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# Effects of Teacher Scaffolding On pŷ Students Paragraph Writing S (Grade 11 Students in Achaeen General Secondary School in Focus

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**BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND**  
**LITERATURE**

**EFFECTS OF TEACHER SCAFFOLDING ON STUDENTS’**  
**PARAGRAPH WRITING SKILLS (GRADE 11 STUDENTS**  
**IN ACHIKAN GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOL IN**  
**FOCUS)**

**BY**  
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**AUGUST, 2022**

**BAHIR DAR, ETHIOPIA**

BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES  
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**EFFECTS OF TEACHER SCAFFOLDING ON STUDENTS' PARAGRAPH  
WRITING SKILLS (GRADE 11 STUDENTS IN ACHIKAN GENERAL  
SECONDARY SCHOOL IN FOCUS)**

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**August, 2022**

**Bahir Dar, Ethiopia**

**EFFECTS OF TEACHER SCAFFOLDING ON STUDENTS' PARAGRAPH  
WRITING SKILLS (GRADE 11 STUDENTS IN ACHIKAN GENERAL  
SECONDARY SCHOOL IN FOCUS)**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in  
Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)**

**By  
Melash Baye**

## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is my work and that all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged. It has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts (MA) in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at Bahir Dar University. I declare that this thesis is not submitted to other universities for the award of degree.

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Name of the candidate

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Signature

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Date

# APPROVAL SHEET

BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

As a research advisor, I hereby certify that I have read and evaluated this thesis entitled “Effects of Teacher Scaffolding on Students’ Paragraph Writing Skills (Grade 11 Students in Achikan General Secondary School in Focus)”. I recommend that it has been submitted as fulfilling the thesis requirements.

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As a member of the board of examiners of MA Thesis, we certify that we have read and evaluated the Thesis work prepared by \_\_\_\_\_ and examined the candidate. We recommend that this thesis should be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirements for The Degree of Master of TEFL.

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Name of Internal Examiner	Signature	Date
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Name of External Examiner	Signature	Date

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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**CG-** Control group

**EG** – Experimental group

**EFL-**English as Foreign Language

**ESL-**English as Second Language **TEFL-**Teaching English as Foreign Language

**ZPD-**Zone of Proximal Development

**S<sub>1</sub>, S<sub>2</sub> .... S<sub>42</sub>** - Stand for student one, student two.... student forty two.

**I<sub>1</sub>, I<sub>2</sub> .... I<sub>12</sub>** – Stand for item one, item two.... item twelve

## ABSTRACT

*This study examined the effects of teacher scaffolding on grade 11 students' paragraph writing skills. Specifically, it investigated whether there was statistical significant difference between the experimental and control groups of participants on their paragraph writing performance. In addition, the study assessed the reactions of the experimental group towards the teacher scaffolding intervention program. The study employed a quasi-experimental design with quantitative data collection and analysis method. Test (pre and posttest) and questionnaire were tools used to gather data. The pretest and posttest results of the experimental group (EG) and control group (CG) were analyzed through independent samples t-test and paired samples t- test methods of analyses. One sample t-test was employed to analyze the data collected through the questionnaire. The results of the pre-tests revealed that, the mean scores were 25.095 for EG and 23.837 for CG and the significance value sig 2- tailed was 0.735 i.e. greater than the p- value 0.05. This confirmed that there was no significant difference between EG and CG in their pretest. Thus, the groups were homogeneous in paragraph writing performance before the treatment. In contrast, the results of the post-test indicated that the sig 2-tailed = 0.005 i.e. < 0.05. In addition, the pretest – posttest comparison of the EG revealed that sig 2-tailed = 0.011 < 0.05. Both the posttest and pretest – posttest results showed that, there was statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest results of the group. On the other hand, the pretest - posttest comparison of the CG indicated sig.2-tailed = 0.866 i.e. > 0.05. Thus, the CG did not show significant difference in their paragraph writing performance. Questionnaire results further indicated that EG has got the conceptual knowledge of paragraph writing. They were motivated and initiated by the teacher scaffolding to improve their writing skills. Thus, it can be concluded that teacher scaffolding has a positive effect on the students' paragraph writing achievement to practice their writing skills independently.*

**Key words:** Scaffolding, teacher scaffolding, writing skill, and paragraph writing achievement

# **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1. Background of the Study**

Language teaching became a profession in the twentieth century and frequent changes and innovations were made on approaches and ideologies of language teaching. As it was stated in Richards and Rodgers (2001) the changes were due to the notion of a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning and the quest for better methods was a preoccupation of many teachers and applied linguists. Because of the nature and purpose of language skills/elements, language teaching methods have been changed throughout centuries to teach the skills communicatively. As language teaching methods have their own roles in teaching EFL/ESL, they are used to teach language skills variously.

Particularly, in teaching writing skills, teaching methods enable learners to take control of their writing process, which in turn leads to an increase of learners' confidence as independent writers. Limpabandhu, Yutdhana and Kongmanus (2018) reported that students became effective in writing after having been exposed to process of writing like brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, editing re-writing and individual or cooperative language learning strategies to develop well organized piece of writing. Similarly, Spycher (2017), claimed students interest-based strategy in teaching writing can also improve the writing performance of the students especially on the relevance and adequacy of content, organization and cohesion, referential, grammatical and mechanical adequacies of writing dimensions. Thus, language teachers have opportunities and responsibilities to identify activities that work for their students and to help them go through each stage of the process, building on each activity until the students produce a final, publishable paper.

As a facilitator, the teacher should comment for wrong agreement and improper use of articles, pluralization, and syntactic forms that transmit vague message. He/she also gives feedback on drafts of less quality, lack of paragraph unity, unorganized ideas and insufficient details. Students will receive these comments and feedback in the revising stage of the writing process. Besides, they will also receive feedback from their classmates. They will use the feedback to revise their writings and so they do this rewrite-revise process before they edit and finally submit their final writings. Arousing students' interests by providing topics related to their real life, simplifying the writing tasks and processes, controlling the frustration of students, providing closer support starting from generating ideas up to revising stage of writing by activating their background knowledge, giving tips, cues and procedures. Marking critical points and correcting errors are also scaffolding

processes (Laksmi 2006) These scaffolding processes will encourage students to write with confidence and to feel committed to their work; they will not worry about their writings will be judged as right or wrong.

Thus, scaffolding writing was considered as an effective technique to teach writing skills in combining with process approach, or stages of process writing. Therefore, the researcher in this study employed this technique to examine its effect on students' paragraph writing skills development. The technique of scaffolding is a means to help students how to build up their writing skills. Providing the students with a scaffold means giving those help, which gradually decreases, as they are getting stronger and finally become independent. By being scaffolded or given a scaffold, the students have been lifted from such a situation in the traditional way of teaching writing as writing without receiving enough feedback to help them develop their ideas in the process of writing.

The scaffolding in the process of writing is an alternative strategy to improve the low motivated students' ability in writing. As Nigrum (2013) providing support takes place in several ways: how the selections are organized in a theme, the amount of prior knowledge activation that is provided, how the literature is read by the students, and the types of responses students are encouraged to make. It is a strategy in which a student at the beginning of learning is given a great deal of support by being modeled and coached to perform a specific task in each stage of the process of writing. Gradually, this support is taken away to allow students to try their independence.

As Laksmi (2006) stated the scaffolding strategy in the process of writing encompasses five major stages. First, the prewriting stage; in this stage question-answer, clustering, and modeling are done for students' motivation to simplify tasks. The second is the drafting stage. The strategies in the drafting stage are modeling and the discussion about the model of a text. The third is the revising stage. The teacher makes a conference with students and gives them revising guidelines. The fourth is the editing stage in which the scaffolding strategies implemented are by giving editing guidelines and doing peer editing activity. Fifth, stage is the publishing stage in which the scaffolding strategies are implemented in the form of generalized feedback by reading the final draft.

Feedback is a fundamental element of a process approach to writing. As Keh (1990) it may have a definition of input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for a revision, usually in the form of comments, questions, and suggestions. By receiving feedback, the writer may learn the reader's confusion caused by his/ her insufficient information, illogical

organization, poor development of ideas, or even inaccurate usage and choice of words and tense. Students are motivated to continue a series of revisions, especially through positive feedback. It drives the writer to polish their drafts again and again, to bring expression closer and closer to intention in successive drafts and eventually accomplish the final end-product.

The general purpose of the current study was to examine the effect of teacher scaffolding on paragraph writing skill of Grade 11 students in the case of Achikan general secondary school in Estie Woreda, south Gondar zone, Amhara region, Ethiopia. Therefore, this study is on the secondary school level, in Ethiopian context.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In the Ethiopian English syllabus, language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar are incorporated. For instance, these skills are graded and sequenced in Grade 11 English for Ethiopia Students Textbook as, listening, reading, and language focus, vocabulary, speaking and writing. Although all the skills are equally emphasized, students are challenged in writing skills particularly in writing an effective paragraph.

In Achikan general secondary school, grade 11 students had paragraph writing problems to practice the skills in the actual classroom. Few students were even being challenged with mastering spellings of some common usual words. They did not spell them correctly. Some other difficulties laid in how the students generate and construct the ideas using appropriate vocabulary, sentence and paragraph organization. Even most students did not forward ideas using English, rather their presentation of ideas relied on their mother tongue.

According to Asep (2014), the students' paragraph writing problems existed from insufficient knowledge on vocabulary, sentence structure and paragraph organization, lack of knowledge of parts of paragraph. Lack of knowledge of function of some word classes such as subject case, verb case, object case, compliment etc cohesive devices, the rules on subject-verb agreement and verb forms were also other problems of students in their paragraph writing. As far as the researcher's teaching experience, mostly students had problems of generating ideas to write paragraphs especially in English language. They experienced problems in getting ideas, organizing the ideas, developing the ideas into paragraphs, and maintaining paragraph unity. They also had insufficient knowledge of mechanics, style, content as well as paragraph writing strategy.



Consequently, the need to implement innovative teaching techniques which help the students to improve their paragraph writing skill was crucial. As a result, the researcher was inspired to utilize scaffolding techniques as the teaching technique to solve the students' paragraph writing problems. Scaffolding techniques can be implemented through the process writing approach. Vernon (2002) suggests that scaffolding should be given to the students from prewriting until the final draft. It is essential to implement scaffolding techniques since it is one process that allows the teachers to organize writing activities systematically to meet the interests of the students.

There are some global studies that have been done on scaffolding reading and writing by Piamsai (2020), Khanza and Nufus, (2019). For instance, there was a study which investigated the effect of teacher scaffolding techniques on students' writing achievement conducted by Vonna, Mukminatien and Laksmi (2015). The study was a quasi-experimental research with a nonrandomized control group design having twenty students in the experimental group and sixteen students in the control group. The result showed that scaffolding techniques can significantly improve the students' writing achievement.

Baradaran and Sarfarazi (2011) also conducted another study through which university students were guided by the use of scaffolding to write their first academic essay in English. The students in this study were taught how to generate ideas, draft, edit and revise their essays within the scaffolding principles such as modeling, contextualizing, negotiation, etc. This study made use of two groups, one control group and one experimental group. The experimental group received teacher scaffolding and the results of the post-test of writing showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. In other words, the results revealed that the participants who received scaffolding wrote better than the students who did not receive any scaffolding.

