

HELPING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO WRITE A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT THROUGH DRAW-LABEL-CAPTION STRATEGY

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ABSTRAK

Draw-Label-Caption strategy merupakan sebuah strategi pembelajaran individu yang digunakan untuk memudahkan siswa dalam menulis text berbahasa inggris terutama descriptive text. Agar proses pelaksanaan *draw-label-caption* berjalan dengan baik, guru perlu mengajarkan langkah-langkah atau proses dari *draw-label-caption* strategy, yaitu: (1). Pada *draw stage* siswa menggambar apa yang ingin di descripsikannya.(2) Pada *label stage* siswa memberi label pada setiap detail gambar tersebut. (3) Pada *caption stage* siswa mengubah label menjadi kalimat. Setelah ketiga proses tersebut, siswa menggabungkan kalimat-kalimat yang ada di *caption stage* tersebut menjadi sebuah paragraf. Strategi ini diharapkan mampu meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam mengembangkan ide-ide dan pemikiran mereka menjadi sebuah tulisan dalam bahasa inggris.

Kata kunci: draw, label, caption, teaching writing, teaching junior high school.

A. Introduction

English is an important skill that must be taught in the junior high school. The purpose of learning English is to prepare the students to face the globalization era. According to curriculum (KTSP), the targets of learning English in the junior high school are the students who are able to communicate both spoken and written text. It means the students are able to understand and produce spoken and written text. It is achieved in four skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Writing is essential to be mastered by the learners because this is a form of thinking. It means writing is one of the language skills to express idea,

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thought, feeling, and opinion in written form. Writing skill becomes more important because of the progress of knowledge, information and technology. In this information era, people intensify their communication throughout the world for doing business, politic, social relationship, and culture exchange. Those who can write well will be able to build good relationship with others and pursue their goal.

Writing is a way of communication. Writing is an act to create communication between a writer and readers. Through writing, the writer can express their ideas, feelings, thought and experiences in the written form. Writing is an important skill that should be mastered by the student. This skill is use as medium of delivering the ideas, feeling and perceptions of the writer to the reader in written form.

According to Barnet and Stubbs (1990), writing is a physical act which requires practices and students can learn it through practice. They also say that writing is not a simple way to express ideas, but a way to acquire them. Writing is not only the way to express ideas but it is also used to get ideas.

Furthermore, Ur (2000) states that writing is an expression of ideas that convey messages to the reader. In writing the writer actually gives something that can be readers' need. When someone writes something and then others read to the writing, there will be a social interaction.

Writing is the most difficult skill. There are many things that should be concerned. First, students have to be concerned to the choice words. Second, students should be able to organize the ideas. The students have to arrange the ideas, thought and feelings in good order. If the ideas are not arranged clearly, the reader will get confused in understanding the writing. Third, the students should be able to produce grammatical sentences with clear ideas and concepts. The last, the student should pay attention to the punctuations and rhetorical structure of the text. All of them are important aspects that should be considered in order to be able to write well

There are several texts that must be taught in writing at the junior high school. They are functional texts, and monolog texts. Functional texts consist of notice/ caution, greeting card, short message, invitation, announcement, and advertisement. The monolog texts consist of procedure, descriptive, narrative, recount, and report. These kinds of texts should be mastered by the students in writing skill in junior high school.

Descriptive text is a text that should be taught at junior high school. A descriptive text is kind of text that gives illustration or to represent person, place or thing in detail, so the readers can visualize or imagine about the object is being described.

Gerrot and Wignell (1994) defines that a descriptive text is the text to describe a particular person, place or thing. By reading a descriptive text, the writer tries to bring up imagination side of the readers; for example, when the readers read about a place that being described in the text, it seems as if they are on that place. According to Abisarma (2001) a descriptive text is a text picturing the person, place, and thing with clear detail to help the readers visualize an object that is being described. By reading a descriptive text, the

readers will create their sense of impression and get a clear picture of the object which is described.

Writing a descriptive text is one skill that must be mastered by the junior high school students. It is not an easy work for student. Most of students face some problems in writing a descriptive text. The first problem is the students are not able to convey their ideas into written form. Besides, the students are not able to organize their ideas, so they are not able to start writing.

