

An Analysis of Students' Understanding Language Features in Descriptive Texts Using Fix-Up Strategy

Pas Sekali Telaumbanua¹, Feby Meuthia Yusuf^{2*}, Lailatul Husna³

^{1,2,3}Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Ekasakti Padang

*Email: febymeuthia1@gmail.com

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki tingkat pemahaman siswa terhadap unsur-unsur kebahasaan dalam teks deskriptif dengan menggunakan *Strategi Fix-Up* pada siswa kelas X di SMK N 6 Padang. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi kendala yang dihadapi siswa dalam memilih kata kerja *present tense* yang tepat, kata-kata deskriptif, subjek, serta kata-kata penjelas (modifying words) dalam proses memahami teks deskriptif. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kuantitatif dengan analisis deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes membaca evaluatif yang terdiri dari 20 soal pilihan ganda. Metode ini dipilih untuk mengukur kemampuan siswa dalam mengenali unsur-unsur kebahasaan yang sesuai dalam teks deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa memiliki pemahaman yang baik terhadap teks deskriptif dengan nilai rata-rata 78. Berdasarkan analisis hasil tes, ditemukan bahwa 56% siswa menunjukkan kemampuan yang sangat baik, 23% memiliki pemahaman yang baik, 9% berada pada kategori cukup, dan 12% mengalami kesulitan. Namun demikian, masih terdapat beberapa siswa yang mengalami kendala dalam mengenali kata-kata deskriptif, kata kerja *present tense*, dan kata-kata penjelas secara tepat, yang terlihat dari kesalahan pada beberapa butir soal tertentu. Oleh karena itu, disarankan agar diberikan bimbingan tambahan untuk mengatasi permasalahan tata bahasa tersebut serta meningkatkan penguasaan siswa terhadap unsur kebahasaan dalam teks deskriptif.

Keywords: *Pemahaman Bacaan, Ciri-Ciri Bahasa, Teks Deskriptif, Strategi Perbaikan.*

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze students' understanding of language features in descriptive texts by using Fix-Up Strategy in class X of SMK N 6 Padang. This article in identifying students' difficulties in choosing simple present tense, adjectives, nouns, and adverbs when reading descriptive texts. This study used a quantitative descriptive design. Data were collected through an objective reading test consisting of 20 multiple-choice questions. This method was chosen to measure students' ability to identify the correct language features in descriptive texts. The results of the study showed that most students demonstrated a good understanding of descriptive texts, with an average score 78. Based on the test results, 56% of students were categorized as excellent, 23% good, 9% fair, and 12% poor. However, some students still faced challenges in correctly identifying adjectives, the simple present tense, and adverbs, as reflected in specific questions where errors were committed. Therefore, further support is recommended to address these grammatical difficulties and enhance students' mastery of language features in descriptive texts.

Keywords: *Reading Comprehension, Language Features, Descriptive Text, Fix-Up Strategy*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a communication tool that is composed of units, such as words, groups of words, clauses, and sentences that are expressed both orally and in writing. There are many definitions of language, and this definition is just one of them. Language is considered as a means of communication, language is a basic human need as a social being to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings. To communicate between countries, an international language is needed. In teaching English, there are four basic language skills that need to be developed,

namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each of these skills plays an important role in language acquisition, and are interrelated in the learning process.

Reading, in particular, is one of skills that enables students to access a wide range of written materials, from textbooks to online articles, fiction, and non-fiction. It helps students improve their vocabulary, grammar, and overall understanding of the language. Reading is essentially a complex activity that involves many things, not only reciting texts, but also involving visual, thinking, psycholinguistic, and metacognitive activities (Marzona et al., 2024). As a visual process, reading is the process of translating written symbols (letters) into spoken words. As a thinking process, reading activities include word recognition, literal understanding, interpretation, critical reading, creative reading, and creative insight. Reading comprehension is a crucial skill in English learning, particularly in understanding descriptive texts. Reading is the construction of meaning from written messages (Maulida et al., 2025). In short, reading descriptive texts not only improves students' overall comprehension and analytical skills but also builds their capacity to choose words in descriptive texts appropriately and effectively in answering questions related to linguistic features. Descriptive texts usually consist of two main components: identification, which introduces and identifies the subject, and description, which elaborates on its characteristics, appearance, behavior, and distinguishing features (Baresh, 2022). Descriptive texts are designed to provide detailed information about a particular person, place, thing, or event, and often rely heavily on rich vocabulary and vivid imagery. By reading descriptive texts, students will be able to visualize and understand the characteristics and qualities being described.

