

# OPTIMIZING SCAFFOLDING TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION IN AN EFL CLASSROOM CONTEXT

## [MENGOPTIMALKAN *SCAFFOLDING* UNTUK MENINGKATKAN KEMAMPUAN MENULIS EKSPOSISI ANALITIS SISWA DALAM KONTEKS KELAS EFL]

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### Abstract

The preliminary study of the present research showed that students faced problems in writing English analytical exposition text. Framed in classroom action research, this study aims to investigate how using scaffolding as a strategy in teaching writing can improve students' writing in analytical exposition text. This qualitative study employed document analysis and interviews to answer the research questions. The participants of this study were 26 EFL students in a senior high school in Bandung, and six students participated in interview sessions. The result indicated that the scaffolding process implemented in two action research cycles improved students' skills in writing analytical exposition text in all aspects of writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Besides, students also showed a positive perception toward implementing scaffolding through various activities in the classroom. This study recommends that scaffolding writing be applied using multiple online tools in more diverse educational settings since the rapid progress of information technology enables learners to acquire knowledge and improve skills online.

**Keywords:** Scaffolding; students' analytical exposition writing; EFL classroom context.

### Abstrak

Studi pendahuluan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa menghadapi masalah dalam menulis teks eksposisi analitis menggunakan bahasa Inggris. Dibingkai dalam penelitian tindakan kelas, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki bagaimana penggunaan *scaffolding* sebagai strategi dalam pengajaran menulis dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa dalam teks eksposisi analitis. Penelitian kualitatif ini menggunakan analisis dokumen dan wawancara untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian. Partisipan dari penelitian ini adalah 26 siswa EFL di sebuah sekolah menengah atas di Bandung, dan enam siswa berpartisipasi dalam sesi wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses *scaffolding* yang diterapkan dalam dua siklus penelitian tindakan meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks eksposisi analitis di semua

aspek penulisan: konten, organisasi, tata bahasa, kosakata, dan mekanik. Selain itu, siswa juga menunjukkan persepsi yang positif terhadap penerapan *scaffolding* melalui berbagai kegiatan di kelas. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan agar penulisan scaffolding dapat diterapkan dengan menggunakan berbagai alat *online* dalam lingkungan pendidikan yang beragam karena kemajuan teknologi informasi yang pesat memungkinkan siswa untuk memperoleh pengetahuan dan meningkatkan keterampilan *online*.

**Kata kunci:** Scaffolding; penulisan eksposisi analitis siswa; konteks kelas EFL.

## Introduction

Students in senior high school must be familiar with writing skill since writing plays an essential role in learning English. Writing is a complex process in which ideas or feelings are conveyed in written form. This process is more than just writing or composing sentences or paragraphs based on ideas (Harmer, 2007). In writing, students must express their opinions, provide logical reasons, support their ideas, and organize them (Rashtci, 2019). In the context of English for Foreign Language (EFL) classes, writing skills can stimulate thinking, force students to focus and organize their thoughts and develop the ability to analyze, summarize, and criticize (Rao, 2007).

However, writing is often considered the most challenging skill for EFL learners to master (Gibbons, 2015). A preliminary study of this research conducted by Nurlatifah and Yusuf (2022) shows that most students face problems in five aspects of writing: content, organization, and writing mechanics (cognitive problems); grammar and vocabulary (linguistic problems). Apart from low writing skills, they lack interest in writing, are confused about starting to write and share ideas and grammatical rules, and have low motivation to write (psychological problems). These facts emerged as reasons for students' negative perceptions of writing.

As a result, writing difficulties have sparked English teachers' creativity in the classroom. One effective method used by teachers to solve challenges in the classroom is scaffolding, which has been confirmed to help students meet their writing learning objectives (Boldrini & Cattaneo, 2014; Howell, 2018). When teachers provide their students with a temporary teaching method implemented collectively and eventually eliminate it when the students no longer require it, this is called scaffolding (Boblett, 2012). Scaffolding refers to classroom activities and teacher-student interactions (Boblett, 2012). Moreover, Suherdi (2008) defines scaffolding as a teaching tool that helps students learn specific concepts and abilities.

