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Enhancing L2 Teacher's Classroom Interactional Competence Through Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

Classroom interaction plays a significant role in helping consolidate academic knowledge in the learners. This study examined the interactional resources and moves employed by novice and experienced EFL teachers before, during, and after a teacher education intervention, aiming to understand their classroom interaction management strategies. Utilizing qualitative analysis, the study identified differences and similarities in the use of act selection, repair strategies, turn-taking practices, and boundary as resources and interactional features (moves). Experienced teachers demonstrated a more diverse deployment of interactional resources and moves. However, the novice teachers also showed some improvement in the deployment of interactional resources and moves, indicating the effectiveness of teacher education in enhancing their interactional competence. Conversely, experienced teachers exhibited a substantial number of resources and moves even before the intervention, maintaining a relatively stable performance throughout the study phases. These findings underscore the importance of ongoing teacher education programs to develop novice teachers' interactional skills and enhance their classroom interaction quality.

KEYWORDS: Classroom interaction; Novice teacher; Experienced teacher; Interactional resources; Interactional moves

1. Introduction

Classroom interaction plays a significant role in helping consolidate academic knowledge in the learners and promoting their passion, self-esteem, and success (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). The major component of this interaction is the teacher. The challenge for the teacher is to create appropriate resources to assist in making a dynamic linguistic interaction in the classroom setting. The class atmosphere is vital because it gives the learners the chance to share emotions, social intelligence, and self-esteem (Minasyan, 2017). This shows how important it is for the L2 teacher to promote interaction in the classroom. Existing research has demonstrated that the most effective educational approaches are based on classroom interaction and the development of interactional competence in L2 learners (e.g., Konzett-Firth, 2020; Wang & Lai, 2023; Watanabe, 2016). There is scant research on novice and experienced EFL teachers' classroom interactional competence (Amiri, 2023) teachers' reflection on their own classroom interactional competence (Demirkol & Dislen Daggöl, 2022), and teachers' interactional competence from a translanguaging perspective (Tai & Dai, 2023). However, research on the impact of the interactional competence of teachers in classroom interaction is still scarce. There are also a number of other studies on teachers' classroom interactional competence

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that have only discursively been carried out on different features or components of teachers' classroom interactional competence such as repair (Ryan et al., 2015; Tavakoli, 2015), turn-taking (Gorjian & Habibi, 2015), or serious yet unwarranted attempts to measure it thoroughly (Tajeddin & Kamali, 2023).

Although it has been repeatedly emphasized that classroom interaction is a crucial pedagogical skill required by teachers to master to encourage interaction in the classroom, little is still known about EFL teachers' practice of interaction in classrooms and the impact of teacher education on it. To bridge this gap, the present paper aimed to discover Iraqi novice and experienced EFL teachers' classroom interaction practices and their employment of interactional resources and moves in the classroom. Furthermore, it sought to uncover the impact of a teacher education course on teachers' interactional competence.

2. Literature review

The development of interactional competence in L1 or L2 requires more than grammatical knowledge (Carroll, 2005). Goodwin (2013) believes that interactional competence includes actions and semiotic behaviors. For Kramsch (1986), interactional competence is synonymous with collaboration. Although some scholars perceive interactional competence as a part of pragmatic competence (Hall, 1995) or communicative competence (Johnson, 2007), He and Young (1998) draw a distinction between interactional competence and communicative competence. They posit that interactional competence encompasses an understanding of rhetorical scripts, proficiency in specific lexical and syntactic patterns relevant to the particular discourse, proficiency in managing conversational turns, competence in structuring topics, and mastery of the techniques for indicating transitions and boundaries within the conversation. Kumaravadivelu (2006) defines interactional competence in terms of textual activity, interpersonal activity, and ideational activity. Textual activities are linguistic endeavors and are evaluated in terms of linguistic gains. Interpersonal activities are social behaviors and are measured in terms of acquired social knowledge. Ideational activities refer to pragmatic ability obtained by a learner and are assessed in terms of pragmatic knowledge. Later in 2008, Young expanded the definition of interactional competence to include three major components or resources with seven subcomponents: (a) identity resources, which include participation framework; (b) linguistic resources, which include register and mode of meaning; and (c) interactional resources, which include speech acts, turn-taking, repair, and boundaries. Interactional competence can be thus defined as "the knowledge of, and the ability to use, the interactional resources necessary to participate in speech events according to the conventions established in the speech community" (Tecedor, 2016, p. 24).

Several studies have already investigated the development of interactional competence in various contexts (e.g., Derakhshan et al., 2023; Dings, 2007; Ishida, 2009; Lam, 2025; Nguyen, 2006, 2008; Batlle-Rodríguez & Evnitskaya, 2024; Wang & Yeh, 2024; Yagi, 2007; Young & Miller, 2004). However, L2 classroom interaction is definitely different from casual conversations in that classroom interaction, as a kind of institutional talk, is goal-oriented (Algarawi, 2011). Walsh (2011, p. 158) defined classroom interactional competence as "teachers' and learners' ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning." Walsh (2012) maintained that interactional competence provides space for learners to "participate in the discourse, to contribute to class conversations and to receive feedback on their contributions" (p. 6).

