

## A Conversation Analytic Study on Scaffolding Strategies Applied in an Online English Class

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**Abstract:** *In higher education, it is anticipated that English students should possess both proficiency in language and the capacity for critical thinking. Nonetheless, the dynamics of English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms often reveal a tendency for teachers to exert significant control over the class. Thus, this study aims to discover the scaffolding strategies applied by the teacher in an online EFL class in terms of classroom interactional competence (CIC). The participants were twelve English preparatory class students studying at A2 level of a state university in Türkiye. The majority of the students were Turkish and one of them was Somalian. They were enrolled in the same class. In the application process, the Microsoft Teams educational platform was used, and the lesson was conducted synchronously through this platform. The lesson lasted ninety minutes. By adopting a conversational analysis (CA) approach, a ninety-minute online English class was critically examined within the scope of Walsh's (2006) self-evaluation of teacher talk (SETT) framework and concept of CIC. The interaction was analyzed by specifically focusing on scaffolding strategies. According to the findings, the teacher was found to apply restating, reformulation, inviting participation from students, providing explanation, modelling, extension, further explaining students' understanding and checking scaffolding strategies.*

**Keywords:** *Classroom interactional competence, Conversational analysis, English language teaching, Higher education.*

**Suggested Citation:** Karafil, B. & Uysal-İlbay, Ö. (2023). A Conversation Analytic Study on Scaffolding Strategies Applied in an Online English Class, *International Journal of Academic Research in Education*, 9(1), 1-13. DOI: 10.17985/ijare.1365101

**Article History:** Submitted 23 September 2023; Revised 15 October 2023; Accepted 31 October 2023

### INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the field of teacher development and classroom discourse research have increasingly emphasized the exploration of classroom interaction dynamics. This shift aims to reveal how teachers and second language (L2) learners communicate during teaching and learning activities. The overarching goal is to gain deeper insights into the process of second language acquisition (SLA). A substantial body of literature has emerged, underscoring the pivotal role of teachers in facilitating learners' engagement and fostering effective learning through classroom interactions (Walsh, 2013).

Classroom interaction (CI) is at the heart of the learning process and is considered as the most important factor in the curriculum since learning occurs in the interaction process rather than through the interaction (Walsh, 2011). Therefore, it can be argued that interaction is an indispensable part of the learning process as classroom interaction is directly related to the material, syllabus, communication, motivation, identity, theory, and practice (Soraya, 2017). According to Walsh (2011), classroom interaction competence has three key features. The first one is called as the use of pedagogically convergent language, which is appropriate for learners. The second one

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includes creating interactional space such as extensive use of pause, a lack of repair, signposting in instructions, extended learner turns and echo. The last one is about shaping learner contribution such as seeking clarification, scaffolding, modelling or repairing learner input. In addition, he identifies four modes that are used in second language classes, which were previously called micro-contexts by Seedhouse (1996). The first one is the managerial mode, which emphasizes the transmission of information and classroom management. The second mode, known as the material mode, centers around the educational materials used for learning. The third mode, termed the skills and system mode, places its focus on teaching language skills like reading, writing, speaking, and listening, as well as language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (phonology). The final mode, referred to as the classroom context mode, offers students increased opportunities to express themselves using the language they are learning. Each mode is associated with distinct educational objectives that are directly tied to the learning task at hand. Walsh further describes each mode in detail by presenting pedagogic goals and instructional features related to each mode (See Appendix A). Each mode comes with distinct educational objectives closely tied to the learning activity at hand. For instance, when it comes to classroom management, instructors must communicate information, introduce new activities, and so on. In the classroom context mode, where students' English proficiency is showcased, educators must foster oral fluency among the students. Each educational objective finds expression in specific interactional elements (Walsh, 2011).

