

**Original Article**

**SEMANTICS IN THE TEXT OF THE HIKAYAT ACEH: A STUDY OF CONTEXTUAL MEANING**

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**Abstract**

Like living creatures, language experiences development that automatically results in changes. Changes in language can include changes in phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. This study discusses changes in the semantics of the word *middle* in three literary works from different periods, namely *Hikayat Aceh* (1625) from the 17th century, *Hikayat Siak* (1855) from the 19th century, and *Belahan Jiwa* (2012) from the 21st century. Sentences containing the word *middle* in the three literary works were inventoried and analyzed using Cruse's (2000) theory of lexical semantics and grammatical semantics. Based on the results of the analysis, the author identified five definitions of the meaning of the word *middle* in the literary works *Hikayat Aceh* (1625), *Hikayat Siak* (1855), and *Belahan Jiwa* (2012). The five definitions of meaning found include a place between two edges, sela/antara, half/perdua, medium, and around; approximately; more or less. The change that is apparent in the meaning of the word *tengah* is the elimination of the word *tengah* which means around; approximately; more or less in the Indonesian used today.

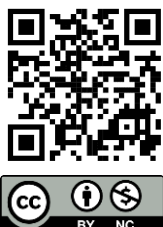
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Keywords : semantics, Hikayat Aceh, contextual meaning, classical Acehnese text, semantic study, classical Malay language, Acehnese literature

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Language is a system of arbitrary speech sound symbols used by humans as a means of communication to convey ideas, thoughts, and feelings, where these symbols refer to certain concepts and thus have meaning (Kusumandari et al., 2019) . In linguistic studies, semantics is a branch of science that specifically studies meaning in language, which includes the relationship between symbols and referents and the accuracy of conveying communication messages so that they can be understood by the interlocutor (Pramuniati, 2008; Zakiyah, 2021) . However, this meaning-making process does not always run linearly because a word can have various meanings depending on the context of its use, so this complexity becomes an important background for semantic studies to uncover the relationship between linguistic signs and the meaning they represent (Habibie et al., 2025) .

This is reinforced by the view that semantics does not only study meaning statically, but also how that meaning is constructed, interpreted, and negotiated in everyday use (Rudi, 2016) . Within this framework, understanding meaning cannot be separated from the social and cultural context in which the language is used, because the meaning conveyed often contains specific nuances that can only be interpreted correctly through a contextual approach (Rudi, 2016) . This approach is crucial considering that language acts are essentially attempts to convey meaning, so that linguistic studies will not be considered complete without including semantic aspects in them (Chaer, 2009) . This shows that semantics plays a crucial role as a scientific framework for dissecting the



layers of meaning contained in a text, thus enabling a more structured analysis at the lexical and grammatical levels (Habibie et al., 2025) .

In addition, semantics examines three main types of meaning, namely lexical meaning, grammatical meaning, and contextual meaning, each of which contributes to the understanding of the text as a whole (Tamur et al., 2024) . Lexical meaning refers to the basic meaning or dictionary definition of a word that is fixed and general, while grammatical meaning relates to the contribution of grammar to the meaning of an utterance through morphological or syntactic processes (Maesaroh & Riyadi, 2025) . Meanwhile, contextual meaning is dynamic and depends on the situation, sentence structure, and socio-cultural factors surrounding the utterance (Halim et al., 2025; Maesaroh & Riyadi, 2025) . This contextual meaning also includes cultural meaning which is an interpretation that arises from the mindset and habits of the language-using community, where linguistic symbols carry special meanings that depend on the values, norms, and traditions adopted by the local community (Yordania & Fateah, 2024) .

Therefore, the study of contextual meaning is very urgent in semantic research, considering that understanding lexical meaning alone is not enough to interpret an utterance or text completely and accurately (Maesaroh & Riyadi, 2025; Setyawan, 2022) . Context is an important element in the structure of a text or utterance because it not only pays attention to words and sentences, but also the linguistic and non-linguistic situations that surround it (Azizah & Luthfi, 2023; Setyawan, 2022) . The context is classified into three main parts, namely the linguistic context which refers to the relationship between elements in the discourse, the situational context relating to the physical environment and relations between participants, and the cultural context which includes the value system and customs of the language community (Melati & Pranowo, 2022) .

