

A Scaffolding Teaching Design: Reading for Writing

Lin Xiao

School of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China

Abstract: This paper proves the efficacy of scaffolding in English writing class and presents a sample teaching design. The teaching design breaks the writing goals down to manageable tasks according to students' ZPD. And the tasks serve as scaffolding, which would support learners in the beginning and gradually withdraw in the process. By employing a systematic progression of tasks that gradually increase in complexity, the teaching design applying scaffolding allows students to develop critical reading and writing skills, as well as independence in writing.

Keywords: Scaffolding; Reading for Writing; English Teaching.

1. Introduction

Scaffolding is a classroom teaching technique which provides temporary support for an inexperienced learner in order to help them to complete a task or acquire a skill, and then gradually withdraw that support. It can also be explained by the phrase "I do, we do, you do," wherein the teacher demonstrates, guides, then hands the reins to the students. It can be used to close the gaps in what the students know and can do and what they are expected to know and do.

There are many advantages of scaffolding. For students, it provides levels of support to aid them for higher levels of comprehension and abilities. So that students are able to use the skills we are teaching more independently. And it moves students progressively toward stronger understanding in the learning process, which facilitates them to solve problems more creatively and flexibly. For teachers, learning objectives can be achieved by one scientific and reasonable small goal after another. So, the logic can be clearer when teachers design lessons. And on the premise of ensuring teaching efficiency and effectiveness, teachers are able to see more clearly in which link students have difficulties, so as to improve teaching design more pertinently and help students to make progress.

In the sample lesson, scaffolding is applied by breaking down the learning objectives into manageable tasks. Initially, the teacher introduced the new concepts of narrative essay through a guided activity, offering clear instructions and modeling the desired outcomes. As students began to engage with the material, the teacher offered hints, feedback, and encouragement, gradually reducing the level of support as students became more confident and competent. This approach allowed students to build on their prior knowledge, work within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and progressively develop their skills through practice and interaction, ultimately fostering independent learning and mastery of the lesson objectives. Besides, the teacher creates a more engaging, effective, and authentic language learning experience by focusing on meaningful communication, cognitive engagement and practical application. By designing tasks that replicate real-world language use, TBA aims to develop learners' communicative competence in a holistic and contextually relevant manner.

2. A Sample Teaching Design

2.1. Preparation

2.1.1. Textbook Analysis

The teaching material is taken from the reading for writing class, Unit 5 First Aid, PEP Optional Compulsory Book 2. It is the 4th period of the unit and lasts 45 minutes. The theme of this unit is "First Aid" in the context of "Man and society". The theme belongs to the theme group of "Disaster prevention" under the category of "human and nature", and the subtheme content involved is "safety common sense and self-protection"; At the same time, it also belongs to the theme group of "Man and work" under the category of "man and self", involving the sub-theme content of "the meaning and value of life". The text narrates the story of Chen Wei, a high school student who used the Heimlich maneuver to save a person's life. The story is told in chronological order and consists of three main events: Chen Wei accidentally discovering someone choking while eating out, Chen Wei performing the Heimlich maneuver, and Chen Wei successfully saving the person's life and reflecting on the experience.

The structure of the passage can be divided into 3 parts. Part 1 (Para. 1-2) tells the story of a choking incident. Part 2 (Para. 3-5) introduces Heimlich manoeuvre. And part 3 (Para. 6) is the reflection of the choking incident. The genre of the passage is narration. And the plot is full of twists and turns, keeping the reader engaged throughout the story. The author's choice of words is precise without being overly exaggerated, making the narrative feel authentic and believable. The language difficulty is moderate, making it suitable for high school students. This text lends itself well to cloze tests and adaptation exercises. For example, a cloze test could be created by removing key words from the article and having students fill in the blanks based on context clues. This would test their vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension skills. The story could also be adapted into various formats such as a news report, diary entry, or dramatic script. Such exercises would challenge students to think creatively while honing their writing abilities.

The text uses Chen Wei's story to inspire students to deeply understand the significance of first aid and the value of life. It aims to cultivate a compassionate heart, teaching students to cherish life and care for others, ultimately achieving the educational goal of moral education and character

development. Reading for writing section represents the 4th period of the unit. Positioned after reading, grammar, and vocabulary lessons, but before video and project work, it serves to consolidate newly acquired knowledge and skills. Furthermore, it aims to ignite students' creativity by encouraging them to apply their learning to craft original narratives. This section acts as a bridge between knowledge acquisition and practical application, facilitating deeper understanding and promoting creative expression.

