



Analyzing Context Clues in Novel Based on Bauman's Theoretical Framework

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Abstract

Context clues are valuable tools employed by authors to assist readers in comprehending unfamiliar or complex vocabulary. These clues, whether intentionally or inadvertently provided, facilitate the reader's understanding and interpretation of the word in question. Drawing upon Bauman's theoretical framework, the present study sought to investigate the diverse contextual cues utilized by the author within the literary work entitled "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind." The primary objective of this investigation was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the semantic nuances associated with unfamiliar lexical items employed in the literary work "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind." Additionally, this study aimed to identify and analyze the predominant types of contextual cues prominently present within the book above. In this study, a descriptive qualitative approach was utilized by the researcher. The data collection method employed in this study involved the utilization of documentation as a means to gather relevant information. The human instrument, the researcher herself, was utilized as the primary instrument in this research endeavor. The data analysis process in this study consisted of three distinct stages: data condensing, data displaying, and conclusion drawing. Investigator triangulation was also employed in this study to corroborate and substantiate the findings derived from the comprehensive analysis of the collected data. After conducting an extensive examination of Jet Black and the Ninja Wind, 56 unfamiliar terms were identified. These terms were subsequently categorized into four distinct groups, taking into consideration contextual clues that suggested each group possessed a particular semantic significance. The categorization of context hint types encompasses inference/general cues, synonym/restatement clues, antonym/contrast clues, and definition/explanation clues. In the literary work entitled "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind," the author predominantly utilized various types of context clues, including but not limited to synonym/restatement clues, inference/general hint clues, definition/explanation clues, and antonym/contrast clues.

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INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of reading skills is widely recognized as a crucial aspect of language learning, including studying English. Through the act of reading, students and readers alike have the opportunity to derive numerous advantages, including acquiring novel information and expanding

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their knowledge base. Converting data from a writer to readers is commonly called a process. Mastering reading skills is considered crucial for English language acquisition among students.

When embarking on the language acquisition journey through reading, individuals often exhibit a penchant for selecting a specific genre of textual material. Engaging in reading materials aligned with our interests has been found to facilitate comprehension and enhance information assimilation. The phenomenon under scrutiny suggests that individuals exhibit a greater inclination towards acquiring proficiency in the English language through the medium of reading, driven by their inherent interest and motivation, as opposed to being compelled or coerced into doing so. Furthermore, engaging in such activities can potentially enhance individuals' language proficiency.

Reading a novel has been widely regarded as a highly effective method for enhancing one's English language proficiency. This is primarily attributed to the vast array of genres that novels encompass, offering readers diverse linguistic styles, vocabulary, and grammatical structures to explore and assimilate. Consequently, individuals can select the genre most aligned with their preferences. The novel, a form of literary work, has garnered significant popularity and a devoted following since the eighteenth century (Choeda, 2019). The distinguishing factor between novels and other forms of prose fiction, such as poems and short stories, lies in their respective lengths. The presence of numerous literary terms within the novel necessitates the utilization of specialized dictionaries, as these terms may not be readily available in conventional or general dictionaries. The reader's interest in continuing to engage with the novel remains undiminished.

Through proficient reading skills and strategic approaches, individuals construct meaning and cultivate a reflective and discerning interpretation of diverse textual forms, encompassing both concise and extensive works of fiction and non-fiction. One of the most effective methodologies employed for determining the significance of an unfamiliar lexical item is the utilization of context clues. Context clues refer to the textual and visual cues present within a given reading material that aid in identifying a missing word or comprehending unfamiliar vocabulary (Zeitsoff, 2005).

Through identification and careful examination of contextual cues, the reader can deduce the most appropriate interpretation of an unfamiliar lexical item based on the available clues. Consequently, individuals can acquire the information contained within the text. It is widely acknowledged that "The Dictionary" is commonly perceived as a reliable and authoritative resource for obtaining information about words, their meanings, spellings, and related aspects (Delahunty & Garvey, 2020). Indeed, it is not the case, as the dictionaries, particularly the general dictionary, can be regarded as lengthier or more concise iterations. In addition to the observation above, it is worth noting that dictionaries possess a restricted lexicon due to their inability to encompass the entirety of lexical items across all facets of language. Therefore, it is imperative to devise an alternative approach to enhance our comprehension and recognition of unfamiliar lexical items.