The Hikayat Aceh, as a legacy of oral literature rich in cultural and historical values of the Acehnese people, requires a contextual semantic approach to deeply uncover its meaning. This is necessary because the meaning of traditional literary texts is not limited to dictionary definitions but is also strongly influenced by the conceptual framework and social experiences of the users (Melati & Pranowo, 2022) . Thus, a contextual semantic approach is a vital analytical instrument for uncovering deeper and more comprehensive dimensions of meaning in the Hikayat Aceh text (Bulan, 2019; Setyawan, 2022) .

### **Problem Formulation**

Based on the background description, the problem formulation in this study is how the form of contextual meaning contained in the Hikayat Aceh text and how this meaning reflects the value system and cultural norms of the Acehnese people. This study focuses on revealing meanings that are not only denotative, but also connotative and cultural that are tied to the social and historical situation of the Acehnese people, considering that the meaning of language is completely determined by the cultural context in which the language is used by its speakers (Shalika et al., 2020) . Cultural context includes the values or norms of cultural representation, while situational context relates to the immediate environment in which the text functions, which includes the discourse field, discourse participants, and discourse media (Nisa et al., 2023) . These three dimensions of context interact with each other and form a complete unity of meaning, so that understanding the text cannot be done partially but must see the reciprocal relationship

between linguistic elements and the socio-cultural reality that surrounds it (Melati & Pranowo, 2022; Zainuddin, 2021) .

### **Research purposes**

Based on the problem formulation that has been put forward, the purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the forms of contextual meaning contained in the Hikayat Aceh text and reveal how these meanings reflect the value system, norms, and socio-cultural background of Acehnese society (Asfar, 2016) . In addition, this study aims to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of semantic studies, especially in understanding the relationship between language structure and the socio-cultural reality that surrounds it (Fata et al., 2024; Prayetno & Qomaruzzaman, 2021) . This research is also directed to provide a practical contribution to the preservation of regional literature and enrich the treasure of knowledge in the field of language studies, especially in understanding the dynamics of meaning that occur in traditional texts (Melati & Pranowo, 2022; Tricahyono et al., 2020) . Specifically, this research aims to identify and classify various linguistic elements containing connotative and cultural meanings, thus explaining how the interaction between texts and the socio-cultural context of Acehnese society produces specific meanings not found in the general use of everyday language. This approach is expected to reveal the characteristics and cultural elements in the texts, as well as analyze the contextualization of interpretations with current phenomena in society (Maula, 2024) .

## **2. LIBRARY RESEARCH**

### **Semantics and Contextual Meaning**

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of a language, where from a cognitive perspective, semantics seeks to investigate the relationship between experience, conceptual systems, and semantic structures embodied by language (Kurniasih, 2019) . Simply put, semantics is understood as the study of the meaning of language that includes linguistic units such as words, phrases, sentences, and discourse (Jambak & Zawawi, 2022) . In this study, semantics is not only limited to the analysis of denotative or referential meaning, but also includes connotative and contextual meanings that are influenced by the pragmatic situation and the cultural background of the speaker (Hidayah & Oktavia, 2019; Kurnia et al., 2019) . Contextual meaning itself is part of the study of semantics that discusses the meaning of a lexeme based on the context of its use, where situational meaning arises due to the relationship between utterances and the context of the utterance (Azizah & Luthfi, 2023) .

This concept emphasizes that context is a conceptual framework that serves as a reference in speaking or understanding the meaning of speech, so that the meaning or intent of the text is obtained through a combination of the text and the context (Saifudin, 2019) . In this framework, the layers of meaning not only include references or concepts that exist in the human mind, but also involve layers of forms in the form of language symbols that must be interpreted based on certain pragmatic situations (Supratmi & Zaidin, 2025) . In pragmatic studies, context is divided into several dimensions, namely linguistic context which includes the meaning of the arrangement of words in a sentence, emotive context related to the speaker's feelings and attitudes, situational context involving time, place, and conditions where the speech takes place, and cultural context which includes the overall meaning in a particular culture (Azizah & Luthfi, 2023) .

This contextual division shows that speech symbols or words do not have a fixed meaning if separated from their context, because the intended meaning is very dependent on the situation, place, time, and environment in which the word is used (Azizah & Luthfi, 2023; Hermawan, 2018) . This shows that understanding the meaning in an utterance cannot be separated from the pragmatic dimension, because context plays a primary role in determining the correct interpretation (Waljinah et al., 2019) .

