

## IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH THROUGH GUIDING QUESTION TECHNIQUE

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**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif dengan menggunakan teknik *Guiding Question*. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kuantitatif. Tes yang digunakan adalah tes menulis teks deskriptif. Metode dalam penelitian ini adalah *One Group Pre-test Post-test Design*. Desain penelitian menggunakan satu kelas sebagai kelas eksperimen yang mendapatkan perlakuan menggunakan teknik *Guiding Question*. Sampel yang digunakan adalah 30 siswa/i kelas VIII.1 pada sekolah menengah pertama yang mana siswa tersebut dipilih secara acak. Data penelitian dikumpulkan melalui pre-test dan post-test. Data di analisis dari hasil pre-test dan post-test. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata nilai pada pre-test adalah 54. 58 sedangkan pada post-test adalah 73. 33 atau hasil menunjukkan terdapat peningkatan nilai sebesar 18. 75. Kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif akan meningkat ketika mereka belajar menulis menggunakan teknik *Guiding Question*. Guru disarankan mengaplikasikan teknik *Guiding Question* dalam mengajar menulis untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa.

**Abstract:** This research was to investigate the increase of the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph by using Guiding Question Technique. This research was quantitative. The instrument was writing test. The method was One Group Pre-test Post-test Design. The design used one class, as the experimental class which received the treatment of Guiding Question Technique. The subject was 30 students at the second grade of junior high school who random selection. The data was collected by administering pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed from the result of pre-test and post-test. The result showed the average score of pre-test was 54. 58. The result of the post-test was 73. 33 or increase 18. 75. The students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph will be better when they are taught by using Guiding Question Technique. Teacher is suggested applying Guiding Question Technique in teaching writing to improve students' ability.

**Keywords:** descriptive, guiding question technique, writing

## **INTRODUCTION**

English is divided into four skills consistency of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing stands for the last skill and will be always discussed in this paper. According to Harris (1979: 68-89) there are five aspects of writing skills needed to be taken into serious attention. Writing is a very complex language skill to study because there are many components to be mastered by the students, such as content, grammar, vocabulary, organization and mechanic.

According to Zaida (2014: 131) the goal of teaching learning in English 2013 Curriculum for junior high school is actually the students should be able to compose effective sentences in the paragraph. They are expected to be able to communicate both in spoken and in written form in their daily lives. Furthermore, the students are also guided to pass the final examinations which are related to the writing descriptive paragraph.

In other words, writing Descriptive Paragraph requires complicated components of the target language. This fact implies that writing is the most difficult skill of language. Other causes are due to the following assumptions: firstly, the students do not know basic principles that can guide them in developing their ideas in unity. Secondly, they almost never have writing exercises in the class activity (Juwitasari, 2001: 2).

Considering the problem above, this study proposes Guiding Questions Technique to be one of the techniques that can be used to increase the second year students'

descriptive paragraph ability. This study chooses guided writing in the form of guiding question technique to develop the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph because it gives the opportunity for the students to develop their own idea freely by answering the questions given by the teacher. This study believe that by giving them some questions as a guidance to be followed by them while they are writing, they will express their ideas in form of writing easier and their piece of writing will be better organized. This idea is supported by Byrne (1998: 25) who confirms that the fundamental principle of guiding students in various ways toward a mastery of writing skill, and sometimes controlling what they write, is not one we can lightly dismiss.

Guiding Question Techniques is necessary for motivating the students to practice writing in accordance with their levels of proficiency. This study chooses questions as a technique to develop the students' ability in understanding descriptive paragraph, for instance the students can develop their own ideas by answering the questions that given by the teacher. Raimes (1983: 101) asserts that the Guiding Question Technique is used to allow students a little freedom in structuring sentence or in their writing activity.

Based on the explanation above, this research was conducted to investigate the increase of students' ability in writing descriptive text by using Guiding Question Technique at the Second Grade of Junior High School Negeri 1 Gadingrejo, Pringsewu.

