



Research article

Meeting Students' Expectations through Teachers' Performance: An ELL Classroom Study at Northern University of Business and Technology Khulna

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the relationship between teachers' performance and students' satisfaction in English Language and Literature (ELL) classes at the Northern University of Business and Technology Khulna, Bangladesh. In the growing student-centered learning trend, the study analyses the impact of teachers' performance, including subject mastery, instructional methods, classroom dynamics, and evaluation procedures, on students' perceptions. A guided questionnaire was used to collect information on the classroom experiences and perceptions of undergraduate students regarding the effectiveness of their teachers' instructions. The findings show that students believed that their educators possessed high levels of subject knowledge and employed practical teaching approaches. Participants also expressed that their teachers valued conducive and respectful teacher-student rapport. Nevertheless, learners identified challenges related to feedback which had a significant impact on their motivation and engagement. The study concludes that although teacher performance plays a major role in students' active engagement in learning, there is still a need to enhance the system of feedback and individualized attention to meet students' expectations. The study will contribute to the body of research on the student-teacher relationship in ELL education in Bangladesh, highlighting the significance of teacher development programs (CPD) and improving institutional policy to ensure quality teaching.

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Introduction

Over the last few years, the global educational paradigm has been transforming significantly towards student-centred learning (Roorda et al., 2011). This shift is categorically pronounced in English Language and Literature (ELL) classrooms where the needs of the learners have taken centre stage in curriculum development, instructional strategies and evaluation methods. Educational institutions are under pressure to be responsive to the growing demands, expectations and anticipations of the learners, since there is a mounting focus on learner autonomy, learner motivation, and learner engagement. In Bangladesh, English Language and Literature courses are taught in most higher education institutions as a second language. These

courses play a pivotal role in defining the academic and professional abilities of students. Relatively ELL student population has increased considerably in private universities, including Northern University of Business and Technology Khulna. In such a context, there is a need to teach in a way that goes beyond the process of transferring linguistic knowledge to the students to groom them with the possibility of developing their critical thinking capacity and corresponding to cultural realities as well. The performance of teachers in the classrooms is projected to exceed the conventional lecturing by entailing a combination of subject knowledge, creativity, effective delivery, and formative assessment techniques (Wang, 2024). This raises an important concern regarding

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teachers' performance in the classroom and how much it meets the requirements of the learners.

The Outcome-based education has also focused on the need to align the teachers' performance with the expectations of the students. This nexus is, however, not always found in ELL classrooms. Learners often are demotivated to learn because of ineffective methods of teaching and lack of a healthy teacher-student relationship. While teachers' effective classroom performance can increase the academic excellence of the learners, a mismatch between students' expectations and the actual teaching practices causes dissatisfaction and disengagement.

The quality of education can no longer be measured merely by the students' academic grades because it also addresses how teachers meet the academic and social expectations. Therefore, this study was undertaken to explore how the classroom performance of the teachers has a significant effect on learners' satisfaction, experience, and motivation. It examined the perception of students regarding the quality of teaching in four areas, namely: subject mastery, instructional techniques, classroom interaction, and assessment practices.

Research Questions

- i. What aspects of teachers' performance are most valued by students in ELL classrooms?
- ii. To what extent does subject mastery influence students' satisfaction?
- iii. How do instructional strategies affect students' motivation and engagement?
- iv. What role does classroom interaction play in shaping students' learning experiences?
- v. How do students perceive the fairness and helpfulness of assessment and feedback practices?

Literature Review

Global and Regional Research on Student Expectations and Teaching Effectiveness

Extensive global research has examined the nexus between students' expectations and teachers' performance. Douglas, McClelland, and Davies (2008) stated that in higher education, the level of satisfaction among students is strongly related to their view of the quality of instruction which entails clarity, engagement, fairness, and emotional support. These perceptions affect the retention rates, academic prowess, and loyalty to the institution. Formulating the concept of ELL, Gibbons (2015) emphasized that an educator has to find a balance between teaching linguistics and critical approaches to texts. Learners expect teachers to promote not only language proficiency but interpretative and analytical skills too. According to Islam and Bari (2017), students in the privately owned universities expect teachers to present the material clearly, incorporating multimedia aspects. Yet, according to the same study, there are inconsistencies in meeting these expectations because of large class sizes and insufficient professional development on the part of the faculty. Akram & Li (2024) highlighted the importance of having positive relationships between the teachers and students in the

ELL classrooms, which contribute profoundly to motivation and academic performance.

Role of Subject Mastery and Communication Skills

Subject mastery refers to a teacher's deep understanding of the content and ability to disseminate it effectively among students. In literature and language courses, pedagogical content knowledge is a prerequisite for effective teaching (Shulman, 1987). According to Bernaus and Gardner (2008), students are highly motivated and satisfied when teachers demonstrate confidence in their subject area and explain literary and linguistic concepts with clarity. Strong verbal and non-verbal communication such as eye contact, tone modulation, and clarity enhance comprehension and foster positive classroom dynamics (Hativa et al., 2001). In the Bangladeshi context, many university students expect a bilingual approach from teachers to make complex texts more relatable, especially in first-year ELL courses (Rahman et al., 2019). In addition, teacher approachability and responsiveness play a key role in shaping student perception; when students feel that their queries are acknowledged and their learning difficulties are addressed, they are more likely to engage actively and feel satisfied with the course.

Impact of Assessment Fairness and Feedback

Assessment is not only an instrument for measuring learning outcomes but also a reflection of the teacher's fairness, clarity, and commitment to students' performance. Formative assessment and feedback can significantly enhance student learning (Black and Wiliam, 1998). In ELL classrooms, the demand for transparent and fair assessment becomes even more pronounced because subjective interpretation is a part of the evaluation (e.g., in essay writing, text analysis). A study by Afsana and Nahid (2020) in Dhaka-based private universities found that students felt demotivated when grades appeared inconsistent or when feedback lacked specific comments. In contrast, clear rubrics, criteria-based grading, and personalised feedback were associated with higher levels of satisfaction and trust in the teacher. Moreover, continuous assessment, such as short quizzes, classroom discussions, and draft submissions, was preferred over high-stakes exams, especially among students with varying levels of English proficiency (Frenzel et al., 2021).

Despite the global and regional research on teachers' effectiveness and students' expectations, several gaps remain, particularly in the context of private universities in smaller cities like Khulna. Most Bangladeshi studies have been conducted in urban areas such as Dhaka or Chattogram, limiting their generalisability to other regions. The specific experiences of students enrolled in English Literature and Language Studies in Khulna's private institutions are underrepresented in empirical research. Additionally, few studies offer a comprehensive evaluation of teachers' performance based on multiple dimensions, such as subject mastery, teaching strategies, communication, and assessment practices (Fernández & Martínez, 2022). Lastly, there is a need for student-centered research that captures learners' perspectives.

Theoretical Framework

The research is based on Constructivist Learning Theory and Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation.

Constructivist Learning Theory

Constructivist Learning Theory, rooted in the works of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner, posits that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with their environment, including peers and teachers. When applied to ELL education, constructivism suggests that students achieve language expertise and make sense of literary texts once they are engaged with cognitive and real-life experiences. Under this theory, a teacher is an individual who serves as a scaffolder and therefore, the teacher facilitates the learning process through interactive feedback and active participation. This approach highlights the importance of teachers' performance in the establishment of a participatory classroom. A good instructional technique coupled with communicative competence, critical thinking, and contextualised presentation of materials enables students to personalise their knowledge. Therefore, the clarity of explanation, student-teacher rapport, and the opportunity for student input are central to students' academic development and satisfaction (Liu & Zhou, 2024). In this view, any mismatch between teaching practices and student needs impairs the co-construction of knowledge and diminishes motivation and outcomes.

Expectancy Theory of Motivation (Vroom)

The Expectancy Theory (1964) proposed by Vroom implies that when a student feels that hard work will bring a desirable outcome, they are more likely to engage and perform. The theory comprises three fundamental elements, i.e., expectancy (that effort leads to performance), instrumentality (the belief that performance will yield a reward), valence (the value attached to the reward). In classroom contexts, students are more likely to be motivated if they perceive their teachers as competent, responsive, and fair. In contrast, unclear explanations, inconsistent feedback, or lack of recognition reduce both instrumentality and valence, diminishing student engagement (Ding, 2025). Thus, teacher performance directly influences students' motivational structure by shaping their beliefs and perceived outcomes.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This research followed a quantitative descriptive survey design to gather data related to the students' perceptions of teachers' mastery of different subject matters, instructional methods, communication, and form of assessment of students' performances. The descriptive survey approach enables systematic gathering of data of a sample population to explain the learning environment and level of teaching as perceived by the students.

