

**AN ANALYSIS OF IDIOMS IN THE WEDNESDAY SEASON 1
DRAMA SERIES**



THESIS

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this research are to identify idioms and explain the context in the characters acting out scenes in the drama series *Wednesday* Season 1. To identify idioms, the researcher used Boatner and Gates theory to classify idiom types, meanwhile, in analyzing the context of idiom use, the researcher used Joan Cutting theory to understand the meaning of the idiom using a pragmatic approach.

This is a qualitative descriptive research. The data for this research are dialogues containing idioms. Data were taken from the drama series and which was then compared with the dialogue script to ensure accuracy. The data collection techniques used were documentation, *simak catat*, content analysis. The data analysis methods in this research were data collection, data displays, data reduction, and drawing conclusions.

The findings reveal a total of 116 idiomatic expression data included: Lexemic idioms: verbal in nature idioms 34 (29,31%), nominal in nature idioms 26 (22,41%), adjectives 6 (5,17%), adverbial 3 (2,59%), phraseological idioms 41 (35,34%), frozen forms 1 (0,86%), proverbs 5 (4,31%). Then in context, included: situational context 44 (37,93%), background knowledge context cultural or interpersonal 43 (37,07%), co-textual Context 28 (24,14%).

The most dominant idioms are phraseological idioms, which appear 41 data (35,34%). This dominance indicates that expressions are phraseological used by the characters to convey meaning effectively in conversational contexts. The most common contexts were situational contexts, with 44 occurrences (37.93%). Therefore, understanding idioms through context meaning of idioms is essential for interpreting meaning in drama dialogues.

Keywords: Idiomatic Expressions, Context, Pragmatic Analysis, *Wednesday* Season 1 Drama Series

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter, the researcher presents about introduction. It includes (A) Background of the Study, (B) Limitation of the Study, (C) Problem Statement, (D) Objectives of the Study, (E) Benefits of the Study.

A. Background of the Study

In the era of globalization and rapid technological development, language is used not only to convey literal meaning but also to express ideas, emotions, and cultural values. One linguistic feature that reflects this complexity is idiom. An idiom is an expression whose meaning cannot be interpreted literally from the individual words that compose it. Idioms are commonly found in everyday communication, literary works, songs, and popular media such as films and drama series.

Pragmatics focuses on how meaning is conveyed and interpreted in context. According to Yule (1996/2014, p. 3), pragmatics involves understanding what speakers mean in particular situations and how context shapes what they say. It also considers how speakers adjust their utterances based on participants, setting, time, and circumstances. Therefore, idioms, which often contain figurative meanings, need to be analyzed within their context to be properly understood.

Popular media, particularly films and television series, provide learners with authentic language exposure. It is widely recognized that such media can increase students motivation to learn English. However, Many English learners

still struggle to understand idioms because they may interpret them literally and fail to fully consider the contextual factors underlying their use. This situation is often encountered when students watch English language films or television series.

However, the analysis of idiomatic expressions based on their context meanings using a pragmatic approach is still limited. In particular, the application of Cutting (2002) context theory in analyzing idiomatic expressions in modern drama `series has not been widely explored. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by analyzing idiomatic expressions and their context meanings based on a pragmatic approach.

The *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series contains various idiomatic expressions in character interactions, reflecting emotions, sarcasm, and implied meanings. These characteristics make the series a relevant object for pragmatic analysis. Therefore, this research focuses on identifying the types of idiomatic expressions based on Boatner and Gates (2004) used in the drama series *Wednesday* and analyzing their context meanings based on Cutting (2002) context theory. This research is expected to contribute to the field of pragmatics and provide insight for English language learners in understanding idioms as they are used in real life communication. Therefore, the researcher conducts a research entitled **“An Analysis of Idioms in the Wednesday Season 1 Drama Series.”**

B. Limitation of the study

This research is limited to idiomatic expressions found in the dialogues of the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series, episodes 1-8. Idioms outside of these episodes are excluded from the analysis.

C. Problem Statement

1. What are the types of idioms found in the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series based on Boatner and Gates theory?
2. What are the context involved are used in the idiomatic expressions used in the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series based on Joan Cutting theory and what are their context meanings?

D. Objectives of the study

Based on the formulation of the problem, the researcher formulates the objectives of the problem above as follows:

1. To identify the types of idioms found in the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series based on Boatner and Gates theory.
2. To analysis the context of idioms used by the characters in the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series based on Joan Cutting context theory of context and provide meaning based on that context.

