

**Investigating the Difficulties that Students Face Regarding Writing Skills and the  
Efficacy of Scaffolding Technique in Resolving this Issue**



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**Date of Submission:** Summer, 2023

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A Thesis Submitted to  
The Department of English and Humanities  
University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh

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In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree of  
MA in English  
Applied Linguistics and TESOL

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## **CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.



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## DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgment of collaborative research and discussions.

Nusrat Maliha

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my wonderful family with heartfelt gratitude. Your constant love and strong support have been my motivation throughout this tough academic journey. Your encouragement has made my biggest dreams come alive, and your sacrifices have paved the way for my success. I understand that this achievement is a victory for all of us, not just me. Your unwavering faith in me has been a guiding light, helping me through even the toughest academic hurdles. I am incredibly thankful, and I dedicate this thesis to you, my beloved family.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Almighty for granting me the blessings and fortitude to reach this point in my academic journey. Special appreciation goes to my supervisor, Tazin Ahmed, and Research Methodology instructor, Mohammed Mosiur Rahman. Their support and guidance were essential, easing the challenges of completing this thesis. Their Valuable insights and encouragement pushed me forward. I am also indebted to the participants of my study, whose enthusiastic cooperation and involvement have been really important in helping me with my research. I also want to express my big thanks to my close friends. They always supported me and kept me motivated when I had doubts. Additionally, I am immensely grateful to my family for their unwavering prayers, which provided me with strength and contributed significantly to my well-being and successful completion of this endeavor. I also owe a lot to my workplace which not only saw the value in my studies but also gave me a lot of support to finish my thesis successfully. This accomplishment shows how much their support and contributions mean to me.

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this qualitative study is to explore the difficulties that Bangladeshi students encounter when trying to improve their writing skills. Additionally, the study investigates how a teaching method called scaffolding could help address these challenges in Bangladeshi educational context. The research involved interviews with a sample set consisting of four higher secondary students and teachers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the writing struggles and the use of scaffolding method in education. Through careful analysis of the gathered information, the study identified key factors that hinder students from becoming proficient writers. The findings revealed that teachers were unfamiliar with the term scaffolding as well as the fact that it is a teaching method, but they were aware of the concept and agreed to rarely use it in their instructional practices. The study suggests implementing scaffolding as an effective teaching approach to empower Bangladeshi students in becoming independent writers. By adopting this method, students' individual learning needs can be better addressed, their confidence in writing can grow, and their understanding of writing techniques and structures can deepen. The study's conclusion emphasizes the value of using scaffolding for better learning as well as the need for teachers to receive adequate training before implementing this teaching method in educational setting. By incorporating scaffolding as a beneficial tool in the field of writing instruction, educators can assist students in overcoming hurdles and developing their abilities to become skilled and confident writers.

**Key words:** Writing Challenges, Traditional teaching method, Scaffolding, Bangladesh, Teachers training.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

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

The Bangladeshi government has made English a mandatory subject for students from secondary to university level aiming to improve learner's language competency. Within academic institutions, educators are directed to emphasize the cultivation of four fundamental language proficiencies: namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, during the instructional process. The goal is to facilitate the acquisition of a high level of English language proficiency among learners. Among these skills, writing is often regarded as more challenging to become skilled at. As a result, many students, especially those who acquire English as a second or foreign language, struggle with writing. Developing good writing skills involves managing several factors at once. These factors include content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and even how letters are formed within words (Bell & Burnby, 1984, cited in Wulandari, Ngadiso & Asib, 2014). To write cohesive paragraphs and sentences, writers must combine all of these elements.

Facilitating writing skills for English as a Second Language (ESL) students poses a significant challenge, demanding a diverse range of approaches to ensure optimal language acquisition. Students in ESL classroom come from a variety of backgrounds, are completely reliant on teachers, and have diverse levels of language skill. This variability is impacted by factors such as where people live (urban or rural locations), their family history, cultural heritage, and other unique conditions (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019). Furthermore, considering themselves as individuals learning English as a second language raises doubts about their ability to gain proficiency in writing, and this self-perception causes them to be unsure of their own ability to obtain this skill.

For ESL teachers, it is crucial to use teaching methods that not only capture students' interest but also lead to effective learning outcomes. Therefore, in addition to employing various techniques and strategies, it's important to adopt approaches that are tailored to the specific needs of the students. Several approaches have been introduced to engage ESL learners and enhance their language skills. However, students tend to rely more on the grammar translation method (GTM) when it comes to learning. Instead of learning to write on their own, they often memorize content solely to pass exams.

Among different teaching methods, Scaffolding stands out as one of the most effective teaching methods for promoting independent learning. Limpabandhu, Yutdhana and Kongmanus (2018) claimed that Students need individualized instruction and scaffolding input in order to write more effectively. Instructional scaffolding, according to Belland (2014) is the assistance provided by instructors, parents, classmates, or through technical aids such as computers or paper-based resources. This assistance facilitates students' participation in and mastery of tasks that might be beyond their individual capabilities. This valuable pedagogical approach not only provides necessary support but also fosters a learning environment, emphasizing the importance of peer and teacher interactions. It encourages active learning by involving students in social interactions, moving away from solitary learning. The success of this method varies between urban and rural schools and heavily relies on teachers who guide students in this process. Although recent curriculum recommend utilizing a scaffolding-based approach, this strategy is still not widely employed in schools, where the traditional grammar translation method still dominates.

“Scaffolding techniques have been used in many studies and have shown positive results” (Veerappan, 2011, p. 935). Many studies conducted by both local and international researchers

have examined the effectiveness of scaffolding in teaching and learning. In my own research, I tried to examine the present situation of student's writing in higher secondary schools in Bangladesh. I accomplished this by conducting interviews with teachers and students from both urban and rural schools. My purpose was to gather insight into their perspectives on their lack of writing skills and their understanding of scaffolding's usefulness. Through this, I aimed to better understand why writing has become a significant challenge in Bangladesh and how scaffolding could serve as an effective teaching tool to address this issue.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Writing has always been an ongoing problem for people studying languages in general, and especially for those learning English as a second language. It is a crucial skill for achieving success in academics, yet it can be quite challenging to become proficient at. "Writing acts as a medium for a person to express ones ideas emotionally or academically in a written form. The act of writing is a cognitive process that comprehends artistic and creative ideas and mechanical skills (Almobarraz, 2017; Yang, 2016; Dorn & Soffos, 2001, as cited in Yunus, Hashim, Pazilah, Rusadzeli, Bolkan & Dineswari, 2019)"(p.69). The lack of proficient writing skills among students in Bangladesh's educational system is a concerning issue with potential future implications. As English is commonly taught as a second language in Bangladesh, students often encounter difficulties due to the significant differences between their native language, Bangla, and English. This difficulty arises due to various factors such as limited exposure to the English language, differences in grammatical rules between their native language and English. Students in Bangladesh in their writing encompass a restricted range of words, inadequate grasp of grammar, struggles in arranging thoughts coherently, and a deficiency in self-assurance regarding their ability to articulate thoughts effectively. Moreover, they face limited opportunities to practice writing adequately. The time constraints in

government schools prioritize syllabus coverage over skill development, leaving students without sufficient guidance. According to Sidky (2019) “Students find difficulty when they are asked to write about a specific topic especially when they are given no assistance. This could be due to number of factors among which are consistent method for teaching writing, students are memorizing paragraphs by heart, then recalling them when asked to rewrite about it on exam”( p.963). The educational approach in Bangladesh heavily revolves around exams, books, and results, hindering the development of active and independent learners. This has a detrimental effect on students' confidence. Numerous individuals experience a sense of inadequacy when attempting to learn English in an environment where it is not the primary language. This often results in feelings of shyness and a lack of self-confidence. Consequently, they rely fully on textbooks and teachers rather than attempting self-guided practice. Teachers can also be held responsible for their students' inadequate ability to write because many of them prioritize grammatical elements in writing above properly instructing students to develop their writing skills. The teacher only discusses the materials with the students without any care that the students understand the materials or not (Kaur et al., 2020, as cited in Widiana & Husein 2021). Consequently, educators might fail to fully recognize the significance of nurturing creativity and critical thinking within the writing processes of their students.