One of the interactional features of the material mode, skills and systems mode and classroom context mode is using scaffolding. In the context of education, the concept of scaffolding relates to Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which encompasses the fundamental aspects of supporting English language learners. Scaffolding, in essence, involves providing additional support when a learner encounters challenges and withdrawing that support as the learner makes progress. Several principles guide this concept: (1) individual learning is fostered through social interaction; (2) language serves as a tool for developing cognitive abilities; (3) assisting learners in completing tasks with more knowledgeable individuals; (4) learning from those with greater expertise; and (5) learners benefit from growing independently (Ardiningtyas et al., 2023). In conclusion, scaffolding is a concept that has its roots in the field of education but draws inspiration from the construction industry's support structures. It serves as a metaphor for the support provided to learners, whether they are children, students, or inexperienced individuals, to help them solve problems or complete tasks they would otherwise struggle with independently. This support is crucial in assisting learners in reaching their educational goals. Ultimately, scaffolding is a valuable teaching and learning strategy that promotes collaboration, autonomy, and the acquisition of essential life skills such as collaborative learning. It serves as a bridge between the learner's current level of competence and their potential development, allowing them to work at a higher level of activity and achievement. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze scaffolding strategies employed by the teacher as a component of CIC from a conversation-analytic perspective.

### ***Literature Review***

#### ***Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC)***

In EFL context, classroom interaction encompasses all forms of communication. It encompasses not only genuine and authentic exchanges but also includes formal drilling activities (Ellis, 1990, p. 12). As Brown (2000) suggests, "interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other" (p. 165). This interaction involves not only one-sided communication but also requires at least two individuals exchanging messages to facilitate effective communication, a concept in alignment with Wagner's (1994) assertion that "interaction is reciprocal events that require at least two objects and two actions" (p. 8). The use of effective strategies for classroom interaction can potentially improve students' communicative skills, leading to enhanced performance (Suryati, 2015). Young (2008) states that interactive competence encompasses identity resources, linguistic resources and interactional resources. Identity resources

include the participation framework, which is about the identities of all participants in an interaction. Linguistic resources encompass the features of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar that typify a practice. In addition, they include how participants construct interpersonal, experiential, and textual meanings in a practice. Finally, linguistic resources are about the selection of acts in a practice and their sequential organization; how to select the next speaker, how to know when to end one turn and when to begin the next; how to respond to interactional trouble in a given practice and how to open and close the act of practice. As can be seen, classroom interaction is a broad term, and it encompasses different features and acts.

Interaction is also an important component of the language learning process. When students actively participate in classroom activities, their learning experience is enhanced. Those who engage by taking turns in the classroom environment can improve their language skills. Conversely, students who adopt a passive role in the classroom may miss out on valuable language learning opportunities (Soraya, 2017). Fostering an active dynamic between teachers and students is crucial for creating a positive classroom interaction. Both parties should actively partake in communication and interactions within the classroom. Consequently, the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process hinges largely on how teachers and students actively engage with each other.

Applying the notion of Interactional Competence (IC) to the classroom discourse, Walsh (2011) introduced the term Classroom Interaction Competence (CIC). Walsh (2011) defines CIC as *“teachers’ and learners’ ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning”*. It places interaction in a central position within the realm of education and contends that enhancing their CIC will lead to an immediate enhancement in both learning and learning opportunities for both teachers and learners. The key point in prioritizing CIC is that as teachers gain a deeper understanding of classroom interaction, this will naturally translate into an enhanced learning experience, particularly in settings where learning is seen as a social activity heavily shaped by involvement, engagement, and active participation (Walsh, 2013). He illustrated three fundamental aspects of CIC: (a) employing pedagogically aligned language suitable for learners; (b) establishing room for interaction (such as making ample use of pauses, minimizing the need for corrections, providing clear instruction cues, extending opportunities for learners to speak, and echoing); (c) shaping learner participation (that is, seeking clarification, providing support, demonstrating, or fixing learner input).

