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Vocabulary Ability of University Students in Identify Nouns in Descriptive Texts from The Jakarta Post: An Analysis

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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini membahas kemampuan mahasiswa Institut Prima Bangsa dalam mengenali noun pada teks deskriptif yang diambil dari *The Jakarta Post edisi 1 November 2025*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tingkat penguasaan mahasiswa dalam mengidentifikasi jenis noun serta mengungkap kesulitan yang mereka hadapi. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan instrumen tes pilihan ganda dan wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata mahasiswa adalah 56 yang termasuk kategori cukup bagus, dengan common noun sebagai jenis noun yang paling mudah dikenali, sementara abstract noun, proper noun, dan collective noun masih relatif sulit. Kesulitan tersebut terutama disebabkan oleh keterbatasan penguasaan kosakata bahasa Inggris serta kurangnya pemahaman makna kata dalam konteks, khususnya ketika mahasiswa berhadapan dengan teks autentik. Implikasinya, pembelajaran kosakata berbasis konteks perlu diperkuat untuk meningkatkan pemahaman mahasiswa terhadap teks deskriptif berbahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan Kosakata, Identifikasi Kata Benda, Teks Deskriptif

ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on the capabilities of students from the Prima Bangsa Institute to identify nouns from descriptive texts sourced from *The Jakarta Post edition published on November 1, 2025*. This research strives to examine students' mastery in pointing out types of nouns and determine problems that might be experienced by students. A descriptive qualitative research was conducted using multiple choice tests and interviews. Findings revealed that the mean score obtained by students was 56, which was actually quite a good performance. Finding common nouns was easiest than any other noun. Meanwhile, abstract nouns, proper nouns, and collective nouns were not yet quite easy.The problems were dominated by less mastery of students on English vocabulary and less mastery of understanding meanings of words based on context, especially when students encounter real texts for the first time. This therefore, implies that the students' vocabularies should be strengthened through context learning for an improvement in their understanding of English descriptive texts.

Keywords: Vocabulary Ability, Noun Identification, Descriptive Text

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INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary range and diversity help students grasp the meaning of the text, use the language appropriately, and communicate their thoughts better. Vocabulary is considered one of the most essential factors in achieving language proficiency, as it provides a foundation for the effective development of language skills. (Rosyada-AS & Apoko, 2023). This statement suggests that vocabulary constitutes a crucial element in achieving accurate and effective linguistic proficiency. Moreover, vocabulary is also recognized as an important element in second language learning (Agustinasari et al., 2022). Vocabulary mastery improves four primary aspects of communicative ability: reading, speaking, listening and writing. Having sufficient vocabulary knowledge, learners are able to read descriptive texts and understand their content. However, vocabulary mastery contributes only 0,4% to student ability to write descriptive texts, indicating that understand context and language structure also play a significant role (Lisa et al., 2023).

For students, vocabulary mastery on only helps in everday communication but also in understanding the literary works and academic texts they study. One important element of vocabulary is nouns, because these words function as labels for people, places, and objects, or opinions that form the basis of sentences construction. Understanding nouns helps students write clearer sentences, describe objects accurately, and

compose texts that are easy for readers to understand. In learning English as a foreign language, the dominant vocabulary mastery consists of nouns, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, and adjectives (Harahap et al., 2025).

According to (Sinaga et al., 2025), nouns can be categorized into four major classifications: proper nouns, abstract nouns, common nouns, and collective nouns. Whereas proper names refer to particular entities (e.g., Jakarta, Ahmad), People, places, or things are expressed in general terms through the use of common nouns (e.g., book, teacher,). Collective nouns depict groups as a single entity (e.g., team, family), while abstract nouns refer to ideas or concepts that are intangible (e.g., happiness, freedom). This categorization offers a theoretical framework for evaluating pupils proficiency in correctly identifying and using nouns in descriptive texts.

One effective way to learn about nouns is to pick up and listen for descriptive texts that describe different objects. Through this study, the students will better appreciate the appropriate use and application of nouns in context. Descriptive document themselves seek to give a proper understanding so that readers are able to envision the object. This research is expected to see the capability of students at Institut Prima Bangsa to recognize a noun through a paraphrased text of *The Jakarta Post on November 1st, 2025* This medium was chosen to assess students' ability to comprehend noun usage within real-world texts.

