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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDED QUESTIONS TECHNIQUE IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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ABSTRACT

This research aims at finding out whether the implementation of guided questions technique can improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text or not. The researcher applied a quasi-experimental research design which involved experimental class and control class. The population of this research was the second-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Toribulu. The sample was VIII B as the control class and VIII C as the experimental class that consist of 20 students for each class. The researcher applied the purposive sampling technique. The instrument used to collect the data was test. The pre-test was administered to measure the students' ability in writing descriptive text before the treatment and the post-test was to measure the students' ability after the treatment. The data gathered from the test were analyzed statistically. The result of the data analysis shows that the hypothesis of the research was accepted regarding the analysis that the $t_{counted}$ (2,076) was higher than the t_{table} (2,0042). The degree of freedom (df) of the table is $N_x + N_y - 2 = 20 + 20 - 2 = 38$ with the level of significance at 0.05. it means that guided questions technique can improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text.

Keywords: *Descriptive Text; Guided Questions; Picture Series Technique*

INTRODUCTION

English is the first foreign language studied at every school in Indonesia. There are four skills that have to be mastered in learning it: listening, speaking, reading and writing. As one of the four skills in learning English, writing plays an important role in developing the ideas of the writer, especially in the written form. "Writing is a skill where people can express the ideas, feelings, and thoughts using eyes, brain, and hand" (Raimes, 1983). It means that students should have the ability to put their thought into words in a meaningful form. The students may communicate and transfer information to the reader through their writing.

On the other hand, some students consider writing as the most difficult skill to be mastered. There are many factors that can cause the problems in writing, such as the difficulties of choosing the appropriate words in writing, the difficulties of arranging words in the appropriate order, the difficulties of writing the sentences in appropriate grammar, there is no feedback on their writing, and the lack of media and techniques used by an English teacher in teaching writing.

Sometimes, students are able to express their ideas by speaking directly, but when they are asked to express their ideas in writing, they appear to be in a quandary about what should they write. Writing English needs hard thinking in producing words, sentences, and paragraphs at the same time. For this problem, the English teacher plays an important role to provide an effective technique and appropriate media in writing, especially when the teacher asked the students to write a descriptive text.

Writing is a skill that is necessary to be developed. Therefore, in teaching writing, we need an effective technique that can improve the students' ability. Sometimes, the teacher does not use an effective method or technique in teaching writing especially descriptive text to encourage the students to write by exploring their ideas. Moreover, most students were not enthusiastic in learning English, when students are less interested in learning it, they tend to be passive in the classroom and have little attention in learning activities.

Descriptive text is a text that explains people, place, or thing particularly. Descriptive text consists of introduction and description. Introduction is the part of the paragraph that introduces the character, and description is the part of the paragraph that describes the character. In descriptive writing, the writer transfers the images and the feeling that the writer experienced to the reader. The main goal of descriptive text is to describe person, place, or thing in such a way that the picture is formed in the readers' minds when they read the text (Hammount, 2010). The purpose of descriptive text is to describe and reveal a particular person, place, or thing in detail. Therefore, students make a clear description in order to make the reader can imagine the object that is described.

As stated in the 2013 curriculum, the students need to develop their ideas competence both in oral and written English. It is stated in *Kompetensi Dasar* (KD) of English in Junior High School that "The students of Junior High School are expected to be able to compile descriptive text about people, animals, or things by observing the aim, text structure, and language feature correctly and contextually". However, based on the information obtained in the observation at SMP Negeri 1 Toribulu, there were some problems faced by students in English class, especially in writing. The problems were identified as follows: 1) Students lack vocabulary. It is hard for them to use the correct words in order to make correct sentences. 2) Students are lack of grammar understanding, 3) Students can't develop their ideas into paragraphs.

Concerning the problem that were faced by the students, the teacher did not use effective methods in the teaching process. She did not give a model to the students on how to write a paragraph. In addition, the time for students to practice their writing is limited. Therefore, the students did not give their full attention, they are busy talking to their friends, and also bored during the learning process.

To overcome the problems above, there are many techniques that can be applied to create a new atmosphere in the classroom. The researcher used one of the easiest techniques that is already known as the best technique in improving English writing. The researcher tried to use guided questions technique in improving students writing skills.

Although, there are many research already discussed this technique. But, the researcher tried to conduct her research in her village. The location, the students, and the environment there still original that needs to be improved. So, the researcher did not use complex technique to improve their ability in writing. The researcher just used the simple one in order the students are easy to understand what the researcher want to explain to them. Therefore, the researcher chose guided questions because it gives the opportunity for the students to develop their own idea freely by answering the questions given by the teacher.

Guided questions technique is a technique in which the teacher asks several questions to help students to write. Asking questions can be a way of playing with the material before deciding what you want to make of its shape (Raymond, 1980:16). Based on the function of this technique, the researcher believed that this technique can help students create descriptive text easily, and make the students easy to develop ideas into paragraphs. The researcher gave questions to students before writing. Questions were made in accordance with the structure of the text to be taught. By using this technique, students will not be bored and be more active in following the learning process. The teaching and learning goals can be achieved easily.

