

**STUDENTS' COMPETENCE IN INTERPRETING DEIXIS IN
NARRATIVE TEXT AT GRADE XI IPA 1 STUDENTS OF SMA
DHARMA LOKA PEKANBARU**

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ABSTRAK

Deixis adalah suatu alat untuk memahami ujaran pada tindak tutur atau teks tertulis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kompetensi siswa dalam menafsirkan deixis dalam teks naratif. Jenis penelitian ini adalah deskriptif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas XI IPA 1 di SMA Dharma Loka Pekanbaru. Instrumen kuantitatif dan kualitatif digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data pada penelitian ini. Data kuantitatif diperoleh dari test membaca. Data kualitatif diperoleh dari wawancara. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kompetensi siswa dalam menafsirkan (1) persona deixis pada teks naratif dikategorikan bagus, siswa kesulitan menafsirkan persona deixis yang mengacu kedepan kalimat dan rujukan yang tersirat (2) deixis tempat pada teks naratif dikategorikan bagus, siswa kesulitan menentukan lokasi tokoh dan menemukan kata kunci rujukan, (3) deixis waktu pada naratif teks dikategorikan bagus, siswa kesulitan menentukan waktu ujaran dan penggunaan waktu, (4) deixis tekstual pada teks naratif dikategorikan bagus, siswa kesulitan dengan pemahaman konteks, situasi, dan kosa kata yang digunakan, (5) deixis sosial pada teks naratif dikategorikan bagus, siswa kesulitan dengan kosa kata dan pengetahuan umum. Walaupun demikian, kompetensi siswa dalam menafsirkan deixis masih perlu ditingkatkan karena penguasaan kosa kata dan tata bahasa mereka masih rendah.

Keywords : *Competence, Deixis, Narrative, Deixis in Narrative*

INTRODUCTION

Deixis is a mean to comprehend utterances in an act of speech or writing. Understanding deixis is very important in language learning. It is one aspect of linguistics which helps students to understand messages and information from the utterances. By understanding it, readers as well as

students will broaden their knowledge, especially knowledge about cultures.

As stated in School Based Curriculum (Depdiknas, 2009) teaching English is emphasized in the language used in situational and cultural context. In this sense, there are various aspects of language that

takes meaning from the situation and context are taught implicitly through some reading texts. One of them is deixis.

Deixis is a term for a word or phrase which takes its meaning element from situational context (Fromkin, Rodman, and Hymes, 2011: 210). It means that its meaning relies entirely on the situational context of utterances. Similarly, Matthews (2007:96) asserts that deixis is interpreted relatively based on the relation to a specific speaker, addressee, time, and place of utterance. In brief, it can be said that the interpretation of deixis will be different for every people according to the context and relation of the speaker and the addressee in a speech event.

In order to make students able to understand deixis, a teacher is intended to teach its types and usages in the text. It is hoped that they will recognize and interpret it well whenever they find its occurrence in written form. The teacher is also expected to teach them about the importance of context and situation in interpreting deixis. In fact, deixis and context cannot be separated because deixis is difficult to be comprehended without context and situation. In teaching deixis, the teacher should guide their students to recall their background knowledge which is useful to draw inferences from the text.

Deixis occurs in texts which have active sentences or utterances. One of the texts mentioned is narrative. According to Emmot (1997:235) narrative is a series of events which some or all of the

events are described as they take place within a context. Then, Gerot and Wignel (1995:79) assert that a narrative is a piece of text which tells a story about someone, places, animals, and many others which is written by the author with the purpose to entertain the reader. In brief, it can be said that narrative is a series of event which described in a special order in a specific context to amuse or entertain the readers. Most of deictic words appear in the characters' dialogue. In narrative text, deictic words not only help the reader to comprehend the text well but also help the reader to understand the plot of the story.

In Indonesian curriculum, especially in Senior High School (Sekolah Menengah Atas: SMA), narrative, as one of text type or genre, occupies a large portion of teaching and learning English. It is taught in all grades in this level. The narrative texts taught are so complex and occurred in various types. Therefore, students should be prepared well in order to be aware of its complexities to enable them to capture the idea of what the author really wants to convey.

Based on the preliminary research which had been conducted by giving a narrative test on Dec 3rd, 2012, it was found that most of students of grade XI SMA Dharma Loka Pekanbaru got low score in reading narrative text. There were 64% or 16 out of 25 students even got below the minimum achievement criteria which have been determined 80. Based on the interview, it was found out that they faced difficulties in

understanding narrative texts due to some problems.

First, they had limited vocabulary to understand some words or phrases used in narrative text. In narrative text, the diction or choice of words are adapted into literary needs. They are chosen to create an imagination and atmosphere of the story for the readers.

