

WORDLE (WORD CLOUD) PREDICTION ACTIVITY AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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Abstrak

Salah satu tujuan dari Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP 2006) mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris adalah siswa mampu menulis. Oleh karena itu, siswa harus mampu menulis teks monolog sesuai dengan tuntutan kurikulum. Namun, seringkali ditemui siswa mengalami masalah pada saat menulis. Karena siswa merasa mereka tidak punya ide tentang topik yang diberikan atau kurangnya informasi dari topik yang diberikan yang akan mereka tulis, khususnya pada teks deskriptif. Makalah ini menjelaskan tentang penggunaan *wordle prediction activity* sebagai salah satu kegiatan yang menarik dalam menulis. Kegiatan ini di aplikasikan dalam pengajaran menulis teks deskriptif dikelas untuk membantu mengatasi permasalahan yang dihadapi oleh siswa dengan memberikan cetakan atau gambar dari kata-kata yang telah diubah menjadi *wordle* atau *word cloud*. Kegiatan ini digunakan dalam kegiatan *pre writing activity*. Dengan menggunakan kegiatan ini diharapkan siswa mampu menulis teks deskriptif dengan baik dan benar.

Kata kunci: teaching, writing, descriptive text, wordle prediction, junior high schools

A. Introduction

Writing is one of the four English skills besides listening, speaking, and reading. It should be learned by students at all levels. However, writing is often considered as a difficult and complicated skill to be learnt by the students. Therefore, teaching writing needs appropriate techniques to be used by the teacher. Besides, the students also need appropriate tasks to improve their writing ability. If they do not get appropriate techniques and tasks, it is difficult for them to master this skill. It means that in learning writing, it takes the study and practice by using appropriate techniques and tasks to develop this skill.

Based on the writer's teaching practice experience, there were some problems that made the students difficult to write. First problem was that the teacher could not create some appropriate and effective writing activities that could catch the students' interest in writing. The students only had a boring activity like doing some writing tasks in groups. For example, the teacher asked

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the students to sit in group and made a paragraph or text based on the topics given by the teacher. This activity was not effective for teaching writing. Second problem was that the students had lack of ideas. When the teacher asked them to write a paragraph or text about the topic given, the students found it difficult to think and express their ideas. However, it is important for the teacher to provide an interesting activity to stimulate and express the students' ideas. Last problem was that many students did not have motivation in writing. In learning writing, students should have motivation to make them interested and enjoy in writing. There are many kinds of fun activities that can increase the students' motivation.

According to Lannon (1989) writing is "the process of transforming the material discovered by research inspiration, accident, trial or error, or whatever into a message with a definite meaning- writing is a process of deliberate decision". Furthermore, Linse (2005:98) in Sokolik says that writing is a combination of process and product. Besides, according Olstaint (2001) writing is an act of communication that suggests an interactive process which takes places between the writer and reader via the messages.

According to Zumakhsin (2005:21), the function of descriptive text is to describe the things that we see. Moreover, Pardiyono (2007) states that descriptive text is a type of written text which has specific function to give description about an object (human or non human). Furthermore, Pardiyono (2007) states that the generic structure of descriptive text consists of identification and description.

In KTSP (2006), the goal of teaching English at Junior High School is to develop the students' communicative competence in oral and written form. Writing is one of the skills that should be learnt by the students at Junior High School. Teaching writing is very important because by writing students can share what they think, see, and feel in written form and develop it into a good text.

Based on the KTSP (*Depdiknas*, 2006:278), one of the scopes in English subject at junior high school is the ability to comprehend and produce several kinds of short functional texts, monologue texts and essays such as procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative and report. The gradation of teaching material appears in the use of vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical structure of the text. Moreover, the basic competence of writing at VIIth grade in the second semester at junior high schools is expressing the meaning in a short monologue texts in form of descriptive and procedure text to interact with environment.

