

THE 9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS:  
INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN  
LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**KỶ YẾU HỘI THẢO QUỐC TẾ**  
NGHIÊN CỨU LIÊN NGÀNH  
VỀ NGÔN NGỮ VÀ GIẢNG DẠY NGÔN NGỮ  
LẦN THỨ IX



UNIVERSITY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES,  
HUE UNIVERSITY

57 Nguyen Khoa Chiem, Hue City, VietNam  
(+84) 234.3830 677  
hufils@hueuni.edu.vn ; huefil@hueuni.edu.vn  
hufils.edu.vn



Sách không bán

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## MỤC LỤC

<b><i>Báo cáo phiên toàn thể 1 - Plenary session 1</i></b>			
1	Nguyễn Văn Hiệp	Cách tiếp cận dị thanh (heteroglossia) đối với nghiên cứu tình thái trong tiếng Việt	2
<b><i>Báo cáo phiên toàn thể 2 - Plenary session 2</i></b>			
2	Ruanni Tupas	The dangers of stereotyping in intercultural and language education	22
<b><i>Báo cáo phiên toàn thể 3 - Plenary session 3</i></b>			
3	Akkarapon Nuemaihom	Translanguaging for english language education in Thailand: Uncovering thai EFL students' insights	24
<b><i>Session 1</i></b>			
<b><i>Linguistics (ENG)</i></b>			
4	Phạm Thị Hồng Nhung, Phạm Thị Tuyết Nhung	Metaphors for grammar instruction in EFL teachers' discourse	26
5	Trần Thị Quỳnh, Đặng Thị Thanh Hương, Nguyễn Ngọc Anh	Conceptual metaphors of mother representations in the 21st century American and Vietnamese songs	36
6	Đỗ Thị Xuân Dung, Trần Thị Huyền Gấm	The relational values of the lexis in Vietnamese journalistic discourse written about women	48
7	Nguyễn Thị Thanh Bình, Hồ Đỗ Quỳnh Như, Thái Tôn Phùng Diễm	Attitudes towards Vietnamese language maintenance in Vietnamese American families	59
8	Phạm Hoàng Long Biên	Linguistic depiction of mother's roles as children's playmate in English and Vietnamese mommy blogs: A comparative study	77
9	Trần Như Quỳnh, Phạm Thị Nguyễn Ái	The use of verb-preposition collocations in academic essays by EFL University Students at HUFLIS	86
10	Đình Công Tiến Đạt	Nominalization in academic writing: A study into English-major students' essays	98
11	Nguyễn Thị Thanh Hà	Unraveling Linguistics Challenges in The Usage of Supply Chain Management Terminology: Insights from EFL Students Majoring Logistics	118
12	Đỗ Thị Hồng Hà, Nguyễn Thuý Ngọc	The lexicalization patterns of manner motion events in Vietnamese	134

	<b>Session 2</b> <b>Ngôn ngữ học (VIE)</b>		
13	Nguyễn Thị Khánh Vân	Đối chiếu uyển ngữ trong thư tín thương mại tiếng Trung và tiếng Việt	152
14	Nguyễn Hà Thảo Ngân, Hoàng Thị Linh Giang	Thành ngữ tiếng Anh có chứa từ chỉ màu sắc: ý nghĩa của “trắng” và “đen” trong ngôn ngữ và văn hóa	165
15	Huỳnh Diên Tường Thụy	Nghiên cứu phương thức ẩn dụ trong các văn bản đọc hiểu trong sách học Cosmopolite	179
16	Võ Thị Mai Hoa, Chế Viết Đông, Lê Thị Thùy Linh	Uyển ngữ trong đàm phán thương mại tiếng Hán	191
17	Đinh Thị Thanh Mai, Lại Minh Uyên	Học người xưa cách giáo dục con cháu qua Lê Triều Nguyễn Tướng Công Gia Huấn Ca (黎朝阮將公家訓歌)	200
18	Võ Trung Định, Hồ Thị Thùy Liên	Phân tích lỗi sử dụng bổ ngữ khả năng tiếng hán của sinh viên ngành ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc trình độ trung cấp	212
19	Hoàng Thúy Hà	Phát triển tư duy phản biện của sinh viên Việt Nam trong giờ học ngôn ngữ	221
20	Lê Đỗ Thanh Hiền	Chiến lược chúc mừng và hồi đáp lời chúc mừng trong tiếng Anh	234
21	Trương Chí Hùng	Một số chiến lược giao tiếp trong diễn ngôn ca dao về tình yêu đôi lứa ở dạng đối đáp	247
	<b>Session 3</b> <b>Translation Studies (ENG)</b>		
22	Võ Thị Liên Hương	The Effects of Critical Thinking on Students' Translation Quality: A Pre-Experimental Study	260
23	Nguyễn Thị Tuyết Hồng	A study on textual equivalence between an Australian short story and its Vietnamese translation	270
24	Phan Thị Thanh Thảo	Attitudes of HUFLIS students towards the Cat Tool's modules in the chatgpt era	281
25	Trần Thị Thảo Phương, Trần Thị Thu Sương	Online translation training: Experiences and insights from English translation majors	296
26	Vũ Việt Phương, Đỗ Thị Tiểu Yên	The exploration and assessment of applying of food technology concepts among EFL Students	315

