

USING THE METAPLAN TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING WRITING A DISCUSSION TEXT TO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstrak

Makalah yang berjudul *Using Metaplan Technique in Teaching Writing a Discussion Text to Senior High School Students* ini membahas tentang bagaimana meningkatkan kemampuan siswa SMA kelas XII untuk menyampaikan ide mereka dalam menulis discussion text dengan menggunakan teknik metaplan. Seperti yang kita ketahui, menulis adalah salah satu kegiatan yang tidak begitu disukai oleh siswa. Ada dua hal/faktor yang menjadi masalah bagi siswa dalam menulis discussion text. Faktor pertama yang menyebabkan kurangnya motivasi siswa untuk menulis discussion text adalah tidak menariknya teknik yang digunakan oleh guru. Guru cenderung menggunakan teknik yang sudah sering digunakan sebelumnya sehingga membuat siswa menjadi bosan. Kedua, siswa merasa kesulitan dalam menyampaikan ide/argumen mereka. Mereka tidak tahu bagaimana cara menyampaikan ide/argumen tanpa merasa takut apakah ide/argumen mereka itu benar atau tidak. Untuk mengatasi masalah ini seorang guru harus kreatif dalam menciptakan kegiatan yang menyenangkan dan bisa meningkatkan minat siswa untuk menulis. Salah satu cara untuk meningkatkan motivasi dan mempermudah siswa untuk menyampaikan ide/argumen dalam menulis discussion text adalah dengan menggunakan teknik metaplan. Dengan menggunakan teknik metaplan ini, diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi pada pelajaran menulis khususnya pada *discussion text*, sehingga siswa mampu menulis teks ini dengan baik dan benar.

Key words: keterampilan menulis, *the Metaplan* teknik, teks diskusi.

A. Introduction

Writing is one of the language skills beside listening, speaking and reading that must be mastered by English learners. Through writing students can express and exchange his or her ideas, thoughts and experiences to others in various forms such as, in essays, papers, books, novels, and research reports. Moreover, through writing students can also transfer information and knowledge to others. In other words, writing can be said as a mean of communication between the writer and the reader.

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However, many people agree that writing is difficult for learners to be mastered. The main reason why writing is difficult related to the fact that a writer's idea must be presented clearly and wellorganized. A writer must use good grammar and appropriate vocabulary as well. Furthermore, most of the students say that writing is difficult because they do not know how to start their writing. They might have ideas on their mind, but they are not sure whether their ideas are wrong or right. As a result, they feel too shy to express them.

According to the curriculum issued by Departemen Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia, known as KTSP 2006, the purpose of teaching writing at Senior High School is to make the students able to reach the information level in writing. Based on this curriculum, the information level is a level where the students are provided with the ability to deal with higher standard education, university. The students are supposed to be able to use acceptable language fluently and accurately in the form of functional and monologue texts.

One kind of monologue text that should be mastered by senior high school students is discussion text. A discussion text is a kind of text to present at least two points of view about an issue. The function is to explore various perspectives before coming to an informed decision. Moreover, Clair (2008:27) says that the function of a discussion text is to present information and opinions about more than one side of an issue ('for' points and 'against' points). Senior High School students have to understand this kind of text because they will need it in their social life. It is common for us to face the situation in which we have different arguments with others about something. This is the reason why students need to master a discussion text.

However, based on the writer's experience during teaching practice at Senior High School, the students faced some problems in writing a discussion text. The main problem is related to the ideas they will write as arguments to support their opening statement that presents an issue. In fact, arguments play the most important role in writing a discussion text. The first problem they experienced in writing a discussion text is limited ideas. They tended to present such few facts that make their arguments weak. Second, they had unequal portion for the arguments. Sometimes, they had more arguments for one point of view, but had less in another point of view.

Actually there are many interesting techniques that can be used by the teachers in teaching writing a discussion text. One of them is by using metaplan technique in order to help students in writing a discussion text. By using this technique, the students will share their own idea in small group about the topic that has been given by the teacher. The students write their own ideas in a small card. In a group, students select the most relevant ideas that have been contributed by the participants. Each participant can votes by choosing the ideas she or he agrees with. After that, each group presents the result of their discussion to the whole group. Then, the whole group re-discuss the ideas that have been present, to reelect the most relevant ideas. Finally, the groups prepare a final product from the ideas that have been chosen before. Successful collaboration occurs when each participant is able to make a contribution toward achieving a common vision or goal statement. Supporting this common goal is the objective that has been

generated by each of the participants. It is important for each participant to feel as though he or she has a significant contribution to make achievement as final result of writing activity.

Tippelt and Amoros (2003:19) define that metaplan technique is a technique that is use written cards to visualize and systematize. The technique paves the way for a whole range of possibilities for the continuing analysis and structuring of existing language.

