

The Effect of Teacher Scaffolding on Learning English as a Foreign Language at King Abdulaziz University: A Classroom Discourse Analysis

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Abstract – This study investigates the scaffolding strategies used by EFL teachers at the English Language Institute (ELI) at King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia with learners of intermediate language proficiency. It also aims to identify the effect of scaffolding strategies on levels of classroom interaction. The data was collected through video-recordings of ten male EFL classes at KAU. All of the data was transcribed using Walsh's convention system and analyzed using the Interaction Analysis (IA) approach. Analysis of the data was performed using a checklist designed by the researchers. The qualitative data in this piece of research is supported with quantitative data as the numbers of turns of student interaction, types and occurrence of scaffolding, were counted and sorted using Microsoft Excel. Overall, the results demonstrate that EFL teachers at the ELI employ a significant number of scaffolding strategies with their students. In addition, the results indicate that the scaffolding strategies exert a positive impact on the level of classroom interaction.

Keywords: scaffolding, EFL teachers, ELI, EFL learners, proficiency level 104, interaction, task completion

1. TOPIC INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM

1.1 Background of the Study

Many training courses are conducted worldwide to improve English teachers' performance and numerous theories of second language acquisition, teaching and learning have been developed. A number of theories have emphasized the importance of interaction. The interaction hypothesis proposed by Long (1996) is an example of these theories where he stated that conversational interaction "facilitates language acquisition because it connects input (what learners hear and read); internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention; and output (what learners produce) in productive ways" (Long, 1996, p. 451- 452). In the same vein, Vygotsky (1978) (Original manuscripts [ca. 1930-1934]) stressed the critical role that social interaction plays in the learning process.

Certain types of interaction (such as group work, pair work and teacher initiates and student answers) also help to provide scaffolding for students, which in turn help them perform tasks successfully. Scaffolding is a method that is used to facilitate learning and help learners perform tasks that are beyond their ability (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976).

According to Walsh (2006), interaction and its impact on development are at the heart of scaffolding. Scaffolding is especially significant in teaching a second language as it guides students and enables them to perform tasks successfully and is done in various ways.

1.2 The Context of the Research Study

Due to the importance of scaffolding in facilitating language learning, this study focuses on the scaffolding strategies used in the English Language Institute (ELI) at King Abdulaziz University (KAU) and aims to investigate the effect of these scaffolding strategies on the level of classroom interaction in the Saudi EFL tertiary context.

Due to the increasing importance of English in Saudi Arabia, it is taught as a compulsory course to students enrolled in the Foundation Year Program of the KAU ELI. Students are given the Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT) to be placed in the appropriate levels as the program consists of four levels. The difficulty of the levels increases as the students advance through the Foundation Year. Students enrolled in the final foundation year course (level 104) often complain that the course material is too difficult, particularly in the areas of reading and listening. For this reason, level 104 was selected for closer study because it is clear that there is an urgent need for teaching strategies that facilitate learning English at this level. This is especially so given the increasingly important role of English, both during and subsequent to students' academic studies (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Therefore, the use of strategies such as scaffolding help learner's move to a higher level of understanding and success in English language learning and are of paramount importance (Alyami, 2008).

Scaffolding is critical, especially in developing reading and listening skills. Studies have shown that scaffolding affects learners' reading comprehension positively (Walqui, 2006 & Bassiri, 2012) and the listening skill is also very important in language learning. As Krashen (1982) stated that learners enhance and expand language competence through active listening and processing the language they hear. Studies have shown that "EFL learners' listening comprehension could be remarkably improved by the teacher-scaffolding and peer-scaffolding" (Yazdanpanah & Khanmohammad, 2014, p. 2393).

This study aims to investigate the scaffolding techniques that are employed by teachers at the ELI at KAU, focusing specifically on the proficiency level of 104 students (B1/Threshold level on the Common European Framework of reference for language; CEFR). Moreover, this study specifically aims to investigate the scaffolding techniques used with listening and reading activities as students in level 104 often complain about the material being too difficult. This piece of research also aims to ascertain whether or not scaffolding techniques promote classroom interaction.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

EFL learners of the intermediate language proficiency level who are enrolled in the Foundation Year Program of the English Language Institute at King Abdulaziz University often complain about the instructional material being too difficult. This being the case, they need support in the form of scaffolding to overcome such problems. It is unclear however,

whether instructors at the ELI actually use scaffolding techniques in their lessons and whether or not the teachers' implementation of the scaffolding techniques is effective in assisting students' learning. Furthermore, the possible positive or negative impact of the scaffolding strategies employed on interaction remains as yet unknown. This current research study aims to investigate which scaffolding techniques are the most frequently used in ELI classrooms and the effect of the observed scaffolding techniques on interaction levels in the Saudi EFL tertiary context. More specifically, it aims to examine scaffolding strategies employed in relation to the listening and reading skills.

