DOES SCAFFOLDING HELP STUDENTS TO WRITE BETTER?

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Abstract

Learning to write is a difficult and complex series of processes that require a range of explicit teaching methodologies throughout all the stages of learning. The capacity of teacher to create positive classroom atmosphere and using appropriate teaching technique will help students to attain the goal of writing. This pre-experimental research aims to measure the effectiveness of scaffolding technique to the students writing ability. The result of the data analysis shows that the mean score of pre-test and post-test are 58. 87 and 71. 29 . Then the t-score is 4. 45 and the t-table at the degree of significant 5% is 2. 042, so the t-score 4. 45 is higher than the t-table. It means very significant, thus scaffolding technique is effective to be used in teaching writing as it helps the students to write better. This result supports the proposed theory which stated that scaffolding helps the students to write by providing a support structure to enable certain activities and skills to develop lies on the frameworks used by the teacher, giving the actual carrying out of particular activities in class, also there is the assistance provided in moment-to-moment interaction among students and teacher.

Keywords: Writing, Teaching Writing, Scaffolding Technique.

I. Introduction

Writing, as one of four English macro-skill, is very complex and can not be learned naturally like speaking. Harmer (2007: 3) states, "Spoken language, for a child, is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to be consciously learned." This statement is supported by Hyland (1993: 18) who states that "it is easier to learn to speak than to write no matter if it is a first or second language". It is not just a simple task to write or make a paragraph since it requires hard work, lengthy steps, enough time, and more practice. Learning writing needs more than enough theoretical knowledge about writing but also the experiences to write based on the theory the students have learned. Furthermore, Knapp and Watkins (2005: 14) state, "Learning to write is a difficult and complex series of processes that require a range of explicit teaching methodologies throughout all the stages of learning." It is supported by Harmer (2007: 4) mentions that writing process has four main elements: planning, drafting, editing (reflecting and revising), and final version (draft). Thus, writing is not just a skill to write or just creating sentence or paragraph based on ideas, but it has a complex process in the way conveying ideas or feeling into written form. Vernon suggests (2001: 1) the five elements of good writing including the writing purpose, the readers that the writer writes for, clarity is about word choice, grammatical and its

mechanic, unity and coherence, and text organization. Students are often difficult to aware and even easy to get lost what their writing purpose is, how to keep focusing on the topic, who is the text addressed to, and how to maintain coherence within a paragraph can make the information goes organized together.

Therefore, in order to fade students' difficulty and help them feel easy to write, not only for the students but also English teacher who must concern to the aspects in teaching writing such as the concept of writing or its importance to the students, what competencies they should achieve, kinds of problem faced, and the techniques that can be used appropriately. However, English teachers are difficult to create a strategy to teach writing, because most English teachers spend a lot of time to have grammatical explanation rather than writing itself. It happens because they assume that the key to a good English written production is mastering the rules of grammar rather than considering the other aspects of writing. Harmer (2007: 61) states that teacher needs to build the students' writing habit that is by making students feel comfortable as writer and gaining their participation in more creative or extended activities. Therefore, one way of helping the students by creating the right kinds of writing tasks, make it more realistic, and providing them with enough language and information to allow them doing the task succesfully. The capacity of teacher to

create atmosphere and learning strategy will help students to attain the goal of writing. There are a lot of techniques of teaching writing that can be applied by the teacher to make the students interest and easy to write. Smith and Zygouris (2006: 1) state "Scaffolding should be seen as a technique that is flexible and temporary." Further they explain that, "Scaffolding should not be seen as only one specific instructional technique, it is a broad term that encompasses many useful and thoughtful strategies that allows the teacher to break down a task into smaller, more manageable parts in order for the student to understand the full concept." It means that scaffolding is a teaching technique which gives instructional guidance, collaboration, and temporary support by the teacher for the students to accomplished the task. Then, Hyland (2003: 123) states, "Scaffolding refers to providing this kind of support for learners as they build their understanding of a text and their linguistics competence to create them." This temporary guidance can be meaning of providing a support structure, actual carrying out of particular activities, and assistance provided in moment-to-moment interaction in the classroom. Vacca and Levitt (2008: 150) argue, "In the classroom, scaffolding is a process by which a teacher provides students with a temporary framework for learning. When scaffolding is done correctly, students are encouraged to develop their own creativity, motivation, and resourcefulness."

Thus, it enables the students to act in an increasingly competent, confident and independent way. Scaffolding technique in assigning tasks enables the students to have a clear understanding and introduce to the expectations of writing in their assignment, then students learn the writing practices and how written products are organized in their discipline and practices. The temporary support by the teacher will assist students to develop new understandings, new concepts, and new abilities. As a result of providing scaffolding, students will be able to think critically through their academic career, to get better prepared to process assignment independently, to develop and activate the schemata of assignment types more readily, and to enable them to produce future assignment tasks independently. In teaching writing, the scaffolding technique helps teacher to give students with the most simpliest, accurate, interesting guidance and activities so that they do not only have good writing competencies but also attitudes to be a good writer.