Furthermore, Mayer and Valente (2009:43) state that metaplan is a method of organisational analysis that is oriented a task with the goal of streamlining communication flows within business and involving in substitute planning those people who will then implement it. This technique alternate individual moments, activities involving small groups and ones involving the entire group with the visualisation of collective knowledge-building processes, encourage communication flows, try to minimise unfocused desicions, and, when properly managed, stimulated and strengthen the creative process, making each person feel he or she has constributed constructively to the final solution.

According to Mayer and Valente (2009:46) there were some steps in applying this technique. First, teacher has to explain the activity that will be doing by students. In this stage, the teacher also has to introduce the topic that the students are going to discuss. Then, students are divided into some groups. In each group, students are given cards to write their own ideas about the topic that has been mentioned by the teacher before. After each person writes his/her idea, it comes to group discussion. Each of group has to choose the best ideas from the members of that group. When each group has their own ideas about the topic/subject, it comes to a whole group discussion. Each group shows their ideas in front of the whole group. A whole group then chooses the most appropriate or the most relevant ideas among the ideas that has been presented. Finally the groups prepare a final product or final text from the ideas above.

B. Discussion

The implementation of using the *Give One Get One* strategy to teach junior high school students in writing a descriptive text as follow:

1. Teacher's Preparation

Teacher has to do a preparation before she/he comes to the classroom in order to do the teaching-learning process well. The main thing that teacher has to do is making a lesson plan. It really helps the teacher to know what steps or procedures that she/he will do in the classroom and achieve the aim of teaching and learning. In short, the teacher should prepare and plan well the material before coming to the class.

2. Teaching Procedure

a. Pre-teaching activity

Pre-teaching is the first stage in teaching and learning process. In this stage, firstly, the teacher greets the students. Then, the teacher checks the students' attendance and learning the environment like media which will be used during the learning process. The function of this activity is to warm up and

prepare the students to join in the learning process. By using this activity, the students become more ready to face the lesson.

After that, the teacher tells them the purpose and basic competencies that must be reached in teaching learning process. The teacher may briefly review discussion text which has been learned by the students in reading. Graham (2005:9) emphasized that in this phase the teacher can ask students about things related with the topic or material that will be learnt. The teacher asks the students some important points about discussion text such as generic structure and language features.

The function of this activity is to recall the students' memory about the discussion text that has been learned before. By using this activity, it is hoped that students will be easier to understand how to write a discussion text.

b. Whilst- teaching activity

Whilst-teaching stage is divided into exploration, elaboration, and confirmation. According to Graham (2008:4) the characteristics of the activity are interactive, inspiring, enjoying; challenging and motivating that can activate the students in learning as well as to provide opportunities for the students to be creative and independent learners based on their talent and their self-development. In exploration, the teacher builds the student's knowledge by showing the pictures and guiding the students to consider different positions about familiar topic. The teacher shows some pictures such as a student who are studying in front of computer, money, and a student who are doing his homework lazily. Then, the teacher introduces the metaplan technique by modeling it to the students. The teacher tells the students that by using metaplan technique, the students need cards to write their arguments, and the teacher have to divide them into group. In group, the students will be asked to write their arguments about the topic that will be given.

For example, the topic which is going to be discussed is 'Distance Learning'. So, the teacher has to say something about this topic such as there are some arguments 'for' and 'against' in doing distance learning. It can make the students become more interested to the topic.

After the topic is clear for the students, the teacher asks the students some questions about the pictures related to the topic. The questions are:

- What do you think about picture 1?
- What do you see in picture 2?
- What can you explain about picture 3?
- What do you think the relation between picture 1 and picture 2?

This activity is used for activating students' background knowledge about the topic that is going to be discussed. The questions that have been asked above lead the students to think of arguments for and arguments against about the topic.

In elaboration, after the students answer the questions on the exploration activity, the teacher asks the students to sit in the groups. Each of groups consists of 4-5 students. The teacher then distributes green and red cards to the students, each of students get two cards, green and red. When every student gets their own cards, the teacher guides them to write their ideas/arguments about the topic that

has been given before on the cards. They write argument for on green card, and argument against on red card.

After all of the students write their arguments on the cards; the teacher guided them to discuss those arguments in the group. In each group, the students have to choose the most relevant ideas she/he agree with.

When each of groups have finished discuss their arguments, the participants stick the cards on the whiteboard so that all of the class can see them. Then, a whole group chooses the most relevant ideas/arguments with the topic.

The arguments that have been chosen by the whole students

Does not need commuting	Costly
Saving money	Does not give immediate feedback
Can be done at any time	Students will study alone

The teacher then writes a discussion text from the ideas/arguments that have been chosen by the students on the white board, and the students are paying attention to the teacher. While the teacher writes the text, he/she also explains the generic structure to the students.

