

## **The 'Guided Question' Technique For Improving The Descriptive Text Writing Skills (Grade XI-4 Students SMA Negeri 10 Semarang)**

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### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi dampak penerapan teknik "Guided Question" terhadap kemampuan menulis deskriptif siswa di kelas XI-4 SMA Negeri 10 Semarang dalam mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) selama dua siklus pembelajaran. Pada awal penelitian, kondisi awal kemampuan menulis siswa hanya mencapai sekitar 27,78%. Teknik "Guided Question" kemudian diterapkan dalam pembelajaran menulis deskriptif selama siklus 1, yang menghasilkan peningkatan signifikan menjadi 50% siswa yang berhasil menyelesaikan tugas menulis dengan baik. Siklus 2 dilakukan untuk mengukur dampak jangka panjang dari penerapan teknik ini. Hasilnya menunjukkan peningkatan lebih lanjut, dengan 88,89% siswa yang berhasil menulis dengan baik. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa teknik "Guided Question" efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa. Rekomendasi diberikan kepada guru Bahasa Inggris untuk mengintegrasikan teknik ini dalam pembelajaran menulis deskriptif. Meskipun demikian, penelitian ini memiliki keterbatasan, termasuk ukuran sampel yang terbatas dan keterbatasan waktu. Penelitian lebih lanjut dapat melibatkan populasi yang lebih besar dan periode waktu yang lebih panjang untuk mengkonfirmasi temuan ini. Kemampuan menulis yang kuat adalah keterampilan penting yang akan memberikan manfaat jangka panjang bagi perkembangan akademis dan profesional siswa di masa depan.

**Kata kunci:** Kemampuan Menulis, Teknik "Guided Question", Penelitian Tindakan Kelas, Bahasa Inggris, Pembelajaran Menulis Deskriptif.

### **ABSTRACT**

*This research aims to evaluate the impact of implementing the "Guided Question" technique on the descriptive writing skills of grade XI-4 students at SMA Negeri 10 Semarang in the subject of English. The study employs the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method over two instructional cycles. At the outset of the research, students' initial writing proficiency stood at approximately 27.78%. The "Guided Question" technique was then applied during the first cycle of descriptive writing instruction, resulting in a significant improvement with 50% of the students successfully completing writing tasks proficiently. A second cycle was conducted to assess the long-term effects of implementing this technique, revealing a further improvement, with 88.89% of students effectively mastering descriptive writing. The results of the research demonstrate the effectiveness of the "Guided Question" technique in enhancing students' writing skills. Recommendations are provided to English teachers to integrate this technique into descriptive writing instruction. Nonetheless, the study has limitations, including a limited sample size and time constraints. Further research involving a larger population and an extended timeframe is suggested to validate these findings. Proficiency in writing is a crucial skill that offers long-term benefits for students' academic and professional development in the future.*

**Keywords:** Writing Skills, "Guided Question" Technique, Classroom Action Research, English, Descriptive Writing Instruction.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the crucial aspects of human resource development, and writing skills are a key competency that every individual should master. Writing is a vital language skill, not only in an educational context but also in everyday life and professional careers. One of the steps taken by the government to address this challenge is through the introduction of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Curriculum is a complex entity with multiple dimensions. It serves as the foundation for the entire learning process, from start to finish, and is at the core of the education system that needs to be evaluated innovatively, dynamically, and periodically to keep up with the times. According to the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education (Kemendikbudristek), there are several advantages to implementing the Independent Learning curriculum. These advantages include ease, simplicity, and depth, as it focuses on the essential aspects of developing students' competencies according to their developmental stages (Badiah, L. I., Jauhari, M. N., & Mambela, S. 2020). Schools have the authority to make the curriculum more adaptable and are empowered to manage it, creating learning experiences tailored to the characteristics of the educational units and students (Badiah, L. I. 2020). In today's technological era, the advancement of knowledge and skills related to the ever-evolving field of science and technology is highly encouraged. Educational curricula are flexible by nature, as they must continually adapt to the needs and characteristics of students in line with the changing times.

