THE UTILIZATION OF CONTEXTUAL TEACHING LEARNING TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' ENGLISH LEARNING OUTCOMES: AN ACTION RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

The research on the fifth-grade students of SD Negeri 093 Desa Sungai Abang Village was driven by the researchers’ desire to enhance students’ learning outcomes, especially in the subject of English. The researcher's findings indicated that the average student achievement scores were still low, below the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) set by the school. Out of a total of 12 students, only 2 students or 16.7% reached the KKM. As an alternative solution to this issue, the researcher conducted Classroom Action Research (CAR) by implementing the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) method. The research was conducted in the second semester of the 2022/2023 academic year, involving 12 students. The data analysis results from Cycle I of the research showed that the average class score had reached the KKM, with 9 out of 12 students (75%) reaching the KKM. Students’ learning outcomes continued to improve in Cycle II, where almost all students, 11 out of 12 (91.7%), reached the KKM. This research demonstrates that the use of CTL was appropriately applied in English language learning, particularly in the material taught in the higher grade levels as the subject of the research.
Keywords: Learning outcomes, English, CTL
PENDAHULUAN

English language teaching for children, known as Teaching English for Young Learners (TEYL), is growing in various parts of the world, especially in developing countries including Indonesia. This policy has been implemented since Indonesia entered the era of globalization, and it continues to be developed and enhanced (Mooney, 2000; Musthafa B, 2010; Brown, 2007). This is related to the government's efforts to prepare the next generation with English language proficiency and the ability to compete nationally and internationally.

The use of English as an international language also drives the government to create a curriculum that aligns with the demands of the times. English, which was initially introduced to junior high school students, is now being introduced to elementary school students and even to students in Kindergarten (TK) or playgroups (Ayu, W, 2021). The government's hope is to encourage students to compete in learning English as a developed skill.

English as a foreign language in Indonesia began to receive special attention, especially in elementary education, since the early 1990s due to the awareness of the importance of learning English as early as possible to compete in an increasingly modern and globalized world. This awareness led to the issuance of a policy by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Depdikbud RI) No. 0487/1992, Chapter VIII, which stated that primary schools could add subjects to their curriculum (Fachrurrozy, 2014). This policy formed the basis for the inclusion of English as part of the local curriculum in elementary schools.

Currently, many primary schools, including those in the Sarolangun Regency, are teaching English as an additional subject, including Kindergarten (TK) programs. This is a positive development in preparing students to compete in the era of globalization. On one hand, this development is very encouraging, but on the other hand, concerns arise about the readiness of students, teachers, and schools for the implementation of English language teaching (Handayani, 2022; Herlina, 2019).

The above conditions are far from the ideal situation that is hoped for. In line with the observations of researchers in several elementary schools in the Sarolangun Regency, especially in SD 093 Sungai Abang Village, there are challenges in implementing English language teaching. The main challenge faced is that the majority of teachers lack adequate English language education backgrounds. On the other hand, efforts to strengthen the competencies of primary school teachers through seminars, workshops, and online ICT training are very limited.

From the collected observational notes, various issues have been identified. During English language lessons in class V, almost all
students were not focused on participating in the learning activities. Other conditions were also observed, such as the majority of students bowing their heads during lessons and showing little interest in completing assigned tasks. Additionally, evaluation documents such as daily tests indicated that the average percentage of grades had not reached the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). In fact, only 3 out of 12 students (25%) passed, meaning that 9 students or 75% were below the KKM for English subject.

Learning outcomes, according to Darmadi (2017), can be observed through changes in a person's behavior. These changes can be visible in physical aspects such as size and weight, as well as non-physical aspects like attitude and behavior. In terms of changes in size, they are used to gauge an individual's attainment in understanding what has been taught. Therefore, the context of this research examines how changes or improvements in the learning outcomes of English subject is achieved using the Contextual Teaching Learning (CTL) model.

