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*Elementary efl learners' perceptions of scaffolded writing instruction at the  
A1 level*

**Percepciones de los alumnos de inglés elemental sobre la instrucción de  
escritura estructurada a nivel A1**

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**ABSTRACT**

Writing instruction at beginner levels of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is often constrained by learners' limited exposure to English beyond the classroom, restricted linguistic resources, and difficulties in constructing grammatically accurate sentences. The objective of this study was to describe elementary EFL learners' perceptions of scaffolded instructional practices implemented in an English writing class at the A1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). A descriptive, cross-sectional design with an exploratory scope was employed. The sample consisted of 12 elementary students (aged 9–10) from a public school in Ecuador. Data were collected through a 12-item Likert-scale questionnaire measuring perceptions of teacher guidance, modeling, feedback, practice opportunities, and confidence in writing. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were used to analyze response patterns. Results indicated highly positive learner perceptions of scaffolded writing instruction. Items related to teacher modeling, step-by-step guidance, feedback provision, and guided practice obtained the highest mean scores ( $M \geq 4.83$ ), reflecting strong agreement regarding the usefulness of structured instructional support. In contrast, items associated with affective dimensions, such as enjoyment of writing ( $M = 3.75$ ), showed greater variability. In conclusion, scaffolded instructional practices were perceived as supportive and beneficial for writing development at the beginner level. These findings underscore the pedagogical relevance of structured guidance in elementary EFL contexts where exposure to English is limited and suggest the need for further research with larger samples and longitudinal designs.

**KEYWORDS:** scaffolding strategies, learner perceptions, elementary education.

## RESUMEN

La enseñanza de la escritura en niveles básicos de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) suele estar limitada por la limitada exposición de los alumnos al inglés fuera del aula, recursos lingüísticos limitados y dificultades para construir oraciones gramaticalmente precisas. El objetivo de este estudio fue describir las percepciones de los estudiantes de EFL en primaria sobre las prácticas instruccionales estructuradas implementadas en una clase de escritura en inglés a nivel A1 del Marco Europeo Común de Referencia para las Lenguas (MCER). Se empleó un diseño descriptivo y transversal con un alcance exploratorio. La muestra consistía en 12 estudiantes de primaria (de 9 a 10 años) de un colegio público en Ecuador. Los datos se recogieron mediante un cuestionario de 12 ítems a escala Likert que midió las percepciones sobre la guía docente, el modelado, la retroalimentación, las oportunidades de práctica y la confianza en la escritura. Se utilizaron estadísticas descriptivas, incluyendo medias y desviaciones estándar, para analizar los patrones de respuesta. Los resultados indicaron percepciones muy positivas de los alumnos sobre la instrucción de escritura estructurada. Los ítems relacionados con el modelado docente, la orientación paso a paso, la provisión de retroalimentación y la práctica guiada obtuvieron las puntuaciones medias más altas ( $M \geq 4,83$ ), reflejando un fuerte acuerdo sobre la utilidad del apoyo instruccional estructurado. En cambio, los ítems asociados con dimensiones afectivas, como el disfrute de la escritura ( $M = 3,75$ ), mostraron mayor variabilidad. Finalmente, estos hallazgos subrayan la importancia pedagógica del andamiaje en contextos de inglés y sugieren la necesidad de más investigación con muestras más grandes y diseños longitudinales and suggest the need for further research with larger samples and longitudinal designs.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** estrategias de andamiaje, percepciones del alumno, educación primaria.

## INTRODUCTION

In a globalized world where English functions as a key medium for academic communication and intercultural exchange, the development of writing skills from early stages of education has become important. However, in many public elementary EFL contexts, particularly where exposure to English is largely confined to classroom instruction, beginner learners face limited opportunities for meaningful written practice and authentic language use. As a result, students at the A1 level frequently encounter difficulties in constructing coherent sentences, controlling basic grammatical forms, and expressing ideas with confidence. This scenario underscores the need for pedagogical approaches that not only address linguistic accuracy but also provide structured support for emerging writers. Within this framework, scaffolding grounded in sociocultural theory offers a theoretically robust model of adaptive instructional mediation that can facilitate progressive writing development. Accordingly, the present study is both theoretically and practically relevant: it extends research on scaffolded writing to underexplored elementary EFL contexts and generates classroom-based insights that may inform more responsive and developmentally appropriate writing instruction.