Students with poor writing skills are unable to engage in successful classroom writing. In order to write meaningfully and accurately in English, they need adequate help and practice. It is vital for educators to address these issues and provide the necessary support and instruction to assist students in resolving their writing difficulties. Several techniques have been developed to captivate ESL learners and amplify their linguistic abilities. Addressing this issue requires a shift in teaching methodologies. Instead of encouraging rote memorization, teachers should adopt an instructive and guiding role. They must furnish abundant resources, allocate time for

collaborative activities, and offer constructive feedback. Prioritizing active learning methods is essential. Scaffolding emerges as a highly influential and effective strategy, producing outstanding results for students ranging from novices to those in higher secondary school. “The term Scaffolding refers to providing contextual support by the teacher through simplified language, showing visual and graphics, clues, and giving them hand on learning experiences” (Ovando & Combs, Cited in Mohani et al, 2020, cited in Lhadon & Wangmo, 2022). Ahmed, Rahman, Hossain and Tambi (2022) “Scaffolding emerged from the sociocultural theory developed by Russian Psychologist Lev Vygotsky” (p.292) the core concept of constructivism is that learning happens when students actively create their own knowledge of the outside world. This theory suggests that learners build upon their prior knowledge and experiences to construct new understandings. It highlights the value of social contact and collaboration in the learning process, as learners can benefit from the direction and assistance of more knowledgeable peers. (Lhadon and Wangmo, 2022) also stated that the process of scaffolding instruction involves assisting the learner until they are capable of using the knowledge on their own. In this learning method knowledge is actively built by the learner rather than passively received from the instructor. While it's less common in Bangladesh, its effective application could revolutionize teaching and learning dynamics. Implementing scaffolding demands proper classroom infrastructure, manageable class sizes, ample time, technological resources, and crucially, comprehensive teacher training. At present, educators face a significant hurdle due to their limited training in the realm of scaffolding. This lack of training not only makes the task more difficult for educators but also hinders students' learning experience. Furthermore, without proper guidance on scaffolding techniques, educators may struggle to effectively support diverse learners in their classrooms. However, once these requirements are met, scaffolding emerges as an ideal approach to boost writing skills in Bangladesh's education system.

In conclusion, the prevailing inadequacies in writing skills among Bangladeshi students require urgent attention. The shift towards scaffold teaching methods offers a promising solution. By embracing this approach and providing the necessary resources and training, educators can help students develop proficient writing skills, ultimately enhancing their overall English language capabilities.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

In the world of education, the quest for creative and successful teaching methods is an ongoing journey. As I explored various approaches to teaching, one method that stood out for its potential to transform the learning process is scaffolding. Despite being less discussed in current research, the idea of scaffolding shows great promise in improving writing skills. The lack of in-depth studies in this area, combined with the novelty of the scaffolding teaching method, has motivated me to explore its potential and make a meaningful contribution to education.

Usually, teachers teach in one way for everyone, but that might not work for every student. Scaffolding, however, aligns with a student-focused approach that acknowledges the importance of personalized guidance and support. This method, inspired by Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), recognizes that students learn better when given suitable assistance that bridges the gap between their current skills and their potential. While scaffolding's effectiveness is well-documented in various contexts, its application in teaching writing remains relatively unexplored.

Current research on scaffolding mainly concentrates on subjects like math, science, and language acquisition, leaving a noticeable gap in its use for writing. This gap presents a chance

for researchers to uncover how scaffolding can significantly enhance writing skills. By conducting thorough investigations, educators and researchers can not only expand the theoretical understanding of scaffolding but also shed light on its practical benefits for teaching writing.

The unfamiliarity of the scaffolding teaching method among educators and students is a challenge that needs addressing. It's crucial to bridge this knowledge gap so that teachers and learners can benefit from this innovative approach that improves writing outcomes. My research aims to highlight the advantages of using scaffolding in writing instruction and provide practical ways to implement it. This effort will introduce the method to a wider audience, piquing interest and making its adoption smoother. Moreover, the potential impact of scaffolding on students' writing skills is substantial. Writing involves intricate cognitive processes, from generating ideas to arranging them coherently. Scaffolding offers a structured framework that guides students through these steps, promoting gradual improvement and boosting their confidence. This approach encourages active involvement, critical thinking, and problem-solving, skills that are vital not only for writing effectively but also for continuous learning.

I have chosen to focus on the effectiveness of scaffolding as a teaching method for enhancing writing skills due to the existing gap in research, the untapped potential of scaffolding in writing, and the need to introduce this valuable method to educators and students. Through this research, I hope to contribute to education discussions, equip educators with a potent teaching tool, and empower students with the abilities they need to become skilled writers and lifelong learners. With thorough research and sharing of findings, I aimed to discover a more effective and student-centered approach to teaching writing comprehension.

## **1.4 Purpose**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to uncover the key obstacles that language learners encounter during their higher secondary level education, hindering the development of their writing abilities. This study examines ineffective teaching approaches in educational settings, along with minimal teacher engagement. Various hindrances include deficient grammar usage, limited vocabulary, spelling errors, low confidence, language background, insufficient writing practice time, and fear of mistakes. These factors impede students from becoming proficient writers. The study also aims to assess the impact of utilizing scaffolding techniques to enhance students writing skill. This research endeavours to investigate the effectiveness of employing scaffolding instruction as a pedagogical approach to foster the advancement of writing proficiency among students at the higher secondary level within the educational framework of Bangladesh. To achieve these goals, the study is grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which places a strong emphasis on the utilization of scaffolding instruction as a teaching strategy. This theoretical framework guided the research in comprehending the dynamics of student learning and the role of instructional support. The research methodology involves gathering data through interviews conducted with both students and teachers at the higher secondary level. By engaging with these participants, the study aims to gain deeper insights into the challenges students face and the strategies teachers employ to provide support. In addition, the study digs into the pivotal role of teachers in delivering effective scaffolding instruction. It explores how teachers can facilitate learning by providing appropriate guidance and support, in line with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Furthermore, the research examines the influence of peer collaboration on the enhancement of writing proficiency. This aspect of the study seeks to understand how collaborative efforts among students can positively impact their writing skills, potentially serving as an additional avenue for improvement. Ultimately,

the findings of this study hold the potential to contribute significantly to the refinement of teaching methods and interventions aimed at bolstering writing skills among students at the higher secondary level in Bangladesh. By identifying the barriers students face and investigating the potential benefits of scaffolding instruction and peer collaboration, this research strives to enhance the overall quality of education and empower students to become more proficient writers.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

In this study, the researcher attempted to address the following research questions:

- a. What are the most significant challenges that students face in terms of their writing ability?
- b. How effective is scaffolding instruction in enhancing writing skills among students at the higher secondary level of the Bangladesh education system?

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Difficulties Students Face Regarding Writing Ability**

Writing is the art of expressing thoughts, ideas, and information through language and symbols. It enables communication, fostering self-expression, knowledge sharing, and convey messages to others. To articulate thoughts effectively, writers must employ their imagination and creativity to arrange ideas into coherent written form. Wangmo (2018) states “ writing is one of the ultimate ways through which students get to discover, build ideas and express numerous forms of knowledge” (p.2). It is a required skill for all students because it is a determinant of both academic and professional success. Academic writing demands students to write from a formal standpoint, following all writing norms, and utilizing the proper manner of citation when presenting proof for statements. Furthermore, Writing serves a crucial role in assessing students, especially in exams, enabling them to demonstrate acquired knowledge uniquely (Carvalho, 2005, cited in Vonna, Mukminationien & Laksmi, 2015). However, “Writing is the most challenging skills to be learnt and to be taught in ESL classroom” (Jusun and Md Yunus 2018, p.470 as cited in Aziz et al., 2019, p.452). Students who do not have adequate writing skills in general, may struggle to write in academic writing (Sayidina, 2010, as cited in Ankawi, 2020). Al Fadda (2012) found out in his study that “the main challenges ESL students encounter are differentiating between written and spoken words and phrases, reviewing grammar including subject-verb agreement and joining sentences together to make a coherent paragraph” (as cited in Badi, 2015,p .66). This challenge arises because students often struggle to apply the rules of grammar correctly in their writing, leading to errors in sentence structure and clarity. As Grammar is vital in building structured writing, students need a deep understanding for effective communication. On the other hand, the complexity of the English language can make it more difficult for ESL students to understand and use advanced grammar concepts, further hindering their ability to write effectively. The common knowledge of

grammar, which makes it challenging to organize effective writing, is the main challenge that students have while writing about grammar (Bahri & Sugeng, 2010, cited in Suvin 2020). This issue may arise from a tendency to memorize grammar rules rather than understanding them. Writing evolves through practice, feedback, and revision, aiding students in honing skills and comprehending subject matter deeply (Carson & Kavish, 2018). Students rarely engage in written communication outside of the classroom environment, and their writing is predominantly confined to educational settings like classroom or examination hall. For individuals who are not yet proficient, the act of writing can pose considerable demands. The obstacles they confront during the writing process have the potential to dissuade them from pursuing further practice. As a result, these students become anxious about their writing abilities (Piamsai, 2020). This anxiety can lead to a lack of confidence in their writing skills, causing them to avoid writing tasks altogether. Additionally, the fear of making mistakes or receiving negative feedback can further hinder their progress and motivation to improve. According to study findings by Ibnian (2017) Jordanian EFL students most frequently struggled with "lack of ideas," then "the incorrect use of writing mechanics", "the lack of clear assessment instruments and marking schemes", "the unsuitable methods of teaching writing", and "vocabulary restriction", "topic inappropriateness" and "lack of materials for consulting", "grammar difficulties", and "the lack of teacher's help". Tabib (2022) observed similar flaws in his study, such as a lack of ideas, a lack of grammatical and lexical expertise, adequate organization, and spelling and punctuation issues. Another study presented by Suvin (2020) reveals that writing complexity varies among the school's students. They appear to struggle greatly with academic style, grammar, and vocabulary. Many studies in this field have consistently shown that learners often struggle with two main challenges when developing their writing: a lack of vocabulary knowledge and difficulties with grammar. These issues hinder their ability to construct coherent sentences and effectively organize their thoughts in written

form. As a result, when students are asked to showcase their creativity and critical thinking in academic writing, a majority of them tend to struggle and fail to attain academic success. Adequate time must be allocated in classrooms for learners to cultivate their writing skills, enabling effective communication in both real-life and academic scenarios (Syarifah & Gunawan, 2016; Ismail, 2011, cited in Yunus et al., 2019). Another study findings by (Ahmed, 2019) shows that grammar, organizing ideas, and punctuation remain the greatest difficulties for students, with mapping resulting as the most challenging writing technique. Similar to this, another study found that learners struggled with vocabulary register, thought organization, grammar, spelling, and referencing (Al-Khasawneh, 2010). This may be due to students' lack of understanding of the basics of writing, a lack of practice, traditional teaching methods, and their weak academic backgrounds. (Peter and Singaravelu, 2021) identified in their study a number of issues with vocabulary choice, spelling, grammar, syntax, and punctuation. Spelling mistakes are another issue that prevents students from writing a perfect piece of writing. Most students fail to attain academic success because of this problem. As they often make mistakes in spelling while writing, they receive low grades even though they have written a good piece of writing. In addition to these issues, the study also found the overlap of content, mother tongue interference, and genre identification. Based on AlMarwani (2020) findings of his study, the problems students encounter are mainly filled into one of the following categories: Language, academic writing, and source management skills. A Study conducted by (Al - Khsawneh, 2010) teaching and learning the necessary writing skills is a significant challenge for both teacher and student, particularly for students, who must deal with their limitations in using the language that they have just learned as well as the grammatical regulations of English itself (Isnain, Saukah & Prayogo, 2017). “Traditional methodologies in teaching writing do not help a lot. Unless the teacher is able to create an interest in the minds of the learners, the teacher can’t expect the desired results” (Ibnian, 2017, p.197). (Ahmed, et al., 2022) explored

that this traditional method of instruction and learning discourages students from participating actively in learning activities and hinders the growth of their higher-order thinking abilities. (Daud, Din and Alsaqqaf, 2018) revealed that in the Malaysian educational setting, students often view writing through a traditional lens, adhering to established rules and specific structures. Instead of having the freedom to express themselves openly in their writing, learners are often guided by predetermined writing models. Saudi students' familiarity with passive learning in Saudi Arabia, results in drawbacks such as poor reading, writing, and particularly academic writing skills, along with limited confidence in English language immersion (Ankawi, 2020). According to Widiani and Husein (2021) teachers face a variety of difficulties, including students' different levels of academic achievement, their lack of interest in exciting classroom activities, their limited vocabulary, and the difficulty of encouraging them. According to the observations, Rimawati and Heramyawati (2020) found in their study that the students had difficulties with writing skills and were less motivated to write. Furthermore, the researcher discovered that the teacher's technique was neither interesting nor effective for the students. This implies that the students needed a fresh instructional approach that would be efficient and offer continuous assistance to students during their learning journey. According to several research, a lack of teachers' pedagogical understanding in writing, as well as a failure to choose the correct technique to teach writing, is another factor that contributes to the production of incompetent writers among ESL students (Yunus and Chan, 2016, as cited in Aziz et al., 2019, p.452). Examining teaching methodologies within diverse contexts is crucial for their effective integration into classroom management, ensuring a seamless alignment between the teaching and learning processes. This alignment is not only desirable but also attainable (Majid & Stapa, 2017 cited in Yunus et al., 2019).

Throughout the course of history, a variety of instructional approaches have been developed within the realm of education. These methods encompass diverse strategies aimed at facilitating effective learning experiences. Examples of these methodologies include the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audio-Lingual approach, as well as the concept of Scaffolding. Each of these techniques has played a distinct role in shaping the landscape of pedagogy over time. According to (Hassen, Adugna and Bogale, 2023) several innovations in the history of second and foreign language education have occurred in order to better teaching methodologies and strategies. However, there are still vigorous discussions around the world about the best teaching methods and instructional practices.

## **2.2 Teacher's Role in Scaffolding Strategy**

Teachers occupy a pivotal position in cultivating the capabilities of students, and their importance is undeniable in the realm of imparting knowledge and fostering growth. However, in the context of Bangladeshi education, the prevailing teacher-centered approach often obstructs students' active learning and effective writing development due to its formal and distant nature. To address this, the concept of scaffolding teaching strategy emerges as a potent tool to enhance students' writing skills. Scaffolding in the classroom involves providing crucial support to students, helping them amplify their learning by guiding their progress and skill development. As students' learning progresses, the teacher should gradually remove their assistance (Choi & Wong, 2018). Scaffolding, when appropriately implemented, offers an avenue to bridge the gap between traditional teaching methods and more engaging, student-centered approaches. In a scaffolding learning environment, the role of the teacher evolves into that of a guide, facilitator, and mentor. This transition involves a dynamic partnership with students, aimed at nurturing gradual skill development and deep understanding. "Under the scaffolding technique, teachers and students make meaningful connections between the

teachers' cultural knowledge and the student's everyday experience and knowledge" (Hoy and Miskel, 2013 as cited in Ahmed et al., 2022, p. 292). Instead of passing on information, the teacher acts as a mentor, facilitator, and co-investigator who encourages students to think critically, engage in discussion, and develop their own opinion (Weegar and Pacis, 2012 cited in Ahmed et.al., 2022).

