

Analysis Students' Mastery on Identifying Adjective in Descriptive Text at XI Grade Students at SMAN 1 Kuok

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ABSTRACT

Classroom observations at SMAN 1 Kuok indicated that many eleventh-grade students have difficulty identifying adjectives in descriptive texts and often confuse them with other word classes, such as nouns and verbs. This challenge negatively affects their reading comprehension and descriptive writing skills. Based on this issue, the research question of this study is: *How is the students' mastery on identifying adjectives in descriptive text at XI grade students of SMAN 1 Kuok?* The purpose of this study was to analyze students' mastery on identifying adjectives in descriptive text at XI grade students at SMAN 1 Kuok. This research applied a qualitative descriptive approach, using a written test and an unstructured teacher interview as instruments. The test asked students to identify adjectives in a descriptive passage, classify their type, and explain their function. The teacher interview provided insight into students' learning experiences, strategies used in teaching adjectives, and observed learning obstacles. The test results showed that only 3 out of 18 students (16.7%) reached the "Excellent" level, while 11 students (61.1%) were in the "Very Poor" category. Many students failed to differentiate adjectives from other parts of speech and lacked confidence in answering the test. From the teacher's interview, it was revealed that although adjectives had been taught previously, students still showed low understanding in practical application. The teacher also noted that students were more familiar with adjectives in Bahasa Indonesia and recommended using contextual and visual learning strategies to support comprehension. This study highlights the need for improved vocabulary instruction, especially in the context of identifying adjectives within descriptive texts.

Keywords: *Adjective, Descriptive Text, Vocabulary Mastery, English Learning, XI Grade Students.*

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INTRODUCTION

English is a language that is widely used around the world as a means of global communication. It plays an important role in sectors such as education, business, technology and diplomatic relations. As many countries make English their primary or second language, it has become a much-needed skill for anyone who wants to expand their opportunities in the academic and professional fields. In learning English, there are four main skills that need to be mastered: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening skills help us understand spoken information, while speaking allows us to express ideas and feelings. Reading helps us understand written information, and writing allows us to convey ideas in writing clearly. These four skills support each other to improve overall English proficiency.

Among these four skills, reading plays a vital role in the academic context. Reading is not only about recognizing words, but also understanding the message, identifying specific information, interpreting meaning, and making inferences. In the school environment, students are often required to read various texts to acquire knowledge. However, reading comprehension depends heavily on vocabulary mastery, especially when students face more descriptive or content-rich texts. Without a strong vocabulary base, students may find it difficult to comprehend what they are reading.

In addition to these four basic skills, vocabulary plays an important role in supporting the development of language skills. An extensive vocabulary facilitates understanding in listening, speaking, reading and writing. In listening, a mastered vocabulary helps to understand conversations, while in speaking, vocabulary enables clear expression of ideas. In reading, a good vocabulary facilitates text comprehension, and in writing, a rich vocabulary helps create varied and easy-to-understand sentences. Thus, a good command of vocabulary will strengthen all language skills and improve overall communication ability.

If someone does not have enough vocabulary, then he will not be able to use the forms and functions of the language he has learned to communicate well and be understood by others, observed Rianti (2017, as cite in Handini et al.,2021). In addition, based on psycholinguistic studies, there is a close relationship between vocabulary acquisition and other language skills, such as speaking and writing. The more vocabulary a person has, the easier it is for him or her to express ideas, communicate clearly, and be more creative in using language (Marselina et al., 2024).

Vocabulary refers to the set of words that a person understands and uses in daily language activities. Vocabulary includes a set of words and their meanings that are essential for effective communication. For students, vocabulary plays an important role in the development of all four language skills: speaking, reading, writing and listening. Although students generally show good mastery of vocabulary, they still face some difficulties related to other aspects of language such as grammar and spelling,observed Andriani & Wahyuningsih (2019, as cite in Marselina et al., 2024). These difficulties can affect reading comprehension skills, as strong vocabulary mastery is necessary to understand the text, interpret the meaning, and capture the main message of a passage (Marselina et al., 2024).

Vocabulary includes the entire set of words used in a language, both in spoken and written form. In vocabulary, there are various types of words or parts of speech such as noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, preposition, conjunction, and interjection. Each of these types of words has a different function in shaping the structure and meaning of a sentence. Therefore, a good understanding of vocabulary includes not only recognizing the meaning of words, but also understanding the types and uses of words in the right context.