Learning outcomes arise from the efforts made by students after experiencing their learning journey (Ismail, M & Aflahah, 2019; Lubis, 2019). Learning outcomes are still considered crucial in the learning process as they provide information related to the changes students undergo in their pursuit of learning objectives through the learning process. From these learning outcomes, educators start creating a series of further learning activities for students in the learning environment.

According to Gagne (2014), the manifestation of learning outcomes can take various forms, such as a student's ability to express knowledge in the form of language, both verbal and written, as well as through non-verbal movements. Additionally, there are learning outcomes demonstrated through intellectual skills by presenting a concept. On the other hand, cognitive abilities, motor skills, psychomotor skills, and attitudes are part of the learning outcomes that serve as indicators or benchmarks of achievement.

In achieving learning goals, as stated by Sucipto et al. (2022), there are numerous components that influence learning outcomes, ranging from internal issues to external factors. Internal issues encompass aspects from the student's own self, including family (parental understanding, upbringing methods, environment, family relationships, economic conditions, including cultural differences). Meanwhile, external factors refer to the educational environment, specifically the school. The choice of teaching methods, curriculum design, teacher-student communication, student-student interactions, school discipline enforcement, instructional media, and other facilities all play an integral role in enhancing students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, in addition to students, teachers, and schools, the surrounding environment where students reside (their activities within the community,
socializing with peers, and various societal norms) also has an influence.

From the discussion on learning outcomes above, it is concluded that learning outcomes are highly significant as a reference for the success of the learning process. This condition is influenced by various factors, both internal (within the student) and external. These various issues should be carefully considered by teachers and parents to identify the reasons behind students' low achievement in learning. Learning outcomes cannot be viewed from a singular perspective of mere achievement but should be seen as holistic and comprehensive, encompassing not only grades, skills, but also attitudes.

CTL or Contextual Teaching Learning is translated as contextual learning. The term "contextual" is taken from English, which means relation/relationship, environment or atmosphere, and conditions or circumstances (Dewi & Alam, 2021). In this method, the learning objectives are designed to help students connect the material they are studying with their everyday environment, including personal, social, and cultural aspects.

According to Rahman's perspective (2023), to achieve meaningful learning, several steps need to be taken, including making learning connected to real-world situations, conducting meaningful learning, understanding concepts independently and collaboratively, striving for critical and creative thinking to help individuals/students grow and develop to achieve high standards, and continuously evaluating using authentic assessment. In short, in implementing the teaching scheme, the delivered instructional material should be relevant to the real world where students reside, thus making learning aligned with the students' characteristics (Geni et al., 2020; Hidayatilah, 2022).

From experts' viewpoints, theories, and research findings mentioned above, CTL learning is synthesized as a teaching model that connects the knowledge acquired in the classroom to real-world situations or something that students have seen or experienced. The presence of this model makes the teaching and learning activities enjoyable as learning is aligned with its context or natural and allows direct application of the learned material. In summary, this teaching scenario assists students in understanding the meaning and benefits of learning activities, thereby enhancing students' enthusiasm for learning.

In general, the steps of CTL learning, as explained by Rahman et al. (2023), start with pre-conception, followed by modelling, then constructivism, moving on to inquiry, forming a learning community, and concluding with authentic assessment through questioning, reflection, and feedback. In more detail, Johnson Elaine, B. (2012) outlines the stages in the implementation of the CTL teaching model as follows: First, teachers strive to develop independent
thinking by learning autonomously to discover and construct new knowledge and skills. Second, teachers implement inquiry activities as much as possible for all topics covered. Third, teachers foster students’ curiosity by providing opportunities to ask questions and building a learning community (discussion groups). Fourth, teachers prepare role models as examples for reflection at the end of the session. Fifth, evaluation is carried out using various assessment methods.