In the Scaffolding classroom scenario, the teacher is a collaborator as well as a person who instructs, explains, and gives the students tasks. Together with the students, the teachers discussed a writing prompt. Veerappan (2011) claims, Scaffolding in the classroom allows students to develop their imaginations, enthusiasm, and freedom while studying. When a student needs help in order to reach a certain level of understanding, the teacher simultaneously gives them the necessary supports students would not feel isolated or inferior in the classroom. During the process of scaffolding, educators assist students in directing their attention towards understanding the extent and clear definition of the problem presented within the given task (Nguyen, 2022). Teachers break down the writing process into small steps and explain it to them. Walqui (2006) states that educators must communicate the learning process to students, particularly crucial for English learners who often feel confused. Teachers should validate their struggles and strategically guide them through tasks, especially those involving intricate language, using temporary scaffolding that is gradually withdrawn as students become more capable. This can reduce students' anxiety and uncertainty about writing. Students can work on their writing under the guidance of the teacher or through collaborative activities that foster a sense of empowerment among learners. As students progressively master the subject matter, their confidence in independent application of knowledge flourishes. The teacher's role extends to offering feedback, error correction, and constructive suggestions. Furthermore, utilizing students' prior knowledge and experiences imbues the writing task with relevance and

engagement. "In this practice, the teachers step by step provide the students with adequate instruction so that the students can learn the procedure, and the teachers eventually give up the help of the students in order to pass the responsibility to the learners to complete the assignment" (Faraj, 2015, as cited in Widianana & Husein, 2021, p.31). "Scaffolding is that which gives support to a building under construction until it is strong enough to stand on its own. The situation is similar when a more capable person gives support to a student until he/she is able to achieve an academic goal. The support is provided only when the child needs it and until the child catches on" (Pressley, 2002, as cited in Sidky, 2019, p. 964). Gillies and Boyle (2006) classified teacher behaviors into six categories: control, involving instruction and lecturing; questioning, aimed at eliciting expected responses; discipline, including student reprimands; mediation, encompassing prompts, scaffolding, and open questions; encouragement, acknowledging student efforts; and maintenance, aiding learning and group facilitation.

Recognizing that language support is crucial, particularly in Bangladesh where English is used as a second language. "The purpose of teachers is to create and stimulate the writing process so that students feel comfortable writing" (Suvini, 2020, p.66). "Scaffolding is an instructional technique whereby the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task and then gradually shifts responsibility to the students" (Veerappan, 2011, p.934) Teacher influence is crucial for fostering student thinking, as quality of their discussions predicts learning outcomes. . In this context, teachers craft learning experiences and facilitate critical thinking. (Chakraborty, 2021) discovered that theories enable teachers to use a variety of student-centered activities when instructing writing skills in addition to numerous assessment tasks that gauge students' higher order thinking skill (HOTS) and lower order thinking skill (LOTS).

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In scaffolding learning setting, students actively participate in their own learning journey, taking ownership and seeking guidance as necessary. They collaborate with peers and voice their difficulties, thus fostering a self-directed learning process. They engage with the support provided by teachers and internalize concepts, ultimately diminishing their reliance on scaffolding as proficiency grows. With repeated demonstrations, students engage by asking more questions which enhance teaching (Daud et al., 2018). Essentially, the teacher serves as a scaffold, offering guidance, while students actively interact, explore, and construct knowledge. Over time, as students become adept, the scaffolding is gradually phased out, leaving them with a robust foundation for independent understanding. This collaborative approach not only encourages active learning and critical thinking but also ensures lasting retention of knowledge.

### **2.3 Scaffolding and its Impact in Writing**

Scaffolding is based on a sociocultural theory developed by Lev Vygotsky (1978), who proposed that in the process of learning and development, students require the assistance of a "more knowledgeable other adult or peer" as an addition to what they can do on their own. In other words, it's referred to as a zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Chaiklin, 2003; Orey, 2010; Shabani et al., 2010, as cited in Widiani & Husein, 2021). ZPD is the difference between students' actual developmental level and their potential level of development as they work together with more capable peers or under competent supervision to solve problems (Knapp & Watkins, 2005 as cited in Isnaini, Saukah & Prayogo, 2015). According to Tabib (2022) Scaffolding entails providing students with the necessary guidance and advice in order for them to improve their knowledge and abilities and approach the desired mastery level. Scaffolding builds students' confidence by creating a supportive environment that encourages risk-taking

and learning from mistakes, as well as assisting Students in becoming active and independent learners. Rimawati and Hermayawati (2020) explores that Students are able to ask questions, share feedback, and assist their colleagues in learning new content in a scaffold learning environment. When a teacher uses scaffolding in the classroom, he or she becomes more of a mentor and knowledge facilitator rather than the dominant content authority. According to a study by (Vonna, et al., 2015) make sure that the use of scaffolding techniques improves the students' writing achievement based on the research's findings. It is also mentioned that students who received instruction using scaffolding strategies scored better on writing assignments than students who received instruction without using scaffolding strategies. This teaching technique provides the support for students to take a more active role in their own learning. It entails assessing prior knowledge, offering hints, modeling, group writing, peer collaboration, and fostering independent learning in a distinct manner. By adopting this approach, teachers empower Bangladeshi students to progressively develop their writing abilities, fostering cognitive skills, self-efficacy, and self-worth.

Writing through scaffolding refers to the process of providing guidance to help a writer develop their ideas, organize their thoughts, and produce a coherent piece of writing. This approach is often used in educational settings to assist students in improving their writing skills. Developing strong writing skills in English as a Second Language (ESL) can be a complex journey. It includes several important steps like coming up with ideas, writing multiple drafts, getting feedback, making improvements, and final editing (Yunus et al., 2019). In a scaffolding approach to teaching writing, a strategic integration of various writing steps is employed to offer structured support and guidance throughout the writing process. According to (Gashaye and Muchie, 2021) scaffolding writing is an excellent strategy for teaching writing skills when combined with stages of process writing. A teacher's role in teaching writing involves selecting

appropriate tasks, fostering confidence, and providing feedback on grammar, syntax, and paragraph development during student revisions, promoting overall writing improvement. The ultimate objective is to facilitate a gradual shift from heavy reliance on the teacher's assistance to fostering independent writing skills in students.

The findings of a study presented by (Lhadon & Wangmo, 2022) scaffolding Instruction has been recognized as one of the promising strategies for improving students' essay writing skills, as it boosts students' confidence when the teacher provides constant guidance and support. He also discovered that by providing consistent direction and constructive feedback to students through Scaffolding Instruction, they improve in all writing attributes such as concept, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, convention, and presentation. Another study by Wulandari et al., (2014) found that Scaffolding teaching techniques can improve students' writing skills in terms of developing the information/ideas appropriate with the topic provided, organizing a text, using precise vocabulary appropriate with the topic provided, using grammatical patterns and sentence patterns appropriate with text, spelling the words correctly, and using appropriate punctuation. The study's findings demonstrated the value of the scaffolding teaching method in enhancing students' writing abilities and classroom dynamics.

Writing process involves eight steps: pre-writing, planning, drafting, self-reflection, peer review, revision, and thorough editing/proofreading (Coffin et al., 2003, as cited in Widian & Husein, 2021). During pre-writing, students brainstorm ideas, gather information, and choose a topic. In the planning phase, students organize ideas into a structured outline. Drafting as the phase during which learners possess the ability to generate their own written content (Donohue, 2009, cited in Suvin). After completing the first draft, students take some time to review the

work. Sharing the draft with others and receiving feedback is also essential in this process. Peers can provide valuable insights, catch errors that students might have missed, and offer suggestions for improvement. Based on the feedback from self-reflection and peer review, make necessary changes to the draft. In feedback debriefing sessions, students often rely on peer guidance and clarification, and occasionally utilize their native language as a means to facilitate the revision process (Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996, as cited in Sidky, 2019). To effectively implement scaffolding instruction, educators should embody eight key characteristics: (1) offering clear guidance, (2) articulating purpose, (3) maintaining focus, (4) using assessments for clarification, (5) guiding towards valuable resources, (6) minimizing uncertainty, (7) optimizing efficiency, and (8) fostering momentum (Jamie McKenzie, 2000, as cited in Rimawati & Hermayawati, 2020).

