SCAFFOLDING STRATEGIES FOR READING COMPREHENSION IN ESP CLASSROOM

Razakova Munira Turaevna,

Senior teacher,

University of World Economy and Diplomacy

Tashkent, Uzbekistan,

email: mrazakova@uwed.uz

Abstract. This article examines scaffolding as an essential instructional technique, that supports students in developing a deeper understanding and greater independence in their learning. By breaking down complex tasks into smaller, manageable parts, scaffolding eliminates obstacles and provides the guidance students need to advance. The discussion focuses on scaffolding techniques in reading, particularly for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms, to enhance comprehension. Key strategies discussed in the article include simplifying texts, pre-teaching vocabulary, using diagrams and visual aids, and dividing information into smaller chunks. Additionally, the article also highlights the significance of using prior knowledge of students through activities like the Class Brainstorm Web, which encourages collaborative work among students. Another. Chunking and "eliciting" techniques are also introduced in the article to motivate students and create inclusivity during teaching and learning. Using these strategies in the classroom enhances students' learning and builds rapport between teacher and student.

Keywords: scaffolding, eliciting, language, acquisition, effective vocabulary teaching strategies, collaborative work, collocations.

Scaffolding involves using various teaching methods to guide students step by step toward a deeper understanding and greater independence in learning. This approach focuses on removing barriers and supporting students as they progress. Below are examples of common scaffolding techniques:

• Simplifying a lesson, assignment, or reading initially and gradually increasing its complexity over time.

• Explaining or demonstrating a concept, problem, or process in multiple ways to enhance comprehension.

• Providing students with a sample or model of the task they will need to complete.

• Offering a vocabulary lesson to prepare students for a challenging text.

• Clearly outlining the purpose, instructions, and goals of a learning activity.

• Explicitly showing how a new lesson connects to previous knowledge and skills students have learned.

What is scaffolding in reading?

Scaffolding is breaking up the learning into manageable sections and offering support or tools for each part. For example, in reading, scaffolding might include previewing the text, discussing key vocabulary, or breaking the text into smaller sections to read and analyze together. In contrast, differentiation involves adapting the content or tasks to individual needs, such as assigning a different text, simplifying or shortening the material, or adapting the writing task that follows. Scaffolding refers to a temporary support system provided by teachers to assist learners. This guidance is collaboratively developed and gradually withdrawn as the learner becomes capable of performing independently (Boblett, 2012). This article discusses some scaffolding strategies in reading that will improve learners' reading comprehension in the ESP classroom.

• Tap into prior knowledge
• Pre-teach vocabulary

• Give time to talk

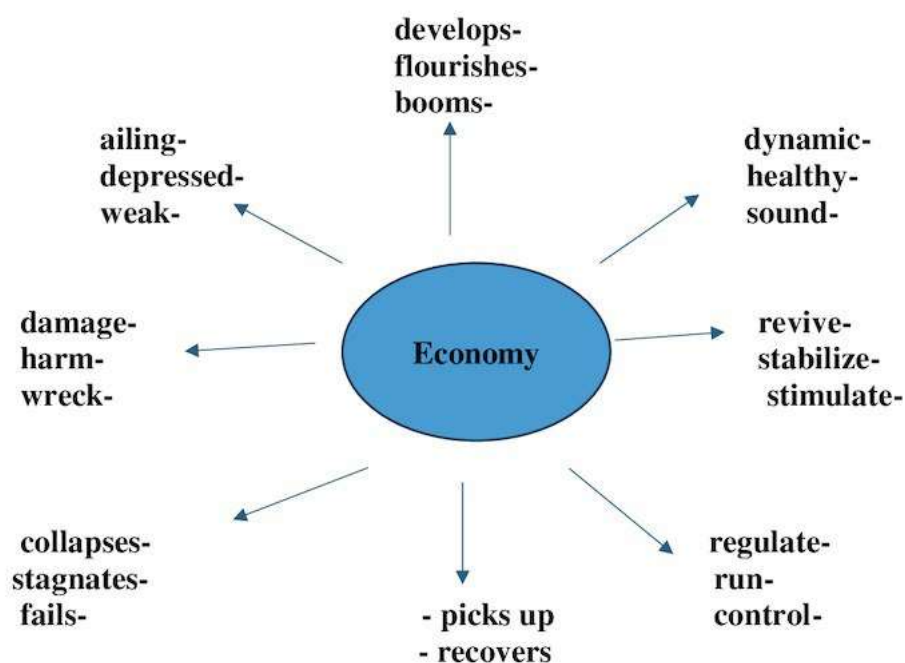• Use visual aid

• Chunking

A Class Brainstorm Web is an engaging and interactive activity that encourages students to freely contribute ideas in a fun, collaborative environment. Begin by writing a central word or phrase like " Coup d'état" inside a circle on a whiteboard or large paper. Students then write related words or concepts, such as *Rebellion,"* "Revolt", or *"Uprising",* around the central term. Adding a timer can create urgency and excitement, making the activity even more effective. This web can remain visible during future lessons, serving as a reference and evolving with new knowledge as students add words or facts. Activating students' prior knowledge through activities like this is essential. This method promotes a richer and more inclusive learning experience.