1.4 Significance of the Study

To the best knowledge of the researchers, little research has been conducted concerning scaffolding strategies in the Saudi EFL context. This study is intended to play an important role in the development of teacher and student awareness regarding the key role played by scaffolding in students' success in learning English. It is also intended to assist teachers to develop their use of scaffolding to support students and to ensure their successful performance, especially with demanding tasks that are at the limit of or beyond students' proficiency levels. Furthermore, it is envisioned as a tool to help program planners design language programs tailored to enhance students' language proficiency, and to enable professional development units to provide necessary training courses to teachers to improve their classroom performance.

1.5 Research Objectives

This study aims at:

- Exploring ELI teachers' use of scaffolding strategies.
- Investigating scaffolding techniques used by teachers with EFL learners of the proficiency level 104 (B1/Threshold level CEFR) to create and promote interaction in ELI classes.
- Investigating the effectiveness of the scaffolding techniques employed to enhance interaction.
- Exploring the types of scaffolding strategies that are specific to and efficacious in reading and listening skills/lessons.

1.6 Research Questions

This piece of research attempts to answer the following research questions;

- 1) What scaffolding techniques are employed by ELI EFL teachers when the level of reading or listening in the textbook is above their students' English proficiency level?
- 2) Which techniques are used most often in ELI EFL classrooms?
- 3) What kinds of scaffolding tend to produce increased classroom interaction in ELI EFL classes?

1.7 Methodology

This research study adopted the descriptive and analytical method and is based on a mixed methods approach as the data collection tools that were used were audio and video-recordings and a checklist. Quantitative data was also used to support the results of the qualitative analysis. The data was analyzed using the interaction analysis approach to identify the impact of the scaffolding strategies employed on the level of classroom interaction. The results of the analysis were then supported by quantitative data as the number of interaction turns were tallied after the scaffolding strategies had been used. Ten classes (1 hour per class) of eight classes of proficiency level 104 (B1/Threshold CEFR) were video and audio-recorded. All recorded data was transcribed for subsequent analysis and results. The video and audio-recordings were analyzed using a checklist to identify the most common scaffolding strategies used and their effect on the level of classroom interaction. The participants were all EFL male learners of proficiency level 104.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

This research study was limited to face-to-face classes conducted at the KAU ELI in Jeddah. The study was also limited to looking at the use of scaffolding strategies and their efficiency only in EFL classes. The data was collected from ten ELI 104 EFL classes (B1/Threshold CEFR) at KAU ELI and was limited to the third module of the academic year, 2014-2015. All the participating teachers and students were male.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Interaction analysis approach: refers to “analyzing classroom discourse, and to review their relative merits and shortcomings” (Walsh, 2006, p. 37).

Discourse: refers to texts whether written or spoken that have been produced in a specific context for a definite purpose (Walsh, 2013).

Scaffolding: “a process of ‘setting up’ the situation to make the child’s entry easy and successful and then gradually pulling back and handing the role to the child as he/she becomes skilled enough to manage it.” (Bruner, 1983, p. 60).

2. LITREATURE REVIEW

2.1 Interaction

Generally, interaction is referred to as, “all types of behavior in which individuals and groups act upon each other” (Simpson & Galbo, 1986, p.38). Simpson and Galbo (1986) indicate an important feature of interaction that is, “reciprocity in actions and responses in an infinite variety of relationships: verbal-non-verbal, conscious and non-conscious, enduring and casual” (p. 38).

Interaction is also an important element of scaffolding. Both Van Lier (1988, 1996) and Gibbons (2002) stated that scaffolding is a process by which language and cognitive

abilities are developed through interaction with others, similarly, Van de Pol, Volman and Beishuizen (2010) defined scaffolding as “an interactive process that occurs between a teacher and a student who must both participate actively in the process” (p. 274). This definition indicates that interaction is a principal element of scaffolding.

Dialogue is also considered an important aspect of scaffolding (Edwards & Mercer, 1994; Gibbons, 1998, 2002a, 2003) and is viewed as a tool through which assistance is given and adjusted, to facilitate “the collaboration necessary between the novice and the expert for the novice to acquire the cognitive strategy or strategies” (Palinscar, 1986, p. 95). Based on this, it is clearly understood that interaction is an important part of scaffolding.