The linguistic style employed by the author in the novel typically manifests through imaginative vocabulary within a specific cultural context. Hence, readers may encounter challenges when encountering an unfamiliar term, as certain words may not be present in the available lexicon. During reader engagement, wherein the individual seeks to reconcile their existing knowledge with the textual information to extract insights about the novel, there is a potentiality for encountering a lexical item unfamiliar to the reader.

By analyzing the contextual cues embedded within the text, the reader can discern the intended definition of a given word. This process involves carefully considering the hints and indications provided by the author and subsequently interpreting the meaning following one's lexicon or viewpoint. Inferring the intended definition of a word based on contextual cues is a crucial approach when encountering less commonly used vocabulary within written materials. In addition, it is more advantageous to employ contextual cues to deduce the intended significance from the textual material, particularly within literary works, instead of investing valuable time in acquiring explicit word definitions or resorting to using a lexicon. This preference is rooted in the latter approach being time-consuming (Na & Nation, 1985).

Numerous researchers have dedicated their efforts to investigating using context clues to deduce or speculate the intended meaning of words within various textual contexts. Various types of clues have been identified in adult and children's literature. These clues serve the purpose of aiding comprehension and enhancing the reader's understanding of the text. The types of clues that have

been identified include definition, experience, comparison or contrast, synonym, familiar expression or language experience, summary, and reflection of a mood or situation. These clues provide additional context and meaning to the reader, facilitating a more immersive and engaging reading experience. The following are the discernible indicators frequently encountered within the realm of adult literature and children's books. According to McCullough's research conducted in 1945, it was observed that readers encountering unfamiliar words would often encounter a clue within the text.

According to a study, context clues have been widely acknowledged as the preeminent factor in facilitating word perception. The present study has revealed that context clues can be classified into three categories: printed word-meaning clues, language clues, and organization clues. Using context clues, in conjunction with other word perception cues, can serve as an invaluable tool for readers across various levels of reading proficiency. The findings of this study indicate that individuals in the younger age group tend to rely on context clues as a strategy for predicting words, which aids in the efficient recognition of words presented sequentially (Emans, 1968).

A subsequent investigation was undertaken to ascertain the various categories of context clues present in textual material for children and evaluate the ability of experts to consistently identify and interpret said clues with a high degree of reliability. Three highly skilled programmers utilized Ames' clues set as a fundamental framework to develop a novel system (Parault Dowds et al., 2016). This system successfully generated clues that can effectively capture a significant portion of the clues in both children's narrative and expository texts.

Drawing upon the extant literature reviewed by the researcher, notable parallels and distinctions emerge between the antecedent investigations and the forthcoming study to be conducted. The preceding body of research extensively discussed the role of context clues in facilitating word recognition and comprehension of textual material. In the present study, the investigator has opted to examine the various categories of contextual cues employed in inferring or surmising the significance of unfamiliar lexical items extracted from the literary work "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind." It is worth noting that this particular novel has not been subjected to prior scholarly investigation. The present study is titled "An Analysis of Context Clues in the Novel Jet Black and the Ninja Wind."

METHODOLOGY

The research design encompasses the systematic planning and organization undertaken by the researcher to effectively delineate and address the research problem at hand. Research design refers to the systematic organization and structure of various data collection and analysis elements. Its primary objective is to balance the research's relevance and the procedures' efficiency (Kothari, 2004).

Qualitative research is commonly distinguished by its use of inductive methodologies to construct knowledge to generate meaning (Leavy, 2017). Qualitative research demonstrates a strong correlation with the manipulation and organization of words and language and associated theoretical frameworks. The majority of data utilized in a qualitative study are descriptive. In addition, it should be noted that the data reports utilized in this study were presented in Word format (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In qualitative research, the data at hand are characterized by their abundance of descriptive elements and explanatory potential. The descriptive explanation yields a substantial amount of information about a given phenomenon or event within social life. Furthermore, it offers a comprehensive portrayal of various aspects of social life. Furthermore, it is worth noting that a descriptive explanation provides an in-depth analysis and comprehensive elucidation of a given phenomenon.

Qualitative research is characterized by its descriptive nature, wherein data collection primarily involves using words or pictures rather than numerical data (Sugiyono, 2016). The present study employs a descriptive qualitative research methodology according to the aforementioned theoretical framework. The focus of this investigation revolved around a literary work titled "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind."