E. Benefits of the Study

Based on the research background and objectives, the researcher expects that the findings will provide both theoretical and practical benefits in language use. The benefits of this research are as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefits

This research is expected to enrich knowledge, particularly about idioms.

Therefore, the results of this study can be useful as a reference and can be used as teaching material in higher education.

2. Benefit in practical

a. For Teachers

This research may be able to provide additional information or be used in the learning process in the English teaching and learning process.

b. For Students

This research can help students understand various types of idioms and their context meanings, and be used in everyday life to ensure accurate meaning there by improving their comprehension and enabling them to use idioms appropriately in both spoken and written communication in the learning process at school.

c. For Researchers

The results of this research may deepen our understanding of idioms with meaning, enable future researchers in reference and knowledge of idioms, and serve as a guide for future research.

d. For Readers

This research can provide additional references to readers to improve their understanding of various types of idioms as well as the context meanings used in drama series.



CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This chapter examines the theory that supports research which includes: (A) Pragmatics, (B) Definition of Idiom, (C) Classification of Types of Idioms, (D) Classification of Types of Context, (E) Meaning of Idioms in Context, (F) Review of the *Wednesday Season 1* drama series, (G) Previous studies.

A. Pragmatics

Pragmatics studies how language is used by speakers to achieve goals in social contexts, focusing on meaning as shaped by the situation and speaker relationships. Levinson (1983, p. 9) state, pragmatics is concerned with the study of aspects of the relationship between language and context that are relevant to the formulation of grammatical descriptions. Which mean grammar alone is not enough to understand meaning, because meaning is also influenced by context. Furthermore, according to Richards et al. (1985, p. 225, as cited in Sumarlam et al., 2023, p. 5), stated pragmatics studies how language is understood and used by considering the context of the situation in which speech occurs.

Meanwhile, treating pragmatic language involves taking into consideration its context, including its use in communication events (Purwo, 1990, p. 31, as cited in Umaroh et al., 2017, p. 1). It means that pragmatics studies the meaning of language in relation to the context with the situation when the speech is performed.

Joko Nurkamto (2000, as cited in Abdurrahman, 2011, p. 10) stated, pragmatics discusses meaning by considering the context of the utterance. In contrast, pragmatics takes into consideration who said the sentence, where, when, and in what situation, as well as the internal factors of the language. Based on the opinions of the experts above, researchers can conclude that meaning is determined by the context of the situation in the context of its use.

B. Definition of Idiom

Meaning of Idioms according to the McCarthy and O'dell (2002, p. 6), idioms are groups of words with a fixed structure and distinct meaning that cannot be deduced from the meanings of the individual words. Chaer (2014, p. 296) defines an idiom as a speech unit that's meaning cannot be determined from the lexical or grammatical meanings of its individual components.

Putri et al., (2023, p. 49) states that idiom is a sentence of more than one word and has a different meaning every word. Apart from that, other definition according to Seidl and Mordie (1998, as cited in Martinah, 2021, p. 2), states that idioms can be understood as the formation of words or phrases, which when translated have a different meaning.

One aspect of this concept is that in any language, idiomatic expressions are often difficult to comprehend for second language learners. Simatupang (2000, p. 49 as cited in Salih & Ali, 2023, p. 152) stated, "It is the other kind of figurative meanings contained in a language, such as in English." Many idioms are difficult to interpret because they use figurative language in

everyday communication, which can be confusing when translated literally. However, they are commonly used in daily interactions. Idioms such as *piece of cake* (easy), *hit the sack* (sleep), and *under the weather* (sick) are often hard to understand, especially for non-native speakers.

C. Classification of Types of Idioms

There is a structure to idioms such as word for word basic forms or long sentences.

1. Type of Idiom based on Boatner and Gates

According to Makkai, Boatner and Gates (2004, p. 7) divides classify idioms into four types or groups as follows. The following is a description of each category: lexemic idioms (verbal in nature, nominal in nature, adjectives, adverbial), phraseological, frozen forms, and proverbs. The following is a description (as cited in Lastriyani, 2025) of the meaning above as follows:

a. Lexemic Idioms

Lexemic idioms are idioms that relate to word classes, such as:

1) Verbal in Nature

Verbal idioms are idioms that contains the meaning of a verb with other elements such as an adverb or preposition in a sentence. rather than taking back a statement from the literal meaning of its elements (the original significance of these items).

