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BEING JUST TO EARTH: TOWARDS BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH GREEN LINGUISTICS

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Modern Languages in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Teaching

Department of English and Modern Languages
School of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
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Declaration

I hereby declare that,

The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing a degree at Independent University, Bangladesh. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Sadia Yasmin

2230522

Approval

The thesis titled "BEING JUST TO EARTH: TOWARDS BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH GREEN LINGUISTICS"
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of Autumn, 2025, has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Teaching on 18-12-2025.

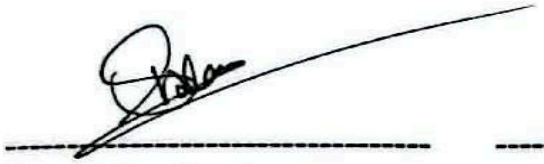
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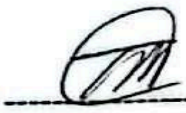
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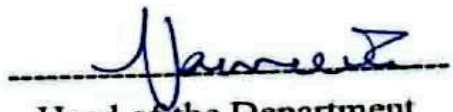


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Ethics Statement

Ethical guidelines were strictly followed to gather information from the participants. In this research, participation was voluntary, and all participants were informed about the study purpose before they took part. Participants' information and responses were kept anonymous. Data relevant to the study were collected and used solely for academic purposes only.

Abstract

This study investigates the integration of environmental discourse (green linguistics) within English Language Teaching (ELT) at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB). The paper examines the foundational English courses ENG 101 (Listening and Speaking) and ENG 102 (Academic Reading and Writing) through a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods approach, to check the availability of sustainability related themes. The data collection process of this study included course outline analysis, 28 undergraduate student surveys, and semi-structured interviews with three undergraduate students. Findings reveal a significant "green gap" in the integration of environmental themes which is absent from the course outlines of the courses despite students' high awareness of climate issues (82.1% agree humans must live in harmony with nature) and showed strong desire for environmentally focused English instruction (85.7% of the students agree that environmental issues should be included in English courses). The course outline analysis demonstrates systematic ignorance of ecological discourse, with course content prioritizing market oriented skills and consumerist narratives. Based on these findings, the study proposes a practicable framework for integrating green linguistics into existing ELT courses through content modification, pedagogical reframing, and alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This research contributes to the growing field of ecolinguistics and sustainability education, offering practical insights for curriculum developers and educators seeking to evolve ELT into a platform for ecological consciousness in Bangladesh's climate vulnerable context.

Keywords: Green linguistics, ecolinguistics, English Language Teaching, sustainability education, Bangladesh, course outline analysis, environmental discourse

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to those who stood beside me during my undergraduate journey and believed in my ability to successfully complete this degree. Their constant encouragement, motivation, and unwavering support, has provided me strength and has made this achievement possible. Each word of reassurance and confidence has contributed meaningfully from the beginning of my academic journey to the completion of this dissertation. I also dedicate this thesis to myself for pushing through countless nights of distress and choosing not to give up during the most challenging moments. This thesis stands as a reflection of how I have been consistent in my patience, perseverance, dedication, and commitment to my degree throughout.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The twenty-first century opposes the human ecosystem with an unmatched environmental crisis. Climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, and pollution have accelerated to an extent that it threatens the very foundations of human civilization. In recent decades, the accelerating global climate crisis has increased the need for sustainable practices across most of the sectors of human activity, including education. According to Whorf (1956), “The structure of the language one habitually uses influences the manner in which one understands his environment. The picture of the universe shifts from tongue to tongue.”. This hypothesis shows that to a certain extent, language can be responsible in shaping thought and influencing human behavior, therefore, as a reliable tool to stimulate environmental awareness, linguistics has been highly recognized and occupies a powerful scope. This perspective has influenced the concept of *green linguistics* also known as eco-linguistics, which finds the relationship between language and nature. It also helps explore how through language ecological consciousness and sustainable living can be embedded among human thoughts and further actions.