Population and Sample

This research selected undergraduate students undertaking English Language and Literature Studies (ELL) course at Northern University of Business and Technology Khulna during the spring 2025 academic

session. A total of 104 students were sampled by stratified random sampling so that the different academic years as well as gender groups were represented. The study was conducted on a voluntary basis with students after getting consent from them.

Instrument Development

A structured questionnaire was prepared to collect primary data. The questionnaire followed a 5-point Likert scale (1-Strongly Disagree and 5-Strongly Agree), so that the students were capable of indicating the extent to which they either agreed or disagreed with the statements being given (Chow, 2020).

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the research, three experts (two faculty members from the Department of English and one education researcher experienced in survey design) reviewed the questionnaire. Their feedback was used to refine ambiguous wording, ensure contextual relevance, and confirm alignment with the study objectives. Pilot testing was conducted with 20 students who were not included in the final sample and minor revisions were made to improve clarity and eliminate redundancy based on their responses.

Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items (Dhakal, 2022). The overall alpha coefficient was 0.87, indicating high reliability.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted over three weeks during regularly scheduled class hours with prior permission from the university administration and course instructors. Before distributing the survey, the purpose of the research was explained, and students were assured that their responses would be used strictly for academic research (Holmes Finch, 2025). They were also informed that participation was entirely voluntary, and they could withdraw at any time. Students were provided with paper-based questionnaires along with informed consent forms. On average, it took each participant approximately 10–15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Completed responses were collected on the spot to ensure a high response rate and to maintain the authenticity of the data.

Ethical Considerations

Informed Consent: Participants were provided with a consent form detailing the purpose of the study (Hussen, 2020). Students were informed that their participation was voluntary, and no incentives were provided to reduce potential bias (Luciano, 2022).

- *Anonymity:* Questionnaires were coded only for data management purposes. No identifying information (e.g., names, ID numbers) was collected.
- *Confidentiality:* All data collected was stored securely in password-protected digital files and locked physical cabinets (Limna, 2023).

A formal letter of approval for conducting the research was obtained from the university's Department of English before initiating the data collection process.

Data Analysis Technique

The data gathered in the research were analysed with several statistical tools. First, descriptive statistics were used to describe the responses of the students, whereby the mean, mode, median, and standard deviation values of each item were computed. This gave an approximate basis of the students’ perception towards the performance of teachers, especially in related areas such as mastery of subject area, communication in the classroom, and assessment methods. In order to understand the current dimensions of teacher performance, Factor Analysis was undertaken based on Principal Component Analysis (PCA), and Varimax rotation (Myors & Murphy, 2023). This discussion identified different aspects, which include

teaching methodology, teacher-student relationship and feedback modes, student satisfaction, and motivation. Lastly, a reliability test was carried out to establish the internal consistency of the items in the questionnaire.

Findings and Analysis

The paradigmatic change towards student-centred paradigm responds to the increased need for a more dynamic way of teaching that meets students’ expectations. The findings of the study are as follows: Table 1 depicts how the male and female participants of the study were distributed.

Table 1: Gender of the Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	73	70.2	70.2	70.2
Male	31	29.8	29.8	100.0
Valid Total	104	100.0	100.0	

The total number of students was 104; 73 of them (70.2 percent) were females, and 31 of them were (29.8 per cent) males.

The below pie chart gives a graphical presentation of the gender distribution of the study.