	<b>Session 4</b> <b>Dịch thuật (VIE)</b>		
27	Nguyễn Thị Quỳnh Trang	Dịch thuật tiêu đề phim bộ truyền hình Trung Hoa sang tiếng Việt: Thành công và hạn định	334
28	Phan Thị Mỹ Trang, Dương Thị An, Nguyễn Thị Như Diệp, Đinh Điền, Trần Thị Minh Phượng.	Đánh giá tự động mạng từ tiếng Việt (Vietnet) dựa trên mạng từ tiếng Anh (Wordnet) cho các danh từ chỉ hoạt động	344
29	Liêu Linh Chuyên, Nguyễn Thị Linh Tú, Hà Thị Hương	Một số vấn đề cần lưu ý khi dịch từ ngữ liên quan đến giáo dục từ tiếng Việt sang tiếng Hán	354
30	Nguy Vân Thùy, Nguyễn Thị Hoài Ly	Khảo cứu lỗi sinh viên thường gặp khi dịch tiếng Anh chuyên ngành khối kinh tế	365
31	Đặng Thị Thanh Lan, Phạm Thế Châu	Một số lỗi sai thường gặp khi sinh viên dịch kết cấu chữ “的” từ tiếng Hán sang tiếng Việt, cũng như dịch ngược lại và biện pháp khắc phục	376
32	Huỳnh Thị Chiêu Uyên, Bùi Thị Thanh Trúc, Phạm Thế Châu	Nâng cao khả năng giao tiếp cho sinh viên ngành ngôn ngữ Trung Quốc qua việc nghiên cứu cách nói khôn khéo của người phục vụ trong nhà hàng	388
33	Phan Gia Nhật	Khảo sát nhận thức của sinh viên chuyên ngữ tiếng Nhật năm nhất Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, Đại học Huế về vấn đề điểm nhìn khi sử dụng nhóm động từ di chuyển có hướng và động từ cho-nhận trong tiếng Nhật	397
34	Bùi Bình Minh	Ngữ nghĩa của từ chỉ màu đỏ trong tiếng Nga và tiếng Việt	404
35	Nguyễn Thị Kim Liên	Cấu trúc ngữ nghĩa cụm danh từ mở rộng tiếng Đức – đánh giá năng lực dịch	413
	<b>Session 5</b> <b>English Language Teaching and Professional Development (ENG)</b>		
36	Phạm Thị Hồng Nhung	Teacher Students’ Oral Feedback Discourse on Peer Learners’ Performance in Micro-Teaching	424
37	Phạm Hồng Anh	Role development and transformation in online EFL writing classes: a case study in a tertiary context	435
38	Nguyễn Trịnh Thảo Trinh, Nguyễn Hồ Hoàng Thủy	Technology literacy, confidence and professional plans: A case study of EFL novice teachers	451

39	Nguyễn Thu Hà	The influences of instructional interventions aligned with the IELTS writing rubric: an action research	463
40	Nguyễn Hoàng Phương Mai, Nguyễn Lê Bảo Ngọc	An investigation of English-Majored students' perceptions on the use of online reflective blogs in Vietnam	484
41	Hồ Thị Quỳnh Như	Evaluating the Effectiveness of Online English Language Teaching as an alternative platform in vocation classes	496
42	Lê Thị Phương Chi, Nguyễn Hồ Hoàng Thủy	EFL students' perceptions of the effects of the use of humor in English speaking classes	506
43	Bùi Phú Hưng	Contextualizing assessment for learning in Asian L2 classrooms	518
<b>Session 6</b>			
<b><i>Dạy ngoại ngữ và Phát triển nghiệp vụ (VIE)</i></b>			
44	Cao Thị Xuân Liên	Nhận thức của sinh viên về việc áp dụng hình thức học tập kết hợp trong giảng dạy ngoại ngữ	534
45	Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Diệp	Một số phương pháp ôn luyện từ vựng hiệu quả dựa trên hoạt động của bộ nhớ	551
46	Nguyễn Thị Xuyên, Võ Lê Thúy Nga	Ảnh hưởng của hình minh họa trong giáo trình Explorer 2 đến sự hứng thú và khả năng đọc hiểu của người học	560
47	Nguyễn Đình Ngọc Trân, Trần Thị Thu Hiền, Phan Đình Ngọc Châu	Nhận thức về thực tập của sinh viên tiếng Pháp chuyên ngành du lịch	571
48	Trần Thị Thùy Linh	Ảnh hưởng của hoạt động phản hồi đồng đẳng đến năng lực tự chủ học tập kỹ năng viết của sinh viên quốc tế	578
49	Phan Đình Ngọc Châu, Trần Thị Thu Hiền, Nguyễn Đình Ngọc Trân	Động cơ học tập tiếng Pháp của sinh viên tiếng Pháp không chuyên ngữ	590
50	Võ Lê Thúy Nga, Vũ Trâm Anh	Nghiên cứu các yếu tố tác động đến động lực học tiếng Anh của sinh viên chuyên ngành thời kỳ hậu Covid-19: Trường hợp nghiên cứu tại Đại học Ngoại ngữ – Tin học Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh	606
51	Nguyễn Thị Hương Huệ	Giảng dạy môn hướng dẫn viên du lịch theo mô hình lớp học đảo ngược	616
52	Nguyễn Văn Đồng	Vận dụng tri thức ngữ âm lịch sử vào việc dạy Tiếng Việt cho người nước ngoài	625