## What Scaffolding is

Scaffolding is, basically, a temporary structure that is employed in the course of building construction or repair (Gibbons, 2015; Gonulal & Loewen, 2018; Suherdi, 2008). When a new building is constructed, scaffolding is removed, a temporary measure crucial to achieving the construction's objectives (Gibbons, 2015). According to Gibbons (2015), a metaphor is used to define scaffolding as actions done to reduce children's independence when performing various tasks so that they can focus on challenging skills. Scaffolding is more than just a synonym for assistance; it assists students in moving toward new skills, ideas, or comprehension levels. Furthermore, she adds that scaffolding is the temporary assistance a teacher provides for the

learner to execute a similar job on their own later (Gibbons, 2015). It is focused on the future and aims to increase student autonomy.

Scaffolding teaching was inspired by Vygotsky's theory and his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Walqui, 2006). The gap between what children can perform independently and the subsequent learning they can help them finish with good direction is referred to as the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). However, Bruner and Sherwood's (1976) research on Peekaboo interactions between mothers and children utilized the English word scaffolding. Because Wood, Bruner, and Ross's work popularized the term "scaffolding" in the educational domain, it is also extensively utilized. This term refers to how parents work with their kids to solve problems. This term was used to characterize how parents and kids collaborated to solve problems. Since its introduction in 1976, it has become widely accepted in several education-related fields (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018).

### **Types of Scaffolding**

There are two types of scaffolding: macro and micro levels (Hammond, 2001). At the macro level, teachers need to be able to express precise linguistic and curriculum goals and decide on appropriate educational goals. There are five essential components of scaffolding at this level: the teacher's goals, the teacher's comprehension of the linguistic aspects of the related tasks, students' knowledge and current abilities and insights, careful task sequencing intended to develop the necessary practice to achieve goals, and a gradual but constant shift in responsibility for completing assignments from teachers to students (Hammond, 2001; Walqui, 2006). At the micro level, scaffolding takes place in teacher-student interactions.

To begin with, bridging is when a teacher draws on the class's prior knowledge before introducing new material. Because students can only learn new concepts and language based on prior knowledge and understanding, this teaching style seeks to build a personal relationship between the students and the lesson by gathering information and sharing experiences that relate to the student's lives as individuals. Using students' prior knowledge is a common bridging technique.

Second, modelling is when a teacher provides students with a situation or a specific example of how they should act, feel, or think to model learning behaviour. Giving students explicit illustrations of what they are expected to emulate is imperative. When introducing a new task or working arrangement, learners must be able to see or hear what a developing product looks like; one way to do this is to take students through an interaction or have them complete it first; this must be done as a class exercise. English teachers might consider keeping (photocopying) student work samples for demonstration purposes. These models can inspire and motivate students and set performance norms or expectations by providing examples.

Third, contextualizing is how a teacher helps students connect academic vocabulary and daily English by providing a pertinent example. This type of scaffolding makes abstract ideas about the problem more relatable to the students' experiences. According to numerous educational professionals, there are differences between academic and everyday language. Because ordinary language is situation-dependent and embedded in a rich context, learners can rely on nonlinguistic information to compensate for potential linguistic shortcomings. However, academic language is decontextualized and situation-independent, meaning students must

understand it only through language use. Instructors can also generate language contextualization using analogies based on students' experiences.

Fourth, schema building, according to Syarifah and Gunawan (2015), schema development is the process of connecting several related meanings and issues with students' general knowledge that may lead to specifics. The teacher needs to provide a range of exercises to aid in their understanding. Students in general, and English language learners specifically, need to be able to process information in two ways: from the bottom up, using vocabulary, syntax, rhetorical devices, and so forth, and from the top down, by first gaining a comprehensive grasp of the big picture before learning the specifics. Additionally, by providing students with a lesson plan, we can lessen their anxiety and support them in handling ambiguity—one of the essential qualities of a proficient language learner.

Fifth, the teacher employs representing text to ask the class to examine the language in a single text. It can involve students in teaching and learning to the fullest extent possible. Every student has had a chance to finish all the assignments. As the teacher monitors class activities, all students will take part in instructive conversations. Because their more proficient peers help them, the less proficient students are not left out. They must complete tasks that are equally difficult for them as the more complex assignments for advanced English language learners.

The final step is helping children develop metacognition, or the ability to control their thinking. It consists of the following four elements at minimum: (1) actively using acquired strategies during an activity; (2) being aware of the strategic options available to a learner and being able to select the most appropriate one for the particular task at hand; (3) keeping track of, assessing, and modifying performance during an activity; and (4) making plans for future performance based on previous performance evaluations.

### **The Purpose of Scaffolding**

The critical component of effective scaffolding is the ability of learners to function inside their ZPD. It is defined as the gap between a child's prospective development level, assessed by problem-solving under adult supervision or in cooperation with more advanced peers, and the child's current developmental level, assessed by independent problem-solving (Shin et al., 2020). Scaffolding is important because it can optimize students' zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the gap between their potential level of maximally supported performance and their level of independent performance (Bodrova & Leong, 1998).

