Implementing the Scaffolding Strategy in Teaching Writing an Expository Text

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Abstrak

Banyak masalah yang dihadapi siswa Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) dalam menulis, diantaranya terkait dengan pengelolaan ide dan bagaimana mengembangkannya. Makalah ini membahas tentang penerapan strategy *scaffolding* dalam menulis teks *expository* dengan memberikan bantuan melalui interaksi guru dan siswa melalui pertanyaan dan pemberian informasi yang akan membantu siswa berfikir, menyediakan petunjuk yang jelas, penjelasan tujuan teks, umpan balik serta media. Kemudian guru secara bertahap mengurangi bantuan tersebut. Salah satu manfaat dari strategi *Scaffolding* adalah membangun kepercayaan diri siswa dalam menulis. Dengan menggunakan strategi ini guru bisa menemukan apa yang menjadi kendala dalam mengembangkan kemampuan siswa dalam menulis.

Kata kunci: Scaffolding, Strategy, Writing, Expository,

A. Introduction

Writing in English is one of the language skills that must be mastered by the students besides reading, listening and speaking. Writing is very important for the students because they can share their ideas, experiences and their thoughts into the written form; it is also needed because they can also transfer information and knowledge. Students can write letters, notes, essays, invitations, tourist information and any other written form to give information to the other people as the reader. In other words, writing can be said as a tool of communication between the writer and the reader.

However, nowadays, most of people are not interested in writing, because writing seems difficult for them. Writing is difficult because of some problems such as lack of vocabulary, organizing ideas, spellings, a coherent arrangement of words, clauses and sentences with the appropriate of grammar and structures. In vocabulary, students do not have sufficient vocabulary, so that they are getting difficulties in writing. It is hard for them to write since they only have lack of vocabulary. Sometimes, they always ask the teacher about the vocabulary that will be written in their writing. For the students who have a good motivation, it will

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not be a problem. However, it does not happen on the students who have low motivation. As the result, the ideas are not developed completely.

Students should consider many things when they are writing a text. They should consider about how to organize their ideas that will be generated in a good arrangement of words, clauses and sentences with the appropriate of grammar and structures in the text. They are worried about the content of the text. It includes difficulties in generating the ideas and lack of knowledge about the language itself. So they do not have confident to write a text by they own self. They need some help or guidance from the teacher.

Based on writer's experience as a student in Senior High School 5 Bengkulu and interview with some English teachers in Senior High School 9 Padang, students got some problems in writing. It is difficult to them to transfer their idea into a written form. They did not understand how to construct the text although the teacher has explained the element of the text. Although writing a text seems difficult for them, it must be mastered by the students because the curriculum has designed the material about this. It is clearly stated in Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) 2006 or the School Based Curriculum that English teaching at senior high school is expected make the students able communicate both in the oral and written form. It has been set by the curriculum in order to get students' language mastery of the foreign language at senior high schools.

Moreover, in the foreign language learning especially in Indonesia, writing is taught by using genre of texts or known as genre-based approach. Genre-based approach according to (Derewianka, 2003) is the teaching and learning that focuses on the understanding and productions of selected genres of text. One of the kinds of texts is expository text. Expository texts are usually designed to explain, analyze, interpret, evaluate or persuade.

One of students' problems is student's motivation in writing is low so it makes their abilities in writing is bad. It is caused of the teacher can choose interesting and helpful strategy. Teacher as the motivator and facilitator has roles to motivate the students; the teachers have responsibility about help students to motivate their motivation in learning process by giving interesting and helpful strategy. It is important to the teacher to help the students to solve the problems in writing. The teachers can use many strategies in the learning process to help the students in writing the texts. Teacher should give helpful strategies to help students in the learning process so it can help the students in producing text. One of the strategies that can be used is scaffolding strategy. It is the helpful strategy because it can to help the students in writing expository texts. Here, the role of teacher is to give guidance in order to facilitate a student's ability to build on prior knowledge so they are able to complete the task or master the concepts in writing independently.

