

# **THE USE OF SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT**

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## **Abstract**

This study deals with enhancing students' ability in writing descriptive text at the second semester of English students of Cokoaminoto Palopo University. This research is aimed to find out whether the use of scaffolding technique is effective in improving the students' competence in writing descriptive text. The scope of the research is focused on scaffolding technique in improving writing descriptive text ability of students. The research used pre-experimental method. Population is the second year students of English Students of Cokroaminoto Palopo, the number of population are 240 students. It used random sampling method. The members of sample were 25 students. The research instrument were used collect data, namely descriptive writing (written test). There is significance difference before and after using scaffolding technique as a treatment. The researcher concluded that scaffolding technique is effective in teaching writing to the students because it can improve the students' writing competence. The researcher applied t-test analysis. The result of data analysis shows that there is significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test. The researcher concluded that using of scaffolding technique is effective in teaching writing descriptive text to the students at the second year of English students of Cokroaminoto Palopo University.

Key words: Scaffolding technique, descriptive text.

## **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini membahas tentang peningkatan kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif pada mahasiswa semester dua bahasa Inggris Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membuktikan penggunaan teknik Scaffolding efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Batasan penelitian ini fokus kepada kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi pre-eksperimental, populasi penelitian adalah mahasiswa semester dua bahasa Inggris Cokroaminoto Palopo yang berjumlah 240 mahasiswa, penelitian ini menggunakan metode random sampling dan jumlah sampelnya adalah 25 mahasiswa. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data adalah tes tertulis. Pada penelitian ini terdapat perbedaan yang signifikan pada saat sebelum dan setelah menggunakan teknik scaffolding sebagai treatment, dan peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa penggunaan teknik scaffolding efektif dalam pengajaran menulis terhadap mahasiswa karena dapat meningkatkan kompetensi menulis mahasiswa semester dua bahasa Inggris Cokroaminoto Palopo.

Kata kunci: teknik scaffolding, teks deskriptif

## **Introduction**

There are four important skills in learning English; they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening skill is useful in communication life especially as a first tool of the communication. Speaking skill is useful in communication also, but it is used to communicate to another people immediately. There is feedback between listening and speaking in communication. Reading skill is useful in finding out the information in the text, book, and so on. Writing skill is useful in giving arguments to the social matter, it is also useful in pouring out someone's ideas in social matter to express that there is something important to be solved together and to entertain the reader who are looking for the information about something they need.

According to Richards and Willy (2002:303) writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to master. The difficulty is not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating idea into readable text.

Descriptive text is one of the functional texts which are difficult enough to be learn by the students. Descriptive text consists of introduction and description. Introduction is the part of paragraph that introduces the character, and description is the part of paragraph that describes the character. The students can use the simple present and adjective clause in writing descriptive text. In writing the descriptive text, students often find some difficulties. The students usually feel difficult to organize their ideas. Furthermore, many students made some mistakes and faced difficulties to build and develop their imagination.

In this teaching, scaffolding is very needed to apply to make the students' competence in writing better especially in descriptive text. According to Veeramuthu (2011:934-940) scaffolding is a learning activity is connected with real world to reach purpose through using the simple language, pictures is seen by teacher, cooperative learning, and prepares the previous learning by teacher.

Related to the background of this study, the problem of this research stated as a question as follows: "Is the use of scaffolding technique improving the students' achievement in writing descriptive text at the second year students of Cokroaminoto Palopo?"

## **Review of Related Literature**

### ***Definition of writing***

In learning English, there are four skills that should be mastered; those are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among the four skills, writing is the most difficult skill to be learnt. This opinion is supported by Richards and Willy (2002:303) stated that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to master. The difficulty is not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating idea into readable text.

Barnet and Stubb's (1983:3) stated that writing as a physical act, it requires material and energy. And like most physical acts, to be performed fully, to bring pleasure, to both performer and audience, it requires practice. On the other side, Marianne (2001:233) stated that writing is the ability to express one's ideas in written form is a second or foreign language. It means that writing is an activity to express our ideas in written form.

Based on definitions above, the researcher concludes that writing is one the ways to give information to the readers so that in giving information to the readers, the writing should be clearly and useful for the reader need. To make writing clearly, there are some guides that important to make the writing clearly and easy to be understood.

### ***Types of writing***

#### ***Narrative***

Mark and Kathy (1998:28) stated that narrative is most generally described as a story told by the narrator. Narratives are not as simple as that. They are construction of certain characteristics that relate a tale through an organization of words. This construction includes three discernible layers, the elements that make up the content of the narrative, and the agent. Understanding these concepts is the key to defining a narrative.

The narrative text is type of written text that tells a story of one character or more who face certain situation. Its purpose is to present a view of the world that entertains or informs the reader or listener. It is related to the recount type. There are many different types of narratives including: humor, romance, crime, mystery, fantasy, science fiction, real-life fiction, adventure, diary-novel, etc.