Nevertheless, adjusting each student's ZPD in a practical classroom is not easy. One teacher giving scaffolding for the entire class prevents customized interactions that better address the ZPDs of individual students (Puntambekar & Hubscher, 2015). They also suggest three crucial scaffolding elements. The first is the notion of a mutual comprehension of the goal of the activity. The adult gives the required assistance based on an ongoing assessment of the child's present level of understanding, intersubjectivity, or a shared understanding of the activity deemed vital, even though some components of the activity may be beyond the child's ability to accomplish alone. Second, the adult offers the proper kind of assistance based on an ongoing evaluation of the child's level of knowledge. It requires the adult to be fully aware of the task and its components, as well as the subgoals that need to be fulfilled and the child's talents, which are developed throughout the session. The final important theoretical aspect of scaffolding is that it

progressively lessens the assistance given to the students, empowering them to assume ownership and responsibility for their education.

### **Scaffolding in Writing**

Based on Vygotsky's theory of learning and development, scaffolding is an innovative method for writing support (Bodrova & Leong, 1998; Ahangari et al., 2014). Scaffolding can be used in language acquisition, especially when teaching writing, as it allows students to experience writing and receive assistance when needed (Vonna et al., 2015). Teachers and educators are concerned about teaching writing in EFL classes (Faraj, 2015). Teachers should be familiar with the fundamentals of writing to help pupils with this task, which requires a great deal of practice. According to Byrne (1993), a teacher's responsibilities when teaching writing include (1) choosing how to set up the activity in the classroom, (2) preparing the students verbally by providing multiple examples, (3) deciding whether the assignment should be completed in groups or alone, and (4) selecting the correction methods.

However, many people believe writing is the most challenging ability to learn in English (Brown, 2004; Gibbons, 2015; Vonna et al., 2015). Writing is challenging in any language, including one's mother tongue (Brown, 2004). While many children in affluent nations master the fundamentals of writing in their mother tongue, very few can express themselves coherently and with a well-formed structure that achieves the desired goals (Brown, 2004). It implies that teaching writing is a complex undertaking. Teachers need to be clear about the goal or criterion when teaching and evaluating writing ability.

One of the problems is that the students cannot adequately express themselves in writing. Language learners typically struggle to articulate their ideas or organize their thoughts in a way that makes writing about a given topic possible. For this reason, thinking skills should be taught in writing workshops, along with writing mechanics (Rastchi, 2019). According to Byrne (1993), three things can affect a writer's process: cognitive, language, and psychological issues. Writing is challenging in psychology because students should be able to write independently without the chance for criticism or contact. For the text they create to be interpreted, students working on linguistic challenges must sustain communication by attempting to ensure sentence structure and how their phrases are ordered and connected. Last but not least, to communicate effectively in writing and solve cognitive difficulties, students must grasp the written language form and acquire some critical structures. They must also learn to arrange their ideas and thoughts so readers can understand them.

### **Writing Analytical Exposition Text**

Over the past ten years, writing instruction in EFL classrooms has concentrated on genre and context due to genre pedagogy's cognitive and psychological benefits (Hyland, 2004; Emilia, 2014). Teachers will also have more psychological, cognitive, political, and financial influence (Emilia, 2014). The genre and context of writing within the Indonesian curriculum have been the main instruction topics in EFL classes. Genre pedagogies in EFL writing courses have evolved in response to process pedagogies because of communicative approaches and literacy comprehension (Hyland, 2004). The program teaches students how to effectively and fluently convey meaning in brief utilitarian and genre-based texts.

Numerous approaches have been taken to interpreting and studying the genre concept. Genre is a widely recognized and widely used writing technique in the Australian setting. As such, it is intended to serve as an organizing concept for the development of EFL learning programs (Ahn, 2012). Analytical exposition texts are one of the genres officially recognized in the English curriculum for senior high school students in Indonesia. According to Gerot and Wignell (1994), it is a written or spoken language that aims to convince readers or listeners that a given statement is accurate while bolstering the author's perception of the phenomenon. An analytical exposition text presents one side of a topic to persuade readers or listeners.

A text is a spoken or written linguistic unit that is socially and culturally complete, ideally from start to finish (Emilia, 2016). Analytical exposition text is one of the texts included in Indonesia's senior high school curriculum. The three main components of an analytical exposition text are the thesis, arguments, and reiteration, according to Gerot and Wignell (1994). In the first section, the thesis presents the problem and the author's point of view. Furthermore, the thesis acts as a roadmap for the main point that will be made. The argument refers to the second section. The main point from the preview is reiterated using the argument. Each argument's growth, elaboration, and support are all included. It concludes with a repetition. Usually, it summarizes the author's viewpoint and brings the discussion to a close.

Analyzing social function, generic structures, and linguistic characteristics in spoken and written analytical exposition by researching and presenting information about a real issue based on the text is the standard competency of analytical exposition texts in the Indonesian English curriculum. The analytical explanation's social purpose is to convince the listener or reader that the idea is significant. A thesis, an argument, and a reiteration make up the general structure of an analytical exposition text. Other prevalent language features in analytical exposition include modal verbs, action verbs, adverbs, adjectives, technical terminology, general and abstract nouns, connectives, and transitions.

Several methods can be applied to genre-based assessment (Hyland, 2004). First, the assessment criteria should be clear to students in a language they can comprehend as early in the course. These are then applied to provide students with scaffolding and support, leading to outcomes specific to the course (Hyland, 2004). The evaluation should then employ criteria-referenced measures to illustrate the abilities to select and create a genre with appropriate linguistic elements and social knowledge. Consequently, learning outcomes—what students can accomplish—rather than instructional strategies are highlighted (Hyland, 2004). Genre-based assessment can be applied in the EFL environment in some ways. Students' analytical exposition writing is assessed in the classroom using writing criteria devised and modified from Brown's writing rubrics (2004), which address vocabulary, organization, content, grammar, and mechanics.

The results of relevant studies regarding scaffolding and its implication in teaching writing have been conducted so far. Scaffolding with a structured process was an effective instructional method for developing writing capacity and supporting competence development and a positive attitude toward writing (Ahn, 2012; Boldrini & Cattaneo, 2014). In terms of support from knowledgeable persons, Both the teacher and peer support were influential in using various scaffolding behaviors to assist students in achieving higher levels of independence (Riazi & Rezaii, 2011; Shoostari & Mir, 2014). There was also a favorable opinion of the student teacher's

perceptions of scaffolding in teaching English as a second language. They believe it positively impacts teaching writing, and it was a successful technique to maximize learners' learning potential, especially in teaching writing (Yunus et al., 2019).

The utilization of scaffolding has been investigated in high-education writing (Veramuttu, 2011; Faraj, 2015; Klimova, 2020). They found that scaffolding helped students develop their competence by improving their writing skills. In the experimental context, the experimental group students performed better in writing than those in the control group (Ahangari et al., 2014; Vonna et al., 2015; Ma et al., 2022). Students were also engaged in groups to share experiences and were greatly influenced by teachers and knowledgeable peers. In argumentative writing, scaffolding was employed through various forms of learning to mediate students' learning in argumentative essays (Fan & Chen., 2019; Gomez-laih et al., 2019). Fan & Chen (2019) claimed that through scaffolding, a group of students in map writing were superior in an argumentative essay to those in the other two groups. Gomez-laih et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of explicit instruction for analytical argumentative writing to unpack language features of description, argument, and analysis required to write argumentative text effectively. Scaffolding in genre-based writing training would help students write better through the two tests' results following the intervention program; writing performance was significantly altered in all four areas—content, organization, language use, and mechanics—with most of them improving the text's organization (Nguyen & Truong, 2024).

Then, this research aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the scaffolding strategy improve students' writing skills in analytical exposition texts?
2. What are students' perceptions regarding the application of scaffolding in facilitating them in writing analytical expository texts?

The study's findings are expected to have a theoretical, practical, and professional impact on Indonesian education. In theory, this study offers valuable perspectives for educational institutions, educators, and scholars. In applicable terms, it is intended that the research's conclusions will enlighten educators and help them create better lesson plans to meet institutional and learning objectives. This study is anticipated to serve as a professional resource for educators facing comparable writing challenges and researchers operating in related domains.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study used classroom action research (CAR) since its goals were to address pedagogical issues and provide information on how teachers implement scaffolding. Its goal was to help students write more analytical expositions in the classroom. Empirical research that uses the classroom as its major research site is generally referred to as CAR (Dornyei, 2007). In order to enhance the caliber of action, it applies fact-finding to practical problem-solving in social contexts including the involvement of practitioners, researchers, and the general public (Burns, 1999).