Second, they were confused in interpreting deixis in narrative text. Most of grade XI SMA Dharma Loka students were confused to understand deixis which cannot be interpreted lexically, but should be related to its context. They were also confused with some words used in characters' status. Those words belong to social deixis which had been adapted into the local culture where the setting of the story takes place. It needs background knowledge for its interpretation. Third, they were unable to draw inferences from the plot of the story. In narrative text, sometimes, there is missing information that is created by the author to invite the readers' curiosity to follow the plot of the story. The missing information should be predicted by the readers. Their inability to draw inferences in the missing story made them did not get the main point of the messages conveyed from the narrative text.

In narrative texts, even a single word, expressions, and sentences can show the facets of deixis. Those words can be determined as deixis if the readers are able to recognize it. However, the students of grade XI SMA

Dharma Loka Pekanbaru seemed not to recognize the use of deixis. Therefore, they face big problem in understanding narrative text.

Based on the previous reason, it was necessary to conduct a study to find out the students' competence in interpreting deixis in narrative text at XI IPA 1 students of 2013/ 2014 of SMA Dharma Loka in Pekanbaru. Grade XI IPA 1 was chosen because narrative occurs in their syllabus. While, narrative text was chosen for this research due to its uniqueness in which some words had been adapted into literary needs. So, the diction in narrative is different than other text types.

Based on the previous explanation, the purposes of the research were formulated:

1. To find out students' competence in interpreting person deixis.
2. To find out students' competence in interpreting place deixis.
3. To find out students' competence in interpreting time deixis.
4. To find out students' competence in interpreting discourse deixis
5. To find out students' competence in interpreting social deixis.

Method

This research was conducted by using descriptive design with the aim to describe the students' competence in interpreting deixis in narrative text. Best (2005: 25) says that descriptive research describes the situation or thing that exists at the same time of the study. It means that descriptive research does not tend to find a new theory rather than to verify and describe the students' competence in interpreting deixis in narrative text.

Clustering random sampling technique was applied to choose the subject of the research. The lottery technique was applied to the five parallel classe. The subject of this research was the XI IPA 1 students of 2013/ 2014 of SMA Dharma Loka. This class consisted of 20 students: 11 males and 9 females. Three other classes namely XI IPA 2, XI IPS 1, XI IPS 2 were also chosen to try out to ensure the validity and reliability of the test.

There were two instruments used in this research, namely quantitative and qualitative instrument. The quantitative instrument in the form of test and the qualitative instrument in the form of interview.

In collecting the data, the tests were administered for three times with different questions. After the students' answer were scored, interview was conducted to them who got low score in interpreting each type of deixis.

The quantitative data were analyzed by scoring the test, determining the standard of competence based on their minimum achievement criteria that was 80, counting the mean score, then compared with the standard of level competence in order to determine the level of students' competence in interpreting deixis in narrative text. The qualitative data were analyzed by reducing the data, displaying the table, and drawing a conclusion.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, discussion was presented to answer

five research questions. All of those points were presented and discussed in the following descriptions.

1. The Students' Competence in Interpreting Person Deixis

The students' competence in interpreting deixis that students' had been fulfilled the minimum achievement criterion. Their average score was 83.13. The level of students' competence in interpreting person deixis can be seen in the following table.

Score	Number of Students	Percentage	Category
80 - 100	13	65 %	Excellent
60 - 79	6	30 %	Good
50- 59	1	5 %	Fair
0 - 49	-	-	Poor

However, some students still made mistakes in interpreting person deixis in narrative texts.

Some students got problem in interpreting person deixis which its interpretation refers forward in the text. They tend to do the mistake because they seldom find this kind of question before. In other words, students lack of practice such question. In this case, the teacher should provide more various question to their student. In teaching and learning reading. For example:

(1) Text : "He had not expected to meet the lady of his dreams, but there she was strolling along in the moonlight. Carlos quickened his pace until he was level with her, hoping for a glimpse of her face under the veil. Carlos was absolutely useless at work and to his boss. After work, he rushed home and

found a letter in his mailbox. Then he ran next door to show it to Diego, his closest cousin”

Question: The word he in the first sentence refers to.....

- a. Diego b. The boss
- b. Carlos d. the ghost

Lack of practice also made some students incorrect to interpret person deixis which its interpretation stated implicitly in the text. They could not find the character and then they tend to interpret it lexically. This condition affected students’ ability to recognize the shifting of person deixis within the story. Meanwhile, person deixis in narrative text were created shifted and moved from participants to participants from the beginning up to the end of the story (Levinson, 1983:68)

For example:

- (2) Text: “The question is: should we tell aunty Gwen about Mum? Gwen remembers how it was after Dad died. Mum sitting with her knees splayed apart on the sofa. 'Good God, Marge,' she said, pulling Mum's skirt down. She won't know her with the nurses making such a fuss of her. 'Your mother's dropped her bundle”

Question : The word *we* in the first sentence refers to.....