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory emphasizes scaffolding as a crucial element in learning. Scaffolding involves collaborative and active learning within a social context, with peers and more knowledgeable individuals guiding learners. Positive reinforcement and peer feedback further enhance this interactive, cooperative learning process. By integrating the principles of collaborative learning and active learning while incorporating effective habit-forming techniques, educators can expertly scaffold students to enhance their writing abilities. This approach nurtures a dynamic educational environment where students are empowered to refine their writing skills through shared efforts and engaged participation.

Through collaborative learning, students collaboratively explore diverse perspectives and collectively develop a richer understanding of effective writing strategies. According to Gillies and Boyle (2006) study, the adoption of cooperative learning by teachers leads to an increase in facilitative learning interactions. These interactions play a crucial role in shaping

understanding and promoting effective learning outcomes. The collaborative learning approach encompasses a collective effort among students, occasionally assisted by educators, to engage in intellectual endeavors. This approach commonly revolves around resolving challenges or generating outcomes by delving into resources and applying them, all the while minimizing the reliance on a teacher's extensive knowledge (Gerry, 2003, as cited in Yunus et al., 2019). It fosters collaboration learning that encourages teamwork and peer group talk; concrete suggestions and questions; coaching; visual signals or modeling (Orey, 2010; cited in Widiana & Husein, 2021).

Simultaneously, active learning methods encourage students to immerse themselves in hands-on writing exercises, fostering a proactive approach that boosts their critical thinking and creativity. Active Learning is typically described as an instructional approach that engages students actively in their learning endeavors. It encourages them to participate in meaningful tasks that go beyond mere compliance with instructions, fostering a thoughtful reflection on their actions and the potential outcomes that stem from them (Gerald, 1999, as cited in Yunus et al., 2019).

Moreover, the integration of habit-forming strategies instills consistency and discipline within students' writing routines. By establishing writing as a habitual practice, educators help students internalize the process and make it an integral part of their academic journey. This fusion of collaborative learning, active learning, and habit formation ensures that students not only refine their writing skills but also cultivate a lifelong appreciation for effective communication.

Effective scaffolding involves employing a task-oriented method when working with learners to achieve successful outcomes and learning. A pedagogical method centered on tasks in language teaching fosters the active participation of learners throughout their learning journey. It grants them the liberty to delve into their thoughts without being overly concerned about errors linked to the technical elements of writing. Schwieter (2010) observed scaffolding as integral to problem-based language teaching, emphasizing collaborative learner interaction for task accomplishment. Both scaffolding and task-based teaching aim to contextualize learning, prioritize task-centered language development, and emphasize meaningful communication (Nunn, 2001, as cited in Damanhour, 2021). A study by Piamsai (2020) showed that post-test scores in all areas of writing proficiency—task completion, organization, lexical variety, and structural variety and accuracy—had significantly improved. The students' views toward the usage of scaffolding in the writing lesson were likewise positive. Lhadon and Wangmo (2022) identified Scaffolding Instruction as a promising strategy for enhancing students' essay writing skills. The study showed that consistent guidance and support from teachers through Scaffolding Instruction boosted students' confidence. They improved across all writing attributes, including concept, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, convention, and presentation. Scaffolding supports students in mastering vocabulary, grammar, and thought organization, fostering independent learning via step-by-step guidance. Scaffolding, an active learning method, utilizes tools like vocabulary lists, sentence starters, and graphic organizers to support students in creating coherent and proficient written pieces autonomously. According to Yunus et al., (2019) the scaffolding technique is appreciated by the majority of respondents, and nearly all felt that it helps writing instruction. Because it considerably benefits in the development of writing skills, the majority of students prefer to improve their writing lessons using this technique. Similarly, the findings of Ikawati (2020) study revealed that scaffolding may be employed as a teacher method to develop students' writing skills by incorporating the

writing process in the genre-based approach that represents the scaffolding. It demonstrates how the teacher gradually withdraws his assistance as the students gain experience carrying out the activity.

## **2.4 Scaffolding in Bangladesh**

The education system in Bangladesh presents its own set of challenges, particularly when it comes to writing skills. The whole educational system places a heavy emphasis on rote memorization and standardized testing. As a result, there is often insufficient attention given to developing critical thinking, creativity, and effective communication skills, including writing. Students are often taught to reproduce information rather than to engage in analytical thinking and articulate their thoughts coherently in writing. Many students in Bangladeshi governmental schools have writing skills that fall below the expected level for their academic stage. This gap between their actual writing abilities and the required proficiency often leads to feelings of anxiety, stress, and self-doubt. As a result, when compared to their peers of a similar age, they may feel inadequate in terms of their writing ability. (Chakraborty, 2021) claimed that Students lack sufficient English writing practice. Also, many students struggle to enhance their writing due to a lack of proper guidance. They face challenges in organizing their thoughts and expressing them effectively on paper. Often, they overly focus on grammar errors instead of the right context, causing issues in creating suitable sentences due to overthinking grammatical structure. This can hamper their academic advancement and ability to communicate well in professional settings. Suvin (2020) stated “Less qualified secondary students face real - life challenges and socio – economic obstacles” (p.65). According to the study findings by Naseem, Shahab-ud-Din Shah, Shafiq and Aqeel's, (2021) grammar remains a significant barrier for learners as they have trouble with complex grammatical structures, verb tenses, and subject-verb agreement. The study also revealed that students struggle to express

themselves, have a limited vocabulary, find the right words, organize their writing coherently, and construct sentences. As a result, the learners' writing style and organization are impacted by the differences in culture and rhetoric between English and their native tongue.

In Bangladesh, the curriculum and teaching methods promote an active teaching approach. However, in practice, there is still a tendency to rely on the traditional teaching approach, either intentionally or unintentionally. This can hinder students from becoming active learners. .“In most EFL contexts, writing is taught with a traditional practice-examination oriented approach based on summative assessment, which seeks to assess student attainment of predetermined learning outcomes.” (Mohammadi, 2018, as cited in Damanhour, 2021, p, 49). Assessment methods that prioritize memorization of information over original thought and coherent writing can hinder students' motivation to develop strong writing skills. Additionally, inconsistent and subjective grading practices may discourage students from making efforts to enhance their writing abilities. Traditional teaching learning practice often leaves little room for students to actively engage with the material or practice their writing skills through assignments, projects, or discussions.

Teachers employing traditional methods merely convey information and rules, leaving students passive in Arabic classrooms. Such outdated approaches hinder active engagement, discouraging discussion, internet research, and academic writing readiness (Yiu, 2009, cited in Ankawi, 2020). According to (Mojumder, 2022) in Bangladesh, education quality and skills were lacking. This problem has persisted because students are not fully involved, they often miss classes, and both students and teachers don't spend much time on campus. So, it makes sense to move away from the old way of teaching where the teacher talks a lot, and instead use methods that focus more on the students. This could help improve how things are taught and learned.

Many ESL teachers worldwide find teaching writing more challenging than the other skills. It's demanding for both teachers and students due to language limitations and unfamiliar English conventions. Ankawi (2020) delved into the notion that teachers might experience a lack of self-assurance when it comes to instructing spoken or written English due to the fact that a significant portion of English educators are not native speakers of the language. Students struggle with newly acquired language and English writing norms (Isnaini, Saukah & Prayogo, 2017). However, Teachers and researchers utilize various strategies to teach writing skills to individuals who are learning English as a second language. But the outcomes is still unsatisfactory. It's important to closely examine the methods employed by teachers in teaching writing in order to improve the situation (Aziz et al., 2019).