Researchers have long emphasized the significance of employing efficient strategies for classroom interaction to facilitate the linguistic growth of students. For instance, Kramsch (1986) proposes that in order to cultivate students’ communicative competence, they should engage in turn-taking with both their peers and the instructor, seek feedback, request clarification, and initiate conversations. Rivers (1987), on the other hand, contends that to encourage productive classroom interaction, educators should steer clear of monopolizing one-sided discussions, adopt a cooperative approach, and consider the emotional aspects of students. According to Mackey (1999), educators should create interactive learning settings that enable students to engage in communication with one another to generate meaning in the target language. To put it differently, teachers must facilitate classroom interaction that encourages students to actively participate in the production of the target language by incorporating elements such as turn-taking, feedback, and negotiation. Based on the information presented in the literature, it is obvious that classroom interaction is a key factor in promoting learning for the students who learn a second language. In this process, teachers have responsibilities, and they are expected to help their students by creating an environment in which the interaction between the students will be high.

By examining the CIC observed during classroom interactions and learning from it, we can gain valuable insights into our specific educational context. Additionally, we can gain a deeper understanding of how teachers and learners utilize their interactional and linguistic abilities to establish and sustain classroom discourse, ultimately improving effective classroom communication. Enhancing their CIC can empower both teachers and learners to create more favorable conditions for learning, thereby reinforcing the educational outcomes achieved (Supakorn,

2020). Additionally, examining interactions within L2 classrooms has the potential to assist educators and researchers in analyzing classroom conversations, thereby providing insights into class-based learning and enhancing teachers' self-awareness about their instructional methods. In the realm of Applied Linguistics, various approaches are employed to gauge, dissect, and portray classroom interactions and participant behavior. These approaches encompass linguistic analysis, systemic functional linguistic analysis, interaction analysis, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and a range of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. While linguistic and discourse analyses have been the primary focus of much research on L2 classroom interaction, there is a growing trend toward employing CA to scrutinize this form of institutional communication (Allami & Mozaffari, & Manzouri, 2022). Due to the powerful tools of CA for SLA research, this paper offers reflections on the use of CA as a tool in identifying the CIC.

### ***Conversational Analysis***

CA is a methodical examination of dialogue that occurs in everyday human interactions, specifically referred to as talk-in-interaction (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). Its origins trace back to the 1960s through the pioneering work of Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974). CA primarily delves into the structure of turn-taking and how we carry out actions through language. Over time, it has evolved into a multidisciplinary approach, giving rise to "Institutional CA." This expansion occurred as CA was applied in diverse contexts, such as doctor-patient consultations, commercial transactions, legal proceedings, and educational settings, among others. Within these contexts, the differing roles of participants influence both how they take turns in conversation and the various strategies they employ to achieve institutional objectives (Heritage & Clayman, 2010).

The examination of CIC through the lens of CA has exerted influence in various educational and teacher development contexts. This influence encompasses aspects such as teachers' practices related to limited wait times and opportunities for student participation (Yaqubi & Rokni, 2012), the shaping of student contributions (Can Daşkın, 2015; Cancino, 2017; Moradian, Miri & Qassemi, 2015), the comprehension of CIC through multimodal CA within content and language integrated learning settings (Escobar Urmeneta & Walsh, 2017), and the cultivation of CIC through teacher development workshops (Perkins, 2018). These investigations collectively suggest that by scrutinizing the dynamics of CIC within classroom interactions and deriving insights from these observations, we can gain a nuanced understanding of our specific educational context. This understanding extends to how the interactive and linguistic tools employed by both teachers and students shape and sustain the flow of classroom discourse, ultimately enhancing effective classroom communication. Consequently, as teachers and learners refine their CIC, they create more extensive learning opportunities and fortify the learning experiences that occur.