Writing is widely recognized as one of the most demanding skills for second language (L2) learners, as it requires the integration of grammatical knowledge, vocabulary, rhetorical organization, and metalinguistic awareness. For young learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), these demands are particularly challenging at early stages of proficiency. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), learners at the A1–A2 levels are classified as basic users, expected to produce short and simple texts that are generally understandable but limited in accuracy and linguistic range (Council of

Europe, 2001, 2020). At this stage, the development of basic grammatical control and sentence structure is a key indicator of emerging writing competence.

Empirical research consistently shows that beginner L2 learners struggle with persistent accuracy-related difficulties, including errors in verb tense, word order, article use, sentence structure, and punctuation (Mahan & Ruiz de Zarobe, 2025). In many educational contexts, writing instruction continues to rely heavily on isolated grammar exercises or repetitive drills. Although such practices may support form recognition, they often fail to connect linguistic knowledge with meaningful writing tasks, limiting learners' ability to transfer discrete knowledge into accurate written production (Johnson, 2023).

In response to these challenges, research on second language writing has increasingly drawn on sociocultural theory to explain how instructional support can facilitate learners' writing development. From this perspective, learning is understood as a socially mediated process, in which guidance and interaction enable learners to perform beyond their independent abilities within the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978; Wood et al., 1976). Scaffolding, defined as temporary and adaptive instructional support that is gradually withdrawn as learners gain competence, has emerged as a key pedagogical strategy for operationalizing sociocultural principles in classroom settings.

Previous studies have reported positive outcomes associated with scaffolded writing instruction, particularly in terms of learner engagement and perceived instructional support (Hassen et al., 2023; Casinto, 2023; Rad & Mirzaei, 2024). However, much of the existing research has focused on adolescent or adult learners, with limited attention to elementary-level EFL contexts. Moreover, while improvements in overall writing quality are frequently reported, fewer studies have described how young learners perceive scaffolded writing practices, despite evidence suggesting that learner perceptions play an important role in shaping instructional effectiveness (Hassen et al., 2022).

To address this gap, the present study explores elementary EFL learners' perceptions of scaffolded writing instruction in a public school context in Ecuador. By describing students' views on instructional support, teacher guidance, feedback, and writing confidence, this exploratory study aims to contribute contextualized insights into how scaffolded writing practices are experienced at the A1 level.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Scaffolding in EFL Writing**

Scaffolding has become a central construct in second language writing pedagogy, particularly within frameworks grounded in sociocultural theory. The first concept introduced was by Bruner and Ross (1976) to describe contingent assistance that enables learners to perform tasks beyond their independent capabilities. In addition, this instructional support is theoretically anchored in Vygotsky's (1978) notion of the Zone of Proximal Development, which conceptualizes learning as a socially mediated process whereby cognitive development occurs through guided interaction before being internalized. Moreover, scaffolding is therefore understood not merely as help, but as structured and adaptive mediation that gradually shifts responsibility from teacher to learner within EFL writing contexts (Hassen, et al., 2023). Consequently, writing development is framed as a collaborative process in which linguistic knowledge emerges through guided participation rather than isolated practice.

In practical terms, scaffolding in writing instruction encompasses a range of strategies such as: explicit modeling, guided drafting, use of sentence frames, strategic questioning, and formative feedback (Malla and Hoshang, 2024). These strategies are particularly relevant at beginner proficiency levels, where learners often struggle with grammatical encoding, lexical

selection, and sentence organization. Therefore, empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of scaffolded writing instruction. EFL learners who are exposed to structured scaffolding demonstrates significant improvements in grammatical accuracy and syntactic complexity among (Anggreni et al., 2026). Similarly, scaffolded tasks enhanced coherence and reduced error frequency in student compositions (Gudina and Wakuma, 2022). Importantly, effective support must remain contingent and responsive; otherwise, it risks becoming either overly directive or insufficiently supportive (Zorluel Özer, 2025).

Despite this growing body of evidence, important gaps remain. While many studies have examined scaffolding among adolescent or university learners, fewer investigations have focused on elementary EFL contexts, particularly at the A1 level. Moreover, it is relevant to contextualize that according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), beginner learners are expected to produce short and simple written texts with emerging grammatical control. In contexts where exposure to English is largely confined to classroom instruction, scaffolded support may play a compensatory role in facilitating writing development (Wu and Alrabah, 2023). Nevertheless, limited research has explored how such instructional mediation operates among young learners in foreign language settings. This gap underscores the need for further context-specific investigation into scaffolded writing instruction at early stages of proficiency.

### **Teacher Mediated Scaffolding in EFL Writing Instruction**

Teacher mediated scaffolding plays a crucial role in supporting the development of writing skills in English as a Foreign Language classrooms. Particularly in beginner contexts where linguistic resources are still emerging. At this stage many learners struggle to organize ideas, select appropriate vocabulary, or construct even simple sentences in English. For this reason the teacher often becomes a central mediator in the learning process. Not merely as a provider of information, but as a guide who accompanies learners throughout the different stages of writing. Planning the text. Drafting ideas. Revising sentences. In many situations this support appears through interaction rather than explanation. Teachers ask questions, suggest possible structures, or provide examples that learners can adapt to their own texts. As a result the writing process becomes a shared activity instead of an isolated task completed individually. Scholars in second language pedagogy argue that such guided interaction allows learners to gradually develop control over linguistic forms while simultaneously gaining confidence in their ability to express ideas in writing (Sun, 2024)

Furthermore effective teacher mediation depends largely on the instructor's ability to adjust support according to learners' needs. In other words scaffolding is not static. It changes as learners progress. At certain moments teachers may offer explicit explanations or demonstrate how a sentence can be constructed. Later however they may step back slightly and allow students to experiment with their own writing decisions. This constant adjustment requires careful observation of learners' responses during classroom activities. Occasionally students need more guidance. At other times less. Consequently the teacher must balance assistance with opportunities for independence. Research conducted in EFL contexts suggests that when teachers provide responsive and flexible mediation learners tend to participate more actively in writing tasks and demonstrate gradual improvement in written performance (Gudina and Wakuma, 2023). In short teacher mediated scaffolding creates conditions where learners feel supported while still being encouraged to take responsibility for their own writing development.

### **Types of Scaffolding Strategies Used in EFL Writing Classrooms**

In EFL writing classrooms scaffolding is typically implemented through a variety of instructional strategies designed to support learners throughout the writing process. Initially teachers often introduce planning tools that help students generate and organize ideas before they begin writing. For instance guiding questions may encourage learners to think about what they want to communicate and how their ideas relate to one another. Likewise visual organizers can assist learners in structuring information more clearly. These tools function as cognitive support because they reduce the difficulty of transforming ideas into written language. Many beginner learners find this stage particularly challenging. Ideas may exist in their first language but transferring them into English becomes complicated (Nguyen and Truong, 2024). Therefore structured planning activities can provide a useful starting point for constructing coherent texts. Studies in language education indicate that learners who use planning supports tend to produce texts with clearer organization and more logical progression of ideas.

Subsequently additional scaffolding strategies appear during the drafting and revision stages. Teachers sometimes provide sentence starters or short model texts that illustrate how certain ideas can be expressed. In this way learners gain access to linguistic patterns that they might not yet be able to generate independently. At the same time vocabulary lists or language banks can help students expand the range of expressions used in their writing. Later during revision teachers frequently guide learners through feedback activities that encourage reflection on the quality of their texts (Hashem, 2021). Rather than simply correcting errors instructors may ask learners to reconsider certain sentences or clarify specific ideas. As a consequence students become more aware of the decisions involved in writing. Research suggests that when these different forms of scaffolding are combined learners gradually develop greater control over both linguistic accuracy and textual organization. Progress may occur slowly. Nevertheless consistent support often leads to noticeable improvement over time.

### **Gradual Release of Responsibility in Scaffolded Writing Tasks**

The concept of gradual release of responsibility represents an essential principle within scaffolded writing instruction. At the beginning of the learning process teachers typically assume a more active role in demonstrating how writing tasks can be approached (Nguyen, 2024). During this stage instructors may model how ideas are organized into sentences or how short paragraphs are constructed. Students observe these demonstrations and participate in guided practice activities. Sometimes they complete partial sentences. Occasionally they contribute small ideas while the teacher organizes the structure of the text. These early interactions allow learners to become familiar with the cognitive processes involved in writing. In many cases the teacher also verbalizes the reasoning behind certain linguistic choices. Consequently learners gain insight into how experienced writers plan and develop their texts. Educational research suggests that such explicit modeling can significantly support beginner learners as they begin to internalize writing strategies.