Bangladesh stands at the frontline of the global climate crisis. The country faces disproportionate vulnerability to climate change impacts, including rising sea levels, increased cyclonic frequency, river erosion, and agricultural disruption from salinity intrusion (Minar et al., 2013). The World Bank projects that by 2050, one in seven Bangladeshis could be displaced by climate change, creating approximately 13.3 million internal climate refugees. Consequently, integrating environmental awareness into national consciousness is not merely an academic exercise priority but also an existential imperative for Bangladesh's survival and a sociopolitical necessity..

In this context, English Language Teaching occupies a strategically powerful position due to its widespread use as a medium of instruction at the private universities of Bangladesh. English

functions as a global lingua franca in the majority of the sectors including commerce, higher education, international diplomacy, and climate negotiations. Accordingly, ELT courses constitute the primary gateway through which students develop the communicative competence required for professional advancement (Rahman et al., 2019). Moreover, mandatory foundational English courses are completed by all undergraduate students regardless of their academic major, providing a universal platform for raising consciousness.

However, primary observations show a disconnection. Despite Bangladesh's acute environmental vulnerability and the global recognition of education's role in sustainability (reflected in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4: Quality Education and SDG 13: Climate Action), ELT curricula in Bangladeshi private universities appear to remain rooted in traditional paradigms only. The traditional curricula often prioritizes linguistic accuracy, fluency, and skills related to business communication while opposing less emphasis on the ecological context of human existence.

This study serves as a critical intervention, proposing that the ELT classrooms should be reimagined as a space for "green pedagogy" where linguistic development is not limited to language skills only, but it bridges language with real world issues. Classrooms can be catered in a manner that mutually regulates skill development and ecological consciousness. By examining the curriculum at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), a leading private institution, this research seeks to illuminate the extent of environmental ignorance in ELT and to develop a practical implementation for integrating green linguistics into existing courses.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although sustainability education has gained global recognition in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the integration of green linguistics within ELT remains significantly underexplored in the Global South, particularly in Bangladesh. The current educational landscape reveals a "green gap" , a disparity between students' high level of environmental vulnerability and lived experience with climate impacts, and the low level of environmental discourse present in their foundational education.

A critical examination of existing course materials, specifically the course outlines for the foundational English courses ENG 101 (English Listening and Speaking Skills) and ENG 102 (English Reading and Composition) at Independent University, Bangladesh, suggests that environmental themes are absent or marginalized in core levels. The syllabi focus heavily on "market-oriented" skills (elevator pitches, product presentations, and academic argumentation) but have no inclusion of activities that help anchor these skills in the pressing ecological realities of students' lives. This absence constitutes a form of linguistic "erasure," where the discussions related to the natural world are neglected in the foundation of success and academic proficiency (Stibbe, 2015).

Furthermore, students in Bangladesh possess tacit knowledge of environmental issues due to their lived experiences with floods, cyclones, air pollution, and heatwaves, but often lack the English linguistic repertoire to discuss these experiences, analyze root causes, or propose solutions on effective platforms. Teachers are often constrained by rigid curricula, institutional pressures, exam-oriented education systems, and lack of training in environmental pedagogy, may feel ill-equipped to bridge this gap, defaulting to "safe" topics that reinforce consumerist ideologies rather than challenging them (López & de Oliveira, 2019).

This study addresses the urgent need to systematically examine this curricular void and to develop a framework for integrating green linguistics into Bangladesh's tertiary ELT sector. Without such integration, both teachers and students become comfortable with limiting language pedagogy to traditional curricula only, while ELT risks perpetuating a disconnect between language education and Bangladeshi students' comprehensibility regarding natural world contexts, thereby missing a critical opportunity to cultivate the eco-literate global citizens necessary for addressing the climate crisis (BarbasRhoden, 2024).

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to investigate the status of environmental and sustainability themes within the ELT curriculum at a leading private university in Bangladesh and to propose a pedagogical framework for the meaningful integration of green linguistics.

Specific objectives include:

1. To critically audit the existing ELT curriculum (ENG 101 and ENG 102 at IUB) to quantify and qualify the presence or absence of environmental themes and sustainability-related discourses.
2. To analyze undergraduate student perceptions, awareness, and attitudes regarding the relevance of environmental themes in their English language learning process, and to identify their preferred modes of engagement with sustainability topics.
3. To synthesize findings from curriculum analysis and student perceptions to design a feasible, context-specific framework for integrating green linguistics into existing syllabi without compromising linguistic learning outcomes.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is guided by three interrelated research questions:

RQ1: To what extent are environmental or sustainability-related themes (green linguistics) present or absent in the existing English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum and materials at IUB?

RQ2: What are students' perceptions, awareness, and attitudes regarding the inclusion of environmental themes in English courses, and what types of sustainability-related content or activities do they consider meaningful for integration?

RQ3: Based on the identified curriculum gaps and student perspectives, what are feasible and meaningful ways to integrate green linguistics and environmental discourse into existing ELT courses at IUB?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research explores across multiple dimensions including theoretical, pedagogical, institutional, and societal.

This study contributes to the emerging field of ecolinguistics through the application of Stibbe's (2015) "stories we live by" framework in the particular context of Bangladeshi tertiary ELT. It extends existing ecolinguistic scholarship beyond textbook analysis to comprehensive curriculum audit, demonstrating how Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), assessment strategies, and pedagogical activities collectively may create a scope or erase environmental consciousness.

This study provides educators with a practical roadmap for "Green ELT," demonstrating that environmental themes can enhance rather than distract from language acquisition. By providing authentic, culturally and emotionally resonant content, green linguistics can increase student's motivation and cognitive engagement which are two of the key factors in successful language learning (Cates, 2016). In such cases, teachers are heavily dependent on the curriculum developers and university administrators. This study also offers a detailed discussion of the current gaps and provides probable examples of how learning outcomes and activity descriptions can be rewritten to introduce and ensure the inclusion of environmental dimensions. This aligns institutional practices with national and international sustainability commitments (SDGs), contributing to universities' broader missions of social contribution.

This study positions ELT as a key domain in fostering the "eco-literate" citizens necessary for Bangladesh in climate adaptation and mitigation.

The findings also can be used to form policy discussions at the UGC level with a view towards integrating sustainability education into all disciplines of higher education in Bangladesh.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focuses specifically on Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), one of the leading private universities of Bangladesh. The analysis is based on two foundational English courses at the university, ENG 101 (English Listening and Speaking Skills) and ENG 102

(English for Academic Reading and Writing). These courses are mandatory for all undergraduate students regardless of their academic major. This focus ensures that findings represent the "common core" experience of the student body at the university.

The limitation of this study is that it does not extend to the exploration of the advanced English courses, English major courses at IUB, or ELT practices at public universities. Additionally, while the research acknowledges the importance of teacher perspectives in pedagogy of English integrating sustainability and environment related themes, the primary data collection focuses on student perceptions and curriculum documents due to scope limitations.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Green Linguistics/Ecolinguistics

The study of the relationship between language and the environment, examining how linguistic patterns reflect and shape human interactions with the natural world (Stibbe, 2015).

Curriculum Erasure

The systematic absence or marginalization of particular topics, perspectives, or voices within educational materials (Stibbe, 2015).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

A set of 17 global goals established by the United Nations in 2015 to address social, economic, and environmental challenges by 2030.

Green Pedagogy/Ecopedagogy

An educational approach that integrates environmental consciousness and ecological literacy into teaching and learning practices (Freire, 1970; Kahn, 2010)

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

The study is grounded upon an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that explores Ecolinguistics, Critical Pedagogy, and Sociocultural Theory. These frameworks collectively illustrate how language dimensions shape ecological perception, how educational platforms can embed consciousness among learners, and how learning is socially moderated. It also provides a comprehensive lens through which the absence of environmental discourse in English language teaching (ELT) can be examined. Ecolinguistics provides analytical tools to deconstruct how language forms ecological realities and maintains public silence on environmental issues. Critical pedagogy and ecopedagogy informs the political and ethical dimensions of education and discusses the role of ELT in developing informed learners about current environmental crises. Sociocultural theory convinces how learners learn both linguistic and ecological new meanings mediated through social interaction. SDGs help to frame the study within a global educational and sustainability agenda. By integrating these complementary perspectives, the framework enables a comprehensive and holistic understanding of how language, education, society, and sustainability intersect in the Bangladeshi ELT context.