### *Descriptive*

Hogue (1995:70-71) stated that descriptive is “word pictures”. You tell how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and sounds. If you organized your paragraph of a car by location, you might talk about the material, the exterior, and the underside.

Elizabeth (1998:148) stated that descriptive presents the appearance of things that occupy space, whether they are object, people, buildings, or cities. The purpose of descriptive is to convey to the reader what something looks like. It attempts to gain a picture with words. The explanation about this term will be presented in the next session.

### *Exposition*

Kernen (1999:99) stated that exposition can be one of the most effective ways of creating and increasing the drama in your story. It can also be the quickest way to kill a plot's momentum and get your story bogged down in detail. Too much exposition, or too much at one time, can seriously derail a story and be frustrating to the reader eager for a story to either get moving or move on.

Ansen (1988:51) stated that exposition is a form of writing that explains something. It often answers to the question of what, how, and why. Its purposes is to present ideas and to make ideas as clear as possible.

### *Report*

Nofri (2010:34-35) stated that report is a text which presents information about something. It is as a result of systematic observation and analysis. Generic structure of report:

1. General classification: Stating classification of general aspect of thing; animal, public place, plant, etc. which will be discussed in general.
2. Description: Describing the thing which will be discussed in detail; part per part, customs or deed for living creature and usage for materials.

### *Recount*

The aim of a recount is to give the audience a description of what occurred and when it occurred. Some example of recount text types is; newspaper, reports, conversation, speeches, television, interviews, etc.

### *Procedure*

Mark and Kathy (1998:28) stated that procedure is a piece of text that tells the reader or listener how to do something. Its purpose is to provide instruction for making something, doing something or getting somewhere. Example of procedure texts include: recipes, itineraries, instruction manuals, directions.

### *Explanation*

Shiel and Murphy (2000:17-19) stated that explanation is written to explain how or why something happens. Typically such text consist of describe of phenomenon and explanatory sequence. Explanation begins by identifying the phenomenon (thing) that will be explained.

Topic sentence identifies a process and presents an attitude toward the process. The process can be efficient, inefficient, careful, insensitive, kind, a marvel, awkward, streamlined, bulky, etc.

### *Descriptive text*

Descriptive text is basically to give information. The social context of this text is to describe a specific thing, animal, or human being (certain thing, our pets, or someone we know well), it is different from report text which describes something in general (for example a specific of animal species, an architect of certain era, and so on).

Traditionally, descriptions are divided into two categories: objectives and subjective. In objective description you records details without making any personal evaluation or reaction. In subjective description, you are free to interpret the details for your reader; your reaction and description can be emotional and value-loaded.

The goal when we write subjective description is to create vivid mental images. To do that, we will use concrete sensory detail, which consists of specific words that appeal to the sense (sight, sound, taste, smell, touch). Miller (1986:105) stated that whether objective or subjective, descriptions can serve a variety of purposes, but in every case it is important to make that purpose clear to your reader.

### *Kinds of descriptive text*

Michael and Jean (1976:149) stated that descriptive text is a text to describe something, such as persons, places, or things. So, it normally takes on three forms, they are:

a. Description of a people

People are different, and writing description of people is different. You are probably already aware of some of the complications because you have often been asked, “What’s so-and-like?” In replying, you might resort to identification, an impression, or a character sketch, depending on the situation.

b. Description of a place

In describing a place for example a room, what should you describe first? The walls? The Floor? Unlike a chronologically developed paragraph, there is no set pattern for arranging sentences in descriptive paragraph. It is not necessary to begin with one area and then proceeds to another one. Nevertheless, the sentences should not be randomly arranged.

c. Description of a things

To describe a thing the writer must have a good imagination about that thing that will be describe. Besides, to make our subjects as interesting and as vivid to our readers as they are to us: using proper nouns and effective verbs.

### ***Scaffolding Technique***

In scaffolding learning methods, there are some common ways who teachers among others: 1) Using simple language, 2). Completing sentences or paragraphs by selecting the available answer, 3).Using images to convey information.

Application of scaffolding learning methods in addition to helping improve students' writing skills at the same time also able to enhance students' creativity, because there is scaffolding in learning and understanding the goals related to the development of students' self- concept. Veeramuthu (2011:934-940) argued understanding of the purpose and scaffolding learning include: 1) Spur the development of students 2) Stimulate students' creativity 3) Enhance and improve the teaching process, 4) Assist the development of students' self- concept, 5)

Giving attention and guidance to the students, 6) Stimulate student reflection, 7) Help and straighten the learning objectives.

In addition, scaffolding learning method has advantages that are not owned by the conventional learning methods. Superiority is reflected in the creativity of students, foster students' sense of responsibility in the tasks given, improving the ability to think in a systematic and organized so as to produce the best work.

Various studies on scaffolding learning methods show positive results, research was conducted Veeramuthu (2011:934-940) demonstrated the application of scaffolding learning method can improve the writing skills of students descriptive text, there is progress grammatical writing skills of students, infrequent errors, writing sentences complete and structured, reduced errors of spelling and punctuation as well as students are able to connect ideas in each sentence and can form a complete article. Another study conducted Belland (2007:4), which uses problem-based learning approach assisted scaffolding to help students build critical thinking skills and creativity of students. The provision of scaffolding in learning can help facilitate students with the means to practice the skills that students learn to read and write is an effective way to support the journal with low English skills.