Another problem that influences process of teaching and learning writing is classroom atmosphere. A teacher should create a conductive, meaningful, and interesting learning atmosphere. During the teaching writing process, the classes seem to be more a teacher-centered rather than students-centered classroom activity. The teachers tend to focus the lesson on theories not in practices. The teacher also give assignment that will not increase student's writing ability and creativity. Such as, students are asked to copy a text, fill some missing words in a text or complete a text. This assignment is not relevant with practicing how to write a descriptive text.

After considering the problems above, teachers need to prepare themselves with a meaningful activity that enables students to write a descriptive text. The teachers should choose a strategy that can involve the students to write independently. The teacher has to have an interesting and meaningful strategy to teach writing a descriptive text. the strategy that the writer proposes is the draw-label-caption strategy.

The draw-label-caption is pre-writing strategy that can help students to generate their ideas before writing a descriptive text, fictional story or a personal narrative. It can also be used to introduce new vocabulary or review vocabulary. The basic technique is that students draw a picture, then label everything in the picture, and then give an overall caption or summary of what is happening in the picture. In short, we should follow three steps to apply this strategy, namely, drawing, labeling and captioning.

Drawing is the first step in draw label caption strategy. According to oxford dictionary definition of draw is produce (a picture or diagram) by making lines and marks on paper with a pencil, pen, and etc. however, Peha (2003) states definition of draw is Make a quick pencil sketch of your scene. This is a rough sketch: use outlines only, stick people are encouraged. Drawing can really help the students to write. When the students take a few minute to sketch a quick picture, they give themselves chance to focus on their topic and their writing is richer and has more detail.

Labeling is the second step in draw label caption strategy. Oxford dictionary defines that label is a small piece of paper, fabric, plastic, or similar material attached to an object and giving information about it. However, according to Peha (2003) Label is Create a one- or two-word text label for each item in your drawing. Ask the student to label everything they can think of, even different parts of things. Labeling has function to give information about their drawing.

Caption is the third step in the draw label strategy. According to oxford dictionary caption is a short piece of text under a picture in a book, magazine or newspaper which describes the picture or explains what the people in it are doing or saying. However, Peha (2003) mention caption is write a single sentence underneath the picture that tells what is happening in the picture.

In conclusion, the draw-label-caption is a pre writing strategy that has three steps, that is: drawing pictures, labeling the picture and turning the label into sentence. The draw-label-caption can really help a student to more focus in their topic of writing.

This strategy is assumed to be able to help the students explore their ideas in writing the descriptive texts. Furthermore, this strategy will help the students in constructing and generating their ideas. Finally, teachers can easily build students creativity and enthusiasm in writing a descriptive text. So, the draw-label-caption is a strategy may help both teachers and students in teaching and learning a descriptive text.

B. Discussion

1. Preparation

The teacher has to realize that writing a descriptive text is not an easy work for the junior high school students. Therefore, the students need to be guided to create a good descriptive writing. Before going through to the lesson, the teacher may prepare and consider some preparations that are able to help the teacher in teaching process. The preparations that the teacher may prepare as follows:

a. Selecting the Material

The teacher selects the material before the teaching and learning process begin. The learning materials prepared for the lesson plan should be based on the students' literacy level; per-formative, functional, or informative. At the per-formative level, the students are able to read, write, listen, and talk to the symbols used. At the functional level students are supposed to learn to use English to get things done, for survival purposes (buying and selling, asking and giving permission, making and canceling appointments, read and write simple texts, etc. while at the informative level the students are able to access the knowledge of the language.

Learning English at the junior high school is targeted to achieve the functional level, it means the students are able to communicate both spoken and written form in daily life. Therefore the teachers have to select the material according to the suggested text type. For the junior high school students the texts that are suggested are descriptive, procedure, recount, narrative, and report. In this case, material that is chosen by the teacher is writing a descriptive text by describing person, place or things.

When the material has been selected, the teacher also has to choose the topic. Determining the topic is an important stage before writing a descriptive text. The topic has to appropriate with the student's ability level, knowledge,

age and situation. Besides, the topic should be interesting to the students because it increase the students' motivation to write. On the other hand, they will be lazy to write if the topic is boring. Thus, it is necessary for the teacher to guide the students to select the most appropriate topic. The teacher may consider what kind of the material used firstly to teach about describing person, place or things. In describing place, for example, the teacher chooses the topic about my dream home, my fantasy bedroom, my favorite place, or my classroom.

b. Preparing Media

Media is one of important aspect in process or teaching and learning. It is better to the teacher to prepare media that appropriate with topic and interest for the students. The media usually will increase student's attention and motivation to the lesson. In usual, video, picture, real object and exercise are some media used in teaching and learning process. In this case, the teacher may use drawing tools such as drawing book, color pencil, etc as the media.

c. Lesson Plan

The teacher also has to prepare a lesson plan to guide them to control or manage the teaching and learning process effectively. At this point, the teacher needs to state what is expected from the students at the end of the lesson based on standard and basic competency that has been decided in KTSP 2006. Moreover, a lesson plan also contains the achievement indicator and learning purpose. The teacher has to know why the material should be taught to the student and what the student get after process of teaching and learning.