Writing is an activity where people share their ideas into paper. According to Byrne (in McDonough and Shaw, 1993), writing is defined as a process of

putting the ideas into words. Through writing someone can express his or her ideas, thoughts and experience to others. Also, writing someone can also transfer information and knowledge to others. In other words, Writing can be said as a mean of communication between the writer and the reader.

Boardman (2001:11) states that writing is a process that the writers think and organize the ideas, then rethink and reorganize it. It means that the writers think, plan, and write a draft, after that rethink and rewrite until they are satisfied. He gives more detail steps in the process of writing. They are generating the ideas which include brainstorming and free writing, organizing the idea that can be used by topic outline and tree diagram, writing the first draft, rewriting which include revising and editing, and the last writing the final draft.

According to Hyland (2003:9), writing is a way of sharing personals meaning and emphasizing the power of the individual to construct his or her own views on a topic. He also gives another definition of writing as a product that a focus of formal text units or grammatical feature of texts. Essentially, writing is seen as a product constructed from the writer's command of grammatical and lexical knowledge and it is considered to be the result of imitating and manipulating models provided the teacher. It means that writing is product of someone's idea and opinion which is focused on grammatical features.

From the some expectations above, it can be conclude that writing as a process of thinking, putting and organizing, someone's ideas, experiences and thought into word that a focus of grammatical feature of texts.

There are some processes of writing based on experts. According Harmer (2004:4) writing process is the stages the writer goes through in order to produce something in its final written form. He suggests four main elements of the process of writing: (1) planning which include consideration of the purpose, the audience and the content structure, (2) drafting (3) editing including reflecting and revising and (4) final version. Moreover, according Lindsay with Knight (2006), there are seven stages in writing activity. They are generate or gather idea for content (brainstorming), organize and order ideas, write first draft, edit content for meaning, write second draft, edit language and spelling and write final draft until they feel satisfactory.

Rooks (1999) classifies writing process into six stages. They are prewriting, writing, sharing, revising, editing, and expanding. In the *prewriting* stage, students read and analyze a model paragraph, discuss vocabulary related to the paragraph and engage in conversation related to the paragraph. After this conversation, students are asked to cluster their own ideas about the assigned topic. In the *writing* stage, students transform their cluster into sentence-paragraph, concentrating on idea. The *sharing* stage then calls for the students to exchange what has been written so far with one or more classmates. Next, students *revise* their paragraph using the idea gained from other class members. In *editing* stage, students are asked complete some exercises that have relevance to the topic at hand. After students have edited their own paragraph using ideas

gained from the completed exercises, edited paragraph are submitted to the teacher for evaluation. Finally, the undertaken the *expanding* stage which extends the topic either individually or collectively beyond work that was previously done. When people explain something, they need to use specific detail or detail to clarify and support their main idea. To write a well-expository paragraph, they need to collect a number of different kinds of examples. With the example which is used by the writers, the reader will be able to see how those examples support the writers' ideas.

According to Folse (in Tseng, 2001) expository writing is meant to inform, explain, clarify, define or instruct via logical analysis. There are several ways to develop a logical analysis, including comparison and contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution, definition, examples, and logical division. Boardman (2002:7) divides some ways to how the writer can explains something. They are (1) by comparing two things or people, (2) By showing the steps in a process, (3) By analyzing something, (4) by making to make others do something, (5) By arguing for the opinion.

There are some expository text structures. According to Tompkins (2000:249), five of the most commonly used patterns of expository text structures are description, sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect, and comparison.

Moreover, according to Olson (2003), expository compositions are usually design to explain analytical/expository compositions are usually designed to explain, analyze, interpret, speculate, evaluate, persuade, or reflect. However, in spite of what they are about expository compositions usually have a three-part structure consisting of an introduction, main body and a conclusion. *The introduction* orients the reader to the writer's purpose and focus as well as indicates something about what the reader can expect to find in the remainder of the essay. Most introductions contain a thesis statement which communicates the point the writer intends to make some writers may choose to let the reader gather what their thesis is or to include it at the end of the composition rather than at the beginning. In the *main body*, the writer explores and develops the controlling idea or ideas presented in the introduction point by point by providing examples, details, and facts, by giving reasons, and by relating incidents. *The conclusion* reminds the reader of the essay's main point by summarizing, exploring the significance of something, asking a question, offering new insights, etc.

