PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

33

The Descriptive Text. Structure and Characteristics

El texto descriptivo. Estructura y características.

§ NOVIEMBRE DE 2026

Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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Fuentes

1. INTRODUCTION

"Coketown, to which Messrs. Bounderby and Gradgrind now walked, was a triumph of fact." With these words Charles Dickens begins one of the most famous descriptions in English fiction, in Hard Times, the novel he serialised in his weekly Household Words between 1 April and 12 August 1854. Within a few lines the reader can see the town: "a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it". Nothing happens in the passage, no character acts and no event unfolds, and yet we remember it. That is the power of description, and it is the subject of Topic 33: The Descriptive Text. Structure and Characteristics.

In order to address it, I will divide the topic into five main sections. Firstly, I will define the descriptive text and place it within the classification of text types. Secondly, I will examine its structure, both global and local. Thirdly, I will analyse its linguistic characteristics: lexis, grammar, cohesion and register. Fourthly, I will review the main kinds of description and their purposes, and I will compare English and Spanish descriptive writing, together with the typical errors of Spanish-speaking learners. Finally, I will reflect on the pedagogical and didactic implications of this content within our current educational framework.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted for the preparation of this topic. These include: Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik's A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language, Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad and Finegan's Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English, Halliday and Hasan's Cohesion in English, Werlich's A Text Grammar of English, Jean-Michel Adam's Les textes: types et prototypes, and Biber and Conrad's Register, Genre, and Style, as well as the online sources Cambridge Dictionary (English Grammar Today), the British Council's TeachingEnglish and the Council of Europe. I have also drawn on the LOMLOE (Organic Law 3/2020), Royal Decrees 217/2022 and 243/2022, and Decrees 110/2022 and 109/2022 of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura.