

STUDENT-LED CLASS OBSERVATION: A NEW PARADIGM FOR EFL TEACHING EVALUATION AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: May 2026 Revised: July 2026 Accepted: September 2026 Published: October 2026	<i>In Bangladesh, teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) is frequently still teacher-centered and conventional. Nonetheless, one important method for evaluating instructional strategies is classroom observation. However, conventional approaches ignore the perspectives of students. Because of this, learner perspectives are not fully incorporated. An alternative to traditional teaching methods is student-led observation. Students are empowered to actively assess their classes. This method encourages self-reliance and introspection among Bangladeshi tertiary-level in-service and pre-service educators. However, there is very little and conservative research in this area in South Asian settings like Bangladesh. Examining student-led observation in tertiary EFL instruction is the goal of this study. It first looks at how this approach affects students' language learning strategies and metacognitive awareness. Second, it looks into how teachers view its usefulness and validity. The research utilizes qualitative techniques within an exploratory case study framework. The study involves four EFL instructors chosen purposefully from a private university. Data is collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations utilizing a checklist. Triangulation ensures the reliability of student-teacher connections in the classroom, whereas thematic analysis supports the understanding of the findings. Observation led by students enhances metacognition in language learners. For example, learners reflect on lesson goals and evaluations, leading to enhanced methods such as self-assessment and strategizing. Educators find it valid for understanding, yet they also recognize prejudices. Furthermore, it promotes joint assessment, student empowerment, and improvements in teaching. Universities should train participants and integrate them into their programs. Future studies can utilize the samples from this research to secure more in-depth insights. Also, it enhances EFL practices in Bangladesh.</i>
Keywords Student-led observation; EFL teaching evaluation; Language learning strategies; Teaching practicum; Classroom management:	
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INTRODUCTION

In modern Bangladesh, instructional strategies are evolving, integrating students' preparedness for future challenges into the development of teaching practices. Instruction in the English language at the tertiary level is increasingly evolving as countries worldwide embrace innovative teaching methods. In countries such as Bangladesh, the tertiary level of EFL teaching is often regarded as overly focused on the teacher and traditional (Haque et al., 2022). Classroom observation is an effective qualitative tool for gathering authentic data on teacher behavior and communication patterns (Haile et al., 2024). On one hand, in the context of Bangladesh, tertiary education is attempting to provide real-world experiences that focus on student-centered activities and experiments. On the other hand, primary and secondary

education continue to face barriers in providing the best teaching support for learners. This research examines the role of teachers in classroom management as well as the practices and teaching styles employed at the tertiary level from the students' observation point of view. Additionally, the student-led observation extracts the crucial points that are essential for their learning. Pre-service teachers often emphasize the importance of observing experienced teachers as a crucial part of their training (Alam & Hasan, 2025; Anis & Hasan, 2025).

Moreover, students' effectiveness and performance depend on teachers' material design and teaching style. Whereas it simply demonstrates the possibilities for effective teaching of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) to university students and teachers. The instructor-to-student communication pattern was found to be the most common during classroom observation in one higher education EFL study (Haile et al., 2024). In recent years, classroom observation has become a central component of evaluating teaching effectiveness within tertiary EFL education. Traditional evaluation systems, often led by administrators or senior faculty, provide institutional accountability but frequently overlook the lived experiences of the learners themselves. Classroom management is identified as a critical, yet often underdeveloped, skill area for early-career teachers (Alam & Hasan, 2025). These approaches can highlight broad teaching skills, yet they provide little insight into how specific teaching strategies influence students' involvement, understanding, and overall educational results.

However, recent studies uncover a significant omission in student viewpoints that are rarely considered when evaluating EFL teaching at the tertiary level, especially in contexts such as Bangladesh. Consequently, instead of relying on continuous or formative assessment, instructors' assessment of students in the tertiary education EFL environment typically relies on conventional approaches (Al-khresheh, 2022). This gap requires a more student-focused and collaborative method for assessing teaching. To address these challenges, student-led classroom observation has emerged as a practical alternative. This model allows students to actively assess the teaching techniques that enhance or hinder their learning. As noted by Al-Khresheh (2022), in certain English teaching situations of today, the behavioral approach remains considerably more dominant than SCL. It encourages careful examination of classroom interactions, recognition of effective teaching methods, and pinpointing areas needing enhancement. Consequently, student-driven observation can foster increased student independence and accountability in educational environments while also making the assessment process more democratic (Hasan et al., 2025). Even when group activities were assigned, the student-to-student interaction pattern was seldom observed in an EFL classroom (Al-khresheh, 2022). This study aims to explore how this model can bridge the existing knowledge gap concerning effective EFL instruction in Bangladesh's higher education system.

Even with its promise, research on student-led observation in educational contexts in South Asia remains limited. In EFL instruction, conventional grammar-based techniques are often supplanted by more interactive, learner-centered methods (Alzubi et al., 2023). Learner independence receives institutional backing in Western or East Asian systems, which is where the majority of the current research originates. In contrast, higher education in Bangladesh is gradually adopting student-centered approaches. The majority of the existing research originates from institutions in the West or East Asia that promote learner autonomy. In contrast, higher education in Bangladesh is continuing to advance towards student-centered approaches. Graduates suggested that EFL courses should place greater focus on practical communication abilities, such as interviewing and presentation skills (Haque et al., 2022). Therefore, it is crucial to explore the feasibility and impacts of student-directed assessment in local educational structures. The significance of this study lies in its ability to show how feedback created by students can enhance teaching, encourage reflective practices in the classroom, and guide decisions about instruction. Serving as a bridge between theoretical

understanding and practical teaching abilities, the teaching practicum is a crucial component of teacher training (Alam & Hasan, 2025).

Consequently, the study incorporates broader theoretical discussions on learner empowerment, collaborative learning, and reflective teaching. By combining student observations with well-established theories of education (e.g., Direct Methods, The Audio-Lingual Method, Total Physical Responses, Task-Based Language Teaching, and Communicative Language Teaching), the study shows how future advancements in EFL instruction can be supported by a more inclusive evaluation framework. The approach uses qualitative information from student observers to provide complex insights into teacher-student interactions and classroom dynamics. The study answers the following research questions in light of this focus.

RQ 1. In what ways does student-led observation impact students' own metacognitive awareness and language learning strategies?

RQ 2. How do teachers perceive the validity and usefulness of student-led EFL class observations at the tertiary level?

Literature Review

At the tertiary level, student-led class observation is becoming a revolutionary method for evaluating EFL instruction. Its potential to improve pedagogical development, feedback systems, and reflective practices is examined in this review of the literature. Al-Khresheh (2022) asserts that ICT should support classroom management in order to improve learning. He said that when teachers prepare lessons, use ICT to create interactive teaching materials, and offer constructive criticism, the learning environment should show a positive attitude toward student-centered learning. Alam and Hasan (2025) investigated the philosophy and classroom practices of teachers. It emphasized the significance of the theme for professional competence, pedagogical approaches, and microteaching, all of which promote the improvement of quality development. Additionally, Chicherina et al. (2020) analyzed the classroom environment in the Russian and Chinese classes. They recognized the class context, indicating how the class is perceived and handled. Similarly, it offers perspectives on how productivity in the classroom is overseen through behavior (discipline and timing). According to Hidayat et al. (2024), the key element is the cognitive assistance given to the students. Their findings show that classroom management must prioritize not just content-focused learning and resources but also the maintenance of psychological support. There appear to be many difficulties in successfully teaching and managing English in the classroom, especially in tackling specific problems. To create a safe and welcoming learning atmosphere that allows education to advance smoothly, teachers need to utilize various instructional methods paired with effective classroom management approaches (Hidayat et al., 2024).

Pastini and Lilasari (2023) indicated the positive impacts on language ability, student engagement, and the enhancement of essential skills for ongoing language education. The educational implications of this review arise from its ability to inform researchers, policymakers, and EFL educators about the intricate benefits of employing student-centered learning approaches specifically tailored for English language teaching. Conventional methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) aided students in enhancing their writing and grammar abilities, as noted by Karim and Badhan (2025). Simultaneously, communicative approaches like role-playing, task-oriented exercises, and context-focused dialogues improved student engagement and self-assurance (Rahman & Hasan, 2025). Teachers played a key role in balancing both approaches, and this active involvement contributed to more successful learning outcomes. Haque (2022) revealed that majority of the participants, after completing the graduation and post-graduation in English, failed to develop

their English language skills at the advanced level due to the lack of some crucial issues, like particular course and test on specific skills (Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing), effective course design and teaching approach, learner-expected professional dedication of the English language teachers, practice and feedback session, and the use of technological devices in the language classroom and language lab in the English language teaching practices. The implementation of TBLT in tertiary settings, particularly in contexts such as Bangladesh, specifies challenges related to teacher training and institutional support (Milon et al., 2023). As stated by Milon et al. (2023), TBLT prioritizes student activity and meaning-making over pure grammatical form, which is in line with the principles of student-centered learning.

Though they did not completely address how student-led observation affects learners' metacognition or how teachers perceive the value of such observation, the reviewed studies provide insightful information about classroom management, student-centered learning, and teacher practices. Al-Khresheh (2022) and Hidayat et al. (2024), for example, it focused on emotional support and classroom management, but they did not look at how students could assess these components on their own. Alam and Hasan (2025), as well as Chicherina et al. (2020), concentrated on the philosophies of educators and the surrounding circumstances. However, they did not take into account the fact that students are active observers who consider how they learn. Although student-centered learning was emphasized by Pastini and Lilasari (2023), structured observation as a method for fostering metacognitive awareness was not examined in their study. Furthermore, while discussing teaching strategies and learning difficulties, studies like those by Karim and Badhan (2025) and Haque (2022) neglected the possibility of using student-led observation to close these gaps. Thus, a glaring research gap still exists. The potential benefits of student-led observation for improving learners' capacity to track tactics, assess development, and make well-informed decisions regarding their language learning were not explored in earlier research. Similarly, it is still unknown how instructors at the tertiary level view the legitimacy and value of such student-led initiatives. This study fills in these gaps and offers a fresh viewpoint. It unifies teachers' evaluation and students' reflection within a single framework. Because it shows how student-led observation can support both learner development and teaching improvement, this dual focus offers stronger insights than previous research.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research employs an exploratory case study design (Acar et al. 2023) to thoroughly investigate the phenomenon of student-led class observation, exploring its implementation, potential benefits, and challenges from the perspectives of students and higher education EFL teachers. This design aimed to document practical instances of teaching methods and evaluation practices in college-level EFL classrooms. A qualitative approach was appropriate as it allowed the researcher to explore participants' experiences, viewpoints, and teaching decisions in an actual classroom context. The aim of the study in implementing this design was to generate a thorough understanding of how student-led class observation can function as an alternative method for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching. Furthermore, the design facilitated open-ended data gathering, enabling the researcher to identify new trends based on real classroom practices instead of assumptions.

Research Participants

The selection of participants was made utilizing a purposive sampling method. This approach enabled the researcher to intentionally choose participants who were most likely to provide relevant and important information for the study. The sample consisted of four English language teachers from a private university (Shitalakkhya University of Bangladesh), all of whom had several years of experience teaching EFL courses at the tertiary level. They

were chosen on the basis of their willingness to take part in observations and interviews, as well as their active participation in student-centered teaching methods. The researcher communicated with the students and the office to identify the participants. Also, the researcher finds them from his previous experiences in attending the classes. That is how the purposive sampling ensured that the study included participants who could offer informed perspectives on instructional strategies, classroom management, and the potential role of student-led observation in teaching evaluation.

Table 1
Demographic Information of the Teachers

Name of Teacher	Highest Achievable Degree	Field of Study	Training in TBLT	Year of Teaching Experience	Class Size	Grades Currently Teaching
Amir Sultana	PhD	Applied Linguistics and ELT	Yes	21 years	35	90%
Sukur Ali	MA	Applied Linguistics	Yes	10 years	40	89%
Rafi Ahmed	MA	TESOL	Yes	3+ years	40	80%
Shohan Akanda	MA	Literature in English and Cultural Studies	Yes	1 year 6 months	30	85%

Instruments

The classroom observation checklist was developed to record systematic information on teaching behaviors and classroom dynamics. The researcher adapted the checklist from a previous study, which is rarely mentioned in this paper. Mirza (2022) developed a checklist to collect primary data based on the English teachers in Primary Education in Bangladesh. Aiming at the teacher of the tertiary level, the researcher modified and included the criteria based on the background and purposes of the research. The checklist included 15 categories for indicating markers, such as teaching methods, communication patterns, use of language, feedback strategies, student engagement, and instructional materials. Additionally, it recorded the ways in which instructors promoted engagement and aided in learning during class. All observations were kept focused, comparable, and in line with the objectives of the study by using a structured checklist. Additionally, it made it possible for the researcher to pinpoint particular instructional components that students might subsequently discuss in their own evaluative observations. Moreover, the researcher verified the checklists with an expert research scholar in order to gather data from classroom observations.

In-depth Interview Protocol

The interview protocol consisted of semi-structured, open-ended questions designed to explore teachers' views on classroom practices, teaching challenges, the use of materials, and perceptions of student involvement in observation. The researcher adapted the interview protocol from a previous study, which is rarely connected in this paper. Nova (2024) designed the semi-structured interview, and the researcher adapted and modified it according to the area of study. Additionally, the researcher incorporates the ideas that are categorized into two research objectives and explained accordingly. Moreover, the interview protocol was validated by an expert in the same field, and the data was collected according to the protocol. The researcher developed ten interview questions under the pilot study. Questions are divided into two categories according to the research objectives, with 10 questions. The protocol allowed the researcher to maintain a consistent direction across interviews while also giving participants the freedom to elaborate on issues they considered important. The follow-up

questions were used when necessary to clarify responses and gain deeper insight into teachers' reasoning and instructional choices.

Data Collection

The study employed two methods as mentioned above. However, this paper aims to incorporate the traditional mode of classroom observation and in-depth interviews to illuminate the issues from the common scenario from the students' point of view. Firstly, the researcher selected four teachers from the tertiary level and collaborated through the research protocol. This procedure is discussed in the Research Ethics regarding how the researcher reaches the participants. Secondly, the researcher not only contacts them formally to observe their language class but also conducts semi-structured in-depth interviews to collect the primary data. To incorporate the instruments, this research began with classroom observations, and it concluded with in-depth interviews. Classroom observation helps the researcher to identify the real scenario of the class. On one hand, it provides the core concept and the authenticity of the data validated by the researcher. On the other hand, the in-depth interview advocates the classroom environment, practices, techniques, and approaches in prompting students to participate and understand the lesson. For these purposes, the researcher firstly collected the primary data from the classroom observation, and after that, the interview was conducted to collect and justify with detailed information.

Data Analysis

The study employed a qualitative method to analyze the data. Data were collected from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with four teachers, where three teachers were taught EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and one teacher taught Listening and Speaking courses. The average class size consisted of approximately (n=36) students from every classes. Firstly, all of the observation checklists and interview records were reviewed repeatedly to ensure data familiarity and accuracy. Thematic analysis was used to examine the interview data, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). Second, the information was arranged and added in a methodical manner. It first contained information that was created using recurrent ideas about teaching strategies, classroom dynamics, student participation, and opinions of student-led class observation. These data were also categorized to create more general themes that showed recurring trends among participants. Following the development of the theme, information from interviews and classroom observations was triangulated for significant objectives. This process improved the reliability of the results by enabling a comparison between teachers' reported opinions and observed teaching practices. In order to clearly understand the variation of this research, the similarities and differences between the two courses (e.g., EAP, Listening and Speaking) were also analyzed. Ultimately, the themes that were found were analyzed in accordance with the goals of the study. The main goal of analysis was to clarify how student-led observation helps with instructional improvement and teaching assessment in tertiary EFL classrooms.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The results of this study are arranged according to the two research questions and are derived directly from the information obtained using the checklists for student-led class observations. The observations included four tertiary EFL classes. This inquiry looks into how students' metacognitive awareness and language learning strategies are influenced by student-led observation. It investigates whether taking on an observational role improves students' ability to reflect, make strategic decisions, and exercise self-control, leading to more efficient and independent language learning techniques. In tertiary-level EFL classrooms, this question looks at how teachers assess the reliability, applicability, and usefulness of student-led observations. It investigates how instructors view whether these observations offer

trustworthy insights, encourage pedagogical advancement, boost student engagement, and significantly advance the teaching-learning process in higher education environments.

