ENERGIZING FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNER IN ENGLISH READING CLASS THROUGH THE USE OF WORD WEBS TECHNIQUE

by Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati

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Abstract

Reading is an activity with a purpose. Students may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge. They may also read for enjoyment or to analyze a writers" idea or writing style. One of important factors which contribute to the better reading comprehension is students" motivation in reading. Unfortunately, although reading is considered to be an important language skill, many students are not interested in reading because many teachers use monotonous reading activities. This paper focuses on analyzing the importance of using Word Web technique and highlighting the implementation the technique in teaching reading. Next the paper discusses the advantages and the classroom experience on the use of Word Webs Technique in teaching reading. The subjects are Second Semester of English Department Students. This study employed a qualitative research design and the data are collected through observation and questionnaire. Word webs technique have many positive advantages compared with another teaching technique. It is highly motivating, giving a sense of achievement in understanding further reading. Word Web technique makes the students use their prior knowledge and information to answer specific questions. With Word Webs Technique the process learning become more enjoyable and interesting. It is recommended for students to apply Word Webs Technique to get better reading ability.

Keywords: foreign language learner, reading class, Word Webs technique

Introduction

Reading is very important to anybody who wants to progress. Everyone should have the comprehension to read especially in English because most of the scientific books are written in English. Heinemann (2009) states that "reading is a process very much determined by what the reader"s brain and emotions and beliefs bring to the reading: the knowledge /information, strategies for processing text, moods, fears and joy all of it. Through reading people can also obtain information which can help them understand and solve various problems which come constantly in their lives.

In Indonesian context, regarding to the English language teaching on Government Regulation No. 19, 2015 clearly mentioned that language education develops language competence with special emphasize on reading and writing according to the literacy level set for every level education. Especially for college learners, most of them are required to take English courses focusing on reading skills to comprehend academic disciplinary text (Masduqi, 2014).

According to the International Association for the Evaluation od Educational Achievement (2003), Indonesian students are just capable of mastering 30% material, and find difficulty in reading text. Recently, some researches (Iftanti, 2012; Hamra & Satriana, 2012) found that reading habits of Indonesian learner are still poor 3.85% and they state that reading comprehension of Indonesian student need improvement.

Therefore, dealing with the students" problem, Word Web Techniques would be one of good solutions to motivate students more active in reading text. Word webs are

collaborative versions of a concept map. A central word, phrase or question placed on a shared writing space serves as the stimulus. Students generate a list of related ideas and then organize them in a graphic, identifying relationships by drawing lines or arrows to represent the connections. (Claire Howell, 2005). Elizabeth Barkley (2005, p. 226) mentioned that this technique help students analyze a complex concept by breaking it down into component parts and clarifying the relationships. It is also an effective starting point, helping students relate new information to prior knowledge or guiding groups to uncover current understanding of the associations between parts. The writer stated that Word Web Technique help students organize facts and principles into meaningful conceptual networks and to represent visually complex relationships that are difficult to understand from words alone.

Methodology

This report used descriptive qualitative approach to describe the students" activeness during the process of teaching and learning, the implementation of word webs technique, the strengths and weaknesses of the technique, and the writer"s impression and opinion toward the techniques. To evaluate the effectiveness of these techniques three instruments were utilized: lesson study, observation sheet, interview and product analysis. Lesson study employed to check students "activeness during the lesson. Meanwhile the observation sheet had two functions: to check students" concentration during the lesson and to give comments on the teachers" presentation. Observation was done during the reading process in the classroom especially to see how they were completing the reading task using the strategy. During the writing process i did the interview to find out how they liked the strategy. Product analysis was done during and after the process. During the process the progress reading answer from

students were analyzed, given feedback, and scored. Last the writer"s comments and his impression toward the technique also would be described qualitatively. The participants of the study were the second semester of English Department Students. They consisted of 24 females and 6 males.

Findings and Discussion

This technique itself works in the following preparations and procedures. The preparations are choose a concept for students to map, and map it ourselves so that we can uncover potential problems. Your own word web can also serve as a model against which to assess group work. Mapa parallel concept to demonstrate the process to students. Decide what to use as shared writing space (for example, flip charts, largeformat paper) and bring this and colored markers or crayons to class.

