

Scaffolding English Learning for Non-Native Speakers: A TEFL Approach in Multilingual Context

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ABSTRACT

In multilingual settings like Indonesia, English language instruction encounters considerable obstacles stemming from learners' different linguistic backgrounds and differing competence levels. Despite scaffolding being acknowledged as a successful method in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), its empirical implementation in multilingual Indonesian classrooms is still inadequately investigated. This study examines the impact of scaffolded instruction on English language competency, student engagement, and confidence in non-native secondary school learners. The study utilized a mixed-method explanatory sequential design, involving 60 students and 4 teachers, and incorporated language competence assessments, questionnaires, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were studied by descriptive and inferential statistics, and qualitative data were assessed thematically. The results indicate that the experimental group exhibited a considerable enhancement, increasing from a pre-test mean score of 68 to 84 in the post-test ($p < 0.01$), surpassing the control group. Students indicated elevated motivation ($M = 4.6$) and perceived utility of scaffolding ($M = 4.7$). Observational and interview data reveal enhanced involvement, confidence, and culturally appropriate pedagogical approaches. These findings underscore the efficacy of context-sensitive scaffolding in improving both cognitive and emotional aspects of language acquisition. The study enhances TEFL research by supplying actual information from multilingual classrooms and presents practical suggestions for developing inclusive and flexible instructional practices.

Keywords: English Language Proficiency; Multilingual Classrooms; Scaffolding; Student Engagement; TEFL.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Proficiency in English is recognized as a crucial competency in the realm of globalization, enabling communication, academic mobility, and access to global information (AbuSahyon et al., 2023; Haryadi & Aminuddin, 2023; Pradheepa et al., 2025). As English is a global lingua franca, non-native speakers have both advantages and challenges in acquiring the language inside formal educational settings (Mahmud & Khan, 2023; McDougald, 2017; Salimi & Safarzadeh, 2018). These challenges are particularly pronounced in multilingual contexts such as Indonesia, where linguistic diversity, variable exposure to English, and disparate educational resources hinder

language acquisition ([Bachtiar & Puspitasari, 2024](#); [Jon et al., 2021](#); [Laila et al., 2023](#)). Indonesian learners typically interact with many linguistic systems, including local languages, Bahasa Indonesia, and English, which influences their learning strategies, motivation, and communicative proficiency ([Moses et al., 2025](#); [Rintaningrum et al., 2023](#); [Sari & Junaidi, 2024](#)).

[Liu & Deris \(2023\)](#) and [Nageen et al. \(2025\)](#) asserted that despite the increasing importance of English proficiency, instructional methods in many classrooms remain dominated by traditional, form-focused approaches such as grammar-translation and rote memorization, which often fail to address students' communicative needs. These strategies may limit student engagement and hinder significant language learning, particularly in linguistically diverse environments where learners require adaptive and context-specific support. Consequently, there is a growing demand for instructional methods that can effectively bridge the gap between learners' current abilities and their desired communicative competence.

Scaffolding, grounded in [Vygotsky's \(1978\)](#) sociocultural theory and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as referenced in ([Guo et al., 2023](#); [Sanders & Welk, 2005](#)), offers a robust pedagogical framework to address these challenges. It signifies structured and temporary support provided to learners through methods like as modeling, guided practice, questioning, and feedback, which are gradually withdrawn as learners achieve independence. In TEFL contexts, scaffolding has been shown to enhance student autonomy, linguistic proficiency, and engagement by fostering meaningful interaction and reducing cognitive load ([Aldosari & Alsager, 2023](#); [Feng, 2023](#); [Jiménez & Barrantes, 2026](#)). Furthermore, effective scaffolding involves adaptive and responsive teaching strategies that take into account learners' linguistic backgrounds and contextual factors ([Xu et al., 2024](#)).

[Anas et al. \(2024\)](#) and [Pol et al. \(2010\)](#) asserted that a comprehensive examination of the existing literature reveals several deficiencies. The majority of empirical studies on scaffolding have predominantly taken place in Western or English-centric contexts, perhaps neglecting the sociological and linguistic complexities of multilingual environments such as Indonesia. Secondly, prior research often utilizes either quantitative or qualitative approaches in isolation, resulting in a fragmented understanding of scaffolding's impact on cognitive outcomes (e.g., competence) and affective dimensions (e.g., motivation, confidence). Third, there is minimal empirical evidence on the effective adaptation of scaffolding tactics to address contextual constraints in Indonesian classrooms, including high class numbers, diverse competence levels, and exam-oriented curricula ([Defianty & Wilson, 2022](#); [Dewi et al., 2023](#)).

These constraints highlight the need for context-sensitive and empirically grounded research that integrates several data sources to get a comprehensive understanding of scaffolding in multilingual TEFL settings. This research investigates the application and effectiveness of scaffolded instruction in Indonesian secondary schools through a mixed-methods approach. The research examines the influence of scaffolding on students' English language proficiency, engagement, and confidence, while evaluating the views of both educators and learners concerning its practicality and efficacy.