CA offers several advantages as a methodology for examining interactions in L2 classrooms, making it particularly suitable for the aims of this study. One key reason is its emphasis on actions rather than isolated functions, providing a more comprehensive and detailed account of the data. Unlike top-down methodologies, CA offers a deeper level of insight into the data and relies on evidence-based analysis, focusing solely on what can be observed and proven in the data. CA also promotes an open-minded approach by avoiding pre-defined categories and assumptions. Furthermore, CA's strength lies in its examination of natural conversation as data, which ensures that researchers studying authentic language use rather than contrived or artificial communication (Atar & Seedhouse, 2018). Therefore, in the current study, scaffolding strategies teacher employed as a component of classroom interactional competence was investigated from a conversation-analytic perspective.

### ***Purpose of the study***

Based on the information presented in the literature, it is obvious that classroom interaction is a key factor in promoting learning for the students who learn a second language. In this process, teachers have responsibilities,

and they are expected to help the students by creating an environment in which the interaction between the students will be high. Scaffolding is one of the techniques emphasized in the literature that could be used in the classes to help learners learn better. Although CA is a powerful tool in examining CIC, the amount of CA work is still quite limited in the EFL context. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to investigate the CIC in an EFL online class from the perspective of CA. The lack of studies investigating specifically scaffolding strategies used by teachers in online EFL classes in terms of CIC makes this study unique. Therefore, as a reflective practice, the following questions were addressed:

1- Which modes are applied in an online EFL class?

2-What are the scaffolding strategies utilized by the teacher in an online EFL class?

## **METHOD**

The present study is a reflective practice with a qualitative research design. As a research approach, CA was adopted. CA centers on elucidating spoken communication, with a particular emphasis on dissecting how speakers structure their dialogue sequentially and how they collectively navigate their conversation (Seedhouse, 2004). Additionally, CA delves into how language serves as a tool for social interaction (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974), exploring its relationship with meaning and context. The dynamic creation of the social context is expressed and revealed through the sequential organization of interactions.

CA analysis relies on naturally occurring data that has been recorded and transcribed, specifically, real instances of conversation. Therefore, CA data is not derived from interviews, observations, or experimental interventions, as these methods involve manipulation, selection, or reconstruction by an analyst or informant, often based on preconceived notions of what is noteworthy or possible (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984). CA discourages analysts from interpreting participants' intentions or psychological states (Mori & Zuengler, 2008), and it avoids pre-emptively linking observed behaviors to broader sociological categories like age, gender, personal history, ethnicity, or native/nonnative status, unless such categories are explicitly demonstrated as relevant. Instead, CA promotes the examination of tangible elements within participants' speech, including linguistic characteristics and intonation patterns. Through these linguistic features, which shape how participants construct their conversational contributions and structure their involvement, analysts can potentially infer the participants' comprehension of the preceding dialogue.

### ***Participants and Setting***

The study was conducted in an online EFL class at a public university in Türkiye. The class lasted 90 minutes. The participants were twelve L2 English preparatory class students at A2 level. In determining the participant, convenience sampling method was employed. The convenience sampling method involves including individuals from the target population who are conveniently situated around the location (Edgar & Manz, 2017). Therefore, in selecting the participants, the students enrolled in the same class and taught by one of the researchers were selected. The majority of the students were Turkish and one of them was Somalian. The age of the participant ranged between 18 and 20. Of them, 7 were male and 5 were female. They had been learning English as a foreign language in the preparatory school to be able to study for their degrees at the undergraduate level. The teacher had a teaching experience of twelve years, and she was Turkish, too. The strategy was implemented during the Fall semester of 2020/2021 academic year.

In the application process, the Microsoft Teams educational platform was preferred, and the lesson was conducted synchronously through the Microsoft Teams platform. The teacher and students accessed the platform using their

institutional email addresses. On this platform, the researcher created a code for the team, and shared it with the students. So, they joined the team by using this code. In this way, all students were successfully added to the team. This platform allows content sharing with students, enables students to write texts using the chat section, grants control rights to students, allowing them to share and manage content, and provides the opportunity for binary group work through created chat rooms (breakout rooms).