Findings from Classroom Observation

The students' metacognitive awareness and engagement with language learning strategies were directly impacted by the student-led observation, which was made possible by a thorough checklist. The observation process changed students' focus from being infrequent learners to critical analysts of the teaching-learning process by requiring them to concentrate on particular criteria. A metacognitive step is required because lesson objectives, activities, and instructions are all in line with each other. First, the observer needed to comprehend the teachers' goals (e.g., presentation techniques, speaking activities, and practice; story writing, listening, writing) and then assess whether the actions that followed helped achieve these objectives. The observer observed that the activities in Sultana's class, including writing through pictures, listening, and writing tests, were in line with the goals. The exercises revealed a metacognitive deficit in other learners, as evidenced by their writing descriptions of the image rather than the required creative narrative. It showed a clear understanding of the difference between the intended learning outcome and the actual student output by pointing out this error. Furthermore, the observer verified that Rafi's activities (such as writing assignments and scatter diagram demonstrations) aligned with the Writing through Diagram lesson objective. The observer was prompted by the criteria to consider how successful the teaching strategies were.

The 'effective EFL teaching strategies' (modeling, scaffolding) and 'constructive and timely feedback' served as an explicit model for effective learning strategies that students could internalize. In Shohan's class, the observer noted the use of scaffolding, such as stepping in to help a nervous student figure out the key points and encouraging that student by clapping and identifying the keywords for storytelling. This observation explicitly modeled a supportive learning strategy that the student could apply to their own future peer interactions or learning attempts, promoting the positive reinforcement process (Skinner, 1988). The emphasis on constructive and timely feedback caused the observer to pay close attention to the quality of the teacher's responses. For Sultana's class, the observer noted the teacher's feedback on the indication of grammatical errors, such as tense, punctuation, capitalization, voice change, and provided the format of writing a story (i.e., story title, topic sentence, body paragraph, supporting ideas, and conclusion). She also applies the *Sandwich Feedback* to feed-forward the students for better outcomes in the next class.

On the other hand, Rafi provided detailed feedback, including pointing out grammatical errors, appropriate vocabulary, sentence structure errors, and providing alternative ways to write, reinforcing the concept of holistic, targeted language correction. Though he has taken a long time to provide feedback on the lesson or manage the class. Criteria focusing on participation (balanced participation, use of English during tasks) reflect on students' own and peers' engagement. For Shohan, the observer noted that students confidently tried to engage in English with the teacher. The intended language learning approach that encourages the regular use of the target language is subtly mentioned by this observation. According to the observation, students are actively engaging in the effective language pedagogy and improving their metacognitive awareness of the quality of instructional delivery and feedback, as well as desirable classroom practices and effective learning strategies.

The checklist provided detailed, helpful details regarding teaching methods, classroom management, and the effectiveness of the resources. The checklist's framework provided specific insights on key teaching elements, moving past general impressions towards accurate assessments. For Sukur Ali, the observer verified that the presentation's main rubrics were

mentioned in detail, along with information about the presentation's objectives, types, and methods. A thorough explanation of the writing material is provided in Rafi's class, and feedback both validates the teacher's efforts to provide clear instruction and attests to the students' successful reception of it. The observations offered concrete proof of the strategy's application. Certain instructional management strategies are needed for online EFL course components (Chicherina et al. 2020). According to Shohan, the use of a WhatsApp group for consultation and communication, scaffolding through clapping with one finger (an interesting way to tell a story), and connecting the lesson to a movie (Coco) to relate a student's story about a picture of a pet. The teacher can verify and improve the particular scaffolding strategies employed with the help of this thorough record. Rafi, on the other hand, is less proactive when it comes to effective EFL teaching strategies, which is a clear and practical criterion for the teacher to address a perceived deficiency in the use of scaffolding or modeling.