In the context of qualitative research, the role of the researcher as a human instrument assumes significant importance. Individuals' independent completion of research tasks underscores their pivotal role as human instruments in the research process. Using a novel as a primary source in this research endeavor facilitated data acquisition through the systematic observation and analysis of various context clues embedded within the literary work.

The analysis process can be conceptualized as a series of concurrent activities proposed by Miles (Miles et al., 2014). These activities include data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

The present study utilizes textual data extracted from the novel "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind" to examine the various context clues employed to elucidate the meaning of unfamiliar words. In this study, data collection will be conducted through documentation as the primary method. The research subject under investigation pertains to a novel book or written text, necessitating reliance on existing records and textual sources for data acquisition.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to elucidate the prevalent categories of words and illustrate the process of discerning the significance of unfamiliar terms through contextual cues. The identification of unfamiliar words can be facilitated by observing typographical cues, such as the presence of quotation marks, italics, or boldface type. These visual indicators draw attention to novel vocabulary within a given text. The devices above lack intrinsic value in ascertaining semantic significance; however, they do serve to underscore the likelihood that the word in question is unfamiliar to the individual. Additional aids, such as parentheses, footnotes, or glossary references, serve as explanatory tools that complement the dictionary by providing contextual support for the word in question.

Definition/ Explanation

In this type of clue, the author defines or describes the word's meaning directly in the text. The signal words used in this type are as is, are, is/are called, known as, is defined as, means, refers to. Here are some examples of definition context clues:

"Long ago, there was a country called Hinomoto. It means land of the rising sun. The Emishi, a native tribe, once governed it."

"One day, a tribe called the Wa arrived from the mainland. They had many soldiers and even more powerful weapons."

Synonym/ Restatement

Here, the author uses a word with a close meaning to another word in a sentence. The signals used in this type are commas (,), semicolons (;), dashes (-), parentheses (), or, that is, in other words. Here are some examples of synonym/ restatement context clues:

"The girls gathered, staring as if trying to remember whether they'd seen the dress in a catalog or a store window."

"She took in the blaring music, the thudding baseline, the hollering boys but behind all that, if she focused, there was the battering, off-rhythm engine of the truck turning onto Amy Williams' street."

Antonym/ Contrast

In this type, the author will use a word with the opposite meaning of an unfamiliar word. The signal word used in this type is but although, otherwise, unless, instead of, on the other hand, well, and unlike. Here are some examples of antonym/ contrast context clues:

"Okay, Mom. I "m thrilled, Jet said, but the intensity of her mother's concentration distracted her."

"Satoko smiled. "Soujutsu. In the old days, people had to use spears and lances. But nowadays, you can use an umbrella, a cane, a stick, or even a rolled-up newspaper. You did well!"

Inference/ General

The author gives non-specific clues to help the reader guess the meaning of the description of a situation. The author gives some general clues to the meaning of words, often spread over several sentences. Here are some examples of Inference/ General

context clue:

Amy Williams cranked the music. Boys were arriving. The girls began dancing in the living room just as the star quarterback threw open the door, a cooler on his shoulder.

"Don't stop. She whispered to her mother, sliding down in her seat. A duffel with clothes for the game was on the floor, and as soon as they turned the corner, she began to change."

The Most Common Type of Context Clue

After analyzing the data, 56 data was found about the unfamiliar words in the novel *Jet Black* and the *Ninja Wind* that were categorized as definition/ explanation clue, synonym/ restatement clue, antonym/ contrast clue, and inference/ general clue. Thus, from 5 types of context clues based on Bauman's theory, only four types are found in the novel *Jet Black* and the *Ninja Wind*.

To answer the research question about the most common type of context clues used in the novel *Jet Black* and the *Ninja Wind*, the researcher used the formula below:

- The percentage of definition/ explanation clues is $9/56 \times 100\% = 16,07\%$
- The percentage of synonym/ restatement clues is $23/56 \times 100\% = 41,07\%$
- The percentage of antonym/ contrast clue is $2/56 \times 100\% = 3,57\%$
- The percentage of inference/ general clue is $22/56 \times 100\% = 39,28\%$

Based on the abovementioned data, it can be inferred that the predominant type of context clue identified in the novel "*Jack Black and the Ninja Wind*" was the synonym/restatement clue. The phenomenon of inference or general clue has been classified as the second category, while the definition or explanation clue has been designated as the third category. Lastly, the antonym or contrast clue, which has been identified in the course of this research, constitutes the final category.

