Facilitating student behavioral engagement in ESP classroom through teachers’ scaffolding talk

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the language delivered by the teachers in the term of teachers’ scaffolding talk and the behavior engagement responded by the students in ESP agriculture Classroom. The investigation was conducted at a University in Sambawa Besar, West Nusa Tenggara. Field note and video recordings were used to collect the data. During the observation, the data were then transcribed, simplified, displayed, and interpreted. The result shows there are four kinds of scaffolding talks namely prompting, dialoging, extension, and modeling from six kinds of scaffolding talk. Those scaffolding talks can facilitate the behavioral engagement of the students in ESP Classroom namely paying attention or focusing on the lesson, attempting to answer the question from the teacher, and exerting themselves actively participating in classroom interaction. These result suggest that lecturers and teachers may consider to apply the scaffolding talk before teaching the students in the classroom because methodology used by the teacher in teaching is as important as a talk in teaching.

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1. Introduction

Student’s behavioral engagement is very important to reach the goal of teaching process in the ESP class. The more engaged students in the classroom or in the academic interaction, the better academic result will be achieved by the students (Harbour, Evanovich, Sweigart, & Hughes, 2015). On the other hand, if the students are less engaged in the classroom activity, the students tend to get bored, anxious, angry, depressed, and rebellious (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Furthermore, the more students engaged in the classroom and practice up to a certain point will affect on the quality of their performance in the classroom (Bertheussen & Myrland, 2016). This shows that actively engaged students in the classroom will help them to improve not only their academic and social quality but also their performance quality. Therefore, some studies about student engagement is still need to be investigated to solve the problem of low
level engagement of students in the class.

One of the biggest challenges faced by the teachers or lecturers in English as foreign language classroom is that the students do not get actively involved in the class interaction. They do not focus on the lesson, they prefer to be silent and they do not exert themselves in answering the questions from the teacher. Furthermore, in the context of teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) the students are not actively engaged in using English as the target language. They often use the first language or mother tongue, being afraid to perform English in the classroom, and being afraid to make mistakes in producing the English. Wediyantoro (2016) revealed in his study that his students preferred to speak Indonesian and Javanese instead of English during the teaching and learning process. Those problems are examples of low-level engagement that should be solved by the teacher.

In response to the problems, researchers suggest learning strategies that promoting students’ motivation. A prior research describes that uploading speaking assignment to YouTube channel increased students’ motivation (Rahayu & Putri, 2019). Other, guided conversation also effectively improve students’ engagement in speaking class (as in Romadhon & Qurohman, 2019).

In addition, to solve the problem of low level engagement, the language delivered by the teachers or Teacher Talk can be an alternative way. The teachers’ ability in delivering an appropriate language is much needed. The teacher should be able to manage the classroom activity through appropriate and acceptable language. The talk produced by the teachers in classroom interaction was not the only tool to transmit the information but also a tool to control students’ behavior scaffolding but they have less ability in increasing students’ metacognitive. As a consequence, the teacher should be trained so that they can deliver more goal-oriented talk in the teaching process.

Arif, Zain, and Refnaldi (2018) identified the initiation talk models delivered by English teach. The teacher talk should be able to stimulate the cognitive challenge and assistance based on the student language level. Nazari and Allahyar (2012) argued that good talk from the teachers can make the classroom communication run communicatively. Furthermore, the teachers are expected to produce the talk that may help and assist the students to be actively participating in the classroom activity (scaffolding talk). The scaffolding talk is an assistance and help used by the teachers for helping the student to acquire language and learn language by rephrasing students’ utterances, relating students’ utterances, giving cues, recalling the students, memories and connecting students future learning (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005).

