

# IMPROVING THE ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT THROUGH GUIDED-QUESTIONS TECHNIQUE

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## Abstract

The objective of conducting this research was to find out whether the use of guided-questions technique can improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text or not. This research employed a pre-experimental research design that involved one group. The population of this research was the tenth grade students of MAN 2 Model Palu. The sample of this research was selected by using cluster sampling technique. The instruments of data collection were test and non-test instrument. The test instrument covers pre-test and post-test, and non-test instruments is observation. The result of data analysis showed that t-counted (11.97) was greater than the result of t-table (1.729) by applying 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom (df) 19. It means that the use of guided-questions technique could significantly improve the ability of the tenth grade students of MAN 2 Model Palu in writing descriptive text. In conclusion, guided-questions technique can be used to improve the students's ability in writing descriptive text.

**Keywords:** Writing; Guided-questions Technique; Descriptive Text.

## INTRODUCTION

English has been taught in Indonesia. It is from elementary schools to university level. Besides, it is also taught in informal education. The main purpose of teaching English is to enable students to communicate both oral and written forms, and to understand English text. The students can learn all language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and language components (grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary) integratedly.

Among the language skills, writing seems to be the most difficult one in the sense that it needs a long process starting from brainstorming up to final product. In addition, it involves some writing elements such as content, grammatical function, vocabulary, and the mechanics like punctuation, capitalization and spelling.

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Writing belongs to the productive skill that should be mastered by the students in order to communicate their ideas and feelings with others in written form. In line with this statement, Raimes (1983:76) states “Writing is a skill in which we express the ideas, feelings, and thoughts arranged in words, sentences and paragraphs using eyes, brain, and hand.” In addition, Tarigan (1987:7) states “Writing is a language skill that is used for indirect communication. The students can communicate their ideas and thoughts to others through written form such as letter, message, or invitation for communication.” From these statements, it can be concluded that writing refers to a process in which its activities are not produced immediately. The writer must think first about the topic, try to know the topic and find some information about the topic.

There are lots of English texts that have to be learned by students in Senior High School level such as, recount, narrative, procedure, spoof, descriptive, etc. The importance of teaching these texts has been written in Depdiknas (2007):

Salah satu rumusan standar kompetensi dan kompetensi dasar untuk mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris di SMA adalah kompetensi yang harus dimiliki oleh peserta didik sebagai hasil dari mempelajari bahasa Inggris adalah menulis ( mengungkapkan makna dalam teks fungsional pendek dan esei sederhana berbentuk : *recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive, news item, spoof, report, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, explanation, discussion, dan review* dalam konteks kehidupan sehari-hari.

This quotation explains that one of competences which students should have in learning English is writing. In this level, the students are required to master several types of texts in English, one of which is descriptive text.

Descriptive text is a text that gives information about particular person, place, or thing. Gerot et al in Mursyid states that descriptive text is a kind of text with a purpose to give information. The context of this kind of text is the description of particular thing, animal, person, or others.” (<http://mmursyidpw.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/learning-description.pdf>). Relating to the quotation, through this text, the readers can imagine what being talked about.

The generic structure of descriptive text consists of identification and description. Identification is about introducing subject or thing that will be described, whereas, description is brief details about who, or what of the subject. One of the examples of descriptive text is as follow:

## My Toy

Identification



*I have a toy. It is a doll, a bear doll, and I call it Teddy. Teddy bear is an American origin. My dad bought it as a present for my tenth birthday anniversary last year.*

Description



*The doll is small, fluffy, and cute. It has thick brown fur. When I cuddle it, the fur feels soft. Because my Teddy bear is a doll, I don't need to feed it. I wash it at laundry at least once a month. Every night Teddy accompanies me sleeping. When I am at school, Teddy stays in my bed. Teddy bear is really nice, adorable, and charming toy. I love my Teddy bear very much.*

The tenth grade students at MAN 2 Model Palu faced several problems relating to their writing. First, students problem is lack of vocabulary. It difficult for the students to build and develop their ideas. Second, they do not master the construction of grammatical sentences well. Therefore, they always produce meaningless sentences. So, in the writer's opinion, the teacher had to find an appropriate technique that could reduce and solve those problems. One of the techniques that could be applied was guided-questions. Guided-questions is a technique which is used in teaching writing. Using this technique could help the students produced their writing, because by answering the questions they would write easily. The students could start their writing easily by answering questions. It was very motivating. Teacher asked questions, then the students analyzed and answered the questions to produce their writing.