## METHOD

The design of this research was quantitative. The participants were 30 students who randomly selected. The instrument was writing test used in pre-test and post-test. Pretest was conducted in order to find out the students' writing ability before the treatment. After conducting the treatment, the post test was administered. It was done in order to know the students' ability after the treatment. The setting was at Junior High School Negeri 1 Gadingrejo, Pringsewu especially at the second grade. This research was conducted in semester two. After the data were collected, this study would analyze the increase of students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph after the treatment. The data were scored by using scoring criteria for writing adapted from Harris (1979: 68-69). They are content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanic. After scoring students' work, the data were analyzed by using *T-test* to compare the data of two means score (Hatch and Farhady, 1982: 108).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the first meeting of the research, this study conducted pre-test in order to find out the basic ability of the students in writing descriptive paragraph before the treatment. The material of the test was descriptive paragraph with the topics were about animal, place and someone. The score of the five aspects of writing tested in the pre-test are presented as follow.

**The Students' Average Score of the Pre-test**

Pre-test	The Evaluated the Components of Writing										Tot-al
	Content		Organization		Vocabulary		Grammar		Mechanic		
	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	
	10.00	10.33	10.50	10.67	12.33	11.67	10.83	10.83	10.83	11.17	
Aver-age	10.16		10.58		12.00		10.83		11.00		54.58

From the table, we can see the average score of five aspects of writing tested in the pre-test of the experimental class is 54. 58. Content has score 10. 16. It means that the students have limited knowledge of the subject, and difficulties to develop the topic given. It might be that the students have limited the ideas to be developed. They could not express their ideas well because they are confused what they will write. The next aspect is organization aspect which scores 10. 58. In the organization, the students did not organize descriptive text well. It happens because the students did not focus on their main idea and it makes them lost idea. Then, the score of vocabulary is 12. 00 which means that it is limited range because there are frequent errors or idioms. There are many frequent errors which the students made in using the article and pronoun. Therefore, the score of grammar is 10. 83 because the students used inappropriate verb in writing descriptive paragraph. The students did not know how to use correct verb when they use the third subject. The last score of aspect writing is mechanic score which scores 11. 00. The students think that mechanic is easy but in fact, many students makes errors in spelling, punctuation, and also capitalization. The mean score of pre-test shows the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph before the treatment is low.

This study conducted post-test in order to find out the improvement of the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph after the treatment did. The score of five aspects tested in the post-test are presented in the following table:

**The Students' Average Score of the Post-test**

Post-test	The Evaluated the Components of Writing										Total
	Content		Organizatio n		Vocabulary		Grammar		Mechanic		
	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	R1	R2	
	13.00	14.00	14. 67	14. 50	14. 17	15. 33	14. 83	15. 50	14. 83	15. 83	
Avera-ge	13.50		14.58		14.75		15.16		15.33		73.33

From the table above, it can be seen that the average score of the five aspects of writing testes in the post-test in experimental class. They are content 13.50, since the students were able to develop the supporting sentences in the organization of the text. The next aspect is organization which scores 14.58. It happens because the students were able to write descriptive paragraph coherently. Then, the score of vocabulary is 14.75 in which the students were able to find appropriate words with the context of descriptive paragraph. Therefore, the score of grammar is 14.16 because the students were able to master the use of Simple Present Tense in writing descriptive paragraph. The last aspect was mechanic aspect which scores 15.33. The students were able to follow the roles like checking the right spelling in dictionary and they used correct marker in writing descriptive paragraph. The table shows the ability of the students before the treatment did. The mean of the post-test in the experimental class is 73.33. It is belonged to the good score which the result shows that the students have an improvement of their ability in writing descriptive paragraph after the treatment did.

From the students' average score, it is inferred that there is an increase of the students' descriptive paragraph ability after being taught by using Guiding Question Technique and also in terms of vocabulary, mechanic, and grammar. It is

proved by the result of T-test which showed that the level of significant is less than 0.05 ( $0.00 < 0.05$ ).

The result of pre-test and post-test implies that Guiding Question Technique can improve the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph. This statement can be seen from the total score of the pre-test and post-test, which (54.58) up to (73.33). It can be seen from the table:

**The Improvement From the Pre-test to Post-test**

	Score of Pre-test	Score of Post-test	Increase
Mean (X)	54.58	73.33	18.75

Furthermore, the improvement of the students' ability from pre-test up to post-test in each aspects writing can be seen from the table below:

**The Improvement of the Students' Ability in Each Aspect Writing**

Component	Pre-test	Post-test	Increase
Content	10.16	13.50	3.34
Organization	10.58	14.58	4.00
Vocabulary	12.00	14.75	2.75
Grammar	10.83	15.16	4.33
Mechanic	11.00	15.33	4.33