2.2 Scaffolding

2.2.1 Introduction. Scaffolding refers to the assistance provided to the students to decrease the difficulty level of the task (Walsh, 2013). It is a teaching technique that organizes and regulates teachers’ support of their students and helps guide teachers’ interventions as scaffolding tells the teacher when support is needed and when it should be removed (Engin, 2014).

The idea of scaffolding was introduced by Jerome Bruner, who explained that scaffolding is ,“a process of ‘setting up’ the situation to make the child’s entry easy and successful and then gradually pulling back and handing the role to the child as he/she becomes skilled enough to manage it” (Bruner, 1983, p. 60). His work has been considered an attempt to operationalize the concept of teaching in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Wells, 1999).

The ZPD theory is the theoretical framework underlying scaffolding and by definition, the ZPD refers to, “ the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined by problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86) (Original manuscripts [ca. 1930-1934]). There is a clear consensus that Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory and the notion of the zone of proximal development are at the heart of the concept of scaffolding (Berk, 2001; Daniels, 2001; Wells, 2001; Krause et al, 2003; McDevitt & Ormrod, 2002, cited inVerenikina, 2008).

2.2.2 Scaffolding: Concepts and origins. By definition, scaffolding refers to a:

Temporary support provided for the completion of a task that learners otherwise might not be able to complete. This support can be provided in a variety of manners that for example includes modeling and the posing of questions for different subjects (e.g. science, social studies) at different ages. (Van de Pol et al., 2010, p. 272).

The term was originally taken from the field of construction, in which a scaffold is a temporary structure raised to provide support in building or modifications of another structure (Van de Pol, et al., 2010). It was first used as a metaphor in the learning context by Wood, Bruner and Rose (1978) to delineate the role of adults’ tutoring in the language development of their children (Van de Pol, et al., 2010). Bruner (1978) defined scaffolding as, “the steps

taken to reduce the degree of freedom taken in carrying out some tasks so that the child can concentrate on the difficult skill that he/she is in the process of acquiring” (p.19).

2.3 Previous Studies Related to the Domain of this Research

Despite scaffolding’s aforementioned challenges and disadvantages, its overall positive impact on EFL learners is undeniable. This section reports several conducted studies that demonstrate the positive impact emanating from the use of scaffolding in EFL classrooms.

Samana (2013) conducted a study titled, “Teacher’s and Students’ Scaffolding in an EFL Classroom”. The study aimed to investigate the scaffolding on the part of teachers and scaffolding from classmates. The participants of the study were low level English proficiency EFL students. They were considered to have low English proficiency because they were repeating parts of the program that they had previously not succeeded in successfully achieving promotion from. The researcher concentrated on task completion subsequent to the students having received social support and also considered students’ attitudes towards the scaffolding providers. The main tools used in this study were audio recordings and interviews. The researcher translated and transcribed the data recordings and subsequently counted and analyzed the scaffolding interactions. The finding of the study opposed the belief that scaffolding is employed only by experts, as it revealed that students with low English proficiency level were capable of successfully scaffolding their peers. This means that the teacher is not the only source of support provision within classrooms. The researcher delineated the difference between the scaffolding on the teacher’s part and the scaffolding that comes from students and found that the teacher was able to manage the type and timings of provided assistance, whereas students told their classmates everything they knew. Therefore, the researcher stated that the scaffolding emanating from students is similar to knowledge sharing.

Another study was conducted by Kayi-Aydar (2013) titled, “Scaffolding language learning in an academic ESL classroom”. This study attempted to examine the ways ESL learners asked for, acted in response to, and managed scaffolding across various classroom interactions in an academic oral skills class. It also aimed to investigate the manner in which scaffolding is influenced by power relations. The main tools used were audio and video recordings. These were complimented by other data sources such as interviews, student diaries, and field notes. The findings demonstrated that teacher constructed scaffolding has a positive effect on student participation. On the other hand, scaffolding failed to occur during small group tasks and student-led discussions because there were power struggle incidents among students with resulting lack of response by some students to their peers. The findings of this study oppose the finding of the previous research that considered peer to peer scaffolding as effective.

Li (2012) conducted a similar study titled, “Scaffolding adult learners of English in learning target form in a Hong Kong EFL university classroom”. This study was based on sociocultural theory and scaffolding and it aimed to investigate the ways in which teachers interacted with groups of university students in learning the target form in a second language. The data collection was based on micro genetic analysis of teacher and student discourse in

English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom at a university in Hong Kong. To facilitate data analysis in order to acquire improved understanding of scaffolding, the researcher adopted seven scaffolding functions: “recruitment, simplifying the task, direction maintenance, marking critical features, frustration control, demonstration, and feedback” (Wood et al., as cited in Li, 2012, p.131). The results revealed scaffolded assistance to be effective since it provides students with the opportunity to internalize content knowledge and the target language, and employ them productively.