To tackle this issue, educators require a teaching approach that fosters students' self-assurance in independent writing and encourages them to take on a proactive role in their learning. Among the various teaching methods available, one approach that is receiving acclaim for its effective instructional style is known as scaffolding. Scaffolding is commonly understood as the skill to take on the role of an expert in creating helpful learning settings that support students. This method is gradually replacing the traditional teaching techniques of the past, aiming to enhance the learning experience by promoting interaction rather than isolation. Over the past few decades, scaffolding has been a promising and a beneficial technique used in teaching and learning, and it is indeed that the metaphor of scaffolding has been used as the name of a theoretical construct in education in general and particularly in language teaching (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018; DeCapua, 2018 as cited in Yunus et al., 2019, p. 71). A study findings by Erdil's (2019) explores that that scaffolding works well to engage and motivate students while they are learning. Students are encouraged to build on what they have learnt to go into something they don't know about. Scaffolding, when effectively integrated into the

Bangladeshi educational landscape, promises substantial improvements in teaching, learning, particularly in writing.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) stands as a prominent figure among Russian psychologists whose concepts have left a lasting impact on both educational psychology and the broader realm of education. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, cognitive development has a direct connection to the social and cultural contexts in which individuals discover themselves. Sociocultural theory has had a significant impact on the field of learning and education, leaving a significant impression on its environment. The idea promotes learning, particularly L2 acquisition, as a linguistic process that requires participation in socially mediated activities (Turuk, 2008). "Vygotsky's (1978) understanding of knowledge construction is that knowledge is created collaboratively within a social group" (Tabib, 2022, p.187). "Vygotsky's social theory advocates that learning takes place in a social community where more capable adults provide needed assistance" (Sidky, 2019, p.964).

"The concept of scaffolding derives from Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development or ZPD, which refers to the amount of learning that learners can achieve with assistance or guidance (Vygotsky, 1978)" (Piamsai, 2020,p.290). The theory emphasizes the crucial role of "scaffolding," where a skilled mentor or a peer with greater expertise engages in active and supportive interactions with a learner. This scaffolding process helps learners gradually acquire new knowledge and skills, allowing them to achieve higher levels of cognitive functioning. According to Vygotsky's perspective, the concept of scaffolding highlights that learning occurs through engagement with both peers and individuals possessing a greater depth of knowledge, such as teachers (Gibbons, 2015, as cited in Hassen et al., 2023) . Scaffolding, within the

sociocultural framework, is similar to providing a sturdy support structure for a building under construction. It involves tailoring the level of assistance to the learner's current cognitive abilities and pushing them to reach just beyond their current zone of proximal development (ZPD).

The concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), introduced by Vygotsky in 1978, refers to the gap between a student's independent abilities and their capabilities with assistance. This idea sheds light on the collaborative and interactive aspects of the teaching and learning process. The ZPD, a cornerstone of sociocultural theory, represents the range of tasks that a learner can perform with the guidance and support of a knowledgeable individual. It is through this collaborative engagement that the learner is challenged to engage in more complex activities and, over time, internalizes the cognitive tools necessary to tackle similar tasks independently (Vygotsky, 1978). "It is 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 capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Walqui, 2006, p. 162). Vygotsky (1981) posited that a child's journey through socialization involves active engagement in communal activities. This initial stride towards becoming an integral part of a collective culture necessitates the child's interaction with fellow community members. In this learning environment enhances the learner's cognitive development.

Sociocultural theory by Lev Vygotsky presents a robust framework for understanding how individuals develop cognitively within their sociocultural environments. Scaffolding, a pivotal concept within this theory, embodies the collaborative process through which learners are guided and supported in their journey toward independent cognitive functioning.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Methodology**

The theoretical framework for this research is drawn upon the sociocultural theory proposed by Lev Vygotsky. This theoretical perspective is used to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. By drawing upon this theoretical perspectives, the research provided a comprehensive understanding of how students can learn and develop their writing skills through the implementation of scaffolding techniques that encompass collaborative learning, social interactions, positive reinforcement, and the utilization of engaging tasks tailored to their individual needs and interests.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

The study followed a qualitative research approach as the research objectives aim to study the relationship between the difficulties students face during developing writing skill and how scaffolding can be an effective method to address this issue. Qualitative research is like exploring and learning about a topic thoroughly to grasp all the intricate details it holds. It's concerned with understanding context, culture, and the subjective experiences of individuals. Qualitative researchers aim to comprehend the social world through participant perspectives, focusing on contextualized event meanings. They seek narrative-based meaning and understanding, delving deeply into topics by involving those experiencing them. This approach constructs theories and employs inductive reasoning, with findings emerging from data. This type of research relies on data collecting methods such as interviews, focus groups, participant observations, case studies, and content analysis. These methods provide rich and detailed data that can capture in-depth and delicate information. Qualitative data analysis involves organizing, categorizing, and interpreting the collected data. Researchers identify patterns, themes, and relationships within the data to generate meaningful insights about the problem

they are studying. Researchers typically use purposive sampling, which involves selecting participants who have relevant experiences and insights related to the research question. Qualitative research focuses on validity (whether findings accurately represent the participants' experiences) and reliability (whether the research process can be replicated to yield consistent results). Ethical considerations are crucial in qualitative research, particularly when dealing with sensitive topics or personal narratives. The aim of using this approach is to provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under study. This is why using a qualitative approach is a recognized and valid choice in my research domain.

### **3.3 Setting and Participants**

To collect data four students and four teachers from two higher secondary schools in Bangladesh, both urban and rural, were chosen to participate. The choice of participants was based on the availability of willing individuals, making it easy to create a suitable sample for the study. Once the participants expressed their willingness to participate, they were approached for data collection. Individuals were personally contacted and provided with an overview of the study's intentions and how data would be gathered. Ample opportunity was given for them to ask questions and discuss any problems they might have had. It was clarified that taking part was their choice, and if they chose not to participate or decided to stop during the study. The participants were chosen because they are the primary source of information about the difficulties they face while developing writing skills, what they lack and need to develop their writing skills, and why their opinion is that scaffolding can be a significant teaching method that will help them in both teaching and writing.

An essential part of this research is to make sure that ethical standards are followed diligently. I have put specific measures in place to protect the privacy and confidentiality of

the people participating in this study. The identities of the teachers who are taking part in the research kept

Completely confidential including their names or any personal information about them. This is to safeguard their privacy and ensure they feel comfortable participating. Likewise, the names of the schools involved in the study remained confidential. The name of the schools are revealed which is to protect their privacy and reputation.

In addition, fictitious names are used for all the participants, teachers, and schools throughout the research. This means that no real personal information was shared or exposed during the study. This extra step is taken to ensure the utmost privacy protection for everyone involved.

### **3.3.1 Information about the Teachers**

I have conducted interviews with one teacher from a rural college and three other teachers from an urban college. I chose both areas to identify the similarities and dissimilarities in their teaching approaches. I also aimed to understand how their teaching styles vary and whether the problems they face regarding teaching writing to students differ due to their rural and urban backgrounds.

