## IMPLEMENTATION OF SCAFFOLDING TEACHING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL (A Classroom Action Research at the Tenth Grade Students of SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang in the 2011/2012 Academic Year)

### Agustina Tri Wulandari<sup>1</sup>, Ngadiso<sup>2</sup>, Abdul Asib<sup>3</sup>

### Master of English Education Program, Graduate School of Sebelas Maret University

### wulandari\_engl.1444@yahoo.com

### Abstract

The general objective of this research is to improve students' writing skill of the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Sumberlawang in the 2011/ 2012 Academic Year. The research is specifically aimed at finding out (1) whether scaffolding teaching technique improves the students' writing skill of the tenth arade students of SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang; and (2) what happens in the class when scaffolding teaching technique is administered. The research was a classroom action research which applied scaffolding teaching technique to improve students' writing skill. The research was conducted at SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang; the subjects of the research were 31 students of class X3 in the academic year 2011/2012. The research was conducted in two cycles with three meetings of each. Each cycle consisted of four steps: planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The researcher used both quantitative (the students' score of writing test) and qualitative data (the information about the implementation of scaffolding teaching technique and the students' reactions to the technique. The former data were taken from the writing test; pre-test and post-test of every cycle. The qualitative data were taken from observation, interview and document analysis. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistic. The qualitative data were analyzed using Constant-comparative technique proposed by Strauss and Glasser. The results of the research showed that: (1) Scaffolding teaching technique can improve students' writing skill in terms of: (a) developing the information/ ideas appropriate with the topic provided; (b) organizing a text; (c) using vocabularies precisely appropriate with the topic provided; (d) using grammatical patterns and sentence pattern appropriate with text; (e) spelling the words appropriately and using suitable punctuation in text; and (2) Scaffolding teaching technique can improve class situation, in terms of: (a) improving students' participation; (b) creating live teaching atmosphere; (c) improving students' attention to the lesson; (d) improving the class cooperation. The result of the research showed that scaffolding teaching technique was beneficial to improve the students' writing skill and class situation. Therefore, scaffolding teaching technique is very potential to be applied in English class.

*Key word: writing skill, scaffolding* 

## INTRODUCTION Background of the Research

English, by Indonesian Government is stated as the compulsory subject that should be communicatively mastered by Senior High School students both in oral and written form to achieve the literacy level. Students are expected to have not only receptive skill such as listening and reading but also productive skill such as speaking and writing to improve survival communication.

То skill, acquire writing students should have cognitive skill required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously. The controls of variable as stated by Bell and Burnby (1984) include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling. and letter formation beyond the sentence. Writer must be able to structure and integrate information in cohesive and coherent paragraphs and text.

In the *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* for Senior High School, English teaching has a purpose to develop communicative competency in the form of oral and written language. It means that teacher must teach students to learn to use language. Therefore, it is

expected that students should learn to use language to communicate. Competence standard of English in KTSP shows that writing is one of the language skills taught to express the meaning of a short functional written text and simple essay in the form of recount, narrative. procedure, descriptive, and news item text in a daily life. The indicators of the competence are using accurate sentence structure, letter formation, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling; writing and elaborating the main idea; developing the information/ ideas appropriate with the topic provided; organizing a text in terms of paragraph unity, coherence, and cohesion.

Based on the theory and indicators in *KTSP*, it can be summarized that the ideal condition of writing skill of the tenth graders is the skill of the students in expressing the meaning of simple essay or creating simple text especially in writing paragraph, in which they write accurately and acceptably to control the content of the writing involving appropriateness with the title: organization of the writing related to the paragraph unity, cohesion and coherence; vocabulary mastery; grammar or language use related to the sentence structure; and mechanics involving spelling and punctuation.

Compared with other three language skills. writing is considered as the most difficult task a learner encounters and one that few people can be said to fully master. The difficulty in writing is encountered by not only a learner of a second language but also a learner of first language as stated by Richards (2005: 303) says that there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. It was in line with the results of the questionnaire given by the researcher conducted in the tenth year students of SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang as shown in the table below:

Table 1. Rank of English Skill Difficulties Class X3 of SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang in the 2011/ 2012 Academic Year

No	English Language Skill	Numb. Students	of	Percentage (%)
1.	Writing	12		38%
2.	Listening	9		28%
3.	Speaking	7		22%
4.	Reading	4		13%

Table 1 showed that writing was considered as the most difficult language skill among the three other language skills learners encountered.

Based on the preliminary research that has been conducted by the researcher in the X3 of SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang, it can be summarized that the problems were mostly derived from two aspects: students' writing skill and writing class situation. The problems of students' writing skill were focused on five elements of writing. The average of each writing element could be seen in Table 2.