For example: call it a day (end an activity), face the music (to accept the consequence), work out (to solve a problem).

2) Nominal in Nature

Nominal Idiom are idioms that are nominal Idioms with noun meanings are called noun idioms, and they typically manifest as noun phrases with idiomatic meanings. For example: A fish story (amazing story), cool cat (stylish person), a wet blanket (a person who spoils to other people enthusiasm).

3) Adjectives

Adjectives idioms are that contain adjective meanings. These terms are used to describe the condition, quality, or state of a person or thing, and their meaning is figurative, not literal. For example: Mad as a hornet (very angry), under the weather (feeling unwell).

4) Adverbial

Adverbial idioms refers to idiomatic expressions that contain adverbs within a sentence. For example: Over and over (repeatedly), in the long run (eventually).

b. Phraseological Idioms

Phraseological idioms, also known as trigger phrases, are idioms that don't directly relate to a specific grammatical category. These idioms usually consist of clauses rather than single words, so paraphrasing is necessary to clarify their meaning. These expressions

are often used by certain groups of people in everyday communication. Compared to other idioms, trigger phrases are generally longer and can contain both phrases and clauses. For example: Bite off more than you can chew (taking on more responsibility than one can handle), cry over spilled milk (regretting something that cannot be changed).

c. Frozen Forms

A frozen forms or frozen idioms is an idiomatic expression whose meaning is fixed and cannot be changed or freely combined with other elements without losing its idiomatic meaning. These idioms are considered special because they have a fixed form and occur in a limited pattern. If their components are modified or paired with different words, the expression will no longer function as an idiom, as it will sound unnatural and its original meaning will be lost. For example: kick the bucket (to die or gone), once in a blue moon (very rarely).

d. Proverbs

A proverb is a phrase segment that has been frozen in terms of structure, meaning, and function. A proverb is a short statement that discusses the experiences of many people and provides advice or a warning. Furthermore, common, socially relevant situations are described and explained by proverbs. For example: Don't count your chickens before they're hatched (don't count your chickens before

they hatch), you can't judge a book by its cover (Don't judge just by appearance).

2. Type of Idiom based on Fernando

As a supporting theory, the researcher uses Fernando (1996, in Khairunnisa et al., 2022) divides idioms into three types:

a. Pure Idioms

Fernando (1996, p. 1) explains that pure idioms are those whose implied meaning differs significantly from what would be understood if translated literally. This means that a pure idiom is a type of idiom whose meaning cannot be guessed at all from its constituent words. This expression has a specific meaning that stands as a unit, so that if translated word for word, it would not make sense. Fernando also uses a pure idiom, which is a multi word statement that is usual but not literal. Spill the beans, for example, is not related to beans. While the literal meaning of "letting the seeds of legumes fall," the non-literal meaning applies to the entire idiom: "to commit carelessness." Further bite a bullet which means facing difficult situations bravely.

b. Semi Idioms

Semi-idioms are idioms that are neither entire idiomatic but completely literal. In these sentences, one or more words keep the meaning they originally had while the others change. Fernando (1996) explains that in the idiom "foot the bill," the word "bill" is still used literally, while "foot" has a figurative meaning. This expression is

understood as an idiom whose meaning can be determined through context. Another example lend a hand which means to help.

c. Literal Idioms

As stated by Fernando (1996), literal idioms are considered transparency idioms since their meaning can be derived from their constituent parts. Literal idioms refer to idiomatic expressions that retain the basic meaning of their words and are easily understood without the need for additional explanation. Using the example, “by hand,” means done by hand. The word “hand” still means hand. Another example on foot which means on a walk.

3. Type of Idiom based on McCarthy & O’Dell

As a supporting theory, the researcher refers to McCarthy & O’Dell (2017, p. 6), who state that “idioms are expressions which have a meaning that is not obvious from the individual words.” They emphasize that idioms should be interpreted as a whole, as their literal meanings often differ from the meaning of the expression. Idioms can be divided into six categories (as cited in Dewi et al., 2024): simile, binominals, proverb, cliché, fixed statements, and other language. Classify idioms based on form and structure as follows:

a. Simile

A simile is figurative phrase that compares two things using the terms “as” or “like.” Similes are used to enhance understanding or create interesting statements in both spoken and written English. For

example: “Little Jimmy has been as quiet as a mouse.” This simile describes is very quiet all day.