<i>Session 7</i>			
<i>Kiểm tra đánh giá và quản lý đào tạo ngoại ngữ (VIE-ENG)</i>			
53	Nguyễn Hồ Hoàng Thủy	Nghiên cứu cơ hội áp dụng kết quả bồi dưỡng năng lực khảo thí tiếng Anh và tác động của hoạt động bồi dưỡng lên quá trình phát triển nghiệp vụ của giáo viên	634
54	Hoàng Thị Thu Hạnh, Trần Thị Khánh Phước, Phạm Thị Tuyết Nhung	Nghiên cứu các biện pháp hỗ trợ sinh viên tiếng Pháp đạt chuẩn đầu ra chuyên ngữ	648
55	Tống Thị Lan Chi, Phạm Thị Hồng Nhung	Washback effects of high-stakes English tests: Direction and intensity	655
56	Đào Phong Lâm, Trịnh Quốc Lập	Đo lường việc đạt được chuẩn đầu ra trong chương trình đào tạo ngôn ngữ: Sự tham gia của sinh viên thông qua khảo sát đánh giá dựa vào chiêm nghiệm mức độ đạt được chuẩn đầu ra cấp học phần trong một chương trình đào tạo ngôn ngữ Anh	666
57	Nguyễn Thị Hương Trà	Khả năng triển khai mô hình hoạt động hợp tác (Peer learning) vào giảng dạy tiếng Nhật thương mại: Nhìn từ kết quả khóa tập huấn dành cho giảng viên Khoa Ngôn ngữ và Văn hóa Nhật Bản, trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, Đại học Huế	678
58	Trần Khai Xuân, Nguyễn Thị Quỳnh Vân, Vương Huệ Nghi	Kết quả thử nghiệm hệ thống kiểm tra đánh giá trực tuyến học phần tiếng Trung Quốc tổng hợp	689
59	Liu Lixian, Liêu Linh Chuyên	Hoàn thiện mô hình hợp tác đào tạo nguồn nhân lực đa lĩnh vực “Tiếng Trung + ” giữa các trường đại học Việt Nam và Trung Quốc	700
60	Phạm Thế Châu, Đặng Thị Thanh Lan, Huỳnh Thị Chiêu Uyên, Bùi Thị Thanh Trúc	Nâng cao sự hài lòng của người học về hoạt động giảng dạy và đánh giá giữa kỳ đối với môn tiếng Trung Quốc 3 tại HUFLIT	712
61	Vũ Trâm Anh, Nguyễn Thị Xuyên	Khảo sát về việc chuyển đổi môn ngữ pháp thành môn học chính thức trong chương trình đào tạo sinh viên ngành ngôn ngữ Anh, Trường Đại Học Ngoại Ngữ Tin Học TPHCM	722
62	Lương Ngọc Khánh Phương	Đề xuất tổ chức các học phần về nghệ thuật Việt Nam cho người nước ngoài trong chương trình đào tạo đại học theo hướng phát triển năng lực tiếng Việt	731

63	Nguyễn Việt Thi	Đánh giá hiệu quả của việc học văn hóa doanh nghiệp kiều Nhật thông qua giờ học tiếng Nhật thương mại ở trường Đại học Việt Nhật	741
64	Tống Thị Lan Chi	Factors generating washback of high-stakes tests: Which matters in Vietnamese secondary educational context?	751
<b>Session 8</b> <b>Giáo dục phổ thông (ENG)</b>			
65	Nguyễn Văn Hương	Scaffolding in English writing by high school students in Vietnam	766
66	Cao Lê Thanh Hải, Trương Hoàng Lê, Phạm Anh Huy	An investigation into the teaching of cultural elements in English textbooks at some high schools in Hue, Vietnam	778
67	Nguyễn Hồ Bảo Trân, Nguyễn Hồ Hoàng Thủy, Lê Thị Thanh Hải	Teachers' perceptions of scaffolding EFL students' listening comprehension at some high schools in central Vietnam	790
68	Nguyễn Thị Diệu Hà	The interface of words and images in Vietnamese and English children's picture books in depicting child characters	806

## TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SCAFFOLDING EFL STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION AT SOME HIGH SCHOOLS IN CENTRAL VIETNAM

Nguyễn Hồ Bảo Trân<sup>1</sup>, Nguyễn Hồ Hoàng Thủy<sup>2</sup>, Lê Thị Thanh Hải<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Quoc Hoc Hue High School for the Gifted*

<sup>2,3</sup>*University of Foreign Languages and International Studies, Hue University*

*Email: ltthainn@hueuni.edu.vn*

**Abstract:** This study investigated EFL teachers' perceptions of scaffolding students' listening comprehension at some high schools in Central Vietnam. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach. Forty-eight EFL teachers responded to a questionnaire, and six of them agreed to participate in following interview sessions. Research findings showed that while teachers had positive perceptions on using scaffolding strategies to enhance students' listening comprehension, they encountered a number of difficulties, including mix-ability class and time-consuming nature of scaffolding, in implementing scaffolding techniques to their respective students and classes. Based on the research findings, some issues related to professional development and pedagogical suggestions were provided for the implementation of scaffolding strategies in teaching listening comprehension for EFL students.

*Keywords: Scaffolding, teachers' perceptions, listening comprehension.*

### 1. Introduction

Listening is a crucial skill for learning and communicating in English as a foreign language (EFL). Along with the introduction of the English curriculum in the 2018 Curriculum for General Education, all four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as language elements of vocabulary, grammar, and phonetics, are supposed to be included in English classes for EFL students. Listening skills are thus being emphasised in the teaching and assessment of English in high schools nowadays, since listening helps establish mental associations and meanings, forming the basis for language usage (Lakhneche, 2017).

Scaffolding strategies have been found to be effective in supporting students' development of language skills (Gibbons, 2015). A brief overview of relevant studies has shown that equal attention has been paid to scaffolding strategies and techniques in all four language skills. This is reflected in the number of published articles and research in speaking (Alwahibee, 2019; Chauhan, 2023; Goh, 2017; Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022), writing (Riazi et al., 2011; Singh et al., 2020; Vonna et al., 2015), reading (Herawati et al., 2020; Lestari, 2016; Ling, 2018; Salem, 2017) and listening (Abobaker, 2017; Albalawneh & Tepsuriwong, 2020; Al-Yami, 2008; Bommanaboina & Madhumathi, 2022; Herlina, 2019; Safa & Rozati, 2016). Nonetheless, while scaffolding has become popular all over the world, it gains little attention and has just been an emerging theme in teaching methodology in Vietnam in recent years, reflected in the limited research found in the field (Dinh, 2016; Le & Tran, 2021; Hong & Nguyen, 2019; Nguyen, 2013). Besides, the focus of the afore-mentioned studies is on scaffolding speaking, reading and writing skills; none of which investigates scaffolding listening. This research, therefore, intends to fill this knowledge gap by exploring scaffolding listening comprehension to EFL students in Vietnamese context. Specifically, it studies teachers' perceptions of scaffolding EFL students'

listening comprehension at some high schools in Central Vietnam. The research question that guided the study reported in this paper was “*What are high school EFL teachers’ perceptions of scaffolding students’ listening comprehension?*”.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. The concept of scaffolding**