In conclusion, this text not only teaches a valuable life-saving technique but also imparts important moral lessons to students, encouraging them to develop empathy, compassion, and a sense of social responsibility. It is an excellent example of how education can go beyond mere knowledge transfer and contribute to the holistic development of individuals, shaping them into caring and proactive members of society.

2.1.2. Student Analysis

The students are from Grade 11 and most of them have a solid foundation in English language. 80% of them can get 120 points or more. Regarding the class structure, there are 20 female students and 30 male students in this class. Most of them are relatively extroverted and interested in English classes. They can actively participate in classroom activities that they find engaging.

After completing 3 period of study, students have become very familiar with describing emergency situations. However, up until now, they have only learned about first aid methods for drowning and knife wounds, and their understanding of other first aid knowledge is very limited. It is quite possible that they may encounter choking emergencies in their daily lives, so students have both the need and interest to learn the Heimlich maneuver.

In terms of knowledge, the students' English proficiency is excellent, but they are better at answering questions. Their oral and written expressions are relatively not as outstanding. Therefore, they need some scaffolding in writing, such as the teacher helping to sort out mind maps and providing some examples. To improve their writing skills, the teacher can provide a writing task where students need to create a poster or a brochure explaining the steps of the Heimlich maneuver. The teacher can provide a mind map or a template to help students organize their ideas and provide some example sentences to guide their writing.

To cater to the students' needs and interests, the teacher can design a lesson that focuses on teaching the Heimlich maneuver while incorporating various engaging activities. The lesson can start with a brief review of the emergency situations they have learned before, followed by an introduction to choking and the Heimlich maneuver. The teacher can then provide a step-by-step demonstration of the Heimlich maneuver, either through a video or a live demonstration. Students can be encouraged to practice the steps with a partner, with the teacher providing guidance and feedback.

Throughout the lesson, the teacher can incorporate various interactive activities such as role-playing scenarios, group discussions, and quizzes to keep the students engaged and interested. By the end of the lesson, students should have a solid understanding of the Heimlich maneuver and feel more confident in their ability to respond to choking emergencies.

2.1.3. Teaching Objectives

After learning this class, students will be able to:

- 1) tell the genre and structure of the passage;
- 2) draw a mind map of Heimlich manoeuvre procedures

and have the awareness of implementing first aid in an emergency;

3) write a continuation writing task based on their outline of a narrative essay.

2.1.4. Key Points

In this class, it is relatively important for students to:

- 1) tell and describe different symptoms of choking;
- 2) tell the procedures of Heimlich manoeuvre.

2.1.5. Difficult Points

In this class, it is relatively difficult for students to:

- 1) write an outline of a narrative essay after learning the characteristics and structure of narrative essays;
- 2) adapt the outline according to the need of continuation writing task in practical writing.

2.1.6. Teaching Resources

Student learning sheet, text, video, Multi-media (PPT), a doll representing a choking child, etc.

2.2. Teaching Process

2.2.1. Lead-in (3')

Procedure	Purpose
Task 1: Watch and Answer Ss watch a video and answer: 1. What happened to Sheldon? 2. What technique did George use to save Sheldon?	1. Arouse Ss' interests and motivations. 2. Stimulate students' thirst for knowledge and increase the richness and interest of the class.
Keys: 1. He was choked. 2. Heimlich.	

2.2.2. Pre-reading (5')

Procedure	Purpose
Task 1: Read for the Genre and structure Firstly, teacher invites students to read the passage about Heimlich and put A-E in the correct places in the text while reading. Then, teacher asks students to choose the genre of the essay. Teacher invites or guides students to make a choice and then ask them why. Then the teacher can introduce the narrative essay in detail: 1. Definition: A narrative essay tells a story about personal experience. 2. Examples: overcoming obstacles, a funny story with a lesson, a person that inspired you, or a memory or event that taught you a lesson. 3. Characteristics: first-person point of view; plot elements; sensory details; chronological order; have a point (a lesson or theme) for readers to take away, etc. 4. Structure: (P57) When introducing the definition, examples and characteristics of the narrative essay, the teacher asks questions along with the introduction to help students better understand. When introducing the structure of the narrative essay, ask students to read the note on page 57 of the textbook and summarize it themselves while reading it. Then the teacher and students draw a mind map of the structure of the narrative essay together and supplement	1. Stimulate students' interest in reading and the desire to challenge, and better input new knowledge by creating questions. 2. Because of the high level of students, so carefully explain the knowledge of narrative essay, so that students have a sense of gain. 3. Let Ss perceive the genre, characteristics and structure of narrative essay.

it in more detail than in the textbook. Teachers need examples to clarify that this structure is the three essential elements of a typical narrative essay. Therefore, one, not all articles have these three elements, and some can be omitted, such as works with open endings. Second, not all narrative essays are written in this order, for example, some will use flashbacks, flashbacks, and even the way to write while describing.