Later the level of teacher support gradually decreases. Students begin to assume greater responsibility for producing their own texts. They may write independently or collaborate with classmates while applying strategies previously demonstrated by the teacher. This transition does not occur instantly. Rather it unfolds progressively as learners gain confidence and linguistic competence. Occasionally additional guidance becomes necessary when learners encounter new challenges or unfamiliar writing tasks. Nevertheless the overall goal remains the same. Learners increasingly manage their own writing processes. They plan ideas organize sentences and revise drafts with less external assistance. Research conducted in foreign language classrooms indicates that this gradual transfer of responsibility

encourages learners to develop stronger self regulation strategies when writing (Abu Shakra, 2023). As a result students become more capable of completing writing tasks autonomously while still benefiting from occasional instructional support.

### **The Impact of Scaffolded Writing Activities on Learner Confidence and Autonomy**

Scaffolded writing activities can also influence learners' attitudes toward writing in a foreign language. Writing tasks frequently generate anxiety among beginner learners who feel uncertain about their grammatical accuracy or vocabulary knowledge. For this reason, supportive instructional environments become especially important. When teachers divide writing tasks into smaller steps learners often perceive the activity as more manageable. Instead of facing a complex assignment all at once they complete a series of shorter tasks. Generating ideas (Nguyen and Truong, 2024). Constructing sentences. Revising their work. Each stage provides an opportunity for success. Gradually these positive experiences may strengthen learners' confidence in their ability to write in English. Psychological research suggests that successful task completion contributes to the development of self-efficacy beliefs which in turn encourage learners to persist in challenging learning situations.

Additionally, scaffolded activities may support the development of learner autonomy. As teachers reduce direct guidance students begin to apply writing strategies independently. They start planning their ideas before writing. They review drafts and attempt to correct certain errors. Sometimes the process feels uncertain at first. Learners may hesitate or seek reassurance from the teacher (Damanhour, 2021). However, with continued practice they become more comfortable managing their own writing tasks. In this sense autonomy does not imply complete independence from instruction. Instead it refers to learners' capacity to use available resources strategically when producing texts. Empirical studies in second language writing indicate that learners exposed to scaffolded instruction often report higher levels of confidence and greater willingness to engage in independent writing tasks. Ultimately these experiences contribute to the development of more self-directed writers capable of approaching writing tasks with increasing confidence.

### **Learners' Perceptions in Scaffolded Writing Contexts**

While scaffolding has often been evaluated in terms of performance outcomes, increasing scholarly attention has been directed toward learners' perceptions as a crucial dimension of instructional effectiveness. From a sociocultural perspective, learners are active participants in mediated learning processes, and their interpretations of instructional support shape engagement and internalization (Vygotsky, 1978). In this regard, motivational dispositions and learner beliefs significantly influence language learning trajectories (Hamasaïd and Ahmed, 2025). Therefore, examining how students perceive scaffolded writing instruction becomes essential for understanding not only cognitive gains but also affective responses associated with writing tasks.

Research investigating learner perceptions in scaffolded environments has yielded generally positive findings. EFL learners valued teacher modeling, step-by-step guidance, and feedback as supportive elements that enhanced their writing development (Saksopin et al., 2025). Likewise, scaffolded tasks as confidence-building, although variability emerged in affective dimensions such as enjoyment and anxiety (Nguyen and Truong, 2024). These findings resonate with Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, which posits that learners' beliefs about their capabilities influence persistence and performance. In writing contexts, scaffolded instruction may therefore contribute not only to linguistic accuracy but also to strengthened perceptions of competence.

Nevertheless, perception based research remains comparatively limited in elementary EFL settings. Most existing studies have been conducted at secondary or tertiary levels, leaving young learners underrepresented when they need to produce written text. In Ecuadorian contexts, supportive instructional practices positively influenced learner engagement, although affective responses toward writing were heterogeneous (Butarbutar, 2024). That is, given that early-stage learners may experience heightened vulnerability when producing written texts in a foreign language, understanding their perceptions is particularly important. Consequently, exploring how elementary students interpret scaffolded writing instruction can provide valuable insights into both pedagogical effectiveness and emotional engagement, thereby informing more responsive and developmentally appropriate classroom practices.