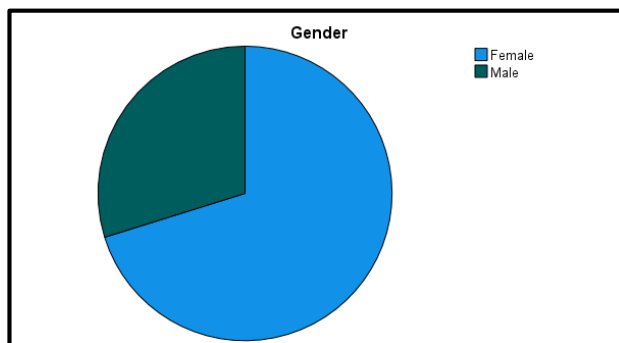


Figure 1: Gender of the Participants

The KMO and Bartlett’s test of Sphericity table is a significant element in carrying out factor analysis. Table 2 shows KMO and Bartlett's Test.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett’s Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.803
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1603.219
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

The KMO value measures the sampling adequacy at 0.803, which is more than the 0.6 value, indicating that the sample is sufficient to be analyzed using factor analysis (Rossoni et al., 2016). The value of Chi-Square in the Bartlett Test of Sphericity is 1603.219, and the value of significance (Sig.) is 0.000. This shows that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, and the variables are correlated enough to undergo factor

analysis. The analysis of these results confirm that the use of factor analysis in analyzing the data is done correctly.

The Rotated Component Matrix indicates the direct loading of each item to the three extracted components, and this will give an overview of the underlying factors that contribute to teachers’ performance in the ELL classroom.

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix^a

Statement	Component		
	1	2	3
The teachers demonstrate a strong mastery of the English literature subject knowledge.	.848		
Literary concepts and language are explained clearly and understandably.	.888		
Teaching methods match students' learning needs and preferences.	.811		
Varied instructional techniques address different learning styles.	.888		
The teachers meet expectations in conducting the ELL courses.	.790		
Students are encouraged to participate actively in class discussions.		.854	
Classroom communication is friendly and supportive.		.887	
A positive and respectful relationship exists between the teachers and students.		.895	
Diverse perspectives on literary topics are provided to make lessons engaging.		.767	
The teachers are approachable for questions and additional help outside class.		.676	
Assessment methods fairly reflect students' understanding of the material.			.817
Feedback on assignments and tests is timely and helpful.			.757
Students feel motivated to study when teachers count their progress.			.818
Class activities help improve English language skills.			.727
The classes are managed in a way that fosters a positive learning environment.			.715
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.			
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.			
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.			

In the case of the first component, all the items are showing high loadings. Teachers have a good command of subject matter in English literature (0.848). Instructions are given in a manner that is tuned with the needs and preferences of students (0.811). This implies that subject mastery and instructional techniques are the core of effective teaching as perceived by the students.

The second element is closely connected with the aspect of interaction and communication in the classroom, which is demonstrated by high value such as classroom communication is friendly and supportive (0.887), and a positive and respectful relationship exists between the teachers and students (0.895). These responses answer the third research question. Statements concerning instructional strategies, classroom interaction, feedback, and student engagement show that the performance of a teacher largely influences students' motivation and satisfaction in the ELL classroom.

Table 4: Reliability

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	104	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	104	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 5: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.883	15

According to a reliability test, it can be seen that the data is consistent, especially with the Cronbach Alpha result of 0.883, which stands above the required range of 0.7. The summary of the case processing indicates that the collected 104 responses are valid, as no response data has been omitted. Such reliability helps the study make meaningful conclusions in terms of the connection between the performance of a teacher and student satisfaction and motivation.

The N value is 104, which means that valid responses were used by all participants (104). All the statements are measured using the Likert scale (1-5), where the mean, median, mode, and the standard deviation of each statement are displayed on the table. The average responses to all the items range between 3.53 and 3.78, implying that the students are inclined to rate the performance of a teacher and teaching technique in a positive way, and the majority of the answers relate to the attitude of a student as "Agree" or "Neutral." Statements like the teachers show a high level of subject knowledge in English literature (mean = 3.58) and students feel motivated to study when their progress is tracked (mean = 3.78), have relatively higher values of means.