Table 2 Pre-Test Score. The Average Scores of Each Writing Element

No	Writing Elements	Average Score
1.	Content	63.85
2.	Organization	61.88
3.	Vocabulary	57.50
4.	Grammar	44.50
5.	Mechanics	58.75
Average Score of Writing		57.09
	Elements	

Table 2 showed that the result of their pre-test of writing was under average and still far from what was expected. The mean score of their test was only 57.09. It means that most of the students could not fulfill the minimum standard of the competence *(KKM)* which is 68. The scores of the students showed that the score of all elements of writing were still low and under average. The worst element of writing was on grammar. Then, it was followed by vocabulary, mechanics, organization, and content.

The writing score of pre-test gave information that most of the students were in low level of writing skill. The problems of writing skills can be summarized as follows: (1) the students had difficulty in developing the ideas appropriate with the topic; (2) the students had difficulty in organizing a text in of terms paragraph unity, coherence, and cohesion; (3) the students had difficulty in using vocabularies precisely appropriate with the topic provided; (4) the students had difficulty in using grammatical patterns and sentence pattern appropriate with a text; and (5) the students had difficulty in spelling the words appropriately and using suitable punctuation in their texts.

The problems derived from the writing class situation were: (1) the class was not inspiring, the students tended to be passive in the class; (2) the class was crowded, many students talked about unrelated topic; (3) the class was noisy, students were busy with their own activities; and (4) the classroom cooperation was low, students

tended to work individually. Those problems always arose and the result of this condition was that they often got low scores in doing writing task.

To evaluate the problems, it can be seen from the main causes of three consisting aspects: students' aspect, teacher's aspect. and the class condition. The first one was the students' aspect that can be summarized as follows: (1) students had low motivation in learning English, especially writing; (2) they had low writing mastery including the limitation of their vocabulary mastery. Most of them did not know how to write well. They did not understand the elements of writing and got limited model of good writing. The impact of this condition was that they depended too much on their dictionary; (3) they got difficulty how to start to write. They never got any stimulus from the teacher that triggered their creative ideas of writing; and (4) they did not have enough time to practice writing.

The second cause was from the teacher's aspect as follows: (1) the teacher used conventional method in teaching writing in which she only demanded the writing product of the students. She never used certain method that encouraged students' interest in writing; (2) she used monotonous technique that made the students bored. There was no variation in teaching learning process; (3) she did not give sufficient attention to teach the students how to write well but she had the students write correctly. She did not give helpful guidelines for writing; and (4) she only gave fewer portion for writing than other language skills though writing was a complex skill.

The third cause was from the class situation. The large number of students made the teacher difficult to control and give attention to each student. Having not much attention from teacher, the students showed no interest to the subject. Some of the students were passive during the lesson and gave no response when they were asked question.

Based on the problems and causes above, the researcher intends to make a better condition in teaching and learning process on improving students' writing by applying a certain teaching technique which is suitable with the conditions. Heaton (1989: 137) states that in improving students' writing skill, a teacher should provide a clearly defined problem, appropriate and good model of teaching writing which motivate them to write because it provides an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to organize language material, to use their words and ideas.

In line with Heaton's statement, the researcher in this study proposes "scaffolding" as the teaching technique to improve students' writing skill. Scaffolding is framework temporary which а generally applies essential aspect of instruction as follows: (1) modeling of desired behaviors; (2) offering explanations; (3) inviting student participation; (4) verifying and clarifying student understandings; and (5)inviting students to contribute clues (Hogan and Pressley, 1997: 17-36). There are actually some different opinions from many linguists about the phase of instructional scaffolding, but those can be concluded whether the phase of instructional scaffolding should apply essential aspects of instructions as follows: (1) Intentionality. It is a step where teachers classify complex task that will be mastered by students into

specific and clear sections. Those sections are the unity to achieve the whole competence. (2)Appropriateness. It is a step where the teachers focus on assistance and determine the focus of aid students need on those aspects that cannot mastered by students. be (3)Structure. It is a step where the teachers provide the model so that students can learn from models showed. The modeling is related to behavior expected. (4) Invitation. It is a step where the teachers invite students to explain the important aspects of modeling. (5) Collaboration. It is a step where teachers and students give response and feedback to the students' works. (6) Internalization. It is a step where the teachers internalize the ownership of knowledge that students actually mastered well. It is done in order to strengthen

Scaffolding as defined by Wood, Bruner, and Ross is a teaching strategy form of tutoring or assistance provided by the teachers or peers in a learning setting to assist students with attaining levels of understanding that is impossible for them to achieve without assistance. As the

students' understanding.

learner's abilities increase, the scaffolding provided by the more knowledgeable other is progressively withdrawn.