Based on observations made at SMA Negeri 1 Kuok, it was found that students' vocabulary mastery is still limited, especially in class XI in using adjectives in descriptive texts. When given the exercise of reading descriptive texts, many students are unable to indicate which adjectives describe objects, places, or people. In fact, some of them mixed up adjectives with other types of words such as nouns or verbs. This suggests that students' difficulty in understanding adjectives is part of a wider problem in vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. As a result, when asked to make simple descriptive sentences, many students do not use adjectives appropriately, or even do not use them at all, so that the descriptions they produce become less clear and do not describe the object effectively.

Bella et al. (2022) argued that students' errors in using adjectives consistently in writing are due to a lack of practice and understanding of how to use adjectives appropriately. One of the reasons is that students have not mastered enough vocabulary related to adjectives, so they have difficulty choosing appropriate adjectives when writing. In fact, there are still many students who have difficulty distinguishing between adjectives, nouns, and verbs. Students' inability to use adjectives in sentences is a serious obstacle when they are asked to write descriptive text (Bella et al., 2022).

In relation to vocabulary mastery, one type of text that requires good vocabulary understanding is descriptive text. Descriptive text is a type of text that aims to describe an object, place, person, or animal in detail so that the reader can imagine what is being described. To achieve this goal, students must have sufficient vocabulary, especially vocabulary that can be used to describe the characteristics or properties of an object. The use of appropriate vocabulary in descriptive text is very important so that the message to be conveyed can be clearly understood by the reader. Therefore, the ability to understand and use vocabulary, especially describing words, greatly influences students' success in understanding and composing descriptive texts.

Descriptive text conveys meaning through the use of sensory details, such as how something looks, sounds, smells, feels, or tastes, so as to create a mental picture in the reader's mind. This type of text allows readers to feel as if they are seeing or experiencing the object described firsthand, observed Dongoran and Siregar (2020, as cite in Bella et al., 2022). Therefore, descriptive text has an important role in helping students develop their ability to express ideas clearly and imaginatively through the use of rich and precise vocabulary (Bella et al., 2022).

This is also that descriptive text is a type of text that functions to convey or describe information clearly about a place, object, or person, confirmed by Mardiah (2018 as cite in Bella et.al., 2022). For example, students can be asked to describe the city of Jakarta, a product such as Samsung, or a famous figure such as Obama. In this case, it is important for students to be able to convey the description in detail so that readers can understand the intended description well. In other words, descriptive text demands students' ability to express the characteristics of an object through the selection of the right words and the arrangement of coherent sentences, so that the information conveyed is not only accurate but also easy to understand and builds the reader's imagination of what is described (Bella et al., 2022).

One of the most important linguistic elements in descriptive text is the use of adjectives. Adjectives serve to provide further information or description about the object, person, or place being described, so that the text becomes more lively and interesting. By understanding and using adjectives appropriately, students can compose more accurate and in-depth descriptions. For example, in describing the school environment, students can use adjectives such as "clean", "green", "crowded", or "cozy" to convey the atmosphere felt. Mastery of these adjectives not only enriches students' vocabulary, but also improves their ability to convey ideas descriptively and communicatively.

Panjaitan (2019, as cite in Panjaitan & Elga, 2020), explain that adjectives are words used to explain or provide additional information to nouns and pronouns. Adjectives help describe people, places, or things in more detail, so that readers or listeners can get a clearer and more specific picture. In addition, adjectives also limit or clarify the meaning of nouns or pronouns by adding important information that describes the nature or state of the object in question. Thus, the use of adjectives makes sentences more informative and helps readers understand the context more precisely and vividly (Panjaitan & Elga, 2020).

Based on the importance of vocabulary mastery, especially the use of adjectives in composing and understanding descriptive text, as well as findings in the field that show students' low understanding of these types of words, it is necessary to conduct further research to find out the extent of students' vocabulary mastery in reading skills, especially in descriptive text. This research is expected to provide a clear picture of students' ability to recognize and use adjectives as an important part of vocabulary that supports their reading comprehension.

From the statement of the phenomenon above, researchers are interested in seeing students' reading activities as Extramural English with the title: "Analyzing Students' Mastery on Identifying Adjective in Descriptive Text at Xi Grade Students at SMAN 1 Kuok." This research will be taken at the second semester of English Language Education Study Program of University of Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai in 2024/2025 academic year.