2.1.1 Ecolinguistics and the "Stories We Live By"

The primary theoretical lens of the paper is **Ecolinguistics**, particularly focusing on Arran Stibbe's (2015) "stories we live by" framework. In this framework Stibbe argues that language does not simply describe reality but actively constructs it. Within cultures, there are certain cognitive ideologies, metaphors, frames, and narratives that are repeated so often that they become unseen "stories" guiding human behavior and perception in that particular culture.

Among the three story types, ‘Destructive Stories’ were identified as narratives that encourage ecological destruction. Example: "economic growth is the primary measure of progress" (Stibbe, 2015, p. 143). In ELT contexts, destructive stories might be portrayed in

lessons that equate "success" solely with materialistic achievements or professional development. It may also impose the anthropocentric assumption that claims nature as the existence to primarily be just a resource for human exploitation.

Narratives that encourage sustainability and ecological well-being, such as "nature as a community of interconnected life" or "well-being as distinct from consumption" are categorized as ‘Beneficial Stories’ (Stibbe, 2015, p. 156). These stories make a shift from humanitarian perspective towards ecocentrism, and promote respect for ecological systems along with the recognition of humans, rather than separate from the natural world.

Another critical concept for this study, erasure refers to the linguistic phenomenon whereby important aspects of reality are systematically suppressed or ignored in discourse. In educational texts, erasure often manifests as the treatment of animals as machines or products, ecosystems as passive backdrops for human drama, or the complete absence of environmental themes from curriculum (Stibbe, 2015, p. 87).

Stibbe's framework provides eight specific "stories" for ecolinguistic analysis: ideology, framing, metaphor, evaluation, identity, conviction, erasure, and salience. This study employs these analytical categories to "read" the IUB curriculum, examining not only what is present but what has been missing.

The theoretical foundation of ecolinguistics by Stibbe can be traced back to earlier research by Halliday (1990), who argued that the way we think about and discuss about the world through language has real effects on the environment. Fill and Mühlhäusler (2001) added to this foundation, exploring how discourse patterns either promote ecological responsibility or support unsustainable ideologies. By applying ecolinguistics approach specifically to the Bangladeshi ELT context, this study expands further on this rich theoretical tradition.

2.1.2 Critical Pedagogy and Ecopedagogy

The study draws upon Critical Pedagogy, originating with Paulo Freire's seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). Freire posited that education is never neutral, it either facilitates integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and brings about conformity, or it becomes "the practice of freedom," the means by which people deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world (Freire, 1970, p. 34).

In critical pedagogy, Paulo Freire outlines two contrasting approaches to education. The banking model views teaching as the transfer of fixed knowledge from teacher to student, where learners are expected to receive information passively. In this approach, almost like a teacher-centered approach, students are considered as empty vessels, where learning becomes a process of memorization rather than understanding. This model discourages asking questions and reinforces accepting the existing social and educational structures.

In contrast, problem-posing education exhibits learning as a shared and dialogic process among teachers and students. Engaging in discussions with real issues encountered in everyday life and studying them together. This approach promotes learners to think critically about their surroundings and to question ideas that have been predominantly embedded into their ideologies. Learning works as a tool for awareness and transformation rather than simple skill acquisition.

Ecopedagogy expands this concept by pivoting environmental concerns into educational practice. It examines curricula that do not emphasize ecological issues and encourage classroom settings where students can critically study environmental problems and their social causes. In the context of ELT, ecopedagogy proposes the use of English not only as a means of communication but also as a way to analyze how language subconsciously shapes nature, development, and sustainability. For instance, students can analyze environmental texts, identify misleading sustainability claims, or reflect on how global climate narratives often marginalize perspectives from countries like Bangladesh.

From this perspective, the limited presence of environmental themes in ELT curricula is not merely an error, rather a political concern. Critical pedagogy helps synthesize this issue as a result of educational priorities that prioritizes language proficiency only while ignoring critical engagement with real-world issues. This lens allows the study to comprehensively explore how ELT can empower learners beyond traditional content and create scope for green linguistics within the curricula of the existing courses.