Some studies have been conducted about teacher talk and scaffolding talk. Walsh (2002) investigated the construction and obstruction of the teacher talk. It shows that teacher talk in the classroom is as important as the method used by the teachers in the learning activity. A study by Panselinas and Komis (2009) shows that there are two kinds of scaffolding that can be used by the teacher in group work learning namely scaffolding individual thinking (SIT) and scaffolding collective thinking (SCT). SIT refers to the students’ individual response without peer discussion and SCT is students’ response after doing peer discussion. Scaffolding talk is also used to motivate students to finish the assignment from the teachers.

In addition, Szendroi (2010) in his study stated that the ratio of teacher talk in ESP classroom is exaggerated. The teachers prefer to used mother tongue rather than target language and they also produce unjustified sentences. As a result, the teachers are expected to make talk planning before teaching in the classroom. Further, Munir (2012) found three types of scaffolding talk delivered by Pre-service English Teachers in practicum and micro-teaching namely modeling, prompting and extension. Kayi-Aydar (2013) also found that intensive communication among the students and teachers plays a vital role to make the scaffolding talk used by the teachers in formal lecture run successfully. Sofyan and Mahmud (2014) analyzed the teachers talk in the classroom through Foreign Language Interaction analysis. Their analysis showed that the teachers were seldom to use encouragement talk and praised talk, the talk is dominated by asking questions. Newman (2016) investigated the rule of the teacher in designing the type of their talk to enhance collaborative talk in the classroom. His study suggested that English teachers have to design their model of talk and to consider the interpersonal aspect.

Heron and Webster (2018) claimed that the experience teacher’ scaffolding talk in EAP
Student engagement and behavioral engagement

Student engagement is important to be investigated because it will influence the success of learning activity in the classroom. Therefore, it is necessary to explain the concept of student engagement. In 1980s the terminology of student engagement was used to minimize the students’ boredom, marginalization and alienation (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Furthermore, Reschly and Christenson (2012) stated that student engagement refers to the students’ participation in academic environment. It includes the students participation in communities, schools, classrooms and peers to reach the goal of academic. Most people perceive that student engagement is only emphasized on the students’ behavior participation in the classroom. But this perception is not completely correct because behaviorally active students do not one hundred percent understand and love the teaching process, the psychological perspective and socio-cultural perspective should also be considered (Kahu, 2013). Student engagement is also defined as students’ emotion to be actively participated the classroom interaction that can be seen from their effort and persistence in the academic environment (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009). Furthermore, student engagement is conceptualized as a combination between the actors of engagement and the indicator of engagement (Lam, Wong, Yang, and Liu, 2012). The actors of engagement are students, teachers, and institution. The indicators of students’ engagement are classified into three namely behavioral, emotional and cognitive engagement. The behavior engagement is the reactions and participation of the students in the academic environment. The emotional engagement refers to the emotion of the students in the academic environment such as happiness, enthusiasm, interest, and sadness. Cognitive engagement is the students’ activity to search and learn knowledge deeper rather than understanding the general meaning (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004).

Behavior engagement refers to the student’s effort, persistence, and attention of the students in the classroom. According to Finn, Pannozzo and Voelki (1995) students’ behavior engagement is the students’ initiative and students’ effort in academic environment. Students’ initiative is classified into actively ask and answer the question from the teachers, actively seek the information, attempt to work well, and actively speak with the teacher. Students’ Effort is classified into paying attention to the lesson and interacting with others. Furthermore, student
engagement in the classroom is defined as the participations and contributions of the students in classroom interactions, for example effort, attendance, persistence, determination, concentration, attention, and intensity (Patrick, Skinner, & Connell, 1993; Skinner & Pitzer, 2012).

The scaffolding talk

The word scaffolding was firstly used in the terminology of building construction that known as the temporary structure in the process of build and repair the construction. In academic context, the term of scaffolding was used to identified child-parent talk (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). Scaffolding is used for helping the children to acquire and construct the language (Gibbons, 2002). Scaffolding is also used by the teacher in the classroom as a temporary action for helping and giving assistance for the students to finish their assignments (Maybin, Mercer, & Stierer, 1992). Furthermore, the use of appropriate language by the teacher in classroom teaching process is also include into scaffolding for achieving the goal of teaching and learning (Panselinas & Komis, 2009).