In the process of scaffolding, the teacher helps the students by giving guidance or the media in doing difficult tasks that students to master. but the have responsibility in accomplishing tasks is on students themselves. In doing the task. the students possibly make some mistakes, but with the mediation or assistance in the form of feedback, guidance or instructions given by the teachers, students can complete these tasks and achieve goals.

In giving assistance, soft and hard scaffolds are provided by teacher or peer in the learning process. According to Save and Brush, soft scaffolds are dynamic, situation-specific aid provided by a teacher or peer to help with the learning process. Hard scaffolds are static supports. These support structures can be embedded within multimedia and hypermedia software to provide students (Kao, Lehman, & Cennamo, 1996; Krajcik, et al., 1998).

The researcher, in this study, applies both soft and hard scaffolds

in scaffolding teaching technique to improve writing skill of the students of SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang. Teacher provides soft scaffold in a form of guidance from the teachers and peers and hard scaffold in a form of slide as presentation program of the computer. A deeper understanding and interest of the students toward the instructional content when it was provided is really expected by the researcher.

Referring to the explanation above, the researcher was interested to conduct a research entitled "Implementation of Scaffolding Teaching Technique to Improve Students' Writing Skill (A Classroom Action Research at the Tenth Grade Students of SMA Negeri Ι Sumberlawang in the 2011/ 2012 Academic Year)".

### **Objective of the Research**

Based on the problems, the objectives of the research can be stated as follows:

- 1. To know whether scaffolding teaching technique can improve writing skill of the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang.
- 2. To know what happens in the class during scaffolding teaching teaching technique is administered.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Writing skill as defined by Bell and Burnaby (in Harmani, 2007: 14) is a complex cognitive activity where the writer needs to show a number of variables arrange together in units. The variables sentence themselves cover two things: surface and deep levels of sentences.

A surface level is concerned with content and structure of sentence, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and word order. The deep level is concerned with arrangement and combination of sentences into coherence paragraphs. In addition, Estaire (1994: 16) identifies the scope of deep and surface level of writing skill variables into linguistics and communicative aspects. Brown (2004:221) further. goes He classifies linguistic aspects into micro skills and communicative aspects into macro skills of writing. The following are the list of micro and macro skills for writing.

Micro skills of writing are: a) produce graphemes and orthographic patterns of English; b) produce writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose; c) produce an acceptable core of words and use appropriate word order patterns; d) use acceptable grammatical systems; e) express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms; f) use cohesive devices in written discourse. The Macro skills of writing are: a) use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse: b) appropriately accomplish the communicative functions of written text according to form and purpose; c) convey links and connection between events and communicate such relations as main idea. supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification; d) distinguish between literal and implied meanings when writing; e) correctly convey culturally specific references in the context of the written text; f) develop and use battery of writing strategies.

Writing skill is a complex cognitive skill. A successful writing as Nunan (1998: 37) says requires some skills as follows: 1) Mastering the mechanics of letter formation; 2) Mastering and obeying conventions of spelling and punctuation; 3) Using the grammatical system to convey one's intended meaning; 4) Organizing content at the level of the paragraph and the complete text to reflect new information and comment structures; 5) Polishing and revising one's initial efforts; and 6) Selecting an appropriate style for one's audience.

From the explanation above, it can be summarized that writing skill is a complex cognitive activity involving a number of linguistic and communicative aspects, namely: 1) content of writing involving the appropriateness with the title; 2) organization of the writing related to the paragraph unity, cohesion and coherence; 3) vocabulary mastery; 4) grammar or language the use related to sentence and 5) structure: mechanics involving spelling and punctuation.

In relation to the result of writing test. there are manv methods which can be used to evaluate the composition. According to Cooper and Odell (1977: 4) the evaluation can be done analytically or holistically. In this research, the evaluation of composition is done using analytical method. It means that the researcher evaluates every component in the composition. The components of composition as stated by Harris (1969: 68-69), Bell and Burnby (1984) as quoted by Nunan (1998: 36) are: (1) content of writing involving the appropriateness with the title; (2) organization of the writing related to the paragraph unity, cohesion and coherence; (3) vocabulary mastery; (4) grammar or language related to the use sentence and (5)mechanics structure: involving spelling and punctuation.

