

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SCAFFOLDING PROCESS TO TEACH ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

The fact that English served as the local content had given another challenge to the Elementary school students in learning English as a Foreign Language. Although, now, curriculum is in the transition into a freedom of learning Independent which English starts to be included as the subject to learn in first and fourth graders, students are still struggling in following the teaching and learning process of the subject. The right techniques must be selected and applied to help students achieve the learning goals. One promising technique to teach EYL is scaffolding. This study aimed to (1) reveal the scaffolding process in teaching English and (2) find out the benefits of the scaffolding process in teaching English for Young Learners in one state Elementary School in Padangan, East Java. The participants were the English teacher and 15 students from the fourth grade. This study applied mixed-method research. The instruments to obtain the data were observation, questionnaire, and interview. The research found that the scaffolding process existed in the teaching and learning process of English in elementary school. Several scaffolding strategies were applied in the teaching process of English subjects. The students' responses towards the scaffolding reached a medium qualification which was 67%. Besides, the students' responses on the benefits of scaffolding showed medium qualification which was 66%. Furthermore, it could be concluded that the scaffolding process was well implemented in the process of teaching English in Elementary school and created positive responses from the students in learning English.

Keywords: *scaffolding process, teaching English for young learners*

Introduction

The fact that English was set as the local content gave the elementary school students another challenge in learning English as a foreign language. Currently, the curriculum is transitioning into the Freedom of Learning Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka), in which English is included as the subject to learn in the first and fourth grades. After observations and interviews were conducted in preliminary research on fourth graders, it was revealed that fourth graders just got English in their learning. Before the new curriculum, there was no English subject in their school. The students still needed help following the English subject's teaching and learning process. This is a new thing for them to learn English. Thus, this was the reason why this study was conducted.

The fourth graders studying in elementary school are classified as young learners. Suyanto (2008, as cited in Sepyanda, 2017) stated that students in Elementary School are categorized as young learners between 6 -12 years old. Teaching English to young learners is very interesting. Learning English is not an easy thing; it needs a separate concept so that it can be adequately conveyed and can be understood by students, and the role of the teacher as an intermediary in delivery must be able to bring the material properly and correctly. Fachrurrazy (2011, as cited in Surkamp and Viebrock, 2018) said that it is of concern for anyone who needs to learn methods in teaching English to realize fundamental terms in the sector.

Teaching English would be better applied from an early age or while sitting in elementary school. According to Erickson by Mooney (2000, as cited in Charlotte, 2018), children at an early age have a critical character in developing independence, trust, and initiative. The young learners' interaction in the class can be a factor in their ability to learn a language, the study of Mooney (2000, as cited in Charlotte). Vygotsky explained that the process of language acquisition in children occurs through conversation and dialogue. Adults pass on their cultural knowledge to children. A medium of intellectual transformation derives from the language used during the learning process by imitating and repeating what adults say. When children learn with their parents and learn about their parents' culture, this process is what Vygotsky refers to as the theme of development in internalization. It means young learners absorb what they see and hear; they get knowledge from the interaction in the class.

Young learners have their characteristics in learning according to Brumfit (1991, as cited in Sepyanda, 2017). First, as young learners are only starting their learning when they are at school; then, the teachers have an excellent opportunity to make their expectations of life in school. Second, young learners are potentially different enough than adults or secondary learners because they are closer to their diverse home cultures. Third, young learners frequently have a passion and are keen for learning. Fourth, young learners have an education that can be intimately related to their development of the concepts and ideas for making them close to their first formal learning experiences. Finally, young learners need lots of simulation from physical action and activity to think.