- a. Gwen and Marge
- b. Nurses
- c. Marge’s children
- d. Marge and Nurses

2. The Students’ Competence in Interpreting Place Deixis

The students’ competence in interpreting place deixis was still low. Their average score was 66.67 or insufficient with the minimum achievement criteria 80. The following table showed the level of the students’ competence in interpreting place deixis.

Score	Number of Students	Percentage	Category
80 - 100	5	25 %	Excellent
60 – 79	11	55 %	Good
40 - 59	1	5 %	Fair
0 - 39	3	15%	Poor

Some students were not competent to identify the exact location of the participants in the speech event. They had limited vocabulary which made them could not recognize the locative expression. This condition made them were not able fully understand the story, moreover place deixis should be interpreted relatively to other objects, locations, or the position of participants in the speech event (Levinson, 1983:79). For example:

- (3) Text : “In the country of Japan there lived two frogs, one of whom made his home in a ditch near the town of Osaka, on the sea coast, while the other dwelt in a clear little stream which ran through the city of Kyoto. They had never even heard of each other; but, funnily enough, the frog who lived at Kyoto wanted to visit Osaka,

and the frog who lived at Osaka wished to go to Kyoto, where the great Mikado had his palace. "Dear me!" cried the Osaka frog, "Kyoto is exactly like Osaka. It is certainly not worth such a long journey. I shall go home!"

Question: The phrase "go home" refers to.....

- a. Clear little stream b. Osaka
- c. Mikado Palace d. Sea coast

Limited vocabulary also made some students were confuse to interpret place deixis which its' interpretation should be related to the previous information to get the clue. Without sufficient lexical knowledge or vocabulary, the readers show inability to use linguistics cues in the large context in order to draw meaning and to recognize lexical relationship and meaning relationship between sentences (Alderson, 2000:56) where as in fiction narrative, the use of deictic expressions does not rely on the addressee's awareness of the speaker's position and perspective, but rather provides clues for the construction of a subjective position within an imagined situational context in reference to which the deictic expressions used in the text make sense (Semino, 2001). For example:

3. The Students' Competence in Interpreting Time Deixis

The students' competence in interpreting time deixis in narrative text was low. Their average score was 65, and it was still below the

minimum achievement criteria. The level of the students' competence in interpreting time deixis can be seen in the following table.

Score	Number of students	Percentage	Category
80 - 100	6	30 %	Excellent
60 - 79	6	30 %	Good
40 - 59	6	30 %	Fair
0 - 39	2	10 %	Poor

They had several problems in interpreting time deixis.

They were incorrect to identify the specific time of utterance or speech event made by a character. This was caused by their understanding of grammar is low, especially about the tenses used. They were confused to identify the change form of verb in every tenses, such as "catch – caught –caught" and other irregular verb. Furthermore, they not only failed to recognize the change of irregular verb, but also the adverb of time which indicating specific tense, for example yesterday, last year, next, etc Actually, their understanding of tenses is crucial because most of narrative were written in past form (Choo, Ling, and Smith, 2003:32) They tend to make wrong answer when they have to predict the time of an event if another event was held at specific moment. Event by event were arranged in such a way chronologically which extended into a plot.. Time deixis is important to understand the plot of the narrative (Rapaport, 1994:3)

For example:

(5) Text : ” then one terrible Friday morning, the third tree was startled as its beams were yanked from the old lumberyard. But at dawn the next two mornings, the earth trembled with joy beneath the third tree, and it knew that God’s love had changed everything”

Question: What day is indicated by the phrase “*next two mornings*”?

- a. Saturday c. Sunday
- b. Monday d. Tuesday

4. The Students’ Competence in Interpreting Discourse Deixis

The students’ competence in interpreting discourse deixis in narrative text was also low. Their average score was 69.38. Thus, it was still insufficient with the minimum achievement criteria. The students’ competence in interpreting discourse deixis can be seen in the following table

Score	Number of students	Percentage	Category
80 - 100	4	20 %	Excellent
60 - 79	13	65 %	Good
40 - 59	2	10 %	Fair
0 – 39	1	5 %	Poor

They faced some problems in interpreting discourse deixis.

Some students were unable to see the context to understand the story. Again, their limited vocabulary did not support their comprehension to sense the tone of the story which creates the

atmosphere of the story. They were not able to make connection between the sad characters into what would happen in that situation. In other words, they did not comprehend the situational information which flow within the story. Actually, if they were able to see the situational information, they had been able to predict what the characters would do in the story (Fromkin, Rodman, and Hymes, 2011:211). The similar conclusion is also in line with Elliston (2008) who investigated that deixis generates atmosphere of the story by sensing the event. For example:

(7) Text : “While she was waiting for him as usual, some people living in the town came to her with his possessions. Immediately, she went to the place where his possessions were found even though she could not walk well. However, when she got there, she could not find his body, only a strange flower. She realized that he lost Soo-il. Afterall, she never ate or drunk and never talked to anybody. She only thought about Soo-il, who could never return to her

Question: How do you interpret the phrase *after all*?