Moreover, there was a study conducted by Artini and Padmadewi (2019) using an embedded mixed method which was mainly in the form of qualitative studies but supported with quantitative data analysis. The subjects were three teachers and involved 21 students of grade 5. The data were analyzed qualitatively as well as quantitatively. The results of the study showed that the teachers scaffolding strategies like, sight word exercises, and problem-solving based learning instructions provided with reading response journals. The results implied that the quality of the scaffolding has an effect on students' writing competency.

Despite the above researches were conducted at international level, there are some local researches conducted on this area. For example, there is local research on the effects of teacher scaffolding on

students' reading comprehension in Dona Berber Primary School conducted by Chanyalew and Abiy (2015). In the research, 42 grade four students were chosen purposively as participants of the study. The researchers used quasi-experimental research design and test, observation and focus group discussion for gathering data. The findings of the research indicated that scaffolding reading strategy instruction is effective in improving students' passage reading comprehension.

Zerihun, Shewa and Kefyalew (2017) also conducted a study on the effects of teacher's scaffolding on students' reading comprehension in the case of Sire Secondary School Grade nine Students. Quasi-experimental research design was used in the study, and the participants were 46 as experimental and 46 as control groups. As a data collecting tool, pretest and posttest reading comprehension were used for both groups. The finding revealed that Students who were taught reading comprehension with Scaffolding strategies outperformed the control group.

There is also a study on the effect of teacher scaffolding on students' writing skills in EFL class room by Simachew and Belyihun (2021) in Meneguzer secondary school. The participants of study were grade nine students. There were a control and an experimental group each has 40 students. As data collection tool test, questionnaire and interview are used. The study employed quasi-experimental research design using explanatory sequential mixed method of data collection and analysis. The finding shows after the scaffolding process experimental group outperformed the control ones.

Although the above studies have been conducted on teacher scaffolding, their focus was on reading skills. However, the current study was different from the above studies. First, this study focused scaffolding on paragraph writing skills. The first local study was conducted in primary school level on reading comprehension, whereas, the current study was on the secondary level in paragraph writing. The second local study was in the case of secondary school level; however, it was not on writing skill. Although the last local study was conducted on scaffolding in writing it didn't employ scaffolding strategies and treatment interventions clearly, and as a result its finding is quite limited. Therefore, the researcher had been initiated to examine the effects of teacher scaffolding on grade 11 students paragraph writing by combining scaffolding strategies with process approach writing. Thus, the main goal of the current study is to fill the gaps of those researches. Therefore the objectives, research questions, methods of data collection and analysis, procedures of treatment and findings of the current study were different from the aforementioned studies.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

At examining the effect of teacher scaffolding on students' paragraph writing skill development, the researcher designed basic questions as follows. Therefore this study was designed to answer the following research questions.

1. Does teacher scaffolding promote EFL students' paragraph writing skills development to a greater extent than the conventional method?
2. What is the reaction of the experimental group towards the treatment given during the scaffolding lessons to improve their paragraph writing skill improvement?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

To answer the basic questions of the study, the general and specific objectives were formulated as follows.

#### **1.4.1 General Objective of the Study**

The general objective of this study was to examine the effect of teacher scaffolding on grade eleven students' paragraph writing skills development.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives of the Study**

In order to answer the basic questions of the study, specific objectives are developed. Therefore, the study specifically will strive to:

1. Examine whether teacher scaffolding promote students paragraph writing skills development than conventional method of teaching paragraph writing.
2. Assess the reactions of experimental group participants towards the effect of teacher scaffolding on their paragraph writing performance.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this research are hopefully useful for English language teachers to conceptualize the implementations of scaffolding techniques using in their actual teaching of paragraph writing. It would provide them with a better understanding of scaffolding in order to adapt it in their teaching language skills. In addition, future researchers would be used for further study on writing and other language skills/elements as teacher scaffolding or peer scaffolding in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of learning. The findings would give them insights to study further.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study was delimited to examine the effect of teacher scaffolding on students' paragraph writing skills development particularly in the process approach of paragraph writing. Grade 11 students were involved in the study and the researcher conducted the research besides his regular teaching English for grade 11 and 12.

The study was conducted in Achikan secondary& preparatory School that is found in Estie woreda, South Gondar zone, Amhara region. The study focused only on one school because the problem was serious there and for convenience of the researcher's work place.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

Since the researcher was teaching and conducting the study in the country side secondary school, getting internet access and electric power as well as literatures to be reviewed were chronic problems. In addition, in the school there was no enough number of English teachers in order to get support during the treatment and data gathering. The third limitation was unable to control the extraneous variables apart from the experiment.

## **1.8 Definition of Key Terms**

- Writing - is an intellectual activity of finding the ideas and thinking about the way to express and arrange them into a statement and paragraph that is clear to be understood by the readers, (Nunan, 1991).
- Writing Performance- is the ability of producing clear and organized body of sentences, paragraphs and essays that convey full sense.
- Scaffolding - refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process. The teacher provides successive levels of temporary support that help students reach higher levels of comprehension and skill acquisition that they would not be able to achieve without assistance.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals on the review of related literatures. The researcher reviewed related literatures regarding to Writing skill and Scaffolding techniques. This helped him in order to set up the methodological aspects and to map the study at all. This review guided the researcher to decide on the design and participants of the study. It also helped him to choose appropriate data gathering instruments and to organize the data in a logical procedure. Moreover, the literature directed the researcher to use the right data analysis method.

### **2.2 Writing**

Writing is one of the major language skills which is an interactive process by nature; it evolves out of the symbolic interplay between writer, text and reader. It is an active and productive skill that indicates the academic success of learners. As noted by Celce-Murcia (1991), writing in second or foreign language with good accuracy and coherence is a great achievement. Durga and Rao (2018) claimed that writing is very important since communication is transmitted more through writing than any other type of media. They added that students need effective writing skills to meet their academic needs and workplace requirements. Naturally, students having good writing skills are always successful in expressing their ideas and reaching their goals (ibid).

#### **2.2.1 Approaches of Writing**

##### **2.2.1.1 Product approach of Writing**

In teaching writing there are two approaches. These are product approach and process approach. Product approach emphasizes on end product of writing in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text, and it is usually presented and analyzed at an early stage. According to Gabrielatos (2002) this approach aims to make learners imitate a model text for the purpose of producing a correct piece of writing via dependence on the typical text given. Its major focus is on accuracy and the knowledge of grammatical rules. The organizations of ideas are more important than the ideas themselves.

Product approach has been criticized for several reasons. For example, it does not allow much of a role for the planning of a text, nor for other process skills (Badger & White, 2000). Moreover, students might become frustrated and demotivated when they compare their writing with better

models. Hairston (1982) also argues that adopting this approach in teaching will not encourage students to practice writing because it does not show them how writing works in real-life situations. Finally, Yan (2005) agrees that product approach ignores the actual process used by students or any writers to produce a piece of writing. The approach therefore requires constant error correction, and this practice in turn affects students' motivation and self-esteem in the writing process.

#### **2.2.1.2 Process approach of Writing**

Laksmi (2006) stated that writing approach in 1970s started gaining broad writing classroom practice and it changed the traditional practice to new methodology i.e. process-based approach of writing. It has been defined by Kroll (2001) as follows.

“The process approach serves today as an umbrella term for many types of writing courses. What the term captures is the fact that student writers engage in their writing tasks through a cyclical approach rather than a single-shot approach. They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts, be it from peers and/or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts.”

The traditional method practice focused on the finished work, while in new methodology learners are given the experience of going through the processes of writing as writers. So, instead of analysis and correction of the final written product given by the teacher, there comes the process of writing in a number of activities, processes or stages. Graves (1983) suggested that the processes include prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

Prewriting: In this stage students write on topics based on their own experiences. For this matter, they gather and organize ideas. Then, the students define a topic sentence and write an outline for their writing. Drafting: Students write a rough draft in sentence and paragraph form. They emphasize on content of their writing rather than mechanics in it. Revising: In the revising stage students reread their writings and share with teacher. They participate constructively in discussion about their writing with teacher. Then, they make substantive changes in their compositions to reflect the reactions and comments of teacher. Editing: This stage is for proof reading what the students wrote. Students increasingly identify and correct their own mechanical errors. Publishing: In the final stage, the students make the final copy of their writings. They publish their writings in appropriate forms and share their finished writings with the teacher.

### **2.2.1.3 Problems in Writing**

Byrne (1988) thinks that because of the absence of the prosodic features in writing, the writer has to compensate these features by keeping the channel of communication open through his/her own efforts by selecting appropriate structures and by using appropriate connecting devices so that the text can be interpreted on its own. Similarly, Hedge (1988) thinks that so as the writer to compensate the absence of the prosodic features in writing, he/ she has to write with high degree of organization, careful choice of vocabulary and using complex grammatical devices.

Major problems of students in paragraph writing are grammatical problems (verb tense, subject verb agreements, pronoun references, and connectors), sentence structure problems (use run-on, incorrect, and fragmented sentences, unable to produce longer sentences requiring subordination and coordination). The other problem in writing is problem of diction (vocabulary/word choice sensible for the reader). For example, Badger & White (2000) states that usually students use ‘big words’ in their essays to impress the reader, their teacher. The effort to impress the reader leads to a problem of diction. Mechanical problems (problems of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling) are also problems that hinder students from paragraph writing in English.

The other major problem in students’ paragraph writing is problem of organization as a whole. According to Piamsai (2020), learners have the problem of structuring the paragraph, topic development of a paragraph, structuring the whole discourse and a theme in a discourse. The most common students’ problem in paragraph writing is either the paragraph is not limited to a single topic or the single topic is not developed or exemplified adequately. The other problem of organization in students’ writing is the difficulty of differentiating a topic and supporting ideas or generalizations and specific details.

### **2.2.1.4 Types of Writing Activities**

The following are types of writing activities.

*Pre Writing activities:* group brainstorming, group research in a writing topic, questioning, discussing and debate, mapping/ clustering, outlining, pass around topic, dialogue writing, etc.

*While Writing Activities:* collaborative writing, individual writing, revising/ editing, Peer editing /proof editing, Self-editing, conferencing, reformulation, whole Class discussion how a particular text might need adjustment are some of them.

*Post Writing Evaluation*: an assessment tool a scoring guide, publishing the final product and sharing it with an appropriate audience these and other activities help learners to develop their writing skill.

## **2.3 Scaffolding**

Scaffolding theory was first introduced in the late 1950s by Jerome Bruner, a cognitive psychologist. He used the term to describe young children's oral language acquisition. Helped by their parents, when they start learning to speak, young children are provided with informal instructional formats within which their learning is facilitated (Ninio & Bruner, 1978).

The psychologist Vygotsky developed a theory of cognitive development that focused on the role of culture in the development of higher mental functions. Several concepts arose from that theory that is important to classroom learning. An essential element to zone of proximal development and scaffolding is the acquisition of language. According to Vygotsky, language (and in particular, speech) is fundamental to children's cognitive growth because language provides purpose and intention so that behaviors can be better understood.

The term Scaffolding refers to providing contextual supports for meaning through the use of simplified language, teacher modeling, visuals and graphics, cooperative learning and hands-on learning Donato (1994). Scaffolding is directly related to zone of proximal development in that it is the support mechanism that helps the learner successfully performing a task within his or her ZPD. Gibbons (2015) has noted that scaffolding does not occur by accident. It is an intentional and strategic process that requires teachers to know students' learning needs deeply and from a variety of angles so that appropriate support can be provided.

