



## Scaffolding Strategy Based-Writing Instruction to Promote Students' Grammar Mastery in Written Communication

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### ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study are to find out the difference of the students' grammar mastery in written communication after the implementation of scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction and to describe the students' response to scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction in writing class. The sample is twenty students of the third semester Buddhist Communication Science Department in the academic year 2022-2023. This research is quantitative and qualitative by using one group pre-test posttest design. The instruments are writing test, questionnaire, and interview. The result of data analysis shows that there is a significant difference in the students' grammar mastery in written communication. The result of the questionnaire shows that the students give the positive response towards applying scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction in writing class. The conclusion of this present study, after the students are given scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction, along with the improvement in writing ability, the students' grammar mastery in written communication improves significantly.

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### Introduction

Language is one of the most important aspects of our lives. English is one of the most important languages to master. Learning English allows us to communicate with people from various cultures and countries. English is already taught as a foreign language in our country. From kindergarten to university, students are taught English in formal school. Students can improve their skills in a variety of areas by using English.



Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four skills of the English. This four skills are crucial in language learning. All of the students rely on them to maintain good communication with one another. Reading and listening are examples of receptive skills. Language learners receive ideas, thoughts, and opinions by reading or listening. On the other hand, writing and speaking are productive skills. It means that students generate ideas, concepts, and meaning from context through writing and speaking. Besides that, the students must learn also three components of English, that is grammar, vocabulary, phonology and pronunciation. Therefore, in this present study, the researcher wants to discuss about the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their written communication ability.

Grammar and writing are two things that are related to one another. In this case, grammar mastery is as language component while writing ability is as language skill. There is assumption "a good writing has to contain a good grammar". Based on the assumption for the people who want to write sentences, paragraphs, essays, and stories, they have to master grammar as requirement of good writing (Adhiyatma, et al, 2015).

Grammar is essential and one of the most important factors influencing writing ability. Grammar rules are essential for forming words into sentences correctly. Swan (1998:19) states, "Grammar is the rule that says how words changed to show different meaning, and they combine into sentences". It is the regulation of forming a different meaning of words that are used to construct a sentence in writing. In addition, grammar is the structure and meaning system of language because the features of a language, such as sounds, words, formation and arrangement of words (Fauzul Etfita, 2019). People who speak the same language are able to communicate because they intuitively know its grammar system (Shen, 2012). Grammar exists in all languages, and each language has its own grammar. Then, N. D. Handayani and M. Johan (2018) says that grammar plays an important role in creating well-organized writing performances. Therefore, grammar is demonstrated to be extremely important in language learning.

Students who are native English speakers are already familiar with English grammar and how to use it correctly. In contrast, the majority of students in Indonesia do not yet understand English grammar and how to apply it. English grammar can be perplexing for Indonesian students because it differs from the grammar of their mother tongue. Therefore, students must learn English grammar as well as how to transfer their knowledge of grammatical concepts from spoken to written language.

Furthermore, Fantahun Kitila (2023) says that one of the key language abilities is writing, which is important for both academic performance and everyday life. Students will not be successful in their studies, which will have an impact on their lives outside of school if they do not use acceptable language while writing their replies, assignments, and projects. In agreement with this, Seow (2002) asserts that writing proficiency is required if students are to succeed in school and in life. It can be concluded that writing is a crucial skill among the other language skills



since it contains knowledge of structures, ideas, other skills (e.g., critical thinking and creative thinking), and the ability to put all of them into written form (Sri Rejeki Murtiningsih et al, 2022). As a result, writing is essential in a language. It also encourages EFL students to write well. Because English is not their native language, EFL students may find it difficult to write in English. Furthermore, good writing requires not only the organization of ideas in a structured manner, but also the use of proper grammar. Therefore, the students' writing ability will be influenced by the students' ability in grammar.

On the other hand, writing is difficult for students in the teaching-learning process because the difficulties lie not only in generating and organizing ideas but also in translating those ideas into written form. In addition, the writer also thinks about the use of proper grammar in the text they make in order that the reader can understand the text well. Despite these challenges, writing skills can be taught by using temporary support as an instructional strategy, which is referred to as scaffolding.

Scaffolding in the classroom is the process by which a teacher provides students with a temporary framework for learning. More knowledgeable others (teachers, peers, etc.) provide scaffolding or support in scaffolding instruction. One of the primary advantages of scaffolding instruction is that it creates a supportive learning environment. Students in a scaffold learning environment are free to ask questions, provide feedback, and assist their peers in learning new material.