Another study was conducted by Al-Yami (2008) titled, “The Effectiveness of Scaffolding Interactive Activities in Developing the English Listening Comprehension Skills of the Sixth Grade Elementary School girls in Jeddah”. This study was based on sociocultural theory and scaffolding and aimed to examine the impact of scaffolding interactive activities on improving the English listening comprehension skills of sixth grade elementary school girls in Jeddah. For the purpose of the study, 50 sixth grade students at The One Hundred and Twenty Eighth Elementary School in Jeddah were selected to participate in this study. They were divided into two groups: 25 pupils in the control group and 25 pupils in the experimental group. Each group studied the same lessons but the experimental group participated in the scaffolded interactive activities designed by the researcher. The researcher designed pre and post tests to be given to the students. The findings revealed that the proposed scaffolded interactive activities were successful in enhancing the listening comprehension skills of sixth grade elementary schoolgirls in Jeddah.

Chi (2007) conducted a study titled “Scaffolding EFL Learners’ Comprehension of Texts”. It was based on scaffolding theory and aimed to investigate and compare scaffolding strategies used by two teachers in two elementary schools in Taiwan in terms of process of instructing more and less proficient students, as well as the most effective strategies perceived by each student group. The teachers employed four scaffolding strategies: offering explanations, clarifying and verifying student understanding, linking with student background knowledge, and negotiating meaning. The data was collected using various tools, namely: instructional data, semi-structured oral interviews, and reading comprehension tests before and after instruction. The findings revealed that linking with background knowledge or prior life experience has a significant facilitating role in reading comprehension.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

3.1 Participants and Setting

This study was conducted in the KAU ELI. ELI foundation year students are classified into four levels: ELI 101, ELI 102, ELI 103 and ELI 104. Placement level classifications are based on students’ English language proficiency levels according to their results of the Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT) taken at the time of their university enrollment. The OOPT is an exam developed by Oxford University Press conducted at the beginning of every academic year for freshmen students who have recently been accepted to the university.

The population of this study consisted of male EFL learners enrolled in an intermediate level (Level 104) course using the intermediate level textbook namely, *New Headway Plus Special Edition Intermediate* at the ELI at KAU, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The

students in this study were initially placed in the elementary level (ELI 102) according to the OOPT and had completed 12 weeks of coursework prior to the start of this study. The reason behind the selection of students of intermediate language proficiency level was to ensure that they would be able to readily respond to scaffolding strategies employed in the classrooms as they are deemed to have higher levels of language proficiency than level 101,102 and 103 students. It is also assumed that level 104 students feel more comfortable expressing themselves in the target language in the classroom environment. Furthermore, since students in this level have often complained concerning the difficulty level of course instructional materials, there is an actual and discernable educational, learning and learner need for the use of scaffolding to help facilitate effective, successful learning.

The sample consisted of ten classes, chosen at random, consisting of 4-18 students per class. The strategy used for participant selection was convenience sampling as this refers to selecting participants from an available population since access to all members of the population is impossible (Fred & Perry, 2005). Consequently, the sample comprised only of students who consented to being video-recorded.

The sample consisted of eight male teachers working in the KAU ELI and convenience sampling was also used for selection of the EFL teacher participants. The sample is limited to only eight male teachers, all of whom agreed to be video-recorded.

The table below (table 1) provides additional information concerning the teachers:

Table 1: Participant Teachers' Information

Teachers	Teaching Experience	Qualifications	Nationality
Teacher 1	1-2 years' EFL at adult/univ level; 11+ years EFL at secondary level	Master's in English Language & Literature (2002); MA TESOL in progress; completed CELTA in Sept, 2012	Pakistani
Teacher 2	5-7 years EFL at adult/univ level	MA TESOL (2014)	Egyptian
Teacher 3	11+ years EFL at adult/univ level	MA TESOL (2013)	Turkish
Teacher 4	3-4 years' EFL at adult/univ level; 1-2 years' EFL at secondary level; 3-4 years' EFL at primary level.	Master's in Applied Linguistics (2011)	Yemeni
Teacher 5	8-10 years' EFL at adult/univ level.	PGCE in Postgraduate Certificate Education (2005); CELTA (2005)	British
Teacher 6	8-10 years' EFL at adult/univ level; 1-2 years EFL at secondary level.	BA Accounting & Finance (2002); CELTA (2006)	British
Teacher 7	11+ years' EFL at adult/univ level	MA in English (1997); CELTA (2009)	Indian
Teacher 8	5-7 years' EFL at adult/univ level; 3-4 years' EFL at secondary level	Master's in English Language (2003)	Jordanian