In the case of teacher scaffolding talk, scaffolding is delivered by the teacher using acceptable and appropriate language to assist and help the students for understanding the lesson easily. According to Munir (2012), scaffolding talk is micro level talk for assisting the students to acquire the language that can be divided into scaffolding individual interaction and scaffolding the all class interaction. The scaffolding talk used to assist the individual interaction is classified into extension, reformulation, and modeling (Walsh, 2006) and the scaffoldings to assist the whole class interaction are prompting, priming, dialoging (Forman, 2008).

Extension take place while the teachers clarify and extant the students’ language to be more comprehensive by shaping the students’ utterance to be more acceptable and clearer. Reformulation takes place when the teacher rephrases and reformulate the students’ language using acceptable and appropriate talk. As a consequence, the students can construct and understand the meaning of the language that they are producing. Modeling occurs when the teachers give a model for the students through giving correction toward the students’ answers, giving a good example of pronunciation such as good stress, and appropriate intonation. Prompting occurs when the teachers give the clues for the students and lead them to answer the teachers’ cues. Prompting aims to stimulate the students’ cognitive to produce the target language using their own words. It places the students as the actor of learning that should follow the teachers’ instruction and direction. Priming takes place when the teachers drill the students to pronounce the word or sentences by asking the students to repeat their words or sentences. Priming is the narrowest and most directive scaffolding that aims to reduce shyness of the student in classroom and to improve their confidence in using the target language. Dialoging occurs when the teachers provide a real dialogue in the classroom activity by asking the students some questions related to their knowledge background and culture background. Dialoging aims to lead the students by stimulating their cognitive to have a real discussion by asking an open question, supporting the students’ utterances, and providing photos or pictures of a famous person.

2. Method

The purpose of this qualitative study is investigating the teachers scaffolding talk produced by the lecturers of ESP and behavioral engagement responded by the students. This present study involve two ESP teachers who have the different academic background and thirty two students with different academic and social backgrounds. This research had been conducted in the Faculty of Agriculture, a University in Sumbawa Besar West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Observation was used as method of collecting the data. During the observation, video recording and field note were used to record and write the classroom interaction. For the analysis, the data was transcribed, analyzed, simplified (Coded), displayed and the conclusion was drawn (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) as seen in table 1.
Table 1. Transcription conversion and symbol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code/symbol</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Teacher’s Utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>For comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td>A group of students Utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>One Student’s Utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSS</td>
<td>Whole class Students’ utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italic</td>
<td>Indonesian Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Face</td>
<td>Emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underline word</td>
<td>The scaffolding talk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Result

Kind of Teacher Scaffolding Talk and Students Behavioral Engagement.

There are four features of the scaffolding talk delivered by the teachers in this study namely prompting, dialoging, modeling and reformulation then the behavioral engagement responded by the students are actively answer the question from the teacher, pay attention to the lesson and show their exertion. Table 1 shows the detailed information about the scaffolding talk delivered by the teachers and the behavioral engagement performed by the students in the classroom.

Table 1. The teachers scaffolding talk and behavioral engagement responded by the students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract</th>
<th>Scaffolding</th>
<th>Teachers’ instructional goal</th>
<th>Behavioral engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>Engaging the students with the topic of the lesson</td>
<td>Actively answer the question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dialoging</td>
<td>Engaging the students who are not actively participated</td>
<td>Attention and focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>Engaging the students with related vocabulary used in daily activity</td>
<td>Pay attention and attempt to answer the question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>Engaging the students with related vocabulary used in daily activity</td>
<td>Actively and spontaneously answer the question,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>Engaging the students with the expression used in daily activity</td>
<td>Attempts to answer the question,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dialoging</td>
<td>Engaging the students who are not actively participated</td>
<td>Exertion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>Engaging the students with presentation</td>
<td>Exertion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>Engaging the students with Simple Present tense</td>
<td>Focus and attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reformulation and Prompting</td>
<td>Engaging students with Simple present tense</td>
<td>Exertion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
<td>Engaging with non-verb</td>
<td>Exertion</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Prompting and Reformulation</td>
<td>Engaging the student with past sentence</td>
<td>Exertion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Scaffolding Talk Example Produced by the Teachers