This research advances TEFL studies by contextualizing the issue within Indonesia's multilingual and culturally complex framework in two significant ways. It provides empirical evidence that expands the applicability of scaffolding beyond monolingual or Western contexts, so enriching the theoretical understanding of scaffolding as a context-responsive instructional framework. Secondly, it offers practical insights for educators and policymakers by identifying effective scaffolding strategies that may be adapted to linguistically diverse classrooms. This study

seeks to bridge theory and practice by demonstrating how scaffolding enhances the cognitive and affective dimensions of English language acquisition in multilingual educational contexts.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

The research utilized a mixed-method methodology, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies to thoroughly investigate the efficacy of scaffolding in English language acquisition in multilingual Indonesian classrooms. This mixed-method approach was chosen to comprehensively document student language progress, perceptions, and motivational factors, closely fitting with the research aims. An explanatory sequential design was employed, commencing with quantitative data collection using language proficiency assessments and questionnaires, subsequently followed by qualitative data gathered through observations and semi-structured interviews. This methodological paradigm facilitated triangulation, enhancing the validity of findings and providing profound insights into the practical implications of scaffolding tactics for TEFL in Indonesia.

2.2 Participants

The research included 60 secondary school students and 4 English teachers chosen via purposive sample to exemplify a multilingual TEFL environment. The students, aged 13 to 16 years, exhibited English proficiency levels from beginner to intermediate and hailed from various linguistic origins, including Makassarese, Buginese, and other regional languages. The educators, aged 30 to 45, possessed bachelor's or master's degrees in English Education and had at least five years of teaching experience. The purposive sampling strategy aims to offer contextual insights and facilitate analytical generalization rather than statistical generalization. The participant characteristics described in Table 1 offer a comprehensive overview of the sample makeup, maintaining clarity without redundancy throughout text, tables, and figures.

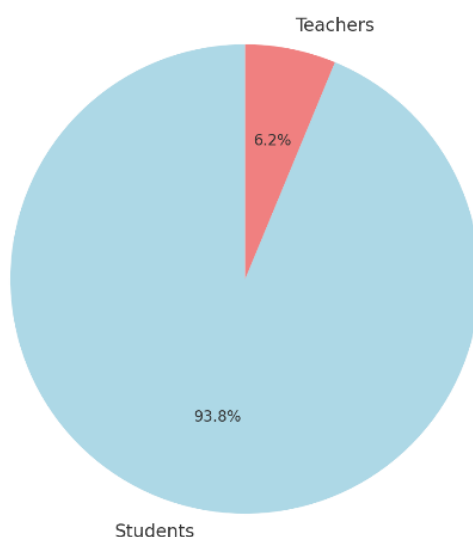


Figure 1. Distribution of Participants

Table 1. Participants Detailed Information

Participant Type	Number	Sampling Method	Age Range	English Proficiency	Linguistic Background	Educational Background
Students	60	Purposive	13-16 years	Beginner-Intermediate	Makassarese, Buginese, Others	Secondary School
Teachers	4	Purposive	30-45 years	Advanced	Bahasa Indonesia, English	Bachelor/Master in English Education

Figure 1 depicts the distribution of participants, indicating that students (93.8%) represent the predominant data source, whilst teachers (6.2%) provide supplementary perspectives on instructional techniques and implementation difficulties. Table 1 provides more information about the sample, comprising 60 students aged 13–16 with beginning to intermediate competence from various linguistic backgrounds, and 4 teachers aged 30–45 possessing advanced English proficiency and pertinent certificates. This intentional composition guarantees varied views and fosters a thorough comprehension of scaffolding strategies in multilingual Indonesian TEFL environments.

2.3 Instruments

The research utilized many instruments to guarantee thorough and triangulated data collecting. Language competency was assessed by pre- and post-tests of 30 questions that evaluated vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and brief communicative writing assignments. Student evaluations were gathered via a structured questionnaire consisting of 20 items utilizing a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), concentrating on motivation, confidence, and perceived utility of scaffolding. Teacher perceptions were collected via a concise survey of 10 Likert-scale items focused on feasibility and instructional efficacy.

Classroom observations were performed with a systematic checklist comprising 12 indications, such as modeling, guided practice, questioning, feedback, visual aid utilization, and student engagement patterns. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 students and all 4 teachers, utilizing 8–10 open-ended questions to investigate their experiences and perceptions regarding the use of scaffolding. All instruments underwent validation via expert review and pilot testing to ascertain clarity, relevance, and reliability.

2.4 Procedure

The study was executed in three stages. During the preparatory phase, educators underwent training in scaffolding methodologies, and teaching materials were designed jointly. The scaffolding intervention was executed over eight weeks, comprising three 90-minute sessions each week. Instructional methods encompassed modeling, guided practice, inquiry, and corrective feedback. During the data collection phase, pre-tests, mid-point observations, post-tests, questionnaires, and interviews were routinely administered. Ethical considerations were meticulously upheld, encompassing informed consent, confidentiality, and institutional permission.

2.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were evaluated utilizing SPSS software. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) summarized students' performance and perceptions, whereas inferential statistics (independent samples t-test) assessed differences between the experimental and control groups. The threshold for statistical significance was established at $p < 0.05$. Thematic analysis of qualitative data from interviews and observations was conducted using NVivo software. The analysis comprised three stages: open coding, thematic categorization, and interpretation of patterns about scaffolding efficacy. The study utilized data triangulation from many sources, member verification to verify participant responses, and intercoder reliability to ensure consistency in qualitative analysis, hence ensuring validity and reliability. These approaches improve the transparency and replicability of the research.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

The results reveal a consistent trend in both quantitative and qualitative data, underscoring the efficacy of scaffolded instruction in multilingual TEFL courses. Pre-test results indicated similar baseline proficiency levels across the experimental group ($M = 68$, $SD = 6.4$) and the control group ($M = 67$, $SD = 5.9$). Post-test results indicated a significant enhancement in the experimental group ($M = 84$, $SD = 5.8$) relative to the control group ($M = 72$, $SD = 6.2$), with the difference being statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). This indicates that scaffolded training significantly enhanced pupils' language development.