b. Binominals

A binomial is a phrase or statement that consists of two words or speech segments, typically combined by a conjunction linking word, and. For example: “We arrived safe and sound.” This binomial expression is safely.

c. Proverb

A proverb is a short statement that reflects common human experiences and conveys advice or warnings. Similar to idioms, proverbs have a fixed form, and their meaning cannot always be deduced from a literal interpretation of the individual words. For example: “Actions speak louder than words.” This proverb implies that what people do is more important than what they say.

d. Cliché

This type of idiom refers to expressions that are overused and have lost their originality and effectiveness. For example: “Time will tell”, “Every cloud has a silver lining.”

e. Fixed statement

This category of idioms consists of fixed expressions with definite meanings that cannot be substituted unambiguously by alternative terms. his fixed statement is often encountered and used in everyday communication, both in spoken and written contexts. For

example: “Long time no see.” This fixed expression is used as a friendly greeting when meeting someone after a long period of time.

f. Other Language

As you may know, English borrows many words from other languages. In this unit, all the idioms are of Latin or French origin. For example:

- 1) déjà vu (French): feeling as if you have experienced something before
- 2) quid pro quo (Latin): exchange, recompense

D. Classification of Types of Context

Context refers to the conditions or situations that influence how language is interpreted. Pateda (2010, as cited in Sukmayani, 2023, p. 141) adds that meaning emerges through the interaction between meaning and comprehension, often shaped by situational context. The following are different types of context according to:

1. Context theory Joan Cutting

According to Cutting (2002, p. 3) divides context into three types: situational context, background knowledge context (cultural or interpersonal), and co-textual context. According to Cutting (2002, as cited in Prasojo, 2025) explains these three types context as follow:

a. Situational Context

Situational context refers to the specific circumstance in which a conversation or event takes place and refers to what the speaker knows

about the surrounding environment of the surrounding environment or conditions at the time of the utterance. For example: The phrase “It’s cold in here” can simply mean stating the temperature or asking to close the window, depending on the conversational situation.

b. Background Knowledge Context

There are two categories of this cultural knowledge: cultural general knowledge and interpersonal knowledge. The context of background knowledge refers to shared knowledge and general cultural knowledge (Cutting, 2002).

1) Cultural

About human life in a general understanding of how human life works in an everyday situation. For example:

- “Break the ice”

Explanation context: Categorized within a cultural context because its meaning is understood through shared knowledge.

It refers to actions to reduce awkwardness in a situation, especially when people meet for the first time.

2) Interpersonal

Personal experience in spoken interaction preceding the act of speaking. For example:

- “We’re not on the same page”

Explanation context: This expression indicates a difference in understanding or opinion between speakers. It can only be

fully interpreted in an interpersonal context because it relies on prior communication and relationships. The meaning in that context is not shared or agreed upon.

c. Co-textual Context

Refers to the sentence or phrase being studied. There is lexical and grammatical coherence in the text. For example:

- Utterance : “Don’t spill the beans”

Co-textual : “We have to keep this plan a secret until the meeting.”

Explanation: The previous sentence provides context that “spill the beans” means to divulge a secret, not literally spill the beans.

2. Deixis based on Levinson

As a supporting theory, Yule (2008, p. 8) state, “Deixis is a technical term (from Greek) for one of the most basic things we do with utterances. It means ‘pointing’ via language.” Deixis is a linguistic element whose meaning depends on who is speaking, to whom, when, and where the utterance is delivered. The meaning of deixis will be difficult to understand if the context of the utterance is unknown. According to Levinson deixis is classified into three types: person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. According to Ruslan and Milal (2024, p. 154-155), explain deixis based on Levinson (1983) as follow :

a. Person Deixis

Personal deixis is used to indicate the identity of the speaker and the party referred to in the speech. This deixis is divided into three

types, namely First person deixis refers to the speaker or group involving the speaker, such as ‘I, we, and us’. Second person deixis is used to refer to the interlocutor, usually through the pronoun ‘you’. Third person deixis refers to parties outside the speaker and listener, which is marked by the pronouns ‘he, they, and it.’

b. Spatial deixis

According to Ruslan and Milal (2024), spatial deixis is related to the location and physical context in speech events as stated by Fillmore (1971). Spatial deixis relies on a shared understanding between the speaker and the listener about the surrounding environment. This type of deixis consists of proximal deixis, which refers to locations close to the speaker (e.g., “this” and “here”); distal deixis, which refers to locations far from the speaker (e.g., “that” and “there”); and medial deixis, which refers to locations closer to the listener.

c. Temporal deixis

Ruslan and Milal (2024) explain, based on Levinson (1983), that temporal deixis focuses on time references in speech and is realized through adverbs. This type of deixis is generally expressed through adverbs such as “now,” “then,” and “yesterday,” and is closely related to verb tense, which functions as a deictic marker to place events in time.

