# The Effectiveness of Text-Based Strategy to Teach Adjectives and Adverbs: An Experimental Study on the Second Semester Students of the English Department at the Faculty of Language and Culture UNTAG Semarang

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## Abstract

A foundational part of what the writer does as a teacher of English as a foreign language involves grammar. When the writer examines students' ability of grammar, the writer certainly expects that they are able to apply grammar correctly in sentences as well as in texts. Unfortunately, this does not always happen. Hence, in this research the writer will discuss one of the teaching strategies to teach grammar (especially adjectives and adverbs), that is text-based teaching strategy. The purpose of this research is to measure the ability of the second semester students in the use of adjectives and adverbs as a basis of legitimate fact for the need of a new teaching strategy, and how effective is the text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs to the second semester students of the English Department at the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang. The research design is a quasi-experimental study. The data of how high is the ability of the students in using adjectives and adverbs is taken by using pre-test and post-test. Meanwhile, the data of how effective is the text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs to the students is tested by using the average difference of the post-test of the experimental and the control group. The result of how high the ability of students in using adjectives and adverbs in sentences and texts was from the pre-test result and from the post-test result and it can be seen that the post-test result is better than the pre-test result and it means that $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ is accepted. Based on the testing of the average difference (using t-test), it was found that $t_{obtained} > t_{table}$. Hence, $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ is accepted. This means that teaching adjectives and adverbs using text-based strategy is effective in this institution.

**Key words:** effectiveness, teaching, text, text-based, strategy, adjectives,  adverbs

## INTRODUCTION

A foundational part of what the writer does as a teacher of English as a foreign language involves grammar. When the writer examines students' ability of grammar, the writer certainly expects that they are able to apply grammar correctly in sentences as well as in texts. Unfortunately, this does not always happen. One of the possible reasons is that they still have lack of the grammatical knowledge of English.

Up to present, the teaching grammar strategy which the writer uses for the second semester students of the English Department at the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang is by explaining the forms, rules and then drilling students on them (the writer called it as a traditional strategy) and the students

look bored and moreover, they cannot produce correct forms on exercises and texts and they consistently make errors when they try to use the language in context. Based on the fact the writer will apply another strategy called text-based to teach grammar (especially in adjectives and adverbs) in which it is expected that this strategy will improve the students' ability in using adjectives and adverbs in sentences as well as in texts. Furthermore to know whether this strategy will give improvement or not to the students, it will be compared with the traditional one used for the time being in the grammar class.

Based on the background of the study above, the writer intended to conduct further research to answer the following problems:

(1) How high is the ability of the second semester students of the English Department at the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang in using adjectives and adverbs in sentences and texts?

(2) How does the lecturer apply text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs to the second semester students of the English Department at the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang?

(3) How effective is the text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs to the second semester students of the English Department at the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang?

Basically, there are three kinds of research significance: the theoretical significance, the practical and pedagogical significance.

Theoretical Significance

a. using a text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs to the second semester students of the English Department at the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang.
b. becoming a foundation for further research.

Practical and Pedagogical Significance

a. To the students
   The students will have an alternative way to master the use of adjectives and adverbs in sentences and texts correctly and effectively.
b. To the english teachers
   Teachers have a good strategy to increase the grammar (especially adjective and adverb) teaching and learning quality.
c. To the other researchers
   Researchers from other institutions may also conduct similar studies in their own universities preferably with greater number of students involved. The results may also serve as useful input for educational institution pertaining to curriculum design for language education.

After stating the statements of the problem and the objectives of the study, the writer can draw the following hypotheses:

$H_0$: The students **cannot** improve the adjective and adverb achievements or it means that the use of text-

based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs **is not** effective.

H₁: The students **can** improve the adjective and adverb achievements or it means that the use of text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs **is** effective.

## DISCUSSIONS

### *1. Previous Studies*

Related to the use of texts for teaching, the writer reads a research done by Nunan (1998) entitled "Teaching Grammar in Context", whose implications of teaching grammar in context are:

(a) teaching language as a set of choices

(b) providing opportunities for learners to explore grammatically and discoursal relationships in authentic data.

(c) teaching language in ways that make form/function relationships transparent.

(d) encouraging learners to become active explorers of language.

(e) encouraging learners to explore relationships between grammar and discourse.

Nunan also suggested that grammar instruction will be more effective in classrooms where:

- learners are exposed to authentic samples of language so that the grammatical features being taught are encountered in arrange of different linguistic and experiential contexts

- there are opportunities to recycling of

language forms and learners are engaged in tasks designed to make transparent the links between form, meaning and use.

- learners are given opportunities to develop their own understandings of the grammatical principles of English by progressively structuring and restructuring the language through inductive learning experiences which encourage them to explore the functioning of grammar in context.