A qualitative design is used to comprehend the circumstances, significance, and participant involvement (Merriam, 2009). The finest results for gaining such a thorough insight

could be obtained through qualitative action research. Instructors frequently monitor, record, and evaluate student learning and classroom activities using qualitative approaches and interpretive procedures (Klehr, 2012).

### Research Site and Participants

This research was conducted at one of the senior high schools in West Java. In this study, one English teacher collaborated to help administer scaffolding activities and record the results, while the researcher also participated. Based on the preliminary investigation of the current research, 26 EFL students in the eleventh grade of an Islamic senior high school participated in this study because they had writing issues. Six students participated in the interview to represent high-achiever, middle-achiever, and low-achiever students.

The researcher in this study took on the role of a teacher who used scaffolding to teach writing to make sure that the lesson plan created by the researcher and collaborator was followed when implementing the scaffolding technique. Additionally, since the researcher is familiar with the classroom environment, student characteristics, and scaffolding, it was helpful for the researcher to practice being a teaching observer.

### Data Collection

Documents collected from students' writing tests are important to language teaching. The student writing test consists of a pre-test and post-test. Tests are tools or procedures to obtain student performance and measure the achievement of certain criteria (Brown, 2004). The test was given before and after scaffolding treatment in teaching and learning. After that, researchers and collaborators assessed the test based on five writing assessment aspects: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (Brown, 2004).

Six students participated in semi-structured interview sessions. Interviews were conducted to obtain better data on teaching implementation. Interviews can serve as class assignments and investigate and collect data regarding the area to be explored (Burns, 1999).

Data collection for this research was obtained from the action research flow of cycle I and cycle II.

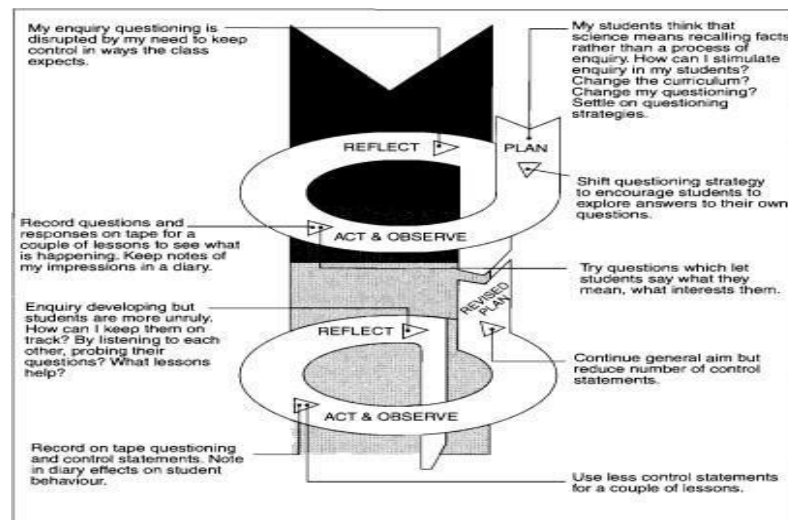


Figure 1. action research flow of cycle I and cycle II.



## Data Analysis

The qualitative data in this study were gathered through interviewing and document analysis. The researcher examined students writing papers based on five writing evaluation features Brown (2004). After that, the researcher used axial and open coding to evaluate the interview data to create categories based on Merriam's analytical steps (2009). In summary, open and axial coding, category construction, category descriptions, and theoretical interpretation were used to examine the data from the two sources (Merriam, 2009).

## Findings and Discussions

Before coming to the action stage, a pre-test was conducted to examine the English score of the students before the treatment. Then it would be compared with the post-test result to know the treatment's effectiveness. In the test, students were asked to write an analytical exposition text. They were given 90 minutes to write the text with five topics. They could choose one of the assigned topics. The reason why the researcher gave the assigned topics is to avoid the task given being too free. Students can select their issues to feel confident about what they have to write (Faraj, 2015). Then, two raters scored the test result. The first rater is the teacher as a researcher, and the second rater is the collaborator. The test result was then assessed using a scoring rubric adapted from Brown (2004).

Thus, the implementation of scaffolding in this study happened in the classroom setting as the action stage. It aligns with Walqui (2006) that scaffolding occurs in the teacher-student interaction that is bridging, modelling, contextualizing, schema building, representing text, and developing metacognition. The notion of scaffolding also highlights the importance of interaction with experienced others in learning and how it can help learners progress from their current performance to a higher level of future performance (Hyland, 2004; Walqui, 2006).

After the implementation of scaffolding in cycle 1, there were some improvements in students' skills in writing analytical exposition texts. The pre-test score was 2.19, and the post-test 1 score was 3.55. It can be seen in the following figure.