E. Meaning of Idioms in Context

According to Chaer (as cited in Hanifah et al., 2023), it was discovered that while a word's meaning may differ based on its continuity, not all words will experience this change in meaning. In linguistics, context has an important part in determining a word's actual meaning. This is particularly relevant in the case of idiomatic expressions, whose meanings cannot be interpreted literally and therefore require an understanding of context.

Context is crucial in determining the meaning of a speech since meaning does not develop out of somewhere but is influenced by a variety of situational factors (Wijayanti et al., 2025)

In this regard, the meaning of idiomatic expressions in context refers to their interpretation based on usage in discourse rather than literal meaning. Idioms are fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be derived from individual words, but must be understood as a whole within a specific context. Therefore, their interpretation depends on how they are used in interaction, as the same idiom may convey different meanings in different contexts.

This analysis is descriptive. The researcher describes the dialogue in which the idiom appears, explains the situational context. The researcher describes the dialogue in which the idiom appears, followed by an explanation of the situational context, including the participants, setting, and circumstances of the conversation. Finally, the idiom is interpreted based on its contextual use to reveal its intended meaning. Each idiomatic expression is analyzed to reveal its intended meaning in relation to the context in which it appears.

F. Review of the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series.

The researcher selected *Wednesday* because it is a popular and relatively recent series, making it easily recognizable and relevant for analysis, particularly as its use of vocabulary continues to develop. *Wednesday* is a supernatural comedy-horror series directed by Tim Burton, created by Alfred Gough and Miles Millar, and starring Jenna Ortega as Wednesday Addams. The series follows Wednesday, the eldest child of the Addams Family who enrolls at Nevermore Academy, a school for outcasts with supernatural abilities. Known for her dark personality and sarcastic manner, Wednesday becomes involved in a series of mysterious murders, prompting her to investigate the case, which ultimately reveals secrets connected to her family.

G. Previous Studies

Previous research was used as a research reference for comparison and allowed researchers to enrich the use of theory related to this research. Researchers used three studies as references in enriching the research material in the research. The previous studies related to this research were:

1. Azhar (2022) conducted a research thesis entitled “Analysis of Idiomatic Expression in Zootopia Movie Directed by Ricky Hover.” Previous research focused on the contextual meaning of idioms in films. Similar to previous research, this research identifies and classifies the types of idioms analyzed using Boatner and Gates theory (2004). However, the difference is that previous research in semantic studies based on idiom dictionaries on contextual meaning, while this research uses context based on Cutting’s

theory (2002). This study analyzes how idiom meaning is formed in context and interprets it descriptively according to the situation in which it is used. This study describes the context and meaning of idioms in the *Wednesday* season 1 drama series.

2. Wowor (2021) conducted a research entitled “Idiom Dalam Serial movie John Wick Karya Chad Stahelski.” Previous research have similarities in identifying and classifying types of idioms, as well as analyzing and describing the meaning of idioms. Similar to this research, the object is the same, namely audio-visual works in the form of films and drama series. However, the difference is that previous research in semantic studies used Fernando (1996) idiom theory and analyzed changes in meaning descriptively using Heasley (2007) theory, while this research uses Boatner and Gates theory (2004) and interprets the meaning descriptively and describes the context based on Cutting (2002) theory in the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series.
3. Arafah (2021) conducted a research entitled “Deixis in the movie script The Lion King 2019” Previous research have similarities in this study also applies a pragmatic approach to language analysis in film or drama dialogue, focusing on the context in which characters utterances are used. However, this study differs from previous research on deixis analysis using Stephen C. Levinson theory, which examined reference words such as person, place, and time deixis. While this research uses Boatner and Gates theory (2004) and interprets the meaning descriptively and describes the

context based on Cutting (2002) theory in the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series.

This research makes a new contribution by using Boatner & Gates theory to analyze the types of idioms and context involved are used in the idiomatic expression based on Joan Cutting. This research highlights how the combination of these two theories can provide a deeper understanding of the meaning of idioms from the context in the dialogue scenes of the *Wednesday* Season 1 drama series.