Extract 1. Prompting

T  Wahyu can you tell me about your daily activity.
S  Editing video miss
T  How about you Ani? Apa activity mu sehari hari.
S  Sleeping miss [other students are laugh] [The other students also have other answer such as study, cleaning the house etc].

The goal of the lesson purposed by teachers is how to write an essay about daily activity and how to make sentences using simple present tense. The teacher starts to scaffold the student behavioral engagement by asking simple question to some students in the classroom about what the students usually do every day. The teacher prompts the students by recalling the student memory through asking some question such as “Wahyu can you tell me about your daily activity”, “How about you Ani? Apa activity mu sehari hari”. This kind of language is called building knowledge of the field (Rechard, 2001) namely talk or language produced by the teacher in the classroom to stimulate the students metacognitive before going to the main activity of the lesson. The teachers relate the material presented in the classroom with the background knowledge and situation faced by the students in a real life. As a consequence, the students show a behavioral engagement by actively answering the question from the teacher.

Extract 2: Dialoging

T  Yuda. Yuda [The teacher calls one of the students who look are not pay attention to lesson]
S  Yes
T  Ohh, Yuda are you ok?
S  Yes
T  Are you sleepy?
S  Aah.. no
T  Yes or no?
S  No

Extract two shows how the teacher used scaffolding talk while there is a student who do not pay attention to the lesson. Therefore, dialoging is used by the teacher to attract the students actively involved in lesson. The teachers ask some simple questions to the student who seem do not pay attention to the teacher’s talk. “Ohh, Yuda are you ok?, Are you sleepy?” then the student answer the question with the short answer “Yes, Aah.. no” after that the teacher stresses the students by saying “Yes or no?” as a way to make sure the students are pay attention to the lesson. The dialoging emerges when the teacher tries to have a real dialogue with the students by asking students’ condition in English.

Extract 3. Prompting

T  If you are sleepy you may go outside wash your face /The teacher suggest the students politely and comfortably/ Came on Yuda talk About your daily?
S  Sleeping [other students laugh]
T  What else? Apa lagi yang kamu lakukan tiap hari?
S  Play…..
T  Ok Now my question what do you do on week end?.. Yang kamu lakukan ketika week
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find the right meaning and make sure that the students understand the meaning of the words and how to pronounce them well. The teacher repeats the familiar sound of the words “watching or washing” She repeated the words twice to make sure that the students are able to differentiate the words both the pronunciation and the meaning. The observation notes that the students show attention and focus on the talk produced by the teacher by attempting to answer the question as the behavioral engagement performed.

Extract 6 Prompting

S Watching [repeated twice]…
T Iya Randi [giving the sign that teacher can control every individual in the class]
S Ya [low voice]
T Biasaya kalau jam segini istirahat di rumah ngapain ya?
S Tidur siang
T What is tidur siang in English? [The teacher some stimulus to interact the students]
S Take a rest

The teacher shows her big attention to the student who does not focus on the lesson presented by the teacher. “Iya Randi!” the teacher points one of the students in the classroom that looks sleepy and does not pay attention to the lesson. It is a sign proposed by the teacher to show that the teacher can control every students’ behavior in the class. The dialoging informs that the teacher pays attention to all students in the class that not only Randi but also other students should pay more attention to the class activity. Furthermore, the teacher recalls the students’ memory through relating real situations and the lesson that is learning. “Biasaya kalau jam segini istirahat di rumah ngapain ya”, What is tidur siang in English?” This dialogue can make the students answer the question from the teacher easily. Therefore, the students show their exertion in answer the question from the teacher.