In addition to vocabulary mastery, evaluation and assessment play an important role in measuring students vocabulary knowledge, including their ability to identify nouns accurately. Vocabulary assessment is a systematic process used to evaluate learners understanding, recognition, and use of vocabulary items in specific contexts (Rinaldi & Prastikawati, 2022). Along with the development of digital technology, vocabulary assessment can be conducted through online platforms such as Google Forms. Online assessment allows students to complete tests flexibly and efficiently while enabling researchers to collect responses and analyze results accurately. Previous studies indicate that online vocabulary assessment provide valuable insights into students learning experiences and responses toward the assessment process

Mastery of vocabulary is a key factor in enabling students to comprehend and produce English texts, particularly descriptive texts that demand accuracy in word choice. Nouns, as one of the most prominent grammatical categories, play a fundamental role in sentence formation and the expression of meaning. Although numerous studies have addressed vocabulary mastery and the classification of nouns, there is still a lack of research that specifically investigates university students' ability to recognize various types of nouns in authentic descriptive texts derived from newspapers such as The Jakarta Post. This research gap indicates the necessity for a more focused examination of students' noun identification skills using real-world textual sources, which serves as the foundation of the present study.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach supported by multiple-choice tests and semi-structured interviews. Multiple-choice tests were chosen due to their objectivity and reliability in assessing students' responses (Hari Sugiharto Setyaedhi & Rusijono, 2025). The test instrument was constructed using a Single Answer Question (SAQ) format, which is effective in measuring structured knowledge by limiting respondents to one correct answer (Oc & Hassen, 2025). The descriptive qualitative approach was selected to describe students' vocabulary skills systematically based on test results. Authentic descriptive texts from The Jakarta Post were used to examine students' ability to identify nouns in real-world contexts. Data were analyzed descriptively to present students' performance and difficulties in noun identification (Suherlan et al., 2022).

Research Participant

Students from the Prima Bangsa Institute in Cirebon participated in this study as respondents. These pupils were chosen because they were willing and able to participate. The study aims to get a clear picture of their vocabulary skills through their participation.

Research Location

The Prima Bangsa Institute in Cirebon is where this study was carried out. The Prima Bangsa Institute is one of the universities with an English-based study program and actively develops students language skills, especially in vocabulary, which is why this location was selected. Additionally, beginning students are thought to demonstrate fundamental vocabulary abilities in comprehending and evaluating nouns in English descriptive texts.

Statistical Analysis

The analysis of data in the study used simple descriptive statistics to explain the vocabulary skills of students based on multiple-choice test results. Qualitative data were also analyzed in this study, which were gathered through semi-structured interviews. Since the interviews have yielded narrative data, the analysis has been performed using a descriptive qualitative analysis method. Semi-structured interviews result in deep and narrative data; to extract meaning from participants responses, qualitative analysis processes such as coding, categorization, and theme extraction are necessary (Olenik, 2021). Although the method adoted here is descriptive qualitative, using descriptive statistics remains acceptable because it is a mere tool for representing data and not for exploring nor hypothesis-testing. The role of descriptive statistics here is the organize and interpret data with the intention of presenting it as an easy-to-understand piece of information (Hasimi, 2020). Researchers can provide a thorough and detailed description of social realities using descriptive qualitative methods. This method enables researchers to fully comprehend the traits and nature of the research object, enabling the findings to offer a more profound comprehension of the context being studied (Furidha, 2024).

Since the test was conducted using google Forms, every students answer wass processesd by the system. Google Form is a kind of application which makes creasting forms for any survey, quizzes , or data collection practical and efficient ways (Lina, 2021). As inte explaination above, this automated feature makes the process of collecting data go faster and becomes more accurate, at the same time helps the simplicity of finding the mean scores, highest scores, lowest scores, and grouping student ability categories. This will be seen as a more organized and systematic presentation of data, as required by descriptive needs.

The method for data analysis aimed at learning outcomes and wass done using descriptive analysis, which took the form of a table with information on maximum, minimum, and average marks (Fitra Prisuna, 2021). Moreover, there was a distribution of questions meant to offer a comprehensive outlook on student vocabulary abilities depending on marks within certain ranges.

Tabel 1. Score Criteria (Irawan et al., 2024)

No	Item	Criteria
1.	80 – 100	Excellent
2.	60 – 79	Satisfactory
3.	40 – 59	Moderate
4.	20 – 39	Low
5.	0 – 19	Very Low

RESULTS

The research findings from two instruments are presented in this section: a multiple-choice interview test. Students' capacity to obtain detailed information about their challenges and comprehension of noun usage was assessed using the multiple-choice exam. Overall, the findings reveal that students achieved the strongest performance in identifying common nouns (76.7%), followed by proper nouns (60%), abstract nouns (54.2%), and collective nouns (50%). This pattern indicates a gradual decline in students' comprehension as noun categories require higher levels of abstraction and contextual interpretation.