Thornbury, 2003, in Asian EFL Journal articles, entitles "Teaching Vocabulary Using Short Texts" stated that short texts are ideal for classroom use, since they can be subjected to intensive grammatical and lexical study, without overtaxing learners' attention or memory, as may be the case with longer texts. Learning to cope with short texts is also good preparation for independent reading and listening, including dealing with longer texts. Moreover, short texts provide useful models for student production, in the form of speaking and writing.

Another study is from Marija and Marmienė (2006). In her article, entitles "Text-Based Language Teaching and the Analysis of Tasks Presented in English Course Books for Students of Information Technology and Computing", she concluded, as follows:

(1) The essential features of a connected text helping students to raise their awareness of its structure and organization and to develop reading comprehension skills are defined.

(2) Various approaches to handling texts in the classroom are described and

the role of text-based activities is determined.

(3) The analysis of text-based assignments found in the course books of English for students of computing and information technology is made and the types of activities are determined.

(4) It is concluded that the effectiveness of text-based activities depends on the level of students' knowledge of English, their awareness of text structure and organization, linguistic guess and quality of the tasks.

(5) In general, text-based activities are creative and thought-provoking, thereby raising the interest of students in language learning.

Allen (2005) in his article on the Indonesian Journal for English Language Teaching entitles, "Some Ideas for Teaching Grammar More Effectively in an EFL Context" stated that the approach used by most teachers and course books needs to be questioned. Students do not pick up grammar in a linear, highly predictable, sequential manner.

From the previous studies mentioned above, it can be concluded that texts can help lecturers and students in teaching and learning English. It is also necessary to find out how effective it is to use texts to increase the students' grammar (especially adjectives and adverbs) achievement, the opportunities for students to explore grammatically and discoursal relationships in authentic data, how students are encouraged to become active explorers of language and to explore relationships between grammar and discourse, that text-based activities are creative and thought-provoking, thereby raising the interest of students in language learning.

This research will try to find out the ability of the students in the use of adjectives and adverbs in sentences and texts, how the lecturer applies text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs, and how effective is the text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Teaching English as a foreign language is not simple. It is necessary for teachers to find out some effective and efficient ways in teaching the foreign language. From time to time the definition of teaching has developed, so that there has not been a single definition of teaching which covers all sides. However there are numerous definitions or terms that have been generated from the way people actually teach.

The word teaching strategies derives from the words teaching means something that is taught and strategy means a carefully devised plan of action to achieve a goal, or the art of developing or carrying out such a plan. Hence, teaching strategy is a carefully devised plan used in teaching (here, language teaching) in order to achieve the mastery of language skills.
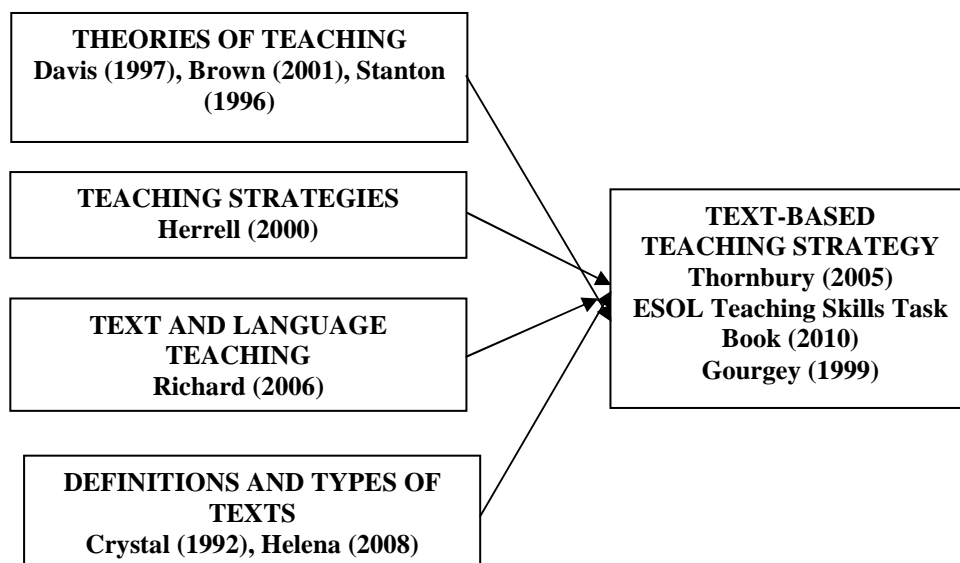
Teaching English as foreign language has changed its orientation for decades. Richards (2006: 6) classifies trends of language teaching into three phases. The first phase is called traditional approaches (up to the late 1960s). The second phase is commonly recognized as classic communicative language teaching (1970s-1990s). The last is current communicative language teaching (late 1990s to the present).