Learning material and strategy are the next point stated in a lesson plan. The teacher can take the material from a book that has been recommended or any resources depending on level knowledge of the students and situation. Some interesting strategies and activities can be applied to support the students' understanding.

Finally, a good lesson plan has to explain the procedure of teaching clearly. The procedure is carried out in three phases, they are: pre- teaching activity, whilst activity and post activity. Pre teaching activities are the activities are done at the beginning of the lesson. Whilst-Writing Activities are the main process of learning. These activities are conducted systematically through exploration, elaboration and confirmation. Post activity is an activity is done to end the lesson. Then, the teacher has to consider how many times to spend for each activity in a meeting. To end the lesson plan, preparing the exercise or examination is obligated to evaluate students' understanding about the topic.

2. Procedure of Teaching Writing a Descriptive Text using the draw-label-Caption Strategy

There are several step are used in the process of teaching writing a descriptive text using the draw label caption strategy for the junior high school students. The steps are; Pre-teaching Activities, Whilst- teaching Activities and Post- teaching Activities. The procedures can be applied as follows:

a. Pre- Teaching Activities

The activities in this step such as:

1) Review the previous lesson

This activity is conducted to check the students' understanding and remind them to the previous lesson in order they are ready to learn the new topic.

2) Teachers choose new topic

Choosing topic is the first thing should be done by the teacher before start to writing. After the topic is determined, the teacher can guide the students to develop their idea through draw label caption strategy. This stage is aimed to help students to more focus to the topic of writing.

There are three points that can be described in a descriptive text, that is, describing person, place or things. If the teacher chooses to describe a place, they have to specify what place will be described. For example, the topic that is chosen by the teacher is "our classroom."

3) The teacher explains the purpose of learning

Before the process teaching and learning begin, the teacher has to explain the learning purpose and what the students reach after learning this material.

4) The teacher explains assignment for the students

The teacher should explain the assignment that will be given to the students after learning the material. This activity has function to make students give more attention to the material, because they will make assignment after learning the material.

b. Whilst-teaching Activities

Whilst-Writing Activities are the main process of learning. These activities are aimed to achieve the basic competency. These activities are conducted systematically through exploration, elaboration and confirmation.

1) Exploration

In this stage, there are some activities done by teacher and students;

(a) The teacher explores students' background knowledge about the topic.

There are many way to explore students' background knowledge. Such as, showing a picture or video that related to topic, introducing some vocabularies, and giving some question about the topic, etc. In this case, the teacher explores students' background knowledge by introducing new vocabularies that related to the classroom. For example:

- White board
- Chairs
- Tables
- Teacher desk
- Etc.

(b) Teacher gives the example how to use the draw label caption strategy.

(1) The teacher gives example of drawing stage.

After introducing some vocabularies, the teacher guides the students to draw everything that will they describe. Before describing

the classroom, the teacher asks the students to look around their classroom because they are going to describe it. Then, ask the students to mention everything that exists in their classroom. While the student mentions things in their classroom, the teacher draws what the student's state in the whiteboard. For example: when the students mention "table", the teacher draws the picture of table in the whiteboard.

(2) The teacher gives example how to label the picture.

After drawing everything that exists in the classroom, the teacher guides the students to give the label in the picture by pointing the detail of the picture and ask the student the name of that picture. Then, write the label in that picture.

(3) The teacher gives example how to change the label into caption.

When the teacher has finished giving label to all detail in picture, the teacher help students to change the label into caption, it means the teacher leads the students to change the words in the picture become sentences by asking the question. For example:

Teacher : what is it? (Point a picture).

Students : teacher's desk.

Teacher : how many teachers' desks are there in this classroom?

Students : there is a teacher desk.

Teacher : Where is the teacher's desk?

Students : front of the class

Teacher : ok. Now, please make a sentence about a teacher's desk.

Students : there is a teacher desk in front of the classroom.