### Research Method

The researcher used quantitative research. In this research, the researcher applied pre-experimental research design. Pre-experimental design aimed at finding out the effectiveness of using scaffolding technique in teaching writing descriptive text of the English students of Cokroaminoto Palopo involves one group of students by giving pre-test and post-test.

The design of this research, shown as follows:

$$O_1 \times O_2$$

Where:

$O_1$  : Pre-test  
 $X$  : Treatment  
 $O_2$  : Post-test

(Best, 1977:103)

### ***Population and Sample***

The population of this research was the second semester of English students of Cokroaminoto Palopo University. The number of population is 240 in six classes. The sampling technique used in this research is random sampling method, because the number of the population is relatively large. The researcher took 5 classes and took 5 students from each class randomly. Furthermore, the number of the sample is 25 students.

### ***Instrument of the Research***

In this research, the researcher used writing descriptive test. This test consists of pretest and posttest. The students were given a theme to be written into a descriptive text.

### ***Findings***

The 25 samples and 5 aspects scoring of components observed, the highest score of each component is 13 (sample number 6) for content component score, 13 (sample number 2, 16, and 24) for organization component score, 13 (sample 4, 6, 11, and 16) for grammar component score, 13 (sample number 2, 4, 6, 15, and 16) for vocabulary component score, 13 (sample number 2, 4, 15, and 16) for mechanic component score. Contrary the lowest score is 9 (sample number 5, 9, 13, and 22) for content component score, 8 (sample number 8, 13, 19, and 20) for organization component score, 8 (sample number 12 and 13) for grammar component score, 9 (1, 9, 12, 18, 19, and 20) for vocabulary component number, and 8 (sample number (8, 10, and 13) for mechanic component score. Moreover the highest total score for all components score is 64 (sample number 15 and 16) and the lowest total score for all components score is 43 (sample number 13).

### ***Content***

Result data before giving treatment in content aspect no students classified very good and good, but contrary 10 (40%) of students' categorized average and 15 (60%) of students got poor. The table 4.2 above showed the students' capability in content was poor classification.

### ***Organization***

Result data showed that before giving treatment in organization aspect no students classified very good and good, but contrary 5 (20%) of students



categorized average and 20 (80%) of students got poor. The table 4.3 above showed the students' capability in organization was poor classification.

### ***Grammar***

The result showed that before giving treatment in grammar aspects no students classified very good and good, but contrary 7 (28%) of students classified into average, 18 (72%) of students got poor. The data showed the students' capability in grammar was poor classification.

### ***Vocabulary***

The result before giving treatment in vocabulary aspects no students classified very good and good, but contrary 11 (44%) of students classified into average, 14 (56%) of students got poor. The table 4.5 above showed the students' capability in vocabulary was poor classification.

### ***Mechanic***

The result before giving treatment in mechanic aspect no students classified very good and good, but contrary 8 (32%) of students categorized average and 17 (68%) of students got poor. The table 4.6 above showed the students' capability in mechanic was poor classification.

Thus, the mean score of pre-test was **51.28** with standard deviation **6.6** and the mean score of post-test was **77.56** with standard deviation **9.1**, it showed the mean score of post-test was higher than pre-test.

The result of T-test was 30.24. It showed the value of T-test was higher than T-table or **30.24 > 2.064**. It means that, scaffolding technique can improve the students' writing skill especially in writing descriptive text by theme "Beach" based on some components; particularly on content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic.

## **Discussions**

In pre-test, there were some weaknesses of the students in writing descriptive text such as in developing their ideas in writing about the topic. It could be seen from the 25 samples and 5 aspects scoring of component observed, the highest score of all components is 13 and the lowest score is 8. In pre-test, the students still difficult in developing their ideas about the topic, it was proven when they wrote a descriptive text by theme "beach".

In post-test, the student's weaknesses in pre-test had been decrease. It could be seen after following treatment with 25 samples and 5 aspects scoring of component score. All the students as sample got increasing score. The highest score of all components is 19 and the lowest score is 13. It showed that the score of students between pre-test before given treatment and post-test after given treatment there were improvement score. It could be concludes that the use of scaffolding technique to improve the students competence in writing descriptive text at the second year of English students of Cokroaminoto Palopo University. On the other hand, using scaffolding in writing descriptive text is one of technique could make students to be easier in delivering their own ideas and also can be an interested technique in teaching writing.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings and discussion in the preceding chapter, the writer concluded that teaching writing by using scaffolding is effective to enhance the ability of the second year students of Cokroaminoto Palopo University in writing descriptive text. It was proved by the result of their test. The test showed that, the T-test value (30.24) is higher than T-table value (2.064). Meanwhile, from all components (content component, organization component, grammar component, grammar component, vocabulary component, and mechanic component) observed.

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