By providing a student-centric perspective that a peer observer might overlook, the student-led observation demonstrated validity in capturing subtle, important aspects of classroom dynamics. The observer offered subtle insights into student engagement. Additionally, Rafi's class feedback indicated that students engaged with the lecture. In some cases, students show a deficiency in participation, demonstrated by the few students who frequently use their phones and partake in side discussions during class. His class had a lot of side conversations and cell phone usage. This observation underscores the importance of recognizing discipline and engagement challenges that directly influence the learning environment in the classroom. Standing beside a female student to encourage equal involvement, Shohan offered helpful feedback and support. From the perspective of the students, it affirms the creation of a positive and respectful educational atmosphere. The checklist provided thorough feedback on the resources and technology. An easily accessible online speaking course platform and materials for learners are essential for the implementation of FCM (Sheerah & Yadav, 2022; Hasan & Ibrahim, 2017). Sultana utilizes the ESL Lab's computer, projector, and sound system for listening activities, which incorporate audio playback. Rafi, in contrast, utilizes Google Classroom and a Multimedia LED TV to captivate students during the lesson presentation.

Findings from Teacher Interview

Findings from four teacher interviews illustrate how student-led observation in EFL classrooms enhances metacognitive awareness and fosters independent language learning strategies. This approach enhances teaching effectiveness and learner independence in tertiary level by shifting from conventional teacher-focused assessments to a collaborative framework that enables students to take on roles as observers and reflectors. Sultana prioritizes systematic teaching approaches and hands-on learning that enhance student preparedness and self-reflection. According to her observations, "students prepare themselves for the next class through the changes in learning strategies through divided skills sessions...". They are in a system to adhere to the tactics. This demonstrates how observation leads to self-monitoring, which is consistent with the paradigm since it gives students a say in how lessons are modified. Sukur Ali's perspectives on student observation demonstrate mutual assessment, encouraging teachers to be self-critical and students to engage in metacognition. Using the (i+1 theory) for peer influence, he emphasizes task-based activities and group work that are adapted to a variety of backgrounds. "Activities help them (students) learn English," he shared as an essential component of studying English as a second language. This validates student feedback for individualized, self-directed learning, thereby supporting the paradigm.

Rafi concentrates on inclusive tactics that overcome cultural barriers, tracking changes in tactics through group projects. He explained, "Students can think later in the class, as well as what the tasks they did inside the class and how these tasks might help them to develop

their skills” as well as, encouraging self-directed learning through technology and feedback. This highlights the importance of observation for metacognitive development and promotes a paradigm in which students assess and modify what they have learned. In order to track confidence and assessment, Shohan emphasizes dismantling psychological barriers and interest-based planning. He employs translanguaging and audiovisual resources, stating, “I attempt to assess their confidence in speaking; the primary goal is to dismantle psychological barriers.” By integrating student reflections into fluid, egalitarian assessments, this illustrates the new model. Results from four teacher interviews reveal varying perspectives on the dependability and significance of student-led observations. Despite expressing worries about bias, dependability, and student knowledge, educators typically acknowledge its capacity to enhance self-reflection and tailor instruction, viewing it as an additional rather than a main assessment method. This framework emphasizes the difficulties of implementation at higher education levels while promoting teacher development via cooperative assessment. Sultana values student feedback during midterm meetings, viewing it as reliable and essential for development. She stated, “Student feedback holds significant value, and we integrate their input since I believe it is quite dependable.” Furthermore, she noted both favorable and unfavorable feedback to enhance materials and techniques. However, she addresses the challenges in the diverse needs of students and suggests more regular observations with the necessary forms for enhanced effectiveness.

Sukur Ali’s observations are valid for student reflection but unreliable for evaluating teaching due to potential bias and students’ incompetence. He mentioned that “I do not view them as a means for enhancing my teaching skills” adding that he appreciates feedback for updating resources, but not for core approaches. To minimize bias, he recommends focusing on overall classroom views, considering this more beneficial for content alteration than for style assessment. Rafi willingly embraces recommendations such as increased speaking activities, as he views feedback as essential and legitimate for personal growth. “Students’ observation always helps me to adopt some new strategies” he says, addressing the difficulties with disorganized student input and large classes. In order to enhance their role in dynamic teaching, he promotes the use of checklists and rubrics for organized mutual evaluation. According to Sohan, teacher-structured feedback is dependable and supports non-hierarchical classrooms and material adaptation. “It does help me a lot because I ask my students what more can I do for you” he says, the importance of comprehending student viewpoints for effectiveness. Unstructured input is one of the challenges that he recommends teacher training, infrastructure upgrades, and less pressure for improved observation utility.

