

Gendered Participation in the Global South: Voice, Power, and Classroom Interaction in Bangladeshi Tertiary EFL Education

Mehbuba Sharmin

Department of English, Asian University of Bangladesh, Ashulia, Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Corresponding author; Email: sharminmehbuba983@gmail.com*



Received: 19 June 2025

Accepted: 06 November 2025

Revision: 25 October 2025

Published: 15 November 2025. **Vol-6, Issue-4**

Cite as: Sharmin, M. (2025). Gendered Participation in the Global South: Voice, Power, and Classroom Interaction in Bangladeshi Tertiary EFL Education. *ICRRD Journal*, 6(4), 189-208.

Abstract: This study examines the gendered dynamics of classroom participation in tertiary-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in Bangladesh, where deeply embedded socio-cultural norms and institutional hierarchies shape learners' voice, visibility, and access to equitable discourse practices. Although gender disparities in education have been widely documented, few studies in the Bangladeshi context have critically explored how gender mediates students' opportunities to speak, be heard, and participate meaningfully in classroom interactions. To address this gap, the study adopts a qualitative design involving classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with 16 undergraduate students (eight male, eight female) and four EFL teachers across two public universities in Dhaka. Drawing on Reflexive Thematic Analysis, the findings reveal persistent asymmetries in classroom discourse, where male voices frequently dominate while female contributions are marginalised, constrained, or silenced. These disparities stem not only from students' internalised gender ideologies but are also reproduced through pedagogical practices and teacher mediation. By foregrounding how gendered subjectivities are discursively constructed and negotiated in EFL classrooms, this study contributes critical insights to the development of gender-responsive pedagogies that foster inclusive, equitable, and empowering learning environments within postcolonial higher education contexts.

Keywords: Gendered participation, voice and visibility, EFL classrooms, critical pedagogy, Bangladesh.

1. Introduction

In recent years, growing scholarly attention has been directed toward the intersection of gender, interaction, and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. Gender, as both a social and linguistic construct, has long been recognised as a critical variable shaping learners' experiences and interactional dynamics (Coates, 2015; Holmes, 2008; Milon, 2016; Al Nahar et al., 2024). However, gendered participation in classroom discourse is not merely a reflection of individual differences but is deeply embedded in broader socio-cultural hierarchies and institutional power relations (Norton, 2013; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Although Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is widely implemented in Bangladeshi tertiary institutions to promote learner-centred participation, gendered asymmetries continue to structure classroom communication, often undermining the egalitarian

aspirations of communicative pedagogy. This tension raises critical questions about how gender and power are performed, negotiated, and contested within EFL classrooms, and why such disparities persist despite decades of reform.

The teaching and learning of English in Bangladesh are shaped by the nation's colonial legacy, socio-economic transformations, and globalisation-driven reforms. English has long held a privileged status as the language of social mobility, professional advancement, and academic prestige (Alam et al., 2018, 2021, 2025; Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014). The introduction of CLT in the 1990s sought to shift pedagogy from rote grammar instruction to interactive, communicative practice (Alam et al., 2024; Hasan et al., 2019). Yet research shows that its implementation in public universities remains uneven, as teacher-centred approaches and hierarchical structures still dominate classroom discourse (Alam et al., 2022a; Milon et al., 2018a, 2018b). Within this context, gender becomes a salient factor, since societal expectations of "appropriate" male and female behaviour frequently determine participation patterns and classroom engagement.

Although gender parity in university enrolment has improved in recent years (Hossain & Islam, 2018; UNESCO, 2022), patriarchal norms and socio-cultural expectations continue to constrain interaction. Female students are often expected to remain silent, deferential, and non-confrontational, while male students are encouraged to be assertive, vocal, and dominant (Ara, 2019). Studies across South Asia confirm that such behaviours are socially acquired rather than biologically determined, reproduced through lifelong processes of socialisation (Lakoff, 2004; Yule, 2006; Coates, 1993; Milon & Ali, 2023). These dynamics become visible in EFL classrooms, where female students may hesitate to speak for fear of judgement, while male students frequently control group discussions and gain greater opportunities to practise language skills (Mahmud, 2018; Głowska, 2014). Such patterns reinforce gender stereotypes and limit women's communicative agency, ultimately producing inequitable learning spaces.

Despite global interest in the relationship between gender and language learning (Sunderland, 2004; Norton & De Costa, 2018), there remains a notable gap in Bangladeshi tertiary research (Mohd Pauzi & Shahadat Hossen, 2025). Most local studies have focused on primary or secondary schooling (Hossain & Kabeer, 2004; Milon et al., 2023) or macro-level language policy (Alam et al., 2025), with limited attention to micro-interactional classroom dynamics at the university level. Moreover, many rely on quantitative counts of speech turns or participation frequency, overlooking qualitative aspects such as silence, turn-taking, interruptions, gesture, gaze, and teacher feedback—key indicators of voice and visibility (Walsh, 2011; Waring, 2008). This research gap underscores the need for a nuanced exploration of how gendered power relations shape not only who speaks but how interactional opportunities are constructed, negotiated, and denied within EFL classrooms.

The central argument of this article is that gendered participation extends beyond unequal speaking time and is embedded in discursive practices that reproduce, resist, or subvert social hierarchies. Drawing on feminist discourse analysis and sociocultural theory, this study investigates how student voices are constructed and contested within gendered classroom ecologies through processes of inclusion, exclusion, and resistance (Tannen, 1994; Gee, 2014). It interrogates interactional moments—such as who gains the floor, how turns are allocated, and how silence is interpreted—as

sites where gendered identities and power relations are enacted and challenged. Recognising these dynamics is crucial, as they affect not only language learning outcomes but also students' confidence, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging.

Accordingly, this study addresses three interrelated research questions:

1. How do gendered dynamics influence students' participation and visibility in tertiary-level EFL classrooms in Bangladesh?
2. What discursive strategies do male and female students employ to negotiate their voice and presence during interaction?
3. How do teachers' pedagogical practices, shaped by their own gendered assumptions, affect the distribution of interactional opportunities?

Together, these questions seek to reveal both the structural and interactional barriers to equitable participation and the agency of students navigating these constraints.

Methodologically, this qualitative research integrates classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with teachers and students from selected public universities. This multi-method approach captures the lived experiences of participants and the fine-grained interactional details often lost in quantitative accounts. By situating classroom practices within broader socio-cultural and institutional contexts, the study contributes to ongoing decolonial efforts to make EFL pedagogy more inclusive, reflexive, and gender-sensitive (Canagarajah, 2013; Pennycook, 2021).