2.1.3 Sociocultural Theory

Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (SCT) offers the lens for understanding how green linguistics can be learned and internalized in the ELT classroom. SCT is based on the idea that the fundamental understanding of humans does not happen in isolation. Instead it develops and takes place through social interactions influenced by cultural tools, activities, and concepts (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore,language plays an influential role in how learners perceive the world around them.

One key concept of Sociocultural Theory is mediation. Language functions as a psychological tool through which learners interpret reality. When students are introduced to new environmental vocabulary, metaphors, and narratives, these linguistic tools help reshape how they think about nature. For example, describing forests as living communities rather than as resources can influence how students conceptually relate to the environment. In this way, green linguistic choices mediate a more ecological way of thinking.

Another important concept is the Zone of Proximal Development. Learning is most effective when students are supported in tasks they cannot yet complete on their own. In a green ELT context, guidance comes not only in the form of language support but also ecological understanding. Through discussion, modeling, and structured tasks, learners gradually gain the ability to express complex environmental ideas in English with greater confidence.

Sociocultural Theory also emphasizes that learning is situated within specific social and cultural contexts. For Bangladeshi students, environmental issues such as air pollution in Dhaka, the vulnerability of the Sundarbans, or climate-induced migration are part of everyday reality. When English lessons engage with these familiar issues, language learning becomes more meaningful and relevant than when it is limited to abstract grammar exercises.

Taken together, Sociocultural Theory provides a strong pedagogical foundation for green linguistics. Environmental themes are not treated as additional content but as meaningful contexts through which language is learned, practiced, and internalized. This perspective supports the integration of sustainability into ELT as a natural and effective approach to language education.

2.1.4 The UN Sustainable Development Goals Framework

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, offer a global framework that links education directly to sustainability. Among these goals, two are particularly relevant to this study. The first is SDG 4, which focuses on Quality Education. Its Target 4.7 highlights the importance of ensuring that all learners gain the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. This includes education for sustainable lifestyles and the ability to act responsibly toward the environment. The second is SDG 13, Climate Action, which emphasizes raising awareness and building capacity for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and early warning.

By placing green linguistics within the SDG framework, this study emphasizes that integrating environmental themes into ELT is not optional. Instead, it is a core educational responsibility that aligns with global commitments. The SDGs provide both legitimacy and urgency to the inclusion of sustainability in English language curricula, framing environmental education as an essential part of quality education rather than an extra or supplementary topic.

2.2 Green Linguistics and Environmental Education: Global Perspectives

Globally, the integration of sustainability into language education has evolved from a niche interest to a central pedagogical concern. This section reviews key scholarship demonstrating the viability and necessity of green linguistics in ELT.

2.2.1 Pioneering Work in Global Education and ELT

Kip Cates emerged as a pioneer in advocating for "Global Education" within ELT during the 1990s. In his influential work, Cates (1990, 2009) argued that language teachers have a moral responsibility to teach "for a better world," not merely to impart linguistic skills devoid of ethical context. The interconnected goals for global education should include understanding of the current world crisis (poverty, political conflict, environmental degradation, etc). Students should also be equipped to analyze and address these problems. Awareness should be raised among

students to encourage being empathetic and respectful towards diversity. Most importantly, students must have the willingness to work towards bringing positive change. Cates demonstrated that there is a promising scope for these goals to be integrated into language teaching through careful content selection, pedagogical approaches, and classroom activities that encourage students to use English for meaningful communication about global issues rather than for purely transactional or academic purposes only.

2.2.2 Content-Based Instruction and Sustainability

Research has shown that integrating environmental themes through Content-Based Instruction (CBI) enhances rather than detracts from language acquisition. A study by Brinton et al. (1989) established that CBI allows language to be learned through meaningful content rather than as an isolated skill. It also promotes deeper cognitive engagement and better retention than traditional structural approaches. Application of sustainability through CBI provides authentic contexts for language use. Students learning English through environmental topics engage with complex texts, practice critical thinking skills, develop specialized vocabulary, and produce meaningful written and oral discourse, all while building ecological literacy.

