

## **Improving students' ability in writing descriptive text through guiding question at SMPN 13 Bandar Lampung**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The aims of the research were to find out whether there was an improvement of the students' writing ability in descriptive text and students' perceptions after the implementation of Guiding Question. The research was a quantitative-qualitative research. The design used in this research was one group pretest and posttest. The subjects were 24 students of class VIII E of SMP Negeri 13 Bandar Lampung. The instruments were writing test and interview protocol. The data were in the form of scores and transcripts taken from the pretest and posttest and those were analyzed by using Paired Sample t-test. The results showed that students' writing score was gained 13.75 points from 50.16 in pretest to 63.91 in posttest and the statistical result showed that the significance score was 0.00 it means that there is a significant improvement on students' ability in writing descriptive text since  $0.00 < 0.05$ . Furthermore, the result of the interview showed that students found it easy and enjoyed while learning descriptive text through Guiding Questions so it can be concluded that students had positive perceptions during the implementation of guiding questions technique in the class. The result of the interview also shows that most students did not feel any difficult, stressed or frustrated and they were also interested and motivated when this media was applied. It can be concluded that Guiding Questions provides a positive impact for the students when it was applied in the class as a teaching media.

**Keywords:** *guiding questions, writing ability.*

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

English has been positioned as a compulsory subject at middle school, high school and university levels. The goal of teaching English based on curriculum 2013 is to enable the students to communicate in English in both spoken and written forms. To achieve the goal, the students should learn four language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing skill is important for students to master because it shows how capable students are in their language mastery since writing engage all five important components of language; content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. If the students are able to write well, it means that they comprehend those five components well. Raimes (1983) says that writing is a skill in which we express the ideas, feelings, and thoughts arranged in words, sentences, and paragraphs using eyes, brain, and hand. Geyser (2007) states that writing gives student sufficient time to process the information whereas speaking does not. Meanwhile, Nik (2010) states that writing is not just putting pen to paper or writing down ideas but it is how these ideas are presented or expressed effectively. Since early 1950s, students' perceptions also have been an important issue in a

research. Studies were carried out relating to the intelligence, interests, aptitudes, students' personality characteristics and achievements in school. As Shuell (2011) writes, "it is the students' perceptions, prior knowledge, and beliefs that determine what they learn something approximating the instructional goals of the teacher. However, there are still so many students in Indonesia who cannot express their ideas well through writing. This is probably caused either by their environment which does not support them or by their English teachers who do not give adequate motivations and aids for them to write. It was found that there were many students who were confused about what they should write. Sometimes, they made some repetitions of what they had written. They are unable to generate their idea. They get confused how to start to write, how to express their idea in written form, and how to develop their idea. For that reasons, in order to overcome the students' difficulties in writing, the researcher chooses a technique to facilitate the students in writing. One of them is the guiding question. According to Traver (1998), a guiding question is a fundamental query that directs the search for understanding and basically the teacher gives a series of questions related to pictures so that the students will be helped by it. The following specific research questions guided the study:

1. Is there any improvement of students' writing achievement of descriptive text before and after being taught using guiding question?
2. What are the students' perceptions toward the implementation of guiding question in teaching writing descriptive text?

## **II. METHOD**

### **Participant**

The Participants of this study were 24 students of SMPN 13 Bandar Lampung.

### **Instrument**

The instrument of this research were a writing test and also interview protocol.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to get the results of this research, the researcher divided the analysis into quantitative and qualitative data analysis using some steps as follows:

#### **A. Quantitative Data Analysis**

1. Scoring the pre-test and post-test.
2. Tabulating the results of the tests and calculating the means of pre-test and the posttest.
3. Drawing conclusion from the tabulated results of the test given, that is by statistically analyzing the data using Paired Sample t-test to show the differences between pre-test and post-test of experimental class for answering the hypothesis. The data was computed through SPSS.

#### **B. Qualitative Data Analysis**

1. Record the students' answer during the interview.
2. Analyzing the students' answer based on the recorded interview and the transcript.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

The pre-test and post-test were administered in the experimental class to find out whether there is an improvement in students' ability in writing descriptive text. Both pre-test and post-test was given in the form of essay test with time allocation was 80 minutes. The pre-test was conducted in order to know the students' writing skill before being given treatments. Meanwhile, the post-test was conducted in order to find out the students' improvement in writing descriptive text after being taught by guiding questions. The frequency results of the pre-test and post-test are listed as follows:

**Table 1 Students' Pre-test and Post-test Result**

No	Score	Frequency of Pre-test	Frequency of Post-test
1	34-43	2	-
2	44-53	15	-
3	54-63	7	10
4	64-73	-	11
5	74-83	-	3
6	84-93	-	-
TOTAL		24	24
MEAN		50.16	63.91

The pre-test column in the table shows that the students still attained low quality of writing descriptive text before being given treatments. It was found out that the mean score of the pre-test was 50.16 with the highest score was 60 and the lowest score was 40. Besides, the post-test column in the table shows that there is an improvement on students' score after being given the treatments. It was found out that the mean score of post-test was 63.91 with the highest score was 74 and the lowest score was 54.