3.2 Research Design

This research study made use of descriptive and analytical design to investigate the scaffolding strategies employed by the ELI teachers with EFL learners of intermediate language proficiency and it sought to investigate the effect of scaffolding strategies on promoting classroom interaction in the Saudi EFL tertiary context. Specifically, the study was considered descriptive as it attempted to gather information concerning the current state of the phenomena (scaffolding) and aimed to describe “what exists” with regard to variables or conditions in a situation (meaning scaffolding’s effect on classroom interaction) (Fred & Perry, 2005).

This study was mainly qualitative because it aimed, as the definition states, to investigate the qualities, characteristics or properties and to acquire a better understanding of a phenomenon (scaffolding) (Henning, Van Rensberg & Smit, 2004). The data collection tools used to obtain the results were video and audio recordings of 10 one hour lectures of eight ELI 104 classes. All of the recorded data was transcribed to verify the results. The research study was also quantitative as it included elements of statistical analysis. The results of the qualitative analysis were supported by the quantitative data, as the frequency of occurrence of scaffolding strategies and number of interaction turns after scaffolding were tallied and organized using Microsoft Excel.

3.3 Video and Audio Recordings

Analyzing classroom discourse relies on audio or visual recordings of interactions. These video recordings are then carefully transcribed (Wooffitt, 2005). Using recordings of classroom discourse is important due to the fact that, “there is often too much happening at any one time to capture every interaction, every word, and every gesture, therefore, multiple interactions are the norm and multi-talk underpins every action, every activity, every moment” (Walsh, 2013, p. 92). Hence, recordings are needed to capture and provide reviewable records of the spoken interaction that occurs in the classroom (Walsh, 2013). For the purpose of analyzing the recorded data, a checklist was designed. The categories used in the checklist were based on the information gathered during the literature review and therefore, the checklist encompassed all scaffolding strategies mentioned in the literature review.

Using this checklist, the researchers recorded the scaffolding techniques used prior to a task being given and any additional techniques used during the task itself. This list also included a column to indicate if any interaction occurred immediately after the scaffolding technique was implemented and the kind of interaction that occurred and the list has space for up to three tasks per lesson.

3.4 Data Analysis

An interaction analysis approach was adopted to analyze the collected data. Interaction analysis approaches are regarded as objective methods used to analyze classroom discourse

(Chaudron, 1988; Wlash, 2006). This approach emphasizes, “the value of scaffolding in contexts where learners have an opportunity to express themselves and clarify what they want to say” (Walsh, 2006, p. 36). The interaction analysis approach, and specifically, the Ad Hoc approach was used to analyze the data in relation to the aims of this research. The Ad Hoc approach was selected due to its flexibility in designing an instrument to suit a particular classroom problem or area of interest (Walsh, 2006). In addition, “it allows attention to be devoted to the microcosms of interaction” (Walsh, 2006, p.44). This approach was employed because the instrument (checklist) used was designed by the researchers specifically to focus on the typical scaffolding strategies used and their effect on classroom interaction.

Interaction analysis was used to determine the common strategies employed, the strategies employed specifically with regards to reading and listening, and the effect of these strategies on classroom interaction levels. All recorded data was transcribed in order to be analyzed and the Walsh’s (2013) transcription convention system was adopted to transcribe the video-recorded data. The data was transcribed by a specialist in the field of transcriptions. A triple-pass accuracy system was used for transcription in which each transcript is typed out by a professional transcriber who proofreads the transcript before sending it to a supervisor for a final quality check. The supervisor then listens to the audio from start to finish, making sure that there are no errors or omissions. Express Scribe was used as a tool to help start and stop audio during the manual process, and Word for the typing itself.

To support the results of the qualitative analysis conducted, quantitative data was used and the interaction turns of students were tallied as turn exchange is one of the principal features of classroom interaction (Nomlomo, 2010). This was undertaken to support the classroom discourse analysis in order to achieve a better understanding of the effect of scaffolding strategies on the promotion of classroom interaction.