Based on the identification, analysis, and alternative problem-solving outlined above, two problem formulations were established for this research: firstly, how to implement Contextual Teaching Learning (CTL) in English language lessons in class V of SD 093 Sungai Abang Village. Secondly, how to improve English language learning outcomes after implementing the CTL teaching model in class V of SD 093 Sungai Abang Village. Therefore, the research objectives for improving teaching include describing the steps of using CTL in English language lessons and analyzing the improvement of English language learning outcomes through CTL on the topic of cultural diversity in class V of SD 093 Sungai Abang Village.

The implementation of CTL is believed to have both theoretical and practical dimensions. This research can provide insights and knowledge about improving English language teaching to overcome the issue of low student learning outcomes. In practical terms, the research results can serve as a report on the improvement of learning outcomes, especially in English language teaching. For teachers, the implementation of CTL can serve as an alternative method reference for use during teaching activities. Furthermore, schools can benefit from this research as informative reference material that inspires teachers in academic supervision activities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research takes the form of classroom action research carried out as a teacher’s problem-solving strategy in the classroom. The researcher divided the study into four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. In this context, the researcher collaborated with the teacher to facilitate easier and more accurate data collection on English language learning using CTL in class V of SD 093 Sungai Abang Village.

During the planning stage, the researcher developed a Lesson Plan (RPP) aligned with CTL, created observation sheets for student learning activities, designed a lesson scenario including the selection of learning materials, and determined student learning outcome assessment tests. Subsequently, during the implementation stage, the researcher carried out the lesson scenario according to the planned CTL steps. Meanwhile, observations were conducted by the teacher and collaborator on student activities.
throughout the learning process. The results of these observations were analysed and used for reflection to consider any necessary improvements in the following cycle.

In this study, students' formative test scores on English language materials were collected using test instruments and observation sheets. The success indicators for the research action were improvements in student learning outcomes, both in terms of average scores and achievement rates, after the implementation of CTL. The researcher analysed the test scores, calculated the percentage of student achievement after the learning process, and then classified them into categories of "achieving mastery" (≥70 KKM) and "not yet achieving mastery" (<70 KKM).

The subjects in this improvement study were students from class V of SD 093 Sungai Abang Village, totalling 12 students, including 7 male and 5 female students. These students were selected based on the initial observations of the researcher regarding the low learning outcomes in English Studies. This school is where the researcher works as a class teacher. The research follows the school's academic calendar, as classroom action research requires phases or cycles where effective teaching and learning activities take place. Thus, the research was conducted in the middle of the even semester of the academic year 2022/2023. The pre-cycle research was conducted on Tuesday, April 16, 2023, cycle 1 on Thursday, April 21, 2023, and cycle 2 on Monday, May 9, 2023.

Classroom Action Research (PTK) is used as a procedure or step in resolving or improving teaching and learning (Ananda, 2020). This research can be conducted with the help of others (collaboration) or by the teacher alone, involving planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting on the activities that have been or will be carried out (Asrori, 2019). This improvement research was carried out with the assistance of various stakeholders, including the school principal and colleagues who provided continuous support and motivation to complete this research. The research was conducted through two cycles, with an additional pre-cycle stage that included planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection at the end of each cycle.

The research activities began in the pre-cycle stage, where the researcher used classical or conventional methods such as lectures, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions during English language teaching. In the pre-cycle stage, the researcher conducted the teaching process as usual, including introduction, main activities, and conclusion. Based on the reflection on the pre-cycle stage, the researcher and collaborator then developed the initial cycle (cycle 1). The stages in cycle 1 began with planning and selecting the materials to be used. The selected materials were incorporated into the Lesson Plan (RPP) as part of the lesson scenario. The instructional steps in
the RPP were designed according to the predetermined steps of CTL. Each instructional step was evaluated based on the learning material achievement indicators. Cycle 2 was conducted if there were still deficiencies in the implementation. Cycle 2 followed the same stages as cycle 1, with adjustments made if necessary based on the reflection from the previous cycle. Reflection activities were conducted by the researcher and collaborator through discussions at the end of each cycle, analyzing strengths, weaknesses, unique aspects, and potential solutions for continuing or discontinuing the cycle.