Observational findings indicate that scaffolding techniques—specifically guided practice, modeling, and structured questioning—were consistently correlated with elevated levels of student involvement (average ratings between 4.5 and 4.8 on a 5-point scale). These tactics promoted active engagement, interaction, and enhanced readiness to communicate. Survey results corroborate these findings, indicating elevated student motivation ($M = 4.6$), confidence ($M = 4.4$), and perceived use of scaffolding ($M = 4.7$). Educators indicated high feasibility ($M = 4.7$) and satisfaction ($M = 4.8$), demonstrating that scaffolding is both effective and practicable in multilingual classroom environments. Qualitative data from interviews reveal three predominant themes: individualized assistance, engaging education, and cultural significance. Students asserted that incremental assistance enhanced their confidence, but teachers observed that incorporating local contexts and permitting restricted use of L1 improved understanding and engagement.

a. Overview of Data Collected

A thorough dataset was built to assess the efficacy of scaffolding tactics in multilingual English classrooms. Quantitative data comprised pre- and post-assessments of language proficiency, student questionnaires regarding motivation and attitudes, and teacher surveys on instructional execution. Sixty students completed both pre- and post-tests, resulting in a 100% response rate for this primary instrument. All students submitted the surveys, with over 95% answering every item, so providing robust data completeness. Four educators also finalized the teacher questionnaires and engaged in classroom observations. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 15 purposefully selected children and all 4 teachers, encompassing diverse linguistic origins and classroom experiences. Furthermore, 20 class sessions were monitored using standardized observation checklists, which documented real-time instructional methodologies and student involvement. The integration of these several data sources

facilitated triangulation, hence enhancing the validity of the conclusions. All data collection instruments exhibited great reliability and were administered uniformly across groups. The thoroughness and consistency of the data established a robust basis for significant analysis of the cognitive and emotional effects of scaffolding on English language acquisition in Indonesia's multilingual classrooms. The data were subsequently evaluated systematically in the following sections to identify emerging trends and notable findings, as shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3.



Figure 2. Summary of Total Data Collected

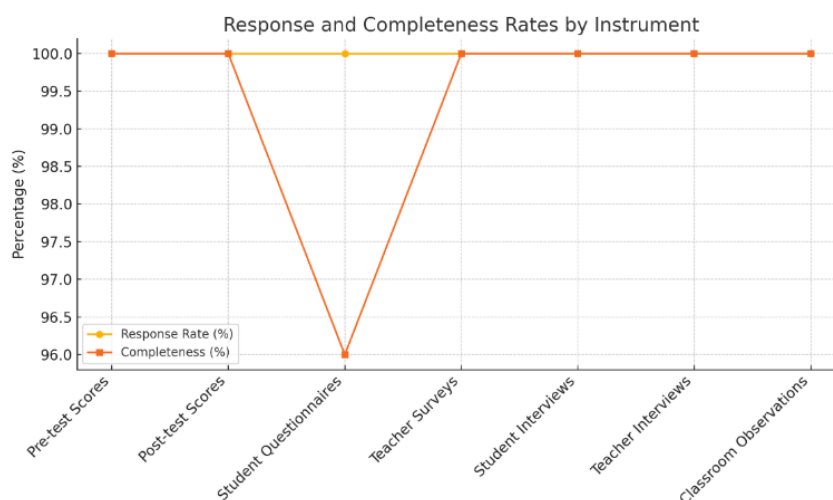


Figure 3. Response and Completeness Rates by Instrument

Figure 2 shows the total number of responses for each data type, highlighting student-related instruments, which received 60 responses for examinations and surveys. Figure 3 shows that most instruments have 100% response and completion rates. Omitted items may have caused student survey completion to drop to 96%. The visualizations demonstrate the fair and effective data collection method, ensuring student and educator coverage. These figures demonstrate the study's methodological rigor and establish the groundwork for the detailed analysis that as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Overview of Data Collected

Data Type	Total Collected	Response Rate (%)	Completeness (%)
Pre-test Scores	60	100	100
Post-test Scores	60	100	100
Student Questionnaires	60	100	96
Teacher Surveys	4	100	100
Student Interviews	15	100	100
Teacher Interviews	4	100	100
Classroom Observations	20	100	100

Table 2 summarizes all data sources used in this study. The quantitative data included 60 pre-test and 60 post-test responses, 60 student questionnaires, and 4 teacher surveys with 100% response and near-perfect completion rates. The qualitative data included 15 student interviews, 4 teacher interviews, and 20 classroom observations. The data collection process ensured multilingual representation. The high response and completion rates imply strong participant involvement and instrument design, ensuring reliable analysis. This ordered dataset made triangulation easier, improving study reliability and depth.

b. Student Language Proficiency Improvement

The enhancement of student language proficiency was assessed via pre- and post-tests conducted with both experimental and control groups. In the pre-test, the experimental group achieved a mean score of 68 (SD = 6.4), whereas the control group attained a mean of 67 (SD = 5.9), signifying equal initial proficiency levels. Following the scaffolding intervention, the experimental group's post-test mean increased significantly to 84 (SD = 5.8), while the control group showed a slight rise to 72 (SD = 6.2). An independent samples t-test demonstrated a statistically significant difference in post-test scores ($p < 0.01$), validating the efficacy of scaffolding tactics on learner outcomes.

