

HYPERNYMS AND HYPONYMS IN THE SHORT STORY “FROM THE FIREPLACE, MY MOTHER AND I FOLD MEMORIES” BY FARIZAL SIKUMBANG

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Abstrak

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This study aims to describe the nature of the semantic relationship between hypernyms and hyponyms in these short stories. This study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. The source material for this study is a short story by Farizal Sikumbang, while the data consist of words, phrases, or sentences that exhibit hypernym-hyponym relationships. Data were collected through observation and note-taking, then analyzed through data reduction, data categorization, descriptive analysis, and drawing conclusions. The findings of this study reveal three hypernymic data points—namely, village, occupation, and school—as well as ten groups of hyponymic data regarding characters, places, body parts, professions, objects, and so on. These findings indicate that hypernymic and hyponymic relationships play a role in building coherence of meaning and clarifying the setting in the short story.

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INTRODUCTION

In literary works, language plays a very important role because it serves as the primary medium through which authors construct plotlines, create atmosphere, and convey ideas to readers. In the short story genre, language functions not only as a means of conveying information but also as an artistic instrument that conveys both beauty and depth of meaning. The various meanings contained in the use of language can be examined through semantic analysis. According to Alamsyah (2024), the semantics of the Indonesian language examines the relationships between meanings found in language so that both the explicit and implicit messages in a utterance can be understood more deeply. Thus, semantic analysis is a relevant approach for exploring the linguistic strategies authors use to create specific effects of meaning in literary works.



In the field of lexical semantics, attention is focused not only on the meaning of individual words but also on the interconnections of meaning that exist between lexical items within a text. One of the most common forms of semantic relations is the hypernym-hyponym relationship—that is, the relationship between a general concept and a more specific one. These relationships contribute to the construction of a structured system of meaning, thereby making it easier for readers to understand the text comprehensively. (Firmansyah, 2020) argues that semantic elements serve to explain the relationships between linguistic components, making the conveyed message more coherent and easier to understand. This view is supported by Salleh et al., (2020) who state that lexical-semantic analysis can reveal patterns of interrelated vocabulary usage that form networks of meaning in literary works.

One interesting linguistic phenomenon worth examining can be found in the short story “From the Fireplace, Mother and I Fold Up Memories” by Farizal Sikumbang. This short story exhibits distinctive characteristics through its use of vocabulary closely tied to domestic life, the rural environment, and the daily activities of the community. Unlike many short stories that tend to rely on abstract vocabulary to create an emotional atmosphere, this work makes greater use of concrete vocabulary, such as a hearth, bricks, an old pot, firewood, and coconut leaves. The presence of this vocabulary suggests hypernym-hyponym relationships that not only render the story’s setting more vivid but also reinforce the message the author intends to convey. This uniqueness demonstrates that lexical choice can serve as an effective means of representing local culture while simultaneously enriching the text’s meaning.

Research on the relationships between meanings in this short story is considered important because it can provide a deeper understanding of how these relationships are used to build textual cohesion and evoke specific emotional nuances. This study is expected to demonstrate that the selection of vocabulary with hierarchical relationships can help present a clearer picture of the setting, traditions, and life experiences of the characters in the story. In addition to providing aesthetic value, hypernym-hyponym relationships also play a crucial role in maintaining the continuity of ideas so that the flow of meaning between sections remains logically connected.

Various previous studies have examined semantic relationships across a range of research subjects. Asabilah, and Solikhati (2025), for example, investigated semantic relationships in digital news articles and found that the use of hypernyms and hyponyms serves to clarify the information received by readers. Similar findings were also obtained by Hidayah & Nazirun., (2024) through research on print media, which showed that these semantic relationships contribute to the clarity of information delivery in news reporting. On the other hand, studies of hyponyms have also been widely applied to song lyrics. Research by (Sumarno & Pangestu, 2025).

In the field of literature, the study by (Paino et al., 2021) revealed the presence of hyponymic relationships that serve to reinforce meaning in the poetry of Taufiq Ismail. Meanwhile, (Febrian et al., 2022) found that hyponymy in the novel *Animal Farm* forms hierarchically structured clusters of meaning among the animal characters in the story. Unlike previous studies, this research specifically focuses on hypernym and hyponymic relationships in contemporary short stories that explore the domestic lives of communities—a research focus that has not yet been extensively studied.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to identify and analyze the forms of hypernym and hyponym relationships found in the short story “From the Fireplace,

Mother and I Fold Memories” by Farizal Sikumbang using a lexical-semantic approach. This analysis is conducted to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the patterns of semantic relationships employed by the author and to explain the contribution of these relationships in constructing the structure, meaning, and aesthetic value of the literary work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In a literary work, language plays a very important role because it serves as the writer’s primary tool for weaving a story, creating atmosphere, and conveying ideas to the reader. In short stories, language serves not only to provide information but also to evoke beauty and convey profound meaning. The meaning behind this use of language can be understood through the study of semantics. Semantics in the Indonesian language studies the relationships between meanings so that messages—both explicit and implicit—can be clearly understood (Alamsyah, 2024). One common type of semantic relationship is that between hypernyms and hyponyms—that is, the relationship between a general term and a more specific one. This relationship helps structure meaning within a text so that readers can more easily grasp the story’s content, with semantic elements serving to clarify the connections between linguistic components so that the message is conveyed coherently (Firmansyah, 2020).