Extract 7 Modeling

I get up at...[the student tell their daily activity without greeting other students]

Good afternoon everybody, I am Ima, I will tell you about my daily activity.
[enthusiastically, the teacher guided the students how to greet and open their speech]
Good afternoon everybody I will tell you my daily activity [the student open the speech with low voices at the same time the other students discus]

While the students are presenting the task in front of the class, the students are directly corrected by the teacher by giving modeling how to start the presentation well. When the students say “I get up at..” the teacher directly interrupts the students and cut the student utterance giving a modeling by saying “Good afternoon everybody, I am Ima, I will tell you about my daily activity.” then the students exert herself to follow the students’ advice.

Extract 8. Prompting

T …Have you remember how to make simple present tense [the teacher try to recall students understanding about the lesson teaching ]
SS Yes [the students answer the question confidently]
T What is the formula?
SS S + VI + O [the students discus and deliver their answer]
T Di simple present itu, ada yang namanya verbal sentence dan nominal sentence..kalau yang verbal subjectnya di ikuti oleh?
SS: VI [the student doubt with his answer]
T Kalo yang nominal, Subjectnya diikuti oleh?
In her lecture, the teacher through the talk brainstorms the students’ memory about what they have learned in the last. The teacher recalls the students’ knowledge by asking simple questions and giving a cue to ease the students in answering the question from the teacher. As a result, the students show their focus and attention behavior toward the lesson delivered by the teacher.

Extract 9. Reformulation and prompting.

T …contohnya, for example? [The teacher facilitate the students to speak English in the classroom] I go to campus.
S I go to the school by bus.
T Apa? I to? [The teacher persuade the students]
SS I go
T I go to school by bus. Ok [reformulate the students to answer] apa lagi?
S We study in Unsa. [Flat intonation]
T Apa? We study in Unsa, ok good job, again

Extract nine depict that the students’ utterances “I go” are reformulated by the teacher to be more specific and acceptable in the form of simple present tense by saying “I go to school by bus” after that the teachers prompt the the students to speak in the classroom. It is prompted by giving a cue using the word “apa lagi?” Therefore, the students are attracted to make complete sentences using simple present tense.

Extract 10 Prompting

T …yang kata sifat Seperti apa? [the teacher recalls the students memories about adjective]
SSS: ]
T Kind, small, thin...[each student mention the adjectives at the same time enthusiastically] Kind, ok good. Angry bisa. [The teacher persuade the student to speak through repeat their correct answer.]
T SSS: Kalau kata benda? apa aja kata benda ?
Chair, had, students...[each students mention the noun at the same time enthusiastically]

To promote students’ willingness to speak, the teacher prompts the student by asking the students to mention the list of adjectives and nouns that they are known orally. As a result, the students show big effort to actively answer the question from the teacher. The students compete to mention the word. They are actively produced the word. They are actively engaged in the classroom because they have known the word in advance.

Extract 11 Prompting and Reformulation

T …nah kalau simple past tensenyga, gimana? [The teacher recall students’ memory about simple past tense]
S Verb two.
T Yes we use verb two [Reformulate the students’ answer]
SS: Sleep jadi Slept, Sing Jadi sang.
T Ingat yang disini. [point out to the lesson material in the white boar about past tense] Tobe nya jadi was and? [ attract the student to mention the TOBE]
SSS: Were…. 
The teacher continues to the topic to challenge the students to be more engaged in the classroom. The teacher prompts the student by recalling the students’ memory about past tense and saying “nah kalau simple past tensenyagimana”. As consequence, most of the students can answer the question because they have background knowledge about adjectives. Therefore, they are not shy when answering the question. Furthermore, the teacher facilitated the students’ behavioral engagement through rephrase or reformulate the students’ utterances “Ya yang menggunakan Verb 2”. As a consequence, the students exert themselves to mention correct words such as “Sleep jadi Slept, Sing Jadi sang.