The present study analyzed the various types of context clues present within the literary work "*Jet Black and the Ninja Wind*." The novel contains four distinct context clues proposed by Bauman's theory. These types include definition/explanation, synonym/restatement, antonym/contrast, and inference/general clues. Our analysis discovered nine unfamiliar words that served as definition or explanation clues, accounting for approximately 16.07% of the text. Additionally, we identified 23 unfamiliar words that functioned as synonyms or restatement clues, making up approximately 41.07% of the text. Furthermore, we observed two unfamiliar words that acted as antonym or contrast clues, representing approximately 3.57% of the text. Lastly, we noted 22 unfamiliar words that served as inference or general clues, making up approximately 39.28% of the text.

Upon completing the research, 56 data points were identified and subsequently analyzed following Bauman's theoretical framework within the context of the novel "*Jet Black and the Ninja Wind*." The inclusion of a table presenting the research findings serves the purpose of enhancing clarity and facilitating comprehension.

Table 1. The Percentage of Context Clues

No.	Types of Context Clues	Number of the Data	Percentage
1.	Definition/ explanation	9	16,07%
2.	Synonym/ restatement	23	41,07%
3.	Antonym/ contrast	2	3,57%
4.	Inference/ general	22	39,28%

According to a study, it has been suggested that while readers tend to utilize general context in a somewhat "automatic" manner, explicit instruction is crucial for young readers to develop

proficiency in effectively utilizing planned and provided context clues. Furthermore, it is worth noting that context clues encompass a diverse range of distinct and discernible types. These types can be reliably identified and anticipated and can even be effectively taught to individuals. Context utilization should be approached informally, followed by a systematic presentation with clear labels for easy identification and application (Priebe et al., 2011).

A separate investigation has revealed that unfamiliar words embedded within a context abundant in information were more accurately inferred than unfamiliar words presented within a context lacking substantial information. The ability to make accurate guesses is influenced by two primary factors: reader-related and text-related variables. The variables about the reader encompass vocabulary size, language proficiency, attention to detail, knowledge of grammar, and reader characteristics. Various variables about the nature of the text being examined exist in text analysis. These variables encompass word characteristics, text characteristics, contextual clues' presence, and familiarity with the topic at hand. According to the findings of (Çetinavcı, 2014) study, it was observed that the strategy of utilizing context clues to ascertain the meaning of unfamiliar words emerged as the prevailing approach employed when encountering foreign language text.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify the various types of context clues utilized in deciphering the meaning of unfamiliar words and determine the predominant type of context clue employed within the literary work entitled "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind." Based on the comprehensive analysis of the data and the findings derived from this research endeavor, it is evident that four distinct types of context clues were identified out of the five types proposed by Bauman's theoretical framework. A comprehensive examination revealed the presence of four distinct categories of data about unfamiliar words. These data sets were further scrutinized and classified according to specific criteria and signal words, as previously outlined. The author of the novel "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind" skillfully employs four distinct types of context clues to enhance the reader's comprehension. These context clues include definition/explanation, synonym/restatement, antonym/contrast, and inference/general.

In the novel "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind," 56 unfamiliar words were identified and categorized based on their usage as definition/explanation clues, synonym/restatement clues, antonym/contrast clues, and inference/general clues. Among these, nine words (16.07%) were determined to serve as definition/explanation clues, providing readers with explicit meanings or explanations. Additionally, 23 words (41.07%) were identified as synonym/restatement clues, offering alternative words or phrases with similar meanings. Two words (3.57%) were classified as antonym/contrast clues, presenting contrasting or opposite meanings. Lastly, 22 words (39.28%) were categorized as inference/general clues, requiring readers to make logical deductions or draw conclusions based on contextual information.

Based on the analysis mentioned above, it can be inferred that the prevailing form of contextual clue utilized in the novel "Jet Black and the Ninja Wind" is the synonym/restatement clue. The dataset comprises 23 unfamiliar words, accounting for approximately 41.07% of the text.

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