As a large portion of learning occurs through classroom interaction, classroom research has focused on the patterns of interaction in which teachers and learners may engage (e.g., Littleton & Mercer, 2013; Mortimer & Scott, 2003; Tajeddin & Kamali, 2023; Wang & Lai, 2023). Classroom interactional competence plays a pivotal role in creating an interactive space that allows students to actively engage in dialog, express their thoughts, and receive feedback (Moorhouse, 2023). Interaction between the teachers and the students in the classroom is necessary as it plays a crucial role in establishing a healthy path of academic student growth and improving the social environment (Martinez-Maldonado et al., 2020). Understanding interactional competence helps teachers manage classroom dynamics, facilitate productive interactions among learners, and identify areas for improvement, tailor instruction accordingly, and make their lessons more engaging and beneficial for learners (Amin & Saukah, 2015).

Drawn upon recent research that describes interactional competence in terms of interactional practices aiming at facilitating learning, this study aims to discover how EFL teachers deploy interactional resources and moves in fostering classroom interaction. It will focus on novice and experienced EFL teachers' interactional competence and the possible impact of a teacher education intervention that aims to improve their classroom interaction strategies. In view of these aims, the following questions were formulated:

1. What interactional resources and moves do Iraqi novice and experienced EFL teachers deploy to afford interactional space for learners?

2. How does a teacher education intervention of interactional competence affect teachers' deployment of interactional resources and moves?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The participants of this study were five male and five female teachers of English (five novice teachers and five experienced teachers), recruited from several language centers in Iraq. They were teaching English at the pre-intermediate and intermediate levels in their institutes at the time of study. The distinction between the novice teachers and experienced teachers was based on

the suggestions given by Farrell (2012) and Freeman (2001). Novice teachers, according to Farrell (2012), are early in their teaching careers, navigating their initial years with a focus on developing classroom management skills, instructional strategies, and understanding student needs. On the other hand, experienced teachers, as outlined by Freeman (2001), have amassed years of teaching experience, demonstrating a deep understanding of pedagogy and student learning. They possess a diverse toolkit for managing classrooms effectively, catering to diverse student needs, and engaging in ongoing professional growth. We selected the teachers with less than 2 years of teaching experience as novice and those with more than 5 years of teaching experience as experienced teachers. Eight teachers had BA degree in English Language Teaching (ELT) and two were MA holders. Their ages ranged from 23 to 45.

3.2. Instruments

Classroom observation is one of the primary sources of data collection in qualitative research. Each teacher in this study was observed 16 times, 3 times before the teacher education course (TEC), 8 during the TEC, 3 times after it, and 2 times as post-delayed observation. We conducted 160 observation sessions (240 hours) to investigate the teachers' interactional competence. The focus of the observation was on the pedagogical criteria and techniques used by teachers in the classroom. To do this, the use of interactional elements was assessed using a checklist adapted by the researcher. The checklist included two sets of interactional features to be checked via observation: One set contained interactional resources as proposed by Young (2008, 2019) and developed by Wang (2015), the other set comprised interactional moves suggested by Walsh (2006) (See Tables 1 & 2). This checklist could provide a structured and consistent framework for observing and recording specific features of interactional competence, allowing for focused and comparable analysis in this study. The observation was done through video/audio recording. All the sessions (240 hours) were transcribed.

3.3. Intervention: TEC on teachers' CIC

TECs serve various purposes, which determine their objectives and procedures. The selected teachers (five novices and five experienced teachers) participated in the TEC that took about eight sessions in the form of a series of Input-Task-Outcome sessions aiming at boosting their classroom interactional competence. First, a raising awareness TEC session was held on classroom-related issues and the exchange of personal experiences and perspectives. The outcomes of the session were guidelines, key takeaways, or blueprints for future professional development activities. Second, materials-analysis sessions were held to analyze published or teacher-created learning materials. Typically, there was a discussion of what might constitute efficient materials, followed by an evaluation. Sometimes, adaptation activities were included. Third, the skills development sessions were employed to teach instructional methods, use resource management, and collaborate with colleagues. The materials were based on elements that focus on interactional resources and moves that have a strong relationship with interactional competence, strategies, and techniques that guide teachers to increase interactional competence.

3.4. Data collection and data analysis

The data were collected from classroom observations before, during, and after the CIC workshop program to determine whether EFL instructors' practices could be modified. Their classes have been recorded and transcribed for three sessions before workshop. The Teacher Education Course (TEC) consisted of eight, one-hour-and-a-half-hour sessions over four weeks, with two/ three sessions per week along with a task assignment for each one. Three post-workshop sessions were also transcribed. all workshop sessions were designed to improve CIC among Iraqi EFL instructors. Data analysis was made through descriptive statistic and the frequencies of strategies.