Descriptive texts contain specific language features, such as the simple present tense, adjectives, nouns, and adverbs, which help students build vocabulary, understand sentence structure, and improve their analytical and interpretive skills (Herlina et al., 2024). Descriptive texts include descriptions of animals, people, objects, and places, among others, stating that descriptive texts consist of information about a particular thing, such as a written description of an object. Basically, descriptive texts provide information about topics, facts, and objects. Generally, the purpose of descriptive text is to describe and reveal a particular person, place or thing in details or specific to make the reader be able to visualize the description (Sugiharti et al., 2020).

Language features are unique characteristics used in various types of texts. For descriptive texts, these features include the use of certain participants, adjectives, simple present tense, and action verbs. It can be concluded that Language features are components or characteristics of language which include sentence structure, vocabulary, diction, grammar, intonation, punctuation, phrase, pronunciation, and the way men and women used a particular language in a communication (Komang Suciati et al., 2022). Language features of descriptive text are simple present tense, action verb, and adjective (Ren & Zhu, 2023). Language features refers to the sentence structure, punctuation, noun, vocabulary, and phrases used in content support, provides meaning to the communication it can be concluded that Language features are components or characteristics of language which include sentence structure, vocabulary, diction, grammar, intonation, punctuation, phrase, pronunciation, and the way men and women used a partical language in a communication (Suciati et al., 2022).

However, many students have difficulty understanding and choosing language features in descriptive texts in grade X of SMKN 6 Padang, which ultimately affects their ability to answer questions in the learning process. To answer questions related to descriptive texts well, students must understand the right and correct language features, such as choosing

simple present tense, adjectives, and descriptive vocabulary. However, in reality, many students have difficulty understanding these language features. They often make mistakes in choosing tenses or are unable to identify the right words in descriptive texts, so the words they choose are wrong and they fail to answer questions from the teacher in the learning process.

Based on the research in SMK 6 Padang it was found that understanding and choosing linguistic features in descriptive texts of class X SMK N 6 Padang, there are several points of error. First, the most common error is in the choice of Simple Present Tense. Many students do not understand the basic grammar rules of this tense. Second, there are significant errors in the choice of adjectives. Students often experience confusion when choosing the right adjective to describe a person, object, or place. Third, difficulties in choosing nouns are also often encountered. Students often have difficulty in distinguishing singular and plural nouns or make mistakes when choosing nouns with adjectives in a sentence. Fourth, there are errors in the selection of adverbs. Students are often confused in choosing the right adverb to describe an action or explain a characteristic. Students' difficulties in understanding descriptive texts are greatly influenced by their limited understanding of the linguistic elements contained in the text. This problem has been observed by researchers at SMK N 6 Padang, especially in class X students of SMK N 6 Padang, where errors in understanding and choosing linguistic elements still often occur.