Scaffolding is used to help someone achieve academic success. Scaffolding is mentor assistance for the learner's benefit (Muhammad Istiaque Hasan, 2020). Bruner (1978) defines scaffolding as a process in which a teacher assists a student or a proficient peer to peer. Scaffolding can be provided in three ways, according to Hsieh (2017): peer to peer, multidirectional, and individual. Soft scaffolding and hard scaffolding are the two types of scaffolding (Saye and Bush, 2002 as cited in Chen and Law 2016). This assistance is very effective because students do not discover any way to solve the problem. A teacher is crucial in resolving the issue.

According to Vygotsky as cited in Poorahmadi (2009), one of the concepts introduced by Vygotsky is scaffolding. He believes that all knowledge is social in nature and that learning takes place in the context of social interactions that lead to understanding. In his theory, learning is effectively formed through the zone of proximal development (ZPD) in social interaction. ZPD is defined as "the difference between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the potential development level as determined by problem-solving under adult supervision or in collaboration with more capable peers". In other words, ZPD is the space between what students can carry out independently and what they are not able to do, even with assistance. The relationship between the scaffolding strategy and ZPD that is the scaffolding strategy provides individualized support based on the learners' ZPD (Cole & Cole; Bockarie; Hill; Holzman as cited in Poorahmadi, 2009).



Scaffolding is a process in which teachers provide students with a temporary framework for learning in an educational setting. In this sense, the teacher is more than just a teacher who teaches, explains, and assigns activities to students; teachers are team players. Teachers and students worked together to brainstorm ideas for writing assignments. When students require assistance in reaching a specific level of understanding, the teacher provides them with adequate supports at the same time. The students will not feel isolated and inferior in class and success is possible.

The scaffolding strategy has been used in many studies and it has shown positive results. There have been some previous studies on the scaffolding strategy in the teaching-learning process. The first study, Zarandi (2014) assessed the effectiveness of interactive scaffolding strategies on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' speaking ability. The second study, Haghparast (2015), attempted to determine the impact of scaffolding on the reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners. The third study, Veerappan (2011) examines the effectiveness of scaffolding strategies in journal writing among L2 undergraduate university students. The purpose of this study is to examine the progress of L2 university college students in using correct grammar by employing a scaffolding strategy in journal writing.

The fourth study, Talley (2014) investigated students' reactions to scaffolding during English communication skills instruction in the classroom. The fifth study, Huggin (2011) evaluated the effectiveness of using instructional scaffolding in college-level reading and writing courses. Its goal was to see if instructional scaffolding had an effect on students' reading and writing performance. The sixth study, Poorahmadi (2012) investigated the effect of scaffolding strategies and classroom tasks on teaching reading comprehension to Iranian EFL learners.

Finally, taking into account the possibility and suitability, the researcher intended to solve the students' writing problems, especially in terms of grammar, using a scaffolding strategy that was implemented in conjunction with writing process. This scaffolding strategy based writing instruction has the potential to improve students' ability in written communication by using a process approach in which students go through a write-rewrite process in providing students with a scaffold to work in a real, live process of how real writers engage in the process of writing. Related to the background of the problem mentioned above, the researcher wants to investigate the students' grammar mastery in written communication after scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction is implemented at the writing class. Additionally, in this study, the researcher wants to know the students' response to scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction which is associated with grammar mastery in writing class.

## **Method**

The researcher employs a quantitative approach as a research method in this study. According to Apuke (2017), quantitative research is the study of quantifying and analyzing variables to obtain results. A pretest-posttest experimental group design was adopted by the researcher. The participants in this study were students from Jinarakkhita Buddhist College of Lampung which consist of 20 students. The researcher used the third semester Buddhist Communication Science Department students in the academic year 2022-2023 as a sample. The research was carried out from September to October 2023 in the Jinarakkhita Buddhist College of Lampung. In each treatment, the students were taught in the same classroom for one hundred minutes. A writing test was used by the researcher to collect the data. The researcher used one type of text in English, that was recount text. The item of test was valid, as evidenced by the sig. tailed 0.05 and the reliability of the analysis result of 0.896.

The researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 program to analyze the data. The data is derived from a writing test used to assess students' written communication abilities before and after treatment. The Repeated Measures T-test was used to compare the means of the pretest and post-test scores. This was done to see if there was a difference in the students' written communication achievement after scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction was implemented. In addition, after the posttest, the researcher conducted an interview. The purpose of this case was to learn about the students' reactions to scaffolding strategy-based writing instruction during writing class.

## **Finding**

The purpose of this section was to explain the results of the current study which was based on two research questions. The first investigation focused on the students' grammar mastery in written communication while the second investigated their reactions to writing instruction that used scaffolding strategies based-writing instruction in writing class.

### **The Students' Grammar Mastery in Written Communication and Scaffolding Strategy Based - Writing Instruction**

This subsection answered the first research question that was investigating the students' grammar mastery in written communication after scaffolding strategy base – riting instruction is implemented at the writing class. To answer this research question, data were gathered by administering pre- and post-tests of essay writing.

In this study, the researcher used a rubric score to analyze and measure the students' written communication ability in recount text. In this case, the researcher used J.B. Heaton rubric score because it was appropriate for the purpose of the first research question which was to determine students' written communication ability in recount text. J.B. Heaton's rubric score included content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. In present study focused on students' grammar mastery in written communication. Based on the J.B. Heaton's rubric score,



especially in point “language use”, grammar (tenses) was one of the points that becomes a benchmark in its assessment.

The scores from the two inter-raters in this study were combined and these were the final and average scores. The highest final score of the writing pre-test was 65, and the lowest final score was 38. The researcher had not given any treatments to the students at the time. As a result, it was not surprising that their score was still low. The students wrote what they knew based on their own experiences in the previous education level. Before they did this pre-test, they must pay attention to the instructions in the pre-test paper that provided by the researcher. The students did this pre-test for ninety minutes.

In this situation, the students struggled because they had assumed that writing was a difficult and boring subject. They did not know how to begin writing something. They still confused about what they should write. Meanwhile, in their mind, the students had many ideas to write about the topic. Unfortunately, they still confused how to organize their thoughts and choose effective words/idioms in their writing. Additionally, the students did not understand the grammar that should be used in their writing. Even with the mechanics issues, they were still irregular. However, they continued to try to write down what they knew in this pre-test section. Finally, the students completed their pre-test on writing. The students' writing pre-test results for each aspect of writing were as follows: content 15.7, organization 11.5, vocabulary 10.5, language use 10.9, and mechanics 2.5.

Furthermore, inter-rating was used in scoring the students' writing post-test, just as it was in scoring the writing pre-test. The results were as follows: the highest final score of the writing post-test was 73, and the lowest final score was 57. The researcher had given the students any treatments based on scaffolding strategy-based writing instruction at the time. The students also used all of the steps in the writing process which in this case included a scaffolding strategy. Scaffolding occurs during the stages of instruction in the context of teaching writing. As a result, the students gained a wealth of knowledge and experience while carrying out this treatment. The researcher assisted the students step by step when they wrote recount text. The students sometimes discussed with their friends in group. The students also assisted them in completed their writing. They got feedback from the teacher. Finally, they completed the writing post-test in ninety minutes. The following were the results of the students' writing post-tests: content 19.2, organization 13.6, vocabulary 13.2, language use 16.15, and mechanics 3.0.

Furthermore, comparing the average score of the pre - test and post - test, students' writing ability improved from 52.2 to 65.1. As a result, there was a 12.9% improvement. The end result was as follows:

**Table 1. The Students' Writing Improvement Paired Samples Statistic**

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair1Writing_Pretest	52.2000	20	4.01182	.89707
Writing_Posttest	65.1000	20	8.95956	2.00342

The t-test was used to determine whether the improvement was significant or not. The end result was as follows:



**Table 2. Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
<b>Pair1 Posttest- Pretest</b>	12.90000	7.62199	1.70433	9.33280	16.46720	7.569	19	.000

The researcher compared t-value to t-table using the table above. The t-value in this case was 7.569, while the t-table was 2.093. If t-value > t-table, the current study's result was significant. This could imply that scaffolding strategy-based writing instruction could significantly improve students' grammar mastery in written communication than conventional methods.

The table above shows a significant difference in the students' writing pretest and posttest scores. According to the Paired Sample T-Test, the treatment had a significant impact on the students' scores, as indicated by the sig. (2-tailed) value of .000. Furthermore, mean score of 4.6, the treatment had the greatest positive impact on the "language use" aspect of writing.