METHOD

This research was conducted at SMAN 1 Kuok, which is located in Kampar Regency, Riau Province. This school was chosen because it has an active English learning program and the grade XI students have learned descriptive text material that is in accordance with the focus of the research, namely the ability to identify adjectives in descriptive text.

The research was conducted in the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, precisely when the English learning process took place so that the conditions for data collection remained natural. Thus, the results of the study are expected to accurately describe the mastery of grade XI students of SMAN 1 Kuok in recognizing adjectives in descriptive text.

Instruments

The main instrument used was a written test to see the extent to which students were able to recognize, classify, and give reasons for the use of adjectives in a reading text. The test results were then analyzed descriptively, not with statistical calculations, but by grouping, describing, and interpreting students' answers to find common trends and frequently occurring errors.

Procedures

In this study, the researcher used a reading comprehension test as To ensure the accuracy and reliability of the research results, the written test instruments used in this study were tested through a content validity process. Content validity relates to the extent to which test items represent the construct or learning objectives to be measured. In this study, the test instruments were carefully reviewed by experts, namely lecturers and English teachers, to ensure that the items were appropriate, relevant, and consistent with the indicators of students' ability to identify In this study, the main data collection technique used a written test given to the students of class XI SMAN 1 Kuok to find out their ability in identifying adjectives in descriptive text. The main instrument in this study is a written test designed to measure students' ability to identify adjectives within a descriptive text. The test consists of one reading passage entitled "Waste Disposal in Japan". After reading the text, students are instructed to: Identify adjectives found in the text. Write down the sentence in which the adjective appears. Determine the type of adjective (e.g., descriptive, demonstrative, quantitative, etc.). Provide a reason for classifying the word as that particular type of adjective.

Data Analysis

After the data in this study were collected through written the researcher analyzed the data qualitatively descriptively. This analysis process was carried out to deeply understand students' ability to identify adjectives in descriptive text. In this study, data analysis techniques were carried out in a descriptive qualitative manner by referring to the steps developed from several expert figures in qualitative research, namely Miles & Huberman (2014), Creswell (2012), and Braun & Clarke (2006). The process of analysis was carried out to describe in depth the students' ability to identify adjectives in descriptive texts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the test results from 18 students of class XI at SMAN 1 Kuok, it was found that the students' mastery in identifying adjectives in descriptive texts is still relatively low. Only 3 students (16.7%) achieved the *Excellent* category, while the majority, 11 students (61.1%), were classified as *Very Poor*. This indicates that most students had difficulty recognizing and understanding adjectives in a contextual reading task.

The qualitative analysis of individual students' responses supports this conclusion. For example, student MHD demonstrated a strong understanding by identifying all adjectives correctly and providing clear and appropriate reasons. In contrast, many students gave incomplete answers, misclassified the adjectives, or identified words that are not adjectives at all, such as "generally", "during", and "their". Several students left most of their answers blank, suggesting a lack of confidence or understanding of the material.

These findings are in line with previous studies. Jitpranee (2017) found that students often struggle to differentiate adjectives from other word classes unless they are trained using contextual exercises. Likewise, Tantika and Via (2021) emphasized that understanding adjective usage plays a significant role in students' comprehension and construction of descriptive texts and contributes to improving their writing and reading skills.

In conclusion, although adjectives have been taught in class, most students still need further support and structured guidance. More interactive and contextual learning, along with consistent practice, is needed to improve students' understanding and accurate use of adjectives, particularly in descriptive writing tasks.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and analysis in the previous chapter, this study concludes that the students' mastery in identifying adjectives in descriptive texts at the XI grade of SMAN 1 Kuok is still relatively low. The written test results showed that out of 18 students, only 3 students (16.7%) reached the *Excellent* category, while the majority of students, 11 in total (61.1%), were categorized as *Very Poor*. This indicates that most students still experience difficulties in identifying adjectives, differentiating them from other word classes, and providing appropriate reasoning for their usage. The qualitative analysis of students' individual responses revealed several common problems: confusion between adjectives and other word classes (e.g., noun, verb, adverb), spelling mistakes in labeling types of adjectives, and lack of understanding regarding the grammatical role of adjectives in context. Some students left many questions unanswered, suggesting low confidence and limited vocabulary mastery. Therefore, this research confirms that there is a gap between students' exposure to adjective instruction and their actual application of this knowledge in reading and identifying adjectives in descriptive texts.

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