In comparison and contrast, the emphasis is usually on one or the other, it depends on the purpose. There are two basic ways used in comparison and contrast. Muhayidin (1989:105) states two basic ways in which the information and contrast paragraph is organized, it is referred to the patterns as the *point approach* and *block approach.* When the writer uses *point approach*, the writer makes a point about topic A and then immediately compares or contrast that point with topic B. the writer then makes another point about topic A and immediately compares or contrast it with topic B. the pattern is followed until the writer

compares or contrasts, one by one, all the point about topic A and topic B .When the writer uses the block approach, in contrast, the writer explain all the points about topic A and then explains all the point about topic B, in other words, the writer gives block of the information about each item.

Teaching English writing in the senior high school is based on phases stated by Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan in Permendiknas No.41 Tahun 2007 (*Standar Proses*) that there are three phases for teaching activities: Pre- teaching activities, whilst- teaching and the last post- teaching activities.

Writing is difficult because of some problems such as vocabulary, organizing idea, spelling, a coherent arrangement of words, clauses and sentences with the appropriate of grammar and structures. They need assistance from teachers to help them write the text independently. Scaffolding strategy is one of the strategies that can be used by the teachers in order to help or assist students. Therefore, scaffolding is needed in order to help students to write text based on their ability as independently. Scaffolding strategy helps the students in writing texts. In the scaffolding strategy the guidance given from the teacher to the students is really important. Stuyf (2002) states the scaffolds facilitate a student's ability to build on prior knowledge and internalize new information promoting and explicitness from the teacher. As the result the learner is able to complete the task or master the concepts independently. Therefore the goal of the teacher when using the scaffolding teaching strategy is for the student to become an independent and self-regulating learner and problem solver. As the learner's knowledge and learning competency increases, the teacher gradually reduces the supports provided.

Scaffolding instruction as a teaching strategy originates from Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and his concept of the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD*).* The zone of proximal development is the distance between what children can do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistance (Raymond in Stuyf, 2002). In other words, ZPD is can be defined as the distance between a child's actual developments as determined by independent problem solving that there are things that students can do on their own, there are things that they cannot do even with the teacher's help, and there are things that they cannot do on their own but can do with help.

B. Implementation

Teachers have to do a preparation before they come to the classroom in order to do the teaching-learning process run well. The main to do is making a lesson plan. It really helps the teachers to know what steps that they will do in the classroom and achieve the aim of teaching and learning. In short, the teacher should have good preparation and plan the material before using this strategy to the class.

To use this strategy, teacher should prepare teaching materials, command and instruction, appropriate method and media. The teacher selects the teaching

materials based on the curriculum. Then, the teacher prepares command, instruction and new materials. They should be interesting as well as to the students, in teaching expository writing. The teacher prepares some text to make the students more understand about material that they will learn. In preparing appropriate method of teaching to be applied in teaching process, the teacher should consider the interest and level of the students. The principle activities for teaching writing technique are the one that can motivate students to develop their comprehension. The teachers use real object or sounds as the media such as pictures that closely related to student's life that make it easier for students to find the ideas in writing.

At pre teaching activity, the teachers also can activate their students' background knowledge by doing brainstorming and discussion. The aims of these activities are to develop students' interest to the topic so they can say and talk what they have learned based on their knowledge related to the topic. For example, the teacher gives opinion in comparing about country life and city life. Both of them have advantages and disadvantages. After that the teacher explains about the purpose of the subject that will be learned.

The second activity in whilst- teaching activity. There are three activities in this stage. In exploration section, the teacher builds the student's understanding by giving guidance. The teacher should predict what kind of guidance that will be used to help the students based on a kind of the texts. Here for example by using picture. By using those pictures, the students know the situation, the advantages and disadvantages where live in city and live in country. The teacher invites students to participate by asking them about the picture. Picture 1 shows a clean place in the country. The second picture shows the dirty place in the city. Some of students may say clean for the pictures 1 and just say dirty in the picture 2. After the topic is clear for students, the teacher asks the students about major focus would be on the identification of compare about country life and city life. In this activity, the teacher role is to build student's understanding about the context with showing some pictures which drawn the situation living in city and some pictures which shows the situation living in the country. They have to know about several questions about pictures related with the topic.