1. Multiple Choice Test Results

a) *Common Noun*

Tabel 2. Common Nouns Question (Musyafii & Sari, 2024)

No	Question	Correct Answer	Wrong Answer
1.	The forum takes the theme of "Next Gen Leadership: Winning the Gen Z Workforce", serving as a cross-generational leadership accelerator where leaders, thinkers and innovators come together to share insights and build bridges across generations. What are the noun in the first line?	11	4
2.	All of the following are nouns, except?	12	3
	Total	23	7

According to the results of the common noun identification test, out of 30 responses, 23 were right and 7 were wrong, yielding an accuracy percentage of 76.7%. This result shows that the majority of respondents had good recognition skills for common nouns. Because they are frequently used in daily life and refer to general objects or concepts like forums, themes, and leaders, common nouns are comparatively simpler to understand. The ability of respondents to recognize common nouns can be considered successful if the percentage of correct answers is greater than 70%.

b) Proper Noun

Tabel 3. Proper Noun Question

No	Question	Correct Answer	Wrong Answer
1.	The Jakarta Post collaborated with Astra and Deloitte to host the Leadership Insight Forum at JP Live! Space on Oct. 28. What are the noun in the first line?	9	6
2.	Which of the following is a proper noun?	9	6
	Total	18	12

According to the test results for the proper noun section, out of 30 responses, participants gave 18 right answers and 12 wrong ones. The participants' ability to recognize particular nouns was within the acceptable range, as evidenced by the accuracy rate of 60%. The mistakes were usually caused by a failure to differentiate certain names, like The Jakarta Post, Astra, and Deloitte, from common nouns. As a result, even though some participants had grasped the idea of proper nouns, more education was still required.

c) Abstract Noun

Tabel 4. Abstract Noun Question

No	Question	Correct Answer	Wrong Answer
1.	The discussions started with a fireside chat session titled "Leading with Purpose—How We Nurture Future Leaders", featuring Astra's chief of corporate human capital development Aloysius Budi Santoso and the Post's president and chief revenue officer Maggie Tiojakin. Which words in the text are abstract nouns?	12	3
2.	All of the following are abstract nouns, except?	7	8
3.	The Jakarta Post collaborated with Astra and Deloitte to host the Leadership Insight Forum at JP Live! Space on Oct. 28. What is the closest meaning of the word "insight" in the text?	4	11
4.	The Nusantara Capital City Authority has reported that illegal farming and mining have damaged over 13,000 hectares of forest area in Nusantara, East Kalimantan. At least 4,236 hectares have been turned into illegal coal mines,	9	6

No	Question	Correct Answer	Wrong Answer
	while 8,338 hectares have been damaged by unauthorized plantations. What is the closest meaning of the word "Authority" in the text?		
	Total	32	27

Out of 59 responses, participants received 32 correct answers and 27 incorrect ones in the abstract noun recognition test, yielding a correctness rate of 54.2%. According to this data, participants' understanding of amorphous nouns remains in the unsatisfactory range. Because they are immaterial and associated with ideas, feelings, or concepts like authority, insight, and purpose, abstract nouns are typically challenging to comprehend. It can be inferred that participants' ability to locate abstract nouns has not attained a successful level when the correctness rate is less than 60%.

d) Collective Mean

Tabel 5. Collective Mean Question

No	Question	Correct Answer	Wrong Answer
1.	The Nusantara Capital City Authority has reported that illegal farming and mining have damaged over 13,000 hectares of forest area in Nusantara, East Kalimantan. At least 4,236 hectares have been turned into illegal coal mines, while 8,338 hectares have been damaged by unauthorized plantations. What are the noun in the first line?	8	7
2.	What is the noun in the second line?	7	8
	Total	15	15

There were 15 right and 15 wrong answers out of a total of 30 in the test results for the collective noun category. The 50% accuracy rate shows that respondents were still having trouble identifying collective nouns. Respondents made this mistake because they did not fully comprehend that collective nouns refer to groups that are thought of as a single entity. As a result, it is possible to classify respondents' ability to recognize collective nouns as unsuccessful.

Tabel 6. Noun Identification Multiple Choice Test Results

Respondent	Score	Category
R1	13	Very Low
R2	90	Excellent
R3	33	Low
R4	32	Low
R5	48	Moderate
R6	27	Low
R7	33	Low
R8	88	Excellent
R9	100	Excellent
R10	0	Very Low
R11	100	Excellent
R12	70	Satisfactory
R13	58	Moderate
R14	95	Excellent
R15	48	Moderate
Total	835	
Average	56	Moderate

The results of the multiple-choice noun recognition test carried out among the participants are indicated in Table 6, which clearly states that the participants' skill level varied widely. The participants' scores varied between 0-100, with a total score of 835, while the mean score is 56, which comes under the satisfactory category.

Data from categorizing the results showed that five participants fell into the fairly satisfactory group, one participant was categorized as good, while three other participants also fell into the fairly satisfactory category. On the contrary, four participants fell into the unsatisfactory group, while two participants got a very low predicate, explaining that some participants still face obstacles in recognizing nouns in descriptive texts.