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform teaching practices, curriculum design, and policy development that promote equity and inclusion. By highlighting the discursive construction of gender in classroom interaction, it offers evidence-based insights for fostering balanced participation and empowering all learners. Ultimately, it argues that equitable classroom interaction is not merely pedagogical but political—a necessary step toward challenging systemic inequalities and advancing transformative learning in postcolonial educational contexts.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The intersection of gender and language learning has long been central to sociolinguistic and applied linguistic inquiry. Foundational works, including Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place* (1973, 2004), Coates (1993, 2015), and Tannen (1994), established that gendered communication styles are socially constructed rather than biologically determined (Hossen & Pauzi, 2025). These authors argue that linguistic patterns are learned and reinforced through socialisation, positioning gender as a cultural and ideological construct. Language thus functions as both a mirror and mechanism of power, sustaining unequal relationships between men and women. Holmes (2008) extends this argument, illustrating how institutional communication, including classroom discourse, reflects societal expectations of authority, politeness, and deference. Collectively, these early frameworks positioned gender as a vital lens for understanding how voice, visibility, and participation operate in educational contexts.

In EFL classrooms, gender has been shown to mediate access to interactional space, feedback, and learning opportunities. Sunderland (2004) identifies three interconnected domains where gendered

practices emerge: language use, pedagogical materials, and interactional processes. Research consistently finds that male students dominate discussion and receive more teacher attention, whereas female students assume facilitative or supportive roles (Holmes, 2008; Jahan, 2025; Sunderland, 2004). Tannen's (1990) distinction between *report talk*—speech associated with authority and information—and *rapport talk*—speech oriented toward empathy and connection—helps explain how communicative norms align with gendered expectations. Although such binaries are debated, they reveal that participation and power are never linguistically neutral but discursively produced through social hierarchies and pedagogical ideologies.

2.1 Gendered Participation in South Asian EFL Classrooms

In South Asia, the politics of participation are inseparable from broader social hierarchies, religious values, and postcolonial legacies of education. While communicative approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) aim to foster inclusivity, the realities of classroom discourse often reproduce entrenched gender norms (Rashed et al., 2025). Empirical studies across Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan show that male dominance and female reticence stem from deeply internalised cultural scripts about respectability, authority, and moral conduct. Ara (2019) found that Bangladeshi female students were reluctant to volunteer responses due to fear of ridicule and expectations of modesty, while Tanen (1994) observed that male students regularly interrupted female peers and controlled group discussions. Mahmud (2018) noted that female learners preferred same-gender collaboration to avoid embarrassment, whereas male learners naturally assumed leadership roles. These findings underscore that participation is not simply a matter of language proficiency but a gendered performance mediated by social approval and constraint.

Comparable patterns appear elsewhere in South Asia. Rind (2015) reported that Pakistani female students associated English-speaking confidence with masculinity, while in India, Kachru (1986) and Canagarajah (1999) showed that teachers tended to valorise male assertiveness as academic strength. Yet most of these studies rely on quantitative measures—counting turns or utterances—while neglecting the interpretive meaning of silence, gesture, and spatial positioning (Walsh, 2011; Waring, 2008). As Rasheed (2017) argues, silence in Bangladeshi classrooms can signal respect or strategic withdrawal rather than disengagement. Such findings invite a discursive re-interpretation: silence, interruption, and turn-taking are not simply interactional behaviours but reflections of symbolic power. Understanding these dynamics requires critical frameworks that connect the micro-level of classroom discourse with the macro-level of social ideology.

2.2 Gender and Textbook Representation

Beyond interaction, gendered ideologies are embedded in the very materials that mediate English learning. Textbooks and visual resources do not merely teach linguistic forms—they construct social realities. Sunderland (2000) and Brodin (2017) demonstrate that EFL materials often reproduce traditional gender hierarchies, depicting men as professionals and decision-makers while women appear in domestic or secondary roles. In Bangladesh, Ara (2019) and Chowdhury and Kabir (2014) reveal that such depictions remain widespread, subtly legitimising male authority and female subservience. These patterns have consequences for learners' identity formation: female students

rarely encounter empowered models of English-using women, while male students repeatedly see themselves reflected as confident speakers.

Crucially, the ideological effects of these materials operate through what Fairclough (1992) calls “common-sense discourse”—the uncritical naturalisation of inequality. The silencing of women’s experiences and the absence of female voices in academic or leadership contexts signal that authority and intellect are masculine domains. Globally, similar findings emerge. Lee and Collins (2009) identified gender bias in East Asian ESL textbooks, while Apple (2019) and Darder (2012) remind us that curricula are never ideologically neutral but serve dominant cultural interests. Within postcolonial education systems like Bangladesh’s, these materials perpetuate dual dependencies: gendered subordination and linguistic subjugation to the Global North. Thus, textbook analysis must extend beyond representation toward ideological critique—uncovering how pedagogical discourse shapes learners’ sense of legitimacy, voice, and power.

2.3 Global and Comparative Perspectives

At the global level, persistent asymmetries in classroom discourse illustrate that gendered participation is a systemic phenomenon rather than a regional anomaly. Sadker and Zittleman (2009) found that in U.S. classrooms, teachers unknowingly provided more feedback and praise to male students, reinforcing subtle hierarchies of confidence and visibility. Tsui (2008) reported that in East Asian contexts, cultural norms linking masculinity with assertiveness privileged male voices, while female hesitancy was interpreted as linguistic deficiency. Conversely, Western institutions that implemented gender-equity training demonstrated reduced participation gaps (Sunderland, 2004; Holmes, 2008). Yet, as Pennycook (2021) and Canagarajah (1999) argue, these reforms often rest on Western liberal feminist assumptions that fail to account for the intersection of gender, class, and colonial history in the Global South.

The comparative literature therefore highlights that gendered participation cannot be understood through a universal model of equality. Rather, it emerges from specific political economies of language learning where English operates as both a gateway to mobility and a marker of elite identity. In Bangladesh, this dual role amplifies inequities: English competence carries symbolic prestige, while cultural expectations of female modesty constrain opportunities to perform that competence publicly. Thus, the EFL classroom becomes a microcosm of postcolonial society—a space where the global politics of English intersect with local gender ideologies. Recognising these intersections underscores the need for decolonial and context-sensitive frameworks that theorise gender not as a variable but as a lived discourse of power, identity, and access.