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## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study employed a descriptive and cross-sectional design with an exploratory scope. Specifically, the purpose was to describe students' perceptions of scaffolded instructional practices implemented in an English writing class. Since the data were gathered at a single moment after the instructional intervention had concluded, the research did not attempt to

establish causal relationships; rather, it sought to provide a contextualized account of learners' experiences within their regular classroom setting.

The participants were 12 elementary students, six girls and six boys, between 9 and 10 years of age, enrolled in a public educational institution in Ecuador. In accordance with institutional curriculum guidelines, all students were classified at the A1 level of English. They were selected through convenience sampling because the study was carried out in the researcher's own teaching context. Moreover, the group shared similar socio educational backgrounds and followed the national curriculum, receiving approximately three hours of English instruction per week. In addition, their exposure to English outside the classroom was limited, which situates the study within a typical foreign language learning environment.

Prior to the implementation of the study, authorization was obtained from school authorities. Subsequently, informed consent was secured from parents or legal guardians, and students provided verbal assent. They were informed about the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. To ensure anonymity, no identifying information was collected and questionnaire responses were coded numerically.

The instructional intervention lasted six weeks and was integrated into regular English writing lessons. During this period, scaffolding strategies were systematically incorporated into classroom practice. For instance, the teacher modeled short written texts, introduced sentence frames and guided outlines, and facilitated the joint construction of sentences. Additionally, structured peer collaboration and corrective feedback focused on grammar and sentence structure were provided. As students demonstrated greater independence, the level of instructional support was gradually reduced. Writing tasks were aligned with A1 level descriptors and focused on short and simple texts, such as personal descriptions and daily routines.

At the end of the six-week period, data were collected through a structured questionnaire composed of 12 Likert scale items. The instrument was designed to measure students' perceptions of teacher guidance, modeling, feedback, opportunities for guided practice, collaboration, and confidence in writing. Responses were recorded on a five-point scale ranging from 1 Strongly disagree to 5 Strongly agree. The questionnaire was administered in the classroom under the supervision of the researcher, and each item was read aloud to ensure comprehension.

Finally, data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics. For each questionnaire item, the mean and standard deviation were calculated to determine central tendencies and variability in responses. Overall, the analysis focused on identifying patterns of agreement and dispersion across items. Given the small sample size and the exploratory nature of the study, inferential statistical procedures were not performed. Consequently, the findings are interpreted as descriptive and specific to this context rather than generalizable to other populations.

## **RESULTS**

This section presents the descriptive statistical results derived from the analysis of students' responses to the writing class questionnaire. Given the exploratory scope of the study and the small sample size ( $n = 12$ ), results are reported using measures of central tendency and dispersion to illustrate patterns of agreement and variability across items.

Overall, the results indicate highly positive student perceptions of the instructional practices implemented in the English writing class. Mean scores across the 12 items were consistently located at the upper end of the Likert scale, reflecting strong agreement with

statements related to teacher support, instructional guidance, and opportunities for practice. About mean score of the questionnaire was  $M = 4.75$ , suggesting a very favorable perception of the writing instruction received. Standard deviations were generally low, indicating limited variability among participants' responses and a high degree of consensus within the group.

Items associated with explicit instructional support, such as teacher modeling, step-by-step guidance, and feedback provision, obtained the highest mean scores ( $M \geq 4.83$ ), with some items reaching a maximum mean value of 5.00. These findings suggest that students perceived structured pedagogical scaffolding as a central and effective component of their writing instruction. In contrast, items related to affective dimensions, including enjoyment of writing and confidence when writing in English, exhibited slightly lower mean scores and greater variability. Although still positive, these results indicate that emotional and motivational factors may present more heterogeneous experiences among learners.