Scaffolding refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process. The teacher provides successive levels of temporary support that help students reach higher levels of comprehension and skill acquisition that they would not be able to achieve without assistance. The teacher of second or foreign language learners has to facilitate that support, then, as students become more proficient, the scaffold is gradually removed as stated by (Gibbons 2015). Like physical scaffolding, the supportive strategies are incrementally removed when they are no longer needed, and the teacher gradually shifts more responsibility for learning to the student with an ultimate view to the students becoming unconsciously competent at the skill being taught.



### **2.3.1 Essential Features of Scaffolding**

Scaffolding has several features. However, the researcher would like to focus on the three essential features of scaffolding that facilitate learning. The first feature has to do with the interaction between the learner and the teacher. This interaction should be collaborative for it to be effective. The second, learning should take place in the learners' zone of proximal development. To do that the teacher needs to be aware of the learners' current level of knowledge and then work to a certain extent beyond that level. The third feature of scaffolding is that the scaffold, the support and guidance provided by the teacher, is gradually removed as the learner becomes more proficient. The support and guidance provided to the learner is compared to the scaffolds in building construction where the scaffolds provide both adjustable and temporal support to the building under construction. The support and guidance provided to learners facilitate internalization of the knowledge needed to complete the task. This support is decreased gradually until the learner is independent.

### **2.3.2 Principles of Scaffolding**

Scaffolding principles, according to Bruner (1978) include:

(1) Recruiting the child's interest in the task as it is defined by the tutor. (2) Reducing the number of steps required to solve a problem by simplifying the task, so that the learner can manage components of the process and recognize when a fit with task requirements is achieved. (3) Maintaining the pursuit of the goal, through motivation of the child and direction of the activity. (4) Marking critical features of discrepancies between what a child has produced and the ideal solution. (5) Controlling frustration and risk in problem solving. (6) Demonstrating an idealized version of the act to be performed.

Therefore, in order to be effective in scaffolding, teachers need to pay attention to the following points: The selection of the learning tasks: The task should ensure that learners use the developing skills that need to be mastered. The task should also be engaging and interesting to keep learners involved. The anticipation of errors: After choosing the task, the teacher needs to anticipate errors the learners are likely to commit when working on the task. Anticipation of errors enables the scaffolder to properly guide the learners away from ineffective directions.

The application of scaffolds during the learning task: Scaffolds could be organized in simple skill acquisition or they may be dynamic and generative.

The consideration of emotive or affective factors: Scaffolding is not limited to a cognitive skill, but it also relates to emotive or affective factors. During the task the scaffolder (teacher) might need to manage and control for frustration and loss of interest that could be experienced by the learner. Encouragement is also an important scaffolding strategy.

### **2.3.3 Levels and Types of Scaffolding in English classroom**

#### **1. Levels of Scaffolding**

As Saye and Brush (2001) there are two levels of scaffolding:

1. Soft scaffolding: According to Van Lier (1996) this type of scaffolding can also be referred to as contingent scaffolding. An example of soft scaffolding in the classroom would be when a teacher circulates the room and converses with his or her students (Simon and Klein, 2007). The type and amount of support needed is dependent on the needs of the students during the time of instruction.
2. Hard scaffolding: In contrast with contingent or soft scaffolding, embedded or hard scaffolding is planned in advance to help students with a learning task that is known in advance to be difficult (Saye and Brush, 2001).

In both situations, the idea of ‘expert scaffolding’ is being implemented (Holton and Clarke, 2006): the teacher in the classroom is considered the expert and is responsible for providing scaffolding for the students.

#### **2. Types of Scaffolding**

Silliman and Wilkinson (1994) distinguished two types of scaffolding:

1. Supportive scaffolding that characterizes the IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow-up) pattern. In this kind of pattern of interaction, the part of the dialogue offers ‘follow-up’ and teachers’ scaffolding becomes ‘supportive’ rather than producing ‘authoritative discourse’ Bakhtin (1981). Supportive scaffolding is more than simply a model of instruction (Saxena, 2010).
2. Directive scaffolding that refers to IRE (Initiation-Response-Evaluation). Within the IRE pattern, teachers provide ‘directive scaffolding’ on the assumption that their job is to transmit knowledge and then assess its appropriation by the learners. The question-answer-evaluation sequence creates a predetermined standard for acceptable participation and induces passive learning. In this type of interaction, the teacher holds the right to evaluate and asks known information questions which emphasize the reproduction of information. The nature and role of

the dialogue have been oversimplified and the potential for the roles of teachers and students in them has been undermined (Nassaji and Wells, 2000).

### **2.3.4 Practices and Implementations of Scaffolding**

Scaffolding Strategies have been practiced and implemented to teach Language Skills. For instance, different Scaffolding Strategies were implemented at Bilingual elementary school which is found in North Bali to improve grade 5 Students' writing skills (Padmadewi and Artini, 2019). In the school there were two teachers who were teaching English as a foreign Language. These teachers used several Scaffolding Strategies to different purposes. They used 'process based Writing' strategy in order to helping Students in developing ideas and developing sentences and paragraphs. The activities used were browsing ideas, deciding topics, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. The other Scaffolding Strategy used was Scaffolding in developing critical thinking and higher order thinking skills. To develop these skills the teachers guided the students through reading problem based passage and questions to be able to solve problems. These teachers in Bilingual elementary School also used 'sight word exercises' Scaffolding Strategies to increase vocabularies in turn which helps students for expressing their ideas in Writing.

In sum up, in Bilingual elementary School different Scaffolding Strategies were implemented in order to practice and improve Writing Skills of grade 5 students.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

As builders need scaffolding in their building task, teachers use it in their teaching learning process. Scaffolding is required in English language learning classes. This can be taken place in listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar of English language learning. In writing instruction, typically support is presented in verbal form (discourse). The writing tutor engages the learner's attention, calibrates the task, motivates the student, identifies relevant task features, controls for frustration, and demonstrates as needed (Rodgers, 2004). Through joint activities, the teacher scaffolds conversation to maximize the development of a child's intra –psychological functioning.

From Vygotskian perspective, talk and action work together with the socio-cultural fabric of the writing event to shape a child's construction of awareness and performance (Dorn, 1996). Dialogue may range from casual talk to deliberate explanations about features of written language. The talk embedded in the actions of the literacy event shapes the child's learning as the tutor regulates her/his language to conform to the child's degrees of understanding. Clay (2005) shows that what

may seem like casual conversational exchanges between tutor or competent writer and student or non-competent actually offers many opportunities for fostering cognitive development, language learning, story composition for writing, and reading comprehension. Conversations facilitate generative, constructive, experimental, and developmental speech and writing in the development of new ideas (Smagorinsky, 2007).

The benefits of scaffolding are not only useful during a task, but can extend beyond the immediate situation in order to influence future cognitive development. The support which is given in the process of learning plays great roles for learners' future humanity. However, when scaffolding is taken place, zone of proximal development (ZPD) should be considered.

Vygotsky, (1978:86) defines ZPD as the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more peers. Scaffolding was initially used by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) in an analysis of children-tutor interaction. While Johnson (2009) explained that any form of aid that supports development has been nominated as ZPD by some in the educational community, Vygotskian socio-cultural theory characterizes ZPD as an area of potentiality; a metaphoric space where individual cognition originates in the social collective mind and emerges in and through engagement in social activity.

According to Bruner (1978), for example, the mother's scaffolding behavior is characterized by five important features: (1) reducing the complexity of the task, (2) getting the child's attention and keeping it focused, (3) offering models, (4) extending the scope of the immediate situation, and (5) providing support so that the child moves forward and does not slip back.

Scaffolding can also work in writing classroom of EFL learners. As the mother scaffolds her child and helps him or her to perform alone, teachers can scaffold students in writing classroom. Hence, the researcher of this study is initiated to check the effect of teacher scaffolding on paragraph writing skill development of Grade 11 students in English paragraph writing based on the above stated theories.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Introduction**

In this section, research design, research site, participants of the study, data gathering instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, data collecting procedures and methods of data analysis incorporated.

### **3.2. Research Design**

In this study, quasi-experimental research design was employed with quantitative methods of data collection and analysis to investigate the effect of teacher scaffolding on students' paragraph writing performance. The researcher preferred quasi-experimental design because it uses intact groups based on the availability of participants and the natural setting (classroom) where the intervention would be performed. Gass and Mackey (2005) noted that in second language research we often need to use intact classes for our studies, therefore, the participants cannot be randomly assigned to one of the experimental and control groups. Intact classes are commonly and often by necessity used in research for the sake of convenience. Using a quasi-experimental research design would not disrupt the natural classroom learning so that experimental and control groups would not be artificial groups. In addition, this design was chosen due to the researcher unable to control the extraneous variables during the experiment.

The researcher collected quantitative data to understand the relationship between independent variable (scaffolding) and dependent variable (paragraph writing). In this case, the data that were gained from test (pre- and posttest) were collected and analyzed quantitatively. Then the data found from the questionnaire were also collected and analyzed quantitatively to triangulate the test data. As explained by Creswell (2014) quantitative approach uses quantifiable data to test causal relationships and generalize results to wider populations. The overall intent of this approach is to examine whether there is a cause and effect between scaffolding and paragraph writing skill. Thus, the test and questionnaire data were transformed from words to numbers.

### **3.3. Research Site**

The research was carried out in Achikan general secondary school which is found in Estie Woreda, Amhara, Ethiopia. The school had been chosen as a research site because of two main reasons. The

first reason was the problem was observed there during the researcher's teaching employment. In other words, the researcher had observed in that school Grade 11 students had been faced with challenges in their writing classes, particularly in paragraph writing classes. The second reason was because of the researcher's workplace, he was teaching English there. This in turn was helpful to conduct the research in parallel with the actual work of the researcher. Thus he can gather the required data-parallel with the actual teaching-learning process in a natural way.

### **3.4. Participants of the Study**

The participants of this study were Grade 11 students in Achikan general secondary school in the 2021/2022 academic year. There were 4 sections of Grade11, with 42, 47, 43 and 45 students respectively in the four sections. The researcher gave a pretest for all sections. Based on their mean score similarity, he selected two sections and assigned them as experimental group and control group using lottery method of random sampling technique. Therefore the participants of the study were 42 students for experimental and 43 students for control groups. His selection baseline of the two sections was the mean score value in the pretest.

### **3.5. Data gathering Instruments**

In this study, the researcher used tests and questionnaire in order to obtain adequate data from the participants.

#### **3.5.1. Test**

In this study, the researcher used test as a major data-gathering tool so that pretest and posttest were employed and rated by two English teachers as stated in section 3.7. The pretest was used to check the homogeneity level of participants in their writing performance, whereas, the posttest was used to measure the effect of teacher scaffolding on students' paragraph writing performance after treating the experimental group. Both of them had similar procedures to prepare. Therefore, the researcher selected and specified tasks, and justified the purpose of the tests towards the test takers. Then, writing topics for pre and posttest had been chosen and formulated; for pretest "effects of early marriage" and for posttest "effects of corruption". After the tasks, had been specified the researcher determined the time frame for each of the tests. It was 1:40hour. Next, the researcher designed understandable and precise instructions for the tests. Finally, to score the tests there was an analytic scoring rubric in order to keep their consistency based on performance qualities of the test takers. The appropriateness of the tests was checked by two English teachers in the school. The test data was assumed to answer the first question of the study.