These connections are also crucial for integrating and forming a network of meaning within a story. Through appropriate word grouping, we can observe how interrelated vocabulary builds a network of meaning in literary works (Salleh et al., 2020). Furthermore, a hyponym is a word that has a narrower or more specific meaning than another word that serves as its semantic umbrella, namely the hypernym (Paino et al., 2021). Therefore, the use of specific terms (hyponyms) rather than general terms (hypernyms) is not merely a matter of word choice, but rather the author’s way of adding “flavor,” strengthening characters, and clarifying the story’s setting to make it feel more vivid for the reader.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach and descriptive methods to analyze hypernyms and hyponyms in short stories through the lens of semantic theory. Qualitative research is a research approach conducted in natural settings to understand and interpret various phenomena. The data source for this study is the short story “From the Fireplace, Mother and I Fold Memories” by Farizal Sikumbang. The research data consists of words, phrases, and sentences containing hypernyms and hyponyms. The data collection technique involves careful reading and note-taking: carefully reading the short story, identifying and marking words or phrases containing hypernyms and hyponyms, and recording the identified terms. The data analysis technique in this study adapts the structured literary text analysis model by (Salleh et al., 2020) to dissect the semantic elements in works of fiction. The analysis steps were carried out descriptively through the stages of data reduction (selecting data), data classification (grouping data into analysis tables, clearly separating words that function as hypernyms from those that function as hyponyms), description, and drawing conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Hypernym Data from the Short Story “From the Fireplace, Mother and I Fold Up Memories” by Farizal Sikumbang

No	Hypernym	Data
1.	Village	Data (1): “Puhan, Sakti, and Mariam—all three are from Atek Village.” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (2): “Salim, Dika, and Burhan are from Pulau Village...” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (3): “...then Johan, Sukri, and Saidah are from the village of Lambasa...” (Sikumbang, 2022)
2.	Jobs	Data (4): “...He said his job was to load logs onto trucks.” (Sikumbang, 2022)
3.	School	Data (5): “Ever since he dropped out of school, he has rarely come home...” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (6): “The hatred that the people from the village across the river felt toward Abang Usman kept reaching my ears at school.” (Sikumbang, 2022)

Table 2. Hyponyms Data from the Short Story “From the Fireplace, Mother and I Fold Up Memories” by Farizal Sikumbang

No	Hyponyms	Data
1.	Mom, Big Brother, Dad, Me, Mariam, Puhan, Sakti, Salim, Dika, Burhan, Johan, Sukri, and Saidah	Data (7): “He never cared, even though my mother and I were very worried about him.” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (8): “Your father was killed by someone because of the war.” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (9): “...Usman has been living there all this time.” Data (10): “Puhan, Sakti, and Mariam—all three of them are from Kampung Atek.” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (11): “Salim, Dika, and Burhan are from Pulau Village...” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (12): “...then Johan, Sukri, and Saidah are from Lambada Village...” (Sikumbang, 2022)
2.	Atek Village, Pulau Village, Lambasa Village	Data (13): “Puhan, Sakti, and Mariam—all three are from Atek Village.” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (14): “Salim, Dika, and Burhan are from Pulau Village...” (Sikumbang, 2022) Data (15): “...then Johan, Sukri, and Saidah are from Kampung Lambada...” (Sikumbang, 2022)