**The Students' Responses to Scaffolding Strategy Based Writing Instruction in Writing Class**

This subsection answered the second research question that was the students' response to scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction which is associated with the students' grammar mastery in writing class. To answer the research question posed above, data were gathered by distributing a sixteen-item likert-scale questionnaire to the students. This is done to investigate the individual responses of participants to scaffolding-based writing instruction in written communication. Data from interviews supplemented the data from the likert-scale questionnaire. In this case, the interview consisted of four questions and was designed to elicit additional responses to scaffolding based - writing instruction in written communication that were not included in the questionnaire.

The results of the questionnaire responses revealed the students' positive responses to scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction, as well as students' acceptance of responsibility for their own learning. Furthermore, scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction was discussed in the interview between the interviewer and the interviewee. The majority of students in this case stated that this learning strategy made them feel at ease and eager to learn English, especially in written communication in the classroom. This occurred because the students received support and guidance from both their teacher and their classmates. They could exchange ideas with the teacher or classmates during English writing skills instruction. As a result, the students found it easier to express themselves in writing.



## Discussion

This part explained how could scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction promote students' grammar mastery in written communication. Then, how were the students' responses to scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction which is associated with the students' grammar mastery in writing class.

### The Students' Grammar Mastery in Written Communication and Scaffolding Strategy Based - Writing Instruction

The relationship between grammar mastery and written communication ability is widely accepted. Grammar mastery is defined as a thorough understanding and application of grammar rules and principles such as sentence structure, punctuation, verb tense, agreement, and word usage. Written communication ability, on the other hand, refers to the ability to produce coherent, effective, and grammatically correct written communication. Furthermore, grammar mastery and written communication have a strong correlation, it is important to note that written communication ability is also influenced by other factors such as creativity, organization, clarity of thought, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. A solid foundation in grammar, on the other hand, serves as a fundamental building block for effective written communication.

Scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction in the classroom was a process in which a teacher provided a temporary framework for learning to students. More knowledgeable others (teachers, peers, etc.) provide scaffolding or support in scaffolding instruction. Scaffolding instruction creates a supportive learning environment. Students in a scaffold learning environment are free to ask questions, provide feedback, and assist their peers in learning new material. Students were encouraged to develop their own creativity, motivation, and resourcefulness when scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction was done correctly. Scaffolding occurs during the stages of instruction in the context of teaching writing. Building the field, modeling, joint construction, and independent writing were the stages.

Teaching writing, on the other hand, allows students to observe the writing process. In this study, the researcher attempts to incorporate a scaffolding strategy into the writing process. To combine those two things, the researcher will use the five stages of the writing process as cited in Faraj (2015) and the theory of Dewi (2013) for scaffolding strategy in teaching writing, as shown in the table of scaffolding strategy and writing process combination below.

**Table 3. Scaffolding strategy and writing process combination**

No.	Stages of The Writing Process	The Ways A Teacher Provides Scaffolding in Each Stage
1.	<b>Stage 1 : Pre - Writing</b> a. Students choose a topic. b. Students gather ideas.	<b>Stage 1 : Building Knowledge of The Field</b> a. Students explore cultural similarities and differences related to the topic or text type.



<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brainstorming (diagram (clustering) or randomly listing ideas)</li> <li>2. Reading</li> <li>3. Interviewing</li> <li>c. Students organize ideas.</li> <li>d. Students define a topic sentence.</li> <li>e. Students write an outline for their writing.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Students practice grammatical pattern relevant to the topic or text type.</li> <li>c. Students build up and extend vocabulary relevant to the topic or text type.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2. Stage 2 : Drafting</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students write a rough draft.</li> <li>b. Students emphasize content rather than mechanics.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Stage 2: Modeling of Text</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students focus on the text type.</li> <li>b. Students discuss the social function or purpose of the text type.</li> <li>c. Students discuss the schematic structure of the text type.</li> <li>d. Students discuss the grammatical features of the text type.</li> <li>e. Giving the real steps of writing process</li> </ol>
<p><b>3. Stage 3 : Revising</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students re – read their writing.</li> <li>b. Students share their writing with teacher.</li> <li>c. Students participate constructively in discussion about their writing with teacher.</li> <li>d. Students make changes in their compositions to reflect the reactions and comments of teacher. Besides that, students make substantive rather than only minor changes.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Stage 3 : Joint Construction of Text</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students and teacher work together to construct a similar text.</li> <li>b. The teacher provides guidance and support to the students.</li> </ol>
<p><b>4. Stage 4 : Editing</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students proofread their own writing.</li> <li>b. Students increasingly identify and correct their own mechanical errors.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Stage4: Independent Construction of Text.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students incorporate knowledge of schematic structure and grammatical features into their own writing.</li> <li>b. Students produce written text that approximate control of the text type.</li> <li>c. Students feel confident when they write a text in context outside the classroom.</li> </ol>
<p><b>5. Stage 5 : Publishing</b></p>	



- a. Students make the final copy of their writing.
- b. Students publish their writing in appropriate forms.
- c. Students share their finished writing with the teacher.