### **Action Hypothesis**

Based on the theoretical description and rationale, the researcher makes a hypothesis that students' writing skill can be improved by implementing scaffolding teaching technique.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY Setting and Time of the Research

This classroom action research was carried out at SMA Negeri I Sumberlawang. It is located on Jl. Solo – Purwodadi Km. 27, Sragen, phone number: (0271) 5890453. It has sixteen classes; six classes for the tenth grade, five classes for eleventh grade, and five classes for the twelfth grade.

### Subject of the Research

The subject of the research was the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Sumberlawang in the academic year of 2011/2012. The class was X3. It consisted of 32 students; 12 males and 20 females.

### Method of the Research

The method used in this research was classroom action research.

## Procedures of Classroom Action Research

The model of action research is suggested by Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (1999: 32). They state that action research occurs through a dynamic and complementary process, which consists of four essential moments of (a) planning, (b) action, (c) observation, and (d) reflection. These moments are the fundamental steps in spiraling process. The steps can be illustrated

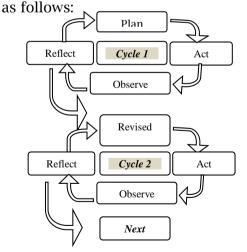


Figure 3: The Procedure of Classroom Action Research

### Source of the Data

The sources of data in this classroom action research were: event, documents (written materials sheets of classroom observation, students' portfolios, students' diary, lesson plans, and list of students' in writing tests). score and respondent.

### **Technique of Collecting the Data**

The data needed for the research were both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were taken from students writing scores. The results of the pre-test and post-test showed whether the writing skill of the students improved or not. To get the valid instrument, the expert judgment, try out of the instrument, and readability of test were applied.

Meanwhile, the qualitative data were collected by using some techniques of observation, questionnaire, and interview. In this research the data were collected from two sources: (1) the students; and (2) the collaborator.

### Technique of Analyzing the Data

There are two types of data in the research, namely the quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, finding out the mean scores in the test.

The researcher analyzed the students' writing progress based on the result of analytic scoring rubric. In scoring students' work, there were five elements to score: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Meanwhile. qualitative data were analyzed using Constant-comparative technique proposed by Strauss and Glasser consisting of the following steps: (1) comparing incidents applicable to category; each (2) integrating categories and their properties; (3) delimiting theory; and (4) writing theory.

# RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

**Summary of Findings during the Research** To know the improvement of the research, the research compared between the previous conditions of students' writing skill and class situation and the condition after the research. The result of comparison can be seen in table 4.

### Table 4

The Comparison between Previous Condition and Condition after the Research

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Table 5 The Comparison among Students' Writing Scores in Pre-Test, Post Test of Cycle 1, and Post-Test of Cycle 2

No	Explanation	Pre- Test Score	Post- Test Score of C.1	Post- Test Score of C.2
1	The Highest Score	75.00	83.00	90.00
2	The Lowest Score	42.00	60.00	70.00
3	The Average Score	57.09	71.71	77.71

By comparing the mean scores of each test, it was found that the mean score of post-test of cycle 1 is higher than the mean score of pretest. It meant that there is a significant improvement between score of pre-test and post-test of cycle 1. Furthermore, by comparing the mean scores of each test, it was found that the mean score of posttest of cycle 2 is higher than the mean score of post-test 1. It meant significant that there is а improvement between score of posttest of cycle 1 and post-test of cycle 2. Finally, after analyzing the scores of pre-test and post-test of cycle 2 by comparing the mean scores of each test, it was found that the mean score of post-test of cycle 2 is higher that the mean score of pretest. It can be summarized that there is a significant improvement between the score of pre-test and post-test of cycle 2.

In the end of this summary, it could be seen the improvement of students' writing skill and class situation in table 6.

Table	6.	The	Improv	vemer	nt of
Student	ts'	Writing	Skill	and	Class
Situatio	n				

	Aspect	Pre-test	C.1	C.2
	a. Content developing the information/ ideas appropriate with the topic provided	63.85	70.54	76.6 1
	b. Organization organizing a text in terms of paragraph unity, coherence, and cohesion	61.88	77.26	83.3 9
Students' Writing Skill	c. Vocabulary using vocabularies precisely appropriate with the topic provided	57.50	73.15	77.9 8
Students	d. Grammar using grammatical patterns and sentence pattern appropriate with a text	44.50	67.29	72.9 7
	e. Mechanics spelling the words appropriately and using suitable punctuation in a text	58.75	72.90	84.1 9
	Mean Score	57.06	72.23	79. 03
	a. The students' participation in writing class	Passive	Mostly active	All activ e
Class Situation	<ul> <li>b. The students' behavior (interest, attention, and attitude of the students toward writing)</li> </ul>	Low	Higher	High est
	c. The class cooperation	Poor	Good	Excel lent
Researc	a. Problems	All writing elements	Three writing elements	Non e
Я	b. Existing	All writing	Three	Non