Scaffolding is an extensively studied concept in education that entails giving learners with temporary help and direction when they face activities beyond their existing ability (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). This is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which emphasises social interaction and collaboration in cognitive growth. Scaffolding, according to Vygotsky, allows learners to progressively acquire new skills and information with the help from a more skilled individual.

Scaffolding is strongly related to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), a concept proposed by Vygotsky (1978). The gap between a learner's current abilities and their potential progress with suitable help is represented by the ZPD. It emphasises the significance of customised instructional support in assisting learners to advance and reach higher levels of competence and comprehension.

Scaffolding strategies in educational contexts can take numerous shapes based on the goals and activities at hand. Explanatory teaching, breaking down complicated activities into smaller components, providing prompts and signals to aid learners, modelling desired behaviours and tactics, and providing feedback and support during the learning process are all examples of scaffolding strategies. These tactics seek to provide learners with structure, support, and guidance, allowing them to overcome hurdles and engage in complicated activities.

Scaffolding has been proven in extensive studies to be helpful in encouraging student learning outcomes, improving problem-solving abilities, cultivating critical thinking, and enabling the development of higher-order cognitive processes (Cameron, 2001). Scaffolding is also advantageous for students who come from a variety of backgrounds, learning styles, and degrees of prior knowledge (Malik, 2017). More importantly, scaffolding bridges the gap between learners' existing abilities and their potential development by providing appropriate assistance, resulting in a supportive learning environment that fosters active involvement, cooperation, and autonomy in the learning process (Puntambekar, 2022).

Scaffolding may also be altered and personalised to match the requirements of individual learners, allowing for differentiated instruction and catering to differing levels of preparedness and comprehension (Gibbons, 2015). It recognises that learners begin at various points and advance at varying rates, and scaffolding offers the essential assistance to help them towards higher levels of performance.

### **2.2. Scaffolding EFL students’ listening comprehension**

Effective listening comprehension strives to promote learners' accurate and efficient understanding of spoken language. Due to the inherent nature of listening, this skill is quite different from others regarding some unique textual and psychological aspects such as pause units, hesitations, repetitions, false starts, intonations, background sound, variable accents and speeds, etc. (Cambridge, n.d.). Scaffolding listening, which entails giving instructional assistance,

hence, can be employed to help students understand and comprehend spoken language (Gibbons, 2015) but requires different strategies and holds different techniques (Albalawneh, 2020; Gibbons, 2015).

Scaffolding in listening comprehension teaching assists students in overcoming problems such as quick speech, natural speech patterns, and accent and intonation variability (Gibbons, 2015). Scaffolding students' listening comprehension also helps them absorb and interpret spoken language, make inferences, check comprehension, and use strategic listening approaches (Rost, 2011). Teachers can use scaffolding strategies to establish a supportive learning environment in the language classroom that fosters active involvement, develops listening strategies, and improves learners' comprehension of spoken language.

Scaffolding EFL learners' listening comprehension is critical for improving learners' capacity to hear spoken language and may be done effectively in three stages of a listening lesson, including pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening (Vandergrift, 2012). Teachers can engage learners in activities that activate existing knowledge, such as brainstorming or guessing the topic of the listening text, during the pre-listening stage. Giving learners prior information on the topic or genre of the listening text improves their comprehension even further. Teachers might use strategies such as strategic listening, in which students focus on specific information or identify the speaker's intent, during the while-listening stage. Teaching students to infer meaning from contextual cues such as tone or facial expressions also helps their understanding. Opportunities for reflection, such as comprehension questions and post-listening dialogues, allow learners to cement their learning throughout the post-listening period (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). Encouraging learners to evaluate their own listening methods and creating goals for future practice help them grow as strategic listeners (Vandergrift, 2012). The current study uses a similar split of scaffolding listening comprehension tactics of pre-, while-, and post-listening to structure the questionnaire and enable the data analysis.

### **2.3. Review of related studies**

The need for more effective techniques to teaching language skills to students is becoming increasingly apparent in research on English language teaching. There has been much interest in using scaffolding to improve language teaching practices, which was motivated by Vygotsky's (1978) theory of cognitive development.

The implementation of scaffolding and its effects on various language skills have caught much attention among researchers and methodology experts, shown in the amount and variety of studies on scaffolding. Scaffolding strategies, for example, have been shown to improve students' communication abilities and confidence (Alwahibee, 2019; Chauhan, 2023; Goh, 2017; Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022). Effective scaffolding exercises have been proved to improve students' reading comprehension and fluency (Herawati et al., 2020; Hong & Nguyen, 2019; Lestari, 2016; Salem, 2017; Tran & Nguyen, 2021), while meaningful gamification has been reported to be an effective tool for engaging students in reading activities (Ling, 2018). Scaffolding has also been demonstrated to be effective in the development of students' writing skills, with both teacher and peer scaffolding techniques resulting to better writing abilities (Riazi et al., 2011; Singh et al., 2020; Vonna et al., 2015). The usefulness of scaffolding in language instruction has been recognised in various countries. The available studies explored

many elements of scaffolding, such as instructor perspectives, student reactions, and the use of scaffolding strategies in the classroom.