One approach that can be used to help students overcome their lack of understanding of language features in descriptive texts is the Fix-Up strategy. This strategy is used to help students understand the language features in descriptive text. In this context this strategy can help students choose or answer questions correctly given by researcher so as to get good results for students' abilities in understanding descriptive texts. The Fix-Up strategy is implemented as a teaching approach to support students' reading comprehension. This strategy aims to help students understand descriptive texts and actively engage by rereading, making predictions, connecting, and inferring meaning. That fix up strategy is frequently referred to as "look-backs." It refers to a strategy in which readers search backward and sometimes forward in a text to remove a meaningful blockage encountered while reading. This helps students overcome comprehension barriers and better understand the language features contained in descriptive texts. The fix-up strategy is a method used to help students improve their understanding when they find it difficult to comprehend texts, including the language features in descriptive texts. That fix up strategy is frequently referred to as "look backs." It refers to a strategy in which readers search backward and sometimes forward in a text to remove a meaningful blockage encountered while reading.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative descriptive research design. This method is also called the discovery method, because with this method various new science and technology can be discovered and developed. According to (Gay et al., 2024) stated that descriptive research is a survey research. This method is a scientific method because it has met the scientific rules, namely concrete, empirical, objective, measurable, rational, and systematic (Sugiyono, 2023). The data were collected through an objective reading test consisting of 20 multiple choice questions. The population in this study was class X culinary major of SMK N 6 Padang which consisted of two classes of around 72 students. The sample of this research was 34 of students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings indicate that students' ability to understand descriptive text through the Fix-Up Strategy was generally strong. This can be seen from the mean score of 78 and from the fact that most students were classified in the excellent and good categories. These results suggest that the Fix-Up Strategy helped students monitor their understanding, recognize confusion while reading, and repair meaning when comprehension broke down. This interpretation is consistent with Yuliana and Sutramakdalena (2024), who found that Fix-Up Strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension, and with Temelman-Yogev, Prior, and Katzir (2024), who showed that comprehension monitoring can be improved through immediate feedback and that such monitoring is an important step toward better text understanding. Similar evidence is also reported by Amumpuni et al. (2025), who found that strategic reading instruction improved comprehension, engagement, and vocabulary development in EFL learners.

Although the overall results were positive, the students still experienced difficulties in understanding language features, especially adjectives, simple present tense, and adverbs. This shows that comprehension of descriptive text is not limited to identifying general ideas, but also involves understanding the lexical and grammatical patterns used to describe people, places, or objects. In this regard, Bumi and Sulhan (2021) found that students frequently made errors in using simple present verbs and adjectives in descriptive texts, indicating that these features are genuinely problematic for EFL learners. Likewise, Napratilora, Mardiah, and Kurniawan (2024) reported that vocabulary understanding and inference were among the most difficult aspects in comprehending English descriptive texts. Therefore, the present finding that some students still had trouble with certain language features is in line with previous studies showing that descriptive text comprehension often becomes difficult when students do not fully control the vocabulary and grammar embedded in the text.

The difficulties identified in this study can also be explained by several interrelated factors, namely limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of reading fluency, text difficulty, and problems in reasoning information from the text. Vocabulary is a key predictor of reading comprehension because students need to know the meaning and use of words in context in order to construct meaning accurately. Sidek and Ab. Rahim (2015) showed that vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in determining reading comprehension performance, while Cai and Liao (2024) found that both vocabulary meaning and vocabulary usage directly affect reading comprehension. In addition, fluency influences how smoothly students process a text; Rodríguez-Fuentes, Ferrer Ariza, and Linero (2025) found that improvements in oral reading rate, accuracy, and expression supported better fluency development in EFL reading. Problems in reasoning or making inferences also help explain why some students still struggled. Samiei and Ebadi (2021) showed that inferential reading skills need explicit instructional support, while Temelman-Yogev et al. (2024) noted that the complexity of English texts, including specialized vocabulary and intricate sentence structures, can hinder comprehension. Overall, these findings indicate that the Fix-Up Strategy was effective in improving students' general understanding of descriptive text, but additional support is still needed in vocabulary enrichment, fluency practice, and explicit teaching of descriptive-text language features so that students can achieve more precise comprehension.

CONCLUSION

After conducting a study on analysis of students' understanding of language characteristics in descriptive texts based on the author's findings in the previous chapter, the author concludes that:

1. This study concluded that students' ability to understand language features in descriptive texts was mostly good. The results showed that most students showed a good level of understanding, as reflected in their test scores. The average score achieved was 78, with 56% of students categorized as excellent, 23% good, 9% fair, and 12% poor. No students were included in the very poor category. This shows that most students can understand descriptive texts well, but some still have difficulty with certain language features.

2. The problems faced by students in understanding of language features in descriptive text it was difficulty recognizing adjectives, do not understanding in the choosing simple present tense, and in the identifying adverbs. Errors are often found in questions related to these aspects, indicating that further emphasis is needed in teaching these particular language features. Although the Fix-Up Strategy has made a positive contribution to improving students' reading comprehension, additional support and reinforcement are needed to help students overcome their difficulties.

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