4. Results

Observational sessions were conducted to track the novice and experienced teachers' use of interactional resources and moves in four phases (pre-intervention observation, during-intervention observation, post-intervention observation, and delayed-post intervention observation phase). Then, the data were coded in terms of each component of the interactional resources and moves in each phase. Finally, to compare the effectiveness of the intervention phase in teachers' use of interactional moves and resources, the components were compared by calculating the number of occurrences in each phase.

4.1. Pre-intervention interactional resources and moves

At first, the resources and moves were identified before the implementation of the TEC. Table 1 displays the types and frequencies of the interactional resources as used by novice and experienced EFL teachers before the TEC to create interactional space for learners.

Table 1.

Pre-intervention Observation of Resources (3 sessions)

No	Resources	Novice Teachers (frequency)	Novice Teachers (percentage)	Experienced Teachers (frequency)	Experienced Teachers (percentage)
1	**Act Selection**	4	40%	6	60%
(a)	Argumentation	0	0%	1	10%
(b)	Discussion	1	10%	1	10%
(c)	Support	1	10%	2	20%
(d)	Connection	2	20%	2	20%
2	**Repair**	**4**	**44.44%**	**5**	**55.55%**
(a)	Self-Self Repair	2	22.22%	3	33.33%
(b)	Self-Other Repair	1	11.11%	1	11.11%
(c)	Other-Self Repair	1	11.11%	1	11.11%
(d)	Other-Other Repair	0	0%	0	0%
3	**Turn Taking**	**4**	**36.36%**	**7**	**63.63%**
(a)	Yielding the Floor	2	18.18%	2	18.18%
(b)	Keeping the Floor	0	0%	1	9.09%
(c)	Taking the Floor	1	9.09%	2	18.18%
(d)	Accepting the Floor	1	9.09%	2	18.18%
4	**Boundaries**	**5**	**38.46%**	**8**	**61.53%**
(a)	Opening	3	23.07%	5	38.46%
(b)	Closing	2	15.38%	3	23.07%

The most common act selection resource used by novice teachers was connection (20%), followed by support (10%), discussion (10%), and argumentation (0%). Likewise, the most common act selection resource used by experienced teachers was also connection (20%), followed by discussion (20%), support (10%), and argumentation (10%). These results suggest that both novice and experienced teachers prioritize creating connection between learners and the topic being discussed. They also indicate that novice teachers are less skilled in using argumentation and discussion as act selection resources.

The most common repair resource used by novice teachers was self-self repair (22.22%), followed by self-other repair (11.11%), other-self repair (11.11%), and other-other repair (0%). However, the most common repair resource used by experienced teachers was also self-self repair (33.33%), followed by self-other repair (11.11%), other-self repair (11.11%), and other-other repair (0%). These results indicate that both novice and experienced teachers rely mostly on self-repair strategies. The most common turn taking resource used by novice teachers was yielding the floor (18.18%), followed by accepting the floor (9.09%), taking the floor (9.09%), and keeping the floor (0%). Similarly, the most common turn taking resource used by experienced teachers was yielding the floor (18.18%), followed by accepting the floor (18.18%), taking the floor (18.18%), and keeping the floor (9.09%). These findings suggest that both novice and experienced teachers prioritize yielding the floor as a turn taking resource. The most common boundary resource used by novice teachers was opening (23.07%), followed by closing (15.38%). The most common boundary resource used by experienced teachers was also opening (38.46%), followed by closing (23.07%). This indicates that both novice and experienced teachers focus more on opening boundaries.

As seen in the pre-intervention observation of resources, experienced teachers, compared with novice teachers, used more components of interactional resources in their interactions. For some components of interactional resources such as Discussion, Connection, Self-other Repair, Other-self Repair, Other-other Repair, and Yielding the Floor, the results were almost equal across novice and experienced teachers. Table 2 below shows the common interactional moves used by both novice and experienced Iraqi EFL teachers to direct learners' contributions to classroom interaction.

Table 2.