2.4 Theoretical Framework: Feminist Discourse Analysis and Sociocultural Theory

Building on the preceding discussion, this study draws on two complementary theoretical frameworks—Feminist Discourse Analysis (FDA) and Sociocultural Theory (SCT)—to examine how gendered power relations shape classroom interaction and learners’ access to communicative opportunities. FDA, as articulated by Lazar (2005) and grounded in Fairclough’s (1992) conception of discourse as social practice, provides critical tools for uncovering how language constructs, legitimises, and occasionally challenges gendered hierarchies. It enables the study to reveal how

ostensibly neutral classroom practices—such as turn-taking, teacher questioning, or feedback—are infused with ideological meanings that privilege masculine assertiveness while constraining feminine expressions of authority. Importantly, FDA also recognises moments of resistance, where students or teachers subvert these norms through alternative discursive performances.

SCT, rooted in Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural psychology and extended by Lantolf and Thorne (2006), complements FDA by framing language learning as a socially mediated and culturally situated process. Learning is co-constructed through interaction; thus, access to participation equates to access to learning itself. When gendered expectations shape who participates and how, they directly affect learners' cognitive engagement and linguistic development. Integrating FDA and SCT therefore enables a dual-level analysis: FDA exposes how discourse enacts ideology and power, while SCT explains how these same discourses mediate development and identity formation.

In the Bangladeshi tertiary context—where English proficiency functions as symbolic capital tied to employability and social mobility (Bourdieu, 1991; Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014)—this synthesis becomes particularly salient. The EFL classroom operates not merely as a pedagogical site but as a microcosm of broader ideological struggles, where gendered subjectivities are performed, negotiated, and transformed. Through these theoretical lenses, this study conceptualises participation not as a neutral linguistic act but as a socially embedded practice that both reflects and reshapes relations of power, privilege, and aspiration.

2.5 Research Gaps and Contribution of the Present Study

Despite the rich global scholarship on gendered classroom discourse, research in Bangladesh remains limited in scope, methodology, and theoretical engagement. Most local studies have concentrated on primary or secondary education (Hossain & Kabeer, 2004; Alam et al., 2022a) or focused on macro-level policy analysis without examining the lived realities of classroom interaction. Quantitative approaches dominate this body of work, reducing participation to measurable frequency rather than interpretive meaning (Walsh, 2011). Few studies have applied feminist or sociocultural frameworks to uncover how gender, ideology, and pedagogy intersect within tertiary English education—where the stakes of linguistic capital are highest.

Addressing these gaps, the present study adopts a critical, discourse-oriented perspective that foregrounds how gendered voice and visibility are co-constructed in real classroom contexts. Drawing on classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, it captures the complex negotiations through which students claim or withhold participation, and the ways teachers' practices either reinforce or challenge gendered asymmetries. The combined use of FDA and SCT allows the analysis to traverse both the micro-level (interactional practices such as silence, interruption, and gesture) and the macro-level (institutional ideologies and cultural expectations) dimensions of discourse. By situating these findings within the broader postcolonial condition of Bangladeshi higher education, this study contributes to global debates on gender and language pedagogy from a Global South perspective—challenging Eurocentric assumptions and advancing more inclusive, transformative understandings of communicative participation.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretivist design to investigate how gendered dynamics shape voice, visibility, and participation in tertiary-level EFL classrooms in Bangladesh. A qualitative orientation enables a rich, contextualised understanding of classroom life as socially produced rather than mechanically measured (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Quantitative indicators—such as counting turns or response frequency—risk reducing participation to surface metrics, whereas an interpretivist lens foregrounds meaning-making, agency, and interactional negotiation. Within this paradigm, knowledge is co-constructed through participants' lived experiences and the researcher's interpretive engagement (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Milon, 2020; Milon et al., 2017).

Accordingly, the design integrates classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to produce complementary layers of data. Observations capture naturally occurring communicative behaviours—silence, interruptions, gesture, and gaze—while interviews elicit participants' reflections on how they experience and interpret those behaviours. Triangulating these methods allows a holistic portrayal of the discursive and affective processes through which gendered participation unfolds. The design thus aligns with the study's theoretical grounding in feminist discourse analysis and sociocultural theory: it treats classrooms as dialogic spaces where meaning, identity, and power are co-constructed rather than merely observed.

3.2 Participants and Selection Criteria

The research was conducted in two public universities in Dhaka, selected through purposive–convenience sampling. Public institutions were ideal because they draw students from diverse socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds, representing a condensed portrait of national educational stratification. A total of 20 participants took part—16 undergraduate students (eight male, eight female) and four EFL teachers (two male, two female). Student participants, aged 18–24, were enrolled in second- or third-year language courses and had attended at least 70 per cent of classes, ensuring familiarity with everyday interactional patterns.

Sampling followed a maximum-variation logic within a purposive frame (Alam et al., 2024; Sharmin, 2023; Patton, 2015), seeking a balanced representation of gender while accommodating disciplinary and regional diversity. Teacher participants were chosen through homogeneous purposive sampling—each had over three years' tertiary teaching experience and was familiar with CLT-based instruction. Including both male and female teachers enabled examination of how educators' own gendered subjectivities and pedagogical beliefs mediate participation. This participant composition thus provides an analytic window into multiple layers of gendered discourse—student practice, teacher mediation, and institutional culture.

3.3 Data Collection

Data generation occurred over four weeks and comprised six classroom observations (three per university) and twenty interviews (sixteen students, four teachers). Each session lasted 60–90 minutes and spanned lectures, pair work, and group discussion. Using an observation protocol

adapted from Walsh (2011), field notes documented turn-allocation, interruption, silence, body language, and the gender distribution of teacher attention. With consent, sessions were audio-recorded to preserve authentic interactional flow, while the researcher maintained low visibility to minimise observer effect.

Subsequently, semi-structured interviews provided interpretive depth. Student interviews explored experiences of inclusion, exclusion, and self-presentation; teacher interviews examined awareness of gendered participation and classroom management strategies. Conducted in English or Bangla, interviews averaged 40 minutes and were transcribed verbatim. Semi-structured interviewing balanced openness with direction (Milon et al., 2024; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015; Yasmin et al., 2024), allowing unanticipated themes—such as emotional comfort, spatial positioning, or humour—to emerge. Together, observation and interview data created a dialogic corpus where emic perspectives and observable practices could be analytically juxtaposed.