Many researchers have been interested in the application of scaffolding in teaching and learning listening skills (Abobaker, 2017; Albalawneh & Tepsuriwong, 2020; Al-Yami, 2008; Bommanaboina & Madhumathi, 2022; Herlina, 2019; Safa & Rozati, 2016). The majority of these studies primarily concentrates on student needs and the efficacy of scaffolding in improving listening abilities (Abobaker, 2017; Al-Yami, 2008; Karimi et al., 2020; Safa & Rozati, 2016; Taghizadeh & Saadatjoo, 2021; Talebinejad & Akhgar, 2015), while the subjective perspectives of instructors, particularly their observations of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the implementation of scaffolding strategies, are not adequately considered in the existing research. Listening is a crucial skill in language learning, and further research is needed to understand the perceptions and experiences of teachers in scaffolding students' listening comprehension. This study aims to address this gap by investigating, then answering the research question “What are high school EFL teachers’ perceptions of scaffolding students’ listening comprehension?”. Specifically, it addresses teachers’ understanding of scaffolding strategies in listening lessons and explores their perspectives on the benefits and challenges of its implementation.

### **3. Research methodology**

#### **3.1. Participants**

Participants were selected based on random sampling, which is seen to be the most effective method for ensuring an unbiased sample and increasing the generalizability of the results (Creswell, 2012). To generate statistically meaningful findings, a sample size of at least 10% of the research population is advised (Coombe & Davison, 2015). In this study, 48 out of 302 EFL teachers from ... high schools in both urban and remote areas of a province in Central Vietnam, and with various rank admission scores for the academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, completed and submitted an online questionnaire. Among the 48 participants, three were male and 45 were female. Regarding educational qualifications, 16 participants held a Master's degree in EFL methodology, while 32 possessed a Bachelor's degree. Notably, the largest group of participants (35.4%) had teaching experience ranging from 6 to 10 years. The second and third largest groups consisted of participants with teaching experience of 11 to 15 years (29.2%) and more than 16 years (22.9%) respectively. Participants with less than 6 years of teaching experience constituted the smallest category, accounting for 12.5% of the total sample. Participants can be said to come from a variety of backgrounds and had varied degrees of teaching experience and educational qualifications.

Six participants were also chosen for subsequent interviews to acquire more insights and explanations on the perceptions of scaffolding strategies. These teachers had varying degrees of teaching experience, and they belong to three schools of three different levels based on high school admission scores for the academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023.

#### **3.2. Data collection instruments**

The data collection instruments in the current study included a questionnaire and interview questions. The questionnaire was chosen as one of the key instruments owing to its advantages in

swiftly and readily gathering huge volumes of data. It enabled the collecting of data on the attitudes, beliefs, and backgrounds of participants (Creswell, 2012).

In the present study, both top-down and bottom-up approaches were used to formulate the items of the questionnaire. It were first designed to be close-ended, with the main parts adapted from Tran and Nguyen's (2021) questionnaire. It was then piloted with a group of 5 EFL teachers to ensure its validity and relevance (Creswell, 2012). The pilot participants were requested to complete the questionnaire, then offer comments on the clarity of the instructions as well as their overall questionnaire experience. The result of the pilot phase helped to finalise the official version of the questionnaire.

There were three sections in the questionnaire for this research. The introductory section served to collect participant information, encompassing aspects such as name, age, gender, degree, current workplace, and teaching experience. The second section of the study focuses on teachers' comprehension of scaffolding and its significance in the instruction of listening comprehension. The third section revolves around teachers' perspectives on the advantages and difficulties associated with scaffolding students' listening comprehension. Each response option is assigned a number: strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). This scale was used to allow participants to express how much they agree or disagree with each statement, then determine teachers' belief of the benefits and challenges encountered while implementing these strategies in the classroom.

Semi-structured interview questions were then employed as the second phase of data collection procedure. It was more qualitative-based with an aim to gain open-ended replies from participants, gather detailed information about teachers' perspectives and experiences with scaffolding strategies (Aksu, 2009) to get a deeper understanding and explanation of the results from first-phase data, which was survey-based quantitative. An interview protocol was developed as guidance for the interview sections. Apart from the preamble, the main part of the interview revolves around three main follow-up questions along with the related prompts to the research question, including understanding of scaffolding strategies, benefits and challenges of implementing scaffolding in listening lessons to obtain further information and examples for the teachers' responses in the questionnaire.

### ***3.3. Data collection procedures and data analysis***

Data collection procedure lasted two months, with the first 20 days for data collection for the pilot phase and data collection instrument revision. The final version of the questionnaire was given to 48 EFL teachers by email, Facebook, and Zalo using the Google Forms platform. Following that, six teachers from three different high schools were chosen for the interview phase. To guarantee the participants' comfort and proper articulation of their perspectives, the interviews were done in Vietnamese, the teachers' native language. The interviews, each lasting 15-20 minutes, were audio recorded with the participants' agreement.

The data was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The data gathered from the questionnaire was quantitatively analysed using descriptive statistics and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 20, which provided percentages, means, and standard deviations. All interview responses were transcribed and translated from Vietnamese to English to facilitate the identification and classification of themes for subsequent data analysis.

The transcripts were sent to the participants to do member-checking. No participants requested any changes to the transcripts. The interview transcripts were then hand-coded using thematic analysis (Askarzai, 2017).