### **Acehnese Tales: Characteristics and Significance**

Acehnese Hikayat is a form of traditional oral literature that holds significant significance in Acehnese civilization. Besides serving as a medium of entertainment, this text also serves as a historical document and cultural heritage, reflecting the social values, norms, and belief systems of the community in the past. As a literary work born from a traditional society, Acehnese Hikayat contains ethical and aesthetic values that function as social control and intergenerational cultural transmission (Astuti & Denafri, 2020; Daud & Subet, 2021) .

This oral tradition is a form of culture passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth, so that its narrative structure and language style reflect local wisdom and the value system adopted by the Acehnese people (Sukarismanti & Samsudin, 2021) . In this case, the Hikayat Aceh text not only records past events but also represents the social construction and structure of Acehnese society that includes roles, positions, and collective life experiences (Melati & Pranowo, 2022) . This is in line with the view that context includes social and cultural factors that determine the position of community members in certain social institutions, so that the interpretation of the text must consider the conditions of language use that underlie it (Al-Anshor & Umar, 2018; Pranowo, 2019) .

## **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Types of research**

This research falls into the descriptive qualitative research category because the researcher did not manipulate or change the object being studied, but rather presented a systematic description of the conditions and phenomena within the research object (Natsir et al., 2019; Rahmawati & Suswandari, 2022) . In this descriptive qualitative research, data were analyzed in depth to describe the existing facts, accompanied by analysis aimed at providing comprehensive understanding and explanation (Ulam et al., 2018; Wahidah, 2019) .

This method was chosen because it is suitable for revealing the meaning contained in oral literary texts in a naturalistic manner without changing their original conditions (Mulyani et al., 2022; Safitri et al., 2023) . The approach used in this study is a pragmatic and qualitative descriptive approach, where the pragmatic approach is focused on analyzing the meaning of language related to the context of who is speaking, to whom, where, and for what purpose (Nabila et al., 2023) . This approach allows researchers to understand the relationship between the text and the surrounding social and cultural context, so that the interpretation of meaning is not only textual but also reflects the actual pragmatic situation (Azziz et al., 2021; Ilma & Bakthawar, 2019) . The pragmatic approach in this study focuses on the study of the conditions of language use determined by the social context, where the context influences how a person interprets a sentence (Nafi'a et al., 2022; Zuhri & Rizal, 2022) .

## Research Approach

The pragmatic approach was chosen as the main foundation in this study because it pays special attention to the role of the reader and the situational context in interpreting literary works, where the text is understood as something created to elicit certain effects or responses from the reader (Yanti, 2022) . This approach views literary works as a communication medium that conveys certain goals from the author to the reader, so that the analysis is not only focused on the structure of the text, but also on the relationship between the text and social reality and the pragmatic goals behind the use of the language (Solichin & Sa'adah, 2023) . Within this framework, the researcher plays a key instrument that conducts inductive analysis by emphasizing the contained meaning rather than merely numerical generalizations, thus enabling the disclosure of nuances and details of phenomena in depth (Solichin & Sa'adah, 2023; Wijayanti & Saputra, 2021) . The data used in this research are all speech units contained in the Hikayat Aceh text which is the object of study, which is then analyzed to reveal the various layers of meaning contained therein (M et al., 2018; Rahayu & Wirawati, 2021) .

## Data and Data Sources

The data in this study are all units of speech contained in the Hikayat Aceh text which is the object of study, which are then analyzed to reveal the various layers of meaning contained therein. The main data source used is the Hikayat Aceh manuscript or manuscript which is considered representative and authentic, which is obtained from libraries, archives management institutions, and scientific publications that have transcribed and critically edited the text (Megasari et al., 2025) . The selection of the manuscript is based on considerations of feasibility, namely a manuscript that contains complete and representative speech data to be analyzed for its meaning in the socio-cultural context of Acehnese society (Istiqamah, 2017) .