Pre-intervention Observation of Moves (3 Sessions)

No	Moves	Novice Teachers (frequency)	Novice Teachers (percentage)	Experienced Teachers (frequency)	Experienced Teachers (percentage)
1	**Scaffolding**	7	46.66%	8	53.33%
(a)	Reformulation (rephrasing a learner's contribution)	2	13.33%	2	13.33%
(b)	Extension (extending a learner's contribution)	1	6.66%	2	13.33%
(c)	Modelling (correcting a learner's contribution)	4	26.66%	4	26.66%
2	**Direct repair (Correcting an error quickly and directly)**	3	42.85%	4	57.14%
3	**Content feedback** (Giving feedback to the message rather than the words used)	2	50%	2	50%
4	**Extended wait- time** Allowing sufficient time (several seconds) for students to respond or formulate a response	1	50%	1	50%
5	**Referential questions** (Genuine questions to which the teacher does not know the answer)	0	0%	1	100%
6	**Seeking clarification**	2	50%	2	50%

(a)	Teacher asks a student to clarify something the student has said.	1	25%	1	25%
(b)	Student asks teacher to clarify something the teacher has said.	1	25%	1	5%
7	**Confirmation checks** (Making sure that the teacher has correctly understood the learner's contribution)	0	0%	0	0%
8	**8-Extended learner turn** (Learner turn of more than one clause)	0	0%	0	0%
9	Teacher echo	2	50%	2	50%
(a)	Teacher repeats a previous utterance.	1	25%	1	25%
(b)	Teacher repeats a learner's contribution	1	25%	1	25%
10	**Teacher interruptions** (Interrupting a learner's contribution)	0	0%	0	0%
11	**Extended teacher turn** (Teacher turn of more than one clause)	0	0%	0	0%
12	**Turn completion** (Completing a learner's contribution for the learner)	0	0%	1	100%
13	**Display questions** (Asking questions to which the teacher knows the answer)	3	42.85%	4	57.14%
14	**Form- focused feedback** (Giving feedback on the words used, not the message)	2	40%	3	60%

In terms of scaffolding moves, both novice and experienced teachers predominantly used modelling (26.66%) to correct and reformulation (13.33) to rephrase a learner's contribution. Novice teachers had a lower percentage of extension (6.66%) compared with experienced teachers (26.66%). However, both groups used modelling to correct a learner's contribution, with novice teachers at 6.66% and experienced teachers at 26.66%. In terms of direct repair, both novice and experienced teachers corrected errors quickly and directly. Novice teachers' frequency of use was 3 (42.85%), while experienced teachers' was 4 (57.14%). Both groups also provided content feedback to focus on the message rather than the words used. For both novice teachers and experienced teachers, the frequency was2 (50. regarding extended wait-time, both groups allowed equal sufficient time for students to respond or formulate a response (n = 1, 50%). In terms of referential questions, only experienced teachers used this move, with a frequency of 1 (100%). When seeking clarification, both groups equally engaged in this move (n = 2, 50%). It is worth noting that for novice teachers, only students asked the teacher to clarify something, whereas for experienced teachers, the teacher also asked a student to clarify something.

Neither novice nor experienced teachers used confirmation checks, extended learner turn, teacher interruptions, or extended teacher turn. In terms of turn completion, only experienced teachers completed a learner's contribution, with a frequency of 1 (100%). Both groups similarly used teacher echo (n = 2, 50%). However, experienced teachers also repeated a learner's contribution, with a frequency of 1 (25%). Neither group used teacher interruptions, extended teacher turn, turn completion, or display questions. In terms of form-focused feedback, novice teachers provided feedback on the words used at a frequency of 2 (40%), while experienced teachers provided feedback at a frequency of 3 (60%).

Overall, it can be observed that experienced teachers exhibited a higher variety of interactional moves compared with novice teachers. They utilized a wider range of moves, including extension, referential questions, and form-focused feedback. This suggests that experienced teachers have developed a richer repertoire of strategies to direct learners' contributions in the classroom.

4.2. During-intervention use of interactional resources and moves

The employment of interactional resources and moves by teachers were measured during and after the intervention course. Table 3 below shows the different resources used by the participants during the course.

Table 3.

During-intervention Observation of Resources

No	Resources	Novice Teachers (frequency)	Novice Teachers (percentage)	Experienced Teachers (frequency)	Experienced Teachers (percentage)
1	**Act Selection**	**39**	**43.8%**	**50**	**56.2%**
(a)	Argumentation	12	13.48%	12	13.48%
(b)	Discussion	6	6.74%	12	13.48%
(c)	Support	12	13.48%	14	15.73%
(d)	Connection	9	10.11%	12	13.48%
2	**Repair**	**25**	**44.44%**	**5**	**55.55%**
(a)	Self-Self Repair	11	22.22%	3	33.33%
(b)	Self-Other Repair	9	11.11%	1	11.11%
(c)	Other-Self Repair	4	11.11%	1	11.11%

(d)	Other-Other Repair	0	0%	0	0%
3	**Turn Taking**	**29**	**43.28%**	**38**	**56.71%**
(a)	Yielding the Floor	13	19.40%	15	22.38%
(b)	Keeping the Floor	4	5.97%	7	10.44%
(c)	Taking the Floor	3	4.47%	5	7.46%
(d)	Accepting the Floor	9	13.43%	11	16.41%
4	**Boundaries**	**39**	**47.56%**	**43**	**52.43%**
(a)	Opening	20	24.39%	23	28.04%
(b)	Closing	19	23.17%	20	24.39%