The bar chart visually illustrates these disparities, clearly demonstrating the experimental group's significant improvement relative to the control group. The application of diverse scaffolding techniques—modeling, guided practice, and feedback—probably facilitated greater understanding and improved performance. The findings robustly endorse the premise that organized scaffolding in TEFL environments enhances learners' English ability in multilingual classes. The definitive statistical and visual data highlight the educational significance of scaffolding as a pragmatic and efficacious instructional method, particularly when customized to meet the varied needs of learners in Indonesian secondary schools, as shown in Figure 4.

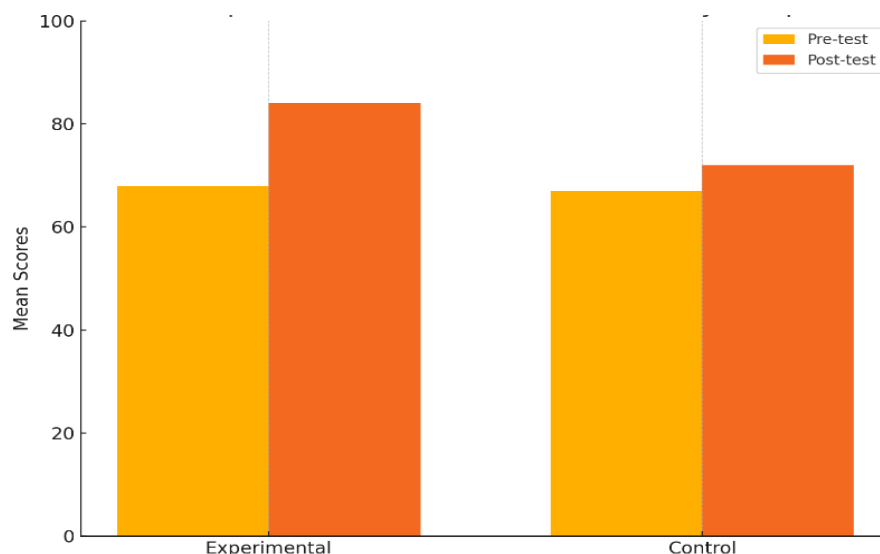


Figure 4. Comparison of Pre- and Post-Test Scores by Group

Figure 4 shows the experimental and control groups' language proficiency differences. Pre-test scores showed that both groups started similarly. After scaffolded instruction, the experimental group scored substantially higher than the control group. Scaffolding improves student outcomes and language acquisition, as shown in this visual. In multilingual learning situations like Indonesia, scaffolded TEFL education can improve outcomes. The chart's clarity and symmetry aid interpretation.

Table 3. Student Proficiency Test Scores

Group	Pre-test Mean	Pre-test SD	Post-test Mean	Post-test SD
Experimental	68	6.4	84	5.8
Control	67	5.9	72	6.2

Table 3 shows the experimental and control groups' pre- and post-test mean scores and standard deviations. Both groups started with similar English competence, averaging 68 and 67. The scaffolding intervention improved the experimental group's post-test mean to 84, compared to 72 in the control group. Keeping standard deviation levels consistent indicates subject performance uniformity. This structured data shows that scaffolding tactics improve students' English language skills in multilingual classrooms.

c. **Observational Findings on Scaffolding Practices**

Classroom observations indicated the regular implementation of essential scaffolding strategies, such as guided practice, modeling, visual aids, and prompting. Guided practice was identified as the predominant technique, closely succeeded by modeling language usage and visual aids. These strategies correlated with elevated student engagement, characterized by learners actively engaged, inquiring, and responding to teacher prompts. Engagement levels averaged from 4.5 to 4.8 on a 5-point scale. Educators constantly offered feedback and restructured student responses to enhance comprehension. Scaffolding strategies improved engagement and motivated learners to engage in communicative risks, illustrating their efficacy in promoting active learning in multilingual classrooms, as shown in Figure 5, Figure 6 and Table 4.