3.2 Discussion

The teacher scaffolding talk in the classroom is very important to make the students actively engage in the classroom activity. Walsh (2002) claimed that teacher talk in the class is as important as method of teaching in the classroom. The data above shows the scaffolding talk delivered by the two English teachers of ESP are able to increase the engagement of the students in the classroom namely showing exertion, paying attention to the lesson, focusing on the lesson and actively answering the question from the teacher. Furthermore, this study reveals four kind of scaffolding talk from six scaffolding talk proposed by (Walsh, 2006) and (Forman, 2008) namely prompting, dialoging, reformulation, and modeling.

The first scaffolding talk emerges in this study is Prompting. It is the most frequently used by the teachers to make the students actively engaged in the classroom. The teachers prompt the student using some method of talk namely; the first method is the teachers recall the student’s memories about what they have known in the past and link the lesson with what they are studying in the present. The second method used by the teachers is asking some simple questions for the students, and the third is giving cues for the students by mentioning simple vocabularies and utterances. The prompting delivered by the teachers in this study is able to make the students engage with the topic of the lesson namely about “daily activity and tenses”. Furthermore, prompting is also able to make the students engage with the related vocabulary about daily activity, engage with the expression usually used in telling daily activity, and engage with simple present tense. On the other hand, the behavioral engagement performed by the students is is seen when the students are actively answer the question from the teachers, pay attention or focus to the lesson, and exert themselves to actively participated in the classroom interaction.

Dialoging is the second of scaffolding talk emerges in this study. The dialoging is used by the teacher to attract the students who seem do not pay attention toward the lesson in the process of teaching and learning. The teachers point out and mention the name of the student then ask some question for the students to have a real dialogue. The teachers try to understand the social culture and physiology of the students, for example, showing sympathy and care to them by saying “Yuda are you ok”, “Are you sleepy”, “If you are sleepy you may go outside and wash your face”. The dialoging in this study can improve the students’ engagement in the classroom that can be seen from the students’ behavior such as pay attention and focus to the lesson delivered by the teacher.

Reformulation occurs while the teacher rephrases the students’ utterances. In this study, the teacher rephrases the students’ utterances by giving reinforcement for the students. The teacher restates students’ answer with acceptable words. As a consequence, the students are not shy to mention some words orally in the classroom. The engagement of the students is seen when the students shows their exertion to mention the correct verb of past tense or verb two. The forth scaffolding talk reveals in this study is modeling. This kind of scaffolding talk occurs when the teachers provide a good example of using the target language such as the pronunciation, the intonation and the stress of the words, phrase, or sentence. In this study, the teacher uses modeling scaffolding talk to engage the students with an ability to deliver a good presentation in front of the classroom through directly giving a correction to the students while the students make mistakes in pronouncing the words. For Example, the teacher directly corrects the student when the student forgets great the audience in starting the presentation as shown in extract eight. The four teachers’ scaffolding talk emerges in this study are able to
increase the students behavioral engagement in the classroom activity.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

In summary, teachers’ scaffolding talk plays a vital role in influencing the behavioral engagement of the students. Those talk can make the students actively involved in the classroom if the teachers can transfer an appropriate scaffolding talk. The result of this study has proved that the four kind of scaffolding talk produced by ESP teachers namely prompting, dialoging, extension, and modeling from six scaffolding talk are able to make the student behaviorally active in the classroom interaction. The prompting delivered by the teachers have made the students actively answer the question from the teachers, pay attention, and exert themselves to be actively participated in the classroom interaction. The dialoging produced by the teachers is able to make the students who do not focus on the classroom activity becomes actively participated and pay attention to the lesson. The reformulation and modeling are able to attract the student attention to be more focus on the lesson. Finally, it is suggested that the lecturers or teachers not only plan the teaching methodology but also consider what scaffolding talk that should be used in the classroom interaction. Furthermore, the writers also suggest doing further investigation about teachers’ scaffolding talk.

5. References