The various scaffolding strategies observed were noted and their occurrence frequencies were subsequently tallied and arranged using Microsoft Excel. Finally, the data was presented in a table format which clearly demonstrates the scaffolding strategies, and their frequency.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Data Analysis and Results

The results in this study attempted to address the research questions as this study aims to identify the most commonly employed scaffolding strategies. The study particularly focuses on the kinds of scaffolding strategies used in reading and listening tasks and on the effect of these strategies on classroom interaction in the Saudi EFL tertiary context.

The table below (table 2) summarizes the analysis of the types and frequency of occurrence of the scaffolding techniques used in the 10 observed classes.

Table 2: The Scaffolding Strategies Used and their Frequency of Use

Scaffolding Techniques	T 1	T2/1st class	T2/2nd class	T3/1st class	T3/2nd class	T 4	T5	T6	T 7	T8	Total	%
Verbal prompts	7	4	6	18	7	1	12	5	21	14	95	17
Offering further explanation and instruction	4	4	7	7	5	8	15	9	7	7	73	13
Extending	4	3	7	0	9	2	1	10	10	19	65	12
Clarifying & verifying student understanding	6	4	1	4	4	5	19	2	12	4	61	11
feedback	8	1	4	5	11	9	4	5	2	4	53	9
reformulation	8	1	9	5	5	5	1	6	0	1	41	7
Modeling	2	0	2	5	1	3	11	1	1	5	31	5
marking critical features	4	1	0	3	1	1	2	0	15	2	29	5
group work	0	2	3	2	2	2	0	0	3	1	15	2
elaboration	1	1	0	0	2	0	8	1	1	0	14	2
using realia	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	5	11	2
contextualization	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	6	1
physical prompts	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	6	1
bridging	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	0.56
Direction maintenance	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	0.56
using organizers	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.18
Reviewing key vocabularies.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.18

Based on the above data, verbal prompts are the most common types of scaffolding techniques used by ELI teachers as they are employed in (17%) of the classes. Verbal prompting is followed by offering explanations and instructions, extending, clarifying & verifying students' understanding, and reformulation. Based on the analysis of the results, it can be seen that the scaffolding strategies used with reading are offering extra explanations and instructions, verbal prompts, bridging and clarifying and verifying student understanding. It seems that all of the scaffolding strategies employed with reading help facilitate students' understanding. In addition, the analysis suggests that the common kinds of scaffolding strategies used with listening are offering explanation and instruction, verbal prompts, clarifying and verifying student understanding. The data also indicates that the types of scaffolding strategies used with listening contributed to the students' understanding.

It is further found that teachers attempt to scaffold individuals as they try to scaffold the entire class. However, based on the data, the occurrence of whole class scaffolding is more frequent compared with the occurrence of individual scaffolding. Individual scaffolding takes place when the teacher provides help to an individual student, while whole-class scaffolding takes place when the teacher provides support for the whole class. Much of the individual scaffolding occurs in group work contexts that were not transcribed due to the problems with the audio in the recordings. However, there are other individual scaffolding examples in the data that were easily transcribed as in extracts 1, 4, 5 and 7. For example, in extract 1, T3 supports the student using verbal prompts, while in extract 4 the teacher uses extension to improve student's contribution and obtain longer utterances. In extract 5, T8 attempts to clarify and verify the students' understanding through questions, while in extract 7 the teacher attempts to highlight critical patterns of the language.

The common scaffolding strategies used with individuals are: modeling, clarifying and verifying student's understanding, extension, marking critical features, reformulation and physical and verbal prompts. The scaffolding techniques used with the whole class are: verbal prompts, offering explanations and instructions, extending, clarifying and verifying students' understanding and feedback.

Regarding the effect of scaffolding on promoting classroom interaction, generally it is evident that it affects the interaction positively, though the IRF and IRE patterns dominate the interaction in the classes. This is probably due to the teachers' way of teaching as they are controlling the classes and controlling all classroom events throughout the lessons. The data indicates that teacher talk time occupies a high proportion of classes' time due to the traditional fashion of teaching being employed. The teachers control all the activities and the interaction as they manage turn-taking, gaining and passing. It is also apparent that the teachers who try to extend with yes/no questions do not succeed in generating much additional interaction, whereas the teacher who extends with wh- and open-ended questions is much more successful in this.

The analysis also indicates that some scaffolding techniques, such as reformulation, do not result in interaction and this is dependent on the nature of the following task and not on the nature of the scaffolding strategy, as illustrated in extracts 5 and 6. On the other hand, some scaffolding techniques, including verbal prompts, extending, clarifying & verifying through students' understanding, marking critical features and contextualization, entail, albeit controlled, interaction. It is also apparent that clarifying and verifying students' understanding, verbal prompting and extending are the most effective scaffolding techniques in promoting classroom interaction throughout the observed lessons. This can be seen in extract 5, in which clarifying and verifying students' understanding results in nine turns, and in extracts 1 and 3, in which verbal prompts and extending results in six turns of interaction. These strategies resulted in numerous turns throughout the observed lessons.