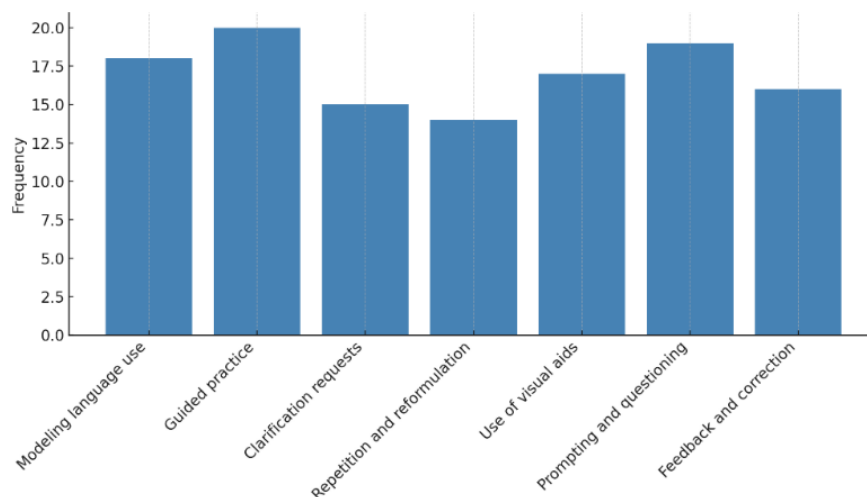


Figure 5. Frequency of Scaffolding Techniques Observed

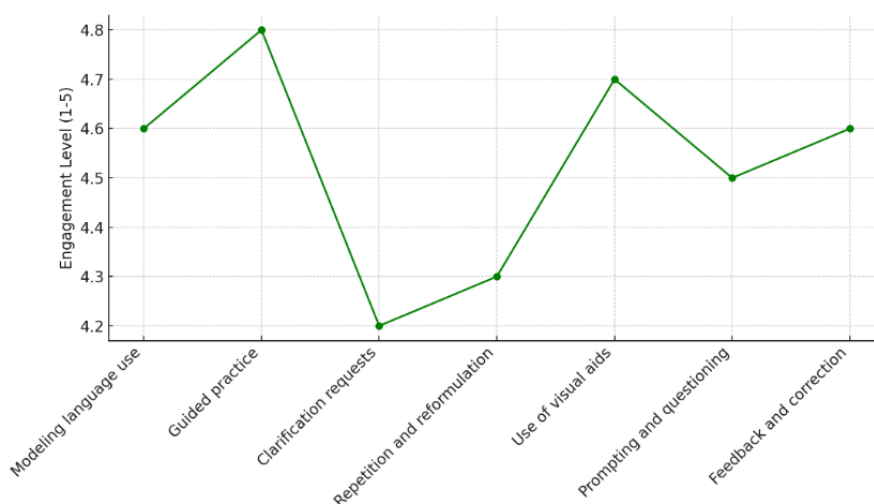


Figure 6. Student Engagement by Scaffolding Technique

Table 4. Scaffolding Observation Summary

Scaffolding Technique	Frequency Observed	Student Engagement Level (1-5)
Modeling language use	18	4.6
Guided practice	20	4.8
Clarification requests	15	4.2
Repetition and reformulation	14	4.3
Use of visual aids	17	4.7
Prompting and questioning	19	4.5
Feedback and correction	16	4.6

Twenty classroom sessions showed TEFL-compliant scaffolding methods. Guided practice (20 occurrences), modeling language use (18 occurrences), and visual assistance (17 occurrences) were the most common. Engagement scores of 4.5 to 4.8 on a 5-point scale revealed that these strategies increased student involvement. The teacher demonstrated linguistic concepts and guided students via systematic exercises, gradually transferring

responsibility to pupils. Regular prompting, clarifying questions, and feedback encouraged student engagement, problem-solving, and reflection.

Figures 5 and 6 show technique usage and student participation. Guided practice, the main technique, had the greatest engagement score (4.8), indicating its effectiveness in active learning. Visual aids and prompting tactics improved comprehension and engagement, especially among lower-proficient students. Scattered instruction improved student interest and understanding, as observed. These findings demonstrate that scaffolding is effective, even in multilingual contexts where linguistic diversity necessitates adaptive and responsive teaching.

d. Student and Teacher Perceptions (Survey Results)

Survey findings from students and educators yielded significant insights into perceptions of scaffolding methodologies. Descriptive statistics from student questionnaires indicated elevated motivation and favorable opinions towards the scaffolded education. The mean score for motivation on a 5-point Likert scale was 4.6, whereas confidence in using English exhibited a substantial improvement post-intervention, with a mean of 4.4. Students saw the scaffolding tactics as exceedingly beneficial for comprehending new language, enhancing speaking fluency, and alleviating tension during classroom activities. They particularly valued the incorporation of visual aids, sequential modeling, and organized peer interaction, which fostered their confidence in a nurturing educational setting.

Teacher polls corroborated these findings, with educators assessing the practicality of applying scaffolding tactics at 4.7. The structured support facilitated meaningful engagement in learning tasks for students with diverse competence levels. Educators observed enhanced classroom engagement, increased participation rates, and greater student autonomy over time. Despite certain challenges, including time management and adapting scaffolding to varying learning paces, the overall results were deemed highly advantageous. Students and teachers affirmed that scaffolding improved the learning process, making English more accessible and significant in a multilingual educational context, as shown in Figure 7.

