

**The Use of Dialogue Journal to Improve Descriptive Writing
Achievement of the Eighth Grade Students of MTs Negeri 1
Palembang**

A Thesis

By

Ghina Salsabila

Student Number: 06011281320011

English Education Study Program



**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY
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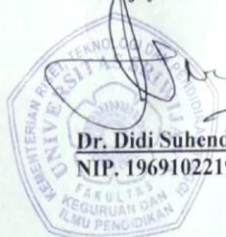
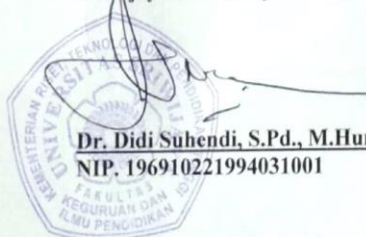
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Certify that the thesis entitled “The Use of Dialogue Journal to Improve Descriptive Writing Achievement of the Eighth Grade Students of MTs N 1 Palembang” is my own work, and I did not do any plagiarism or inappropriate quotation against the ethic and rules commenced by the Ministry of Republic Number 17, 2010 regarding plagiarism in higher education. Therefore, I deserve to face the court if they find me to have plagiarized this work.

Palembang, May 2018

The Undersigned



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THESIS DEDICATIONS

This thesis is dedicated to:

✚ My beloved father, Yahya, S.Pd.

✚ My beloved mother, Dra. Asnani Hayati, M.Si.

✚ My beloved siblings, Ahmad Fadholi Merdeka and Husnul Khotimah Yas.

MOTTO

-Fall down six times, Get up seven-

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The Writer,

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE	i
APPROVAL	ii
COMMITTEE APPROVAL.....	iii
DECLARATION OF PLAGIARISM	iv
THESIS DEDICATIONS & MOTTO	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF APPENDICES	x
ABSTRACT	xii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 The Problems of the Study	4
1.3 The Objectives of the Study	4
1.4 The Significance of the Study	4
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	5
2.1 The Concept of Writing.....	5
2.2 The Concept of Descriptive Writing	6
2.3 The Concept of Dialogue Journal.....	9
2.4 The Steps of Teaching Descriptive Writing by Using Dialogue Journal .	12
2.5 Previous Related Studies	12
2.6 Hypotheses of the Study.....	14
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	15
3.1 Method of the Study	15
3.2 Teaching Procedure	16
3.2.1 The Teaching Procedure for Experimental Group	16
3.3 The Variables of the Study	20
3.4 Operational Definitions	20

3.5 Population and Sample.....	21
3.5.1 Population of the Study	21
3.5.2 Sample of the Study	22
3.6 Techniques for Collecting the Data.....	23
3.6.1 Test.....	23
3.6.2 Rubric	23
3.6.3 Validity of the Test.....	27
3.6.4 Reliability of the Test.....	28
3.7 Techniques for Analyzing the Data.....	29
3.7.1 The t-Test	29
CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION.....	30
4.1 Findings of the Study	30
4.1.1 The Results of the Pretest and Posttest of Writing Test in the Experimental Group.....	30
4.1.2 The Results of the Pretest and Posttest of Writing Test in the Control Group	32
4.2 Statistical Analyses	33
4.2.1 The Analysis of Normality Test	33
4.2.2 The Analysis of Homogeneity Test.....	34
4.2.3 Results of Paired Sample t-Test of Experimental and Control Groups.....	35
4.2.4 Results of Independent Sample t-Test.....	38
4.3 Interpretation of the Study.....	39
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS	43
5.1 Conclusions	43
5.2 Suggestions.....	44
REFERENCES.....	45
APPENDICES	48

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	List of Meetings and Activities for Experimental Group	18
Table 2	Distribution of the Population	22
Table 3	Sample of the Study.....	23
Table 4	Composition Profile.....	23
Table 5	Classification of the Students' Scores	26
Table 6	Test Specifications.....	27
Table 7	Inter-rater Reliability of Pretest and Posttest.....	28
Table 8	The Score Distribution in the Experimental Group.....	31
Table 9	The Score Distribution in the Control Group	32
Table 10	Normality Test of the Experimental and Control Groups	33
Table 11	The Results of Homogeneity Test	34
Table 12	The Results of Paired Sample t-Test of Experimental and Control Groups	35
Table 13	The Results of Paired Sample t-Test of Aspects of Writing in the Experimental Group	36
Table 14	The Results of Paired Sample t-Test of Aspects of Writing in the Control Group.....	36
Table 15	The Results of Independent Sample t-Test of Experimental and Control Groups	37
Table 16	The Results of Independent Sample t-Test of Aspects of Writing in the Experimental and Control Groups.....	38