The researcher formulated the research problem in following question: *Can the use of guided-questions technique improve the ability of the tenth grade students at MAN 2 Model Palu in writing descriptive texts?* It is to verify that the use guided-questions technique could improve the students' writing ability in writing descriptive text of the tenth grade at MAN 2 Model Palu.

## METHODOLOGY

In conducting this research, the writer applied pre-experimental research design. It is only one group. This group was given treatment as seen in the formula by Arikunto (2010:124) as follows:

$$O1 \quad X \quad O2$$

Where :

- O1 : pre-test
- X : treatment
- O2 : post-test

In this research, the researcher took one group as sample and it was given pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was conducted to know the students' basic knowledge while the post-test was conducted to know the improvement of their skill after the treatment. The population of this research was the tenth grade students at MAN 2 Model Palu consisting of 2 classes. Each class consisted of 20 up to 21 students. The total number of the students was 41. Sample is a small part of population. Arikunto (2010:118) states "Sampel adalah bagian dari jumlah dan karakteristik yang dimiliki oleh populasi tersebut." The samples of this research were selected through cluster sampling technique. First, the writer prepared two small pieces of paper and wrote down the names of the classes. Then, all the papers were rolled and put in a small box. After that, the writer shook them in a few seconds. The writer took the sample for the first paper which fell down from the box.

Referring to the title of the research, the researcher found out two variables: dependent and independent variable. Tuckman (1978:59) states, "Dependent variable is a factor which is observed and measured to determine the effect of the independent variable." It means that, dependent variable is variable that influenced by independent variable. In relation to the title, the dependent variable was students' ability in making descriptive text, while the independent variable was the use of guided-questions technique, Tuckman (1978:58-59), "Independent variable is a factor which is measured manipulated, or selected by the experimenter in determine its relationship to an observed phenomenon."

In collecting data, the writer used two instruments, namely test and observation. The test instrument was in form of writing test consisting of pretest and posttest, while, the observation used to help the writer to collect additional information related to the research. Before giving the treatment, the writer observed the teaching and learning process in the classroom to acquire

information about the classroom situation and the way teacher taught the students especially in teaching writing. After that, The writer applied two techniques of data collection, pre-test and post-test. Pre-test was given in order to know how far the students' ability in writing descriptive text before being given the treatment. Pos-test was administered after the treatment conducted. It was done in order to know the students' improvement in writing descriptive text after having the treatment.

The writer gave the treatment to the students sixth times. The writer taught descriptive text through guided-questions technique. She explained what descriptive text is and explained parts or generic structures that the students must write in a paragraph also. Then she also explained about the guided-questions and explained how to apply it in making descriptive text by giving them examples. Finally, she asked the students to write descriptive text by using guided-question technique.

In scoring each part of the descriptive paragraph, the writer used the score procedure as follow based on the Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) 2007:

**Table 1:**  
**Scoring Rubric of Writing**

No	Criteria	Score
1	Correct grammar, correct vocabulary, and correct spelling.	5
2	Correct grammar, correct vocabulary, but misspelling.	4
3	Incorrect grammar, correct vocabulary, and correct spelling.	3
4	Incorrect grammar, correct vocabulary, but incorrect spelling.	2
5	Incorrect grammar, incorrect vocabulary and correct spelling.	1
6	Every unanswered item.	0

*Adapted from Depdiknas (KTSP:2007)*

From scoring rubric above the total score for all correct criteria was five. It consists of:

- Correct grammar = 2
- Correct vocabulary = 2
- Correct spelling = 1

In scoring the paragraph, the writer asked students to make thirteen sentences. If all of the sentences correct, the total score for paragraph was thirteen sentences multiplied five and the result is sixty five.