### ***Data Collection and Analysis***

The aim of this study was to understand how scaffolding was achieved in interaction. Consequently, the nature of this study requires a qualitative and in-depth analysis of the L2 classroom data. The study was carried out across an online class, necessitating the collection of data via video recordings of the instructional sessions. Subsequently, the selected excerpts from these recordings underwent meticulous analysis employing CA techniques, with the data being coded following the transcription conventions outlined by Have (2007, p. 68). In accordance with the recommendations outlined by Ten Have (2007, p. 68), this study adhered to a fundamental procedure comprising four key stages: (1) recording authentic interactions; (2) transcribing the recordings, wholly or partially; (3) analyzing selected extracts and (4) presenting the research findings.

As a result, in the study researcher used video recording to capture the classroom interaction for teacher-student interaction. By adopting the CA approach, a ninety-minute online English class was critically examined within the scope of Walsh's (2006) self-evaluation of teacher talk (SETT) framework and concept of classroom interactional competence (CIC). Within this context, the video recording of the online class was watched carefully. Then the recording was transcribed. To avoid any missing points, the transcription was checked by watching the video recording again. Among the transcription, two extracts were selected. These extracts were analyzed by CA approach.

## **FINDINGS**

Based on the analysis of classroom interaction, the dominant modes throughout the class were found to be the skills and systems mode and the materials mode, respectively. The class began with a managerial mode and there was a switch to this mode when the teacher introduced a new topic. Sometimes a "mode side sequence", as Walsh (2011) calls it, emerged. The objectives of the skills and systems mode in this class were to practice previously learned grammatical structures - Simple Present Tense vs. Present Continuous Tense - as well as to teach and practice a new grammar topic on object pronouns. The materials mode mainly revolved around a reading text from the textbook complemented with some vocabulary and speaking activities. Classroom context mode was rarely employed in this class partly due to the pedagogical goals of the class, and partly due to the absence of physical interaction within a classroom. There was a mode side sequence following "materials-classroom context-materials" mode pattern where the classroom context was derived from a pre-reading activity.

### ***Scaffolding Strategies Used by the Teacher***

To understand the scaffolding strategies used by the teacher in online EFL classes, video recordings of the classes were examined in detail. According to the findings, the teacher was found to apply restating, reformulation, inviting participation from students, providing explanation, modelling, extension, further explaining students' understanding and checking scaffolding strategies.

Two sample extracts are provided below.

### Extract 1

- 1 T: ok so (.) for this one for example what should you err look for ↑ (2) the time  
 2 expression at the moment so (2) if we have this time phrase ↑ (2) which tense  
 3 is it ↓ (.) Is it present simple ↑ or present continuous tense ↓  
 4 L1 present continuous  
 5 L2 [present continuous]  
 6 T it's present continuous tense (.) <yes> it refers to now (1) so (1) with the  
 7 present continuous tense err we don't (1) use you know the auxiliary verb (.)  
 8 do or does (.) right ↑ we should use (2) to be plus verb -ing (.) but (.)  
 9 which form of BE (.) do we use with I (5) am ↑ is ↑ or are ↓  
 10 L3 am  
 11 L2 am ↑  
 12 T it's am (.) yes ok (1) and verb -ing doing I am doing my homework at the  
 13 moment this is the correct option

As can be seen in the extract, T scaffolds learners' contributions by restating (lines 6 and 12) the learners' responses and extending on the explanation. Since this was a part of a skills and systems mode and the goal was to achieve accuracy, there was no extended learner turn. The same pattern was observed in several other extracts in the skills and systems mode. There are other instances where the teacher shapes learners' contributions through scaffolding. In the following extract that took place in the materials mode, students were asked referential questions as a pre-reading activity. Students responded to the question "What do you like spending money on?"