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	: Writing Test
APPENDIX B	: Interview Transcript
APPENDIX C	: Lesson Plan
APPENDIX D	: The Level of Appropriateness of Writing Test Items
APPENDIX E	: Attendance List of Experimental Group
APPENDIX F	: Attendance List of Control Group
APPENDIX G	: Letter of Statement of Being Rater
APPENDIX H	: Pretest and Posttest Score in Experimental Group
APPENDIX I	: Pretest and Posttest Score in Control Group
APPENDIX J	: The Result of Reliability Test
APPENDIX K	: The Result of Normality Test
APPENDIX L	: The Result of Homogeneity Test
APPENDIX M	: Paired Sample t-Test of Experimental Group
APPENDIX N	: Paired Sample t-Test of Control Group
APPENDIX O	: Paired Sample t-Test of Aspects of Writing of Experimental Group
APPENDIX P	: Paired Sample t-Test of Aspects of Writing of Control Group
APPENDIX Q	: Independent Sample t-Test of Experimental and Control Groups
APPENDIX R	: Independent Sample t-Test of Aspects of Writing of Experimental and Control Groups
APPENDIX S	: The Result of Descriptive Statistic in Experimental and Control Groups
APPENDIX T	: Students' Descriptive Writing in Pretest and Posttest of Experimental Group
APPENDIX U	: Students' Descriptive Writing in Pretest and Posttest of Control Group

APPENDIX V	: Students' Journals
APPENDIX W	: Usul Judul Skripsi
APPENDIX X	: Approval of Research Design Seminar
APPENDIX Y	: Letter of Having Conducted the Research Design Seminar
APPENDIX Z	: Suggestion List of Research Design Seminar
APPENDIX AA	: SK Pembimbing
APPENDIX AB	: Permohonan Surat Izin Penelitian kepada Kementerian Agama Kota Palembang
APPENDIX AC	: Surat Izin Penelitian dari Kementerian Agama Kota Palembang
APPENDIX AD	: Surat Keterangan Telah Melaksanakan Penelitian
APPENDIX AE	: Approval of Preliminary Research Report Seminar
APPENDIX AF	: Letter of Having Conducted the Preliminary Research Report Seminar
APPENDIX AG	: Suggestion List of Preliminary Research Report Seminar
APPENDIX AH	: Approval of Final Exam
APPENDIX AI	: Documentation
APPENDIX AJ	: Thesis Consultation Card

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ACHIEVEMENT OF THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF MTS NEGERI 1
PALEMBANG**

ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to find out whether or not: 1) there was any significant difference in descriptive writing achievement between the eighth grade students of MTs N 1 Palembang who were taught by using dialogue journal and those who were not and 2) whether or not there was any significant difference in descriptive writing achievement before and after the eighth grade students of MTs N 1 Palembang were taught by using dialogue journal. There were 60 students of eighth grade taken as the sample. They were divided into control and experimental groups which both of the groups were 30 students. The technique of selecting the sample was purposive sampling method. In collecting the data, both groups were given pretest and posttest. The data were analyzed by using Paired Sample t- Test and Independent sample t- Test. The results obtained from Paired Sample t- Test showed that there was a significant difference in students' writing achievement before and after the students were taught by using dialogue journal since the p -value was lower than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). The results obtained from Independent Sample t- Test of the posttest in both experimental and control groups showed that there was a significant difference in descriptive writing achievement between the students who were taught by using dialogue journal and those who were not as the p -value lower than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). So, dialogue journal was effective to be applied in teaching descriptive writing for the eighth grade students of MTs N 1 Palembang.

Keywords: *Writing, Descriptive Writing, Dialogue Journal*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses: (1) background, (2) the problems of the study, (3) the objectives of the study, and (4) the significance of the study.

1.1 Background

Writing is one of the skills in English that students need to master beside the other language skills. Writing is a skill which requires organization of ideas to be communicated in a text. To produce a good writing, a writer needs to consider all of the components of writing. Indeed, writing entails many complex components such as grammar, spelling, vocabulary, mechanics, unity, coherence, and cohesion (Hogue, 2003). Hogue also states that writing a good paragraph cannot be done without any planning, editing, or rearranging. Moreover, the students need concentration and more practice to learn how to organize a good writing to make it perfect.

The students may have some problems in writing. When they try to write, sometimes they get stuck with some words they are going to use. Even though the topic has been given, they do not know how to express their ideas. It makes them frustrated because even though the ideas are flowing over their mind, they do not know how to write a paragraph in the right way. Therefore, the teacher must be creative in order to make writing a pleasant activity. It is important for teachers to teach by using a suitable technique.

Based on the contents of junior high school syllabus (Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional, 2013), the writer found there are two types of writing applied in teaching English for the eighth grades' junior high school namely descriptive and procedure. Between the two types of writing, the writer focused her study on descriptive writing.