II. Method

Considering the purpose of this research is to measure the effectiveness of scaffolding technique to the students' writing achievement, the quantitative approach is applied in this study. There are two variables namely independent variable, that is scaffolding technique, and the dependent variable, students' writing achievement. The type of this research is pre-experimental research using one-group pretest-post test design. The sample of this research, taken by using clustering sampling, is the second year students of English Department of II E class that consists of 31 students. The treatment is the application of teaching writing using scaffolding technique that indicates with the following steps: stimulating students' prior knowledge (Bridging), providing the model of the task and the way to proceed (Modeling), creating analogies based on students' experiences (Contextualising), offering explanations to activate students' knowledge (Building schema), inviting students to participate in the task through activities (Representing), and verifying students' work and clarifying their understanding as this feedback (Developing students' meta-cognition). The type of test used is essay writing test. Then, to score the students' writing product, the rubric of scoring classification of writing assessment taken from Weigle (2009: 116) is used. The criteria are content, organization, vocabulary, language used, and mechanics.

III. Result

The purpose of this research is to measure the effectiveness of scaffolding technique to the students' writing achievement. In order to know the difference of the students' writing achievement before

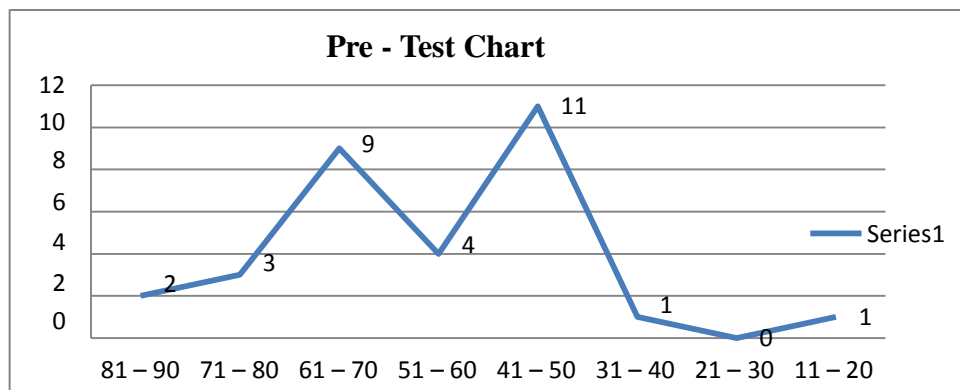and after being taught using scaffolding, the pre and post-test are conducted. The following is the result of both test:

Table 1.

Pre – Test Scores

No.	Interval	Frequency	Fkb	Fka	Fkb(%)
1.	81 – 90	2	31	2	100%
2.	71 – 80	3	29	5	93. 55%
3.	61 – 70	9	26	14	83. 87%
4.	51 – 60	4	17	18	54. 84%
5.	41 – 50	11	13	29	41. 94%
6..	31 – 40	1	2	30	6. 45%
7.	21 – 30	0	1	30	3. 23%
8.	11 – 20	1	1	31	3. 23%

Chart 1.
The Chart of the Students' Pre-Test Score

From the table above the highest score of pre - test is in the range of 81 until 90 which can be reached by 2 students. Then the biggest frequency is between 41 up to 50. It can be inferred that there are large number of students get low score in writing. The lowest interval is the score between 11 up to 20. After the treatments the post-test is conducted, the result of the computation is as follows:

Table 2.

Post – Test Data Analysis

No.	Interval	Frequency	Fkb	Fka	Fkb(%)
1.	81 – 90	1	31	1	100%
2.	71 – 80	11	30	12	96. 77%
3.	61 – 70	15	19	27	61. 29%
4.	51 – 60	3	4	30	12. 90%
5.	41 – 50	1	1	31	3. 23%

Chart 2.

The Chart of the Students' Post Test Score
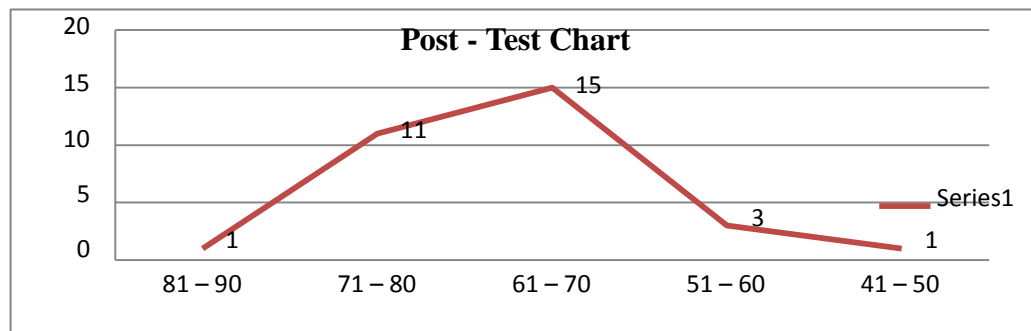
From the data and chart above, it can be seen that most of the students' scores is higher than before. It can be seen from the lowest interval range is between 41 until 50 obtained by 1 student . Although the higher score is still in the range of 81 until 90, the number of students who have scores in the range of 71 – 80. 61 – 70, and 51 – 60 are higher than before.