Some variations in responses can be observed, with standard deviations ranging from 1.06 to 1.27. Nevertheless, all of these point to the fact that students share a common basis for their perception of teaching quality.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Perceptions of Teacher Performance

Statement	Valid (N)	Missing	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
The teachers demonstrate a strong mastery of the English literature subject matter.	104	0	3.58	4.00	4	1.086
Literary concepts and language are explained clearly and understandably.	104	0	3.67	4.00	4	1.065
Teaching methods match students' learning needs and preferences.	104	0	3.57	4.00	4	1.189
Varied instructional techniques address different learning styles.	104	0	3.66	4.00	4	1.067
The teachers meet expectations in conducting the ELL course.	104	0	3.53	4.00	4	1.123
Students are encouraged to participate actively in class discussions.	104	0	3.56	4.00	4	1.189
Classroom communication is friendly and supportive.	104	0	3.63	4.00	4	1.158
A positive and respectful relationship exists between the teacher and students.	104	0	3.63	4.00	4	1.133
Diverse perspectives on literary topics are provided to make lessons engaging.	104	0	3.69	4.00	4	1.115
The teachers are approachable for questions and additional help outside class.	104	0	3.60	4.00	4	1.273
Assessment methods fairly reflect students' understanding of the material.	104	0	3.73	4.00	4	1.134
Feedback on assignments and tests is timely and helpful.	104	0	3.73	4.00	4	1.168
Students feel motivated to study when interest in their progress is shown.	104	0	3.78	4.00	4	1.140
Class activities help improve English language skills.	104	0	3.75	4.00	4	1.180
The classes are managed in a way that fosters a positive learning environment.	104	0	3.70	4.00	4	1.230

Discussion

The results obtained in the research have given a clear insight into the impact of teachers' performance in the English Language and Literature (ELL) classrooms at Northern University of Business and Technology Khulna on student satisfaction and motivation.

Teachers' Performance and Students' Satisfaction

The findings show that students have positive attitude towards teachers who have adequate subject mastery and apply effective teaching methods. This is consistent with the idea of pedagogical content knowledge proposed by Shulman (1987), which maintains that a good knowledge of the subject taught by a teacher plays an important role in the engagement of students and their achievements. Students seem to enjoy clear and well-explained content and instruction strategies that address the diverse needs of the students. Even though the general feeling towards the subject mastery was a positive one, it is important to address the variety of responses as suggested by the standard deviations. This may indicate that though for many students the teaching methods used by the teachers were satisfactory, for some students, teaching methods may not be adequate in terms of the delivery of content and comprehensiveness.

Students' Engagement and Classroom Interaction

According to Constructivist Learning Theory, learners create knowledge by engaging their environment, among which they include the teachers and peers. Vygotsky (1978) suggests that the construction of a positive and cooperative classroom environment leads to a better capacity of students to interact with the material and with

one another. The high values of the findings indicate that learners appreciate an open classroom where they are allowed to express themselves and their thoughts are appreciated. Most students stated that the teacher was approachable and classroom communication was supportive, whereas the proportion of those dissatisfied was lower. It might signify that, whereas the atmosphere in general remains positive, some students might feel ignored or left out in the classroom. It might as well imply that the students might be willing to have a more personal or intimate attention, especially in larger classroom. Educators must be aware of these issues, and they should make sure that their engagement plans are inclusive and can serve the interests of every learner. It is especially necessary when students are becoming more vocal regarding their rights and expectations of the learning process (Gibbons, 2015).

Assessment and Feedback

The third research focus in this study entails the quality of assessment and feedback. The findings indicate that the students consider assessment methods to be quite fair and representative of the knowledge of the material. These results are similar to those presented by Black and William (1998), who concentrated on formative assessment, showing the necessity to give students regular, corrective feedback to increase the effectiveness of the learning process. The timely and relevant feedback will enable students to recognise their strengths and ways to improve in the future, and thus, it will contribute to their motivation and achievements in the future as well. Nevertheless, there was a moderate range, as can be seen in the standard deviations of items on feedback. Students also stated they were dissatisfied with the promptness or

specificity of feedback, so it is possible that feedback may be dissimilar across courses or instructors. This can be especially discussed in the light of Afsana and Nahid (2020), who observed that students at Dhaka-based universities felt discouraged when the feedback provided was unclear or unreliable. The feeling of fair evaluation and constructive feedback is the key to sustaining student motivation as well as interest. Teachers should thus aim at giving specific, appropriate, and clear feedback that would assist students to know their progress and areas they have to improve.