The procedure of applying Word Web Technique are:
1. Describe and demonstrate the process to students
2. Form teams 2-4 group size and distribute paper and markers
3. Present the central concepts that students will graph
4. Ask students teams to brainstorms, writing list of terms and phrases that express core concepts and supporting details.
5. Have students sketch out a diagram starting with the central idea and adding primary, secondary and even tertiary associations.
6. Suggest that students determine the ways in which the items are related, drawing lines or arrows to show the connections.
7. Ask students to add new ideas and relationships as they construct the web.

The lecturers may also do some variations in applying Word Webs Technique to energize English foreign learners in reading class.

1. The lecturers use different kinds of graphics to represent different relationship.

2. Instead of having students brainstorm the list of ideas, provide them with list and ask them to graph out the relationship between the items.

3. Organize word webs around specific class. The first reading text is about "what is themes. design?" the second is "Halloween" and the   third is "group work".

   These are the examples of word web technique which were applied in reading
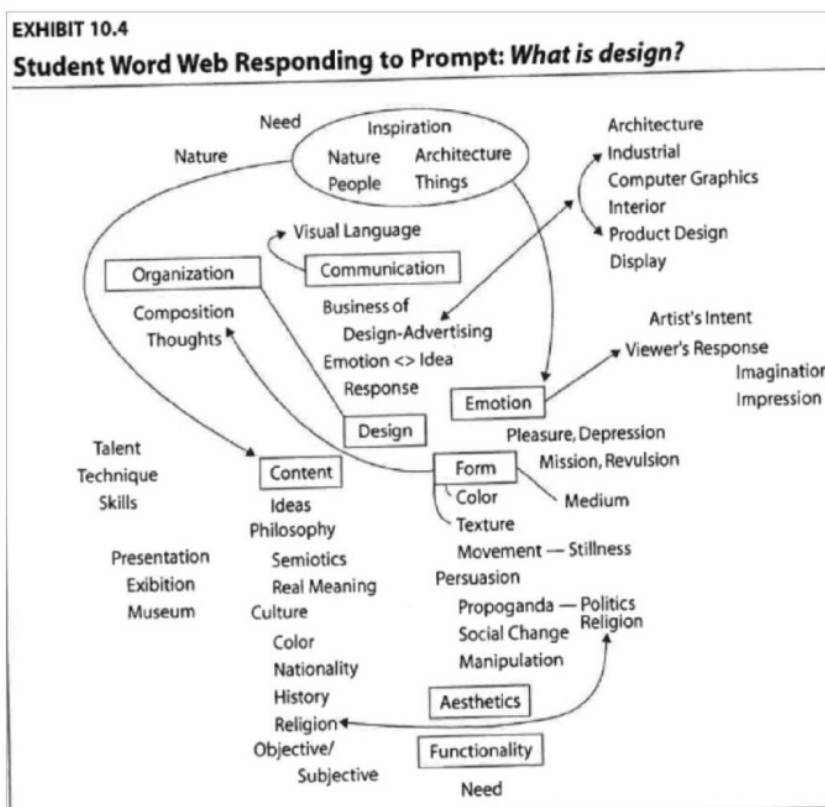
Picture 1. Word web technique of the text "What is Design?"
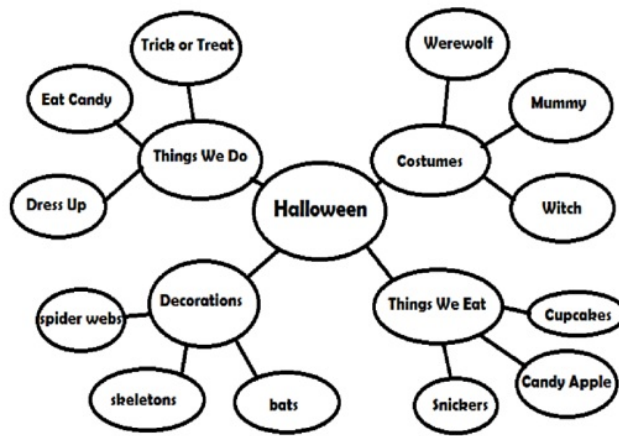
Picture 2. Word web technique of the text "Halloween"
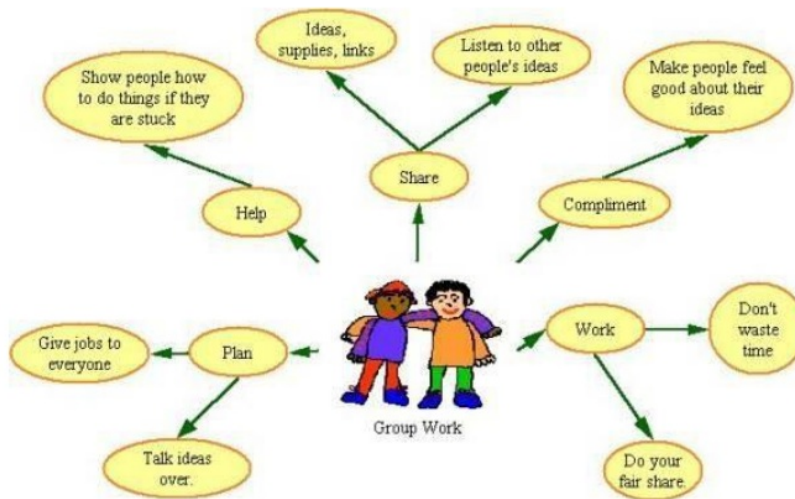
Picture 3. Word web technique of the text "Group Work"