**Table 01**

| <b>Participants</b> | <b>Institution</b> | <b>Education</b>                           | <b>Experience</b> |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Teacher 01          | College A (rural)  | MA in English Literature & B.Ed.           | 15 years          |
| Teacher 02          | College B (urban)  | MA in English Literature & Language        | 4 years           |
| Teacher 03          | College B (urban)  | MA in English Literature,<br>B.Ed. & M.Ed. | 23 years          |
| Teacher 04          | College B (urban)  | MA in English Literature                   | 12 years          |

As depicted in the table, all the teachers have completed their MA degrees in English. Some of them have also obtained a M.Ed., while others have undergone B.Ed. training. It's important to note that B.Ed. training is compulsory for aspiring teachers in Bangladesh

### 3.3.2 Information about the Students

I conducted interviews with four students, one from a rural college and three from urban areas, aiming to investigate whether the challenges they encounter in developing their writing skills are similar or differ based on their educational backgrounds (rural and urban).. Additionally, I sought to determine if the teaching methods employed are effective in facilitating their writing learning process. Through these interviews, I gathered substantial information about their respective writing experiences within their academic contexts, as well as their approaches to learning writing.

**Table 02**

| Participants | School            | Class |
|--------------|-------------------|-------|
| Student 01   | College X (rural) | 12    |
| Student 02   | College Y (urban) | 12    |
| Student 03   | College Y (urban) | 12    |
| Student 04   | College Y (urban) | 12    |

### 3.4 Method of Data Collection

To gather data, I conducted semi-structured interviews with both teachers and students for my study. Throughout the interviews, I made audio recordings and later transcribed them. I

verified some of the teacher interviews by discussing the content with them, ensuring the accuracy of the data.

The research questions guided the entire process of data collection and analysis. Once transcribed, I carefully analysed the data by assigning codes to different segments and identifying recurring patterns.

Through repeated review of the transcriptions, I identified common themes in the data. These themes helped address the research questions. By comparing the transcriptions, I found similarities that contribute to the answers to the research questions.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

Selective research questions were addressed using qualitative data analysis.

#### **Questionnaire for students and teachers:**

**Research question 1:** What are the most significant challenges that students face in terms of their writing ability?

- Do you think your writing ability is appropriate for your academic stage?
- How do you react when your teacher assigns you to write something on your own?

#### **Questionnaire for teachers:**

**Research question 2:** How effective is scaffolding instruction in enhancing writing skills among students at the higher secondary level of the Bangladesh education system?

- What do you know about Scaffolding and its application?
- In your classroom, how do you teach writing?
- How did your journey into the teaching profession begin, and what is your background in education and teaching?

- Are you pleased with your teaching performance? If not, where do you believe you fall short as a teacher?

In qualitative research, analyzing data involves getting the information ready and structured, whether it's in the form of text (like transcripts) or images (such as photos). This information is then condensed into themes by coding, where you sort and summarize the key points. Finally, researcher presents the findings using visuals like charts, tables, or in a discussion. This process helps him/her to uncover patterns and insights from non-numerical data. It is a crucial step in understanding complex, often text-based or visual information, allowing researchers to draw meaningful conclusion.

The analysis of the transcribed data revealed five themes for coding:

1. Challenges in academic writing students' experiences,
2. Teachers' scaffolding knowledge,
3. Teaching methods,
4. Teacher's educational journey,
5. Suggestions from teachers.

## **Chapter 4: Findings, and Discussion**

### **4.1 Research Findings**

The primary objective of conducting individual interviews was to delve into the perceptions of students and teachers regarding students' writing challenges and their overall academic writing experiences. During these interviews, both students and teachers conveyed a notable level of dissatisfaction. Their dissatisfaction primarily stemmed from several key issues, with the foremost being a deficiency in academic vocabulary. This deficiency hindered their ability to effectively convey ideas and concepts in a scholarly manner.

Additionally, participants commonly expressed struggles related to grammar usage and sentence structure. Many students and teachers alike found themselves grappling with how to employ proper grammar rules and structure sentences coherently and persuasively. These challenges were consistently highlighted throughout the interviews, painting a clear picture of the difficulties faced in the realm of academic writing.

In sum, the interviews underscored the prevailing issues surrounding academic writing experiences, including the widespread lack of academic vocabulary, as well as the ongoing struggle with grammar usage and sentence structuring. These challenges collectively contribute to a sense of dissatisfaction among both students and teachers when it comes to academic writing.

#### **4.1.1 Challenges in Academic Writing Students' Experiences**

I began the interview by addressing the first research question, seeking insights from both teachers and students to gain a clear understanding of the major problems students face when it comes to writing in the Bangladeshi educational context. Their statements regarding these issues are provided below:

S1: "I often find myself struggle with spelling and vocabulary, and also face the fear of making mistakes when it comes to using the appropriate tense while constructing sentences. This fear often hinders me from fully expressing my ideas during writing practice. In my current academic level, I lack confidence. When my teachers assign a new topic for me to write about, I struggle to organize my thoughts and effectively convey my ideas through written words; additionally, I lack proper knowledge about that topic."

S2: "My main difficulty is with vocabulary usage, as my vocabulary knowledge is a bit poor. Our school has a rigid syllabus that requires us to memorize and that makes us only learn specific topics from the syllabus during exams. Unfortunately, this discourages independent writing practice and exploration."

S3: "I try to write on my own, but my limited vocabulary remains a significant barrier. It makes it difficult to properly use words to express my thoughts and ideas. My dependency on memorization for writing tasks has unintentionally fostered a fear of making mistakes. As a result, as I prepare my assignments, I feel more stress and anxiety."

S4: "I have trouble coming up with new ideas for topics, and when I try, I find it difficult to use the right words. As a result, I struggle to put together sentences in a structured way and share my thoughts. At school, teachers want us to memorize grammar rules instead of just understanding how to use grammar through practice. So, when I try to write anything, I make mistakes with grammar tenses".

The participants expressed struggles with confidence, organization, and effective communication of ideas due to insufficient knowledge of assigned topics. The rigid curriculum

emphasizing memorization over independent exploration hampers their writing practice and fosters fear of errors, leading to heightened stress and anxiety. Additionally, the emphasis on rote grammar rules, rather than practical application, contributes to persistent grammatical issues in writing. Addressing these issues necessitates a shift towards fostering critical thinking, creative expression, and a balanced approach to language learning, enabling students to become more proficient and confident writers.

T1: “Students frequently struggle with a lack of vocabulary as well as grammatical accuracy. Their anxiety comes from the fact that English is not their first language, which frequently prevents them from expressing themselves confidently in writing because they are afraid of failing.”

T2: “Students prefer memorization of grammar rules to practical application. This approach causes grammatical and vocabulary issues, which contributes to a lack of confidence in their writing abilities.”

T3: “Students rely heavily on the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), which limits their ability to develop writing confidence. The dependence on translation limits their ability to generate ideas independently during the writing process.”

T4: “As still the GTM method dominates in most educational institution students rely on teachers and books instead of actively learning on their own. This means they do not explore or practice enough by themselves.so they lack practice by their own.”

T2 and T3 also mentioned that students both emphasize a lack of proper foundational knowledge and writing practice in primary and secondary school. As a result, when they progress to higher secondary levels, they are unprepared to meet the expected writing standards. (Tardy, 2010 as cited in AL Marwani, 2020) However, although they are expected to show that they have the ability to produce quality academic writing, students are finding it challenging to do so.

T1 and T3 have pointed out a problem with students' English writing skills. They believe that since English isn't their first language, students feel hesitant to speak and write in English on their own. Additionally, students come from diverse backgrounds in terms of language, family, culture, and education. This diversity leads to a lack of confidence and motivation to practice English writing. This issue can be traced back to their past educational experiences, which haven't fully equipped them with strong writing skills.

Students tend to rely heavily on teachers, but many are too shy to discuss their writing weaknesses with them. Teachers also struggle to address each student's individual needs due to time constraints. As a result, students often resort to memorizing content from books to pass exams, which is concerning for their future prospects.