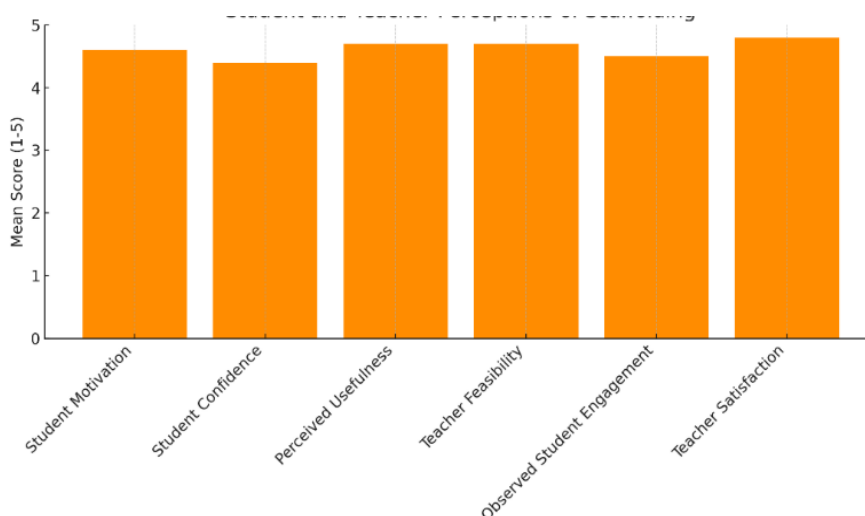


Figure 7. Student and Teacher Perceptions of Scaffolding

Figure 7 shows that children and teachers liked scaffolding, confirming the survey results. All six dimensions scored over 4.4 on a 5-point scale, indicating strong agreement and satisfaction. “Perceived Usefulness” and “Teacher Satisfaction” received the highest ratings (4.7 and 4.8), showing that scaffolding improved learning outcomes and instructional delivery. The substantial association between student enthusiasm, confidence, and instructor engagement assessments shows that scaffolding is a successful pedagogical strategy in Indonesian secondary school multilingual TEFL programs, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Perceptions of Scaffolding - Survey Summary

Aspect	Mean Score (1-5)
Student Motivation	4.6
Student Confidence	4.4
Perceived Usefulness	4.7
Teacher Feasibility	4.7
Observed Student Engagement	4.5
Teacher Satisfaction	4.8

Table 5 shows student and instructor impression questionnaire averages for scaffolding strategies. Students reported increased motivation (4.6), more English confidence (4.4), and strong consensus on scaffolding tactics (4.7). Teachers gave these techniques a 4.7 practicality rating and expressed satisfaction (4.8) with the results, including student involvement (4.5). The consistently high ratings across all categories demonstrate scaffolding's effectiveness in multilingual classroom English language development. The results demonstrate its practicality in TEFL.

e. Interview Results (Thematic Summary)

An investigation of student and teacher interviews identified many critical features that enhanced the comprehension of scaffolding in multilingual TEFL environments. Initially, customized help appeared as a predominant topic, with students valuing teachers' capacity to deconstruct intricate tasks. A student noted, *“I used to be afraid to speak English, but now I feel more confident because the teacher helps us step by step.”* The concept of interactive learning emphasized how scaffolding facilitated involvement. Educators saw a heightened readiness among students to participate in conversations and collaborative activities, especially when visual aids or real-world examples were employed.

A significant issue was the cultural and linguistic significance of scaffolding. Educators highlighted that linking English instruction to students' local experiences facilitated comprehension. One teacher remarked, *“When I use examples related to their local culture, they respond more actively.”* Students experienced increased comfort when permitted to initially articulate their views in their original language prior to shifting to English. The interviews underscored the importance of scaffolding in fostering a secure, inclusive atmosphere that honors learners' language backgrounds while enhancing English ability. These conclusions highlight the significance of context-sensitive educational practices adapted to Indonesia's diverse multilingual environment, as shown in Figure 8.

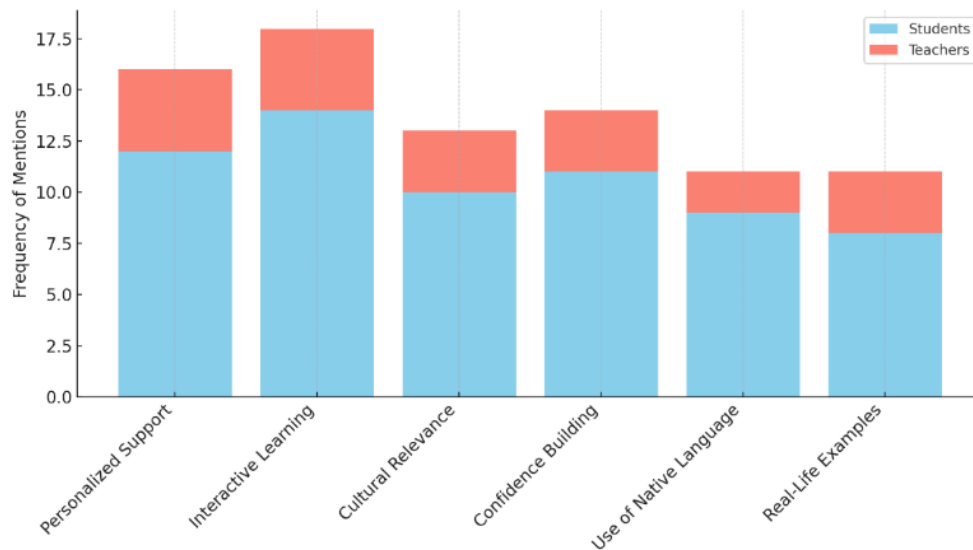


Figure 8. Key Themes Identified in Student and Teacher Interviews

Figure 8 shows how students and educators reference themes. Student answers dominated all subjects, especially “Interactive Learning” and “Personalized Support,” demonstrating their love for scaffolded training. Teaching emphasis was consistent as educators stressed these themes with fewer references. Both groups stressed "Cultural Relevance" and "Use of Native Language," emphasizing the need to contextualize English instruction in Indonesia's multilingual schools. This figure highlights how student experiences match instructor goals, emphasizing the need of culturally responsive scaffolding in language learning, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Thematic Summary of Interview Results