One promising technique to teach young learners is the scaffolding technique. Scaffolding is a technique of assisting in the learning process provided by a teacher or a more experienced person. A study by Gibbons (2002, as cited in Mentari et al., 2014) explained that scaffolding is assistance provided by the teacher for students or learners when students find difficulties when doing assignments; with the assistance, the student can complete tasks independently. Scaffolding refers to the concept introduced by Lev Vygotsky; a Russian psychologist famous for his contributions to the theory of child development. One of his works in the field of child psychology formulated the concept of ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding is the concept of teaching in ZPD. The term "scaffolding" comes from Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky said in Walqui (2006 as cited in Vonna et al., 2015) that ZPD is the gap between the actual developmental level of the learner. This can be seen in problem-solving under the guidance of a teacher, or in collaborating and interacting with more capable peers. According to Stuyf (2002, as cited in Vonna et al., 2015), in the scaffolding technique, there are tasks and activities, including (1) give some direction so that students can focus on achieving their goals, (2) reduce frustration, (3) provide a clear model that describes expectations for the activities to be performed; (4) simplify the task to make it easier for students to accomplish and manage, (5) motivate students and involve them in assignments.

There were three previous studies to support this study. The first previous related study is entitled Teachers' Strategies in Providing Scaffolding in English for Young Learners by Arlinda (2020). The study aimed to evaluate the degree to which teachers of English for young learners scaffold their students' learning and to examine how their language proficiency affects this process. Two highly qualified English teachers were asked to participate in this descriptive qualitative study using classroom observations and interviews. The results were that teachers applied several scaffolding techniques, including modeling, bridging, and contextualization. In addition, effective communication in other languages depends on teachers providing good language models, using English in class, providing explanations and instructions in English, and showing examples of words and grammatical structures.

The following previous related study was conducted by Kamil (2018) entitled Exploring Teacher's Scaffolding to Students in Teaching Writing. The research

aimed to investigate a teacher's method of creating scaffolding and the challenges of using scaffolding when teaching 7th grade students how to write a narrative in Palompong, West Java, Indonesia. The researcher used classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and field notes. As a result, the researcher found that six types of scaffoldings were used in classrooms teaching writing teachers. The results also revealed different scaffolding processes used by the teacher. This included providing illustrations, explaining grammar, allowing students to participate in the learning process, providing corrective feedback on student responses, providing support, asking questions about previous lessons, text structures, and reading text model. Based on previous research mentioned above, scaffolding can help teachers and educators teach languages and help students with learning difficulties.

Anggadewi (2017) conducted the third study entitled *Scaffolding: How It Works for Students with Learning Difficulties*. She stated that children with learning disabilities meant the group difficulties they experienced themselves, coming from children who had trouble learning. The aim was to familiarize teachers with methods of scaffolding that could be used for alternative classroom learning. This result indicates that scaffolding is a method that can be used as an alternative to remedial education for children with learning disabilities. The three previous related studies gave more underlying theories to support the conduct of the research. Moreover, this study was conducted to reveal the Scaffolding process in teaching English and to find out the benefits of the scaffolding process in teaching English to Young Learners.

Method

This research used a mixed-method approach. The mixed methods research approach combined two methods which were qualitative and quantitative, in research activity so that the data acquired would be more valid, reliable, objective, and comprehensive Sugiyono (2016, as cited in Aini et al., 2020). The subjects were students in fourth grade, with 15 students as the total participants. In collecting the data, the researcher used some instruments. The first instrument was observation. Observation is a technique to analyze to observe the subject or participants' behavior and the real phenomenon from their real life in a natural setting. Powell (1997, as cited in Zevalkink 2021) stated that in the observational study, the current status of the phenomena is established by observation rather than asking questions. The

second instrument the researcher used was an interview. The interview was conducted with an English teacher and five students. The interview was purposed to get the explanations better understanding from the teacher and students about their English ability and the scaffolding process in the class. The third is a questionnaire with 29 questions, and the questionnaire has two parts: part A is about the scaffolding process in the class, and part B is about the benefit of the scaffolding process. In scoring the questionnaire, the researcher used the calculation and referred to the classification by Sugiyono (2009).

Results and Discussions

The purpose of this study was to find out the scaffolding process in teaching English for young learners, and the study aimed to find out the benefits of the scaffolding process in teaching English for young Learners. The data were collected by observation, interview, and questionnaire. The research was conducted in one of the elementary schools in East Java; the researcher took a fourth grade with 15 students. Based on Observations 1, 2, and 3 aimed to find out the scaffolding process by the teacher in English class. After conducting the observation, the researcher revealed some Scaffolding techniques in English class done by the teacher.