After that, ask students to apply the structure to the text and divide it into correct parts and think about the main idea of each part. Then invite students to share the division and main idea and each part.

Part 1 (Para. 1-2): Tell the story of a choking incident.

Part 2 (Para. 3-5): Introduce Heimlich maneuver.

Part 3 (Para. 6): Reflection of the choking incident.

2.2.3. While-reading

Procedure	Purpose
<p>Task 1: Read and Judge</p> <p>According to the division, the teacher asks the students to observe the first part, name the symptoms of choking, and then judge whether someone is choking in a specific situation through the multiple-choice question.</p> <p>Q: Someone is choking when _____.</p> <p>A. he shouted for help B. his chest heaved violently C. he holds his throat with his face turning red D. he pointed to his throat and couldn't speak E. his tongue is swollen and has small red spots</p> <p>Keys: C, D</p>	<p>1. Engage Ss in the topic and activate their schema.</p> <p>2. Students apply the knowledge they have just learned in real situations to give students a sense of accomplishment.</p>
<p>Task 2: Read and Finish Flow Chart</p> <p>The teacher asks the students to read the second part carefully and complete the flow chart to sort out the steps and procedures of performing the Heimlich maneuver when they encounter someone choking. After reading and filling, teacher invites students to check together. And while checking, the teacher will add body language to perform Heimlich maneuver as a teaching demonstration to help students better understand it.</p>	<p>1. Integrate the text to make the Heimlich method clearer.</p> <p>2. Prepare Ss intellectually for writing.</p>
<p>Task 3: Finish the story of providing first aid</p> <p>The teacher presents the revised text. This article is adapted from the text, but converted to the first point of view of the rescuer. Students need to fill in the blanks as they read to make the passage complete.</p> <p>At the same time, while the students fill in the blanks, the teacher presents the ABC of the article, reminding the students how to write</p>	<p>1. Adapt the text into a standard narrative structure to enrich the classroom and students' cognition.</p> <p>2. Link the preceding with the following. This paragraph is both an application of the previous structure and an example for the narrative essay that the student will</p>

and segment the narrative essay write soon. from the first perspective.

2.2.4. Post-reading

Procedure	Purpose
<p>Task 1: Fill and Outline</p> <p>Using the structure that students have just sorted out and the text of the narrative essay in their text books, taking Chen Wei's saving Zhang Tao from choking as an example, the students use key words to sort out the writing outline.</p> <p>After that, the teacher helps to arrange and reorganize the outline according to the requirements of practical writing, and forms a new outline with strong operability of continuation tasks.</p>	<p>1. Provide and gradually withdraw the scaffolding for the writing task.</p> <p>2. Broken the writing task into small tasks such as word filling, sentence making and frame building to reduce the difficulty of students' practical operation.</p>
<p>Task 2: Writing</p> <p>After making sure that all students have mastered the new outline of continuation tasks, give students a task with context and they can practice the continuation task.</p> <p>After that, teacher invites some students to share. According to the actual situation, put their works on the screen, or ask them to read their own essay.</p> <p><i>"One day, Edward was walking home from school, enjoying the warm afternoon sun. Suddenly, a large dog appeared out of nowhere and lunged at him. The dog's sharp teeth grazed Edward's leg, leaving a painful bite mark. Startled, Edward shouted and tried to flee, but the dog persisted in chasing him.</i></p> <p><i>Panicking, Edward looked around for help.</i> _____</p> <p><i>As Johnson gently cleaned the bite, Edward explained what had happened.</i></p>	<p>1. Put together an outline and build the scaffolding for your writing.</p>
<p>2.2.5. Homework and Reflection</p>	
<p>Homework:</p> <p>Teacher integrates the 3 kinds of emergency situations learned in this unit and encourage students to summarize the comprehensive handling methods into a common response to emergency situations. Then assign homework respectively. Students can choose at least one to complete according to their level, interests and needs.</p> <p>Level 1: Complete the whole continuation task based on your outline.</p> <p>Level 2: Write an outline of a narrative essay based on your own experience with an emergency. You may refer to these contexts. Active forms are encouraged.</p> <p>Level 3: Write a narrative essay based on your own experience with an emergency. You may refer to these contexts. Around 160 words.</p>	<p>Provide different layered assignments for different students to suit the needs of all students.</p>
<p>Reflection:</p> <p>Students take out their learning sheet and finish the self-assessment part.</p> <p>1. I can tell the genre and structure of the essay. ☆☆☆☆</p> <p>2. I can draw a flow chart of Heimlich</p>	<p>Improve students' learning autonomy.</p>