#### 4. Findings

##### 4.1. Teachers' understanding of scaffolding strategies in listening lessons

Section Two of the questionnaire of five items presents teachers' understanding of scaffolding and its importance to students' listening comprehension, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Teachers' understanding of scaffolding strategies in listening lessons**

No.	Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD		M	SD
		F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%
1	Scaffolding is the guide from the teacher to help students complete a listening task step by step.	28	58.34	16	33.33	3	6.25	1	2.08	0	0.00	4.48	0.71
2	Scaffolding is the assistance by the teacher to facilitate student learning of listening through teacher-student interaction.	15	31.25	29	60.42	4	8.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.23	0.59
3	Scaffolding is aiding students in completing a listening task with temporary support.	12	25.00	28	58.34	4	8.33	3	6.25	1	2.08	3.98	0.88
4	Scaffolding is enabling students to solve problems in their listening task.	26	54.17	17	35.42	5	10.41	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.44	0.68

5	Scaffolding is helping students understand their listening lesson better.	11	22.92	23	47.92	9	18.75	4	8.33	1	2.08	3.81	0.96
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(SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly disagree, F: Frequency, P: Percentage, M: Mean, SD: Standard Deviation)

As the data revealed, the teachers' understanding of scaffolding strategies in listening lessons indicated the importance of scaffolding in improving students' listening comprehension. The highest mean value in statement 1 (M=4.48) shows that 91.67% of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that scaffolding guided students through listening tasks step by step. Items 4 and 5 also showed high mean values (M=4.44 and M=3.81, respectively), indicating that the teachers considered scaffolding was helping students resolve obstacles and better grasp their listening lessons, respectively. The majority of the informants (83.33%) also thought scaffolding is to help students temporarily complete a listening task. In statement 2, over 90% of the teachers believed that scaffolding entails teacher support through inquiry and discussion, only approximately 8% were unsure, and no one disagreed with this assertion (M=4.23).

The interview findings are in accordance with the questionnaire's results. Some significant sharing from the interview can be noted as follow.

*Scaffolding is the process of giving students help and instructions while they engage in the listening material, (...) generating chances for students to interact with the teacher and with one another in order to enhance their knowledge of the content. This is how the activities are often carried out in my class. (Teacher 1)*

*Teachers must be aware of their students' needs and abilities in order to improvise their teaching tactics. Teachers can give comments and instructions to students as they progress through the listening activity, as well as assist them in identifying areas where they may require further support or guidance. (...) So I think scaffolding is very temporary and dependent on specific contexts. (Teacher 4)*

*I scaffold different students and different classes in different ways. Teachers need to depend on students' understanding and proficiency to provide suitable help. (Teacher 5)*

From teachers' elaboration of how they scaffolded their students, "adaptive" scaffolding or "soft" scaffolding, the process of offering temporary assistance and direction to students through teacher-student interaction, is the emerging theme of teachers' understanding of the issue.

Besides, "wait time" is considered another crucial technique in scaffolding recognised and acknowledged by teacher interviewees, shown in the high frequency of its appearance in teachers' interviews (five out of six interviewed respondents mentioned this). However, it should be noted that while teachers talked about "wait time" as the MUST technique, they also regarded it as a challenge in their implementation process due to time limit (see 4.3 for more detail.).

**4.2. Teachers' perceptions of the benefits of implementing scaffolding strategies in listening lessons**

**Table 4.2. Teachers' perceptions of the benefits of implementing scaffolding strategies in listening lessons**

No.	Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD		M	SD
		F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%
6	I think scaffolding gets students involved in listening.	12	25.00	26	54.17	7	14.58	3	6.25	0	0.00	3.98	0.81
7	I think scaffolding helps students to do the task easier.	25	52.08	20	41.67	3	6.25	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.46	0.62
8	I think scaffolding helps reduce students' anxiety to deal with the listening task.	12	25.00	23	47.92	10	20.83	2	4.17	1	2.08	3.89	0.91
9	I think scaffolding motivates students to learn listening.	10	20.83	27	56.25	8	16.67	3	6.25	0	0.00	3.92	0.79
10	I think scaffolding allows students to complete a listening activity at different stages of the lesson.	11	22.92	29	60.42	7	14.58	1	2.08	0	0.00	4.04	0.68

11	I think scaffolding makes listening classroom atmosphere more interesting.	6	12.50	18	37.50	16	33.33	5	10.42	3	6.25	3.39	1.05
12	I think scaffolding helps students interact with the teacher.	15	31.25	29	60.42	4	8.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.23	0.59
13	I think scaffolding helps students interact with their peers.	8	16.67	25	52.08	8	16.67	4	8.33	3	6.25	3.65	1.06
14	I think scaffolding helps students reach a higher level of listening.	16	33.34	27	56.25	4	8.33	1	2.08	0	0.00	4.21	0.68
15	I think scaffolding helps students get the key idea of the listening.	12	25.00	24	50.00	8	16.66	2	4.17	2	4.17	3.86	0.98

(SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly disagree, F: Frequency, P: Percentage, M: Mean, SD: Standard Deviation)

The study also investigated teachers' perceptions regarding the benefits of implementing scaffolding strategies in listening lessons and the results are presented in Table 2, specifically focusing on items 6-15.

Regarding cognitive purposes, a majority of the teachers believed that scaffolding has various benefits for enhancing students' listening abilities. Statement 7 obtained the highest mean score of 4.46, with a large majority (93,8%) agreeing that scaffolding simplifies schoolwork for students. The majority of educators (89.5%) concurred that the implementation of scaffolding methodologies facilitates the advancement of students' listening skills to a more elevated level. Moreover, a significant percentage (75%) of teachers acknowledged the efficacy

of such instructional practices in enabling students to grasp the fundamental concepts embedded within a given listening exercise. The findings from the interviews corroborated these findings, as all participants believed that scaffolding speeds the learning process for students, allowing them to improve their listening abilities. Teachers emphasized that scaffolding helps students engage with the content, develop comprehension skills, and become more confident and independent learners.

