CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

A. Background

English has an important role to communicate among people in the world. It is an international language which connect people all around the world. Meanwhile, to communicate using English well, for example, asking questions, sharing feelings and ideas, learners need to have good ability not only in speaking but also in writing. Writing is a basic thing of an individual ability to convert an idea into topic (White, 1995). Writing is an art done under particular conditions that requires more elaboration and clarity compared to other skills (Maryam, 2013). Moreover, writing is the most difficult ability for learners to master (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Thus, a researcher conclude that writing is the process of exchanging ideas into written forms.

Based on a researcher observation, it showed that the eleventh grade students of Daarussalaam senior high school in Sukabumi made many mistakes in oral or written form of English subject. In written forms, the students need to have much knowledge about grammar, punctuation, and ideas. Many materials have been learnt, for example, tenses, subject-verb agreement, genres of text, and expressions. Although the students learnt those lessons and they have ideas, the students can not express their ideas into written forms. Therefore, the students should be given a method to develop their knowledge to be good writer.
One of the methods to develop the students’ writing is dialogue journal by Leslee Reed (1960). Dialogue journal is an ongoing written conversation with the partners exchanging messages daily or weekly (Eanes, 1997). It seems a real conversation between the students and a teacher. The students can write as much as the students want and the teacher comments the students’ writing. The comment should motivate the students to write. Dialogue journal is an interactive conversation between a teacher and students which is written frequently (weekly or biweekly) about an interest topic, as practices regularly in writing (Brown, 2004).

Many teachers find dialogue journal as an interactive writing for an individual learner (Peyton, 1993). Dialogue journal has been regarded as a written, regular discussion between teacher and the students based on their own interest topic and the teacher comments as a partner in a discussion rather than a grader or evaluator (Maryam, 2013). Dialogue journal can develop the students’ motivation in writing because of freedom to determine topic (Liao & Wong, 2010). Therefore, the researcher decides to investigate how dialogue journal can develop the students’ writing descriptive text.

There are previous studies that examined dialogue journal to develop students’ writing ability as research topic. Maryam Foroutan, Nooren Noerdin, and Mohd. Sahandri Gani Hamzah (2013) examined about dialogue journal in writing performance in English as a second language context. It compared between dialogue journal writing (DJW) and topic-based writing (TBW). The aspects of writing are assessed namely content, organization, vocabulary,
Another study was conducted by Arik Dwi Rofiqoh (2015), it is investigated dialogue journal in writing fluency on recount text. It is conducted in tenth grade students. The aspects of writing are assessed such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Meanwhile, this study is difference from previous studies because it does a research on descriptive text which focuses on subject-verb agreement and generic structures in descriptive text. Therefore, this study is entitled as “DEVELOPING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT USING DIALOGUE JOURNAL”.

B. Research Questions

From the description above, the researcher formulates the research questions as follows:

1. How is the implementation of dialogue journal in students’ ability on writing descriptive text?
2. How can dialogue journal develop students’ ability on writing descriptive text?

C. Research Objectives

From the research questions above, this study is intended to find out:

1. The implementation of dialogue journal in students’ ability on writing descriptive text.
2. Dialogue journal can develop students’ ability on writing descriptive text.

D. Research Significances

This study is significant because the result of this study would be useful for a researcher and students in general.
1. Theoretically

The result of this study is expected to become a source of information about a method to develop students’ writing descriptive text using dialogue journal which focus on subject-verb agreement.

2. Practically

a. For the students

Students may develop their writing by using dialogue journal. Hopefully, the students will develop their ability in writing descriptive text.

b. For the researcher

This study is expected to develop students’ writing descriptive text using dialogue journal in teaching and learning process.

c. For the next researcher

This study can be a source to conduct further relevant study to the problem in different kinds of text.

E. Rationale

Writing is as communication that exchanging information into written form to someone (Brown, 1993). Writing transfers ideas into written form using knowledge. It is a written product which is completed after the process of thinking, drafting, and revising (Brown, 2000). In writing process, there are strategies of writing namely pre-writing, writing the first draft, revising, and editing (Langan, 2009). By writing, students can express their ideas and revise it. Writing is exchanging ideas into written form through paper. The students can develop their ability in writing descriptive text.
There are many genres of text, descriptive text is one of them. Descriptive is a text which focuses on describing particular things, items, or individuals and it specifies some of their characteristics (Emilia & Christie, 2013). Descriptive appeals the writer’s senses (Langan, 2009). The purpose of descriptive text is to tell about something based on personal view (Mark & Kathy, 1998). There are generic structures of descriptive text namely identification and description. Beside that, there are language features in this text. One of language features in this text is the use of simple present tense which related with subject-verb agreement.

Subject-verb agreement is a subject and a verb must be agree in number (Langan, 2009). A singular subject takes a singular verb and a plural subject takes a plural verb.