From the table above, it could be stated that Guiding Question Technique could improve each aspects of writing; they are content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic. From the table above, it can be seen that the highest improvement was grammar and mechanic (4.33) and the lowest improvement was vocabulary (2.75). The students had the improvement of content because the students could develop the supporting sentence well. Then, the next improvement was organization aspect since the students were able to write descriptive paragraph in chronological order by applying temporal conjunction like *besides*, *beside that*, and *and then*. The score of vocabulary improved but not significant

because the students still had difficulties in choosing diction. Grammar and mechanic were same improvement aspect because the students were able to use appropriate verb when they used the third person and the students used appropriate marker, spelling and capitalization in their writing descriptive paragraph. It can be concluded that Guiding Question Technique can be used to improve the students' ability in all aspects of writing.

This study used T-test in order to find out the significance of the treatment effect. The hypothesis was tested at significant level of 0.05 in which the hypothesis is accepted if  $\text{Sign} < .$  The result was shown in the following table.

#### T-test Result of the Hypothesis Analysis

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre-test – Post-test	-1.84167E1	8.77112	1.60138	-21.69186	-15.14148	-11.501	29	.000

#### Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre-test – Post-test	-1.15833E1	6.80654	1.24270	-14.12494	-9.04173	-9.321	29	.000

From the table, it can be seen that the result of the composition shows that the value of two-tailed improvement was 0.000. It means that  $H_a$  was accepted and  $H_o$  was rejected since  $0.00 < 0.005$ . It proves that the treatment that was given had better effect of the students' ability in writing descriptive text. In other words, the hypothesis is accepted.

## **DISCUSSION**

From the result presented before, it can be seen that the scores of the students' post-test were higher than the students' scores of the pre-test. This can be seen from the mean score of the pre-test in experimental class (54. 58) up to (73. 33) in post-test. The result of the post-test showed that Guiding Question Technique can be used to improve the students' score in writing descriptive paragraph. It can be seen from the total score of the pre-test up to post-test.

The pre-test in the first meeting was given to find out the basic students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph. This study applied the technique in the three meetings, which is Guiding Question Technique. In the last meeting, post-test was given in which is to find out the students' ability after the treatment given. After giving pre-test and post-test, this study analyzed the result of both tests. There found that the result of the students' score in the post-test was higher than the pre-test.

Rivers (1964: 262) says that a series of questions may be constructed that the students write continuous story as they answer the questions. Based on the statement from River, the treatment was did by applying Guiding Question Technique to help or guide the students to write a descriptive paragraph easily. The students were given some questions which those questions should be answered. In this case, the technique helped the students to lead them in creating descriptive paragraph effectively. The questions are applied in identification and

description of descriptive paragraph. The questions were made based on the topic given.

In the treatment process, this study also gave the material of descriptive paragraph that the aim of that material was as the media to the students to make the students are able to identify the generic structure and kind of the tense which is used in descriptive paragraph. Then, the students were asked to monitor material of descriptive paragraph. The students were asked also to mention kind of tense in that material and the generic structure of descriptive paragraph. Then, the students were given an explanation about descriptive paragraph, tense that should be used, and the generic structure of descriptive paragraph. After the students had understood descriptive paragraph, the students were given an introduction what Guiding Question Technique is which that technique is the tool to help the students to create descriptive paragraph. The students were given set of the questions related to the topic. After that, this study demonstrated how to use those set of questions as a guidance to write descriptive paragraph and gave the students example of descriptive paragraph that could be create by using those set of questions.

After the students understood how to use the set of questions as guidance to help them in creating descriptive paragraph, the teacher wrote a topic in the whiteboard. This research divided the text into two parts, identification and description. It was used to help the students write the organization of descriptive paragraph easier and in a good order. Beside that, the students were given the set

of questions in each part of descriptive paragraph. The transactional signal also used to help the students more understand.