2.2.3 Teacher Perspectives and Implementation Challenges

While theoretical support for integrating sustainability into ELT is strong, empirical research reveals implementation challenges. López and de Oliveira (2019) conducted a comprehensive study of English language teachers' beliefs and practices regarding environmental topics. Their findings revealed that there is an imbalance between beliefs and practice (87% of surveyed teachers believed environmental topics were important, but only 34% regularly incorporated them into lessons). One of the reasons behind this reluctance is lack of appropriate materials, insufficient training in environmental pedagogy, perceived conflict with standardized curriculum requirements, and time constraints. This research underscores that curricular change requires not only materials and training but also institutional support and policy frameworks that legitimize environmental education as a core rather than peripheral concern.

2.3 ELT and Sustainability in Bangladesh: Context and Challenges

Bangladesh's unique position as a nation vulnerable to climate change effects, creates urgent needs of addressing, despite the specific challenges for integrating sustainability into education. Integrated learning has not been popular in Bangladesh due to negligence and lack of accountability among policy makers. Implementation challenges also work as a strong barrier. Despite all, the integrated learning environment is evolving, while experts research on ways to successfully activate these ideas.

2.3.1 ELT in Bangladesh: Current State

English education in Bangladesh has historically prioritized grammar-translation methods and exam preparation over communicative competence and critical thinking (Rahman et al., 2019). Recent reforms have introduced more communicative approaches, but content remains largely disconnected from Bangladeshi realities. Hamid and Baldauf (2008), trace the evolution of English education in Bangladesh, noting tensions between Instrumental Goals (English for economic advancement and social mobility), Educational Goals (English for critical thinking and global citizenship), and Cultural goals (Maintaining Bengali identity while accessing global knowledge). This tension creates space for integrating environmental themes, as climate change represents a global issue requiring local action; a perfect nexus of the local and global.

2.3.2 Existing Research on Environmental Themes in Bangladeshi ELT

Recent studies have begun examining environmental content in Bangladeshi English textbooks. Onee, K. A. et al. (2024) analyzed secondary-level EFL textbooks ("English for Today" series) and found moderate presence of content that addressed environmental topics. Although there is moderate presence of such content, it was typically confined to reading comprehension exercises without follow-up critical discussion or action-oriented activities. Whereas activities for speaking and writing tasks rarely developed environmental readings, representing missed opportunities for meaningful language practice, etc. Other experts have studied the same issue and extended this analysis to tertiary education, finding that

university-level English courses focus predominantly on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and business communication, with environmental themes nearly absent (Akter, Dr., 2025). Their study revealed a gap in the tertiary level education where eventually the environmental content that existed at secondary levels disappears at university, leaving students with a void in their advanced language training precisely when they have the cognitive and linguistic capacity for sophisticated environmental discourse.

2.4 Student Perceptions and Attitudes

Contemporary studies focus on shifting from teacher-led approach to learner-centered approach. For effective curriculum reformation, understanding students' perspective is crucial. Contextually, Bangladeshi students have high environmental awareness due to direct exposure to climate impacts. Bangladeshi youth demonstrate surface level understanding of climate change causes and effects, due to lived experience with floods, cyclones, and heatwaves. However, this awareness rarely translates into educational content, creating frustration among students who perceive a disconnect between curriculum and reality. Due to the absence of conscious awareness, the majority of the students may take climate change issues lightly, or not think critically regarding the consequences of their actions that worsen conditions.

2.5 Gaps in the Literature

Although sustainability is increasingly addressed in global ELT scholarship, research focusing specific to Bangladesh's (tertiary level) private education institutions remains limited. Most existing studies concentrate on secondary-level textbooks, leaving a gap in understanding how sustainability can be integrated across full tertiary curricula, including course learning outcomes, assessment methods, and pedagogical strategies. While some research highlights the need for environmental content in language teaching, there are few concrete, context-specific frameworks for achieving this, especially in resource-constrained settings. In addition, student perspectives on green linguistics in Bangladeshi universities remain largely underexplored,

limiting insights into how learners perceive, engage with, and could benefit from integrating ecological themes into their English learning.