The first scaffolding technique was regarding a theme that was easy for students to understand. The teacher used a theme that was easy for students; choosing a suitable theme for students was essential. The students felt excited and could understand the material; based on an interview with the teacher before learning started, the teacher prepared the learning material sources and then developed it with media or games. Mercer (1994) said that they set specific themes and elicit responses that lead students down a particular path of thought.

The second scaffolding technique was using image media as teaching materials to support learning activities. Students observed the given picture media during the learning. The teacher used book pictures to engage the teaching and learning process in every meeting. On day three, the teacher added the media, such as small paper, to write the number. The learning was about the number in English, and the students felt happy when related to Luke et al. (2005, as cited in Sam, 2011) stated the instructions on how to use the tools, resources, and materials readily hand to assist a

student in learning how to perform a given task. Media is helpful in the learning language process, and media can be the tool scaffolding process.

The third scaffolding technique was the formation of a learning group. The students were excited about the work in the group. Based on the observation, it was revealed that the teacher formed some groups on day three. In the interview section, the teacher said that the group forming aimed to make students not feel bored, and they could interact with others and have a discussion as well. They were in the group when they did a game learning, such as a guessing game about the number. Making groups in learning can help students understand the learning. Donata (1994, as cited in Samana, 2013) stated that students could help their peers in the same way as professionals.

The fourth scaffolding technique was giving time for students to express their opinion. The students gave their opinion about the question to the teacher. The teacher supported students by giving them time to express their opinions and decide. When the researcher did his research, the teacher applied that scaffolding technique from day one until day three. For example, when the teacher asked the student about numbers in English, they gave their opinions and discussed their answers. In this process, an adult encourages a child to express their opinions and ideas and then asks them to make decisions. This statement is from Raiser (2004, as cited in Hsin and Wu, 2011).

The fifth scaffolding technique was the teacher used the Indonesian language to help students understand the learning process. Students felt the teacher helped them a lot by using the Indonesian language. Using a first language in teaching English can be a tool for the teacher. Students needed help understanding if the teacher used full English in class. This statement was strengthened by an interview with some students who said they had problems understanding the material, so it was better when the teacher used L1 or the first language. Cho & Kim (2017) stated that L1 was given another look as a crucial mediating mechanism for learning a second language.

The sixth scaffolding technique was when the teacher supported students by offering instructions on completing a task. When doing the class research, the teacher

gave the students a way to complete the task. The teacher asked students to complete the sentences about the number, students shared their knowledge about it, and the students wrote the sentences on a whiteboard. According to Rohler & Cantlon (1997, as cited in Kamil, 2018), students are encouraged to offer clues on completing the task. It can benefit English students' learning; they can be more active in class and automatically engage in their learning.

The seventh scaffolding technique was the teacher formed students' interests by using exciting materials and focused on learning objectives and student interests. From the scaffolding process that was found in research, the teacher used interest media in their learning. On day one and day two, the teacher used a picture book as a tool for the learning process. On day three, the teacher used small pieces of paper to guess words; the students felt happy and interested. Bransford et al. (2000) strengthened this statement, stating that students' interest focuses on learning objectives, simplifies assignments, points out differences, responds to students' responses, and forms solutions in assignments were part of scaffolding techniques.

The eighth scaffolding technique was the teacher provided students with related concepts, sentences, and paragraphs. The research found that teachers implemented strategy techniques, such as giving procedures or steps to create concepts, sentences, and paragraphs. Based on the interview with some students, the teacher helped them by providing the procedures for creating paragraphs, sentences, and concepts. Also, in the interview with the teacher, he still guided his students with procedures. This was accurate to a statement from Faraj (2015), who stated that Scaffolding was designed to provide the students with measures or formulas to make paragraphs, sentences, and concepts.

The ninth scaffolding technique was that the instructions given by the teacher were clear so that the students could follow the lesson well. The teacher gave instructions in class slowly and clearly. The students could absorb what the teacher explained about the learning. They could respond to teacher questions. In this practice, the teacher gave the students good step-by-step instructions to understand the process (Faraj, 2015).