Theme	Frequency (Student Mentions)	Frequency (Teacher Mentions)
Personalized Support	12	4
Interactive Learning	14	4
Cultural Relevance	10	3
Confidence Building	11	3
Use of Native Language	9	2
Real-Life Examples	8	3

Table 6 shows the primary themes from student and teacher interviews. Interactive Learning was the most frequently stated theme by students, with 14 mentions, followed by “Personalized Support” with 12 and “Confidence Building” with 11. This shows students' value for progressive support and engaging activities. Teachers emphasized interactive pedagogy and cultural relevance. Although instructors identified fewer themes, their responses supported the kids' experiences. Themes like "Utilization of Native Language" and "Practical Examples" let students relate new subjects to their local surroundings, improving engagement and understanding.

3.2 Discussion

a. Interpretation of Key Findings

The results of this study significantly corroborate the notion that scaffolding improves English language acquisition, especially in multilingual classroom environments like Indonesia. The pre- and post-test results indicated that students who received scaffolded training exhibited markedly better enhancement in their language skills than those instructed through traditional approaches. This result substantiates the theoretical framework of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), wherein learners gain from systematic assistance that diminishes progressively as their proficiency escalates (Asrifan, Sadaruddin, et al., 2024; Asrifan, Shafa, et al., 2024; Oliveira & Westerlund, 2022; Ertugruloglu et al., 2023; Pacheco et al., 2021; Feller, 2022). The systematic application of scaffolding strategies, including modeling, guided practice, and scaffolded inquiry, facilitated students' comprehension and production of English in significant manners.

Observational evidence corroborated that students exhibited increased engagement, communication, and confidence throughout scaffolded lessons. These behavioral modifications indicate that scaffolding facilitates cognitive advancement and fosters affective elements such as drive and self-efficacy. In multilingual environments, where students frequently alternate among local languages, the national language (Bahasa Indonesia), and English, scaffolding served as a conduit facilitating smoother transitions and enhanced comprehension (Acosta-Gonzaga & Ramirez-Arellano, 2022; Derakhshan & Fathi, 2024; Han, 2021). The intentional employment of students' first language (L1) facilitated idea clarification prior to transitioning to English, hence alleviating fear and augmenting involvement.

Furthermore, the concordance between teacher and student perspectives validates the efficacy and practicality of scaffolding in actual classrooms. Educators noted heightened learner autonomy and engagement, while students expressed a greater sense of support and a readiness to take risks in utilizing English. These findings corroborate the premise that scaffolding is both pedagogically effective and culturally adaptable in multilingual TEFL contexts (Rafidi & Wagner, 2024; Pan et al., 2024; Pastini & Lilasari, 2023). The consistent findings from quantitative, qualitative, and observational data highlight scaffolding's ability to enhance language instruction, rendering it more accessible, inclusive, and effective for varied learner populations within Indonesia's linguistically heterogeneous education system.

b. Comparison with Previous Studies

The results of this study align with an expanding corpus of literature highlighting the advantages of scaffolding in English language acquisition. Prior studies have emphasized scaffolding as a crucial pedagogical approach that facilitates language development through structured, provisional support customized to the requirements of learners (Devereaux & Palmer, 2021; Mahan, 2022; Puntambekar, 2022; Xi & Lantolf, 2021). Consistent with prior findings, the present research demonstrated that scaffolding resulted in substantial enhancements in student competency, motivation, and classroom engagement. These findings validate the applicability of scaffolding principles across various educational settings, especially those characterized by language variety.

This study uniquely contributes by investigating scaffolding in the specific multilingual and multicultural context of Indonesian classrooms, an area that remains underexplored in the literature. This research examines the intricate dynamics encountered by learners

who must navigate multiple local languages, Bahasa Indonesia, and English, in contrast to studies in Western contexts or English-dominant countries that typically concentrate on monolingual or bilingual learners (Asrifan et al., 2024; Hossain, 2024; Wang et al., 2023; Xiong et al., 2025). The discovery that the purposeful employment of pupils' first language (L1) improved comprehension and diminished worry stands in opposition to methodologies that dissuade L1 utilization in English language teaching. This disparity underscores the significance of culturally responsive teaching in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Moreover, incorporating the perspectives of teachers and students, in conjunction with observational data, offers a comprehensive understanding of the practical effects of scaffolding. This study integrates quantitative and qualitative insights to provide a comprehensive understanding of scaffolding in authentic multilingual contexts, in contrast to earlier research that predominantly focused on test scores or discrete classroom interventions (Flynn et al., 2024; Schroedler et al., 2023; Veerman et al., 2025). This approach enhances the discourse in TEFL and multilingual education research, highlighting the necessity for adaptive, context-sensitive teaching practices. The study provides empirical evidence and practical consequences for teacher training, curriculum development, and classroom practices in linguistically diverse educational environments.

c. Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study offer significant practical insights for English educators operating in multilingual classrooms. A crucial result is the necessity of deliberately crafting scaffolding strategies that correspond with students' language, cultural, and cognitive requirements (Asrifan, Panggua, et al., 2025; Oliveira & Westerlund, 2022; Pacheco et al., 2021; Feller, 2022; Wongso et al., 2023; Yanto, 2024). Educators must acknowledge that multilingual learners frequently necessitate more than merely simplified language; they demand systematic support that fosters confidence, enhances communicative competence, and progressively empowers them to assume responsibility for their learning. Techniques including modeling target language usage, guided practice, visual aids, and scaffolded inquiry must be consistently integrated into daily instruction.