Teachers also recognised that scaffolding improves communication between students and teachers, as well as among students themselves, as shown by high mean scores of 4.23 and 3.65 in statements 12 and 13, respectively. Scaffolding promotes cooperation, debate, and the sharing of ideas in the classroom, hence increasing interaction and social engagement. This is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) work, which emphasised the importance of scaffolding in fostering cognitive progress and social interaction among learners. Over 83% of instructors agreed or strongly agreed that scaffolding assists students to complete listening exercises at different phases of the lesson (Statement 10).

Qualitatively findings from the interview were in accordance with quantitative ones from the survey. Teachers identified and emphasized the importance of teachers' scaffolding over peers' scaffolding.

*Most of the support must come from teachers. Students can help one another, but listening is challenging, and students do not have adequate knowledge to give helps. (Teacher 2)*

Moreover, in terms of affective purposes, the findings show that scaffolding improves student motivation in listening instruction. A mean score of 3.92 was assigned to statement 9 about scaffolding's potential to drive learners to develop their listening abilities, with 20.83% strongly agreeing and 56.25% agreeing. This indicates that a sizable proportion of respondents recognised the positive impact of scaffolding on student motivation.

Statement 6 had a mean score of 3.98, responses indicated that 79.2% of the teachers felt scaffolding allowed students not only to achieve their level of proficiency in the learning process but also involve them in tasks. Furthermore, a notable percentage of educators, specifically 72.9%, acknowledged the potential of scaffolding methodologies in alleviating students' anxiety when confronted with listening audio materials. These views were reinforced by the interview results. Scaffolding, according to teachers, simplifies the process for students, helps them connect with the information, and enhances their listening ability.

*For students, listening may be extremely daunting and irritating. They may simply tune out because they do not believe they can grasp what is being said. However, scaffolding allows us to offer them with the support and assistance they require to truly connect with the subject. (Teacher 2)*

Therefore, scaffolding was also considered as a way to alleviate students' anxiety when coping with listening activities, allowing them to break the action down into manageable components and feel more competent.

*Teachers, on the other hand, can help to break down the listening activity into more manageable and less challenging components by offering proper support and instruction. This can make students feel more confident and less worried while they listen to the topic. (Teacher 6)*

**4.3. Teachers' perceptions of the challenges when implementing scaffolding strategies in listening lessons**

**Table 3. Teachers' perceptions of the challenges when implementing scaffolding strategies in listening lessons**

No.	Statements	SA		A		N		D		SD		M	SD
		F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%		
16	I think scaffolding needs much preparation from the teacher in a listening class.	7	14.58	18	37.50	13	27.09	6	12.50	4	8.33	3.38	1.14
17	I think scaffolding is problematic in mixed-ability classes of listening.	22	45.83	19	39.59	7	14.58	0	0.00	0	0.00	4.30	0.72
18	I think scaffolding is time-consuming.	11	22.92	24	50.00	9	18.75	3	6.25	1	2.08	3.85	0.92

(SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly disagree, F: Frequency, P: Percentage, M: Mean, SD: Standard Deviation)

The poll of English language teachers sought to learn about their perceptions of the problems they might face while employing scaffolding tactics to improve students' listening comprehension. The findings showed that the surveyed teachers had difficulties in a number of areas of scaffolded listening instruction (Table 3).

The issue of mixed-ability classes was cited as a major difficulty (Statement 17). It obtained the highest mean score of 4.30, with 45.83% strongly agreeing and 39.58% agreeing that scaffolding in such environments is difficult. The interviewed teachers further emphasised the challenges of giving adequate help and guidance to students with varying levels of competency, prior knowledge, and learning styles.

Another key problem was the time-consuming nature of scaffolding (Statement 18). It received a mean score of 3.85, with 22.92% strongly agreeing and 50% agreeing that scaffolding takes a significant amount of time. The interviewed teachers noted the importance of substantial

planning and preparation in order to provide appropriate aid and instructions to students, especially in mixed-ability classes. A time-consuming feature of scaffolding was highlighted as providing personalised instruction to students.

Statement 16 had the lowest mean score of 3.38, showing that teachers did not regard lengthy preparation as a significant problem when adopting scaffolding in the listening class.

## **5. Discussion**

In this study, teachers' perceptions of scaffolding students' listening comprehension in high schools in Central Vietnam, were examined. The findings indicated that teachers recognized the importance of scaffolding as a form of teacher support that facilitates active learning and the acquisition of new knowledge in reading, with the emphasis on adaptive scaffolding. The provision of instructional support was perceived to enhance teacher-student interaction. The questionnaire responses and semi-structured interviews further highlighted the benefits of both cognitive and affective scaffoldings, including enlarged students' knowledge with concepts and information, increased students' listening proficiency, increased student interest, interactive learning environments, and reduced anxiety. However, challenges such as mixed-ability student proficiency, class size, time constraints, and student attitudes towards collaboration were identified by teachers.

The outcomes of this study add to the current corpus of research on scaffolding strategies for improving students' listening comprehension. Consistent with prior research (Gibbons, 2015; Puntambekar, 2022; Safa, 2016), the findings demonstrate instructors' positive attitudes towards the use of scaffolding strategies to assist students in completing listening exercises and overcoming obstacles. This study is also consistent with previous research in that it emphasises the importance of teacher-student interaction in scaffolding education (Vygotsky, 1978; Wood et al., 1976). It backs up earlier results (Albalawneh, 2020; Puntambekar, 2022; Safa, 2016) that scaffolding entails offering support and advice via questioning and interactive strategies. This emphasises the importance of instructor assistance in facilitating students' listening comprehension. The findings of the study add to current theoretical frameworks, especially Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasises the function of scaffolding in supporting cognitive progress and encouraging social interaction among learners.

Furthermore, this study expands on earlier research by finding particular advantages related with the use of scaffolding tactics in listening classes. Teachers in this study recognised that scaffolding simplifies assignments, improves students' relationship with the topic, and lowers anxiety during listening activities. These advantages are consistent with prior research demonstrating the favourable impact of scaffolding on student engagement and motivation (Brown & Lee, 2021).