Thus, the overall result of this test concludes that the skill level that the students possess for the recognition of the noun is still at the level of the intermediate category, although with great gaps between the abilities of the participants. Therefore, this result concludes that the students have not fully grasped the knowledge about the different types of nouns that are used in the descriptive paragraph.

To ensure that the results obtained from the multiple choice test are reliable, this study will also incorporate the results of the interviews held with some of the participants. The main reason why the interviews will be undertaken is to enhance understanding of the difficulties exhibited by students in identifying nouns in descriptive texts.

2. Interview Results

The interview results with student participants revealed that the skill of the participants in identifying nouns in descriptive texts was still categorized as moderate to low. However, the participants noted that identifying nouns would not be difficult if it was an frequently encountered word, but where the word was new, the task would be difficult, as shown in the statement by one of the participants who said, “Recognizing nouns feels quite easy if the word is frequently encountered, but if the word is new, I find it a bit difficult” (R6). Also, lack of English proficiency was another challenging factor that impeded the skill, as shown in the statement by another participant that “it’s still lacking, because I’m not very good at English and my vocabulary for nouns is still lacking” (R1). In the task of identifying nouns, more importantly, participants tended to make use of the meaning of the word in English more than others, but with the use of the placement of that particular word in the sentence by others.

The prime theme identified in the findings from the interviews was the lack of vocabulary in English, especially in abstract nouns and proper nouns. Many subjects argued that the abstract nouns are difficult to comprehend because their meanings are not visible. This was evident from the statement of a respondent who said that "abstract nouns are difficult because their meanings are not immediately visible, so you have to think about the meaning first" (R7). Additionally, proper nouns proved to be a challenge since the subjects had to understand special names. This problem was even more intensified when subjects were asked to identify descriptive texts from authentic media. Here, almost all sections of the text proved to be difficult for students as they lacked vocabulary. A respondent mentioned that "it was quite difficult, maybe because I don't speak English very well and only know a few words" (R4). This proved to be a problem for students because they found themselves confused when taking the test for the identification of nouns, although they found Google Forms quite practical and fun.

DISCUSSION

Students' multiple-choice test scores, which averaged 56 and put them in the moderately adequate category, clearly demonstrate their ability to recognize nouns. These findings imply that students already have a rudimentary understanding of nouns, though participant proficiency varies. The wide range of students' vocabulary skills is demonstrated by the notable variation in scores. The development of vocabulary is an essential prerequisite for language competency. This result is consistent with (Rosyada-AS & Apoko, 2023). However, these findings also bolster the claim (Lisa et al., 2023) that comprehensive reading comprehension requires contextual and grammatical knowledge in addition to vocabulary mastery.

The reason why common nouns can easily be recognized is due to their tangible and common use. This finding also supports the statement of (Harahap et al., 2025) that the dominant and relatively easy vocabulary type to learn in learning English as a foreign language is common nouns.

Secondly, the struggle exhibited by the students in identifying nouns can be seen in the use of abstract nouns and proper nouns. This is because pointing out nouns in questions that display word meaning in relation to insight and authority can be a challenge. According to (Sinaga et al., 2025), abstract nouns are intangible; therefore, abstract thinking ability is required. Moreover, students' lack of prior knowledge has a role in their understanding of proper nouns.

Mastering collective nouns is also a learning obstacle for some students. Students normally experience difficulties

in grasping that collective nouns mean a group of objects as one unit. This implies that improving students' conceptual noun learning is still required.

The information gathered through interviews supports the result from written test findings concerning differences in students' capabilities to identify nouns in descriptive texts. Students agreed that identification of nouns can be made easy when they are familiar with vocabulary, but having restricted English vocabulary is one of the greatest drawbacks to grasp authentic texts from The Jakarta Post, since there are many new words and intricate sentence structures. While learning noun vocabulary, learners should pay more attention to meaning understanding, especially in the case of abstract, proper, and collective nouns.

CONCLUSION

From the result above and the analysis done in the study, the findings indicate participant capability in pointing out the nouns in the authentic descriptive texts, such as the article in The Jakarta Post on November 1, 2025, can be seen as good because their total score has reached 56 on the scale. This indicates that students understand the concept of a noun in a way that is still incomplete.

As far as noun categories are concerned, common nouns are the simplest to distinguish, being more tangible and very often encountered in everyday contexts. Proper nouns, abstract nouns, and collective nouns, conversely are those that remain difficult to grasp for students. The reason behind this is the vocabulary being restricted and an increased demand on understanding meaning in context, particularly in authentic reading.

The findings from the interviews are in line with the test results, wherein students mentioned a lack of English vocabulary and the fact that authentic texts are complex as biggest factors against recognizing nouns. Hence, there is a big emphasis on appreciating the usage of nouns in a particular context.

Thus, the outcomes of the study are anticipated to contribute to the lecturers' judgments about devising better strategies for learning vocabulary, which will enhance the ability to point out the nouns in descriptive texts effectively.

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