This study addresses these gaps by providing a comprehensive curriculum analysis of IUB's foundational English language courses, foregrounding student perspectives through mixed-methods data collection, and developing an applicable implementation framework supported by ecolinguistic theory and critical pedagogy.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a concurrent (qualitative-dominant) mixed-methods design (Creswell & Clark, 2017), integrating both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously to provide a comprehensive understanding of the "green gap" in IUB's ELT curriculum. The research design comprises three interconnected components that together provide a comprehensive understanding of the study's focus. First, a qualitative document analysis (Bowen, 2009) is conducted to examine the ENG 101 and ENG 102 course outlines through an ecolinguistic lens, focusing on Stibbe's (2015) analytical framework. Through this analysis, the identification of both the presence and absence of environmental discourses within the existing curriculum has been done. Second, a quantitative survey (structured questionnaire) is administered (Weber, 1990)to measure student's environmental awareness, attitudes toward sustainability in ELT, and preferences regarding environmental content, with a total of 28 participants. Lastly, semi-structured interviews (Albaret and Deas, 2023) are carried out with three students to gain deeper insights into their perceptions, experiences, and suggestions for meaningfully integrating green linguistics into English language courses.

The purpose of using this mixed-methods approach is to triangulate findings, and to ensure that curriculum-level observations are validated by student experiences and that statistical trends are enriched by narrative depth. This design allows the study to answer not only the gaps that exist but why they matter to students and how they might be addressed.

3.2 Research Context and Participants

The study was conducted at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), a leading private university in Dhaka established in 1993. IUB follows the North American liberal arts education

model and uses English as the medium of instruction across all programs. The university serves approximately 9,000 students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

The courses examined are, ENG 101 (English Listening and Speaking Skills) and ENG 102 (English for Academic Reading and Writing) were selected because they are mandatory for all undergraduate students regardless of major, ensuring findings represent the common educational experience.

28 undergraduate students enrolled in ENG 101 and ENG 102 during Autumn 2025 semester, were involved in the research as respondents. Among the 28 students, 22 are first-year students, and 6 are second-year students. From the group of respondents, three students were selected through purposive sampling to represent diverse perspectives.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

3.3.1 Document Analysis Protocol

The course outlines for ENG 101 and ENG 102 were examined through an ecolinguistic content analysis framework adapted from Stibbe (2015). The analysis began with a careful and systematic reading of all curriculum components, including the course rationale, objectives, course learning outcomes, weekly topics, and assessment methods. This initial stage aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of how language learning goals are framed within the curriculum.

Identification and frequency count of environmental terms such as *nature*, *environment*, *sustainability*, *climate*, *ecology*, *pollution*, and *conservation* were noted to determine the visibility of ecological themes. Following this, a thematic analysis was conducted using Stibbe's eight analytical categories: ideology, framing, metaphor, evaluation, identity, conviction, erasure, and salience. Based on these categories, the course content was then classified as reflecting either destructive stories, beneficial stories, or instances of erasure.

This structured and transparent analytical process ensured a rigorous and replicable examination of the underlying ecological ideologies embedded within the curriculum.

3.3.2 Student Survey Questionnaire

A 14-item questionnaire was developed comprising:

Section A: Demographics (gender, year of study)

Section B: Environmental awareness and values (6-point Likert scale items):

Items 1-3: General environmental beliefs

Items 4-10: Attitudes toward integrating environmental themes in English education

Items assessing agreement with statements such as "Learning English through environmental topics makes lessons more meaningful" and "English can help me participate in global discussions about sustainability"

Section C: Open-ended questions (addressed in interviews):

1. How can English classes help students become more environmentally aware?
2. What types of environmental content would you like to see?
3. What materials and activities would be most engaging?

3.3.3 Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

The semi-structured interview questions were designed to explore four key areas related to students' experiences and perceptions. First, the interviews examined students' awareness of environmental challenges and their sense of personal responsibility toward ecological issues. Second, participants were invited to reflect on their experiences with environmental content, or the absence of such content, in their current English language courses. Third, the interviews explored students' preferences regarding the integration of sustainability into ELT, including the types of topics, activities, and materials they would find engaging and meaningful. Finally, students were asked to consider how different language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) could be effectively connected to sustainability-related themes within English classes.