3. Conclusion

Scaffolding is an important teaching approach when design reading and writing class. By building scaffolding and then removing the scaffolding scientifically, it can bridge the gap between learners' Old Knowledge and New Knowledge. On the premise of fully understanding learners' ZPD, teachers can effectively equip students with new knowledge and skills and cultivate their thinking ability and independent problem-solving ability. And it should be noted that in the sample teaching design, some activities are designed according to the OK and ZPD of the current class learners. Due to the individual differences between learners and classes, teachers need to adapt the design according to specific situations when applying scaffolding. At the same time, this teaching design is absolutely not perfect in every aspect, comments, criticism and improvement and greatly welcomed.

All in all, scaffolding is a teaching method that can help teachers successfully achieve teaching objectives and enable students to develop their thinking capacity while learning knowledge, which suits the design of reading for writing classrooms well.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to Pro. Zheng Yi and Miss Huang Xiaoshu.

References

- [1] Bruner, J. (1974). *Toward a theory of instruction*. Harvard university press.
- [2] Van de Pol, J., Volman, M., & Beishuizen, J. (2010). Scaffolding in teacher–student interaction: A decade of research. *Educational psychology review*, 22, 271-296.
- [3] Van Der Stuyf, R. R. (2002). Scaffolding as a teaching strategy. *Adolescent learning and development*, 52(3), 5-18.
- [4] Belland, B. R. (2014). Scaffolding: Definition, current debates, and future directions. *Handbook of research on educational communications and technology*, 505-518.
- [5] Reiser, B. J., & Tabak, I. (2014). Scaffolding.
- [6] Yelland, N., & Masters, J. (2007). Rethinking scaffolding in the information age. *Computers & Education*, 48(3), 362-382.
- [7] Bliss, J., Askew, M., & Macrae, S. (1996). Effective teaching and learning: Scaffolding revisited. *Oxford review of Education*, 22(1), 37-61.
- [8] Maybin, J., Mercer, N., & Stierer, B. (1992). Scaffolding learning in the classroom. *Thinking voices: The work of the national oracy project*, 186, 195.
- [9] Hein, G. E. (1991). *Constructivist learning theory*. Institute for Inquiry. Available at: <http://www.exploratorium.edu/ifi/resources/constructivistlearning.html>.
- [10] Bada, S. O., & Olusegun, S. (2015). Constructivism learning theory: A paradigm for teaching and learning. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 5(6), 66-70.
- [11] Honebein, P. C. (1996). Seven goals for the design of constructivist learning environments. *Constructivist learning environments: Case studies in instructional design*, 11(12), 11.
- [12] Fosnot, C. T. (2013). *Constructivism: Theory, perspectives, and practice*. Teachers College Press.
- [13] Wilson, B. G. (1996). *Constructivist learning environments: Case studies in instructional design*. Educational Technology.
- [14] Richardson, V. (2005). Constructivist teaching and teacher education: Theory and practice. In *Constructivist teacher education* (pp. 13-24). Routledge.
- [15] Fosnot, C. T., & Perry, R. S. (1996). Constructivism: A psychological theory of learning. *Constructivism: Theory, perspectives, and practice*, 2(1), 8-33.
- [16] Von Glasersfeld, E. (2012). A constructivist approach to teaching. In *Constructivism in education* (pp. 3-15). Routledge.
- [17] Taylor, P. C., Fraser, B. J., & Fisher, D. L. (1997). Monitoring constructivist classroom learning environments. *International journal of educational research*, 27(4), 293-302.
- [18] Taylor, P. C., Fraser, B. J., & Fisher, D. L. (1997). Monitoring constructivist classroom learning environments. *International journal of educational research*, 27(4), 293-302.
- [19] Leong, D. J. (1998). Scaffolding emergent writing in the zone of proximal development. *Literacy*, 3(2), 1.
- [20] Leong, D. J. (1998). Scaffolding emergent writing in the zone of proximal development. *Literacy*, 3(2), 1.
- [21] Schwieter, J. W. (2010). Developing second language writing through scaffolding in the ZPD: A magazine project for an authentic audience.