Text is a piece of naturally occuring spoken, written, or signed discourse identified for purpose of analysis. It is often a language unit with a definable communicative function, such as a conversation, a poster (Crystal, 1992). From the definitions above, it can be concluded that a text refers to related sentences which are not characterized by their size having definable communicative function that is to convey a complete message by a sender to a receiver. Furthermore, based on generic and language feature dominantly used, texts are divided into several types (Helena, 2008). They are: narrative, recount, descriptive, report, explanation, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, procedure, discussion, review, anecdote, spoof, news item. In this thesis the writer

chooses one of them, that is narrative text used to teach adjectives and adverbs.

Thornbury (2005: 7-14) claimed that language always happens as text and not as isolated words and sentences, therefore, teaching foreign languages should be based on handling texts, either written or oral.

Take into consideration of the thought above, in this research the writer proposes a teaching strategy using texts (narrative texts) to teach grammar (especially in adjectives and adverbs). According to the writer's opinion, by using this teaching strategy the students will understand the context of the target grammar as well as understanding the meaning.

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┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│   THEORIES OF TEACHING          │
│ Davis (1997), Brown (2001),     │
│      Stanton (1996)             │
└─────────────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────┐
│    TEACHING STRATEGIES          │        │      TEXT-BASED          │
│      Herrell (2000)             │ ─────▶ │  TEACHING STRATEGY       │
└─────────────────────────────────┘        │   Thornbury (2005)       │
                                           │ ESOL Teaching Skills     │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐        │    Task Book (2010)      │
│   TEXT AND LANGUAGE             │        │    Gourgey (1999)        │
│       TEACHING                  │        └──────────────────────────┘
│     Richard (2006)              │
└─────────────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ DEFINITIONS AND TYPES OF        │
│         TEXTS                   │
│ Crystal (1992), Helena (2008)   │
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## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of experimental research that the writer choose is semi experiment (quasi-experimental research design) with pre-test-post-test control group design, it means that there are two different types of

groups as the research subjects, experimental and control groups, and are assigned to do both pre-test and post-test (Azwar, 2005; Shuttleworth, 2008). In this experimental model, there are two groups that is equivalent (have same level). These

two groups consist of experimental group (treatment group) and control group (non treatment group), in the end of experiment the post test of both group is compared. Here is the diagram of this experimental model:
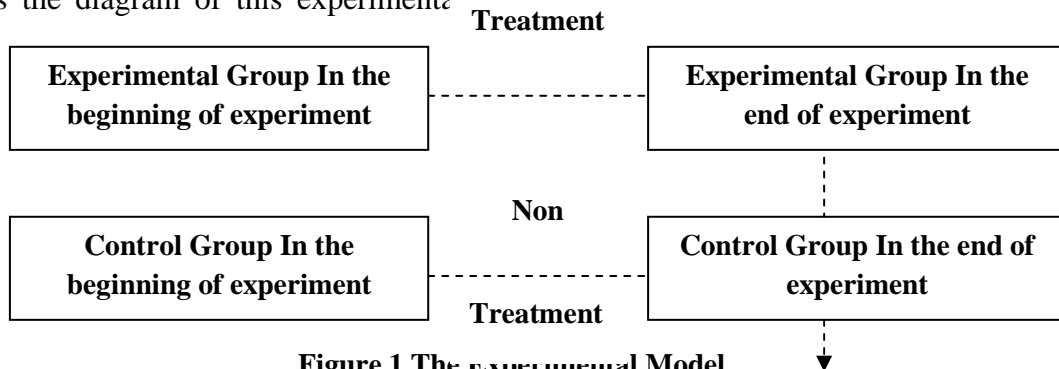
**Treatment**

| Experimental Group In the beginning of experiment | ------ | Experimental Group In the end of experiment |

**Non**

| Control Group In the beginning of experiment | ------ | Control Group In the end of experiment |

**Treatment**

**Figure 1 The Experimental Model**

**Same Condition**   **Different Process**   **Compared**

There are two kinds of data resources:

(1) The first data is the pre-test data. The pre-test data is the adjectives and adverbs test using paper-pencil test in a set of multiple choice test items in the experimental group before treatments with text-based and in the control group before traditional teaching of adjectives and adverbs.

(2) The post-test of the experimental group after three times treatments and the post-test of the control group are

Variables Of This Study is :

(1) The independent variable in this research is the use of text-based strategy to teach adjectives and adverbs for the second semester students of the English Department of the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang in the academic year of 2009/2010.

the second collecting data for both groups, paper-pencil test in a set of multiple choice test items is used.

The writer uses multiple choice tests for the method of collecting data of the students' adjectives and adverbs achievement. There are two kinds of tests, pre-test and post-test. The pre-test will be used to know the balance condition of both groups. The post-test will be analyzed to know the average difference between the experiment and the control group.