The research underscores the educational significance of permitting pupils to deliberately utilize their first language (L1) throughout the learning process. Instead of perceiving L1 utilization as an obstacle, educators can regard it as a linguistic resource that enhances understanding, particularly during the initial phases of learning (Huang et al., 2022; Imbaquingo & Cárdenas, 2023; Rahiem, 2021; Shaaban & Mohamed, 2024). For instance, educators may promote preliminary brainstorming in the first language prior to shifting to English, or elucidate intricate grammatical principles utilizing familiar linguistic structures. This culturally relevant methodology alleviates learner fear and fosters inclusion.

Furthermore, the findings emphasize the significance of regular feedback and motivation. Scaffolding is most efficacious when accompanied by prompt, constructive feedback that validates student effort and directs enhancement (Asrifan, Ilyas, et al., 2025; Calor et al., 2022; Rodríguez et al., 2022). Educators should facilitate opportunities for peer collaboration, enabling students to assist one another through cooperative tasks that promote social engagement and language acquisition.

Scaffolding should be regarded as a flexible framework, rather than a uniform technique, adaptable to varying competence levels and classroom contexts. Professional

development programs must provide educators with effective scaffolding tools and classroom management techniques suitable for big, varied classes (Hennessy et al., 2022; Meutstege et al., 2023). Scaffolding ultimately enables learners to go from dependence to independence, rendering it a crucial element of effective TEFL education in multilingual environments.

d. Contextual Challenges and Adaptations

Implementing scaffolding in bilingual Indonesian classrooms was difficult. Class sizes often exceeded 30 individuals per lesson, which presented a problem. This hindered teachers' ability to provide individualized instruction and track student progress. Thus, scaffolding needs to be changed to include peer mentorship and collaborative learning activities, allowing students to help each other while the instructor observed the learning process. The variety of student skills and language backgrounds in a classroom was a challenge. Students spoke Makassarese, Buginese, and other languages in addition to English. To engage children at varying levels of comprehension, educators constructed tiered scaffolding, changed language assignments, and used differentiated questioning. Visuals and multilingual materials promoted diversity and understanding.

The national curriculum's emphasis on exam preparation above communicative skills made time constraints an issue. Teachers employed scaffolding in normal course frameworks without extra teaching time by adding guided practice to speaking exercises or modeling the target language in warm-up tasks. Technological difficulties, especially in rural areas, prevented digital scaffolding use. Printed materials, hand-drawn graphics, and physical artifacts proved successful and accessible, therefore educators used them. These adjustments emphasize context-sensitive pedagogy. Multilingual classroom scaffolding must be flexible, practical, and culturally relevant. Innovative, locally-based teaching strategies can achieve scaffolding despite logistical and systemic constraints, as shown in this study.

e. Limitations of The Study

The study provides significant insights into scaffolding within multilingual TEFL contexts, although certain limitations must be recognized. The research was conducted in a small number of schools within a single region of Indonesia, thus constraining the generalizability of the findings to other places with distinct language or educational characteristics. Secondly, although employing a mixed-method approach, the limited sample size, especially for qualitative data like interviews, may inadequately represent the range of student and instructor perspectives. The observational data depended on scheduled classroom visits, which may have affected instructor and student behavior (observer effect). Subsequent research ought to broaden the geographical range and incorporate a broader, more diverse sample from several regions. Longitudinal research may offer enhanced understanding of the enduring effects of scaffolding on language development. Integrating student portfolios or digital learning analytics may enhance data reliability and depth.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the efficacy of scaffolded education in enhancing English language acquisition among non-native students in multilingual Indonesian secondary schools. The results offer definitive empirical proof that scaffolding markedly improves language proficiency, evidenced by the considerable rise in the experimental group's post-test scores (from M = 68 to

M = 84, $p < 0.01$) relative to the control group. Furthermore, survey findings demonstrate elevated student motivation ($M = 4.6$) and perceived usefulness ($M = 4.7$), while observational data indicate robust engagement levels (4.5–4.8), corroborating that scaffolding positively impacts both cognitive and affective aspects of learning. The results indicate that organized scaffolding strategies—such as modeling, guided practice, and feedback—effectively assist learners in managing linguistic complexity and progressively attaining communicative competence. The study emphasizes that context-sensitive adjustments, such as the deliberate incorporation of learners' first language and culturally pertinent materials, are essential for enhancing comprehension and alleviating anxiety in multilingual classrooms.

This study enhances TEFL scholarship by offering context-specific empirical evidence from Indonesian multilingual environments, a domain that is currently underrepresented in the literature. It broadens the utilization of scaffolding beyond monolingual settings and establishes it as a versatile, culturally attuned teaching framework. The findings provide direction for educators and curriculum developers in employing adaptive scaffolding techniques that cater to varied learner requirements within actual classroom limitations. Future research may investigate the enduring effects of scaffolding, its incorporation with digital learning resources, and its implementation across many educational tiers and areas to enhance multilingual language instruction methodologies.

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