### Extract 2

- 1 L1 I like (.) to spend money on technologic (misp. Technological) things because 2 I  
 layv(misp.love) them  
 3 T yeah ok so (1) you are interested in technology (.) and that's why you like  
 4 spending money on technological items ↑ that's nice (4) how about the others  
 5 (1) what do you like spending money on do you like spending money <on> clothing 6  
 for example (...) accessories ↑ <on> makeup ↑  
 7 L2 [(.....utterance not clear)]  
 8 T yes elifnur ↑  
 9 L2 I like spending money on books  
 10 T BOOKS (0.2) yes (1) why ↑  
 11 L2 (4) I love reading (.) I love reading books  
 12 T yes (.) ok (.) very good so (1) you love reading books (1) that's why (1) you  
 13 like spending money on them ↓ (3) any other opinions ↑ any other ideas ↑ (10) 14  
 no ↑ (1) ok



In line 3, the teacher shapes the learner's response through reformulation. L1 mispronounced 2 words, but since this activity was seen as a chance to work on fluency with a shift to classroom context mode, T ignored the errors and rephrased L1's response to make sure other learners could follow. The teacher then asked for the others' opinions. In line 10, T asked L2 for clarification to encourage her to speak further. It seems to work since L2 shared her reason for spending money on books. In line 12, T made use of the reformulation technique again, rephrasing what L2 had said in the previous line. Throughout the lesson, the teacher also provided other techniques such as modelling and extension to scaffold learners and promote interaction within the classroom.

## DISCUSSION

The study identified two dominant modes of interaction in the online EFL class. These dominant modes were the "skills and systems mode" and the "materials mode." Skills and Systems Mode likely refers to interactions centered around the development of language skills (e.g., speaking, listening, writing) and the teaching of language systems (e.g., grammar, vocabulary). In an EFL context, this mode may involve exercises, drills, or discussions aimed at improving language proficiency. The dominance of skills and systems mode and materials mode suggests that the class might have focused heavily on language acquisition through structured exercises and resources. This could reflect a particular teaching approach or the preferences of the instructor. The materials mode suggests that the class heavily relied on instructional materials such as textbooks, worksheets, or online resources. This mode often involves teachers and students working through structured content, which can include exercises, readings, or multimedia resources: In contrast to the dominance of the skills and systems mode and materials mode, the "classroom context mode" was rarely employed in this online EFL class. This mode typically involves discussions and interactions related to the broader classroom environment, teaching methods, student-teacher relationships, or classroom management. It may encompass interactions that facilitate a positive classroom atmosphere and effective learning. The limited use of classroom context mode may indicate less emphasis on fostering a classroom community or addressing non-linguistic aspects of learning. Exploring ways to incorporate more classroom context discussions could enhance student engagement and a sense of belonging in the online class. The study might prompt a review of the course design to ensure a balanced approach that not only covers language skills and materials but also considers the broader classroom context and its impact on learning. In summary, this finding highlights the predominant modes of interaction in an online EFL class and suggests areas for potential improvement or adjustment in the instructional approach to create a more comprehensive and engaging learning experience. In the study conducted by Suryati (2015), a combination of managerial, materials, and system and skills modes were found to be a common practice. Similarly, the classroom context mode was found to be very limited. This finding is in line with the results of Howard's (2010) research, which indicates that teachers do not fully engage in the utilization of the classroom context mode. The infrequent use of the classroom context mode could imply that teachers may lack the knowledge of effectively organizing lessons and controlling classroom discussions through the application of suitable interaction tactics.