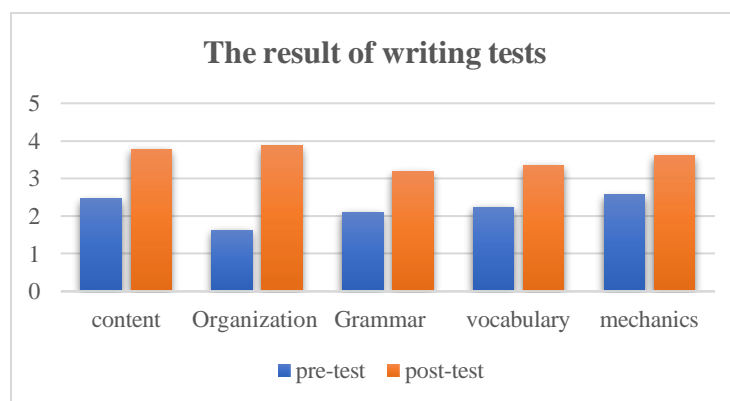


Figure 2.1 The comparison of pre-test and post-test 1

As illustrated in the figure above, the average score after scaffolding treatment increased for each aspect: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. However, the

results vary from one aspect to another. For example, its effect significantly affects content, organization, and mechanics, but not grammar and vocabulary. In line with that, the post-test results also showed that some students' scores were still below the minimum criteria (pass score). It was also found that less improvement occurred in aspects of grammar and vocabulary.

Incorrect use of grammar is found in almost all students' writing. There are many errors in applying basic grammar, such as the agreement of subjects and verbs, singular and plural nouns, tenses, and articles—specific grammatical issues that need to be addressed in the first cycle of this research. First and foremost, grammar teaching is combined with writing teaching rather than being taught separately. As a result, students learn how to construct sentences effectively and assess grammatical errors in their writing. However, this strategy did not work as planned because students were in a hurry to complete their thoughts and also ran out of time to correct grammatical errors in their writing. As a result, their grammar skills are not developed sufficiently. Problems regarding grammatical errors in students' writing were also found in other research (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017; Hasan & Marzuki, 2017; Nasser, 2019; Nurlatifah & Yusuf, 2022).

Teachers also discovered issues with student accountability, classroom management, student work evaluation, and comparable writing during the first cycle. Accommodating each student's ZPD in a real-world classroom is hard. Furthermore, interactions expressly intended to address students' various ZPDs more extensively cannot be created when a single teacher provides scaffolding for the entire class (Puntambekar & Hubscher, 2015). Because scaffolding is individualized, it is demonstrated that all students can gain from it in the learning process. However, the largest drawback for educators is the amount of work required to construct the instructional scaffolding and supports required to fulfill the needs of every student. Furthermore, implementing personalized scaffolding in a classroom with many students would be challenging. As a result, the second cycle's learning must be improved. The second cycle's implementation will concentrate on issues that arise in line with the first cycle's reflection. When managing the classroom, researchers and partners establish deadlines for every task and support students who don't meet expectations. The second cycle's implementation will concentrate on providing scaffolding to low-achieving pupils. The following table displays the outcomes of the second cycle's implementation.

In the second cycle, the post-test results showed that students' writing had improved. The progress from cycle one to cycle two was then determined by comparing the post-test result with the preceding post-test. Two raters then graded the post-test result. The teacher in their capacity as a researcher, is the first rater, and the collaborator is the second. After that, the post-test results were evaluated using a grading system modified by Brown (2004). The post-test 1 and 2 results are shown below, as determined by the two raters.