Alexander LG (1975) stated that the four basic language skills are Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. In his book, he also emphasized that among these four language skills, speaking and writing are the most crucial. "Speaking and writing are the most important of these skills since, to some extent, they presuppose the other two." Based on this statement, writing is one of the abilities assessed at various educational levels. Unfortunately, based on assessments conducted by various parties,

especially in the context of descriptive text writing, it is often found that students' writing skills are still lacking. Students tend to struggle with expressing ideas, elaborating on descriptions, and composing high-quality descriptive texts. Various factors can contribute to this low writing proficiency, including a lack of understanding of the structure of descriptive texts, limited experience in written communication, and a deficiency in skills for constructing effective sentences and paragraphs.

Therefore, sustained efforts are needed to enhance the descriptive text writing skills of grade XI-4 students at SMA Negeri 10 Semarang, specifically in the subject of English. One of the approaches that can be taken is to develop techniques or teaching methods that can assist students in better understanding, elaborating on, and organizing descriptive texts. One such technique that can be utilized is the "Guided Question" technique. This technique involves the use of specifically designed questions to guide students in developing their understanding of the topic they are writing about and to help them create more comprehensive and in-depth descriptions.

Based on the background discussed above, the primary issue identified is the low level of students' ability in writing descriptive texts. This is reflected in the assessment results, which indicate that most students face difficulties in elaborating descriptions, organizing ideas, and composing cohesive and high-quality descriptive texts. In some cases, students may even lack a sufficient understanding of the structure and components of descriptive texts.

This research will narrow down the issue to the 11th-grade students at SMA Negeri 10 Semarang in the subject of English. This restriction is made to focus the research on students' understanding and ability to write descriptive texts in the context of English language learning.

Based on the identified issues, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How can the "Guided Question" technique be applied in teaching descriptive text writing?
2. Can the implementation of the "Guided Question" technique improve students' ability to write descriptive texts?

To address these issues, the research will implement the "Guided Question" technique as a teaching method designed to help students better understand, elaborate, and compose descriptive texts. The use of this technique will be studied in-depth and evaluated continuously to enhance students' descriptive writing abilities.

## 2. METHOD

In this research, various data collection techniques will be employed to gather the necessary information. The first is Observation, it will be conducted to directly observe students' behavior during the learning process. This observation will encompass students' reactions to the "Guided Question" technique, their interaction with the instructor, and active participation in writing activities. Next is Field Notes, during the observation process, field notes will be taken to record significant events, student reactions, and relevant observations. These notes will serve as additional sources of data used in the analysis. The last is tests, it will be utilized to measure students' descriptive writing abilities before and after the application of the "Guided Question" technique. These tests will be specifically designed to assess relevant aspects of writing skills, including text structure, language usage, and the ability to elaborate on descriptions.

The Classroom Action Research (CAR) was conducted at SMA Negeri 10 Semarang, located at Jl. Padi Raya No.16, Gebangsari, Genuk District, Semarang City, Central Java 50117. The researcher selected SMA Negeri 10 Semarang as the research site because it served as the location for our Second Teacher Professional Program (PPL 2), where the writer gained teaching experience during guided and independent teaching cycles. This experience enabled the writer to identify issues related to student learning,

particularly in the context of English subject.

In this study, various instruments will be employed for data collection and evaluation purposes. These instruments are designed to comprehensively assess the impact of the "Guided Question" technique on students' descriptive writing abilities. The research instruments include:

- a. Observation: An observation sheet will be meticulously crafted to document observations made during the learning process. The observation sheet will encompass items relevant to students' reactions, interactions, and active participation. By systematically noting these aspects, the observation sheet aims to provide insights into the real-time dynamics of the learning environment, particularly how students respond to the application of the "Guided Question" technique. This qualitative data collection method will enable a nuanced understanding of student engagement and behavior throughout the study.
- b. Field Notes: Field notes will be maintained in the form of a journal or daily diary to capture significant events, student reactions, and pertinent observations. These unstructured notes will serve as a narrative record of the research context, allowing for the contextualization of observed behaviors and experiences. The field notes provide an additional layer of qualitative data that supplements the quantitative results, offering valuable context for the analysis.
- c. Descriptive Writing Assessment: To gauge students' descriptive writing abilities, a comprehensive assessment tool will be developed. This assessment will consist of a series of questions specifically designed to measure various facets of descriptive writing skills. The assessment will be administered both before and after the implementation of the "Guided Question" technique to evaluate changes in students' writing proficiency. This mixed-methods approach will provide valuable quantitative data, allowing for a precise analysis of improvement, while also

enabling a qualitative assessment of the quality and depth of students' descriptive writing. The assessment will encompass multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and a descriptive writing task, thereby offering a comprehensive view of students' progress.