According to the findings, the teacher was found to apply restating, reformulation, inviting participation from students, providing explanation, modelling, extension, further explaining students' understanding and checking scaffolding strategies. The use of these diverse strategies reflects a thoughtful and adaptable teaching approach that considers students' needs and learning processes. This finding underscores the importance of employing a repertoire of teaching strategies to cater to the diverse learning styles and needs of students. It also highlights the teacher's dedication to facilitating a dynamic and engaging learning environment. Further research could explore the specific impacts of these strategies on student learning outcomes and their effectiveness in different educational contexts. Suryati (2015) obtained the finding that strategies including scaffolding, content-focused feedback, clarification requests, referential questions and extended students' turn rarely occurred. Supakorn (2020) found that teachers used reformulations, paraphrasing, minimally repairing learners' input in the form of recasts or embedded corrections and extending learner's input as scaffolding strategies to shape (accept and



improve) learner contribution. Zarandi and Rahbar (2016) discovered that the utilization of scaffolding methods proved effective in enhancing the speaking skills of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Khatib and Chalak (2022) concentrated on the efficacy of four distinct scaffolding strategies in enhancing the grammar knowledge of Iranian EFL students. Their findings indicated that the group exposed to scaffolding interventions outperformed the control group, underscoring the effectiveness of scaffolding in bolstering grammar proficiency. Naibaho (2019) investigated the influence of scaffolding on learners' speaking achievements, highlighting its efficacy. Piamsai (2020) provided evidence of the effectiveness of scaffolding in elevating writing skills, with a particular emphasis on its impact on the academic writing abilities of less proficient students. Shirmhamadi and Salehi (2017) explored the effects of scaffolding on reading comprehension among English for Specific Purposes (ESP) students, finding scaffolding to be notably more effective in this context. Similarly, Birjandi and Jazebi (2014) examined the diverse scaffolding techniques employed by EFL instructors. They identified a total of 55 strategies serving various functions, categorizing them into linguistic, cognitive, social, cultural, metacognitive, and affective categories. Furthermore, other studies have ventured into exploring the impact of scaffolding strategies on all four language skills: reading (Ghaffarsamar & Dehghan, 2013; Rahimi & Ghanbari, 2011; Bhooth et al., 2014), speaking (Abdul-Majeed & Muhammad, 2015; Ezza, 2013), writing (Veerappan, Suan & Sulaiman, 2011; Zarandi & Rahbar, 2014; Chairinkam & Yawiloeng, 2021), and listening (Ahmadi Safa & Rozati, 2016). These investigations collectively highlight the significant benefits of scaffolding in enhancing language learning across various language skills. In conclusion, the concept of scaffolding in language learning represents a crucial means of support, facilitating the progression of learners to higher levels of proficiency. Finally, studies exploring the influence of scaffolding on all four language skills—reading, speaking, writing, and listening—collectively underscore the substantial advantages it brings to language learning across diverse contexts.

### CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

The aim of this reflective practice was to find out how and to what extent the teacher employed scaffolding as a component of classroom interactional competence in an online EFL class. The teacher in this study was found to employ a range of effective teaching strategies. These strategies encompassed various dimensions of teaching, from reinforcing key points through restating to fostering active student participation and providing additional explanations where needed. Furthermore, the teacher demonstrated a commitment to extending students' learning experiences beyond the core curriculum. The class observation reveals that the teacher uses scaffolding techniques, such as extending learners' responses, rephrasing what learners say, asking follow-up questions and repeating the short responses. These techniques helped to promote interaction in the class up to a point. The responses were short, and the interaction was limited in the skills and systems mode, which is in line with Walsh's suggestion that each mode has its unique features. Students could give full responses later in the classroom context mode. However, the interaction could be expanded at most for four lines with each learner. In order to promote longer interaction, the teacher-researcher can develop new techniques, advise a critical friend, and ask for students' reflections. Overall, it can be said that the amount of scaffolding employed in the class is more than satisfactory given the fact that this is an online class.

However, in some instances, learners did not contribute further. One reason for this can be due to lack of face-to-face interaction. Students sometimes lose their attention on a computer. Another reason might be related to the topic. In the skills and systems and the materials mode, the topics are limited, so it can be hard for students to build on them. One other reason could be that the teacher's scaffolding techniques were insufficient or ineffective. Therefore, it can be said that in the implementation stage of this study, the teacher-research should try new ways of shaping learners' contributions. Yet, given the fact that this was an online class, the learners' contributions were satisfactory.