### **3.5.2. Questionnaire**

The second data gathering tool was questionnaire. The data that had been collected through the tests were triangulated by providing the idea of the inquiry in questionnaire form for the same subject in a time space if they had complementarity (inform each other) with a questionnaire so as to employ the validity and reliability of the study. The content of the questionnaire assessed the feelings of the experimental group while using scaffolding techniques on writing skills to answer the two research question of the study. They forwarded their perceptions towards the effect of teacher scaffolding on paragraph writing skills. This helped the researcher to triangulate the data that was gained through the posttest. The items included twelve close-ended questions and that were five leveled likert-scales and structured types.

## **3.6. Validity and reliability of the instruments**

### **3.6.1 Evidences of Validity from Reviewers**

The content and face validity of the test and questionnaire were reviewed and assessed by two reviewers (English teachers) who have been teaching in Achikan general secondary school. Comments were received about the clarity and relevance of the items. Based on the feedback, unclear items were reworded, and items that were irrelevant were deleted. Besides, some items were added. Then, the tools were pilot tested as follows.

### **3.6.2 Pilot testing (validity and reliability assessment of the tools)**

The researcher strongly hoped that the pilot study will give him useful insights for the main research i.e. about the research tools and procedures that should be maintained, revised, included, and excluded for the main study. In this case the instruments were pilot tested before employed for the main study. The purpose of the pilot test was to check the validity and reliability of the instruments designed for the study and to obtain useful insights for the main study.

#### **3.6.2.1. Setting and procedure of the pilot test**

To gather data for the pilot study, students who were similar with the target population for the main study, were selected from Tinafa general secondary School in Estie woreda. The school was selected purposively for two reasons. The first reason was that the school is geographically so closer to the school where the main study was conducted in that the backgrounds of the students are similar in many aspects. The second reason was that the school was accessible to the researcher in distance and facilities. At the school, two sections of grade 11 students were selected and assigned as experimental and control groups randomly.

The data collection processes of the pilot study were conducted procedurally. First, pretest was administered for both the experimental and control groups at the last week of February, 2022. The test task was to write a paragraph on the topic “Effects of early marriage”. While administering the writing task, the students asked the clarity of instructions. For example, one student asked that how many paragraphs they were ordered to write on the topic. The researcher replied that the students were instructed to write only one paragraph with a topic sentence, supportive details and concluding sentences. The other student also asked the length of his writing; the teacher told him to write 100 up to 150 words of a paragraph.

Then, at the second, third and fourth days of the pretest, treatment was given for experimental group using the paragraph writing training handout. The treatment was given for only three days, 50 minutes in each of them. During the treatment students were confused by the researcher’s oral speech in English language. The researcher tried to translate some key words of the explanations and discussions into Amharic.

At the fifth day of the pretest, posttest was administered for both groups to write a paragraph on the topic “Effects of corruption”. In the posttest writing task three students asked the general clarification of the instruction. For this reason, the researcher made a clarification in Amharic language to clear it more. A student also raised his ambiguity why to feel personal data of students in the first instruction of the writing task. To be certain and ethical, the researcher let students to leave blank their personal information.

After the posttest, questionnaire was administered to the experimental group at the first school day of the first week of March, 2022. The items in the questionnaire deal about the uses and advantages of teacher scaffolding on their writing performance. Therefore, the experimental group students were selected purposively to fill the questionnaire. In filling the questionnaire, the students inquired to know the meaning of the term “scaffolding” so that the researcher translated it in Amharic for the ease of communication. In addition, some questions were found similar, and some essential questions were left out. Therefore, the researcher deleted similar items and added essential new questions.

Generally, the pilot test was employed at Tinfafa Secondary School and had been completed within six lessons of hard working. While employing each of the instruments, some points had been modified for the main study.



### **3.6.2.2. Lessons Gained from the Pilot Study**

From the pilot study, useful insights were obtained about the research tools and procedures that should be maintained, revised, included, and excluded for the main study. The modifications for the main study were reported as follows.

Regarding to the Test:

- ✚ The length of the writing test tasks were clearly indicated as a topic sentence, supportive details and concluding sentences, for about 100 up to 150 limited number of words.
- ✚ The variables that were about the personal information of the participants were excluded because they were not necessary for the analysis of the data.

Regarding to the questionnaire:

- ✚ Unrelated questions were deleted out from the questionnaire.
- ✚ The word scaffolding was replaced by the word “support” for the ease of understanding.

## **3.7. Data collecting procedures**

Data were collected quantitatively from test (pre and posttest) and questionnaire. Keep in mind that the pretest was given and rated during participant selection to check the homogeneity level of the whole grade 11 students and to assign two sections as experimental and control groups which will have very similar mean scores from the four sections purposively.

As a result, the data collecting procedures started from the tasks that were performed in the treatment process. After the pretest had been administered and scored at second and third March 2022, the main experiment/treatment was started at the fourth day of the first week of March, 2022. In the first lesson, the researcher made a brief discussion with the experimental/treatment group to aware what they would do in the writing tasks by lecturing using handout (paragraph writing training handout about parts and organizations of a paragraph especially on how to write introduction, body and conclusion parts of a paragraph). This discussion took two hours in two successive days, one hour each of them.

At the first day of the second week of March 2022, a sample cause and effect expository paragraph had been introduced and explained for the experimental group in order to make clear the writing tasks for about one hour in the day.

Then, at the third and fourth day of the week, the participants of the experimental group were required to write a paragraph having topic sentence, supportive details and conclusion on the topic ‘Effects of the war between TPLF and Ethiopian government’. After their first draft, the researcher gave corrections, feedbacks and comments regarding to the content (relevance, subject knowledge) and organization (coherence, logical sequencing). Then, in the second draft he gave feedbacks on the mechanics (spelling, punctuation) of their paragraphs. This session took two hours in two successive days.

Next, at the fifth and sixth school day of the second week of March, 2022, another practice of paragraph writing was held on the topic, ‘the effects of living cost’. In the process of writing, the researcher made the students to exchange their first drafts and give comments each other as like as the teacher did in the first writing task. Then he gave feedbacks on content, organization (topic sentence, supportive details, concluding sentence), mechanical as well as structural issues and vocabulary and language use as like as the first writing task. In this regard, he evaluated the vocabulary richness, word form in relation to vocabulary use, and he made corrections on usage of articles, word order, tenses, prepositions and sentence constructions in relation to language use. This practice took four hours in two days.

Then, at the first school day of the third week of March, 2022 , both experimental and control groups were instructed to write paragraphs on the topic, ‘the effects of corruption’ as a posttest, and the raters scored the participants ‘paragraphs as like as the pretest’ at second and third school days of third week. This task took two hours for writing in the first day and four hours for scoring the posttest in the second day by the two raters.

The score that was gained in the posttest was triangulated by using questionnaire after the experiment. The questionnaire was found to be important to evaluate the reactions of the experimental group participants towards the effect of teacher scaffolding on their paragraph writing skill development.

Therefore, at the third school day of the third week of March, 2022, the questionnaire was administered to experimental group participants.

To sum up, the data collecting process took for about nine meetings beginning from the pretest up to the delivery of the questionnaire.

### 3.8. Intervention procedures

1. The treatment group was informed what they would do throughout the writing process.
2. The group was learned about parts of a paragraph, qualities of a good paragraph and paragraph development process in two days for two hours each.
3. The experimental group has given a sample cause and effect expository paragraph about “why cities are overcrowded” as a model. In the process of modeling the researcher taught them about the topic sentence, supportive details, concluding sentence, transition words, vocabularies and mechanical issues. After the sample has been discussed in detail, the experimental group has been given the first writing task to write a paragraph about ‘effects of the war between TPLF and the Ethiopian government’ based on the given model. In the process the researcher provided the following brain storming questions. Have you remember the war between TPLF and the Ethiopian government?
  - ✓ Did your parents participate in the war?
  - ✓ Do you know people who died in the war in your kebele? How many children do the dyed person has?
  - ✓ What damages have you seen as a result of the war? Please list institutions and materials damaged in your kebele?
  - ✓ What problems have you seen in relation to people’s life in case of the war?

In generating ideas the researcher gave incomplete sentences like the following and asked the experimental group participants to write their first draft of their paragraph. This modeling and questioning scaffolding strategies were held in *pre writing stage* of process writing. In this stage the researcher will provide high support and little control for students’ learning as Gibbons 2015.

The war affects people’s life in..... The  
primary reason why people’s life become complex is that .....the war left  
many children..... and damaged .....  
.....the other reason that  
make people’s life complex is that .....  
.....

4. After those questions the researcher supported the experimental group to develop topic sentence, supportive details and concluding sentence to make *a small draft*. The researcher's responsibility in this stage was giving moderate support and low control about 90 % support.
5. They were ordered to exchange their first draft with their friends to give comments/ corrections each other. This is the *revising stage* in the scaffolding process. This will show gradual release of teacher's responsibility may be from 90%- 40%. The teacher started giving low support and moderate control.
6. Corrections which were given by their peers were checked and feed backs on content (relevance and subject knowledge like word order subject verb agreement and the like ) and organization (coherence, logical sequencing of sentences in the paragraph) were given by the researcher. This is the support of more expert others as Gibbons (2015).
7. Then they are ordered to *edit and* rewrite their paragraphs based on the feedbacks given.
8. Then they reported their final product. This is called *publishing stage* in which the experimental groups read their final work in front of the class.
9. The last procedure was *independent writing* in which experimental group had left to write their own paragraphs individually and submit it to the teacher. In this last stage, teacher/ researcher had little or no responsibility.

Finally, they had given the second task to write a paragraph on "Effects of living cost" following steps in the first writing task.

### **3.9. Methods of Data Analysis**

After all the necessary data have been gathered carefully, descriptive statistical analysis was employed to analyze the data and interpret the findings. The data were analyzed quantitatively because of requiring numerical analyses. The data which were gathered from the pretest had been analyzed in the Independent Sample T- test method of analysis to check the homogeneity level of students in their paragraph writing performances. This is because the researcher had two independent groups as the experimental and control group on teacher's scaffolding (independent variable). The result of one group would not change the result of the other.

The scores of the posttest were also analyzed using Independent Samples T-test to calculate the mean score difference between experimental and control groups. In addition, the pre and post results of the groups were analyzed using paired samples T- test to determine whether there is statistical evidence that the mean difference between pre and post results of the experimental and

controlled groups is significantly different from zero. The analyzed data from the tests were cross-checked through questionnaires. The data from questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively in one sample t- test using SPSS software.

### **3.10. Ethical Considerations**

Before anything the researcher obtained permission to conduct the study. After the permission was gained from the school, the participants were requested to be involved in the research as a participant. The researcher provided the respondents with certain information about the purpose and need of the study. Besides to this, the respondents assured of confidentiality of the information that they provided and that the study findings were used for academic purposes only. The researcher also kept the participants autonomy and informed them to be autonomous. Then respondents were further assuring of their personal protection and that they had authority to refuse or accept to participate.

# CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSES, DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

## 4.1. Introduction

In this section, the pretest, posttest and questionnaire data were analyzed sequentially, and the findings were discussed in detail.

## 4.2. Data Analyses

The data that were gathered through test (pretest and posttest) and questionnaire were analyzed orderly. First, test results of experimental and control groups were compared. The comparison was pretest with pretest and posttest with posttest through independent samples t test analysis. Next, pretests of the groups were compared with their corresponding posttests using paired samples t test analysis. Then, the questionnaire data were analyzed. Finally, the findings from the analyses were discussed in detail.

### 4.2.1. Analysis of Pretest Results of Experimental and Control Groups

The independent samples t- test analysis of pretest scores of the groups were introduced as follows.

*Table 1: Independent samples t- test analysis of pretest scores of experimental and control groups*

	N		Mean		t- test for equality of means			
	EG	CG	EG	CG	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean difference
Pretests of experimental and control groups	42	43	25.095	23.837	.340	83	.735	1.068

$$P = 0.05$$

As we can see in the above table, there were 42 participants in the experimental group and 43 in the control group. In the pretest their mean scores were 25.095 and 23.837 for experimental and control groups respectively. It shows that the two groups have no differences in their pretest mean scores. In addition to this, it revealed that the significance *sig.* (2-tailed) calculated for the groups is = 0.735 where  $t = 0.340$  and the  $df = 83$ . Hence, the *sig. 2 tailed* 0.735 is greater than the p value 0.05.

#### 4.2.2. Analysis of Posttest Results of Experimental and Control Groups

In this section, the results of the posttest scores of experimental and control groups were introduced and analyzed as follows.

*Table 2: Independent samples t- test analysis of posttest of experimental and control groups*

	N		Mean		t- test for equality of means			
	EG	CG	EG	CG	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean difference
Posttests of experimental and control groups	42	43	32.071	24.233	2.915	83	.005	7.839

$$p = 0.05$$

As shown in table 2, the mean scores of the posttest were 32.071 for experimental and 24.233 for control groups. This shows there was mean score difference between the posttest results of experimental and control groups and the t- value of the posttest for the two groups is found to be 2.915. The significance value sig. 2- tailed = 0.005 at df = 83. Thus, the 2-tailed is less than the p-value 0.05.

#### 4.2.3. Pretest and Posttest Results of Experimental Group

The statistical differences between the mean scores of the pre and post results of the experimental group were computed using paired samples t- test with SPSS software as follows.

*Table 4: Paired Samples t- test differences between pre and posttest for experimental group*

		Paired Differences				
		N	Mean difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair1	Experimental pretest – Experimental posttest	42	-6.976	-2.670	41	.011

Table 3 shows the pretest and posttest comparison of experimental group. As it is shown in table 1 and 2, experimental group has the mean score value 25.095 in the pretest and 32.071 in the posttest. The mean difference was computed to be -6.976 and the t value -2.670, with sig 2- tailed = 0.011 which is < 0.05. These shows there is a difference between the scores of the EG for the pretest and the posttest.

#### 4.2.4. Pretest and Posttest Results of Control Group

The statistical differences between the mean scores of the pre and post results of the control group were computed using paired samples t- test with SPSS software as follows.

*Table 4: Paired Samples t- test differences between pre and posttest for control group*

		Paired Differences				
		N	Mean difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair1	Control pretest – Control posttest	43	-.395	-.170	42	.866

As stated in table 1 and 2 the control group participants had the mean score 23.837 in the pretest and 24.232 in the post test. The calculated mean score difference between the pre and posttest of the group was -0.395 and the t value -0.170, with sig. 2-tailed = 0.866 which is greater than the p value 0.05. Hence, the control group had almost similar scores in the post test and the pretest.

#### 4.2.5. Presentations and Analysis of Responses on the Questionnaire

In this section, results of the questionnaire from the experimental group were computed and analyzed. To gather information on the reactions/ feelings of participants of experimental group towards the support/ scaffolding on their paragraph writing performance, questionnaire data were computed. The questionnaire contains 12 items with 5 point likert scale in ‘strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree’ (see appendix 7). The results were analyzed using one sample t- test by SPSS software.

*Table 5: One sample t- test results for the students’ questionnaire*

	N	Mean	Test Value = 3		
			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Feelings of experimental group participants towards the scaffolding writing in improving	42	4.7619	26.488	41	.000
P > 3.00 (expected mean value)			P < 0.05		

As indicated in table 5 above, the mean score of the five point scale questionnaire was (4.7619). It was greater than the expected mean score for 5 point likert scale (3.00) as stated by (Cohen, et al 2000). Statistically, the sig.2- tailed value of one sample t- test for the twelve items in the questionnaire was 0.000 at df = 41. Thus the sig. value 0.000 is less than the p- value i.e. 0.05.



## **4.3. Discussion**

### **4.3.1. Discussion on Pretest and Posttest Results**

This study was conducted to examine the effect of teacher scaffolding on grade eleven students' paragraph writing performance. For this purpose it examined statistical difference between the experimental and control groups of participants in their paragraph writing performance

To answer the raised research questions the significance difference between the mean scores of experimental and control groups' participants were computed. Hence, the data gained from the pretest was analyzed through independent samples t-test. Thus, the significant value of the two groups in their pretest was  $p=0.735$  that is greater than 0.05 (see table 2). This means that the variability of the scores for each of the groups was similar. Pallant (2001:172) claimed that if a significant value of two groups is greater than 0.05, the two groups have equal variance. Here we can see there was a homogeneous variance between experimental and control groups in their pretest of paragraph writing performance. Therefore, there was no significant difference between experimental and control groups regarding to their paragraph writing performance before the treatment.

The other data were collected from posttest. The results of the posttest also answered the first basic question of the study like the pretest. To remind the basic question, it is about investigating whether teacher scaffolding promote EFL students' paragraph writing skills development to a great extent than conventional way of teaching paragraph writing skills. Therefore, after treating the experimental group; the researcher provided a posttest for both groups. As the test score analyzed using independent samples t-test the observed significance value is lower than the p value i.e.  $\text{sig. /2-tailed/} = 0.005$  which is less than 0.05 (see table 4). In this regard, Pallant (2001) stated that if the significance level of a test is  $\leq 0.05$ , the variances for the two groups are not the same. Therefore, in this study the sig. (2-tailed) value is certainly lower than the p value. This confirmed that the difference between experimental and control groups is statistically significant in their posttest scores (Muijs, 2004; Dörnyei, 2007; Larson- Hall, 2010). From all the above results it can be concluded that the difference in the mean scores of the posttest between the two groups is statistically significant. This means that the experimental group showed higher writing performance than the control group after the treatment. This was happened because of the teacher's scaffolding provided as a teaching technique.

To make the above findings relevant the pre and posttest results of the groups should be analyzed using paired sample t- test analysis technique. Thus the comparison of pre and posttest of experimental group had a mean = -6.976 and the sig 2- tailed value = 0.011 at  $p < 0.05$ . (See table 5 and 6). This indicated there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group in paragraph writing.

The pre and posttest results of the control group should also be compared to answer the first research question. Hence, the paired sample t- test analysis showed mean -0.395 and sig 2- tailed = 0.866  $> 0.05$ . Thus, based on Pallant (2000) the sig. 2 tailed value is greater than 0.05 (see table 7 and 8). As a result, there was no significant difference between the pre and posttest scores of control group in their paragraph writing performance.

Based on all the above discussions from the independent and paired samples t tests, it can be observed that the difference between the two groups (experimental and control group) was found to be statistically significant in their posttests.

As we can see from the pretest analysis of the two groups, they had almost similar mean scores in the pretest. This means before the experiment there was no statistically significant difference in the mean scores between the two groups in the pretest. However, there existed a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the posttest. As clearly stated above the experimental group has shown a statistically significant progress over the control group in their paragraph writing achievement due to the teacher's scaffolding.

#### **4.3.2. Discussion on Questionnaire Results**

The second intention of this study was assessing the feelings and reactions of experimental group participants towards the effect of teacher scaffolding on their paragraph writing performance. For this purpose questionnaire was provided to answer the second research question i.e. "What is the reaction of the experimental group towards the treatment given during the scaffolding lessons to improve their paragraph writing skill?" all participants of experimental group expressed their feelings towards the teacher scaffolding.

Although the treatment activities were challenging, the participants were enthusiastic to perform the tasks. Since the scaffolding was done in small groups, the organization of the groups and comments of the peer attracted the participants to the task and to interact with each other. Ngeon and Yoon (2001:1-2) also suggested that "Scaffolding instruction should be challenging to students so that it

helps them to 'learn how to learn'." Challenging tasks can pave ways to have peer scaffolding in line with the teacher's scaffolding. Thus, peer scaffolding was found to be supportive to facilitate the students to outline draft and rewrite their paragraphs immediately before teacher scaffolding. Therefore the researcher accomplished this through, randomization of the group members. All interactions and tasks took place within the students Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which was identified from the pretest. As Van Der Stuyf (2002) clearly stated, teacher scaffolding provide clear direction, reduce confusion, develop step by step instruction keep students on task by providing structures used as a pathway to the task. So, the students' response to the questionnaire confirmed that teacher scaffolding instruction (especially for writing) helped students to write better paragraph when assisted by the teacher.

Thus, the data gathered from the questionnaire indicated that the mean score of the items is greater than the expected mean value (3.00). As Cohen, et al (2000) suggests, on the five point scale category three is the midpoint. Based on this, when we compare the mean score of the items in the questionnaire (4.762) with the expected mean (3.00), it can be clearly seen that the mean score of the items of the questionnaire was above the expected mean. To conclude whether the differences observed in the mean are statistically significant or not one sample t test was computed. The result from the one sample t test indicated that the significance 2- tailed was 0.000 where  $df = 41$ . The sig. 2-tailed value (0.000) is less than the p- value 0.05 that makes the difference statistically significant. As a result, we can conclude that the students had positive feelings to the items in the questionnaire. Thus, the students have positive attitude towards the activities which they have been practicing during the treatment.

Therefore, according to the analyses of the questionnaire, the experimental group participants showed a significant improvement on their writing skills. They internalized what is paragraph, and they abled to write an organized paragraph. They were motivated to practice their writing skills confidentially. This finding indicated that the teacher scaffolding made an influence on the improvement of experimental group's writing achievement. Consequently, the finding of the questionnaire supported the finding of the t test.

Generally teacher scaffolding had a positive effect on grade eleven students' writing skills. It showed a significant difference from the usual method of teaching writing skills, as a result, the students were motivated to practice more their writing skills.

## 4.4. Findings

Based on the discussions of the results, the following findings were summarized:

All the results from independent samples and paired samples test confirmed that teacher scaffolding promote EFL students' paragraph writing skills development to a greater extent than the conventional method of teaching paragraph writing. As MacNaught and Williams (2004) indicated, development in learning requires the planned and structured assistance of more experienced others (teachers) to maximize learning. This finding is supported by the previous studies such as, Katilie (2003), Veerappan et.al. (2011), Yangrifqi (2012), Solikhah (2012), Simachew and Belihun (2021), Laksmi et al (2015).

The result of the questionnaire from the one sample t test for the reactions of the students to the scaffolding lessons indicated that teacher scaffolding increased the interest and motivation to improve students' writing skills through practice. Here it can be concluded that scaffolding writing had a positive effect to improve paragraph writing skills of grade eleven students.