The analysis also demonstrates that the use of language simplification is implemented by all the teachers in the observed classes. This is accomplished idiom and difficult vocabulary avoidance, and by speaking in the present simple.

Based on the data, it is apparent that some scaffolding strategies are not implemented effectively with the result that their actual impacts on classroom interaction are not identified. For example, feedback for improvement is not implemented in all the classes, as it is rather used for closure of students' contributions, and thus, it is not considered a scaffolding technique in the recorded classes.

Feedback is considered scaffolding when it aims for improvement through extending students' contributions through follow-up questions to involve students in a talk in order to help them absorb and understand new information. By doing so the teacher has more opportunities to contribute to students' understanding and thus to their learning (Hammond, 2001).

Group work is not implemented in an effective manner as the students speak in Arabic and some of merely utilized the venue as an opportunity to copy from their peers. This is due to the lack of appropriate teacher monitoring. Group work is intended to be an effective scaffolding strategy when it contributes to understanding the task demands and negotiates meaning through students' support of each other (Walshaw & Anthony, 2005).

To sum up, the data of this current study demonstrates that ELI EFL teachers employ various types of scaffolding strategies in their classrooms and that these strategies generally contribute to the students' understanding of tasks and lessons. The impact of scaffolding strategies on interaction in ELI EFL classes is generally beneficial.

5. DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

In summary, this research study aims to investigate the ELI EFL teachers' use of scaffolding techniques with the proficiency level of ELI 104 students and the effect of the scaffolding strategies used on classroom interaction. Specifically, it focuses on the scaffolding strategies used with listening and reading skills. To reach the aim of the study and answer the three research questions, video-recording of ten EFL classes of eight male teachers were obtained. All the data was transcribed and analyzed using a checklist and the interaction analysis approach was adopted. In general, the findings indicate extensive use of scaffolding techniques by ELI teachers to facilitate students' understanding and learning. Based on the results, the scaffolding techniques could be divided into three groups with regard to their effect on classroom interaction as some techniques result in interaction between students and teachers, some techniques do not entail interaction and others result in interaction between students.

Based on the results, there are some pedagogical ramifications relevant to teachers' education and curriculum designers. The findings demonstrate the positive impact of scaffolding on interaction, although the interaction is to a certain extent limited due to the manner of teachers' implementation of the scaffolding strategies. This can be due to teachers' adherence to set pedagogical goals and pacing or time restrictions. Also the findings indicate that the kind of scaffolding strategies used contributes to students' understanding. Consequently, training on what is meant by scaffolding and the effective ways in which it can

be implemented to assist students' learning and comprehension would be useful for prospective teachers. This can be part of a teachers' training program and allows teachers to reflect upon their use of scaffolding and thus improve their teaching practices.

The findings of the study may also help inform the ELI to conduct a generalized analysis to improve instruction. The findings shed light on the importance of using scaffolding in reading and listening classes as the scaffolding techniques used have positive effects on facilitating students' listening and reading comprehension. This can help teaching reading and listening skills in EFL classes. The findings of the study can also be useful for program and curriculum designers as it can help them to include some scaffolding activities that contribute to students' understanding. The findings can also be inspiring for institutes engaged in teaching English as a foreign language because it reinforces the importance of scaffolding, especially for EFL learners.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

One limitation of this study is related to the strict social traditions and local educational practices which prevented video recordings of classes of female students. Therefore, the methodology was changed and restricted to exclusively video recording classes of male students. However, the video recordings of the male students provided the researchers with important details of the classroom events, such as non-verbal responses.

The second limitation concerns participants as only male participants were only recorded in this study due to aforementioned Saudi cultural accepted norms. Conducting this study for both male and female teachers and students could have provided broader insight into the kinds of scaffolding strategies employed by EFL teachers in Saudi context and their effect on classroom interaction.

Another limitation is regarding the use of the video recording as the main tool to address the research questions because using video-recorded classes may conceivably impact the natural behavior of the teachers and students.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

This current research attempts to provide a reasonable insight into the common scaffolding techniques used with EFL Saudi tertiary students. However, more research is required in this field and, based on the results, the following suggestions are presented for further research in the future.