Discussion

Student-led class observation greatly improves EFL tertiary students’ metacognitive awareness and language learning techniques. By assessing lesson alignment, such as Sultana’s writing exercises aligning with objectives, and spotting gaps as well as students’ misinterpreting creative assignments. Observer from class observations showed and indicated reflection over the practices. Reactive disciplinary actions are less necessary when there is a positive teacher-student relationship (Chicherina et al., 2020). While participation criteria emphasized target language use, encouraging strategic engagement, feedback mechanisms such as Sandwich Feedback and holistic corrections modeled self-regulation. A fundamental component of educators’ ongoing professional development is reflective practice (Salih & Omar, 2022). Teacher interviews confirmed with Sultana found structured skills sessions with preparation, such as, “students prepare for the next class, they are in a system to follow the strategies” Sukur Ali stressed task-based activities as important for metacognition, Rafi emphasized post-class reflection on tasks for skill development, and Shohan stressed breaking psychological barriers using audiovisual tools.

For the research questions, teachers viewed student-led observations as both valid and useful, with some caution regarding class settings, class observations provided frequent feedback on pedagogy, such as, clear rubrics in Sukur Ali's presentations and scaffolding in Shohan's storytelling which verified engagement but also pointed out deficiencies, including side talking. According to Sheerah and Yadav (2022), the FCM action questionnaire's use of student surveys and self-reports on their own learning process lends credence to the idea that student feedback is an important evaluation tool. Interviews revealed differing opinions about Sultana's reliability for improvements. Sukur Ali thought it was biased for core teaching but helpful for materials, Rafi appreciated it for adopting strategies, and Shohan thought it was useful for non-hierarchical adaptation when structured. The role of the evaluator has evolved (e.g., student-led) aligns with the broader movement towards inclusive and democratic educational practices (Dan & Li, 2024). Moreover, by weighing the benefits against the challenges of execution, the model promotes collaborative assessment.

Shifting students from passive recipients to active analysts through objective alignment and feedback assessment, student-led observation enhances metacognition, directly addressing the first research theme. Acar et al. (2023) stated that professional development (PD) must be sustainable and integrated into everyday practice through observation. This promotes approaches such as scheduling (pre-class organization) and evaluation (considering involvement), leading to independent learning. Findings for the second research theme suggest that educators regard observations as a trustworthy source of student-focused information. However, they express concerns about their accuracy due to biases and gaps in understanding, positioning them as supplementary resources for adjustments in teaching, such as increased focus on oral skills. To enhance SCL, classroom dialogue must transition from 'teacher-directed' to 'student-involved' approaches (Haile et al., 2024). The results jointly describe the new paradigm as enabling, and in incorporating reflections into evolving EFL evaluation at higher education levels to enhance effectiveness. The incorporation of CT into writing tasks is often limited by educators' views on students' capabilities (Khan et al., 2024; Ullah et al., 2022).

The observations show heightened involvement due to reflective feedback, aligning with Pastini and Lilasari (2023), who contended that student-centered approaches positively affect motivation and lifelong skills. However, Haque (2022) indicated that graduates are deficient in advanced skills due to poor designs, while this study demonstrates that strategic autonomy enables observation bridges to bridge these gaps. This finding is consistent with that of Milon et al. (2023), who also said that TBLT emphasizes student action over form, which is similar to our task-based metacognition. However, the findings contradict those of Al-khresheh (2022), who mentioned ICT supports management without student evaluation, whereas ours prove observation's crucial role in learner-driven improvements, making this paper more vital by filling empirical voids in dual learner-teacher benefits. Digital literacy is a prerequisite for both teachers and students in modern EFL classrooms (Rabbi et al., 2024).

This paper identified a gap by demonstrating how student-led observation develops metacognition, unexplored in prior works, and validates teachers' perceptions of its utility, providing a unified framework linking reflection to evaluation. Facilitating critical thinking (CT) skills is a core requirement of tertiary-level English education. Many teachers struggle to balance grammar instruction with the goal of communicative comprehensibility (Alzubi et al., 2023). It validates the students' awareness of and concerns about teachers' classroom management and engagement. The findings cannot assume generalizability beyond Bangladeshi tertiary EFL contexts, as small sample sizes limit broader cultural or institutional applicability, nor causal links without longitudinal data. This research contributes to metacognitive theory by extending Flavell's model through observation as a tool for self-regulation, and to TBLT by incorporating student evaluation for enhanced autonomy in EFL.