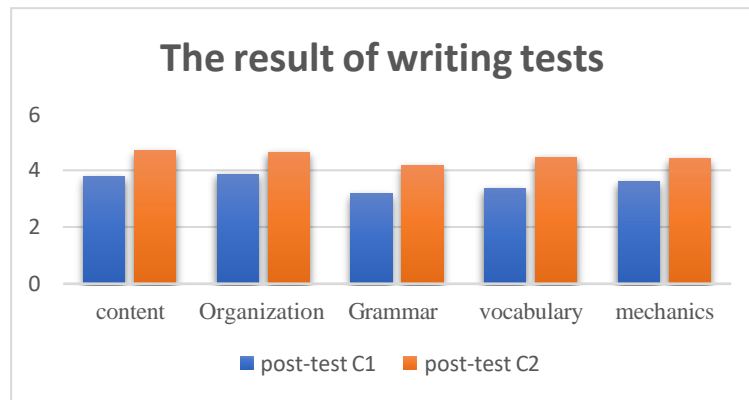


Figure 2.2 The result of post-test 1 and post-test 2

According to the figure above, the scaffolding treatment in cycle II shows that scaffolding improves students' skills in writing analytical exposition texts. The average post-test 1 score was 3.55, and the average post-test 2 score was 4.50. The results of the second cycle of student writing analysis showed that all students' grades had increased and had reached the KKM. Apart from the linguistic aspect, no similar writing was found in the second cycle, meaning that students had a clear direction in compiling their writing based on their competence without copying each other's assignments. So, it can be concluded that this second research cycle has met the criteria for its success.

The improvement of student writing can be seen from the comparison of pre- test and post-test writing below.

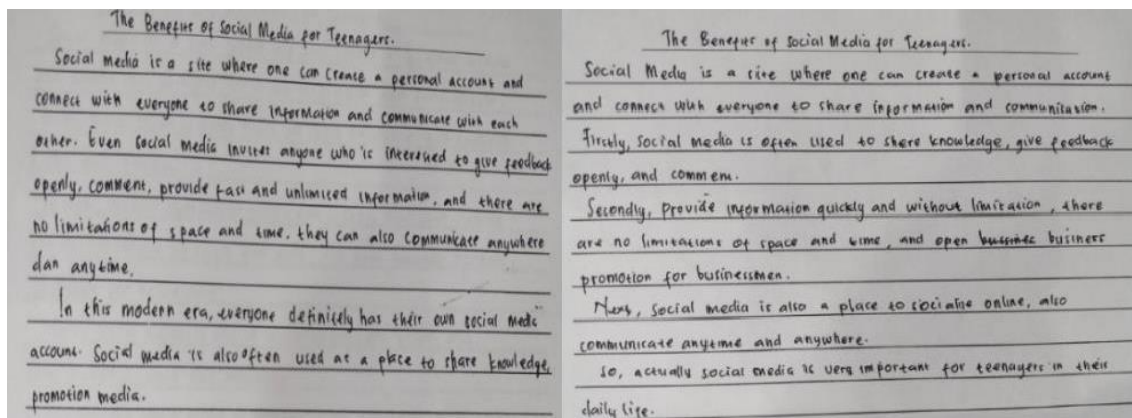


Figure 3. The comparison of pre- test and post-test writing

The example of the student's writing above showed that the student had improved their ability to write analytical exposition text regarding content, organization, vocabulary, and mechanic aspects. The result of the interview below also showed that students' writing content improved along with vocabulary improvement. The teacher's support in enhancing vocabulary enrichment enabled the student to explore the content of his writing, which resulted in more

acceptable content with adequate information to support the arguments based on the thesis statement.

*T: What do you think of scaffolding given by the teacher to improve your writing skills in content?*

*S: I think I can explore my writing content more because of the added vocabulary.*

Regarding the organization aspect, the students produced the final writing following the suggested generic structures of the analytical exposition genre: thesis, arguments, and conclusion. In the second cycle of this study, the organization of students' writing is more understandable.

*T: What do you think of scaffolding given by the teacher to improve your writing skills in the organization of the text?*

*S: I know the organization of the text because the teacher explained and discussed it, and I understand.*

Regarding the vocabulary aspect, vocabulary enrichment in the building of the knowledge stage was very helpful in enriching students' vocabulary. Vocabulary mastery is required for the successful use of a second language since, without an extensive vocabulary, one would not be capable of using the structures and functions of the sentence. Vocabulary is crucial to English language proficiency because students' linguistic skills improve as they increase their vocabulary (Zahedi & Abdi, 2012). Students cannot correctly communicate their message or express their views in spoken and written form without a suitable vocabulary.

*T: What do you think of learning activities to enrich your vocabulary?*

*S: The learning activities are plentiful. Working in groups is also very helpful in sharing ideas and vocabulary.*

Regarding mechanics, scaffolding in the writing process could improve students' analytical exposition text.

*T: What do you think of learning activities to improve linguistic aspects such as mechanics in writing?*

*S: At first, I often wrote carelessly; after an explanation of the mechanic aspect, I know and write better*

Students' opinions of the use of scaffolding in cycle II were likewise favorable. All respondents deemed scaffolding beneficial for enhancing their writing and language abilities. Additionally, every respondent believed that producing texts collaboratively in a scaffolding environment boosted their text-writing confidence. For instance, some students find writing difficult because they are unsure what to write about. After working with teachers and

classmates, students can write more confidently and develop more ideas because they have more topics to write about in collaborative writing.