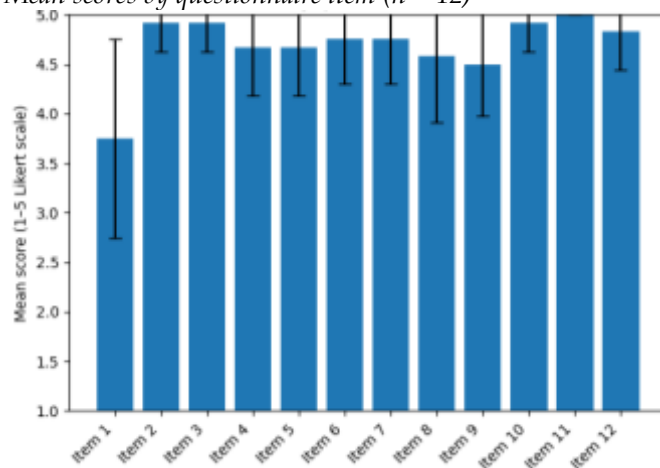
Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for each questionnaire item. As shown, most items demonstrate high levels of agreement, with minimal dispersion. The lowest mean score was observed in the item related to enjoyment of writing in English ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ), indicating greater variability in students' affective responses compared to instructional perceptions.

**Table 1**  
*Descriptive statistics of the writing class questionnaire (n = 12)*

Item	M	SD
I enjoy writing in English	3.75	1.00
My teacher helps me understand how to write better	4.92	0.29
My teacher shows examples before I write	4.92	0.29
I work together with classmates	4.67	0.49
I get feedback from my teacher	4.67	0.49
The teacher gives me step-by-step help	4.75	0.45
I understand my mistakes after explanations	4.75	0.45
I can write sentences more correctly now	4.58	0.67
I feel more confident when I write	4.50	0.52
The teacher uses examples and models	4.92	0.29
The teacher gives time to practice	5.00	0.00
Teacher support improves accuracy	4.83	0.39

*Note.* Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree).

**Figure 1**  
*Mean scores by questionnaire item (n = 12)*



*Note. Bars represent mean values for each questionnaire item measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). Error bars indicate standard deviations.*

## **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to discuss elementary EFL learners' perceptions of scaffolding strategies implemented in an English writing class. Overall, the findings reveal consistently positive evaluations of instructional practices, particularly those related to teacher guidance, modeling, feedback, and opportunities for guided practice. Both the descriptive statistics and the visual analysis of Figure 1 indicate high levels of agreement, as most items obtained mean scores above 4.50 on a five-point Likert scale. This pattern suggests that, at the A1 level, scaffolded instruction is perceived as supportive and pedagogically meaningful.

These findings are aligned with sociocultural theory, which conceptualizes learning as a mediated process occurring through interaction and guided participation (Vygotsky, 1978). From this perspective, scaffolding functions as temporary and contingent support that enables learners to operate within their Zone of Proximal Development. The strong consensus observed in items related to teacher modeling and structured guidance reinforces this theoretical assumption. In addition, the results converge with empirical evidence reported by Malla and Jawad (2024), who found that university EFL students expressed positive attitudes toward scaffolding instruction and perceived improvements in their writing performance and motivation after a 12-week intervention. Although the present study focuses on elementary learners rather than university students, both investigations highlight the perceived effectiveness of scaffolded practices across proficiency levels. However, unlike Malla and Jawad (2024), the current study did not measure pre and post-performance gains, which leaves open the question of how perceptions relate to measurable improvement at early stages.

Similarly, the positive evaluations of guided practice and feedback are consistent with the findings of Utumporn et al. (2025), who reported that EFL students perceived peer scaffolding in online collaborative writing as beneficial across proficiency levels. In their study, learners actively assumed scaffolded and scaffolder roles, demonstrating that support can emerge not only from the teacher but also from peers. In contrast, the present research primarily examined teacher led scaffolding within a face to face elementary classroom. Therefore, while both studies confirm the value of structured support, they differ in the source and modality of scaffolding. This contrast suggests a potential avenue for future research: exploring the integration of peer scaffolding strategies in primary level contexts to determine whether collaborative mediation enhances both cognitive and affective outcomes.