The tenth scaffolding strategy was confirming and clarifying the students' understanding. Interviews with some students revealed that the teacher confirmed and clarified the students' understanding during and at the end of the learning. This statement was strengthened by Roehler and Cantlon (1997, as cited in Bikmaz et al., 2010), who stated that clarifying and verifying students' understanding is one of five different forms of Scaffolding that they often use. The eleventh scaffolding strategy was when the teacher guided the student to turn the information into action rather than memorizing it. Based on the observation, the students performed some actions than were just memorized. They were allowed to answer the questions given by the teacher orally and might write them on a whiteboard. Poorahmadi (2009) stated that transforming information instead of just remembering specific scenarios to perform certain actions was a scaffolding that can be applied in the class.

The questionnaire strengthened the scaffolding process from students and interviews with the teacher and some students. The questionnaire consists of two parts, Part A and Part B. Part A has 21 statements about the scaffolding process in English class. In contrast, part B consists of 8 statements about the scaffolding process's benefit. Statement 1 showed that their learning utilizes media as learning support materials were well implemented. The first statement showed that 80% of the students chose to agree. The media has been well implemented in their learning, and they agreed with the utilization of media in the learning process. Based on the observation, they used media in their learning. Related to the study, Luke et al. (2005) stated the instructions on how to use the tools, resources, and materials readily hand to assist a student in learning how to perform a given task. Media helps learn language processes, and media can be a tool for the scaffolding process. From the result of interviews with some students, they felt interested in using media during learning. The second statement has the same result for strongly agree and disagree in 40%. It means the implementation of making groups in process learning needs more engagement in learning. By Donata (1994, as cited in Samana, 2013), the data showed that students could help their peers in the same way professionals. Based on an interview with the teacher, he said that group learning in the class could energize students, and students could have discussions and interact with other students. The teacher made a group learning, such as a guessing game about the number. Making groups in learning could be beneficial.

The third statement showed that 46% of the students agreed with the easy theme that the teacher used for their learning. Based on interviews with the students, they felt the learning material was easily understood. As a result of an interview with the teacher, he prepared the learning, such as learning material, sources then developed it with a mediator game. Mercer (1994), in his study, said to set specific themes and elicit responses that lead students down a specific path of thought. In the fourth statement, 66,6% of respondents chose to agree. The teacher gave the students time to express their opinion, idea, and decision during the learning. A theory from Reiser (2004) supported that an adult encourages a child to ask him or her, express their opinion or idea, or make decisions. Related to observations in the class, the teacher has given time for them to express their opinion, idea, and decision. Statement number five revealed students' response in 66,6%. Students agreed when the teacher explained the lesson in Indonesian to help them understand it. Strengthened by Cho & Kim (2017), L1 use has been considered a crucial mediating mechanism for learning a second language. Additionally, this tool can be applied to scaffold students' knowledge.

The sixth statement showed that 46,6% of students agreed with utilizing infographics in their learning. The observations revealed that the teacher did not engage the infographic in their learning, maybe in the future. In statement seventh, 66,6 % of students agreed with the support from the teacher when they wanted to offer instructions on how to complete the task. In statement eight, 53,3% of students responded with the teacher's media, such as video or film. The students agreed with that. Based on the interview with the teacher, he said he did not utilize media such as video or film. However, he chose pictures and songs, then developed them. This was relevant to theory (Mahan, 2020). Support for learning material and language is referred to as Scaffolding. In statement ninth, the more significant score obtained by agreement, the number qualification's percentage shows 60% of students agree about the interest shaped by the teacher, focus on learning objectives, simplify assignments, point out differences, respond to students' responses, and form solutions in the assignment. The study of Bransford and Brown strengthened this statement, and Cocking (2000); stated that part of scaffolding techniques focuses on learning objectives, forming students' interest, simplifying assignments, pointing out differences, responding to students' responses, and forming solutions in assignments.