# **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

## **5.1. Introduction**

The summary, the conclusions and the recommendations of the study are presented in this chapter. In the summary part, the purpose of the objectives and/ the basic research questions are presented. Then, the participants and the method of data collecting tools are summarized. The analyses of the responses and the discussions are also summarized based on the basic research questions. In the conclusion part, the conclusions drawn from the findings are followed. Finally, in the recommendation section, the suggested recommendations are forwarded.

## **5.2. Summary**

As indicated earlier, the objective of this study was to examine effects of teacher scaffolding on students' paragraph writing performance/ skills. It was necessary to examine whether teacher scaffolding promote EFL students' paragraph writing skills development to a greater extent than the conventional method.

The study also intended to assess the feelings/ attitudes of experimental group participants towards the effect of teacher scaffolding on their writing performance.

The study was conducted in Achikan general secondary school which is found in Estie, in South Gondar Zone, in Amhara Region. That is, it was conducted in secondary school level. The participants of the study were grade eleven students. The researcher took two sections of grade eleven based on their mean score similarity and homogeneity of variances in their pretest results. Then, he divided the two sections as experimental and control groups through systematic random sampling technique with 42 students as experimental and 43 students as control group. In order to gather the adequate data from the participants, test (pre and posttest) and questionnaire were employed. Before using them, the tools were reviewed by two secondary school English teachers, and they were pilot tested. The researcher made modifications for each of the data gathering instruments based on the reviewers comment and the pilot test.

After collecting the required data, the researcher analyzed the responses quantitatively. The test data were analyzed using independent samples t-test to compare pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group with control group. The test data also investigated the difference between experimental and control groups in their paragraph writing performance as well as the difference

between pre and posttest results of each group. The pretest scores of each group were compared with their corresponding posttest using paired samples t test analysis by SPSS software in order to triangulate the results of the independent samples test results and to arrive at convincing conclusion on the statistical difference between the pre and post test results of the groups.

Mainly, the questionnaire was provided to answer the second research question i.e. about the reactions/ feelings of the experimental group towards the teacher scaffolding and its process on their paragraph writing performance.

Discussions are summarized as follows based on the findings.

1. The results of the pretest for the control and experimental showed sig. (2-tailed) = 0.735 where  $t = 0.340$  and the  $df = 83$  in the pretest. Hence, the significance 2 tailed 0.735 is greater than 0.05. This implied that the two groups had equal variance in their writing performance before the treatment. Therefore the groups had homogenous level of writing performance in their pretest.

2. In contrast, there was a statistical significant difference between the experimental and control groups in their writing achievement in the posttest. In the t-test the observed significance value is lower than the p value i.e. sig. /2-tailed/ = 0.005 which is less than 0.05. In this case the post test revealed that there was a statistical significant difference between experimental and control groups of the participants in their paragraph writing performance. This means that the experimental group showed higher writing achievement than the control group.

3. The paired sample t test for the pre-posttest results of experimental group in their paragraph writing achievement demonstrated that, the mean  $M = -6.976$ , and sig /2- tailed/ value = 0.011 which is less than the standard p value (0.05). This indicated there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group in paragraph writing. On the other hand, the paired sample t test for the pre and posttests of the control group was -0.395 and the sig 2- tailed = 0.866 with t value -0.170, which is greater than the p value 0.05. This indicated the difference between the pre and posttest of control group

4. The result of the questionnaire from the one sample t test for the reactions of the students to the scaffolding lessons indicated that the significance 2- tailed was 0.000 where  $df = 41$ . The sig. 2-tailed value (0.000) is less than the p- value 0.05 that makes the difference was statistically significant. Here it can be concluded that scaffolding writing had a positive effect to improve paragraph writing skills of grade eleven students. It had a vital role to teach writing skills in EFL

classroom. In addition to this, experimental group felt that the teacher scaffolding increased their interest and motivation to improve their writing skills through practice.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

Effectively implementing scaffolding techniques play a great role in teaching paragraph writing skills especially with process approach of paragraph writing. Therefore, based on the discussion of the study, conclusions of the findings were drawn in terms of the effect of teacher scaffolding on paragraph writing, differences of experimental and control groups on their writing achievement and feelings of the experimental group participants towards the teacher scaffolding on their paragraph writing achievement.

Thus, teacher scaffolding had a positive effect in teaching paragraph writing. In this regard, this study ensured that the posttest mean score of the experimental group was higher than the control group. Similarly, the posttest results of the experimental groups were greater than their pretest scores. Therefore, there exist a statistical significant difference between the mean scores of experimental and control groups. For this reason, it can be generalized that teacher scaffolding promote EFL students' paragraph writing skills development to a greater extent than the conventional method. Teaching writing skill in a close support made the writing tasks simpler for the students and students were able to go through the steps of paragraph writing in order to enhance their writing skills. The immediate feedbacks from the teacher were the main catalysts that were hooking students in practicing writing. This result was positively supported with the result of the questionnaire. Both the tests and the questionnaire revealed there was a positive effect of teacher scaffolding on students' paragraph writing achievement.

Based on the discussion, there was a statistical significant difference between the experimental and control groups in their writing achievement. In addition, EG were motivated and confidential on their paragraph writing skill. They were initiated to practice writing without frustration. Their apprehension level of writing was minimized so that they performed writing tasks actively. In general, it can be concluded that implementing teacher scaffolding can improve the students' paragraph writing achievement. The students who were taught using teacher scaffolding achieved higher score than the students who were taught without teacher scaffolding. This implies that using teacher scaffolding has a significant difference from the usual/conventional method of teaching writing. It can also motivate students to practice their writing skills independently and confidentially.

## 5.4. Recommendations

The findings of the current study indicated that teacher scaffolding promote EFL students' paragraph writing skills development was found to be more effective than the conventional method of teaching writing skills. Teacher scaffolding also has a positive effect to improve the students' writing skills. Hence, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested for English teachers and future researchers.

1. The first recommendation is directed for English teachers to consider implementing scaffolding techniques in the classroom. The teachers can apply scaffolding techniques in learning and teaching process to improve the writing achievement of the students since it has been tested and already showed positive effect in this study. While scaffolding, teachers should know the actual level of their students. They should internalize what and how of the tasks would be designed and instructed to the students. The writing tasks should be simple and engaging to catch the interest of the student writers. The instructions should also be clear and concise to immerse writers to the task easily. Then, the teachers should be very careful in giving feedbacks on students' paragraphs. Their feedbacks and comments should be limited on doable areas due to level of the student writers and due to the given time of practicing writing.
3. The next suggestion is forwarded for future researchers who are interested to examine effects of scaffolding in writing and other language skills. Future researchers can consider the different level of students such as in primary schools, secondary schools and universities. Hence, the findings of the current study would give insights for them to study on the effect of scaffolding techniques on language elements and skills.



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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: pre test

BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES  
Department of English Language and Literature

### General Instruction:

Dear test takers, the purpose of this test is to gather information on the performance of your writing skill. It is not an examination. The test result you provide will be used only for a research purpose and will remain highly confidential. There is no need to write your name. As your works of writing contribute most to the successful completion of this study, you are kindly requested to write appropriately as like as you do in your exams. Thank you very much for your help!

Melash BAye

### Specific Instructions

- I. Write a paragraph by using the following topic. Your paragraph should have a topic sentence, supportive details and concluding sentences. In your writing, you should consider the relevance of the content, coherence of ideas, appropriateness of vocabularies, accurate language use and mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. The number of words is limited on 100-150, and the time you have been given for your writing is 1:20 hour.

The Effect of early marriage

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## Appendix 2: Rubric/Rating Scale

This is an Analytic Rubric/Rating Scale of Expository Paragraph of the experimental and control groups of Grade 11 Students on their Writing performance before and after treatment.

Rater's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

An adapted version of the rubric, the ESL Composition Profile, which was originally developed by Jacobs et al. (1981), is used for the current study.

Components	Inadequate 1	Needs Improvement 2	Meets Expectations 3	Exceeds Expectations 4	Score
<b>Content</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity of purpose</li> <li>Critical and original thought</li> <li>Flow of thought</li> <li>Use of examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central idea and clarity purpose are absent or incompletely expressed</li> <li>Little or no evidence of critical, careful thought or analysis</li> <li>There are too few, no examples and evidence or they are mostly irrelevant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The central idea is expressed though it may be vague</li> <li>Some sense of purpose is maintained throughout the paragraph</li> <li>Some evidence of critic careful thought and analysis</li> <li>There are some example and evidence though general.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central idea and clarity of purpose are generally evident throughout the paragraph</li> <li>Evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis</li> <li>There are good, relevant supporting</li> <li>Evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis</li> <li>There are good, relevant evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central idea is well developed and clarity of purpose is exhibited throughout the paragraph</li> <li>Abundance of evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis</li> <li>Evidence and examples are vivid and specific while focus remains tight</li> </ul>	
<b>Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no apparent organization to the paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is some level of organization of thought</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper has a clear organizational structure with some digressions, ambiguities or irrelevances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper is logically organized</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transitions</li> <li>• Sentence structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult to follow</li> <li>• No or poor transitions</li> <li>• No format</li> <li>• Uses simple sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• digressions, ambiguities, irrelevances are too many</li> <li>• Difficult to follow</li> <li>• Ineffective transitions</li> <li>• Rambling format</li> <li>• Uses compound sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easily followed</li> <li>• Basic transitions</li> <li>• Structured format</li> <li>• Uses complex sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easily followed</li> <li>• Effective, smooth and logical transitions</li> <li>• Professional format</li> <li>• manipulates complex sentences for effect/impact</li> </ul>	
<p>Language use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writer's tone exhibits little level of audience sensitivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write's tone exhibits some level of audience sensitivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writer's tone emerges and is generally appropriate to the audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writer's tone is clear, consistent and appropriate for intended audience</li> </ul>	
<p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choice of vocabulary</li> <li>• Use of vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary is unsophisticated, not used properly in very simple sentences.</li> <li>• Uses subject specific vocabulary too sparingly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary is used properly though sentences may be simple</li> <li>• Infrequently uses subject specific vocabulary correctly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary is varied, specific and appropriate</li> <li>• Frequently uses subject specific vocabulary correctly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary is sophisticated and correct as are sentences which vary in structure and length</li> <li>• Uses and manipulates subject specific vocabulary for effect</li> </ul>	
<p>Mechanics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punctuation</li> <li>• Capitalization-on</li> <li>• Spelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses punctuation, capitalization and spelling wrongly</li> <li>• Lack of using punctuation, capitalization and spelling is too many</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses some punctuation, capitalization and spelling appropriately</li> <li>• Some punctuation and/or mechanical errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses too many punctuation, capitalization and spelling appropriately</li> <li>• Few punctuation or mechanical errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses all aspects of punctuation, capitalization appropriately</li> <li>• No punctuation or mechanical spelling errors at all spelling</li> </ul>	