This study, however, repeats the limitations noted in previous studies regarding the use of scaffolding systems. The topic of mixed-ability classes, for example, was frequently discussed by the teachers in this study. This supports previous research that highlights the difficulty of providing appropriate help and advice to students with varying competence levels and learning styles (Smith & Johnson, 2017). The time-consuming nature of scaffolding, particularly individualised support, is consistent with prior research emphasising the resource-intensive character of this instructional strategy (Brown et al., 2021). Furthermore, previous studies (e.g.,

Lee et al., 2003; Nguyen et al., 2018) have emphasised the need of teacher preparation in scaffolded education, however the instructors polled did not see it as a significant barrier. This can be partly explained by teachers' understanding of scaffolding listening (see 4.1 for more detail) when they emphasised "adaptive" (or temporary) scaffolding rather than "fixed" (or planned) scaffolding.

## **6. Conclusions and implications**

The study's findings shed light on teachers' perceptions regarding the scaffolding of students' listening comprehension. The teachers recognized scaffolding as a valuable instructional tool for enhancing students' listening skills, aligning with the social constructivist perspective of learning. It became evident that the gradual release of responsibility and ownership to students is essential, and teachers' perceptions play a crucial role in shaping their roles and decisions in listening classes. By providing timely support, teachers assist students in constructing and critically engaging with new knowledge. As students are given opportunities to assume greater responsibility and active participation in developing effective listening skills, teachers employ various instructional support and strategies tailored to meet students' individual learning needs.

Teachers' perceptions of scaffolding strategies in students' listening comprehension show their clear awareness of their advantages. Scaffolding is seen as a beneficial technique for simplifying work, improving understanding, and increasing student enthusiasm and participation. Teachers' understanding of scaffolding and their recognition of its benefits and challenges in listening lessons entails that they should participate in more professional development workshops and training of scaffolding and its techniques. They should understand the step-by-step coaching process and the function of teacher-student interaction in scaffolding. They should be aware that scaffolding techniques such as assistance, direction, and feedback can help students not only improve their proficiency in listening but also motivate students minimise anxiety during listening exercises, resulting in a supportive and engaging classroom climate that promotes students' confidence and autonomous learning. They should also be provided more theory and techniques about planned scaffolding, which is an essential type of scaffolding, to combine with adaptive one.

However, issues in applying scaffolding were pinpointed. Teachers were not fully aware of the importance of peer scaffolding, or how to apply them effectively in their context. These two types of scaffolding were not only emphasised in scaffolding's theory but also particularly suitable in mixed-ability classes because it helped deal with time issue. To address these findings, language instructors should obtain professional development on scaffolding methodologies and teacher-student interaction. Administrators can give resources and curriculum standards that contain scaffolding, while curriculum designers should incorporate scaffolding into materials and activities. Collaboration between designers and instructors is critical for successful implementation. Besides, language teachers need to be properly trained to better deal with time issue in listening classes since scaffolding tactics may need additional planning and preparation time. It is critical to devote enough time for scaffolding without jeopardising other elements of instruction. They should also be able to solve the challenges they acknowledge in implementing

scaffolding techniques once they are well-trained. Overall, scaffolding is recognised as a critical component in strengthening listening skills and establishing an engaged classroom atmosphere.

Despite the extensive research methodology and data collection techniques employed, this study has several limitations. Firstly, the findings may not be generalizable beyond high school EFL instructors in Central Vietnam. Secondly, the small sample size of 48 participants may limit the comprehensiveness of the results. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data through questionnaires introduces the possibility of social desirability bias. Lastly, the study focused solely on scaffolding strategies for teaching listening skills, overlooking other language skills. These limitations should be considered when interpreting and applying the findings, and future research should address these constraints for a more comprehensive understanding. To enhance the quality of teaching listening, future research should focus on professional development training workshops or seminars for teachers, emphasizing the integration of scaffolding techniques into listening instruction. Continual engagement in such practices will enable teachers to cultivate their personal and professional expertise, thereby diversifying their repertoire of listening strategies and creating a more engaging and interactive classroom environment.

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## NHẬN THỨC CỦA GIÁO VIÊN VỀ VIỆC SỬ DỤNG HOẠT ĐỘNG HỖ TRỢ HỌC TẬP KHI GIẢNG DẠY KỸ NĂNG NGHE HIỂU TIẾNG ANH

**Tóm tắt:** Bài báo nghiên cứu nhận thức về việc sử dụng hoạt động hỗ trợ học tập của giáo viên trong việc giảng dạy kỹ năng nghe cho học sinh tại các trường THPT một tỉnh miền Trung Việt Nam. Nghiên cứu áp dụng phương pháp kết hợp, sử dụng bảng hỏi đối với 48 giáo viên và phỏng vấn 6 giáo viên trong số đó để thu thập dữ liệu. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy giáo viên có thái độ tích cực đối với việc áp dụng các hoạt động hỗ trợ học tập để cải thiện kỹ năng nghe hiểu của học sinh. Tuy nhiên, họ phải đối mặt với một số khó khăn khi tích hợp các hoạt động hỗ trợ học tập vào quá trình giảng dạy, do trình độ học sinh trong các lớp thường chênh lệch nhiều, cũng như việc áp dụng các hoạt động hỗ trợ học tập thường tốn nhiều thời gian. Dựa trên kết quả nghiên cứu, các vấn đề về phát triển nghiệp vụ cũng như phương pháp sư phạm liên quan đến việc áp dụng các hoạt động hỗ trợ học tập trong giảng dạy kỹ năng nghe cho học sinh THPT được đề xuất.

*Từ khóa:* Hoạt động hỗ trợ học tập, nhận thức của giáo viên, kỹ năng nghe hiểu.