Furthermore, when compared with recent research on multimodal scaffolding, additional insights emerge. Anggreni et al. (2026) demonstrated that integrating TikTok videos and narrative text outlines significantly improved university students' writing performance and generated positive emotional engagement. Likewise, Hamasaid and Ahmed (2025) found that incorporating multimodal composing activities led to increasingly positive learner perceptions over time, particularly in terms of motivation, audience awareness, and engagement. While the present study did not incorporate digital or multimodal tools, the comparatively lower mean scores and greater variability observed in Item 1, related to enjoyment of writing, suggest that affective engagement remains partially unresolved. In contrast to Anggreni et al. (2026) and Hamasaid and Ahmed (2025), whose interventions explicitly stimulated creativity and digital literacy, the current scaffolded approach was primarily text based and accuracy oriented. Consequently, although cognitive and structural support were strongly valued, affective dimensions such as enjoyment and confidence appeared more heterogeneous.

This contrast is theoretically meaningful. Sociocultural theory explains how mediated support fosters cognitive development; however, motivational frameworks emphasize that affective engagement requires additional pedagogical conditions (Dörnyei, 2005; Graham, 2019). The present findings confirm that scaffolding effectively addresses structural aspects of writing at the beginner level, yet they also indicate that emotional responses are not uniformly enhanced. Therefore, what seems resolved in this study is the perceived usefulness of structured guidance for linguistic development. What remains less resolved is how to systematically strengthen learners' enjoyment and intrinsic motivation within scaffolded writing environments.

In light of these comparisons, several new research directions emerge. First, future studies could adopt quasi experimental or longitudinal designs combining perception measures with performance data in order to determine whether positive attitudes predict sustained improvement. Second, integrating multimodal scaffolding tools, such as short videos, visual prompts, or digital storytelling platforms, may help address the affective variability identified in Figure 1. Third, the incorporation of peer scaffolding practices, as suggested by Utumporn et al. (2025), could be examined in elementary settings to explore whether collaborative mediation increases both confidence and autonomy. Finally, qualitative methods, including interviews and classroom observations, would allow for deeper exploration of how young learners interpret and internalize scaffolded support over time.

In conclusion, the discussion demonstrates that the findings of this study are consistent with prior research emphasizing the pedagogical relevance of scaffolding in EFL writing instruction. At the same time, by contrasting the results with studies conducted at the university level and in multimodal or online contexts, this research highlights both convergences and gaps. While scaffolded instruction is clearly perceived as supportive and developmentally appropriate at the A1 level, further pedagogical innovation is needed to integrate cognitive, social, and affective dimensions more comprehensively. Such integration may ultimately contribute to more engaging, context sensitive, and theoretically grounded writing instruction in elementary EFL classrooms.

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to describe elementary EFL learners' perceptions of scaffolded instructional practices implemented in an English writing class. In alignment with this objective, the findings demonstrate that students perceive scaffolding strategies such as teacher modeling, guided practice, structured feedback, and step by step support as highly beneficial for their writing development at the A1 level. Thus, the study successfully fulfills its descriptive purpose by providing a contextualized account of how young learners experience scaffolded writing instruction.

Overall, learners reported strong agreement with instructional practices that offered gradual guidance and clear structure. These results indicate that, from the students' perspective, scaffolding constitutes a central component of accessible and supportive writing pedagogy at beginner levels. In this sense, the conclusions directly reflect the objective of describing learners' perceptions, as they highlight the value attributed to mediated instruction within the classroom context. Moreover, these perceptions are consistent with sociocultural views of learning, which emphasize guided interaction as a pathway toward increasing independence.

At the same time, the descriptive analysis revealed greater variability in items related to affective dimensions, particularly enjoyment of writing and confidence when writing in English. Although responses remained positive overall, this variability suggests that emotional engagement is not uniformly experienced among learners. Therefore, while the

objective of describing perceptions has been met, the findings also indicate that scaffolded instruction, as implemented in this context, appears to address cognitive and structural aspects of writing more consistently than affective ones.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the study underscores the importance of aligning scaffolded practices with learners' developmental stages and CEFR descriptors. In public elementary contexts where exposure to English beyond the classroom is limited, structured instructional support seems especially relevant in fostering positive learner perceptions and promoting equitable learning opportunities.

Methodologically, the study remains exploratory and context specific. Although the small sample size limits generalization, the conclusions are coherent with the stated objective and provide descriptive evidence that can inform reflective teaching practice. Future research should extend this descriptive foundation by examining the relationship between perceived support and measurable writing outcomes, as well as by incorporating strategies that more explicitly address affective engagement.

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