### Appendix 3: Scores of pretest

Students'	pretest scores of	pretest scores of
S <sub>1</sub>	21	14
S <sub>2</sub>	28	30
S <sub>3</sub>	18	25
S <sub>4</sub>	18	49
S <sub>5</sub>	11	51
S <sub>6</sub>	4	54
S <sub>7</sub>	42	54
S <sub>8</sub>	39	16
S <sub>9</sub>	42	24
S <sub>10</sub>	42	24
S <sub>11</sub>	22	9
S <sub>12</sub>	31	16
S <sub>13</sub>	13	40
S <sub>14</sub>	47	24
S <sub>15</sub>	30	8
S <sub>16</sub>	20	6
S <sub>17</sub>	32	18
S <sub>18</sub>	9	10
S <sub>19</sub>	6	49
S <sub>20</sub>	14	35
S <sub>21</sub>	64	14
S <sub>22</sub>	39	15
S <sub>23</sub>	11	11
S <sub>24</sub>	41	22
S <sub>25</sub>	21	16
S <sub>26</sub>	46	7
S <sub>27</sub>	11	12
S <sub>28</sub>	14	12
S <sub>29</sub>	14	9
S <sub>30</sub>	33	5
S <sub>31</sub>	5	23
S <sub>32</sub>	17	21
S <sub>33</sub>	17	16
S <sub>34</sub>	13	30
S <sub>35</sub>	31	32
S <sub>36</sub>	31	20
S <sub>37</sub>	34	12
S <sub>38</sub>	16	14
S <sub>39</sub>	34	21
S <sub>40</sub>	16	29
S <sub>41</sub>	28	70
S <sub>42</sub>	19	22
S <sub>43</sub>		36

## **Appendix 4: Training Handout**

Training Module for treatment group after pretest

Paragraph Writing

ACHIKAN GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

PREPARED BY: MELASH BAYE

April, 2022

## OVERVIEW OF THE HANDOUT

This handout aims at explaining what of paragraph and practicing paragraph writing. It will help the researcher to treat the experimental groups on how to follow the process of writing to write an effective paragraph.

As a result, the following important points are incorporated in it. It begins on what of paragraph through explaining the qualities of an effective paragraph. Then, the parts of a paragraph are well explained. Finally, the processes of paragraph development and cause and effect paragraph development have been discussed with model examples.

Based on this, after completing this handout the experimental groups will be able to:

- Explain the concept of paragraph,
- Analyze the process of paragraph writing,
- Practice writing an effective paragraph in cause and effect method of development.

### 1. Definition of Paragraph

- ❖ Dear students, before studying the concept of paragraph you have to brain storm on the following questions.

What is a paragraph for you? How many main ideas are there in a single paragraph?

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Note

- ❖ Dear students now, compare your answers with this summary about paragraph. Paragraphs are the building blocks of papers. Many students define paragraphs in terms of length: a paragraph is a group of at least five sentences; a paragraph is half a page long, etc. In reality, though, the unity and coherence of ideas among sentences is what constitutes a paragraph. A paragraph is defined as “a group of sentences or a single sentence that forms a unit” (Lunsford and Connors 1989:116). Length and appearance do not determine whether a section in a paper is a paragraph. For instance, in some styles of writing, particularly journalistic styles, a paragraph can be just one sentence long. Ultimately, a paragraph is a sentence or group of related sentences that support one main idea.

Paragraphs have three important purposes:

1. Paragraphs join together sentences into a unit that works to support an essay's main idea or thesis.
2. Paragraphs provide breaks that allow readers to pause and make sense of what they are reading.
3. Paragraphs indicate the movement or development of ideas in an essay. Each new paragraph, or in some cases, clusters of paragraphs contributes important new information that moves a reader one step closer to an essay's main idea or thesis.

2. Characteristics/qualities of an effective Paragraph

Do you think any written paragraph is effective in the sight of the readers? Why?

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What are the qualities of an effective paragraph? Please define them.

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❖ Read the note on the qualities of an effective paragraph, and cross check your answers.

- A. Unity:** The first characteristic of an effective paragraph is unity, which means that all sentences in the paragraph explain, develop, and support a central idea in some way. In other words, every paragraph must have a purpose within your paper, and all the sentences must somehow advance that purpose. This means that all sentences (topic sentence, supporting ones, and concluding sentence) must be more than loosely related to the sub-topic. They must all advance the paragraphs purpose as well as the thesis. Why should you aim for a unified paragraph? Because in a dis-unified one, a writer's purpose and the connections between the sentences can be unclear.
- B. Clearly related to the thesis:** The sentences should all refer to the central idea, or thesis, of the paper.
- C. Coherent:** The sentences should be arranged in a logical manner and should follow a definite plan for development. You've achieved coherence in a paragraph when a reader (usually an instructor) congratulates you on good 'flow'. A paragraph that is coherent flows because it is arranged according to a definite plan, and as a result, all the sentences are not just about the same main topic, but they also „stick together“ and lead readers smoothly from the topic

sentence to the concluding one. This ‘stickiness’ results from sentences that follow, one from the other; in a way that makes sense. Each sentence takes a logical step forward. There are a number of ways to achieve coherence: through use of ordering principles, pronouns, transitional words, and repetition.

**D. Well-developed:** Every idea discussed in the paragraph should be adequately explained and supported through evidence and details that work together to explain the paragraph’s controlling idea. Effective paragraphs are not only unified, they are fully developed, which means that they don’t leave any significant questions in readers’ minds. If you were drawing a map to show a fellow traveler how to get from a mountain pass to a source of water, you would be careful to draw a line that followed the trail down the mountain, along the valley to a spot where there was a lake. You wouldn’t stop the line halfway down the mountain, hoping that those who used your map would be able to figure out the rest of the way for themselves. Similarly, when you are writing a paragraph, you must be sure to trace the full development of your ideas for readers so they will understand the assumptions, evidence and reasoning you used.

### 3. Parts of a Paragraph

Usually, a paragraph has three main parts. Can you list and explain about them?

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#### A. The topic sentence

A topic Sentence is a sentence that tells the reader what your paragraph is about. It expresses the main idea of the paragraph, and it is usually the most general sentence in the paragraph. You can write your topic sentence in the beginning, middle, or end of your paragraph. If you are a new writer, it might be easier for you to start your paragraph with your topic sentence and take it from there.

Remember this formula: Topic Sentence= Topic +Controlling Idea

#### B. Controlling Idea

As the name suggests, controlling idea controls your thoughts and ideas. The controlling idea tells your reader what specific aspect of this topic you are going to write about.

Example of Topic Sentence and Controlling Idea

Look at the following group of words:

### Raw Vegetables

If I say raw vegetable, nobody will know what I will write about raw vegetables. I could write about how they are planted, what they are used for, different recipes calling for raw vegetables, the vitamins in them, etc. By writing a controlling idea, I can clarify what I am talking about. Look at the following example:

*Raw vegetables might not be as healthy as we thought they were.*

Here I made it clear that I am going to talk about the health related aspect of raw vegetables. So, my topic is “raw vegetables” and my controlling idea is “*might not be as healthy as we thought they were*”. I also started my sentence with a shocking claim that raw vegetables might actually be harmful!

### C. Supporting Details

Develop, explain, and support the main idea of the paragraph. If your paragraph has five sentences, usually the three sentences after the Topic Sentence are called the Supporting Details (Sentences). Contain facts, examples, and details that relate to and say something about the topic of the paragraph. These sentences give explanation, evidence, and reason for your claim. Explain why the main idea is true.

### Example of Supporting Sentence

Take the example of our paragraph about Raw Vegetables. I can write three supporting sentences bringing evidence to support my claim that raw vegetables might not be as healthy for you.

Read the first supporting sentence below:

We all agree that raw vegetables are full of vitamins and minerals, but some of these raw vegetables can also carry toxic ingredients that can cause severe harm to your health if you don't cook them.

### D. The Concluding Sentence

The last sentence in your paragraph is called a Concluding Sentence. The Concluding Sentence does not introduce anything new. It either summarizes what you already talked about or paraphrases the Topic Sentence. It restates the main idea of the paragraph and it indicates why the topic is important.

## Example of Concluding Sentence

Raw vegetables have always been considered one of our best friends when it comes to our diet, but we should always familiarize ourselves with the ingredients inside them and the best way to eat them: cooked or uncooked.

### 4. Process of Paragraph Development

Have you ever written a paragraph? What steps you follow in your writing?

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❖ Let's walk through a 5-step process for building a paragraph.

Step 1. Decide on a controlling idea and create a topic sentence

Paragraph development begins with the formulation of the controlling idea. This idea directs the paragraph's development. Often, the controlling idea of a paragraph will appear in the form of a topic sentence. In some cases, you may need more than one sentence to express a paragraph's controlling idea.

Step 2. Explain the controlling idea

Paragraph development continues with an expression of the rationale or the explanation that the writer gives for how the reader should interpret the information presented in the idea statement or topic sentence of the paragraph. The writer explains his/her thinking about the main topic, idea, or focus of the paragraph.

Step 3. Give an example (or multiple examples)

Paragraph development progresses with the expression of some type of support or evidence for the idea and the explanation that came before it. The example serves as a sign or representation of the relationship established in the idea and explanation portions of the paragraph.

Step 4. Explain the example(s)

The next movement in paragraph development is an explanation of each example and its relevance to the topic sentence and rationale that were stated at the beginning of the paragraph. This

explanation shows readers why you chose to use this/or these particular examples as evidence to support the major claim, or focus, in your paragraph.

Continue the pattern of giving examples and explaining them until all points/examples that the writer deems necessary have been made and explained. None of your examples should be left unexplained. You might be able to explain the relationship between the example and the topic sentence in the same sentence which introduced the example. More often, however, you will need to explain that relationship in a separate sentence.

Step 5. Complete the paragraph's idea or transition into the next paragraph

The final movement in paragraph development involves tying up the loose ends of the paragraph and reminding the reader of the relevance of the information in this paragraph to the main or controlling idea of the paper. At this point, you can remind your reader about the relevance of the information that you just discussed in the paragraph. You might feel more comfortable, however, simply transitioning your reader to the next development in the next paragraph.

#### *Review Exercise*

Dear students, do the following questions based on your understanding of the above contents.

- Define paragraph by your own word.
- List and define the qualities of an effective paragraph.
- Explain the parts of a paragraph.
- Discuss the steps of developing a paragraph.

### **5. Cause and Effect Paragraph Development**

Cause and Effect: Cause and effect paragraphs analyze the causes or the effects of something or the relationship between both. If you want to explain the “why” of something a process, an event, a concept then this is a useful pattern. In this pattern, transitions of logic (e.g., *thus, therefore, consequently, as a result*) and words and phrases of cause and effect (e.g., *because, for the reason that, given that, in effect*) feature prominently. Be careful, however, when you make statements about cause and effect. If there is more than one cause to a particular effect, be sure not to restrict your analysis or explanation. On the other hand, if there is more than one effect, be sure not to assume they all arose from the same cause. To be sure there is a connection between the causes and



affects you are analyzing or explaining, ask questions like “Is this the only thing that could cause this effect?” and “Is this the only possible effect this cause could have?” and “Was this because sufficient to result in this effect?” (Horner, 1988:127).

### Cause / Effect Essay Structure

While writing a cause / effect paragraph, the order of the main points given in the topic sentence is followed in supportive sentences. The following example is an outline for a cause paragraph about the reasons for cities becoming overcrowded.

*Thesis statement:* There are two main reasons why these and other cities are becoming so crowded; one economic, the other socio-cultural.