The difference of the result from both tests can be seen as follows:

Chart 3.

The Difference between Pre and Post-test Score
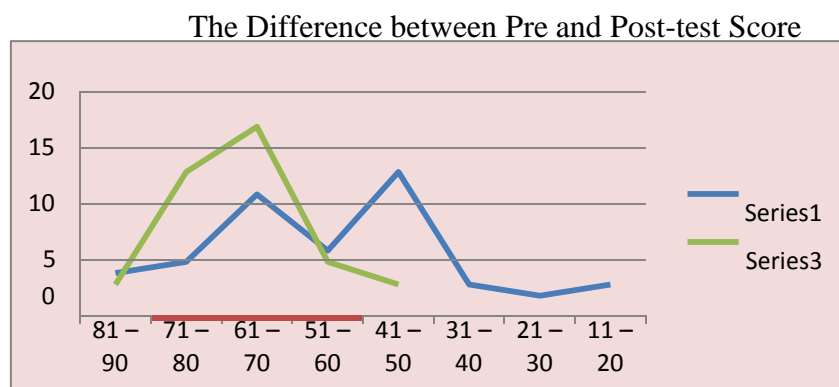
The result of pre – test drawn in blue line, each point shows that there are lots of differences through the up and down lines. The green line is shown the score result of students post–test result. There are two different mean results in this research, the first one is the mean of pre–test that is 58. 87 and the mean of post-test that is 71. 29. So the mean of the post-test is higher than the mean of the pre-test. It means the students' writing achievement is better after the treatment of teaching writing using scaffolding technique. In order to test the Hypothesis (Ha) in which the students taught writing using scaffolding have better writing achievement that those taught without scaffolding, the t-test computation is used. Then the following is the result of the t-test computation:

$$\text{t-score} = \frac{Mk - Me}{\sqrt{\dfrac{\sum d^2}{N(N-1)}}}$$

$$= \frac{71.29 - 58.87}{\sqrt{\dfrac{7.275.67}{31(31-1)}}}$$

$$= \frac{12.42}{\sqrt{\dfrac{7.275.67}{31 \times 30}}}$$

$$= \frac{12.42}{\sqrt{\dfrac{7.275.67}{930}}}$$

$$= \frac{12.42}{\sqrt{7.8233}}$$

$$= \frac{12.42}{2.79}$$

$$= 4.45 \ (\text{t-score})$$

After finding the t-score, the t-table with degree of freedom 30 is found. The t-table with the db 30 for the significant degree 1% is 2.750 and 5% is 2.042, so the t-score (4. 45) is higher than the t-table with the significant degree 1% (2. 750) and 5% (2. 042). Thus it can be concluded if the result is significant. Finally, the Ho is rejected on the other hand the Ha is accepted. It means that scaffolding is effective to use in teaching writing.

IV. Discussion

Based on the research finding, it can be stated that the scaffolding technique gives significant effect to the students' writing achievement. It supports the theory explained by Knapp and Watkins (2005: 14) who state that "Learning to write is a difficult and complex series of processes that require a range of explicit teaching methodologies throughout all the stages of learning." This complexity creates a situation that students difficult to develop their ideas and consider to the aspect of writing skill. In line with this, Byrne (1993: 2) also state that," the process of writing is so varied and complex that it requires detailed analysis in order to discover which part (or parts) of the process need assistance." Therefore the teacher's guidance, support, and collaboration are needed in order to achieve the goal of writing. In this case, scaffolding helped by providing a support structure to enable certain activities and skills to develop lies on the frameworks used by the teacher, giving the actual carrying out of particular activities in class, and then there is the assistance provided in moment-to-moment interaction among students and teacher (Walqui, 2006: 164). By doing so, scaffolding technique helped effectively for the students to write if it is done correctly in the classroom activity and it was showed to the score of post-test that the students significantly increased their writing ability.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion even though writing is one of productive skills that is difficult and complex skill to learn scaffolding comes as a teaching technique provides temporary guidance, support, and collaboration run effectively to create situation that make the students easier to write. It begins with the selection of a suitable learning task compatibly with the students' level which engages the students' interest to control and support students' emotion during lesson. Considerable explanation of models/exposures and collaboration provided in moment-to-moment interaction make students focus and have clear understanding about the task. Finally, the follow up or post activity such as representing the text, discussion, and feedback becomes an evaluation technique through inviting the students to have their own understanding about writing.

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