Motivation and Students' Engagement

One of the other important findings of the study is the influence of motivation on the experience of the students' learning (Roorda et al., 2011). The highest mean score was given to the item to show that students are motivated to study when there is interest in their progress. Such a result can be aligned with the Expectancy Theory (1964) cited by Vroom, who assumed that the students are more motivated when they believe they can get some valuable outcomes because of their efforts. When the students feel that their achievements are not unnoticed, they tend to stick to their studies. It shows the role of praise and encouragement in motivating students (Frenzel et al., 2021). Nonetheless, since the interest of the teachers in the progress of many of the students may have been encouraging to many of the students, there are still other students who might still feel distant, especially when the teacher does not show individual attention or feedback on the progress of the students (Wang, 2024). This once again justifies the importance of universities to develop closer, individualised bonds between teachers and students, fostering involvement as well as motivation. The finding is associated with the existing literature on the connection between teacher-student rapport and student success (Kabir & Akter, 2019).

Implications for Teacher Development

The findings of this research have serious implications for the teacher development programs within Northern University of Business and Technology, among other educational institutions. The results indicate that, in general, teachers are in line with the expectations of students, however, some improvements are needed. Teachers are expected to improve their strategies of teaching, especially the subareas of individual attention and feedback (Fernández & Martínez, 2022). Professional development, such as workshops on active learning strategies, formative assessment, and enhancing student engagement and addressing learning challenges, should be offered as means to help faculty members fill these gaps.

The proposed study is important in many ways. It investigates the student-centred approach toward learning within the tertiary educational context, especially the one concerning the English language teaching in Bangladesh. It captures the voices of the students, hence, giving us detailed information on how teaching strategies, assessment techniques and communication tactics are taking place in the ELL classrooms in the real world. The results obtained in this study can be used in teacher development programmes that will enable faculty

members to review their method of teaching in order to enhance their performance. Perceived strengths and weaknesses about the teaching may result in specific interventions, e.g., workshops, peer observations, and classroom innovations. This will also benefit the institutional policymakers.

Conclusion

The study aimed at finding out the connection between teachers' performance and students' satisfaction in English Language and Literature (ELL) classrooms at Northern University of Business and Technology Khulna. It surveyed student attitudes on several dimensions of teacher performance, such as the performance in subject mastery, instructional strategies, interaction in the classroom and assessment. The findings point to an overall highly rated satisfaction with teachers and their levels of knowledge of subjects. Another commonly accepted perception about teachers is that they largely show a good command of the English literature content and teaching techniques that adequately suit the needs and preferences of students (Fernández & Martínez, 2022). The outcomes indicate that learners place importance on clear explanations and the wide selection of teaching techniques that focus on various learning styles. Nonetheless, there are some aspects on which students are partially dissatisfied, mostly regarding feedback and personal attention. This indicates that there is a need to ensure that feedback is timely, as well as specific, and constructive. Moreover, the study has revealed the significance of classroom interaction and engagement in moulding the learning experiences of students. The findings show that students prefer positive and supportive classroom environment. Nevertheless, it also shows that there is a necessity to improve some aspects on an on-going basis, like the quality of the feedback and personal interaction with students, so that the expectations of all students can be satisfied.

Limitations of the Research

Although this research provided important knowledge on this issue, various limitations must be acknowledged. First of all, this research was conducted with undergraduate students (English Language and Literature) at Northern University of Business and Technology Khulna, so the conclusions may not be generalised to other majors or other institutions in Bangladesh. The 104 participants involved in the study may not represent the rest of the student population because of different learning preferences and different schooling backgrounds. The study relied on the use of self-reported questionnaires to determine the perceptions that the students hold; hence, there might be a tendency of having bias in responses.

Future Research Recommendations

Future research on teachers' performance and students' satisfaction in ELL classrooms may extend the current study by choosing a more diverse sample representing various universities and disciplines in Bangladesh, which would enable making more generalisations. Moreover, it is possible to introduce some qualitative procedure, i.e. interviews, or focus group discussions, which would

enable to gain deeper insights into students' perceptions of teachers' teaching practices. It is possible to research how the various models of feedback and interventions of teaching are effective in enhancing engagement and motivation of the students (Ding, 2025).

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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