After doing the treatment, the result of test was evaluated. The writer analyzed the result of the test statistically. Therefore, in analyzing the test, firstly, the writer counted the individual score of the students by applying the formula proposed Arikunto (2006:276):

$$\Sigma = \frac{x}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

- $\Sigma$  = gained score
- $x$  = sum of correct answer
- $N$  = maximum score
- 100 = fixed score

Then, the researcher computed the students' mean score by using formula as recommended by Arikunto (2002:276)

$$M = \frac{\Sigma x}{N}$$

Where:

- $M$  = mean score
- $\Sigma x$  = total score
- $N$  = number of students

Then the researcher computed the mean deviation by using formula that is proposed by Arikunto (2002:276):

$$Md = \frac{\Sigma d}{N}$$

Where:

Md = mean of deviation  
 $\sum d$  = the total score of deviation  
N = number of students

Then, the square deviation was computed using the formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:308):

$$\sum x^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$

Where:

$\sum x^2 d$  = the sum of squared deviation  
 $\sum d^2$  = the sum of deviation  
N = number of students

To find out the effect of treatment, the researcher used the formula proposed by Arikunto (2010:349):

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$$

where:

t = t-test score  
Md = mean from pre-test and post-test  
 $\sum x^2 d$  = sum of squared deviation  
N = number of students

## FINDINGS

The writer conducted the pre-test on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2013. The result of pre-test was presented in the following table:

**Table 2:**  
**The Result of Pre-test**

No	Students	Grammar	Vocabulary	Spelling	Obtained Score	Total Score	Students' Score
1	AHY	10	10	10	30	65	46.15
2	MS	8	12	8	28	65	43.07
3	IW	12	20	10	42	65	64.61
4	AS	14	16	2	32	65	49.23
5	DRA	10	10	5	25	65	38.46
6	MA	10	22	10	42	65	64.61
7	IM	8	12	7	27	65	41.53
8	MSH	8	12	7	27	65	41.53
9	AN	14	16	5	35	65	53.84
10	YA	14	16	10	40	65	61.53
11	AA	10	10	5	25	65	38.46
12	MT	8	12	5	25	65	38.46
13	ED	12	18	6	36	65	55.38
14	ARA	12	18	9	39	65	60.00
15	ASM	14	16	7	37	65	56.92
16	FA	8	12	8	28	65	43.07
17	AF	10	20	8	38	65	58.46
18	AD	10	10	12	32	65	49.23
19	MZ	10	10	13	33	65	50.76
20	FC	14	16	9	39	65	60.00
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>1015.30</b>	

Based on the table above, the highest score is 64.61 and lowest score is 38.46. After getting the total score of the students, the writer then computed the students' mean score by using the formula below:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1015.3}{20}$$

$$M = 50.76$$



From the result above, it can be concluded that the students' mean score in pre-test was 50.765. After applying the treatment, the writer gave post-test to the students. The result of post-test can be seen in the following table:

**Table 3:  
The Result of Post-test**

No	Students	Grammar	Vocabulary	Spelling	Obtained Score	Total Score	Students' Score
1	AHY	24	26	13	63	65	96.92
2	MS	20	24	12	56	65	86.15
3	IW	20	24	11	55	65	84.61
4	AS	24	26	10	60	65	92.30
5	DRA	20	26	12	58	65	89.23
6	MA	20	26	12	58	65	83.07
7	IM	20	20	12	52	65	80.00
8	MSH	22	20	12	54	65	83.07
9	AN	24	26	13	63	65	96.92
10	YA	14	16	12	42	65	64.61
11	AA	24	26	9	59	65	90.76
12	MT	20	22	12	54	65	83.07
13	ED	20	20	10	50	65	76.92
14	ARA	20	26	12	58	65	89.23
15	ASM	22	24	12	58	65	89.23
16	FA	24	26	12	62	65	95.38
17	AF	22	18	12	52	65	80.00
18	AD	24	26	12	62	65	95.38
19	MZ	20	24	13	57	65	87.69
20	FC	24	26	11	61	65	93.84
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>1738.38</b>	

After doing the computation, it was found that the highest score is 96.92 and the lowest one is 64.61. The writer then calculated the mean score by using the formula below:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

$$M = \frac{1738.38}{20}$$

$$M = 86.92$$

The students' mean score of post-test was 86.92. From the calculation above, it showed that there were differences ability in writing descriptive text between the students' mean score in pre-test and post-test. The students' mean score in post-test 86.92 was higher than students

mean score in the pre-test 50.76. These showed that students' achievement was greatly increased after the treatment.