Bramer and Sedley (1981: 24), asking then answering the questions is a good idea to discover details writing form. This statement is the basic principle of the research to give some questions as the guidance of writing paragraph. The activity is very good activity because by giving some questions that are related to the topic, the student will not be confused about what they are going to write because they were guided to create descriptive paragraph by answering the questions related to the topic given. Therefore, this study applied Guiding Question Technique in the form of guiding questions because a guided writing is used for guiding a learner to write something and one of the possibilities for a guided writing is by giving the learner some questions as guidance before they wrote descriptive paragraph. Because of that, the students could be helped write their ideas by answering the questions. By following some questions related to the topic, the students could write descriptive paragraph easier. Beside that, by the following the questions which are given by the teacher, the students can make their writing flow coherently.

After all students finished their writing, the teacher asked the students to exchange their writing to their partner to correct their writing by seeing the language use and the vocabulary. One of the factors why Guiding Question Technique can increase the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph is because of this activity. This activity can make the students minimize the mistakes by the

students when they wrote descriptive paragraph. After exchanging their writing, the students were expected to realize the mistakes which they made.

After administering the first meeting, the teacher administered the second meeting. In this meeting, the activity was the same activity with the first one. The difference was the students were given their writing in the first meeting after that writing working corrected by the teacher. The students also was tried to make the questions that should be answered by their friend. This study also applied teacher correction because after seeing the result of the students' mistakes in the first meeting. There were many mistakes which were made by the students. Therefore, this study decided to help them by applying teacher correction beside peer correction.

In third meeting, the activity was same. The students were given the material of descriptive paragraph that showed the correct sentence while their working in the second meeting. Then, the teacher and students moved both activities to construct some questions that needed to be answered by the students.

After having three meetings of the treatment, the students were given post-test to investigate their improvements of writing descriptive paragraph. The highest score of the students' writing in post-test was 87. 50 and the lowest score was 60. 00 with the average score was 73. 33.

The findings support the previous research done by Gunawan (2011: 36) that showed the students' ability in writing recount text improved after they had been given the treatment by using Guiding Question Technique. This study used the same technique (Guiding Question Technique) to improve the students ability in writing descriptive paragraph because the previous research done by Gunawan had shown that Guiding Questions Technique could improve the students' writing score. It can be conclude that the students' ability in writing will improve by using Guiding Question Technique in all kind of the text.

The first aspect that improved was grammar. It happened because most of the students had no problem in constructing sentences on Simple Present Tense such as the use of Be (is, are, am) for example "*She is a good woman*", the change verbs when used the Pronoun (she, he it) for example "*My mother teaches the students from 07.30 am until 12. 30 pm*". The same improvement with grammar is mechanic aspect. It happened because the students followed the role that the teacher asked like checking the right spelling of difficult words in the dictionary if they were not sure about the word that they had wrote. Besides, most of the students used correct marker in the sentences. The second aspect that improved was organization aspect. It happened because by the following questions, the students could write descriptive text coherently. The transactional signal made together with the questions were also very helpful the students to make their descriptive paragraph coherent. The third aspect that improved was content aspect. It happened because some of the students can develop the supporting sentences in the organization of the text effectively. They seldom wrote the

supporting sentence out to the topic sentence. While the last aspect that improved after applying Guiding Question Technique was vocabulary. Intents of the students found difficulties in finding the appropriate vocabulary with the context.

Finally, from the result above, this study concludes that the implementation of Guiding Question Technique improved each aspects of writing aspects; content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic. The highest aspect that improved was grammar. This is because descriptive text is using simple present tense that the tense is very familiar. The improvement of the students score is not only in grammar and mechanic but also in all aspects of writing skill, such as vocabulary, content, and organization. This is supported by the theory from Robinson (1967: 2) asserted guided writing as “is able to avoid which serious errors as long as the students along follow the the directions carefully.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

The students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph will improve if the teacher applies Guiding Question Technique in teaching writing. Consider to the conclusion, this study showed the mean score of the pre-test and post-test; they are (54. 58) up to (73. 33). Thus, this technique also improved all aspects of descriptive paragraph writing in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and mechanic.

This study would like to give suggestions to the teacher: they are: (a) English teachers are suggested to apply Guiding Questions Technique as one of the alternative ways to improve the students' writing ability in writing descriptive

paragraph. (b) This study suggests that the teacher should help the students improve their score of vocabulary by giving suggestion to open or use dictionary when they write.

Other suggestions also given to other study, they are: (a) Other study can try to apply Guiding Questions Technique in other kinds of writing , for example in procedure text. (b) Other study can conduct this technique in senior high school.

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