*1st body:* economic reasons    *2nd body:* socio-cultural reasons

- Cities are engines of development. 1. Education 2. Urbanization

The sample shows organization of paragraph

#### *Why Cities are Becoming Overcrowded?*

The fact that the world’s cities are getting more and more crowded is well-known. Cities such as Tokyo, Sao Paolo, Bombay and Shanghai are now considered ‘mega-cities’, because of their enormous size and huge populations. There are two main reasons why these and other cities are becoming so crowded; one economic, the other socio-cultural. (*Topic sentence*) First, the primary cause of cities becoming so crowded is economic. (*supportive details* ) As a country develops, its cities become the engines of development, thus jobs are available in these areas. Frankfurt, Istanbul, Bombay and Sao Paolo are all the economic centers of their countries. For example, Tokyo was the motor for Japan’s rapid economic development in the 1960’s and 70’s; as a result, its population increased rapidly. People moved to Tokyo because they could find employment and establish economic security for themselves and their families there. Second, another factor in the huge increase in urban populations is the socio-cultural factor. (*supportive details* ) Thousands of people migrate to the cities not only for jobs but also for educational and personal reasons. The better universities are always located in big cities and this attracts thousands of students every year, and these students stay on and work in the city after they graduate. Moreover, young people will move to the city as the villages and rural areas are more custom and tradition oriented. Therefore, young people believe this is an obstacle to their personal freedom.

In conclusion, economic and cultural factors are the major causes of huge urban population.

(*Concluding sentence*) People will always move to the areas which provide opportunity and to the places which can give them the freedom they desire.

The following sample shows paragraph connectors

Why are Cities Becoming Overcrowded?

The fact that the world's cities are getting more and more crowded is well-known. Cities such as Tokyo, Sao Paolo, Bombay and Shanghai are now considered 'mega-cities', because of their enormous size and huge populations. There are two main reasons why these and other cities are becoming so crowded; one economic, the other socio-cultural. *First*, the primary cause of cities becoming so crowded is economic. As a country develops, its cities become the engines of development, thus jobs are available in these areas. Frankfurt, Istanbul, Bombay and Sao Paolo are all the economic centers of their countries. *For example*, Tokyo was the motor for Japan's rapid economic development in the 1960's and 70's; as a result, its population increased rapidly. People moved to Tokyo because they could find employment and establish economic security for themselves and their families there. *Second*, another factor in the huge increase in urban populations is the socio-cultural factor. Thousands of people migrate to the cities not only for jobs but also for educational and personal reasons. The better universities are always located in big cities and this attracts thousands of students every year, and these students stay on and work in the city after they graduate. *Moreover*, young people will move to the city as the villages and rural areas are more custom and tradition oriented. Therefore, young people believe this is an obstacle to their personal freedom. *In conclusion*, economic and cultural factors are the major causes of huge urban population. People will always move to the areas which provide opportunity and to the places which can give them the freedom they desire.

The following sample shows paragraph specific vocabularies

Why are Cities Becoming Overcrowded?

The fact that the world's cities are getting more and more crowded is well-known. Cities such as Tokyo, Sao Paolo, Bombay and Shanghai are now considered 'mega-cities', *because of* their enormous size and huge populations. There are two main *reasons why* these and other cities are becoming so crowded; one economic, the other socio-cultural. First, the primary *cause of* cities becoming so crowded is economic. As a country develops, its cities become the engines of development, *thus* jobs are available in these areas. Frankfurt, Istanbul, Bombay and Sao Paolo are

all the economic centers of their countries. For example, Tokyo was the motor for Japan's rapid economic development in the 1960's and 70's; as a result, its population increased rapidly. People moved to Tokyo because they could find employment and establish economic security for themselves and their families there. Second, another factor in the huge increase in urban populations is the socio-cultural factor. Thousands of people migrate to the cities not only for jobs but also for educational and personal reasons. The better universities are always located in big cities and this attracts thousands of students every year, and these students stay on and work in the city after they graduate. Moreover, young people will move to the city as the villages and rural areas are more custom and tradition oriented. Therefore, young people believe this is an obstacle to their personal freedom. In conclusion, economic and cultural factors are the major causes of huge urban population. People will always move to the areas which provide opportunity and to the places which can give them the freedom they desire.

Writing task one: Write an expository paragraph by using the topic 'Effects of the war between TPLF and the Ethiopian government'. Your paragraph should have a topic sentence, supportive details and concluding sentences. In your writing, you should consider the relevance of the content, coherence of ideas, appropriateness of vocabularies, accurate language use and mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. The number of words is limited on 100-150.

After their first draft, the researcher will give corrections, feedbacks and comments regards to the content (relevance, subject knowledge) and organization (coherence, logical sequencing). In the second draft, then, he will give an assessment on the mechanics (spelling, punctuation) of their paragraph.

Writing task two: In the second practice of writing, the treatment groups will write a paragraph on the topic 'Effects of living cost' with a topic sentence, supportive details and concluding sentences. The researcher will give feedbacks on vocabulary richness, word form in relation to vocabulary use and on usage of articles, word order, tenses, prepositions and sentence constructions in relation to language use.

## Summary

A paragraph is a sentence or group of related sentences that support one main idea. If a paragraph said to be effective all the sentences should be united, refer the central idea, arranged in a logical manner and adequately explained and supported through evidence and detail. In this summary, I tried to inform the different parts of a paragraph, steps and methods of paragraph/essay development.

A paragraph contains a topic sentence, supporting details and concluding sentences. The topic sentence is the most general sentence that tells the reader what the paragraph is about. It is the combination of the topic and the controlling idea. The supporting details develop, explain and support the main idea of the paragraph through facts, examples and details that relate to the topic. Concluding sentence is usually the last sentence that either summarizes what has been talked or paraphrases the topic sentence.

There are some basic steps that help the writer to develop a well-organized paragraph. The first step is deciding on a controlling idea and creating a topic sentence. Then, explaining the controlling idea will guide the writer to explain the focus of his/her paragraph. After explaining the focus or the main idea the writer needs to give and explain relevance and rational examples for the main idea. Finally, the writer is expected to establish a concluding sentence. He/she intends to complete the idea of the paragraph.

Paragraphs can be developed through different methods. However, in this hand out cause and effect method of expository writing has been discussed with example paragraphs. This method of paragraph development analyzes the relationship between cause and effects, or it may explain the causes or effects only. While writing a cause/effect paragraph, the order of the main points given in the topic sentence is followed in supportive details. Using transitions of logic are essential for causes and effects in this type of writing.

#### Reference

Horner, W.B.(1988). *Rhetoric in the Classical Tradition*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, Inc.  
Lundsford, A.& Connors, R.(1989).The St. Martin's hand book. An notated instructors ed. New York: St. Martin's Press.

## Appendix 5: Post-test for both groups

BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

Department of English Language and Literature

### General Instruction

Dear test takers, the purpose of this test is to gather information on the performance of your writing skill. It is not an examination. The test result you provide will be used only for a research purpose and will remain highly confidential. There is no need to write your name. As your genuine works of writing contribute most to the successful completion of this study, you are kindly requested to write appropriately as like as you do in your exams. Thank you very much for your help!

Melash Baye

### Specific Instructions

- I. Write an expository paragraph by using the following topic. Your paragraph should have a topic sentence, supportive details and concluding sentence. In your writing, you should consider the relevance of the content, coherence of ideas, appropriateness of vocabularies, accurate language use and mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. The number of words is limited on 100-150, and the time you have been given for your writing is 1:20 hour.

The effect of corruption

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## Appendix 6: Scores of posttest

Students' Roll no	Posttest scores of <i>experiment</i> group	Posttest scores of <i>control</i> group
S <sub>1</sub>	37	30
S <sub>2</sub>	36	23
S <sub>3</sub>	47	15
S <sub>4</sub>	59	11
S <sub>5</sub>	39	8
S <sub>6</sub>	23	6
S <sub>7</sub>	37	51
S <sub>8</sub>	12	23
S <sub>9</sub>	15	31
S <sub>10</sub>	57	23
S <sub>11</sub>	32	5
S <sub>12</sub>	36	23
S <sub>13</sub>	44	39
S <sub>14</sub>	47	41
S <sub>15</sub>	19	10
S <sub>16</sub>	24	16
S <sub>17</sub>	57	22
S <sub>18</sub>	15	11
S <sub>19</sub>	22	42
S <sub>20</sub>	31	29
S <sub>21</sub>	49	51
S <sub>22</sub>	20	22
S <sub>23</sub>	26	12
S <sub>24</sub>	41	29
S <sub>25</sub>	23	22
S <sub>26</sub>	32	16
S <sub>27</sub>	18	31
S <sub>28</sub>	18	19
S <sub>29</sub>	32	11
S <sub>30</sub>	23	23
S <sub>31</sub>	31	18
S <sub>32</sub>	42	20
S <sub>33</sub>	46	19
S <sub>34</sub>	50	27
S <sub>35</sub>	29	30
S <sub>36</sub>	28	14
S <sub>37</sub>	12	21
S <sub>38</sub>	22	19
S <sub>39</sub>	26	28
S <sub>40</sub>	29	20
S <sub>41</sub>	32	59
S <sub>42</sub>	29	40
S <sub>43</sub>		32

## Appendix 7: Questionnaire for Treatment Group

BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

Department of English Language and Literature

### General Instruction

Dear Respondents, the purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about your views on the effect of teacher's support on students' writing skill. It is not an examination so that there is no right or wrong answer. The information you provide will be used only for a research purpose and will remain highly confidential. As your genuine responses contribute most to the successful completion of this study, you are kindly requested to provide genuine information. Thank you very much for your help!

Melash Baye

### Specific Instructions

I. Read the following statements and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree by putting a tick (✓) mark on the most appropriate answer on the following scale.

1=strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Undecided 4 =Agree 5=Strongly Agree

No	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	In the writing process the teacher's support helped me to revise my paragraph.					
2	The support helped me to minimize my writing difficulties on spelling, punctuation, capitalization, choice of words, sentence structures.					
3	The writing tasks were simplified through the teacher's close support.					
4	The teacher's support on writing helped me to brain storm ideas regarding to my writing topic					
5	In the practice of paragraph writing the teacher's support helped me to develop a topic sentence of my paragraph					
6	The writing tasks given in the support were appropriate to write an organized paragraph					
7	The steps of paragraph writing that the teacher used guided me to keep the structure of my paragraph.					
8	During the teacher's support I get the concepts of paragraph writing					
9	The support informed me to use cohesive devices properly such as, first, next, because, for example, as a result, but, and etc					
10	The teacher's support made me frustrated in writing a paragraph.					
11	The support taught me to use appropriate language to the intended audience in my paragraph writing.					
12	My paragraph writing skills have been improved through the support of the teacher.					

### **Appendix 9: Schedule of the study**

Activities to be performed with corresponded time frame were included in the table.

No.	Activities	Time/ period
1	Reviewing related literatures	October-November, 2021
2	Organizing ideas/literatures to draft the report writing in the form of proposal	December – January, 2022
3	Submit and present the proposal	January, 2022
4	Data collecting through tests and questionnaire	February – March, 2022
5	Data analyzing	April - May ,2022
6	Writing the first and second draft report	June, 2022
7	Writing the final report through incorporating the comments raised by advisor	July - 2022
8	Submitting the final report and presenting it	August,2022