1. This research investigated only the effect of the used scaffolding techniques on promoting classroom interaction. Therefore, it is recommended that the ways to create and design interactive scaffolding activities that help to promote classroom interaction are also explored and investigated.
2. This study is limited to ELI 104 proficiency level students. Therefore, the same study could be conducted with 101, 102, 103 proficiency levels at ELI to see if the findings are consistent.

3. This study is limited to video-recording as a way of identifying teachers' use of scaffolding techniques and their effect on their students. Therefore, there could be a study that uses additional methods to specifically investigate the ELI teachers' awareness and implementation of scaffolding techniques and whether their implementation contributes effectively to students' understanding.
4. Further investigation can be done on the scaffolding techniques used with writing and speaking skills as this study only investigates the general scaffolding techniques used and those used specifically with reading and listening skills.
5. This study only investigates the effect of the kinds of scaffolding techniques on classroom interaction levels. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the effect of scaffolding on accuracy of students' production, ability and proficiency.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Classroom Observation Checklist

Teacher's Name: _____ Date of Observation: _____

Number of Students: _____ Venue: _____

Observation #: _____ Session Time: Morning / Afternoon

Section 1 of Lesson:

Scaffolding Techniques Used to Prepare for Task 1 and During Task 1	Details:	Any immediate interaction observed (# of Ss, T-S or S-S, # of turns)

Section 2 of Lesson:

Scaffolding Techniques Used to Prepare for Task 2 and During Task 2	Details:	Any immediate interaction observed (# of Ss, T-S or S-S, # of turns)

Section 3 of Lesson:

Scaffolding Techniques Used to Prepare for Task 3 and During Task 3	Details:	Any immediate interaction observed (# of Ss, T-S or S-S, # of turns)

Master list of Scaffolding Techniques

1. Avoiding the use of idioms,
2. speaking in the present
3. Offering explanations
4. modeling, Demonstration
5. re-presenting text
6. simplifying the task,

7. Providing metaphors
8. Providing organizational charts,
9. negotiating meaning
10. Clarifying and verifying student understanding through questioning
11. building schema,
12. direction maintenance , recapping the goal
13. marking critical features
14. Showing Ss key things to do and indicating other ways of performance
15. group work
16. frustration control,
17. Feedback
18. Using artifacts
19. Bridging: linking with student background knowledge
20. Contextualization
21. Recruitment: generating interest
22. Other strategies that emerge in the class

Appendix B

Walsh's 2013 Transcription Convention System

T: teacher

L: learner (not identified)

L1: L2: etc. identified learner

LL: several learners at once or the whole class

/ok/ok/ok/ overlapping or simultaneous utterances by more than one learner

(4) Numbers enclosed in parentheses indicate a pause. The number represents the number of seconds of duration of the pause, to one decimal place. A pause of one second or less is marked by (.)

((4)) a stretch of unintelligible speech with the length given in seconds

[do you understand?] Brackets around portions of utterances show that those portions

[I see] overlap with a portion of another speaker's utterance.

= An equal sign is used to show that there is no time lapse between the portions connected by the equal signs. This is used where a second speaker begins their utterance just at the moment when the first speaker finishes.

:: A colon after a vowel or a word is used to show that the sound is extended. The number of colons shows the length of the extension.

(hm, hh) These are onomatopoeic representations of the audible exhalation of air)

(hm.hh) these are onomatopoeic representations of the audible exhalation of air

.hh This indicates an audible inhalation of air, for example, as a gasp.
The more h's, the longer the in-breath.

? A question mark indicates that there is slightly rising intonation.

. A period indicates that there is slightly falling intonation.

, A comma indicates a continuation of tone.

- A dash indicates an abrupt cut off, where the speaker stopped speaking suddenly.

↑↓ Up or down arrows are used to indicate that there is sharply rising or falling intonation. The arrow is placed just before the syllable in which the change in intonation occurs.

Under Underlines indicate speaker emphasis on the underlined portion of the word.

CAPS Capital letters indicate that the speaker spoke the capitalised portion of the utterance at a higher volume than the speaker's normal volume.

° This indicates an utterance that is much softer than the normal speech of the speaker. This symbol will appear at the beginning and at the end of the utterance in question.

> <, < > 'Greater than' and 'less than' signs indicate that the talk they surround was noticeably faster, or slower than the surrounding talk.

(would) When a word appears in parentheses, it indicates that the transcriber has guessed as to what was said, because it was indecipherable on the tape. If the transcriber was unable to guess as to what was said, nothing appears within the parentheses.

T organizes group editor's comments (in bold type)