Concerning Act Selection, the novice teachers used argumentation (13.48%) and support (13.48%) most frequently, followed by connection (10.11%) and discussion (6.74%). Experienced teachers, on the other hand, used it at slightly different frequencies with support (15.73%) being the most common, followed by argumentation (13.48%), connection (13.48%), and discussion (13.48%). Regarding Repair, the novice teachers predominantly engaged in self-self repair (20%), followed by self-other repair (16.36%), other-self repair (9.09%), and no instances of other-other repair. For experienced teachers, the frequencies were as follows: self-self repair (23.36%), self-other repair (21.81%), other-self repair (9.09%), and no instances of other-other repair. Concerning Turn-Taking, the novice teachers used yielding the floor (19.40%) most frequently, albeit less frequently than experienced teachers (22.38%). The percentages for keeping the floor, taking the floor, and accepting the floor were relatively similar in the two groups. With regard to Boundaries, the results show that both novice and experienced teachers utilized opening and closing boundaries with high frequencies (47.56% and 52.43%, respectively). The percentage distribution for opening and closing boundaries was also similar in the two groups.

Overall, findings suggest that both novice and experienced EFL teachers in Iraq employed a variety of interactional resources during the course to create interactional space for learners. These resources included act selection, repair strategies, turn-taking practices, and setting boundaries through opening and closing actions. The differences in frequencies and percentages between the novice and experienced teachers indicate some variations in their deployment of these resources.

As seen in the during-intervention observation of resources, experienced teachers, compared with novice teachers, used more components of interactional resources in their interactions. For some components of interactional resources, such as Argumentation, Other-self Repair, and Other-Other Repair, the results were equal in novice and experienced teachers.

The effects of the intervention course on teachers' use of interactional moves also showed interesting results. Table 4 displays the participants' use of interactional moves during the course.

Table 4.

During-intervention Observation of Moves

No	Moves	Novice Teachers (frequency)	Novice Teachers (percentage)	Experienced Teachers (frequency)	Experienced Teachers (percentage)
1	**Scaffolding**	28	45.90%	33%	54.09%
(a)	Reformulation (rephrasing a learner's contribution)	8	13.11%	10	16.39%
(b)	Extension (extending a learner's contribution)	7	11.47%	9	14.755
(c)	Modelling (correcting a learner's contribution)	13	21.31%	14	22.95%
2	**Direct repair (Correcting an error quickly and directly)**	10	41.66%	14	58.33%
3	**Content feedback** (Giving feedback to the message rather than the words used)	5	41.66%	7	58.33%
4	**Extended wait- time** Allowing sufficient time (several seconds) for students to respond or formulate a response	11	40.74%	16	59.25%
5	**Referential questions** (Genuine questions to which the teacher does not know the answer)	0	0%	2	100%
6	**Seeking clarification**	9	45%	11	55%
(a)	Teacher asks a student to clarify something the student has said.	5	25%	6	30%
(b)	Student asks teacher to clarify something the teacher has said.	4	20%	-	25%
7	**Confirmation checks** (Making sure that the teacher has correctly understood the learner's contribution)	4	40%	6	60%
8	**8-Extended learner turn** (Learner turn of more than one clause)	2	28.57%	5	71.42%
9	Teacher echo	8	40%	12	60%
(a)	Teacher repeats a previous utterance.	6	30%	7	35%
(b)	Teacher repeats a learner's contribution	2	10%	5	25%
10	**Teacher interruptions** (Interrupting a learner's contribution)	2	33.33%	4	66.66%

11	**Extended teacher turn** (Teacher turn of more than one clause)	3	37.5%	5	62.5%
12	**Turn completion** (Completing a learner's contribution for the learner)	4	33.33%	8	66.66%
13	**Display questions** (Asking questions to which the teacher knows the answer)	9	45%	11	55%
14	**Form- focused feedback** (Giving feedback on the words used, not the message)	7	43.75%	9	56.25%

The results presented in Table 4 suggest that both novice and experienced EFL teachers in Iraq used various interactional moves during the course sessions to direct learners' contributions to classroom interaction.

The most frequently used moves by both groups of teachers were scaffolding (reformulation and modeling) and content feedback. Experienced teachers, however, used scaffolding moves more often than novice teachers (54.09% vs. 45.90%). Extended wait-time and extended learner turns were also commonly used by both groups, but experienced teachers use it more frequently than novice teachers (59.25% vs. 40.74%) (71.42% vs 28.57%), respectively. Teacher echoes and teacher interruptions were used by both groups, but experienced teachers' use exceeded that of novice teachers (60% vs. 40% for teacher echoes, and 66.66% vs. 33.33% for teacher interruptions). Display questions and form-focused feedback were employed by both groups, with experienced teachers employing display questions more than novice teachers (55% vs. 45%). Overall, the results suggest that experienced teachers used a wider range of interactional moves than novice teachers, indicating that they had more experience in directing learners' contributions to classroom interaction. However, novice teachers still used some moves in a wide range, suggesting that they may had some strengths in certain areas.