3.4 Data Analysis

Analysis followed Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) (Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2021), chosen for its capacity to capture both semantic and latent dimensions of meaning. RTA conceptualises coding as an interpretive, iterative process rather than mechanical categorisation. The analysis unfolded in six phases: familiarisation, coding, theme development, theme review, theme refinement, and analytic writing. Codes were generated inductively from the data yet interpreted deductively through the theoretical lenses of FDA and SCT. NVivo 12 supported systematic data management and traceability of decisions.

Throughout analysis, reflexivity remained central. The researcher maintained an analytic memo journal to record evolving interpretations and positional reflections—acknowledging how personal experience as a Bangladeshi EFL educator might influence data reading. Triangulation between observational evidence and participant narratives enabled cross-validation: for example, recurrent interruptions identified in audio transcripts were compared with students' accounts of conversational discomfort. The resulting themes thus represent negotiated interpretations grounded in both empirical observation and theoretical reasoning.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University Research Ethics Committee. Participants received detailed information sheets and provided written consent. Pseudonyms were used to maintain anonymity (Alam et al., 2022a, 2022b) and all data were securely stored on encrypted devices. Observations were conducted non-intrusively to preserve the authenticity of interaction. Given the sensitivity of discussing gender and power, interviews were held in private, supportive environments. Participants were reminded of their right to withdraw at any stage without consequence.

Ethical reflexivity extended beyond compliance to relational ethics—the researcher continually evaluated how presence, questioning style, and insider-outsider positioning affected participant comfort and disclosure. In line with feminist research ethics (Hesse-Biber, 2014), the study

prioritised empathy, reciprocity, and respect for participants' narratives, treating them not as subjects of inquiry but as co-interpreters of experience.

3.6 Trustworthiness and Rigour

Ensuring methodological trustworthiness was central to the integrity of this qualitative inquiry. Following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) framework, the study addressed credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability through a range of reflexive and systematic strategies. Credibility was achieved through prolonged engagement in the field, triangulation of classroom observations and interviews, and iterative member-checking, where participants reviewed interpretive summaries of emerging findings to ensure alignment with their lived experiences. These procedures enhanced the authenticity of the data and minimised the risk of misrepresentation. Dependability was strengthened through the maintenance of an extensive audit trail that documented each stage of data collection and analysis, including observation protocols, coding memos, and reflexive journals. This documentation provided a transparent account of the researcher's interpretive decisions and analytic shifts over time.

Equally crucial was the establishment of confirmability, which was ensured through continuous reflexive engagement. The researcher maintained detailed reflexive notes that interrogated personal assumptions, insider biases, and positional dynamics—particularly given their dual role as both an EFL practitioner and academic researcher within the same cultural context. This reflexive stance enabled critical self-awareness, preventing the imposition of preconceived notions on participants' narratives and interactional practices. Finally, transferability was facilitated through thick, contextualised descriptions of research settings, participants' demographics, and observed classroom interactions. By offering a richly detailed account of the sociocultural and institutional environment, the study allows readers to assess the extent to which findings may resonate with or be applied to other EFL contexts.

Overall, methodological rigour in this study derives from the coherence between its interpretivist epistemology, theoretical alignment, and analytical procedures. The integration of feminist discourse analysis and sociocultural theory required a reflexive mode of inquiry that recognises knowledge as co-constructed rather than discovered. The study's commitment to transparency, reflexivity, and contextual sensitivity ensures that its findings are not only trustworthy but also theoretically and ethically grounded within the broader paradigm of critical qualitative research.

4. Findings

Through Reflexive Thematic Analysis, three interrelated themes emerged from classroom observations and interviews: (1) Negotiating Silence and Visibility, (2) Competing for Voice: Gendered Turn-Taking and Interactional Dominance, and (3) Teacher Mediation of Gender Roles and Participation. A cross-cutting dimension — the intersection of gender, language anxiety, and agency — was evident across these themes. Together, they reveal how gendered power relations shape students' access to voice and visibility within the multilingual, postcolonial ecology of tertiary-level EFL classrooms in Bangladesh.

4.1 Negotiating Silence and Visibility

Silence surfaced as one of the most complex and revealing dimensions of gendered participation. Observations indicated that female students' silence was not simply a lack of engagement but a negotiated response to the symbolic weight of speaking in male-dominated classrooms. Silence often functioned as both a shield against ridicule and a space of strategic withdrawal. As one participant observed, *"I sometimes know the answer, but I hesitate because if I make a mistake, the boys might laugh. It feels safer to stay quiet unless I am very confident"* (Runa, Interview, 12 March 2025). Her hesitation reflects the internalisation of patriarchal expectations that equate female speech with risk and error, while male assertiveness is perceived as natural.

Yet silence was not invariably passive. Several female students described remaining quiet as a deliberate means of control — a way to manage interruptions and claim the right moment to contribute. Farzana explained that she preferred to *"wait and listen first"* so she could *"speak when others will listen"* (Farzana, Interview, 15 March 2025). Such comments reveal how silence can become a resource for agency, allowing female students to resist interactional norms that privilege quick, competitive talk. By contrast, male students interpreted silence as weakness or incompetence. Asif commented that *"boys are expected to take the lead; being quiet looks like you don't know anything"* (Asif, Interview, 14 March 2025). These contrasting meanings assigned to silence demonstrate how gendered ideologies structure the moral value of speech, positioning talk as masculine capital and quietness as feminine restraint.

4.2 Competing for Voice: Gendered Turn-Taking and Interactional Dominance

Turn-taking patterns reflected similar asymmetries. In most observed classes, male students dominated floor access, frequently interrupting or overlapping their peers, particularly during group discussions. These interventions were rarely sanctioned by teachers, suggesting that dominance had become normalised as enthusiasm. During one observed lesson on social media, a female student's explanation of cyberbullying was cut short by a male peer who shifted the topic toward online business; the teacher allowed the digression to continue. When reflecting on such incidents, female participants described feelings of invisibility: *"Sometimes we get cut off. If the teacher doesn't stop it, the boys keep talking. It feels like we are just there to listen"* (Sadia, Interview, 16 March 2025).

Male participants, however, rationalised their interruptions as conversational style. *"We don't mean to dominate,"* Rakib noted, *"but in discussion you have to be fast. Maybe the girls are too polite to jump in"* (Rakib, Interview, 16 March 2025). His framing of interruption as efficiency reveals how masculine communicative norms are legitimised as productive engagement, while female politeness is re-coded as passivity. Observations also showed that female students often sought non-verbal permission to speak — glancing at the teacher or waiting for silence — while male students entered talk uninvited. Shaila described this difference poignantly: *"We girls think before speaking — if it's the right time or the right thing to say — but boys don't think like that. They just speak whenever they want"* (Shaila, Interview, 18 March 2025). Such accounts demonstrate how gendered

socialisation produces distinct temporalities of talk: the immediacy of masculine assertion versus the deliberation of feminine caution.