This technique is most effective when students are able to interact "in the moment". Consider using a whiteboard tool during a synchronous session. The outcome can be captured as a screenshot to be uploaded onto a forum and shared with other students.

Another findings are the students activeness and its responses. Based on the writer‟s observation, the process of teaching and learning ran smoothly and successfully.

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they were so enthusiastic to do the tasks. Based on the observation guidance, here are the complete results:

Table 1. the percentage of observation during the teaching-learning process

No.	Observation focus	Number of students	Total students	Percentage %
1.	The students get bored with the material in reading class	17	30	56,7
2.	The students pay attention to the lecturer‟s explanation about Word Web Technique	26	30	86,7
3.	The students are enthusiastic about Word Web Technique	23	30	76,7
4.	The students have difficulties to apply Word Web Techniques for reading task	21	30	70
5.	The students discuss about reading task with their peer	19	30	63
6	The students can do reading task by using word web technique with the given time	27	30	90

Each activity planned in previous explanation could be well implemented step by step. The writer observed the teachinglearning process in reading class by using observation sheet. The result of the research showed that many students were not interested in reading class if the lecturers only taught using the same method all the time. When they were introduced with the new technique, that is Word Web Technique,

The writer used questionnaire sheet to acquire the students‟ opinion about the teaching learning process in reading class. From the questionnaire it indicated that most students give positive responses on the use of word web technique. Here is the table of students‟ responses in reading class.

Table 2. students‟ responses of reading class

No	Questions	Yes	No
1.	Do you like reading class?	21	9
2.	Do you get bored with reading materials?	19	11
3.	Are you able to understand lecturer‟s explanation?	16	14
4.	Do you participate actively in reading class?	18	12
5.	Do you get difficulties in comprehending English text?	20	10
6.	Is word web technique interesting?	23	7
7.	Do you think that word web technique difficult to apply?	22	8
8.	Are you motivated to use word web technique in your reading task?	18	12
9.	Do you cooperate with your peer to do the task with the technique?	21	9
10.	Do you give good response to the lecturer in reading class?	24	6

From the findings above, this study showed that the use of word web technique can energize the English foreign learners in reading class. This technique successfully

attracted students" attention. Most students stated that they become more active and answered the questions bravely. The result of this study is in line with the statement of Richards & Renadya (2002) who says that motivation is one of the key factors that drive the learners activeness in teaching learning process. It also helped the learners to comprehend the reading text and answer the questions easily.

Moreover they enjoyed helping each other in the process of learning reading. Since learners have to be ready to answer the questions, all students including the shy or weak ones should participate in reporting the answer. Since the students are given time to discuss it is more likely that everyone including lower achieving learner will know the correct

responses. In line with Kagan"s (1994) idea, such cooperative learning experiences in the reading class aim to preserve democracy in which every student holds opportunity for participation.

Conclusion

To restate briefly, the use of word webs technique gives positive result in students" reading activity and motivation. It also gives the evidence that when we provide a technique to complete the task of reading text, students may comprehend its content and energize them in reading class. They give good responses to word web technique in classroom activities. Despite the use of word web technique in teaching reading class

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is quite effective to help reluctant students do the tasks. I admit that the strategy used in this study is not the best one. However this technique can be applied by both lecturers and English foreign learners in completing the task of reading text.

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