Data analysis techniques used in this research included both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data was gathered from observations of teacher and student activities during the teaching and learning process (Arikunto, 2019). Observation sheets were used to observe the sequence of teacher and student activities. The collected data were then reduced to select relevant information related to the research. Subsequently, the reduced data were narrated and connected with factual notes from the field. Drawing conclusions was the final step in the data analysis process.

Quantitative data in the form of numerical scores were obtained from test or examination results. Data processing portrayed the learning outcomes obtained or calculated using the formula:

\[
\frac{\text{Total Students' Score}}{\text{Maximum Score}} = 100
\]

Additionally, the classical achievement percentage of learning outcomes was analyzed using the formula:

\[KKM = \frac{x}{z} \times 100\%
\]

Descriptions:
\[KKM = \text{Classical Mastery Criteria}
\]
\[x = \text{Number of students achieving scores } \geq 69
\]
\[z = \text{Total number of students.}
\]

Table 1. Criteria of Individual Mastery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval Score</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85-100</td>
<td>A (Very good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-84</td>
<td>B (Good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-69</td>
<td>C (Satisfaction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>D (Below Average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\leq 39)</td>
<td>E (Poor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Arikunto, 2019)

The minimal mastery criteria (KKM) will be achieved if there is an increase in learning outcomes, such that the number of scores ≥70 reaches 75% in the final cycle, with a classical mastery level classified as Good or even Very Good.

FINDING DAN DISCUSSIONS

Data processing from the research results proves that the learning scenario using the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model can improve student learning outcomes. Looking back, the use of conventional methods
provided limited opportunities for students to explore themselves by seeking and experiencing the learning process independently. With the presence of CTL, teachers have been able to facilitate student learning activities by understanding the learning materials through searching, discovering, processing, and connecting them with their personal experiences (Dewi & Alam, 2021).

From the observations during this improvement research, a positive classroom atmosphere was evident. The teacher successfully selected and implemented teaching strategies or methods that were suitable for the students’ characteristics. The appropriate choice of teaching scheme contributes to the achievement of learning goals. As stated by Sudrajat, (2015) and Sya & Helmanto, (2020), the CTL teaching model can create a conducive learning atmosphere during the teaching process, making it suitable for elementary school students. The detailed results of the research are as follows:

Pre-cycle: During the pre-cycle phase, the teacher used only lecture methods, provided opportunities for question-and-answer sessions, and conducted group discussions. In other words, the teacher predominantly employed classical or conventional methods during teaching. The pre-cycle learning outcomes yielded an average score range of 50-62 (Less-Satisfactory category), with the highest score being 70 and the lowest 50. From the pre-cycle activities, it was observed that 25% of the students achieved mastery (2 students), while 75% did not meet the mastery criteria (9 students).

Cycle 1: In the implementation of cycle 1, the learning activities employed the CTL model. Throughout the learning process, the researcher, aided by the assisting teacher, observed the implementation of the learning activities and made notes on the observation sheets for both the teacher and students. At the conclusion of cycle 1, the students were given a test to assess their understanding. The test results indicated an increase in the average student score to 72.5. This average score indicates that the students’ learning outcomes in English Studies, specifically regarding the topic of for subject of the research, fall into the Good category. The scores ranged from a high of 81 to a low of 63.

Based on the analysis of cycle 1 student scores, it was observed that the total number of students who achieved or exceeded the mastery criteria inversely correlated with the pre-cycle conditions. The improved mastery outcomes were evidenced by 9 out of 12 students achieving mastery (reaching 75% mastery), while 3 students (25%) scored below the mastery criteria. Despite the progress, the percentage of mastery did not yet meet the expected criteria of ≥75%. Therefore, another cycle was needed.