4.3 Teacher Mediation of Gender Roles and Participation

Teachers' mediation emerged as a critical factor shaping the classroom gender order. Observation data indicated that the distribution of attention, feedback, and floor time often mirrored broader patriarchal hierarchies. In four of six observed classes, male students were called on first or received longer follow-up turns, reinforcing their visibility as the "active" participants. When interviewed, one male teacher explained, *"I treat everyone equally, but the boys raise their hands faster; it's natural to call on them"* (Mr Rahman, Interview, 20 March 2025). His comment illustrates how the discourse of equality can obscure structural inequity, overlooking how confidence itself is socially gendered.

By contrast, one female teacher described intentional efforts to redress imbalance: *"I notice boys dominate discussions, so I try to call on girls first. Still, some remain silent even when encouraged; they seem to need extra reassurance"* (Ms Nahar, Interview, 19 March 2025). Her awareness reflects an emergent reflexivity that some educators exercise in negotiating the tension between cultural norms of modesty and pedagogical equity. Female students consistently reported that micro-gestures — such as a teacher's smile, nod, or verbal affirmation — affected their willingness to participate. As Farhana expressed, *"When the teacher smiles or says 'good point,' I feel confident. But if he looks only at the boys, I feel invisible"* (Farhana, Interview, 17 March 2025).

Observation notes confirmed that gendered hierarchies often reappeared during group work, where male students assumed leadership and female students took notes or agreed silently. However, when teachers explicitly appointed female leaders or rotated reporting roles, participation became more balanced. This demonstrates that pedagogical design can either reproduce or disrupt gendered interactional norms, depending on the teacher's awareness and intervention.

4.4 Intersections of Gender, Language Anxiety, and Agency

A cross-cutting theme linking all three patterns was language anxiety, which interacted with gender to influence participation. Female students frequently described apprehension about pronunciation or grammar errors, associating mistakes with personal inadequacy. Shaila explained, *"Sometimes I know the answer but I feel nervous; my English is not as good as some of the boys, and they speak so fast and confidently"* (Shaila, Interview, 18 March 2025). In contrast, male participants tended to frame errors as opportunities for improvement, suggesting a greater tolerance for linguistic risk. This asymmetry reflects how confidence in English proficiency becomes gendered, with linguistic authority disproportionately associated with men.

Yet, despite these anxieties, many female students displayed subtle forms of agency. Observation notes recorded instances of women using humour, supportive prompts, or collaborative alignment with peers to re-enter conversations after being interrupted. Some students strategically sought allies — often other women — to validate their contributions before speaking. These micro-acts of negotiation, though easily overlooked, represent critical moments of resistance and re-positioning within the discursive field of the classroom.

4.5 Summary of Findings

The findings reveal that gendered participation in Bangladeshi tertiary EFL classrooms is shaped by the interplay of cultural expectations, classroom interactional norms, and teacher mediation. Female students navigate silence as both a protective and strategic resource, while male students dominate verbal space through confident, often competitive talk. Teachers' practices — whether consciously equitable or unconsciously biased — mediate these dynamics, determining whose voice becomes audible and whose remains peripheral.

Overall, the classroom emerges as a microcosm of broader social hierarchies, where assertive speech is valorised and reflective silence is misinterpreted as lack of competence. Yet, within these asymmetries lie traces of transformation: moments when teachers' inclusive scaffolding and students' small acts of agency destabilise the dominant order. These findings highlight that participation is not merely about speaking but about how visibility, legitimacy, and power are distributed and contested in the everyday discourse of English language classrooms.

5. Discussion

The findings illuminate the complex interplay of gender, power, and pedagogy in Bangladeshi tertiary-level EFL classrooms, revealing that classroom discourse is not merely a communicative practice but a space where broader social hierarchies are reproduced, resisted, and reimaged. Rather than treating participation as a neutral indicator of engagement, the study positions it as a discursive act mediated by sociocultural norms and institutional ideologies. Through the combined lenses of Feminist Discourse Analysis (FDA) and Sociocultural Theory (SCT), these dynamics can be understood as part of the larger negotiation of identity and agency within the gendered order of education.

Female students' strategic negotiation of silence challenges the long-standing association between speech and empowerment. While traditional pedagogies often valorise verbal participation as evidence of confidence and competence, the nuanced uses of silence observed here complicate such binaries. Silence, as Tannen (1994) and Jaworski (2006) remind us, can function as an expressive and relational act rather than a void. Within patriarchal contexts, silence may operate as both compliance and subversion—an embodied practice through which women regulate exposure to ridicule while preserving self-respect and agency. In Bangladesh's conservative academic culture, where modesty and deference are culturally valorised feminine virtues (Ara, 2019; Mahmud, 2018), female students' selective speech can be interpreted as a critical adaptation rather than deficiency. This reconceptualisation demands pedagogical sensitivity: teachers must read silence not simply as disengagement but as a situated discourse strategy conditioned by social expectations and power asymmetries.

At the same time, the dominance of male students in turn-taking sequences underscores how communicative norms themselves are gendered performances. As Butler (1990) argues, gender is enacted through repeated social acts that acquire legitimacy through recognition. In EFL classrooms,

the assertive conversational style typically exhibited by male students is rewarded within the framework of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which equates frequent verbal contribution with communicative competence. Such pedagogical paradigms inadvertently privilege masculinised forms of talk—fast, competitive, and performative—while devaluing reflective, collaborative, or cautious speech often associated with femininity (Holmes, 2008; Coates, 2015). This finding suggests that CLT, while ostensibly egalitarian, remains entangled in Western liberal ideals of individualism and assertiveness that do not necessarily align with the communicative ethos of collectivist or gender-stratified societies (Canagarajah, 2013; Pennycook, 2021).

The asymmetrical treatment of interruptions provides further evidence of how discourse legitimises power. When male students interrupt, their behaviour is frequently reinterpreted by teachers as enthusiasm or leadership; when female students do the same, it risks being perceived as rudeness or overstepping gender norms. This asymmetry resonates with Sunderland's (2004) claim that the micro-politics of talk reproduce institutional hierarchies through evaluative feedback and turn-allocation practices. Teachers' apparently neutral decisions—such as whom to call on first or how to respond to interruptions—thus function as gatekeeping acts that determine whose voice becomes audible in the pedagogical space. The fact that some teachers perceived their practice as “equal treatment” reflects what Fairclough (1992) calls the naturalisation of inequality: the absorption of dominance into the common sense of institutional routines.