	Problem	elements	writing	е
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### C. Discussion

Based on the previous descriptions, the researcher can summarize the research findings as follows:

1. The scaffolding teaching technique improves students' writing skill

Based on the findings, it can be theorized that the use of scaffolding teaching technique can improve students' writing skill. The improvement is identified from scores in each cycle that can be seen in table 7

Table: 7. The Students' Writing Scores of Each Writing Category in Pre-Test, Post-Test of Cycle 1, and Post-Test of Cycle 2

Ν	Category	Pre- test	Post- test 1	Post- test 2
1.	Content	63.85	70.54	76.61
2.	Organization	61.88	77.26	83.39
3.	Vocabulary	57.50	73.15	77.98
4.	Grammar	44.50	67.29	72.97
5.	Mechanics	58.75	72.90	84.19
	Mean Score	57.06	72.23	79.03

From the table above, it can be seen that the mean score always improves from the pre-test till the post-test 2. The improvement also happens in each category of writing skill in every cycle. The improvement could be achieved because scaffolding teaching technique had many advantages for learners in learning process. It is supported by the improvement of the students' writing skill that could be recognized from the skill of the students in developing the ideas with appropriate the topic. organizing a text, using vocabularies precisely appropriate with the topic provided. using grammatical patterns appropriate with a text, spelling the words appropriately and using suitable punctuation in the texts.

### 2. The scaffolding teaching technique improves class situation

The situation changed after the implementation of scaffolding teaching technique. It can improve participation. students' The students showed high participation in writing class. All students got to be active during group activities. They spoke up, shared their opinions enthusiastically, and actively involved in the writing discussion. Activities such activating students' prior knowledge in intentionality stage to of scaffolding facilitated the students to express their prior knowledge, modeling in structure stage, checking and giving correction to the peer's writing in collaboration stage were engaging and motivating the students to be active in the class and to be independent in doing the task. It is in line with the Vygotsky's words, "what the child is able to do in collaboration today he will be able to do independently tomorrow" (Vygotsky, 1987: 211).

Scaffolding teaching technique can create live teaching atmosphere. It makes the class situation more alive by applying various activities of writing and using some medias during the teaching learning process.

Scaffolding can improve students' attention to the lesson. The students' behavior including the interest, attention, and attitude of the students toward writing was high. The use of teaching learning media such as videos, pictures, and map were interesting. The activities and media used in implementing scaffolding teaching technique increased the interest of the students and had them to give more attention to the writing class.

Scaffolding improves the class cooperation. The class cooperation got to be excellent. This technique provided students more chance to have interaction with their friends. A good communication among the group members made the passive students became active. They were very enthusiast in group discussion. This is in relation with the idea stated by Clay (2005: 1) that shows that what may seem like casual conversational exchanges between tutor and student actually offers many opportunities for fostering cognitive development, language learning, story composition for writing, and reading comprehension.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION Conclusion

Doing the action research using scaffolding teaching technique in class X3 showed improvement both in students' writing skill and writing class situation. After the researcher did the action research by using scaffolding teaching technique to improve students' writing skill in SMA Negeri 1 Sumberlawang, it can be drawn conclusion as follows:

- 1. Scaffolding teaching technique improves students' writing skill. The improvement can be identified from students' writing skill achievement in: (a) developing ideas appropriate with the topic provided; (b) organizing a text; (c) using vocabularies appropriate with the topic; (d) using grammatical patterns and sentence pattern appropriate with text: (e) spelling the words appropriately and using suitable punctuation in text.
- Scaffolding teaching technique can improve class situation, in terms of: (a) improving students' participation; (b) creating live teaching atmosphere; (c) improving students' attention to the lesson; (d) improving the class cooperation.

### Suggestion

Based on the experiences of the researcher during the action research, the researcher proposes some suggestions for the betterment of students' writing skill as follows:

For the English teachers
 The English teachers can use scaffolding teaching technique

as an alternative technique in

teaching writing. They must be creative to use it in order that the students are interested and they are not bored in the teaching learning process.

2. For the students

The students who are taught through scaffolding teaching technique should be active and creative in learning writing. Besides learning with the teacher in the class, they should develop writing skill through forming writing habit. So, creative writing can be created by the students independently and easily.

3. For other researcher

The researcher realizes that the result of this research is far from perfect, so the other researchers might improve this research to solve the same problems. The other researcher can use this research as additional resources to conduct research about writing skill. technique for the further research.

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