The research procedure in this study encompasses several key stages.

#### 1. Pre-Cycle

- a. Initial Needs Identification: In this phase, the researcher conducts an initial assessment to understand the current writing abilities of grade XI-4 students. Data is collected to determine the baseline level of descriptive writing skills before introducing the "Guided Question" technique.
- b. Lesson Planning: Based on the findings from the initial need's assessment, a preliminary lesson plan is developed. This plan outlines the teaching materials and strategies that will incorporate the "Guided Question" technique to enhance students' descriptive writing abilities.
- c. Pre-Teaching: In this phase, the researcher introduces the initial lessons to students. The focus is on providing students with a foundational understanding of the "Guided Question" technique and the fundamentals of descriptive writing.

#### 2. Cycle I

Cycle I follows a systematic approach, comprising four key stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Each stage serves a specific purpose in the research procedure.

- a. Planning: In the planning stage of Cycle I, the researcher designs and organizes the learning activities and materials, ensuring that the "Guided Question" technique is implemented effectively.
- b. Acting: This stage involves the actual implementation of the planned lessons and the application of the "Guided Question" technique in the classroom.
- c. Observing: During this stage, the researcher closely observes and assesses the students' responses, engagement, and progress in relation to the applied technique and lesson content.

- d. Reflecting: The reflecting stage is essential for analyzing the outcomes of Cycle I. The researcher evaluates the effectiveness of the technique, identifies areas for improvement, and uses the insights gained to plan Cycle II.

#### 3. Cycle II

Cycle II represents a refined phase of the research procedure, building upon the lessons learned from Cycle I. It also includes the four essential stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

This detailed description provides a comprehensive understanding of the research procedure, emphasizing the structured approach to improving students' descriptive writing skills through the "Guided Question" technique.

The data analysis technique involved observing students' attentiveness in the classroom using a predefined observation format and assessing students' learning outcomes in each cycle. This allowed for the calculation of the percentage increase in learning outcomes, which was then described to draw conclusions. In determining the percentage of student learning outcomes, the following formula was used:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100 \%$$

Explanation:

P = Percentage

F = Number of indicators

N = Number of students

The parameters of this research are learning mastery, both at the individual and class levels. Data regarding student learning mastery are determined by evaluating individual students who have participated in the Visual learning media implementation. In this study, students are considered to have achieved mastery when they attain a score of  $\geq 75$ , which is the Minimum Competence Standard (KKM).

To determine individual student learning mastery during the learning process, the following formula is used:

Based on the criteria, an individual

$$\text{Ketuntasan individu} = \frac{\text{jumlah jawaban individu yang benar}}{\text{jumlah soal}} \times 100 \%$$

student is considered to have achieved mastery if they score 75% of the total number of questions given or obtain a score

of 75 (Depdiknas, 2006). Class-level mastery is determined by the formula:

Class-level mastery is achieved when a class scores 85% of the number of students who have achieved individual mastery or obtains a score of 75

$$\text{Ketuntasan Klasikal} = \frac{\text{jumlah siswa yang tuntas}}{\text{jumlah siswa}} \times 100 \%$$

(Depdiknas, 2006). The improvement in students' learning outcomes is assessed by comparing their scores from the baseline test, the cycle 1 test, and the cycle 2 daily quizzes, which represent progress scores. The success indicator for this research is marked by a minimum of 85% of students meeting the Minimum Competence Standard (KKM) criteria, which is 75 for the Descriptive Text material.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher aims to present the results of a study conducted on the XI-4th-grade students of SMA Negeri 10 Semarang to address the issue. The purpose of this research is to prove whether the use of "Guided Question" technique can improve students' learning outcomes or not.

**Tabel 1.** Student Learning Achievement Completion Data in Pre-Cycle

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Complete	10	27,8%
2	Incomplete	26	72.2%
TOTAL		36	100%

The average writing ability of students only reached approximately 30% of the 100-point assessment scale. This indicates that the majority of students faced challenges in developing a strong thesis, organizing the text effectively, using appropriate vocabulary, and achieving the overall quality of the text that aligns with the topic and purpose.