After counting the students mean score of both pre-test and post-test, the writer calculated the deviation and square deviation of the students' scores on pre-test and post-test as shown in the following table:

**Table 4:**  
**The Result of Deviation Pre-test and Post-test**

No	Students	Pre-test (X1)	Post-test (X2)	Deviation (d) (X2-X1)	Square deviaton (d2)
1	AHY	46.15	96.92	50.77	2577.59
2	MS	43.07	86.15	43.08	1855.88
3	IW	64.61	84.61	20	400
4	AS	49.23	92.30	43.07	1855.02
5	DRA	38.46	89.23	50.77	2577.59
6	MA	64.61	83.07	18.46	340.77
7	IM	41.53	80.00	38.47	1479.94
8	MSH	41.53	83.07	41.54	1725.57
9	AN	53.84	96.92	43.08	1855.88
10	YA	61.53	64.61	3.08	9.48
11	AA	38.46	90.76	52.3	2735.29
12	MT	38.46	83.07	44.61	1990.05
13	ED	55.38	76.92	21.54	463.97
14	ARA	60.00	89.23	29.23	854.39
15	ASM	56.92	89.23	32.31	1043.93
16	FA	43.07	95.38	52.31	2736.33
17	AF	58.46	80.00	21.54	463.97
18	AD	49.23	95.38	46.15	2129.82
19	MZ	50.76	87.69	36.93	1363.82
20	FC	60.00	93.84	33.84	1145.14
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>723.08</b>	<b>29604.43</b>

To know the mean deviation score of pre-test and post-test, the writer used the formula below:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Md &= \frac{\sum d}{N} \\
 &= \frac{723.08}{20} \\
 &= 36.15
 \end{aligned}$$

The mean deviation score of pre-test and post-test was 36.15. The writer then computed the sum of squared deviation as shown below:

$$\begin{aligned}\sum x^2 d &= \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N} \\ &= 29604.43 - \frac{(723.08)^2}{20} \\ &= 29604.43 - 26142.23 \\ &= 3462.2\end{aligned}$$

Furthermore, the writer used the t-test formula in order to analyze the significance of difference between the pre-test and post-test. The computation was as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}t &= \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}} \\ t &= \frac{36.154}{\sqrt{\frac{3462.2}{20(20-1)}}} \\ t &= \frac{36.154}{\sqrt{\frac{3462.2}{20(19)}}} \\ t &= \frac{36.154}{\sqrt{\frac{3462.2}{380}}} \\ t &= \frac{36.154}{\sqrt{9.11}} \\ t &= \frac{36.154}{3.02}\end{aligned}$$

$$t - \text{counted} = 11.97$$

From the above computation, the writer found that the significant difference between the result of the pre-test and the post-test of the students was 11.97.

## DISCUSSION

Pre-test and post-test were administered to state that the use of guided-questions technique could give significance improvement to the students in enhancing their writing ability. The result of the test were analyzed using stastical formula.

Related to the result of pre-test, none of students passed the test. The standard score for English subject at the school was 65. By seeing the result of pre-test, the writer concluded that the students did not know well how to write descriptive text. There were several problems that students faced in their writing. First, students' problem is lack of vocabulary. It is difficult for them to build and develop their ideas. Second, they did not master the construction of grammatical sentences well. Therefore, they always produce meaningless sentences. Based on the problems, the writer used guided-questions technique to solve their problem.

In the first treatment, the writer taught the students about simple present tense since this tense used in making descriptive text. After that, the writer explained about descriptive text and its generic structure. Then, the writer explained about guided-questions technique and how to apply it in making descriptive text. For each meeting, the writer asked the students to make descriptive text through guided-questions technique.

After giving the treatment, the writer gave post-test in order to know the improvement of students' ability in writing descriptive text through guided-questions technique. In the post-test, the percentage of students who passed the test was 95% (19 students) and only 1 student (5%) did not pass the test. By comparing the result of pre-test and post-test, the writer concluded that the use of guided-questions technique in writing descriptive text was effective because there was a progress on students' score.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

After analyzing the data statistically in the previous chapter, the writer then draws conclusions as follows: It was found that guided-questions technique could significantly improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text. It can be proved by the value of  $t$ -counted (11.97) which is greater than  $t$ -table (1.729). It means that, the hypothesis is accepted. On the other words, the use of guided-questions technique can improve students' ability in writing descriptive texts.

Based on the conclusion above, the writer would like to give suggestions for the improvement of the quality of teaching English. First, the students should be given more exercises in writing by using simple present tense. In order that, they can write descriptive text correctly. Second, the teacher should apply an appropriate technique which makes students understand the material given. One technique that is recommended is guided-questions. The

last, the teacher should actively encourage and attract the students' motivation in the class in order to make them interested and motivated in learning English.

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