4.3. Post-intervention use of interactional resources and moves

The resources used by the participants after the intervention were also recorded and analyzed. Table 5 shows the types and frequencies of the resources employed by them after the course.

Table 5.

Post-intervention Observation of Resources

No	Resources	Novice Teachers (frequency)	Novice Teachers (percentage)	Experienced Teachers (frequency)	Experienced Teachers (percentage)
1	**Act Selection**	**15**	**46.87%**	**17**	**53.12%**
(a)	Argumentation	3	9.37%	4	12.5%
(b)	Discussion	2	6.25%	2	6.25%
(c)	Support	5	15.62%	6	18.75%
(d)	Connection	5	15.62%	5	15.62%
2	**Repair**	**11**	**45.83%**	**13**	**54.16%**
(a)	Self-Self Repair	4	16.66%	6	25%
(b)	Self-Other Repair	4	16.66%	4	16.66%
(c)	Other-Self Repair	2	8.33%	2	8.33%
(d)	Other-Other Repair	1	4.16%	1	4.16%
3	**Turn Taking**	**13**	**44.82%**	**16**	**55.17%**
(a)	Yielding the Floor	5	17.24%	5	17.24%
(b)	Keeping the Floor	2	6.89%	3	10.34%
(c)	Taking the Floor	1	3.44%	2	6.89%
(d)	Accepting the Floor	5	17.24%	6	20.68%
4	**Boundaries**	**26**	**44.06%**	**33**	**55.93%**
(a)	Opening	14	23.72%	16	27.11%
(b)	Closing	12	20.33%	17	28.81%

As Table 5 shows, regarding Act Selection, both novice and experienced EFL teachers in Iraq deployed diverse interactional resources to afford interactional space for learners. The most frequently used resources by both groups were Support and Connection, which amounted to 15.62% and 15.62% for novice teachers and 18.75%, 15.62 for experienced teachers. Other frequently used act selection resources included Argumentation and Discussion with comparable percentages in the two groups. Moreover, novice and experienced teachers utilized certain repair strategies after the course. The most frequently used repair strategy for both groups was Self-Self Repair, followed by Self-Other Repair and Other-Self Repair. However, the frequencies of repair strategies show some variation between novice and experienced teachers, with slightly higher percentages observed among experienced teachers (16.66%, 16.66%, 8.33%, and 4.16% for novice teachers, and 25%, 16.66%, 8.33% and 4.16% for experienced teachers respectively).

The results also indicate that both novice and experienced EFL teachers demonstrated an understanding of turn-taking practices in the classroom. They employed strategies such as Yielding the Floor, Keeping the Floor, Taking the Floor, and Accepting the Floor (17.24%, 6.89%, 3.44%, and 17.24% for novice teachers, and 17.24%, 10.34%, 6.89% and 20.68% for experienced teachers respectively) to ensure equal participation and interactional space for learners. The frequencies of these strategies were relatively similar between novice and experienced teachers, although there was a slight increase in percentages for Taking the Floor and Accepting the Floor among experienced teachers.

To establish boundaries within the interactional space, both groups of teachers utilized opening and closing strategies. Opening strategies were more frequently employed than closing strategies by both novice and experienced teachers. However, experienced teachers used opening and closing strategies (27.11% and 28.81%, respectively) slightly more frequently than novice teachers (23.72% and 20.33%, respectively).

As seen in the post-intervention observation of resources, experienced teachers, compared with novice teachers, used the components of interactional resources more frequently in their interactions. For some components of interactional resources such as Discussion, Connection, Self-other Repair, Other-self Repair, Other-other Repair, and Yielding the Floor, the results were almost equal across novice and experienced teachers. The results indicate that both novice and experienced EFL teachers in Iraq employed a variety of interactional resources to provide interactional space for learners. The specific frequencies and percentages varied between the two groups, but overall, they demonstrated an understanding of effective interactional practices to facilitate language learning.

The moves used in the classes by the participants after the workshop are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6.

