conveyed the learning objectives, 3) related the material studied to the next material, and 4) built students' learning motivation.

In the core phase of learning, the teacher performed some stages as the following 1) progressive differential with the aim of organizing student learning, 2) contextualization with the aim of linking the learning process based on the real-life context of students, and 3) meaningful learning development with the aim of building meaningful learning. At the progressive differential stage, the teacher prepared the material in stages and explained the general material in nature and then continued with specific material and provided concrete examples. At the contextualization stage, the

teacher conveyed material or concepts by connecting to the students' real-life and asking students to build knowledge based on the real-life context of students. At the meaningful learning development stage, the teacher asked students to develop concepts or teaching materials and the teacher asked students to implement learning concepts in real life.

In the closing phase, the teacher conducted an evaluation in which the teacher asked students to review the concepts or teaching materials in a real-life context and provided an objective assessment of learning to students with the context of the students' real life. The assessment given was in the form of multiple-choice questions consisting of 10 questions referring to basic competence number 3.4 in the English syllabus. The results obtained by students could be seen in table 01.

Table 01. Student Learning Completeness

Criterion	Sum of Students	Percentage
Complete	8	44 %
Uncomplete	10	56 %
Total	18	100 %

From the table 01, it was known that there were still many students who had not finished learning English. This was indicated by 56% of students getting scores below the minimum completeness criteria which was a reference in student learning mastery. Only 44% of students completed the learning process. This indicated that there were still many students who had not been able to absorb the learning material.

Cycle 2

In the second cycle, the teacher did plan by considering the reflection in the first cycle. The plans, which made by the teacher, were 1) preparing learning materials with the topic of invitation, 2) preparing a meaningful learning model with an emphasis on building students' knowledge in their real-life contexts,

and 3) providing more emphasis on invitation dialogue practice exercises.

At the implementation stage, the teacher conducted learning based on three phases, opening, core, and closing phases. In the opening phase, the teacher carried out the advance organizer stage with activities 1) delivering invitation material to students, 2) conveying learning objectives, 3) linking the material with the previous material, and 4) motivating students to learn and practice the invitation material.

In the core phase, the teacher carried out a progressive differentiation stage with activities 1) preparing invitation material in stages from examples of dialogues, expressions in invitations, and exercises, and 2) teacher explanations from general concepts to special concepts accompanied by examples of invitation dialogues.

After that, the teacher applied the contextualization stage with activities 1) connecting the invitation material with examples of inviting in everyday life, and 2) asking students to build their own knowledge. At the meaningful development stage, the teacher asked students to be able to practice the dialogue they had made in pairs in front of the class.

In the closing phase, the teacher conducted an evaluation stage which consists of 1) reviewing the invitation material that has been submitted, and 2) providing an assessment to students.

Table 03. Student Learning Completeness

Criterion	Sum of Students	Percentage
Complete	18	89 %
Uncomplete	2	11 %
Total	18	100 %

Table 03 indicated that the students' learning mastery had increased from the first cycle. This increase is shown by 89% of students completing the invitation material in English learning. Although there were still

11% or 2 students who had not finished due to their difficulty in distinguishing the question of invitation from asking for a help.

DISCUSSION

Besides conducting observation for teacher in teaching and learning process, the researcher also observed students when they were learning in the classroom. The following were the results of these observations:

Table 02. Result of Teacher' Observation

No	Aspects	Score
1	Advance Organizer	11
2	Progressive Differential	4
3	Contextualization and Constructivism	5
4	Meaningful Learning Development	4
5	Evaluation	5
	Sum	29

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Score} &= \frac{\text{Score Obtained}}{\text{Total Score}} \times 100 \% \\ &= \frac{29}{36} \times 100 \% = 80\end{aligned}$$

Based on the table 02, it was known that the total score of observations on teachers during the learning process was 29. This score was then calculated by percentage so that the teacher's observation value was 80. With this value, it was known that in the learning process, the teacher had been good in carrying out learning because the observation value obtained was greater than the specified success indicator limit, which was 75.

During the learning process, researchers also observed students to get an overview of the activities they were doing. At the advance organizer stage, students prepared mentally well to take part in learning by responding to greetings and following the learning stages at the beginning. At the progressive differential stage, students were asked to dig up information about the material they had learned at the previous meeting, but there were still some students who forget the material that had been delivered by the teacher. At the contextualization stage, students connected the material with the real life that was around them even though they were still confused about what they should

relate to the lessons learned. In addition, students had difficulty in building new knowledge about the material being studied. At the stage of meaningful learning development, students had applied and developed conceptual understanding or teaching materials in real life although they still needed assistance from teachers regarding what they should do. Finally, at the evaluation stage, students worked on the questions given by the teacher objectively with real-life contexts where they were asked to make dialogue texts about invitations.