Then, the teacher writes the sentence underneath the label. Do these activities until all labels or words in the picture become the sentences.

All activities in this stage have function to guide the students to generate and to organize their idea into the written text. These activities also give the students a chance to be more focus to the topic.

2) Elaboration

The activities that the teacher does during this phase are:

a) The teacher explains how to write a descriptive paragraph

Before writing a descriptive text, teacher has to explain about the generic structure of descriptive text (identification and description). Besides, the teacher explains more about the language feature of descriptive paragraph, such as: using simple present tense, using adjective, pronoun and etc.

b) The teacher leads the students to combine and arrange the sentences be a good descriptive paragraph

First, the teacher writes down what should be the identification of paragraph. For example: "our classroom is 7B classroom. It is located between 7A and 7C classroom. The classroom is very big".

When the identification of paragraph has been writing, teacher and students all together continue to combine and arranges caption become the description of the paragraph.

c) Teacher guides the students to edit and revise the paragraph

After combining and arranging the sentences become a descriptive text, the teacher writes the paragraph in the white board. Then, ask the students read the paragraph together. These activities have function to find some errors in the paragraph, such as, the tense used, the adjective words, social function, and so on. Then the teacher guides the students to edit and revise the paragraph.

d) The teacher check student understanding about the lesson

After revising and editing the paragraph, the teacher should check the students understanding about all activities above. If they do not understand yet, the teacher can give more explanation to the students. However, if they understand, the teacher can continue to next activity.

e) The teacher gives an assignment to the student

In these activities, the teacher gives a picture to the students. Then, ask them to give label to each item in the picture. When they finish labeling the picture, ask the students to evolve the label into a caption. It means the students should change the single word into sentences.

When the student finish to turn words into sentences, ask the students to develop their sentences become a good descriptive paragraph. The students should determine the identification of their paragraph. Then, the students should arrange and combine the sentences become descriptions of paragraph. In this stage the teacher walk around the classroom to help the students if they get some problems in writing process.

3) Confirmation

In this stage the students will revise and edit their writing. The students will work in pair when their writing is completed. Then, the student share they work with a partner. Ask the student to edit and revise their pair's work. The way the students edit and revise is by underlining inappropriate aspect of writing such as: choice of words, grammar, punctuation, spelling and etc. then, the student has to give the solution to their pair's writing. Each student has to give improvement to their partner's work. Then, they should discuss their work.

After discussing, ask the students to submit all their work form labeling the picture, changing the label into the caption and finishing a paragraph. The assessment for the task can be done by analyzing the student's work sheet.

c. Post-teaching Activity

This activity is done to end the lesson which can be in the form of summarizing, evaluating, reflecting, and following up activities.

At this stage the teacher guide the students to make conclusion about the material that they learn. In order to make students more competent in doing this strategy, they can be asked to do the same things outside the class. They can choose the topic that interesting for them.

3. The Advantages of the Draw-Label-Caption Strategy in Teaching a Descriptive Text

Helping the junior high school students to write a descriptive text through the draw-label-caption strategy is useful because it has some advantages. First, the draw-label-caption help student to more focus to the topic of writing. While the students drawing, they will spend several minutes to think about what they want to write. Second, Most of students think that writing is very difficult and boring to be learned. By using the draw-label-caption strategy, writing becomes easier and more interesting. The last, draw-label-caption strategy can increase student's motivation, concentration and participation in learning process.

4. The Weakness of the Draw-Label-Caption Strategy in Teaching a Descriptive Text

The draw-label-caption is a strategy that is expected to be able to help the students to write a descriptive text. However, this strategy still has weakness. Most of student is shy to drawing. They will try to draw as beautiful as possible, so that they will spend much time in drawing, whereas the focus is not the drawing but the writing.

C. Conclusion

In teaching writing, the teacher should be creative and able to create interesting learning atmosphere in the classroom. The teachers also should be able to attract the students' attention by choosing topic and learning strategy that interesting for students. The teachers should choose a strategy that can involve the students to write independently, especially writing a descriptive text. This text has purpose to describe a person, a place, and a thing in details. In teaching descriptive text, the teachers have to consider about the strategy that will be used.

The draw label caption is a strategy to help students to write a descriptive text. This strategy will help the students to focus to the topic of writing and help the students to organize and generate their ideas easily. The draw label caption strategy is used in pre reading activity. Procedure of this strategy is divided into three stages. They are drawing activity, labeling activity, and captioning activity.

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