3.	Stairs in the house, kitchen	Data (16): “From the wooden staircase leading down to this kitchen, I also saw my mother’s tearful eyes.” (Sikumbang, 2022).
4.	Cheeks, eyes, head, arm muscles, chest, mouth, waist, lips, ears, knees	Data (17): “Then it slowly trickled down her cheek... stinging her eyes.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (18): “Hurriedly, and with a flood of questions in my mind, I opened the front door.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (19): “The muscles in his arms looked bulky, and his chest jutted forward.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (20): “And from their mouths, too, I often heard bad news...” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (21): “Around my waist, Mom, there’s always a steel machete hanging.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (22): “...said my mother, her lips trembling.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (23): “...flowing ever more rapidly into my ears at school.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (24): “My mother’s knees were bleeding from being scraped by the rough concrete floor.” (Sikumbang, 2022).
5.	Wood, dried coconut leaves	Data (25): “My mother is cooking rice on that stove using wood and dried coconut leaves.” (Sikumbang, 2022).
6.	Central Army, log truck assistant, log collector, truck driver, massage therapist	Data (26): “During the war between rebel guerrillas and the central government’s army.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (27): “...if Usman worked as a helper on a log-hauling truck in the village across the river.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (28): “You don’t have to work in the forest gathering wood anymore,” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (29): “Abang Karim, who owns a truck and also drives it, is very fond of me,” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (30): “...I promised that tomorrow morning I would take my mother to the massage therapist in the village across the river.” (Sikumbang, 2022).
7.	High School	Data (31): “My high school is in the village across the river.” (Sikumbang, 2022).
8.	Machete, picture frame, glass plate, door	Data (32): “I always have a steel machete hanging from my waist, Mom.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (33): “I also made a frame for Dad’s photo, which is displayed right on the wall...” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (34): “Fortunately, the two broken glass plates didn’t hurt my mother.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (35): “...someone was banging hard on our front

		door.” (Sikumbang, 2022).
9.	Trees, tree branches	Data (36): “I don’t cut down trees. I just collect branches.” (Sikumbang, 2022).
10.	At school, in the classroom, in the village, in the forest, at home, at the well behind the house, at the cemetery	Data (37): “...it made me feel down and less confident at school.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (38): “Mariam whispered one morning in our classroom.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (39): “A diploma is useless in this village. Do you need a diploma to go into the forest?” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (40): “Usman didn’t answer his mother; he hurriedly left the house.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (41): “One evening, my mother fell into the well behind the house.” (Sikumbang, 2022). Data (42): “My mother cried unceasingly at the funeral, right beside me.” (Sikumbang, 2022).

The results of the data analysis revealed the function of semantic relations in Farizal Sikumbang’s short story. The analysis showed that there are three words that function as hypernyms in the short story: village, work, and education. These three words have general meanings, allowing them to encompass several other, more specific words.

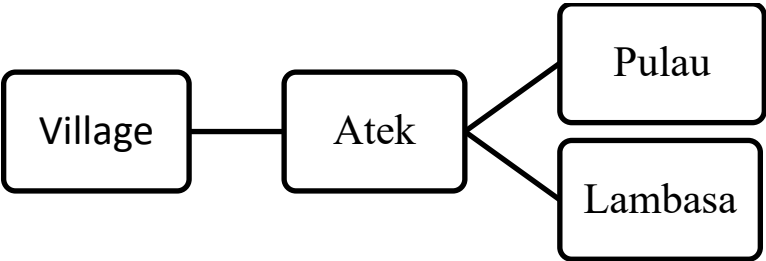
Table 2 shows that 51 hyponyms were found in the short story. Data No. 1 includes ibu, abang, ayah, aku, puhan, mariam, Sakti, Salim, Dika, Burhan, Johan, Sukri, and Saidah. Data set No. 2 also includes Kampung Atek, Kampung Pulau, and Kampung Lambasa. In data set No. 3, the hyponyms are “house stairs” and “kitchen.” Next, in data set No. 4, the hyponyms are “cheek,” “eye,” “head,” “arm muscle,” “chest,” “mouth,” “waist,” “lip,” “ear,” and “knee.” The hyponyms in data set No. 5 are wood and dried coconut leaves. Additionally, data set No. 6 includes the Central Army, a wood-hauling truck assistant, a wood collector, a truck driver, and a massage therapist. In data set No. 7, there is one hyponym: high school. Data No. 8 includes several items: machete, picture frame, glass plate, and door; Data No. 9 covers tree and tree branch; and Data No. 10 includes at school, in the classroom, village, forest, house, at the well behind the house, and at the cemetery.

Based on the research findings, the hypernym-hyponym relationships in the short story are used to construct a concrete picture of work, education, and the village. The use of specific vocabulary, such as “fireplace,” “kitchen,” and “mother,” helps readers understand a simple setting that is closely tied to everyday activities.