Post-intervention Observation of Moves

No	Moves	Novice Teachers (frequency)	Novice Teachers (percentage)	Experienced Teachers (frequency)	Experienced Teachers (percentage)
1	**Scaffolding**	15	45.45%	18	54.54%
(a)	Reformulation	5	15.15%	6	18.18%
(b)	Extension	4	12.12%	4	12.12%
(c)	Modelling	6	18.18%	8	24.24%
2	**Direct repair**	8	28.57%	10	35.71%
3	**Content feedback**	5	41.66%	7	58.33%
4	**Extended wait- time**	8	50%	8	50%
5	**Referential questions**	1	33.33%	2	66.66%
6	**Seeking clarification**	7	46.66%	8	53.33%
(a)	Teacher asks a student to clarify something the student has said.	3	20%	3	20%
(b)	Student asks teacher to clarify something the teacher has said.	4	26.66%	5	33.33%
7	**Confirmation checks**	4	44.44%	5	55.55%
8	**8-Extended learner turn**	5	45.45%	6	54.54%
9	**Teacher echo**	9	40.90%	13	59.09%
(a)	Teacher repeats a previous utterance.	6	7.27%	8	36.36%
(b)	Teacher repeats a learner's contribution	3	3.63%	5	22.72%
10	**Teacher interruptions**	2	40%	3	60%
11	**Extended teacher turn**	2	50%	2	50%
12	**Turn completion**	2	40%	3	60%
13	**Display questions**	6	46.15%	7	53.84%
14	**Form- focused feedback**	4	40%	6	60%

The data presented in Table 6 shows that both novice and experienced EFL teachers used various interactional moves to direct learners' contributions to classroom interaction. The most commonly used moves by both groups were scaffolding (including reformulation, extension, and modeling) and content feedback. Experienced teachers used scaffolding moves more frequently than novice teachers, with a percentage of 54.54% compared with 45.45%. Similarly, experienced teachers used content feedback more frequently than novice teachers, with a percentage of 58.33% compared with 41.66%. Another interactional move used by both novice and experienced teachers was seeking clarification, with a percentage of 46.66% for novice teachers and 53% for experienced teachers. Experienced teachers also used confirmation checks more frequently than novice teachers, with a percentage of 55.55% compared with 44.44%. Experienced teachers used more extended learner turns, with a percentage of 54.54% vs. 45.45% for novice teachers. They also used more teacher interruptions (60% for experienced teachers and 40% for novice teachers). Both novice and experienced teachers used teacher echoes with percentages ranging from 40.90% to 59.09%. Finally, experienced teachers used more extended teacher turns, display questions, and form-focused feedback than novice teachers.

Overall, the data suggests that experienced teachers used a more balanced range of interactional moves than novice teachers, with a focus on content feedback, extended learner turns, and teacher interruptions. Novice teachers, on the other hand,

used more scaffolding moves and confirmation checks, but still less frequently than experienced teachers.

5. Discussion

The analysis of interactional resources used by novice and experienced Iraqi EFL teachers during and after the workshop revealed some differences and similarities between the two groups of teachers. Both groups employed a diverse range of interactional resources, including act selection, repair strategies, turn-taking practices, and boundary setting through opening and closing actions. This finding confirms the findings of earlier research (Afzali & Kianpoor, 2020; Can Daşkin, 2015; Saeedian, 2022; Supakorn, 2020) that EFL teachers employ a range of interactional resources such as elicitation (questions, prompts, and requests), initiation (topic openings and turn-allocations), scaffolding (modeling, simplifying and feedback), and control (setting expectations, summarizing discussions, and redirecting conversations) to manage classroom discourse, encourage student participation, and promote language learning.

The resources used by the teachers in this study were also partly reported by Galaczi and Taylor (2018) and Lam (2018), who worked on the construct of interactional competence. They found that EFL teachers' interactional competence is a multifaceted construct that includes the ability to initiate and sustain conversations, provide and receive feedback, and adapt to different learning styles. However, the findings in this study indicate that experienced teachers used more of these resources than novice teachers. Specifically, experienced teachers utilized other-self repair and closing boundaries resources more frequently than novice teachers. Novice teachers, on the other hand, selected argumentation and connection resources more frequently than experienced teachers. Both groups used self-self repair and self-other repair resources at similar frequencies.

The frequencies of taking the floor and accepting the floor were also similar between novice and experienced teachers; however, experienced teachers yielded the floor less frequently than novice teachers. Of course, Lam (2018) does not advocate too much teacher talk exceeding student talk in classroom discourse, which can hinder student participation and opportunities for language practice. He maintains that teacher talk is characterized by lengthy monologs, explanations, and directives, which often dominate the early stages of discussions, limiting students' opportunities to initiate topics and engage in meaningful interactions. According to Quasthoff (2022), the interactional involvement of students increases when they are permitted to participate in entire explanations provided by the teacher as a result of being granted the opportunity to explain themselves. This underscores the significance of teaching practices that aim to enhance overall student performance but challenge conventional approaches. Such practices entail demanding explanations that are coherent, plausible, and free of contradictions for all students. Providing support for student productions is also crucial and can be achieved through multimodal cues, requests for clarification or elaboration, and verbal models. By promptly addressing learners' queries and providing scaffolding, experienced teachers can concurrently save time for future classroom activities and expand learners' knowledge.