## Data and Data Sources

In this study, the data studied includes all language units in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences contained in the selected Hikayat Aceh manuscript, which are then classified based on the categories of meaning to be analyzed (Kurniasih, 2019; Rahardi, 2020) . Data collection was carried out through literature study techniques by reading and listening to the entire contents of the manuscript carefully to identify language units relevant to the focus of the research (Hartati, 2019; Muslihah & Febrianto, 2017) . The identification process was carried out by recording and inventorying language units that contain potential contextual, lexical, and grammatical meanings for further analysis (Rosalina, 2023; Sutika & Sulibra, 2023) . In addition to the literature study technique, data collection was also carried out using the *simap* and *cakap* methods to enrich understanding of the context of language use in the text (Iqbal & Mulyadi, 2022; Rahardi, 2020) . The data collection techniques applied in this study include documentary studies and data triangulation to ensure the validity and depth of interpretation of the meaning obtained from the manuscript (Nur et al., 2018; OCVTAVIANI & Rahmawati, 2019) .

## Data Collection Techniques

The data collection procedure was carried out through the stages of reading the entire contents of the manuscript thoroughly, noting relevant language units, and inventorying the data based on the categories of meaning studied (Mustafa, 2022; Octoyota, 2022) .

The analysis step was carried out by grouping the collected data into specific categories of meaning, then conducting in-depth descriptions and interpretations to find patterns of meaning that appear in the text (Iqbal & Mulyadi, 2022; Suparno, 2020) . Data analysis in this study was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions interactively (Fakhriati, 2016; Saputra et al., 2024) . Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative text analysis method, where the collected data were sorted, classified, and analyzed for meaning based on semantic rules and the surrounding discourse context (Najih & Irfan, 2022; Rahmawati & Suswandari, 2022) . The analytical method applied in this study was the contextual equivalence analysis method, which focuses on determining the meaning of language units based on their equivalence with the context of use in the text (Rahardi, 2020) . The data reduction stage was carried out by sorting and simplifying relevant data from the recording results, then the data presentation stage presented the information in an organized manner in the form of narrative descriptions to facilitate understanding of patterns and relationships between meanings (Habibie et al., 2025) .

### Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study used a qualitative descriptive method to present a systematic and factual picture of the results of semantic studies on the research object, without making comparisons or testing hypotheses (Habibie et al., 2025) . This method emphasizes revealing meaning, description, clarification, and placing data in their respective contexts and depicting them in the form of words rather than numbers (Garcia, 2023; SUPRIADI et al., 2024) . The analysis stages include data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions interactively to validate the findings (Masfufah & Marwan, 2024; OCVTAVIANI & Rahmawati, 2019) . This process begins with grouping data into specific meaning categories, then in-depth description and interpretation are carried out to find patterns of meaning that appear in the text (Laa et al., 2025; Sukoco et al., 2024) . The data reduction stage involves summarizing, grouping, and selecting data findings according to research needs, while the data presentation stage aims to present data more systematically and clearly so that it is easily understood by readers (Haeran, 2021; Halisa et al., 2024) . The final stage is drawing conclusions and verification, where researchers interpret the meaning of the data that has been presented to answer the problem formulation and continuously validate the findings (Hasibuan et al., 2025; Safitri & Atikurrahman, 2023) . This verification process is carried out repeatedly to ensure that the conclusions drawn are truly supported by strong and valid evidence (Lestari & Prabawa, 2024; Yanti et al., 2018) .

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on Cruse's semantic theory, semantics is divided into two types, namely lexical semantics and grammatical semantics. To identify the lexical meaning of the word *middle* in the literary works *Hikayat Aceh* (1625), *Hikayat Siak* (1855), and *Belahan Jiwa* (2012), this study uses the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) published by the Ministry of Education and Culture which is accessed through the page [kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id](http://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id) and the Malay Language Dictionary from the Malay Letter Reference Center under the auspices of the Malaysian Language and Library Council which is accessed through [prpm.dbp.gov.my](http://prpm.dbp.gov.my).

1. Based on KBBI (2016), lexically the word *middle* as a noun has several meanings, namely:

- (1) a place (direction or point) between two edges (boundaries);
- (2) an area that is not the edge; center;
- (3) a place or region that is far from the edge;
- (4) between; between;
- (5) half; half; and
- (6) a place (direction or point) near the center line of the body.

In addition to being a noun, the word *tengah* can also function as an adverb meaning *medium* and as a conjunction meaning *when* or *while*. To determine the exact meaning of the word *tengah* in the context of a sentence as well as detecting its semantic changes in *the Hikayat Aceh* (1625), *Hikayat Siak* (1855), and *Belahan Jiwa* (2012), the meaning at the grammatical semantic level needs to be considered.