The researcher read some previous research about guided questions technique. Some researchers had investigated the effect of guided questions technique in teaching writing. One of them is guided questions technique. It is effective in improving the students ability in writing procedure texts as suggested by Haryanto. In his study, he proved that guided questions technique is effective to improve students' skill in writing. It used quasi-experimental research design. The population of this research was the eleventh grade students at SMA Taman Siswa Teluk Betung Bandar Lampung. The researcher chose the sample randomly by using the cluster random sampling technique (Haryanto, 2018). The current research is different from the previous one. In this current research, the dependent variable is the students' ability in writing descriptive text. The population of this research is the second-grade students' of SMP Negeri 1 Toribulu. The difference is also found in obtaining the sample. In the previous research, the researcher used cluster random sampling, but in this research, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique.

The second research was conducted by Imanisa. The use of guided questions technique to teach writing descriptive text is aimed at finding out whether there is a difference in the students' ability in writing descriptive text before and after being taught through guided questions technique, and to investigate which aspects of writing improved the most. This research was a pre-experimental research design. The scope of this research was evaluated based on content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The population of this research was the second grade students of SMPN 23 Bandar Lampung and the sample was chosen randomly (Imanisa, 2017). The second previous research has some differences from the current research. Firstly, the second previous research used a pre-experinmental research design, while the current research used quasi-experimental research design. Secondly, the sample of the second previous research was chosen randomly, while the current research was chosen by using the purposive sampling technique. Thirdly, the scope of the second previous research was evaluated based on content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics, while the current research focused on checking the students' vocabulary, grammar and organization.

The researchers above prove the influence the use of guided questions in learning English. That is why the researcher is interested to apply this technique in teaching writing descriptive text to the second-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Toribulu.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing

Writing is one of the skills in learning English. Writing requires thinking hard to develop ideas into paragraphs. It usually makes students are difficult to master writing subject because they have to produce a text by using English. They have to write about what they think in their paper by using the correct procedure. "Writing is a two – step process. First, you figure out your meaning, then you put it into language" (Brown, 2001).

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. 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 (Tarigan, 1987). 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 four main stages of the process of writing that is planning, drafting, revising and editing. Planning or prewriting is an activity that encourages the students to write. Drafting is the process of gathering ideas for the first. Revising is the stage of reviewing the text on the basic of feedback given. Editing is the process of tidying up the text for grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction, sentence structure and accuracy for preparing the final draft (Richard & Renandya, 2002).

Writing is a written productive skill. It is a way of remembering and a way of thinking. The purpose of writing skill is to share information from spoken language into written language. There are many factors influencing writing to be a good one such as grammatical, vocabularies and mechanics. Because of that, writing is not easy. It needs a hard work. It needs a great thinking to produce writing which begin from getting main idea, planning, and revising procedure. In reaching the whole, it requires the specific skill which not all the people could develop it.

Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a type of text whose purpose is to provide a description of a particular person, place or object. Its aim is also to inform the readers about how something or someone looks like. "A good description is a word picture; the reader can imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind." (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). So, it is as if the reader feels what the author has written or described. The goals of a good descriptive writing is to involve the reader in the story as much as possible. In summary, descriptive paragraph is a skill in writing that provides a concrete description about the object based on the author's point of view. The writer must describe the object as concrete as possible that makes the reader catch the information easily.

Descriptive paragraph is a paragraph that describes something in details. Descriptive paragraph is giving a picture in words that appeal directly to the sense (sight,

sound, smell, touch, taste). Warriner stated that a descriptive paragraph is normally full of vivid verbs and precise adjectives. It depends on details, not action, to hold the readers interest (Warriner, 1982). Descriptive paragraph describing something using a certain sequence to facilitate the reader understand what the author wants to tell to the reader. Paragraph composition in the paragraph such as format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, grammar and sentence structures (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). In the format consists of title of the paragraph, punctuation and mechanics consists of spelling and the use of punctuation correctly, content consists of the main idea of paragraph, organization consists of generic structure of descriptive paragraph, and sentence structure consists of grammatical usage.

Guided Questions

A guided question technique is a technique which used to guide the students to write something by giving some questions. Through this technique, this can make it easier for the students to develop their ideas and make coherence paragraph. Therefore, it minimize the mistakes made by the students. The aim of this technique is to help the students in gathering idea before starting writing. Asking and answering questions is a good method to discover details of experience (Bramer & Sedley, 1981). So, giving questions to the students is expected to stimulate students' thoughts and they can compose the paragraph by answering the questions given to them. In this way, the students can write well because they are guided by the questions.