Before teaching new vocabulary, it is also important to mention an activity which is called "Eliciting." Eliciting refers to various methods that encourage learners to supply information themselves rather than having the teacher present it directly. Eliciting activities allow learners to convey meaning and deeply understand the target vocabulary. (Harrel, A. 2004). Eliciting is often employed to encourage students to create new vocabulary and linguistic frameworks, as well as to brainstorm ideas related to a topic before the lesson. This approach fosters a learner-centered classroom and creates an engaging atmosphere, enhancing the retention of new information by connecting it to prior knowledge. Beyond language and general knowledge, eliciting can also involve drawing out ideas, emotions, interpretations, contexts, associations, and memories from students. For the teacher, eliciting is a powerful diagnostic tool, providing key information about what the learners know or do not know and, therefore, a starting point for lesson planning. Eliciting also encourages teachers to be flexible and to move on rather than dwell on information that is already known. There are different tips for eliciting:

•Eliciting is a basic technique and should be used regularly, not only at the beginning of a lesson, but whenever it is necessary and appropriate.

•Acknowledge or give feedback to each answer with gestures or short comments.

•Learners can elicit from each other, particularly during brainstorming activities. This helps to build confidence and group cohesion as well as shifting the focus away from the teacher.

Before reading authentic articles related to diplomacy, students need to understand the meaning of key vocabulary words. Enhancing students' vocabulary helps improve their text comprehension by ensuring they understand critical terms. Teachers may introduce new vocabulary by synonyms or antonyms and collocations. The diagram below shows how students can use collocations with the word "economy" for the topic "Economic growth".

EXAMPLE OF A DIAGRAM WITH COLLOCATIONS

develops-
flourishes-
booms-

dynamic-
healthy-
sound-

ailing-
depressed-
weak-

Economy

revive-
stabilize-
stimulate-

damage-
harm-
wreck-

regulate-
run-
control-

collapses-
stagnates-
fails-

- picks up
- recovers

Unit 19.p.106. Vocabulary for Political Science. I.A, Mazaeva

One more pivotal scaffolding strategy in teaching is chunking. Chunking is a strategy that divides lengthy or complex texts into smaller, manageable sections for students. This approach makes dense material feel less intimidating, reducing anxiety and promoting better understanding. Chunking reduces cognitive overload, lowers anxiety, and supports improved comprehension. This technique is especially effective for struggling readers or when dealing with challenging subject matter. The benefit of this technique is that it helps students concentrate on specific ideas without feeling overwhelmed by the entire text. Moreover, by processing a smaller amount of information at a time, students can analyze and understand details more effectively. Here is an example of introducing a scaffolding strategy for students who learn global issues in the classroom.

1. Lead-in by asking questions about the causes of poverty.

2. Stick eight chunks of the article about "Causes of global poverty" on the walls around the classroom such as:

- **Inequality and marginalization**

- **Conflict**

- **Hunger, malnutrition and stunting.**

- Poor healthcare systems

- Little access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene

- Climate change

- Lack of education

- Poor public works and infrastructure.

3. Students move around the class in pairs, read each paragraph and then work in different groups and discuss or debate each cause of poverty.

Finally, if the teacher wants the class to examine the work created by each pair or group, such as a mind map, a summary, or a poster presentation they can present their work on the walls. Then, encourage students to walk around and review or

observe their groupmates' work. Collaborative learning and cognitive development are closely linked with each other. According to Gillies, group discussions improve comprehension and critical thinking skills during collaborative reading activities (Gillies, 2006).

Moreover, it is essential to note that throughout the learning process, students use a variety of strategies, including participating in group discussions, involving in collaborative projects, working in groups, exchanging ideas, and reflecting on their experiences. Scaffolding is essential for helping students gain a deeper understanding of complex concepts. This method not only improves understanding but also encourages students to become more independent as they progressively take control of their own learning journey.

Activities like Class Brainstorm Web and eliciting further enrich the learning experience by activating prior knowledge, encouraging collaborative thinking, and building a learner-centered classroom environment. Additionally, chunking helps break down lengthy texts into manageable sections and lower stress Ultimately, scaffolding fosters an inclusive classroom dynamic where students can engage actively, reflect on their learning, and develop both cognitive and social skills. This article demonstrates the power of scaffolding strategies in improving reading comprehension, particularly in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms, and highlights the importance of adapting teaching techniques to meet the diverse needs of learners.

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