Based on grammatical semantic analysis, in *Belahan Jiwa* (2012) the word *tengah* has four meanings, namely 'place between two edges', 'between', 'half', and 'medium', as described below.

### **The place between two edges**

“...with a beautiful candle burning in the middle of the table.”  
“I called Benny, inviting him to sit in the middle of the bed in front of me.”

In both sentences, the word "*tengah*" means "place between two edges" because it indicates the position of a plane that divides two sides into relatively equal sizes, namely the table and the bed. Grammatically, this meaning is formed by the prepositional phrases "*di tengah meja*" and "*di tengah kasur*" which function as adverbs of place. The preposition "*di*" which indicates location reinforces the meaning of "*tengah*" as a position between two edges.

The same meaning is also found in *the Hikayat Aceh* (1625), for example in the sentence:

"So the chieftain was at the head and the Sultan of Samutera was in the middle and the youngest king was at the back."

The word "*middle*" in this sentence indicates a location on the elephant's body, between its head and back. The meaning "place between two edges" is formed by the phrase "*di tengah*" (*middle*) as an adverb of place. Another example is found in the sentence:

"So when he reached the middle of the field, he felt the earth move as if it were being shaken by an earthquake."

In this example, the phrase "*to the middle of the field*" indicates a location between two edges of an area, with the preposition "*to*" indicating direction or destination. In *the Hikayat Siak* (1855), this meaning also appears, for example in the sentence:

"The Central King arrived at the central door."

The phrase "*middle door*" refers to a door located between two other doors. Another example is in the sentence:

“And there is a fort in the middle of the river.”

### Interval/between

“... closed with the event of throwing my hand bouquet into the crowd.”  
“... without hesitation kissed my lips in the middle of the crowd of people who were queuing at the entrance...”

In both sentences, the word *tengah* means 'between' because it appears in the phrases *ke tengah kaum* (to the middle of a crowd) and *di tengah kaum* (in the middle of a crowd). The prepositions *ke* and *di* function as location indicators, while *rakyat* (crowd) indicates density. Therefore, *tengah* indicates a position among the density of people. Based on the data, the meaning of 'sela/antara' is only found in *Belahan Jiwa* (2012). In *Hikayat Aceh* (1625) and *Hikayat Siak* (1855), *tengah* is not used with this meaning.

### Half/half

“At 12 midnight, Bimo was lying on his back on his bed.”  
“It was past noon and Bimo hadn't come home yet.”

In both sentences, *tengah* means 'half', referring to time. This meaning is formed by the phrases *midnight* and *midday*, since the nouns *night* and *day* refer to units of time. Thus, *tengah malam* can be interpreted as 'half of the night' or 'peak of the night,' while *tengah hari* refers to the middle of the day.

The same meaning is also found in *the Hikayat Aceh* (1625), for example:

"... at midnight with very heavy rain and very strong lightning."

In *Hikayat Siak* (1855), similar examples include:

"Tomorrow at noon, your Majesty will come."  
"And at midnight, when everyone was quiet, the captain of the ship also boarded."

In all of these examples, the meaning of 'half/half' is formed by a phrase that combines *the middle* with a noun that expresses time.

### Medium

“A man accompanied by a pregnant woman, looked at Bimo in amazement.”

In this sentence, *tengah* means 'in the middle', indicating a state that is currently ongoing. Grammatically, this meaning is formed by the phrase *tengah hamil*. In this context, *tengah* functions as an adverb describing the condition of pregnancy the subject is currently experiencing. A similar meaning is also found in *the Hikayat Siak* (1855), for example:

“And His Majesty was eating, holding a grilled chicken.”  
“And at that time His Majesty was praying Isha.”  
“So the Bugis were sleeping.”

In all three examples, *tengah* indicates that an activity is in progress. In contrast, in *the Hikayat Aceh* (1625) there is no use of *tengah* with the meaning 'in progress'.

Around; approximately; approximately

In *the Hikayat Siak* (1855) we find the use of *the middle* with a meaning that does not appear in the other two works, for example:

"In five days, we will go with two hundred soldiers."  
 "There are two hundred warriors, with shields and bright spears."  
 "... bringing two hundred Siamese..."

This usage pattern is not found in *Belahan Jiwa* (2012) and is no longer productive in modern Indonesian. Therefore, a search was conducted using the Malay Language Dictionary (prpm.dbp.gov.my). In the dictionary, *tengah* is defined, among other things:

1. something that is located in the middle;
2. a condition that is not too high and not too low; moderate; moderate;
3. equal; average; half; half.