CONCLUSION

This study explored student-led class observation as a new way to evaluate EFL teaching at the tertiary level in Bangladesh. It focused on how this approach affects students' thinking about their own learning and how teachers view its value. Student-led observation positions the student as an 'expert witness' of their own learning (Dan & Li, 2024; Ahmad & Aljohani, 2024). First, the research addressed that student-led observation helps students improve their awareness of how they learn. For instance, when students were in class, they focused on lesson objectives, activities, and feedback. Public universities experience large class sizes, complicating the implementation of active observation and SCL (Haque et al., 2022). Consequently, they paid greater attention to their approaches, like planning in advance and assessing their development. Students noticed similarities between tasks and objectives in their classroom observations, like crafting narratives or giving presentations. Moreover, they recognize helpful techniques such as scaffolding and constructive feedback that they could utilize in their own learning. This was supported by discussions with teachers. Sultana mentioned that structured activities prepare students for class, whereas Sukur Ali indicated that task-oriented work aids in building students' confidence. Moreover, Rafi and Shohan stated that students can develop greater autonomy in their learning by reflecting on their efforts and addressing challenges with resources such as videos. The aim of EFL teaching is to make certain that the teachers' input is comprehensible and clear. This strategy typically enhances students' English skills by shifting their role from passive to active. Additionally, this research could assist pre-service teachers in learning effective classroom management and enhancing their instructional approaches.

Secondly, while educators commonly perceive that student-led observation is effective and advantageous, it is not without its imperfections. As most classroom observations are conducted from a top-down perspective, teachers often feel anxious and lack authentic professional development. Self-regulated, teacher-led, or student-led observation models emphasize collaboration and reflection more than evaluation. The observations provided specific feedback on teaching, including direct instructions and issues of engagement, like side discussions. Educators such as Sultana realized that it served as an effective resource for improving teaching materials. The flipped classroom approach shifts lecture materials to be covered before class, promoting more active learning during class sessions. However, Sukur Ali indicated the possibility of bias arising from the students' lack of experience. Rafi and Shohan valued it for changing approaches, like adding more speaking activities. In summary, while it is most effective when used alongside other evaluations, teachers consider it as a valuable resource for teamwork. These results add information to prior research. In EFL environments, they demonstrate how student reflection and instructor development are related and have positive outcomes for both. The study, though, has a few drawbacks. It only used a small sample of four instructors and their students from one private institution. Thus, the findings might not be applicable to all tertiary schools in Bangladesh or elsewhere. Additionally, the data was obtained from brief interviews and observations, not from longitudinal monitoring. This indicates that we are unable to establish strong cause-and-effect relationships. Lastly, the emphasis was on qualitative aspects, thus there are no figures to properly quantify the variations.

For even better outcomes, universities should provide training for students and instructors in observation techniques, such as checklists. Feedback allows instructors to modify lessons more frequently. Future research might follow students over time and include bigger cohorts in order to see the end results. To promote inclusive teaching, policymakers may include student-led evaluation into EFL courses. Additionally, the procedure may be made easier with the use of blending technology, such as feedback applications. Prior to giving feedback that is based on technology, though, it must be taken into account. Feedback

that is tech-based is often quite kind to all pupils. In this case, to maintain class balance, the feedback should be hybrid in nature. In Bangladesh, these procedures can help make EFL instruction more efficient and student-centered. In conclusion, student-led observation provides a positive avenue. It gives learners power and aids to the instructors. It has the potential to enhance English language instruction at the tertiary level because of its focus on inclusion.

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

This study adhered to established ethical guidelines to protect the rights and well-being of all participants. Formal consent was obtained from the four participating teachers via email after they were briefed on the study's purpose, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms were assigned, and all institutional identifiers were removed. Data from interviews and observations were used exclusively for academic purposes and stored securely. Furthermore, classroom observations were conducted with minimal disruption to the learning environment, and no personal data were collected from students. These measures ensured transparency, integrity, and trustworthiness throughout the research process.

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