There is one of methods on descriptive writing text such as dialogue journal. Dialogue journal is a journal written by student and teacher, they carry a conversation and interaction in the journal (Reid, 1993). The teacher gives responses based on the students’ writing without correcting the form. Using dialogue journal is effective for the students’ writing. Bean and Zulich (1989) reported that dialogue journals help pre-service teachers deeply reflect on their course materials and field experiences. The journal also gives the students’ opportunities to improve their writing because there is communication between the student and the teacher. Dialogue journal can help to share the students’ emotion in writing. Humanistic education stresses the importance of considering students’ emotions in the learning process (Moskowitz, 1978).
Dialogue journal can develop writing descriptive text. In the process, there is communication between the students and the teacher. In addition, as a private conversation with the teacher, in dialogue journal the students can ask questions, complain about the lesson, tell what happened in and outside the class, reflect on why things happen, express personal feelings, so “they use the written language in all the purposeful ways and they use their spoken language” (Staton, 1987). There are three benefits using dialogue journal: extending contact time with students and getting to know them in a way that may not be possible; management of classes with students of varying language, ability, and interest level; optimal language learning conditions (Peyton, 1993).

F. Previous Studies

There are already some researchers who had done studies about dialogue journal. The first study is about dialogue journal in African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), it was carried out by Zulfadli A. Azis and Nina Magdalena (2016). The title is about “using dialogue journal to develop writing skills”. This study analyzed African-American students in writing. It is followed 49 students in the fourth grade. It used two ways analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare pre-test and post-test mean score of students in control and experimental group. In qualitative, a researcher analyzed in terms of content, language, grammar, and vocabulary. The result of the study showed that dialogue journal improved the students’ writing in terms of vocabulary and grammar.

Compare to the previous study, there is similarity between their research and this research. The similarity is dialogue journal applied in writing, but this
study focuses on students’ writing descriptive text. It is followed by the eleventh grade students of Daarussalaam senior high school in Sukabumi. It is only used qualitative research design. It uses observation, document analysis, and interview to collect the data.

The second study is about dialogue journal in writing proficiencies, it is taken from Yunita Widya Hapsari (2016). The title is about “using dialogue journal to improve students’ writing proficiencies”. It is followed by 20 students of eight grade. There are three section in this study, namely pre-research, research, and post-research. The aspects are assessed such as contents, vocabularies, organizations, and mechanics. It used mix method (qualitative and quantitative). The result of this study is that dialogue journal can improve students’ proficiencies and classroom condition. The students can be more active and motivated.

Compare to the previous study, there is similarity between Yunita’s research and this research. That is dialogue journal applied in writing, but this study concerns on subject-verb agreement and generic structures in descriptive text. It is followed by the eleventh grade students. It only uses qualitative research design.

The third study is about dialogue journal in writing fluency, it was conducted by Arina Muflikhati (2013) about “improving students’ writing on recount texts through the use of dialogue journal writing of the tenth grade students”. It is followed by 25 students of tenth grade. It is performed two cycles and concerned the problems of students’ writing on the five aspects namely grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency, and form. The data is gained from
qualitative and quantitative (mix method). The result of this study is the students can participate in classroom activity very well, interaction between teacher and students was also enhanced, and there is significant improvement in students’ score of writing fluency.

Compare to the previous study, there is similarity between Arina’s research and this research. The similarity is dialogue journal applied in writing, but this study emphasizes the students’ writing descriptive text. It concerns on subject-verb agreement and generic structures in descriptive text. To collect the data, it uses observation, document analysis, and interview. This study only uses qualitative research design.

The last study is about dialogue journal in difference English proficiency levels. It was carried out by Kentaro Ochi (2014), the title is about “effectiveness dialogue journal writing: comparison of two classes with different English proficiency levels”. It is followed by 31 secondary school students in Tokyo, Japan. The students wrote one journal per week during 15 meetings. The research design is quantitative. The aspects are assessed namely writing fluency, accuracy, and complexity. The result of this study showed that there is improvement in fluency and complexity, but only little improvement in term of accuracy.

Compare to the previous study, there is similarity and differences between Kentaro’s research and this research. The similarity is the use of dialogue journal writing, but this study analyzes subject-verb agreement and generic structures in descriptive text. It is followed by the eleventh grade students of Daarussalaam senior high school in Sukabumi. The research design is qualitative.
Overall, this study has similarities and differences with previous studies. The similarities are dialogue journal can develop students’ writing ability and the research design uses qualitative. Meanwhile, the differences are level of participants, methodology, genre of text, and focus on subject-verb agreement and generic structures in descriptive text. This study is conducted in the eleventh grade students of Daarussalaam senior high school in Sukabumi. It focuses on students’ writing descriptive text. It uses observation, document analysis, and interview to gain the data.