Based on the grammatical structure and context of the sentence, the phrase "*mid-two hundred*" indicates a quantity. In this context, "*tengah*" combines with the numeral "*dua ratus*" and functions as an adverb that indicates an approximate number. Thus, the phrase means 'around two hundred people'. The same meaning applies to the other two examples, so "*tengah*" can be paired with the adverbs "*sekitar*" (*around*), "*kira*" (*approximately*), or "*kurang lebih*" (*approximately*).

The five identified meanings are marked with a check mark (√) based on the period of the literary work .

Table 1 Classification of the Meaning of the *Middle* Word in *the Hikayat Aceh* (1625), *Hikayat Siak* (1855), and *Belahan Jiwa* (2012 )

Nama Hikayat	The Meaning of the Word "Middle"				
	The place between two edges	Interval/between a	Half/ half	Currently	Around; approximately; less more
<i>Hikayat Aceh</i> (1625)	√	-	√	-	-
<i>The Tale of Siak</i> (1855)	√	-	√	√	√
<i>Soulmate</i> (2012)	√	√	√	√	-

The definition of the word "*tengah*" (around; approximately; approximately) is no longer found in the Indonesian language currently used. There are several possible causes behind this phenomenon. Referring to the classification of semantic changes according to Hollmann (2009), semantic changes in the word "*tengah*" (around; approximately; approximately) can be caused by internal and external language factors . Internal language factors that influence the semantic changes of the word "*tengah*" include the emergence of other lexicons with similar meanings, namely "*sekitar*" (*around*) or "*kira-kira*" (*approximately*). These two lexicons are more widely used in

Indonesian, thus displacing the word " *tengah*" (*mid*) to refer to an estimate of quantity. The use of the lexicons " *sekitar*" (*around*) and "*kira-kira*" (*approximately*) is influenced by external language factors, specifically socio-cultural factors. Society as language users continues to experience changes in socio-cultural aspects along with the development of the times.

For example, changes in cultural aspects that have an impact on language change can be traced through an article released by the Language Development and Fostering Agency entitled *A Glance at the History of the Indonesian Language* . Based on the article's content, Indonesian was proclaimed as the national language in the Youth Pledge on October 28, 1928, and its status and function were confirmed through the Proclamation of Independence of the Republic of Indonesia on August 17, 1945. These two events became a barometer for the revival of Indonesian as a national identity. The public's awareness and enthusiasm for upholding national identity are a manifestation of the cultural change of Indonesian society. Indonesian society began to be moved to emphasize Indonesian identity and was spurred to encourage the development of Indonesian as a new language that has differences from Malay. One form of difference between Indonesian and Malay can be seen in the semantic aspect as stated in the discussion regarding changes in the meaning of the word *tengah* in three literary works from different periods.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis of changes in the meaning of the word *tengah* in three literary works of different periods, namely *Hikayat Aceh* (1625), *Hikayat Siak* (1855), and *Belahan Jiwa* (2012), it was concluded that the changes that emerged from a semantic perspective were in the form of eliminating the use of the word *tengah* which has the meaning definition of 'around; approximately; more or less' in the Indonesian language used today. The word *tengah* which has the meaning definition of 'around; approximately; more or less' is only found in the literary work *Hikayat Siak* (1855).

The definition of the meaning of the word " *tengah*" which is still used in Indonesian today based on the analysis of the literary work *Belahan Jiwa* (2012) includes 'a place between two edges', 'sela/antara', 'half/half', and 'medium'. The elimination of the word " *tengah* " which means 'around; approximately; more or less' can be caused by internal and external language factors that result in semantic changes. Internal language factors that influence the semantic changes of the word " *tengah*" are the emergence of new lexicons that have similar meanings, namely the lexicon " *sekitar*" and "*kira-kira*" . The external language factors that influence the semantic changes of the word " *tengah*" are changes in Indonesian culture that begin with the awareness that Indonesian is a national identity. Indonesian society is encouraged to continue developing Indonesian . The development of Indonesian ultimately creates distinctive characteristics so that Indonesian has slight differences from Malay. One indicator that can distinguish Indonesian from Malay is the difference in semantic aspects, for example the meaning of the word " *tengah*" .

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