The reflection stage was carried out after knowing the results of the implementation and observation of learning where there were still 56% of students who had not completed in the first cycle. The researchers and the teacher discussed to find efforts in improving student learning outcomes so that their mastery of the material being taught increased. Teachers were asked to be able to explain the material more gradually at the progressive differential stage. This was intended so that students could build their knowledge gradually and could use this knowledge during the practice of dialogue invitations. In addition, in practicing the dialogue, students were still confused in finding ideas. To overcome these problems, the teacher at the stage of meaningful learning development connected the explanation given with examples of the real-life context of students.

The results of the learning observation in the first cycle obtained a score of 80. Although it obtained a good score, the two stages of meaningful learning still obtained a low score, namely progressive differential and meaningful learning development. To optimize the stages of learning in these two aspects in the next cycle, the teacher explained the material in stages, starting with invitation expressions in general and continuing with invitation expressions that were in accordance with the context of students' daily lives. In addition, the teacher also planned to involve students to be more active in the learning process, especially in the practice of dialogue invitations.

Table 03 indicated that the students' learning mastery had increased from the first cycle. This increase is shown by 89% of students completing the invitation material in English learning. Although there were still 11% or 2 students who had not finished due to their difficulty in distinguishing the question of invitation from asking for a help.

Table 04. Result of Teacher'

Observation		
No	Aspects	Score
1	Advance Organizer	12
2	Progressive Differential	5
3	Contextualization and Constructivism	5
4	Meaningful Learning Development	5
5	Evaluation	5
Sum		32

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Score Obtained}}{\text{Total Score}} \times 100 \%$$

$$= \frac{32}{36} \times 100 \% = 88.8$$

Based on the results of observations made by researchers on teachers, it was found that the value obtained was 88.8. This value was obtained based on observations on each aspect contained in the table 04. The results of observations in the second cycle indicate that there is an increase, especially in aspects of progressive differential and meaningful learning development.

During the teaching and learning process, the researcher also observed the teacher in the implementation of teaching model. The observations obtained indicated that the activities carried out by the teacher in the second cycle were mostly the same as the activities in the first cycle. There were only additional activities at stage 1) progressive differential where the teacher explained the material presented was general and then continued with specific material and provided concrete examples and 2) meaningful learning development where the teacher asked students to implement learning concepts in real life. After the implementation and observation, researchers and teachers reflected on learning where students' learning mastery obtained 89%. This showed that the absorption of students to the material presented by the teacher increased from the first cycle. In

addition, the results of learning observations of teachers also increased from the first cycle. This increase was indicated by the value obtained at 88.8 which was greater than 80. This increase occurred because the teacher had been good in carrying out learning activities in the meaningful learning model through CTL. Besides that, students' average score also increased which was showed in figure 1.

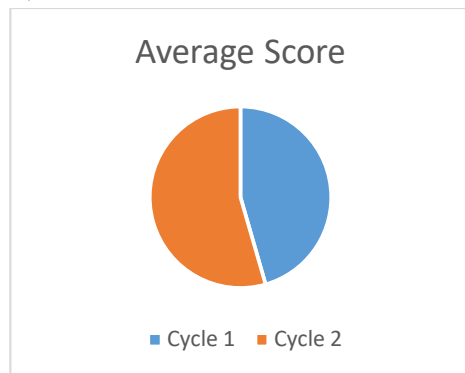


Figure 1. Students Average Score in Each Cycle

The average score obtained in each cycle was 62.7 for the first cycle and 75 for the second cycle. These results indicated that in the second cycle there had been an increase in aspects of student understanding related to the material presented. This increase occurred due to the use of a meaningful learning model through CTL with an emphasis on progressive differential and contextualization aspects which were the result of reflection from the first cycle. The increasing results obtained in

the second cycle from students learning completeness, observation form teacher, and students average score was in accordance with the research conducted by Hakkarainen (2011) and Annamalai et al. (2018).

CONCLUSION

The implementation of meaningful learning model through contextual teaching and learning can improve student learning outcomes in English subjects. This increasing is seen from 1) the students' learning mastery increased either before the implementation, or in the first and second cycles, 2) the results of observations of teachers increased in second cycle, and 3) the average score obtained by students increased from the first cycle. This increasing is because the steps of meaningful learning through contextual learning can really stimulate students' knowledge in building their knowledge meaningfully by connecting the context of real-life. For further research, it would be better to focus on research that examines the effectiveness of the meaningful learning model through CTL on learning outcomes and students' participation in the classroom.

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