In this statement, 60% of students chose to agree. The teacher has provided the students with procedures or steps for creating concepts, sentences, and paragraphs. Based on the interview with some students, the teacher helped them by providing the procedures for creating paragraphs, sentences, and concepts. Also, in the interview with the teacher, he still guided his students with procedures. Furthermore, this was accurate to a statement from Faraj (2015) that scaffolding is designed to provide the students with measures or formulas to make paragraphs, sentences, and concepts. Then, in statements eleventh agree 60%. Students felt agreed about the clear instruction that the teacher gave. The observations revealed that the technique was implemented. Faraj (2015) stated that the teacher gives the students sufficient step-by-step instruction so they may understand the process.

The twelfth statement shows that 60% of the students agree that responsibility has been given after getting help from a teacher. However, in the interview with the teacher, he needed to give complete responsibility even though he did the task and still accompanied his students. In this statement, 66,6% of the students agreed with what the teacher did. The teacher confirmed and clarified their understanding. In an interview with the students, they said the teacher confirmed and clarified their understanding during and at the end of the learning. This statement was strengthened by Roehler and Cantlon (1997), as cited in Bikmaz et al. (2010), who stated that clarifying and verifying a student's understanding is one of five different forms of Scaffolding they often use. In statement number fourteenth, agree got 60%. The students agreed with action rather than memorizing in their learning. Based on the observations in the class, the students could do some actions other than memorization. For example, when the teacher asked students about the written number, the student answered it orally and then wrote it on the whiteboard. Poorahmadi (2009) in his study stated transforming information instead of just remembering specific scenarios to perform certain actions, this was one of Scaffolding that can be applied in the class.

The fifteenth statements strongly agree and agree has the same score of 33,3 % from the teacher's question and explanation activity in learning. The students felt it could have helped them. Chi (2007) Parts of scaffolding techniques were to explain difficult words or concepts, and an effective scaffolder takes students' questions seriously and uses them to guide their thinking. Statement number sixteen, 53,3%

showed a medium result; most of them felt that the precise instructions gave them benefits. The observation revealed that the teacher gave explicit instruction during the learning. It was supported by Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000), who stated, modeled, and clearly defined the activity to be performed in the scaffolding technique. In the following statement, 60% of students agreed with the teacher's explanation about the learning purpose and why it was necessary. The students said the learning was easily understood; which means the learning purpose and instructions were clear and well conveyed by the teacher. Also, from the classroom observations, the teacher has explained the learning purpose and why they were necessary; this is accurate to the theory from Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000). They stated scaffolding technique clearly, and the model describes it as defining the assignment's expectations.

Statement number eighteenth average of students chose to agree, and the score was 46,6%, but it was still in the low qualification. Students still agree with the straightforward structure of learning by the teacher. The interview with students supported this statement. They said they could absorb and understand what the teacher taught in the class but still needed more explanation to get a better understanding. The teacher stated in the interview session that he has made learning with chosen material and prepared to learn for the students. Then, this statement accurately Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) stated that to simplify the task to make it more manageable and achievable for a student; these are the tasks or activities that should be provided in the Scaffolding technique. In statement nineteenth, 46,6% of students' responses chose strongly agree; this statement was about the proper assistance by the teacher during the learning. The teacher said that he has made learning with chosen material and prepared to learn for the students and interview with students. They said they could understand what the teacher taught in the class but still needed more explanation to understand better. Based on the teacher's interview, he has made learning with chosen material and prepared to learn for the students.

Statement number twenty showed that 80% of students' responses agreed with the help during process learning. The help made students more motivated in their learning. This statement was strengthened by Halls (2008), who stated that there are several advantages to Scaffolding for students, including increased motivation for