Cycle 2: The implementation of Cycle 2 was essential to further
enhance learning outcomes in the classroom. The activities conducted in this phase were based on the reflections from cycle 1. The planning process included preparing test questions and answers suitable for the application of the CTL model. The researcher also prepared relevant teaching materials related to English subjects. Similar to cycle 1, observations were conducted during cycle 2 by the researcher and the assisting teacher using observation sheets. The evaluation of learning outcomes was performed to assess the achievement of mastery criteria. The data collection and analysis indicated an average score of 77.5 for cycle 2. This achievement corresponds to the level of Very Good, with some students even achieving an Excellent score.

Regarding the analysis of mastery, it can be concluded that nearly all students exceeded the school's mastery criteria. Out of the total 12 research subjects (students), 11 students achieved mastery (91.7%), leaving only 1 student who did not (8.3%). This means that all students have reached the set mastery criteria.

The summary of average scores for cycle 1 was 72.5, falling within the good level of achievement. This improvement continued in cycle 2, with an average score of 77.5 (Very Good). The comparison of average learning outcomes for each cycle, from cycle 1 to cycle 2, can be visualized in Figure 1 as follows.

From the visualization of learning outcomes in Figure 1, the percentage of student mastery in learning is evident. The students' mastery criteria (KKM) also experienced an increase in each cycle conducted. The number of students achieving KKM or mastery in the pre-cycle was only 3 students (25%), then tripled in Cycle 1 to 9 students (75%). A significant improvement becomes even more apparent in Cycle 2, where almost all students achieved mastery. Out of the 12 students at SD 186/V TSM Tebing Tinggi, 11 students reached mastery or, in other words, the mastery percentage reached 91.7%. The achievement of student learning mastery is depicted in the recapitulation of student KKM in each cycle as presented below.
The increase in mastery of learning outcomes, as an indication of the implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) carried out by educators to enhance student learning achievement, has proven to be effective. The utilization of this method has imbued the teaching of English with more significance, as stated by Theriana (2019) in their writing. The CTL teaching model becomes a step for students to learn by actively seeking solutions to real-life problems relevant to their daily lives. The teacher facilitates students by creating a conducive environment, enabling them to reflect on the subject matter based on their personal experiences. In other words, the application of the CTL teaching model is highly appropriate for initiating changes during the learning process, thereby resulting in improved student learning outcomes in the classroom (Sucipto, 2022; Wijaya, 2015).

The research results also depict that the implementation of CTL has fostered a positive interaction between teachers and students throughout the learning and teaching activities. Rahman et al. (2023) explains that the principles of CTL focus on motivating students to engage fully in the learning process by understanding the presented material and connecting it to real-life situations they encounter. This situation encourages students to comprehend the learning context by linking it to what happens in their lives. In short, the use of the CTL teaching model in Grade V of SD 093 Desa Sungai Abang has successfully motivated both teachers and students to actively participate in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted has yielded several conclusions, including the proven effectiveness of implementing Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) as a teaching scheme to improve English language learning outcomes in Grade V of SD 093 Desa Sungai Abang, Sarolangun Sub-district, Sarolangun Regency, Jambi Province. A significant improvement in learning outcomes is evident, as seen from the average scores: starting from 60.5 in the pre-cycle, gradually increasing to 72.5 in Cycle I, and reaching its peak in Cycle II with an average score of 77.5.

The increase in students' average scores is paralleled by the percentage of students achieving mastery, which has risen from an initial 25% in the pre-cycle, tripling to 75% in Cycle 1, and culminating at 91.7% in Cycle 2. These findings affirm the successful educational
improvement in line with the research objectives.

As a follow-up recommendation from this study, the researcher hopes that the utilization of the CTL teaching model can be published and disseminated. The dissemination is expected to inspire educators to implement the CTL model in enhancing students' abilities to find alternative solutions to the problems they encounter. Moreover, these findings are expected to motivate other teachers or researchers to experiment with CTL in other subjects or related themes within elementary education.

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