In elaboration activity, the students work in pair. The teacher uses help students to write comparison and contrast text by giving guidance to the students as far as they need based on what they can do by themselves and what they cannot do without any guidance such as give pictures, cues, transition and some difficult word for them. This strategy called scaffolding strategy. This strategy is purposed to help students write the text independently without any guidance from the teacher students motivate students to write a comparison and contrast independently. This uses joint construction text that teacher give more guidance to the students.

Firstly, the students work with pair so they can share their idea and can discuss each other what they want to write. The teacher can give the first paragraph as the guidance to the students. Then, the teacher shows some pictures and some cues related to the topic. She/he also gives some transition that can be

used when they are writing. If the students get difficulties in the process of learning, the teacher has responsibility to help them. The students make sentences with the pictures from teacher as the guidance. For example, first students write about the facilities in the city, there so many good hospital and school. The modern public transportation is very useful for the citizens. Next, the other student describes the facilities in the village. The people in the country still use traditional transportation. After that, the first student writes about situation in the city. Because of much transportation, living in the city is very noisy and the air is so dirty. Then, the second student describe situation in the country. There is no air pollution in the village. The teacher gives the time around 15 minutes make a comparison between country life and city life.

Based on the guideline above, the first paragraph is about city life is written by the first student. Next, the second paragraph is about country life is written by the other student. This activity will be continued until they have finished explain about country life and city life. After that they make a good paragraph based on what they have written in by using the transition which is given by the teacher. Finally, the conclusion of the text is about country life and city life. Both of the students compare it together in one paragraph.

In confirmation section, the teachers and the students all together try to find the difficulties in comparison and contrast text. Then, teacher gives some topics to the students and gives a chance for students to write independently to develop their paragraph. They should be able to write the comparison and contrast paragraph in front of the class. Before that, they should check their draft paragraph with another pair student in the class as a peer correction then they revise their mistakes based on the correction from their friend. After that teacher checks whether each of them can understand their friends' writing and whether they can explain what it is so. Finally, the teacher and the students take the number randomly from the students to come to in front of the class showing their paragraph. This way has a purpose to make the students more understand about the lesson.

In post teaching, the teacher gives correction to make them can write independently. The teacher also gives feedback to the students toward the process and learning achievement, it can be giving reward to every group that has finished their writing well. Then the teacher and the students conclude or summarize the lesson together. The teacher reviews the activities that have been done consistently

From this activity, it is found the purpose of scaffolding strategy in teaching and learning English. In addition, in this stage the teacher gives the exercises or assigns students to write another comparison and contrast paragraph without any guidance from the teacher. Based on the three phases in teaching above, it can be concluded that by using scaffolding strategy the students can write a text independently without any guidance from the teacher and they feel more confidence to write by themselves. The teacher provides the students with enough instruction and guidance as long as necessary. That instruction and guidance will continually remove as the students develop their own skills and strategies, which will enable them to become independent learners and thinkers.

C. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the discussion in the previous chapters, it can be concluded that scaffolding strategy in writing expository text especially comparison contrast text will be more helpful for the students. It is very interesting strategy for the students. Therefore, it is designed to make clear to the students what is to be learned and to build their confidence and to write effectively. During the early stages with unfamiliar genre, the students move from their potential through appropriate interaction with teacher, who contributes what the students are initially unable to do they can do, scaffolding their progress by providing information, appropriate language, and opportunities for guided practice. As they gain control the comparison text, this support gradually removed when they able to write comparison text independently.

Teaching writing in the class can be interesting if the teacher can choose the strategy creatively and helpfully. Scaffolding gives a contribution in motivating students in writing activity. It is suggested to design the strategy that can be used to help students in the process of teaching and learning to be more creative and independently, so the students have confidence to write effectively.

Note: this article based on her paper with the su*perberdasarkan makalah dengan pembimbing Drs. Saunir Saun, M.Pd*.

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