learning. Statement number twenty-one showed that students agreed with the percentage of 53,3%. The teacher was helping the students to solve the problem of learning, and it was helpful. Based on the interview with the teacher, he helped the students when they had learning difficulties, such as explaining the learning more. Then, students' interviews revealed that the teacher helped them solve the problems in the learning process. The observation in the class helped the students answer their problems in learning. The statement showed 28 students' responses toward the teacher's solution. 6,6% of students agree with the solutions given by the teacher. Based on the observation in the class, the teacher gave a solution to the learning. Gibbons (2002) stated that Scaffolding is a type of assistance teachers provide students when they find it challenging to complete assignments independently. Based on the observation. Therefore, based on the questionnaire calculation by Sugiyono (2009) revealed that the student's perception towards the scaffolding implementation reached a medium qualification of 67%. It could be concluded that the scaffolding process was well implemented in teaching English. The observations revealed that the teacher helped students during the learning. Then, the following statement showed that 53% of students chose to agree. Students felt they were more active after being helped by the teacher. Based on the interview with the teacher, students became more active after the teacher helped them. The teacher helped students engage with exciting material, and students were active and interested in the learning process. It is strengthened by Halls (2008) that stated scaffolding allows students to learn more actively.

The statement number twenty-three presented that 46,6% agreed that the help given by the teacher reduces their confusion in doing assignments. Nevertheless, it needs to be more engaging in their learning. 46,6% of students felt it helped them. Based on the observation in the class, the teacher helped students to get more understanding. He said he repeated his explanation for his students, and maybe his students still needed clarification about the explanations. In the statement number twenty-four, 66,6% of students' responses agreed with the questions, feedback, and arrangement of assignments in the learning given by the teacher. It helped the students. As a result of observations, the teacher asked students during the learning and gave feedback when the students had questions. In the interview session, the teacher stated that before the learning, he prepared the lesson plan and even the

assignment in the learning before it started. Then, statement number twenty-five showed that 66,6% of students' responses agreed with the help provided by the teacher. It made their learning clear with the goal. The observations revealed that the teacher gave them clear explanations during the learning process, and he prepared the learning material before the learning started. The next item showed the students agreed and got 66,6%. Most of them felt that the help given by the teacher made them more interested in learning. Related to observation in the class, the teacher helps the students, such as explaining students' questions in the learning or related to the tasks, using media, or engaging the material by using the things they encounter around them. It made them more attracted to learning. The interview with some students and the help from the teacher made them interested in learning. This statement was accurate with the theory from Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000, as cited in Van Der Stuyf, 2002) that the scaffolding techniques provide tasks and activities that obtain and motivate the learners' interest in the task.

The statement number twenty-seven, 66,6% of students chose to agree. Students' knowledge in learning increased with the Scaffolding by the teacher. Based on the interviews with the students, they said that when they did not understand the learning materials, the teacher helped them with explanations. It aimed to have a better understanding of learning. In the last item, students' responses showed that 33,3% strongly agreed. Interviews with students revealed they felt more critical of their learning after being given help by the teacher. The study of Wood et al. (1976, as cited in Schwieter, 2010) stated that highlighting critical learning characteristics is one of the parts of scaffolding action. Further, after calculating the questionnaire by Sugiyono's theory (2009), the students' responses of the benefits of Scaffolding showed a medium qualification of 66%, which meant the scaffolding process was beneficial to their learning. The scaffolding technique can help us to teach English learners.

Conclusion

This research aimed to reveal the scaffolding process during their learning in English class, which the teacher implemented, and strengthened by the questionnaires answered by students and the interview with the teacher and students. The questionnaire consists of two parts, A and B. The average result from part A,

about the scaffolding process, 67%, relates to the questionnaire result qualification it is considered medium (Sugiyono, 2009). Then, students' responses towards the benefit of the scaffolding technique in part B showed 66%, same with part A, the qualification result considered medium. Then, the result of observation in the class revealed that the teacher had implemented the scaffolding process in the learning. The scaffolding process were using media to obtain students' interest in learning, using a theme that was easy for students to understand, forming the learning groups, giving time for students to express their opinion, using the Indonesian language to help students understand the learning process, offering instructions on completing a task, forming students' interests by using exciting materials and focusing on learning objectives and student interests, providing students with related concepts, sentences, and paragraphs, giving clear instruction so that the students could follow the lesson well, and confirming and clarifying the students' understanding. Besides that, scaffolding techniques still needed to be used in the class. The teacher will utilize that in the future. Based on the interview with the students, the scaffolding technique positively impacted them. Furthermore, the scaffolding strategies were well implemented to teach English for Young learners.

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