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The procedure of scaffolding strategy-based writing instruction are as follows.

1. Students focus on the text type. In this case, the text type is recount text.
2. Students discuss the social function or purpose of the recount text.
3. Students discuss the schematic structure of the recount text.
4. Students discuss the language features of the recount text.
5. Students choose a topic.
6. Students gather ideas.
7. Students explore cultural similarities and differences related to the topic or ideas.
8. Students organize ideas.
9. Students define a topic sentence.
10. Students practice grammatical pattern relevant to the recount text.
11. Students build up and extend vocabulary relevant to the recount text.
12. Students and teacher work together to construct a recount text.
13. The teacher provides guidance and support to the students.
14. Students write an outline for their writing.
15. Students write a rough draft.
16. Students re – read their writing.
17. Students proofread their own writing.
18. Students increasingly identify and correct their own mechanical errors.
19. Students pay attention toward their aspect of writing, such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic.
20. Students share their writing with teacher.
21. Students participate constructively in discussion about their writing with teacher.
22. Students incorporate knowledge of schematic structure and grammatical features from their teacher into their own writing.
23. Students make changes in their compositions to reflect their reactions and comments of teacher. Besides that, students make substantive rather than only minor changes.
24. Students produce the final copy of their writing.
25. Students publish their writing in appropriate forms.
26. Students share their finished writing with the teacher.
27. Students feel confident and comfort when they write a recount text in writing class.
28. Moreover, it happens in context outside the classroom.

As a result, the current study found that scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction aided students' written communication processes. In this case, the students stated that scaffolding strategy-based writing instruction enabled them to communicate their ideas in written form, after which they were able to edit their work. Then, they published their work in appropriate formats. In other words, the



students' written communication skills could improve in areas such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Not only that, the students felt confident and at ease in writing a recount text in writing class, moreover it occurred outside of the classroom.

### **The Students' Responses to Scaffolding Strategy Based - Writing Instruction in Writing Class**

The current study found that students responded positively to scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction in writing class. This case could be supported by the students' feelings of comfort and confidence when writing a recount text. Meanwhile, they frequently found it difficult to begin writing a text. They were unsure where to begin writing. However, the students found it easier to write a text than they had previously. This case arose as a result of them receiving support and guidance for teaching the learning process in the writing class. Not only that, they also gained knowledge and information from their teacher or peers.

Finally, the researcher conducted an interview with the students to know about their reactions to scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction in writing class. In this case, the researcher obtained additional responses from the students, namely that they felt at ease with the teaching-learning process, which included guidance and support from the teacher and classmates. The students felt that their writing had changed during this instruction, particularly in terms of content and organization based on the recount text. Aside from that, they could select vocabulary and language use that was appropriate for the text, in this case, the text was recount text. Additionally, the students had understood about construction, errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. Therefore, the students knew how to write a good paragraph because they were familiar with writing system.

Furthermore, the students liked scaffolding strategy based - writing instruction as one of the strategies in writing class because they could enjoy writing class although still feeling difficult in this lesson. They were enjoying this class because the teacher guided them step by step, from how to write a good sentence to how to write a good text. In other words, the students understood how to make a good text, especially recount text. Finally, the students felt that writing was not as difficult as we imagined.

### **Conclusion**

In accordance with the previous section's analysis of the data obtained during the research, the findings, and the outcome of this current study, the researcher comes to the following conclusions: The first was the implementation of scaffolding strategy based writing instruction in the third semester of Buddhist Communication Science Department students in the academic year 2022-2023, which resulted in improvements in the students' grammar mastery in written communication. The second, scaffolding strategy-based writing instruction, appears to be beneficial in the teaching learning process, particularly in writing classes. In this case, students who

previously struggled to write, now have a growing understanding of how to gather information and confidently use it in their writing.

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