Guided questions is a technique in teaching learning writing by using some questions to help writing. To make the questions and answer clearly, the characteristics of the questions must be pay attention before making questions is WH questions and based of the features of descriptive text. This means that, when the teacher asks the questions, it will make the students to open their brain to create their ideas. In addition, asking questions about a problem or topic is a way to learn about it and decide what to do or say. It is a useful and systematic approach to explore a topic (Axelrod & Cooper, 1985). Meanwhile, they need to know the topic might consider using the questions. He called this by *5Ws and the H grid*. He draws this method by a table.

Guided questions technique is used to help the students in gathering idea by giving some guided questions. In teaching English descriptive text by using guided questions, the teachers have to provide the guided questions in order to help the students in gathering idea easier in learning it. In learning writing by using guided questions, the students are going to write by answering the first question and so on. By answering the guided questions provided by the teacher, it can help the students in writing coherently.

To apply Guided Questions in teaching descriptive text, the researcher proposes some steps as follows:

1. Theresearcher explains about descriptive text.
2. After explaining about descriptive text, the researcher explains about Guided Questions Technique.
3. The researcher explains and gives the example of making descriptive text by using Guided Questions.
4. The researcher asks the students to make descriptive text.

5. The researcher guides the students in gathering ideas to make descriptive text by using Guided Questions.
6. The researcher asks the students to present the descriptive text they made.
7. The researcher and the students check the result together.
8. The researcher gives feedback to the students.

METHOD

This research was a quasi-experimental research design. The sample of the research was divided into two classes: experimental class and control class. The test was given to both classes. In the experimental class, the researcher gave a treatment by using guided questions in teaching writing in descriptive text, while in the control class, the researcher taught writing of descriptive text by asking the students to write a descriptive text based on the picture given by the researcher.

The population of the research was the second-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Toribulu which consists of three parallel classes, VIII A, VIII B, and VIII C. Each class consists of 20 students, in a total of 60 students. The researcher used test as the instrument of the research. The test in this research consists of pre-test and post-test. At the beginning of the meeting, the researcher gave the students pre-test as a tool to measure the students' writing ability. After giving the pre-test, the researcher gave treatment to the students. Then the last, the researcher gave a post-test to the students to measure or see whether there was any improvement or not after the treatment.

The researcher analyzed the data of the test statistically. First, she computed the individual score by using formula stated by Arikunto (2006) as follows:

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

Second, the researcher calculated the students' mean score of each group by using the formula stated by Hatch and Farhady (1982):

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}$$

After getting the mean score, the researcher calculated the result of the mean score and the square deviation to find out whether there is a significant difference between the result of the experimental and the control classes or not by using the formula by Arikunto:

$$t = \frac{M_x - M_y}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\Sigma x^2 + \Sigma y^2}{Nx + Ny - 2}\right) \left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right)}}$$

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher finished her findings research at SMP Negeri 1 Toribulu. The researcher used quasi-experimental design and gave two kinds of test to the students, the pre-test and the post-test. The population is the second grade students. The researcher did this research to find out the reason of the students' difficulties in improving their writing. Concerning the students' problems in writing, the researcher conducted the treatment by using guided questions technique to the experimental class for eight meetings. Before applying the treatment, the researcher conducted a pre-test to measure the students'

proficiency. The students' mean score for experimental class in the pre-test is 34,99 and for the control class is 37,77. The result of the pre-test shows that both experimental and control classes got low scores in writing descriptive text. That is why the researcher chose guided questions technique to improve their writing ability.

After giving the pre-test, the researcher was starting to teach the experimental class by using guided questions technique. In the first meeting of treatment, the researcher asked the students to write descriptive text related to the topic given by the researcher. It indicates that the students in the experimental class got confused about how to write a descriptive text. After that, the researcher started by introducing descriptive text and its generic structure. Then, the researcher explained simple present tense because this tense is used to make a descriptive paragraph. After that, the researcher explained the language features of descriptive text by using noun and adjective. Next, the researcher showed several examples of descriptive text and explained how to write descriptive paragraph by using guided questions. For each meeting, the researcher taught the students to make descriptive text through guided questions.

After conducting the treatment, the researcher gave a post-test to both experimental class and control class on 10th of June 2021 in order to find out whether the students' ability is improved or not. The result shows that the students' post-test scores in the experimental class are better than their pre-test. It can be seen from the mean score of experimental class; 73,88. While the mean score of control class is 54,99. Furthermore, the total score of the students in the experimental class is higher than the total score in control class. It was influenced by using guided questions technique that was conducted in experimental class. By using this technique, the students develop the idea on their writing directionally. It can minimize mistake made by the students and they didn't need to think hard about what they should write because they follow the direction given by the researcher. In addition, the result above means that it proved the effectiveness of using guided questions technique after giving the treatment, and the hypothesis of this research is accepted.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher concluded that the use of guided questions technique is effective in improving the students' ability in writing the descriptive text in the second grade at SMP Negeri 1 Toribulu. It was proved by looking at the result of $t_{counted}(2,076)$ was higher than $t_{table}(2,0042)$. It means that the hypothesis of this research is accepted. So, it could be concluded that the use of guided questions significantly affects the students' ability in writing descriptive text.

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