- a. After Soon-ae found Soo-il possession
- b. After Soon-ae realized that she had lost Soo-il
- c. After Soon-ae saw the strange flower
- d. After Soon-ae could walk even not well

Limited vocabulary also made them not competent to link the discourse deixis with the previous information to interpret the meaning. They tried to comprehend the text through each word translation without considering the context found within the text. In fact, deixis interpretations depend greatly to the contextual information and it is hard to be understood without it (Fromkin, Rodman, and Hymes, 2011: 211) For example:

(7) Text : “It had made the first little tree a beautiful treasure chest. It had made the second little tree a strong sailing ship. And every time people looked upon the third little tree, they would think of God. That was even better than being the tallest tree in the world”.

Question : What does the word *that* in the last line refers to?

- a. It had made the first little tree a beautiful treasure chest.
- b. It had made the second little tree a strong sailing ship.
- c. It had made the third little tree the tallest tree in the world
- d. Every time people looked upon the third little tree, they would think of God.

5. The Students’ Competence in Interpreting Social Deixis

The students’ competence in interpreting social deixis in narrative text was good. Their average score was 76.94. In other words, it had not been fulfilled the minimum achievement criteria. The level of the students’ competence in

interpreting social deixis can be seen in the following table.

Score	Number of students	Percentage	Category
80 - 100	11	55 %	Excellent
60 - 79	7	35 %	Good
40 - 59	2	10 %	Fair
0 - 39	-	-	Poor

Some students were still face the problem in interpreting it.

First, they lack of vocabulary and background knowledge to interpret the meaning of words. In narrative, the diction or word choices were adapted with the local culture where the story happened. All the narrative used in the tests were taken from other countries. Students tended to interpret social deixis lexically. Students who made mistake were lack of background knowledge, especially about social status, custom, and habit of people in a specific country which was different with Indonesian culture. For example:

(13) Text : “One day, the king asked his ministers "I hear every state in the north is afraid of our minister Zhao Xixu, is that so?" At the question, almost all the ministers kept silent except one called Jiangyi, who liked to curry the king's favor very much. He lost no time to seize the opportunity and said, "Your Majesty, you know, it's you who people awe and respect, not him! Have you ever heard the story The Fox Borrows the Tiger's Terror?"

Question : What does the phrase *your majesty* refers to?

- a. The King
- b. The Minister Jiangyi
- c. The minister Zhao Xixu
- d. The Tiger

Second, they tend to interpret the same word or terms (such as *lady*) which appeared more than once in the story with the same meaning. As a matter of fact, in deixis the same words or pronoun which appeared for several times in a text, the meaning could be different depending to linguistics expression (Levinson, 1983:86) For example:

(11) Text : "He prayed all day long and refused to do any work. Visu's wife got extremely angry. Visu ran to the jungle and chased a fox. He saw two ladies sitting down by a brook playing go. After three hundreds year, they made wrong move "Wrong, most lovely lady!". In a moment these women turned into foxes and ran away. He decided to home. When he reached the spot he was surprised to see no hut, and, perceiving a very old woman, he said: "Good lady, I am amazed to find that my little home has disappeared. I went away this afternoon, and now in the evening it has vanished!"

Question : Who did the words good lady he refers to?

- a. his wife c. Fox's woman
- b. old woman d. the priest

To solve these problems, a teacher is intended to develop study of deixis in narrative texts, especially about the types and how important background knowledge, context, and situation in interpreting deixis. Besides that, students also need to reinforce students' competence by giving more practice and various question as well as vocabulary in teaching and learning process in order to be aware of the potential errors in interpreting deixis in narrative text.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding and data analysis, it can be concluded:

1. The students' competence in interpreting person deixis in narrative text was good. Most of them achieved the minimum achievement criteria which had been determined 80. They had problems in interpreting person deixis which refers forward and state implicitly in the text because they lack of practice..
2. The students' competence in interpreting place deixis in narrative text still needed to be improved. Even, their level of competence was in good category but they did not achieve the minimum criteria. They had problems in identifying the exact location of the participants or locative expressions and find the clue from the text.
3. The students' competence in interpreting time deixis in narrative text was good. Thus, it was not sufficient with the minimum achievement criteria as required by the school that was

80. They had problems in finding the exact time of the utterance because of their lack understanding of tense
4. The students' competence in interpreting discourse deixis in narrative text also needed to be improved. Even though, their competence was in good category but they did not achieve the minimum score achievement. They had problems with the context, situational information due to limited vocabulary.
 5. The students' competence in interpreting social deixis in narrative text was good. They got problem with limited vocabulary and background knowledge.

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