Viewed through the lens of SCT, these patterns also reveal that learning opportunities are not equally distributed. If, as Vygotsky (1978) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006) assert, language development depends on participation within social interaction, then the marginalisation of certain voices constitutes an epistemic injustice. Female learners' limited access to dialogic engagement constrains their linguistic and cognitive scaffolding opportunities, reinforcing both linguistic and social inequities. From this perspective, inequitable classroom talk is not only a gender issue but a pedagogical failure that undermines the fundamental principles of sociocultural learning. The challenge, then, lies in creating “zones of equitable participation” (Norton & De Costa, 2018; Imam et al., 2025) where learners' engagement is not contingent upon conformity to gendered communicative norms.

Teachers emerge in this analysis as both mediators and potential disruptors of gendered discourse. Their classroom practices—ranging from who they acknowledge to how they frame feedback—play a decisive role in either sustaining or subverting patriarchal interactional orders. The data show that even well-intentioned teachers often enact implicit biases by rewarding assertiveness or overlooking the subtler contributions of quieter students. As Sadker and Zittleman (2009) observed in similar contexts, teacher attention is a political resource that can either amplify or silence learner agency. Yet, moments of pedagogical reflexivity—when teachers deliberately encouraged female leadership or monitored turn-taking—demonstrated the transformative potential of critical awareness. These instances affirm the value of what Norton (2013) calls “investment pedagogy,” where teachers actively construct conditions for equitable participation rather than assuming neutrality.

Power in these classrooms also manifested spatially and symbolically. Male students' tendency to occupy central seats and command floor time reflects what Lefebvre (1991) terms the “production of space,” wherein spatial arrangements reproduce social hierarchies. Visibility—both physical and

discursive—becomes a measure of legitimacy, determining whose knowledge counts as public and whose remains peripheral. The gendered occupation of space, therefore, is not incidental but constitutive of how knowledge and authority are circulated within the classroom. Nevertheless, as observed, moments of female assertion—such as taking leadership in group discussions or re-entering conversations after interruptions—revealed cracks in this order. These micro-acts of agency exemplify what Mahboob (2010) describes as the “emergent resistance” within language education in the Global South, where learners continually re-negotiate dominant discourses through subtle everyday acts.

Integrating the insights of FDA and SCT thus reveals that gendered participation is both a discursive and material phenomenon. FDA exposes the ideological operations of language—the ways talk legitimises power, reproduces gender roles, and defines the boundaries of legitimate participation. SCT complements this by situating these discursive struggles within a learning ecology, showing how social mediation shapes cognitive access and identity formation. Together, these frameworks highlight that gender inequity in EFL classrooms is not an incidental by-product of culture but a structural feature of pedagogy, embedded in the epistemologies of classroom interaction itself.

The implications are therefore profound. To cultivate equitable classrooms, teachers must move beyond procedural fairness toward critical reflexivity about how their communicative practices sustain or challenge hierarchies. This involves recognising silence as an active discourse position, diversifying participation formats to accommodate varied interactional preferences, and consciously balancing feedback and visibility across genders. Teacher education programmes in Bangladesh and similar postcolonial contexts must integrate gender-aware discourse analysis into professional training, enabling educators to identify and transform the subtle biases embedded in everyday pedagogic talk.

Ultimately, the discussion points to a broader redefinition of participation as a socio-political construct rather than a purely linguistic one. EFL classrooms, particularly in postcolonial settings, are sites where language learning intersects with identity politics, cultural legitimacy, and symbolic power. Addressing gendered participation, therefore, requires not merely pedagogical adjustment but ideological reorientation—toward a critical pedagogy that recognises all voices as legitimate contributions to knowledge. By interpreting classroom discourse through feminist and sociocultural lenses, this study underscores that equitable participation is both a moral and epistemological imperative: an act of linguistic justice that reclaims the classroom as a shared space of learning, dignity, and voice.

6. Conclusion and Implications

This study has critically examined how gendered dynamics shape voice, visibility, and participation in tertiary-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Bangladesh. Drawing on feminist discourse analysis and sociocultural theory, it explored classroom discourse not as a neutral pedagogical exchange but as a socially mediated arena in which power, identity, and agency are constantly negotiated. Through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with students and teachers from two public universities in Dhaka, the study illuminated how gender

norms, pedagogical practices, and institutional hierarchies converge to determine who speaks, who is heard, and who remains peripheral in EFL classrooms.

The findings reveal that silence and speech are deeply gendered communicative resources rather than binary opposites. Female students frequently engaged in reflective silence, not as evidence of linguistic incompetence but as a discursive strategy to manage risk, preserve dignity, and assert control within patriarchal interactional spaces. Male students, by contrast, were encouraged—both culturally and pedagogically—to claim the floor, interrupt, and display confidence. These asymmetries show that communicative competence in Bangladeshi classrooms is not merely a matter of linguistic skill but of performing socially sanctioned gender identities. Teachers' role in this process proved decisive. Those who unconsciously called on male students first, overlooked interruptions, or equated assertiveness with ability inadvertently perpetuated existing inequalities. Conversely, educators who deliberately balanced turn-taking, rotated leadership roles, and acknowledged female contributions helped reconfigure participation norms and foster more equitable discursive spaces.

These insights carry significant pedagogical implications. Teacher education programmes must move beyond technical training toward cultivating critical awareness of how gender operates through language. EFL pedagogy should not valorise verbal frequency as the sole measure of participation but instead recognise multiple modalities of engagement—including reflective silence, attentive listening, and collaborative contribution—as legitimate indicators of learning. Structured group work, gender-balanced facilitation, and explicit encouragement of quieter voices can help redistribute interactional opportunities. At the institutional level, curriculum designers and policymakers should embed gender-sensitive discourse practices within national EFL frameworks, ensuring that inclusivity is viewed not as an optional add-on but as integral to communicative competence. Embedding these approaches within higher education also aligns with the global vision of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 5, which advocates for gender equality and empowerment across all sectors, including education.

Beyond pedagogy, the study underscores a broader sociopolitical imperative: classroom interaction reflects and reproduces the social order. Universities, as spaces where young adults from diverse social and linguistic backgrounds converge, hold transformative potential to challenge gender hierarchies. Institutional policies that encourage equitable participation, mentorship for female learners, and regular monitoring of teacher–student interaction can convert classrooms into microcosms of social justice. By viewing language teaching as a site of ethical responsibility rather than neutral transmission, educators can position the classroom as a space for cultivating equity and agency.