One of the activities that is appropriate to be used is the wordle prediction activity. In this activity, teacher will choose the reading text that will be focus on the lesson and next, the teacher draws wordle by using a paper and colored markers based on words are choosen. Then, the students will be divided into groups of four and the teacher will ask them to reconstruct the text and write their own versions using the words in printed copy of wordle (word cloud) as the clues that are provided by the teacher. At the end of the activity, each group will read their own version in front of the class. After that, the teacher will hand out a copy of the original text and ask the students to decide which group's version was the closest to the original. This activity can be one of the activities that can help students to develop and arrange the topic sentence based on words is provided in the wordle form.

According to Feinberg (2009) word cloud is a “toy”. Barret (2010) mentions that data visualization refers to the use of tools for representing data in the form of charts, maps, tag clouds, animations, or any graphical means that make content easier to understand. So, wordle or word cloud is a tool for representing data that is formed by colorful words collage that makes the content easier to understand. Jovic (2012:102) states that in this activity the students use the word cloud to predict the content of a text and to write it, but this is a very flexible tool that can be used for a number of purposes.

Based on the explanation above, teacher can use wordle prediction in teaching writing a descriptive text. It supposed to help students get easier to write and change their mind that writing is fun. By using this activity, it can motivate the students and help develop their ideas easily. In addition, it can catch the students’ interest in writing. Furthermore, the students can develop the topic sentence and generate the ideas based on the clues that provided in the word clouds. The wordle prediction activity will also teach the students how to work together as a team.

B. The Implementation of Wordle Prediction Activity In Teaching Writing A Descriptive Text At Junior High Schools

Teaching Preparation

The teacher has to do some preparations before starting teaching and learning process. A good preparation is the requirement to get the understanding of learning by the students. The first preparation is materials. Materials need to be prepared well because the teacher will get success in using wordle prediction activity in the classroom if he/she has some good, interesting, and familiar materials. If the students are interested in the materials, it can increase their motivation while learning. Then, the materials have to refer to the syllabus at junior high school and the teacher can use internet, book, etc as sources. In wordle prediction activity the teacher has to provide the topics as the important materials, there are 2 topics as the example and task for the students. The topics must be familiar with the students so that the students can understand them easily. The printed copy of wordle are showed at the beginning of the teaching process to build their background knowledge and it will be modeled by the teacher firstly. The second preparation is media. Media is better for the teacher to used in teaching and learning process. It makes the students get interested and motivated in learning writing. Motivation and interest are the important factors to establish the students’ success and achievement. In this activity, the teacher prepares some printed copies of wordle related with the topic that are given. There are two ways of making wordle. First making wordle through internet. The teacher goes to www.wordle.net to make wordle. The teacher copies the text that he/she is going to use and paste it in wordle generator until the picture of wordle comes out. After that, the teacher print it by click print in wordle’s website. Second making the own wordle. The teacher prepares a paper and colored markers. The teacher draws it by themselves the words that are going to change into wordle form by using

colored markers. In this activity, the teacher will create his/ her own wordle by using paper and colored markers.

Moreover, the teacher has to prepare the lesson plan (see appendix 1) related to the topic. It helps the teacher to teach systematically in improving the teaching and learning process. In designing a lesson plan, the teacher should consider about the syllabus and curriculum at Junior High Schools.

Teaching Procedures

1. Pre-teaching Activity

In this stage teacher prepares the students' readiness for the learning. In this stage, the teacher greets the students to open the class and creates a good condition for teaching and learning process. Then, he/she checks the attendance of the students. The teacher also checks the students' readiness to study and also reviews the previous lesson to remind the students about the last lesson/topic and know how far the students' understanding of previous topic is. Before the teacher explains about the descriptive text, he/she asks some questions to the students in order to activate their background knowledge..

2. Whilst-Teaching Activities

Whilst-Teaching activities are activities conducted during the discussion teaching materials. It aims to accomplish the basic competencies. There are three phases in this activities. They are:

1) Exploration

Exploration is a stage where the teacher begins to introduce the topic to the students. The topic is about descriptive text of a famous person. In this step, the teacher shows a picture of a famous person (Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono) After that the teacher asks some questions related to the picture.