#### **4.1.2 Teachers' Scaffolding Knowledge**

T1, T2, T3, T4 all agreed that they had no idea what the term scaffolding meant in learning. After conversing with the interviewer, they became acquainted with the concept of scaffolding. Subsequently, they mentioned that while they weren't previously familiar with the term "scaffolding," they did possess an understanding of its application in the field of

education. Specifically, they recognized its potential to assist students in enhancing their writing skills. But they did not know before that there is a teaching method named scaffolding. They also stated that the predominant approach in schools, which is shared by both educators and students, is based on the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) for teaching and learning. As a result, they observed that the use of scaffolding techniques in education is still relatively limited. However, According to their understanding, the scaffolding teaching system can improve students' writing by providing gradual guidance, support and feedback.

The interviews with participant's uncovered significant issues in students' English writing skills. The primary struggle identified was grammatical weaknesses, accompanied by vocabulary and motivation gaps. The traditional Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) in education was criticized for hindering learning progress. Common issues included passivity in class, reluctance to express writing-related concerns, and a limited understanding of the writing process. Additionally, writing primarily occurred in classroom/exam settings, leaving little room for practice due to time constraints focused on content coverage. Consequently, students felt ill-prepared and uneasy about their academic English writing abilities.

#### **4.1.3 Teaching Methods**

The teachers agree that although they don't fully implement scaffolding techniques while teaching writing to their students, but they try to make efforts to incorporate it at least in a constrained manner. They recognize the value of using scaffolding strategies, yet with limitations, in their teaching approach. According to Piamsai (2020) "Scaffolding plays an important role in language instruction, and has an important role in writing development" (p.290). For instance, they encourage students to write by providing preliminary insights into the assigned topic. They help students generate ideas by holding brainstorming sessions, encouraging collaborative group and pair activities, and allowing students to share ideas and

gain knowledge collectively. Teachers provide constructive feedback and assign additional tasks that require further exploration once students have built a foundation on their own. However, this teaching methodology's practical application in the classroom is somewhat limited. This is primarily due to students' discomfort with a more innovative teaching process, which comes from their previous reliance on memorizing material from textbooks to simply pass exams. It is important to note that implementing such a teaching approach necessitates certain conditions, such as large classrooms, manageable class sizes, Enough time to instruct and practice and access to adequate teaching materials and resources. These elements work together to create an engaging and stimulating classroom environment. Schwenger (2016) asserts that “appropriate support at every level is essential for students to acquire literacy competencies and scaffold learning” (p. 73).

#### **4.1.4 Teacher's Educational Journey**

Most of the interviewed teachers had years of teaching experience and felt more comfortable with the traditional GTM method in their teaching journey than newer practical task-based methods like scaffolding. Since scaffolding was introduced recently in the Bangladeshi curriculum, teachers lacked training in this approach when they started teaching. Although completing a B.Ed. course was mandatory but the additional training were limited. Teachers mentioned that during their BA and MA studies, they didn't learn about such teaching method named scaffolding as it is new to them. Though two out of four teachers mentioned that they attempted to incorporate scaffolding in the classroom, but they faced challenges due to inadequate classroom resources and time. These teachers agreed that more comprehensive training and knowledge about this method would greatly enhance its effective implementation.

#### **4.1.5 Suggestions from Teachers:**

All the teachers agreed to the fact that they feel ill-equipped to employ the "scaffolding" teaching method effectively without adequate support and training from the government. This teaching approach demands specialized training to empower educators with the necessary skills and strategies for the effective use of scaffolding techniques into their classrooms.

Most teachers really support the idea of having a clear plan for what students should learn, especially when it comes to helping them be more creative with their writing. This kind of plan not only helps students come up with creative ideas but also fits well with the overall goals of our education system, which is to help students grow in many different ways, not just academically.

To ensure the success of the scaffolding method and the promotion of creative expression, the government must commit to providing educators with the requisite resources, training, and guidance. This investment in teacher development and curriculum enhancement will not only equip teachers to navigate this innovative approach effectively but also enable students to flourish academically and creatively. In doing so, our educational system will move closer to its overarching goals of preparing well-rounded, empowered individuals for the challenges of the future.

#### **4.1.6 Limitations of the Study**

The research involved a limited number of participants, comprising four teachers and students, exclusively from two educational institutions. However, the study's effectiveness could have been enhanced by including additional colleges, broadening the scope of the

investigation. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, the examination was confined to only two institutions.

A notable constraint of the research lies in the data collection method, which relied solely on interviews. While interviews offer valuable insights, supplementing them with actual writing samples could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the students' writing issues. Incorporating writing samples into the research methodology would allow for a more in-depth analysis.

To overcome these limitations and establish more robust findings, further extensive research is recommended. This could involve classroom observations conducted before and after implementing scaffolding as a teaching technique. This method would allow for a comprehensive assessment of the writing situation and the impact of the scaffolding approach on student writing skills. By expanding the participant pool to encompass additional colleges and employing varied data collection methods, the study's conclusions could be validated and its insights significantly enriched.

## **4.2 Recommendation**

Drawing broad conclusions from the results of this study, which involved a limited number of participants, is a challenging task. Nevertheless relevant solution or suggestion may support to some extent. The following recommendations were made based on the findings regarding how writing can be taught effectively using the scaffolding approach and how teachers as supporters can become better prepared to teach in this manner and use this method in the classroom in a more productive way to teach students writing and make them independent learners. Students receiving traditional writing instruction often struggle to compose standard paragraphs and essays. Conventional teaching methods tend to emphasize the final written

outcome over the writing process itself. This deficiency isn't limited to English; even in their native Bangla, many students lack proficiency in academic writing. By imparting fundamental writing skills and strategies, these students can not only improve their performance in exams but also develop the capacity to create coherent compositions across various subjects. The conventional teaching approach significantly contributes to students' poor writing skills. English instructors across disciplines should adopt contemporary teaching methods. Additionally, educators must create ample opportunities for students to actively engage with the language learning. Proficiency in grammar remains a crucial foundation for effective writing. Utilize techniques such as brainstorming, reading, watching films, listening to texts, or describing pictures to stimulate ideas. Provide instructions on the proper use of spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, quotation, and capitalization to enhance writing quality. Allow students to choose their own writing themes, which will foster personal interest and engagement. Allocate sufficient time for students to gather ideas, connect concepts, and engage in the various stages of writing (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing). Feedback aids student writing improvement. Weak learners should form small, teacher-supervised groups throughout their university tenure. English teachers invest substantial time in assessing and providing feedback for enhancements. Furnish classrooms with effective teaching aids and contemporary tools to inspire student-teacher English interaction and engagement.

The crucial recommendation is to prepare teachers for active, practical, and task-based teaching using scaffolding. They must receive training on this method, access necessary resources, and have optimal conditions for effective implementation. Encouraging increased use of scaffolding empowers students to become independent learners. These measures foster

a dynamic, student-centered environment, nurturing creativity, skill development, and independent thinking in writing.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

Writing is a multifaceted cognitive process that requires both artistic creativity and mechanical skills. It is extremely important as a means of expression, whether personally or academically. However, mastering writing skills, particularly in the context of academic success, can be difficult, especially for students studying languages as a foreign language. This struggle is especially visible among students in Bangladesh, where poor writing skills cause self-doubt.

These difficulties are made worse by a variety of factors, including a limited vocabulary, poor grammar, organizational issues, and a lack of confidence. Teachers' teaching styles and emphasis on grammar frequently fall short of equipping students with the overall writing abilities required. Students experience difficulties as a result of their lack of writing abilities.

Scaffolding is a teaching method, which is based on Vygotsky's socio-constructivist theory, emerges as a powerful pedagogical strategy for addressing these challenges. Scaffolding provides contextual support as students' progress from guided assistance to independent mastery. Educators who use scaffolding methods become mentors and facilitators, promoting critical thinking, discussion, and opinion formation.

Scaffolding is particularly useful in Bangladesh, where English is a second language. Scaffolding develops students' writing abilities through strategies such as vocabulary support, graphic organizers, collaborative peer activities, and reflective revisions. It bridges the gap between students' existing knowledge and desired proficiency, increasing their self-efficacy and self-worth.

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