First paragraph development in their descriptive texts often lacked clarity, and the text structure was frequently disorganized. Grammatical and spelling errors were also common in students'

writing. While some effort was made to compose descriptive texts, most students still encountered difficulties in creating a coherent flow of thought and presenting adequate details in their writing. The use of rich vocabulary and engaging expressions was also limited in students' writing.

**Tabel 2.** Student Learning Achievement Completion Data in Cycle 1

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Complete	18	50%
2	Incomplete	18	50%
TOTAL		36	100%

From Table 2. a significant improvement in students' writing ability is evident. Approximately 18 students, or around 50%, successfully completed the writing task well. This indicates a significant enhancement in students' writing abilities following the implementation of the "Guided Question" technique in the teaching process. However, class-level mastery, according to the Depdiknas (2006) standards, which require achieving a score of 85% in accordance with subject criteria for mastery, has not yet been reached.

The test results conducted in cycle II showed an improvement compared to the test results in cycle I. The increase in student learning outcomes can be observed in the following table.

**Tabel 3.** Student Learning Achievement Completion Data in Cycle 1

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Complete	32	88,8%
2	Incomplete	4	11,2%
TOTAL		36	100%

From Table 3. above, an improvement in student learning outcomes in cycle II is evident. In Cycle 2, there was further enhancement in students' writing abilities. Approximately 36 students, or around 88.8%, successfully completed the writing task well. This high percentage

demonstrates a significant positive impact of the "Guided Question" technique in improving students' writing abilities. This figure already meets the criteria for class-level mastery, which is 85%, as per the mastery criteria according to Depdiknas in 2006. This indicates that students are motivated and have an interest in learning English. The improvement in learning outcomes has reached the Minimum Competence Standard (KKM), even though four students did not achieve mastery.

The data indicates that the percentage of students who have achieved mastery in cycle II has reached the minimum competency standard at the class level, even though there are still four students who have not achieved mastery. This issue will be addressed by providing remedial support. Based on the reflective results, there is no need to proceed to cycle III, and the class is considered to have achieved mastery in the Descriptive Text material.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The conclusion of this study is that the implementation of the "Guided Question" technique in teaching descriptive writing has significantly improved the writing abilities of grade XI-4 students at SMA Negeri 10 Semarang. The positive impact is evident in the increased number of students who successfully completed the writing task, reaching 88.89% in Cycle 2, compared to the initial condition where only 27.78% succeeded. Therefore, this technique can be recommended for use in teaching writing to assist students in developing their descriptive writing skills. However, this study has limitations, including a limited sample size, time constraints, and a focus on the primary variable. Further research is needed to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of this technique in a broader context.

The results of this study have shown several notable impacts on the students. Firstly, there has been a substantial increase in students' motivation and interest in learning English. The application of the "Guided Question" technique has engaged students more

actively in the writing process, making it a more enjoyable and interactive experience. This increased motivation has positively influenced their learning outcomes.

Secondly, the students have shown a significant improvement in their descriptive writing abilities. The use of the "Guided Question" technique has helped them to better understand the structure and components of descriptive texts. Their writing has become more organized, coherent, and well-structured, with a more extensive use of descriptive vocabulary.

Furthermore, students have developed a clearer understanding of how to elaborate on descriptions effectively, resulting in more detailed and comprehensive written pieces. This improvement in writing skills has not only enhanced their academic performance but also their overall communication skills.

Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations can be made. First, for teachers of English, it is advisable to consider implementing the "Guided Question" technique in the teaching of descriptive writing. During the instructional process, teachers can plan guided questions that are more specific and directly related to the topic being taught, enhancing students' ability to understand and write descriptive texts effectively. Second, students can play an active role in improving their writing skills by utilizing the "Guided Question" technique as a tool. They should engage actively with the guided questions presented during the learning process, making a conscious effort to provide more detailed and comprehensive descriptions in their writing. Lastly, for future research, there is potential to explore the impact of alternative techniques in teaching descriptive writing. Expanding the research to different educational levels can provide valuable insights into the effects of this technique across various stages of education. These recommendations collectively aim to enhance the teaching and learning of descriptive writing, and further studies can contribute to a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of various teaching techniques in this context.

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