One of the text types taught for junior high school students is a descriptive text. Kane (2000) states that description is about sensory experience-how something looks, sounds, and tastes. Mostly, it is about visual experience, but description also

deals with other kinds of perception. Moreover, Savage and Shafiei (2007) state that in descriptive paragraph, the writer uses words that create an image and help the reader sees, touches, feels, smells or tastes the topic that she or he is describing. In other words, descriptive text is a kind of text which describes the particular person, place, or thing.

English has been taught in Indonesia for several purposes; to give knowledge of English, make students be able to communicate and compete in the globalization era because everything used English. Teaching English is considered to be one of the most challenging teaching practices. However, to produce a piece of writing is a challenge task for EFL students. Students are usually afraid of joining English classes. Their mindsets say English is difficult to learn. There are some facts of problems in students' writing. First, the study conducted by Imron (2000) showed that Indonesian students' writing ability is the lowest in Asia. Second, some studies report that most of the EFL/ ESL students are still in the low level in terms of their writing ability (Ihsan, 2016; Nordin & Mohammad, 2006; Kim & Kim, 2005). Third, Afrilyasanti (2013) states that "in Indonesia 75% of students are unable to write since they face some problems in learning EFL writing for example; the time given to the students to write is limited to expressing their idea freely, and also many EFL students do not feel confident with their sentence structures" (p.1). The students commonly find the difficulties in grammar, choice of words, and coherence.

Based on the interview with the English teacher of MTs Negeri 1 Palembang on October, 26th 2017, the writer found that most of the eighth graders had problems in writing like; the students did not put the capital letter in the sentence because they were careless of writing, and they had a lack of vocabulary which made them difficult to write, so every student needed a dictionary. Moreover, the students had grammatical errors which made them difficult to develop their writing. The students had to know the elements of grammar that would be used in their writing. The other problem was that the students were confused in developing the structure of their writing, so it was difficult for the students to organize the ideas into a paragraph. The students needed the teacher to guide them in developing their ideas with the right structure. Because of that, teacher in that case needs to use suitable teaching

technique to make the classroom atmosphere becomes unstressful and interesting, because it can help the students relax to express their writing without pressure and also less their afraid in learning English.

In this study, the writer used dialogue journal as a technique to improve students' descriptive writing achievement. Dialogue journal is a written conversation between a teacher and an individual student (Peyton & Reed, 1990). In other words, it can be said that dialogue journal is unlike oral conversations, this is a learning tool that gives the students something to look back and review. Teachers regularly are writing their side of the dialogue, commenting on any aspects of a learner's writing, responding to questions, posing questions and challenges, and initiating their own dialogue topics (Peyton, 1993). Therefore, from the teacher's response above, it can guide the students to write a good paragraph. To support this study, there are some investigations related to writing and the use of dialogue journal. Firstly, according to Collins (2003) in her research with the title, "Connecting with Elementary School ESL Students through Dialogue Journals" dialogue journal has benefits not only to the students but also to the writer. They are both become more fluent, expressive, and worried in writing. Secondly, according to VanderMolen (2011) in her research with the title, "Does the Use of Dialogue Journals Affect the Writing Fluency of Low-Literacy Adult Somali Students" through the dialogue journal, the communication is expanded and deepened, which enables to develop new understanding and respect for each other. It means the students feel to be respected of their writing by the teacher and grow their writing ability indirectly.

Based on the discussions above, the writer can conclude that dialogue journal gave many advantages to improve the students' descriptive writing achievement, like expressing ideas through writing, practicing their fluency in writing, or building a good relationship between teacher and students. Because of that, the writer chose dialogue journal as a technique that was applied to her study and it could motivate the students to write about something without feeling afraid that the teacher would check the form of their writing. By using dialogue journal, they did not realize that they had already practiced their writing. Writing the dialogue journal could also make the students interested and decrease their boredom in learning English.

Therefore, the writer was interested in conducting a study with the title **“The Use of Dialogue Journal to Improve Descriptive Writing Achievement of the Eighth Grade Students of MTs N 1 Palembang”**.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

The problems of the study identified were as follows:

1. Was there any significant difference in descriptive writing achievement between the eighth grade students of MTs N 1 Palembang who were taught by using dialogue journal and those who were not?
2. Was there any significant difference in descriptive writing achievement before and after the eighth grade students of MTs N 1 Palembang were taught by using dialogue journal?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

1. to find out whether or not there was any significant difference in descriptive writing achievement between the eighth grade students of MTs N 1 Palembang who were taught by using dialogue journal and those who were not.
2. to find out whether or not there was any significant difference in descriptive writing achievement between before and after the eighth grade students of MTs N 1 Palembang were taught by using dialogue journal.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The writer hoped that this study provided significant contribution for the writers' competence in teaching writing. For teaching English as a foreign language, the writer hoped that this study provided a contributing technique to improve students' writing achievement and helped them to write descriptive text easily, and also that this study could help the other writers to add the references in their study.

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