The researcher used Paired Sample T-Test to test the hypotheses and this was the result of the test.

**Table 2 Paired Sample Statistics**

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Posttest	63.9167	24	6.05710	1.23640
	Pretest	50.1667	24	5.37034	1.09622

**Table 3 Paired Sample Correlations**

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Posttest & Pretest	24	.508	.011

**Table 4 Paired Sample Test**

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	Posttest - Pretest	13.75000	5.69706	1.16291	11.34434 16.15566	11.824	23	.000	

In the table above, we can see that the results showed that the computation of the value of two tailed significance is 0.000. It means that H1 is accepted because  $0.00 < 0.05$ . It proves that there is improvement on students' writing skill from pre-test to post-test after being taught by guiding questions for writing descriptive text. Then, if the t-value (11.069) compared with t-table (2.0518), it can be seen that the students' writing improves since  $t\text{-value} > t\text{-table}$ . It can be concluded that there is an improvement of students' writing in descriptive text through guiding questions for the first grade students of Junior High School 13 Bandar Lampung.

The data of students' perceptions was gained from the guided interview. In the interview, the researcher took 8 students from the class to be the respondents and they were asked about their perceptions after the implementation of guiding questions. To make sure they gave consistent answers, the researcher also made sound records during the interview session. There are five categories of perceptions to bring up students' perceptions such as: difficulty level, stress, confidence, interest, and motivation. The responses for each category were symbolized (+) and (-) for coding purposes. The (+) symbol means positive perception from the respondents for the categories while (-) symbol means respondents' negative perceptions of the implementation of guiding questions. Furthermore, the data of students' perception is showed in the table below:

**Table 5 Result of Students' Interview**

No	Categories	Number of Students' Feedback	
		+	-
1.	Difficulty level	8	0
2.	Stress	7	1
3.	Confidence	7	1
4.	Interest	4	4
5.	Motivation	6	2

## **Discussion**

The results of the research showed that the students' writing skill improved after being taught by guiding questions at the first grade of Junior High School 13 Bandar Lampung. From the results presented before, it can be seen that the score of the students' post-test was higher than the score of pre-test. This can be seen from the mean score of the pre-test was 50.16 which is improved to 63.9 in the post-test. In this research, there was only one class used as the sample of the research. The research was begun by conducting the pre-test. The aim of the pre-test is to see how far the students' skill to write descriptive text. In the pre-test, the researcher found out many students did not have a good idea or content to produce a good text. It can be seen from the students' work, they had limitation in developing the idea. Researcher also still found the problem in the organization that the students were confused to organize their paragraph coherently. The research about students' perceptions that had been conducted by the researcher showed that at least there are five categories of students' perception that can be evaluated as adapted from Mahpul (2014). The result shows that the students had different perceptions after the implementation of guiding questions. It can be seen from all the respondents' answer. Most of the respondents did not feel any difficulties, stressed or frustrated when the media applied in the class. They were also interested and motivated whether this media is applied in further study. It can be concluded that Guiding Questions provides a positive impact for the students when it were applied in the class as a teaching media.

## **IV. CONSLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusions**

The implementation of guiding questions was good to improve students' writing ability. Based on the result of the tests and analyzing the data, there was an improvement in students' writing ability after the implementation of guiding questions. It could be seen from the improvements of students' writing score in the pre-test and post-test. The mean score was improved from 50.16 in pre-test to 63.9 in post-test. Meanwhile, the students had different perceptions after the implementation of guiding questions. It can be seen from all the respondents' answer. Most of the respondents did not feel any difficulties, stressed or frustrated when the media applied in the class. They were also interested and motivated whether this media is applied in further study. It can be concluded that Guiding Questions provides a positive impact for the students when it were applied in the class as a teaching media.

### **Suggestions**

In reference to the conclusion above, the writer gives some suggestions as follows:

#### **A. Suggestions for English Teachers**

1. Considering the advantages of guiding questions, the researcher suggests that English teachers of the class to apply guiding questions as an alternative way in teaching writing especially descriptive text.

2. The learning process should be done effectively by considering the time to apply guiding questions in teaching writing because the teacher need to prepare the learning tools such as printed files of guiding questions and other stuffs.

### **B. Suggestions for Further Researchers**

1. This study was conducted in a junior high school level. Therefore, further researchers may try to find out the effect of using guiding questions in different level of school: senior high school and university level.

2. This study was aimed to find the students' perceptions after the implementation of guiding questions in the class. Therefore, further researcher can try to find out the responses, motivation or attitude of the students. Due to the pandemic condition, the researcher realized there is still any limitation in this research which less take an attention in students difficulty in writing text.

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