Overall, it can be noted that experienced teachers' interactions are more focused on maintaining a flow of communication and building upon learners' understanding. These findings suggest that both novice and experienced EFL teachers in Iraq have a good understanding of effective interactional practices to facilitate language learning, but further training and support may be necessary to help novice teachers develop their skills in certain areas. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of teachers' use of interactional resources in creating effective learning environments for EFL learners.

It can thus be argued that both novice and experienced EFL teachers in Iraq use a variety of interactional moves to direct learners' contribution to classroom interaction. However, there are some differences in their use by the two groups. Novice teachers prefer scaffolding moves, such as reformulation, extension, and modeling, while experienced teachers tend to use content feedback, extended learner turns, and teacher interruptions. Novice teachers also use confirmation checks more frequently than experienced teachers; however, they draw on seeking clarification less frequently. Overall, the data suggest that experienced teachers have a more balanced range of interactional moves than novice teachers. Ellis (2009) recognized that novice teachers often facilitate opportunities for learners to participate in discussions, but they predominantly monitor the interactions of one student in target. In contrast, experienced teachers encourage a larger group of students to contribute by soliciting their ideas and integrating them into the interaction. Derakhshan (2023) found differences between novice and experienced teachers in their practice of interactional moves. They identified the most notable disparities between the two groups in the content feedback and referential questions. Moreover, they found that while novice teachers may experience pauses and hesitation when confronted with unexpected events in the classroom, experienced teachers are better equipped to utilize these situations as opportunities for asking clarifying questions and providing additional information.

The results obtained in this study also indicate a significant improvement in the deployment of interactional resources by novice teachers as a result of teacher education intervention on interactional competence. Before the intervention, only a small percentage (5.27%) of novice teachers demonstrated the appropriate deployment of interactional resources during the pre-intervention observation phase. However, during the intervention phase, this percentage increased significantly to 40.99%. This improvement continued after the intervention, with 20.18% of novice teachers demonstrating the appropriate deployment of interactional resources during the post-intervention observation phase. Furthermore, the delayed post-intervention observation phase revealed that this improvement was sustained, with 33.54% of novice teachers demonstrating the appropriate deployment of interactional resources. These findings are consistent with previous research studies that have investigated the effects of teacher education interventions on interactional competence. For instance, a study by Urmeneta and Walsh (2017) found that a teacher education program focused on improving interactional competence significantly improved the teachers' use of interactional resources in classroom settings. Similarly, a study by Wong and Waring (2020) reported that a teacher education program focused on improving teachers' communication skills resulted in significant improvements in their use of interactional resources during

classroom instruction. However, it should be noted that experienced teachers demonstrated a relatively high level of skillfulness in the deployment of interactional resources throughout the observation phases, ranging from 6.86% during the pre-intervention phase to 29.81% during the delayed post-intervention phase. This suggests that while the teacher education intervention on interactional competence had a significant impact on novice teachers, experienced teachers may already possess a high level of skillfulness in this area.

The teacher education intervention also positively affected both novice and experienced teachers' use of interactional moves. Before the intervention, novice teachers used interactional moves less frequently than experienced teachers; however, during the intervention, both groups showed significant increases in their use of these moves. This finding is consistent with the results of a study by Can Daşkın (2015), who found that a teacher education program focused on interactional competence led to significant improvements in novice teachers' use of interactional moves.

However, it is noteworthy that experienced teachers' use of interactional moves decreased slightly after the intervention. This may be due to the fact that experienced teachers already had a high level of competence in this area prior to the intervention. A study by Nemati (2022) also found that experienced teachers' use of interactional moves remained stable over time, suggesting that they may have reached a plateau in their development. The finding that novice teachers' use of interactional moves continued to be high after the intervention suggests that the teacher education intervention had a continued impact on their practice.

6. Conclusion

The influence of teacher education programs on teachers' classroom practices has generated considerable research attention. Teachers should be encouraged to develop their interactional competence through training and practice, focusing on their ability to initiate and maintain conversations, provide constructive feedback, and adapt to the needs of individual learners. They can implement them in their classes by increasing the use of recommended strategies such as providing positive feedback, while reducing the use of some less effective strategies (Harmer, 2007), and adopt various interactional strategies to effectively afford interactional space for learners (Tsui, 2001). By implementing these strategies, EFL teachers can effectively create a supportive and interactive learning environment that fosters the development of CIC among their students (Sundari, 2017).

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that teacher education programs focused on interactional competence can have a positive impact on both novice and experienced teachers' use of interactional resources and moves, although the effects may be more pronounced for novice teachers. The findings may imply that teacher education programs should be redesigned to include sustained, practical training on specific interactional strategies, providing support to both novice and experienced teachers. Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of such programs and to identify strategies for sustaining improvements over time. Furthermore, future research could explore how cultural and linguistic backgrounds may influence the teachers' deployment of interactional resources and moves and how these factors can be taken into account in teacher education programs focused on improving interactional competence.

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