In conclusion, while this study centers on the observation of CIC within the specific setting of EFL classrooms at a particular university, it is anticipated that the results will hold relevance for diverse contexts where second

language (L2) instruction occurs. Furthermore, this research might present an alternative perspective centered on classroom interaction, potentially contributing to enhancements in ELT practices in Türkiye.

### LIMITATIONS

Since the class was conducted online, the interactions were sometimes hindered due to technical problems. Moreover, the interactions among learners in pair-work and group-work activities could not be recorded since breakout rooms were used for this purpose and they were not recorded, separately. Additionally, consistent with the inherent characteristics of CA, this research cannot present the entirety of the collected data. Consequently, the data necessitates selective analysis and presentation to highlight specific areas of interest. Given the study's concentration on a single teacher, it is conceivable that her language usage and interactional attributes could be unique or individualistic.

### Declarations on Ethical Standards

**Financial support** There is not received any financial support to conduct this research and/or publication of the article.

**Conflicts of interest** There is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

**Ethical Approval** At the beginning of the research, the participants were informed about the purpose of the research. The scale was filled by pre-service teachers who volunteered to participate in the research. Scientific and ethical principles were complied with during the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the article.

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX-A**

Framework of Interactional Features in L2 Classroom Modes

<i>Mode</i>	<i>Pedagogic Goals</i>	<i>Interactional features</i>
Managerial	a. To transmit information b. To organize the physical learning environment c. To refer learners to the material d. To introduce or conclude an activity e. To change from one mode of learning to another	A single extended teacher turn which uses explanation and/or instruction The use of transitional markers The use of confirmation checks An absence of learner contribution
Materials	a. To provide language practice around a piece of material b. To elicit responses in relation to the material c. To check and display answers d. To clarify when necessary e. To evaluate contribution	Predominance of IRF pattern Extensive use of display question Form-focused feedback Corrective repair Scaffolding
Skills and systems	a. To enable learners to produce correct forms b. To enable learners to manipulate the target language c. To provide corrective feedback d. To provide learners with practice in sub-skills	The use of direct repair scaffolding extended teacher turns display questions teacher echo clarification request form-focused feedback
Classroom Context	a. To enable learners to express themselves clearly b. To establish a context c. To promote oral fluency	Extended learner turns Short teacher turn Minimal repair Content feedback Referential question Scaffolding Clarification request

## APPENDIX-B

Symbol	Name	Use
[ text ]	Brackets	Indicates the start and end points of overlapping speech.
=	Equal Sign	Indicates the break and subsequent continuation of a single interrupted utterance.
(# of seconds)	Timed Pause	A number in parentheses indicates the time, in seconds, of a pause in speech.
(.)	Micropause	A brief pause, usually less than 0.2 seconds.
. or ↓	Period or Down Arrow	Indicates falling pitch.
? or ↑	Question Mark or Up Arrow	Indicates rising pitch.
,	Comma	Indicates a temporary rise or fall in intonation.
-	Hyphen	Indicates an abrupt halt or interruption in utterance.
>text<	Greater than / Less than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker.
<text>	Less than / Greater than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more slowly than usual for the speaker.
°	Degree symbol	Indicates whisper or reduced volume speech.
ALL CAPS	Capitalized text	Indicates shouted or increased volume speech.
underline	Underlined text	Indicates the speaker is emphasizing or stressing the speech.
:::	Colon(s)	Indicates prolongation of an utterance.
(hhh)		Audible exhalation
? or (.hhh)	High Dot	Audible inhalation
( text )	Parentheses	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript.
(( italic text ))	Double Parentheses	Annotation of non-verbal activity.