*T: You have learned to write analytical exposition writing with the guidance of your teacher. Tell me about your experiences in the learning and writing process*

*S: At first, I didn't know how to write text in English, then I understood better how to write texts, and I preferred to group up so I could share opinions. The learning experience is fun, so I can do it; I enjoy working in groups because it's fun.*

*T: Do you think that guidance from the teacher is important in the learning process? What is the impact on your abilities?*

*S: Although the teacher's explanation is short, it is beneficial. When given a task, we know it and can do it immediately.*

Positive attitudes toward the implementation of scaffolding were also found in other studies (Ahn, 2012; Boldrini & Catteneo, 2014; Ma et al., 2022). Significantly, Ma et al. (2022) concluded that the students' attitudes toward writing in English in the experimental class had changed. The percentage of students in the class who wrote was much higher than before the trial. Most students were happy to write in class and actively participate in various learning activities. They were also more willing to share projects and write ideas with fellow students. Finally, students' confidence in their writing level has increased, eliminating the fear of writing difficulties.

Despite applying numerous strategies in the implementation of scaffolding, there are still issues with students' grammatical writing abilities. Their grammar abilities haven't improved as anticipated as a result. Nevertheless, Bitchener & Ferris (2012) in Emilia and Hamied (2015) contend that writing programs cannot or should not ask students to produce ideal or perfect work free of text errors. Therefore, this does not imply that the educational program is ineffective.

*T: What do you think of scaffolding given by the teacher to improve your writing skills regarding grammar?*

*S: When the teacher explained the information about grammar, I understood it. But I forget the rules when I write.*

Therefore, numerous studies on the value of scaffolding in enhancing students' writing abilities and levels corroborate the findings of this study (Veramuttu, 2011; Faraj, 2015; Klimova, 2020; Ahangari et al., 2014; Vonna et al., 2015; Fan & Chen., 2019; Gomez-laih et al., 2019, Ma et al., 2022). This research differs from earlier studies because it employs a classroom action research methodology to solve writing challenges and applies numerous strategies at different scaffolding stages.

## Conclusions

It is concluded that implementing scaffolding in this study helps students improve their skills in writing analytical exposition text. After the treatment was applied, there was an improvement in five aspects of writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. It was proved by improving students' scores from the pre-test and post-test 2. The post-test result shows that scaffolding has improved students' writing skills, and the impact varied from one aspect to another. Based on the pre-test result, the average was 2.19, the average score of post-test 1 was 3.55, and the average score of post-test 2 was 4.50. There is an improvement in students' scores on each test in all aspects of writing. It means that scaffolding helped students improve their writing analytical exposition,

There were also positive perceptions of students towards implementing scaffolding in the classroom. The result of the interview supports these findings. All interviewed students from low, middle, and high achievers perceived the implementation of scaffolding in learning activities to overcome the writing problems found in the preliminary phase. It is also supported by the result of the writing tasks mentioned earlier. Students' perception regarding the implementation of scaffolding shows that the scaffolding technique is adequate, and each response has distinct explanations based on their experiences in classroom activities. They believed that this technique aided them in getting a better understanding of writing related to the concepts. Scaffolding has become a guide to providing suggestions, adequate and practical support, collaborative learning, and improvement in writing.

This study then offers some suggestions to teachers and students who have the same problem in teaching writing. First, it is recommended that teachers do more scaffolding for students to solve problems in writing by improving their skills. Second, the teachers must focus on overcoming students' grammatical problems in writing. Finally, when teachers are skilled at managing their classroom technique, it can substantially impact their education and thus assist students in achieving their goals.

The present study's findings have several implications for teacher professional development in the teaching and learning process. English teachers should motivate students to be interested in writing by providing entertaining strategies to solve their writing problems and some practices to improve their English proficiency and competency. Then, scaffolding processes in the teaching and learning process from the macro to micro level can be considered an essential part of teaching all skills in English since the result of this study show that guidance from the teacher and support and help from the peers are needed by the students in the process of learning. Finally, the implications of this study may impact the teachers in developing their competencies through classroom action research. Instead of improving students' skills in learning, classroom action research improves teachers' teaching skills since it enables teachers to learn through their activities and develop competencies personally and professionally through its reflection.

Therefore, this study also recommends using the online tool in scaffolding to assist students in writing. The rapid progress of information technology and the internet enables learners to acquire knowledge or improve skills online, and learning is no longer restricted to paper-based formats nowadays.



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