The study, however, is not without limitations. It was conducted within two public universities in Dhaka, and the sample, though diverse, cannot fully capture the range of linguistic and cultural variation across Bangladesh's higher education landscape. A larger and more geographically diverse dataset—including rural, private, and vocational institutions—would enrich the understanding of how gendered participation intersects with socio-economic, regional, and institutional factors. Furthermore, the qualitative design, while offering rich interpretive insights, focused on depth rather than representativeness. Future research could employ a mixed-methods approach that combines

discourse analysis with quantitative measures of participation to triangulate and expand on these findings. Comparative studies across disciplines or South Asian contexts could also illuminate how gendered dynamics manifest differently in varied academic and cultural settings.

Looking ahead, future scholarship should attend to the intersectionality of gender with class, ethnicity, and language background. As Norton and De Costa (2018) remind us, identity is never singular but constituted through multiple, overlapping structures of power. Investigating how these dimensions interact could provide a more comprehensive picture of participation in multilingual, postcolonial classrooms. Moreover, longitudinal research tracing how gendered participation evolves as students progress through their academic journeys would help reveal whether pedagogical interventions lead to sustained behavioural and attitudinal change. Experimental and action research exploring the impact of teacher-led equity strategies—such as structured dialogue tasks, peer mentoring, and inclusive curriculum design—would further translate critical theory into practical transformation.

Ultimately, this study contributes to critical applied linguistics by reframing classroom participation as both a linguistic and political phenomenon. It demonstrates that gendered inequities in Bangladeshi EFL classrooms are not peripheral anomalies but systemic outcomes of cultural and institutional discourses that define who holds the right to speak. By integrating feminist discourse analysis and sociocultural theory, the research advances a dual understanding of participation—as discursive power and as mediated learning. Theoretically, it extends feminist scholarship on classroom discourse into the Global South, foregrounding how patriarchal norms intersect with postcolonial educational structures. Practically, it offers actionable insights for teacher education, curriculum reform, and institutional policy.

Overall, equitable participation in EFL education must be recognised not merely as a pedagogical aspiration but as an ethical and epistemological commitment. When classrooms become spaces where every learner—regardless of gender—can speak, listen, and be heard with dignity, language education fulfils its most transformative promise: enabling voice, fostering agency, and advancing justice through communication.

Acknowledgement: The author extends sincere appreciation to the editor and the anonymous reviewers for their insightful feedback, which greatly enhanced the clarity and quality of this paper.

Funding: This research was conducted without any financial support from funding agencies, institutions, or organizations.

Author's Contribution: The author solely conceptualized, designed, conducted, and wrote the manuscript, and takes full responsibility for its content and accuracy.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest related to this study.

Declaration of Originality: This manuscript has not been submitted to, nor is under consideration by, any other journal or conference.

Data Availability: All data generated or analysed during this study are retained by the author and are available upon reasonable request.

References

- Al Nahar, A., Hira, F. K., & Milon, M. R. K. (2024). From policy to practice: Evaluating the implementation of communicative language teaching (CLT) in Bangladeshi primary schools. *ICRRD Journal*, 5(3), 125–138.
- Alam, M. R., Ansarey, D., Abdul Halim, H., Rana, M. M., Milon, M. R. K., & Mitu, R. K. (2022a). Exploring Bangladeshi university students' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English classes through a qualitative study. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 7(1), 1-17.
- Alam, M. R., Islam, M. S., Ansarey, D., Rana, M. M., Milon, M. R. K., Halim, H. A., ... & Rashid, A. (2024). Unveiling the professional identity construction of in-service university English language teachers: Evidence from Bangladesh. *Ampersand*, 12, 100178.
- Alam, M. R., Jahan, S., Milon, M. R. K., Ansarey, D., & Faruque, A. S. U. (2021). Accelerating learners' self-confidence level in second language acquisition: A qualitative study. *ICRRD Quality Index Research Journal*, 2(3), 141–153.
- Alam, M. R., Milon, M. R. K., & Rahman, M. K., & Hassan, A. (2022b). Technology application in tourism event, education and training for making a nation's image. In A. Hassan (Ed.), *Technology application in tourism fairs, festivals and events in Asia* (pp. 149–163). Singapore: Springer.
- Alam, M. R., Milon, M. R. K., & Sharmin, M. (2018). Hindrances to use and prepare the lesson plan of secondary school teachers in Bangladesh and some recommendations. *Australasian Journal of Business, Social Science and Information Technology*, 4(4), 189–197.
- Alam, M. R., Sulaiman, M., Bhuiyan, M. M. R., Islam, M. S., Imam, M. H., Hossen, M. S., & Milon, M. R. K. (2025). Online Corrective Feedback and Self-Regulated Writing: Exploring Student Perceptions and Challenges in Higher Education. *World Journal of English Language*, 15(6), 139-150.
- Apple, M. W. (2019). *Ideology and curriculum* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Ara, R. (2019). *Gender in English as a foreign language classroom: A case study*. *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 7(5), 1–15.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power* (G. Raymond & M. Adamson, Trans.). Polity Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). *Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis*. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. SAGE Publications.
- Brodin, A. (2017). *Gender bias and teachers in the EFL classroom in grades 4–6*. Malmö University.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Canagarajah, S. (2013). *Translingual practice: Global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations*. Routledge.
- Chowdhury, R., & Kabir, A. H. (2014). *Language wars: English education policy and practice in Bangladesh*. *Multilingual Education*, 4(21).