(2) The dependent variable is the ability of the second semester students of the English Department of the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang in the academic year of 2009/2010 in using adjectives and adverbs in sentences and texts.

## 4. The RESEARCH Findings

The research finding consists of the discussion of the data description, data interpretation

### Data Description

The data described in this chapter were the results of adjective and adverb mastery test of the experimental group and control group. The treatment was applied to the experimental group and no treatment was applied to the control group. Two kinds of tests were given to the two

groups, namely, the pre-test and post-test.

### The Pre-Test of the Control Group

In control group, it was found that the highest score was 92, and the lowest score was 70 and based on table distribution above, the mean score fell between the range of 76 – 85, in which Mean = 79.5. It means that the students' adjectives and adverbs mastery in pre-test in the control group is good.

### The Pre-test of the Experimental Group

From the data above, it was found that the pre-test scores of the experimental group showed the highest score 90 and the lowest score 70 and based on table distribution above, the mean score fell between the range of 76 – 85, in which Mean = 77.5. It means that the students' adjectives and adverbs mastery in pre-test in the experimental group is good.

### The Post-Test of the Control Group

Based on table distribution above, the mean score fell between the range of 76 – 85, in which Mean = 79.33. It means that the students' adjectives and adverbs mastery in post-test in the control group is good.

### The Post-Test of the Experimental Group

The results showed that the highest score was 94 and the lowest score was 78 and the mean score was 82,83 and based on table distribution above, the mean score fell between the range of 76 – 85, in which Mean = 82.83. It means that the students' adjectives and adverbs mastery in post-test

in the experimental group is good.

## The Discussion of the Hypothesis

After the experiment, both groups were given post-test. Based on the testing of the average difference, it was found that $t_{table} = 2.20$ and $t_0 = 6.0661$; so $t_0 > t_{table}$. It means that $H_0$ was rejected and $H_1$ was accepted. This means that the average ability to do the test of the experimental group was better than that of the control group. The average achievement of the experimental group was 82.83 and the average achievement of the control group was 79.33. Based on the analysis, it showed that there was a significant difference between the teaching adjectives and adverbs by using text-based strategy and that without using text-based strategy, or it could be said that using the text-based strategy to teach grammar (especially adjectives and adverbs) to the students is effective at the English Department of the Faculty of Language and Culture UNTAG Semarang.

## CONCLUSIONS

(1) From the analysis on the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group in the previous chapter, it could be concluded that the post-test result was better than the pre-test result and it means that the students' ability in using adjectives and adverbs increased after they were given treatment.

(2) To apply this strategy, first of all, the lecturer prepares any kind of texts containing both adjectives and adverbs. Give the text to the students and ask them to read first to check the students' understanding. Then ask them to identify by highlighting

the adjectives and adverbs in the text (can use different colour). The next step is to ask them read the result and the lecturer will control and correct when they make mistakes.

(3) From the analysis on the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group in the previous chapter, it could be concluded that the post-test result was better than the pre-test result and it means that $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ is accepted. Based on the testing of the average difference (using T-test), it was found that $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ is accepted. This means that teaching adjectives and adverbs using text-based strategy is effective in teaching learning grammar (adjectives and adverbs) at the English Department of the Faculty of Language and Culture Untag Semarang.

(4) Some advantages were found when some texts were used in learning adjectives and adverbs.
   (a) Through texts which contained adjectives and adverbs, the students could learn and comprehend adjectives and adverbs better because they will understand not only the meaning or the form but also the other characteristics of adjectives and adverbs (e.g. the position in the phrases or sentences)
   (b) Leaning adjectives and adverbs through texts could make the students interested in learning. They felt interested in learning because the materials (adjectives and adverbs) could be presented in various kinds of texts. Hence,

it could make the lessons not monotonous and boring.
   (c) The students got better achievement.

## SUGGESTIONS

(1) To the lecturers
Since the teaching grammar (here especially adjectives and adverbs) must be communicative or integrated with other skills, it is hoped for the English lecturers to create such strategy (text-based strategy) to get better achievement for their students. Teaching with text-based strategy is one of the strategies to make the students interested and make the materials various and not monotonous.

(2) To the students
The students should realize that learning grammar (especially adjectives and adverbs) will be more interested when the materials are presented in various ways, so that the materials are not monotonous and boring.

(3) To the institution
It is only the lecturers and the students but also the environment factors which are involved in teaching and learning process. For that reason, it is suggested that the institution provide good facilities to support the teaching and learning process, for instance, the language laboratory, LCD projector, computer, internet, and other equipments needed.

(4) For the other researchers

It was suggested that the other researchers can do the same research but in different materials

of grammar, for instance, tenses, nouns, gerund, et cetera.

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