First, the teacher writes a paragraph. The first paragraph is called general statement; it contains an opening statement presenting the issue which is going to be discussed. In discussion text, the issue must be problematic. The problematic here means something that still has pro and con within it. As the example of the first paragraph of the discussion text above, the general statement is making office at home which is still has pro and con arguments among the people.

Then, teacher writes the second paragraph. The teacher tells the students that the second paragraph is called arguments against, because it states the arguments which disagree to the stated issue. After that, the teacher writes the third and the fourth paragraph. The third and four paragraphs are called arguments for, because it provides arguments to support the pro opinion. Finally, the teacher writes the last paragraph. The last paragraph is called conclusion or recommendation; it says the writer's conclusion or recommendation for the discussed issue on how people should concern with it. Then, the teacher explains about language features based on the text above. (See Appendix 4)

After the teacher explains the language features of discussion text, the students are asked to write their own discussion text by using the technique that has been modeled by the teacher before. The students still sit in the groups that

have been divided by the teacher. Then the teacher tells the topic of discussion text that will be discussed by the students.

The topic is 'National Examination'. The students are asked to share their arguments about it, for and against. In groups, the students will be given green and red cards again. Each of the students has to write his/her arguments for and arguments against about the topic given on the cards. They write one argument for on the green card, and one argument against on the red card.

The students have to write the arguments clearly by using the simple sentence or phrase. They have to write in a large and legible script so that all of the class can see and read it when it is shown in front of the class.

After each of the students finishes writing the arguments, it comes to group discussion. Each of groups has to select the most relevant arguments that have been contributed by the participants. After that, each group presents the result of their discussion to the whole group. They stick the cards on the whiteboard so that all of the class can see it clearly. Then, the whole groups re-discuss the arguments that have been attached on the whiteboard to reelect the most relevant arguments.

Finally, the groups prepare their final product from the arguments that have been chosen before. They have to create a discussion text by using the arguments which they have already argued with.

In confirmation, In this stage, the teacher gives feedback to the students toward the process and learning achievement, such as giving reward to every group that have finished their writing well. To appreciate the students' works, the teacher gives opportunity to the students to show their works. The representative of each group will read their discussion text in front of the class. This activity makes the students become more confident because they have to stand in front of their classmates to read their works.

The teacher can also facilitate the students to get more learning experience from this activity since the teacher and the students discuss the work that is presented in front of the class together. The students can also check their final text by exchanging them with the others group and do group correction. The teacher checks whether the group corrector can understand their friends' writing and whether they can explain why it is so.

Thirdly, the teaching activity is ended with post- teaching activities. The teacher concludes or summarizes the lesson by her/him or together with the students. The teacher and the students try to find the difficulties in discussion text together. The teacher reviews the activities that have been done consistently. The teacher evaluates the students learning progress and then prepares plan to improve the students' ability on writing a discussion text if the students need more assignment or counseling. Ifanc and Wales (2010:67) emphasized that teachers' marking can help learners to improve their work if it identifies areas of possible improvement.

Before closing the class, the teacher checks the students understanding of the lesson. Next, the teacher concludes the lesson together with the students. After that, the teacher ends the class.

C. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that the Metaplan technique is an alternative in teaching English, especially in writing skill. The teacher has to know that by using the Metaplan technique it can increase the students' attention and motivation during classroom writing activities. Besides, the students become easily to share their ideas in order to write a discussion text. Then, it can encourage the students' motivation in writing and make their group work useful for them in learning English. After that, the teachers have the opportunity to teach of English, especially in writing, more delightful.

Then, there are several suggestions for the teacher in using Metaplan technique. First, the teacher has to prepare the cards that will be used by the students before coming to the class so that he/she will not wasting the lesson's time. Second, the teacher should be creative in selecting the topic that will be discussed by the students. The students must have the background knowledge about the topic that will make them easier to convey their arguments, so it can make the classroom activities more enthusiastic. Third, the teacher should know the level of his/her students' ability since he/she has to divide them into groups. This is to avoid the mistake in dividing the groups, like, putting the clever students together and leaving the students that have ordinary ability fellow them. If this happens, it will be difficult for the students who have ordinary ability to create the text. Fourth, the teacher should use real object and media such as pictures that are closely related to student's life in presenting the model. It will be easier for the students to find or write the arguments about the topic. Besides, the teacher should be creative in organizing a good teaching and learning process. He/she has to be able to choose meaningful teaching media and activities which are based on student's need. Last, the teacher has to ensure the students that they are free to write their arguments about the topic without felling shy whether their arguments are right or wrong. The teacher has to let the students to write down whatever he/she thinks about the topic given as long as they are using good words.

Note : this article is compiled based on the writer's paper with her advisor Rusdi Noor Rosa, S.S., M.Hum.

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