- Coates, J. (1993). *Women, men and language: A sociolinguistic account of gender differences in language* (2nd ed.). Longman.
- Coates, J. (2015). *Women, men and language: A sociolinguistic account of gender differences in language* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Darder, A. (2012). *Culture and power in the classroom: Educational foundations for the schooling of bicultural students* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2018). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Polity Press.
- Gee, J. P. (2014). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Główka, D. (2014). *The impact of gender on attainment in learning English as a foreign language. Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 4(4), 617–635.
- Hasan, M. R., Rashid, R. A., Nuby, M. H. M., & Alam, M. R. (2019). Learning English informally through educational Facebook pages. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 7(7), 277-290.
- Hesse-Biber, S. N. (Ed.). (2014). *Feminist research practice: A primer* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Holmes, J. (2008). *Gendered discourse at work. Language and Linguistics Compass*, 2(3), 478–495.
- Hossain, N., & Islam, M. A. (2018). *The SDGs and the empowerment of Bangladeshi women*. In S. Chaturvedi et al. (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of development cooperation for achieving the 2030 Agenda* (pp. 453–470). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hossain, N., & Kabeer, N. (2004). *Achieving universal primary education and eliminating gender disparity. Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(36), 4093–4099.
- Hossen, M. S., & Pauzi, H. M. (2025b). Synthesis of Psychological Wellbeing of the Elderly Individuals Literature Using Bibliometric Analysis. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 33(3).
- Imam, M. H., Pathan, M. A. I., & Farzana, S. (2025). Bridging the Policy–Practice Divide in English Language Teaching and Education: Challenges and Strategic Pathways for Bangladeshi Colleges. *ICRRD Journal*, 6(3), 159-174.
- Jahan, S. (2025). From Screens to Semantics: A Qualitative Inquiry into Vocabulary Learning through Captioned YouTube Videos in Bangladeshi Higher Education. *ICRRD Journal*, 6(3), 321-338.
- Jaworski, A. (1993). *The power of silence: Social and pragmatic perspectives*. SAGE Publications.
- Kachru, B. B. (1986). *The power and politics of English. World Englishes*, 5(2–3), 121–140.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2015). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Lakoff, R. (1973). *Language and woman's place. Language in Society*, 2(1), 45–80.
- Lakoff, R. (2004). *Language and woman's place: Text and commentaries*. Oxford University Press.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford University Press.
- Lazar, M. M. (Ed.). (2005). *Feminist critical discourse analysis: Gender, power and ideology in discourse*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lee, J. F. K., & Collins, P. (2009). *Gender stereotyping in EFL textbooks. ELT Journal*, 63(3), 234–241.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The production of space* (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). Blackwell.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications.

- Mahboob, A. (2010). *The NNEST lens: Non-native English speakers in TESOL*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Mahmud, M., & Nur, S. (2018). *Exploring students' learning strategies and gender differences in English language teaching*. *International Journal of Language Education*, 2(1), 51–64.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Milon, M. R. K. (2016). Challenges of teaching English at the rural primary schools in Bangladesh: Some recommendations. *ELK Asia Pacific Journal of Social Science*, 2(3), 1–17.
- Milon, M. R. K. (2020). A close investigation of the interaction between the individual and the society in *The American Scholar*. *Port City International University Journal*, 7(1–2), 71–79.
- Milon, M. R. K., & Ali, T. M. (2023). From language movement to language policy: A critical examination of English in Bangladeshi tertiary education. *ICRRD Journal*, 4(4), 101–115.
- Milon, M. R. K., Alam, M. R., & Hossain, M. R. (2018a). A comparative study on the methods and practices of English language teaching in Bangla and English medium schools in Bangladesh. *Australasian Journal of Business, Social Science and Information Technology*, 4(3), 118–126.
- Milon, M. R. K., Hossain, M. R., & Alam, M. R. (2018b). Factors influencing dropouts at undergraduate level in private universities of Bangladesh: A case study. *Australasian Journal of Business, Social Science and Information Technology*, 4(4), 177–188.
- Milon, M. R. K., Hossain, M. R., & Begum, R. (2017). Women's revolution against the male-dominated society in R. K. Narayan's novels. *ELK Asia Pacific Journal of Social Science*, 3(2), 1–14.
- Milon, M. R. K., Imam, M. H., & Muhury, P. (2024). Transforming the landscape of higher education in Bangladesh: Teachers' perspectives on implementing outcome-based education (OBE). *ICRRD Journal*, 5(2), 117–135.
- Milon, M. R. K., Ishtiaq, M., Ali, T. M., & Imam, M. S. (2023). Unlocking fluency: Task-based language teaching (TBLT) in tertiary speaking classes—Insights from Bangladeshi teachers and students. *ICRRD Journal*, 4(4), 218–230.
- Mohd Pauzi, H., & Shahadat Hossen, M. (2025). Comprehensive bibliometric integration of formal social support literature for elderly individuals. *Housing, Care and Support*, 1–17.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- Norton, B., & De Costa, P. I. (2018). *Research tasks on identity in language learning*. *Language Teaching*, 51(1), 90–112.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Pavlenko, A., & Blackledge, A. (Eds.). (2004). *Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts*. Multilingual Matters.
- Pennycook, A. (2021). *Critical applied linguistics: A critical re-introduction* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Rasheed, M. M. H. (2017). *Breaking the silence: Experimenting with creative approaches to ESL classrooms in a rural Bangladesh context*. University of Canterbury.
- Rashed, M., Jamadar, Y., Hossen, M. S., Islam, M. F., Thakur, O. A., & Uddin, M. K. (2025). Sustainability catalysts and green growth: Triangulating evidence from EU countries using panel data, MMQR, and CCEMG. *Green Technologies and Sustainability*, 100305.
- Rind, I. A. (2015). *Gender identities and female students' learning experiences in studying English as a second language at a Pakistani university*. *Cogent Education*, 2(1), 1115574.

- Sadker, D., & Zittleman, K. R. (2009). *Still failing at fairness: How gender bias cheats girls and boys in school and what we can do about it*. Scribner.
- Sharmin, M. (2023). Beyond Traditional Approaches: Exploring Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and its Impact on Bangladeshi University Students' Academic Writing Performance. *ICRRD Journal*, 4(4), 231-246.
- Sunderland, J. (2000). *Gender representation in EFL textbooks*. In B. Francis & C. Skelton (Eds.), *Gender and education* (pp. 149–165). Routledge.
- Sunderland, J. (2004). *Gendered discourses*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tannen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation*. Ballantine Books.
- Tannen, D. (1994). *Gender and discourse*. Oxford University Press.
- Tsui, A. B. M. (2008). *Classroom discourse: Approaches and perspectives*. In N. H. Hornberger (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2nd ed., Vol. 3, pp. 2013–2024). Springer.
- UNESCO. (2022). *Global education monitoring report – Gender report: Deepening the debate on those still left behind*. UNESCO.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Walsh, S. (2011). *Exploring classroom discourse: Language in action*. Routledge.
- Waring, H. Z. (2008). *Microanalysis of classroom discourse*. *TESOL Quarterly*, 42(4), 763–774.
- Yasmin, A., Milon, M. R. K., & Imam, M. H. (2024). An examination of practices and perspectives of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in tertiary literary classes: Insights from Bangladesh. *ICRRD Journal*, 5(2), 101–116.
- Yule, G. (2006). *The study of language* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium upon the work for non-commercial, provided the original work is properly cited.