The results of the data analysis of the short story “From the Fireplace, Mother and I Fold Memories” by Farizal Sikumbang show that hypernym and hyponym semantic relationships are not merely statistical data. Based on the analysis, there are three types of hypernymic relationships associated with ten types of hyponymic relationships. The functioning of these relationships can be understood through the most dominant lexical groupings in the short story, namely the relationship between hypernyms as general concepts and hyponyms as more specific elements. This relationship reveals a semantic

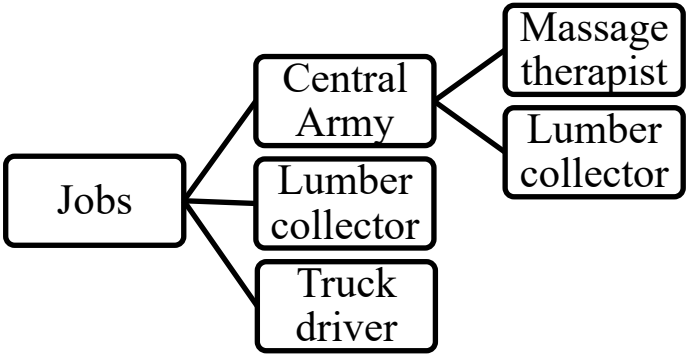
correlation among the vocabulary used by the author to construct the setting, characters, atmosphere, and theme of the story. To clarify these findings, the following presents some examples of hypernyms and hyponyms found in the short story.

Data 1:



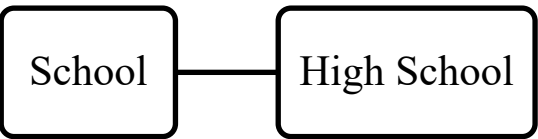
Based on the quote above and referring to the theory by (Paino et al., 2021), a hyponym is a word that has a narrower scope of meaning or refers to something more specific than another word that serves as its superordinate term, namely the hypernym. In the excerpt, a hypernym-hyponym relationship is evident, with the word “kampung” serving as the hypernym, while “Kampung Atek,” “Kampung Pulau,” and “Kampung Lambasa” are its hyponyms. This relationship exists because these three village names fall into a more specific category—that of hyponyms.

Data 2:



Based on the quote above and referring to the theory by (Paino et al., 2021), a hyponym is a word that has a narrower scope of meaning or refers to something more specific than another word that serves as its superordinate term, namely the hypernym. In the excerpt, a hypernym-hyponym relationship is evident, with the word “job” serving as the hypernym, while “logger,” “log truck driver,” etc., are its hyponyms. This relationship arises because these jobs fall under a broader category.

Data 3:



Based on the quote above and referring to the theory by (Paino et al., 2021), a hyponym is a word that has a narrower scope of meaning or refers to something more specific than another word that serves as its hypernym. In the quote, a hypernym-hyponym relationship is evident, with the word “school” serving as the hypernym and “high school” as its hyponym. This relationship is formed because the job falls under a more general category.

In the Education category, for example, the author chose the hypernym “School,” which is further specified by the hyponym “High School.” This is similar to the use of highly specific hypernyms in the Occupation category, such as “farmer,” “log truck driver,” and “massage therapist.” In the “village” category, words such as Atek, Pulau, and Lambasa represent specific semantic relationships. Thus, this categorization is key: the use of specific (hyponymic) words rather than general (hypernymic) ones adds “color” and clarity to the narrative setting the author seeks to create.

It should be noted that this study differs fundamentally from some of the research literature cited herein. For example, the study by Wahyu, (2014) on discourse analysis in the Kompas newspaper employed the same analytical method. However, while Wahyu, (2014), who examined discourse in the Kompas newspaper, also used lexical-semantic analysis, that study focused more on classifying noun forms and parts of speech within an objective journalistic context, whereas this study is grounded in the aesthetic needs of literary works. Based on the findings in this short story, these semantic relationships function as a cohesive device to maintain the continuity of ideas from one section to the next—a strategy also supported by Salleh et al., (2020) theory on semantic analysis in fictional works. Furthermore, when compared to the study by Paino et al., (2021), which examined hyponyms in Taufiq Ismail’s poetry, or that of Febrian et al. (2023) on the novel *Animal Farm*, this study offers a novel focus in its subject matter: contemporary short stories centered on domestic life. Unlike previous studies, which focused more on hierarchical structures for informative purposes, this study finds that authors deliberately use semantic relations to evoke emotional nuances—such as the use of fictional fireplaces and coconut leaves.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis conducted, it can be concluded that the use of hypernym and hyponym relationships in the short story “From the Fireplace, Mother and I Fold Memories” by Farizal Sikumbang is not merely a common linguistic phenomenon, but rather a deliberate literary strategy. The author seeks to create a clear “mental map” of the social and family context of village life through the hierarchy of meaning between general terms (hypernyms) and more specific terms (hyponyms) the occupations discussed include bus conductor, driver, and massage therapist by employing these relationships.

The precision and fluidity of word choice in this short story demonstrate that these semantic relationships play a crucial role in building cohesion. These relationships not only function as a “network” for conveying ideas but also serve to place greater emphasis on the setting and the characters depicted. Thus, an understanding of these semantic relationships is key for the author to create a narrative world that feels authentic, real, and possesses a depth of meaning that readers can experience.

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