After the teacher and the students discuss it, the teacher explains how to write by using wordle prediction activity and then develop it become a descriptive text. The steps are: after the teacher shows the students a picture of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and discussed it together, then the teacher shows a printed copy of wordle about SBY. Next, the teacher and the students together create a text based on the words on printed copy of wordle (SBY) with the first sentence has been done by the teacher as the example for the students. The teacher writes it on the whiteboard. After that, the teacher asks the students to continue the next sentences based on the clues in wordle. Next, the teacher and the students edit and revise the text that has been reconstructed together based on the original text. Then, the teacher explains about the components of descriptive text step by step. They generic structure, language features, and purpose of descriptive text.

2) Elaboration

In this elaboration activity, Firstly, the teacher divides the students into groups of four. The students are next asked to reconstruct a descriptive text based on the words in wordle in their group, then develop and write it into a descriptive text. In the wordle, there will be written information about the object that being described.

Secondly, the teacher gives a printed copy of wordle of the famous person that is going to be reconstructed by each group. The students have to discuss the

wordle in group in order to decide which information that to be written first. So that they can reconstruct a descriptive text from the words in wordle given.

Thirdly, after the students have finished reconstructing the text, the teacher and the students discuss it together. Fourthly, the teacher and the students revise and edit the students' work. The teacher asks a representative from each group to read out the group's text in front of the class. Then, the other groups give suggestion and comment about it. Next, the teacher hands out a copy of the original text and asks the students to decide which group's version was the closest to the original text. Finally, the group that has the closest text with the original one is given a reward by the teacher.

3) Confirmation

In confirmation activity, the teacher and the students discuss the lesson that has been learned. The teacher asks whether students who find the difficulties in learning the descriptive text, such as they do not understand about the generic structure or the language features of the descriptive text or other difficulties. If there are some students still do not understand about it, so the teacher has to give the explanation more. Then, the teacher asks the students some questions that are related to the material given to know whether the students have understood or not based on the answers given by the students.

3. Post Teaching Activity

Post teaching activity is an activity that is purposed to end the teaching and learning activity which can be done through creating summary or conclusion by the teacher to the students. In this activity, the teacher gives feedback and reinforcement toward the learning process and learning achievement. The teacher has to conclude and review the lesson to the whole class in order to make sure that the students are really understand about writing a descriptive text. The teacher can do it by asking some of the students about the important parts in descriptive text. Then, the teacher asks the students work in pair and make their own wordle. The students will take turn make their own text based on wordle given by their pair. The teacher informs that they are going to perform it in front of the class in the next meeting. Finally, the teacher dismisses the class.

The Advantages of Teaching Writing A Descriptive Text by Using Wordle Prediction Activity at Junior High Schools.

There are some advantages of teaching writing a descriptive text by using wordle prediction activity to junior high school students. They are:

First, It can increase students' interest because wordle prediction activity is a fun activity to make the students easier to express their ideas and to write. Second, It can increase students' thinking ability because it makes the students deliver their ideas easily and do not think hard to deliver their ideas. Third, It is an excellent way to make the students become comfortable with their writing and it also helps them to work as a team because they do not think by themselves but they think and work with their group. Fourth, It can improve students' ability in writing a descriptive text.

C. Conclusion and suggestion

Conclusion

From the discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that in order to help the students to develop their writing ability. The teacher has to pay more attention in materials, media, and activity. The teacher is expected to facilitate the learning process by creating an interesting activity to the students. Using wordle prediction activity is one of effective activity to apply. By using wordle prediction activity, the students can arrange and explore their idea easily, because when the students are asked to write about descriptive text by the teacher, the points about the topic are available in the printed copies of wordles. So they just develop and generate the idea based on wordles.

Wordle prediction activity is one of the effective activity that can be used by the teacher. It is a fun and effective activity that can attract the students in writing a descriptive text. This activity can help the students to express their ideas easily. In wordle prediction activity, the students learn how to work in group.

Suggestion

In this paper, the writer would like to give some suggestions. First, it is suggested for the teachers to use this activity for teaching writing to describe objects such as person, thing, and place. Second, it is better for the teachers to choose an interesting descriptive text of describing person in order that the students can deliver their ideas easily. Finally, it also suggested for teachers to give some reinforcement and rewards toward the students' response in writing.

Note: This article is written based on the writer's paper whose advisor is Muhd. Al Hafizh, S.S., M.A.

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