Interviews lasted around 20-30 minutes, were conducted in English, audio-recorded with consent, and transcribed for analysis. The transcriptions were reviewed by the respondents to avoid chances of misinterpretation, before being used for analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

The quantitative survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. These measures were used to identify overall trends in students' environmental awareness, attitudes, and content preferences. To enhance clarity and accessibility, the results were presented through tables and pie charts, allowing patterns in the data to be easily visualized (Weber, 1990).

The qualitative data, comprising both curriculum documents and interview transcripts, were analyzed using thematic analysis following the approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This method enabled the identification of recurring patterns, themes, and meanings related to the presence, absence, and interpretation of environmental discourse within ELT contexts.

Finally, the quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated through an integrated analytical approach. In this process, statistical trends from the survey data were interpreted alongside qualitative insights from document analysis and interviews. This integration allowed the numerical results to be explained and enriched by participants' narratives, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the research questions.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity, multiple data sources (documents, surveys, interviews) were triangulated to support the findings. The transcripts were reviewed by the interview participants to avoid misinterpretation of data during transcription. Preliminary findings were shared and discussed with ELT faculty and students who are not involved in the study for feedback. Theoretical frameworks were consistently applied throughout the analysis to make the study more reliable.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

All participants responding to the survey questionnaire and interview protocol were provided with an information note explaining the study's purpose, voluntary participation, right to withdraw, and data usage. Participant's consent was obtained before participation.

Confidentiality was maintained and protected through keeping participants' identities as pseudonyms. Survey responses were anonymized. Audio recordings were stored securely and will be destroyed after three years.

Data collection was scheduled to minimize disruption to students' academic responsibilities. No course grades were affected by participation or non-participation.

All the data collected has affiliations with the study. No irrelevant information was gathered. Data has been collected and purposefully utilized for academic purposes only.

3.7 Limitations

Due to time constraints, the relatively small sample (n=28 for survey, n=3 for interviews) limits generalizability. However, the study prioritizes depth over breadth, providing rich qualitative insights that are transferable to similar contexts.

The study draws attention to only one single institution, focusing exclusively on IUB. As a result the findings may not represent all private universities in Bangladesh. However, IUB's status as a leading institution makes it a significant case study.

Survey and interview data rely on self-reports, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Triangulation with curriculum analysis helps mitigate this limitation.

The study was conducted within a very short duration. Data were collected during one semester, potentially missing variations across different terms or years.

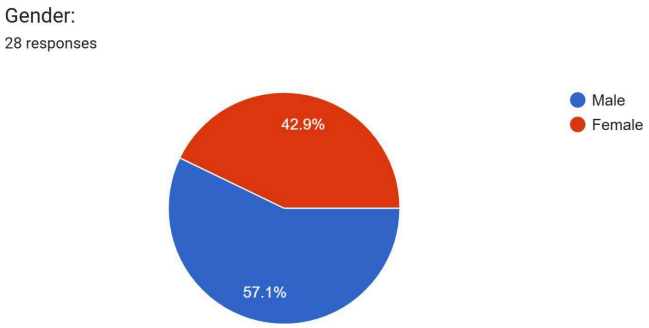
Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into green linguistics in Bangladeshi ELT and establishes a methodology for future research.

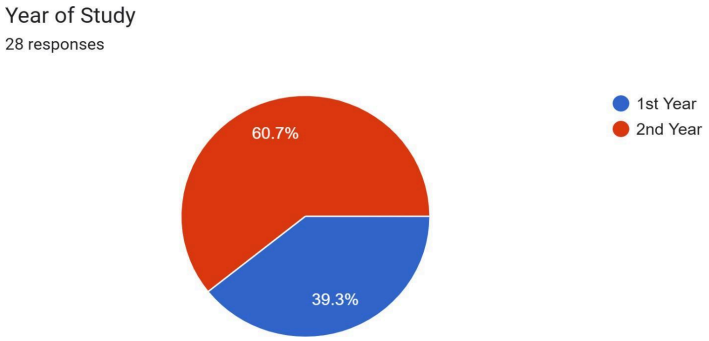
Chapter 4

Findings and Discussion

4.1 Curriculum Analysis (The Absence of Environmental Discourse)

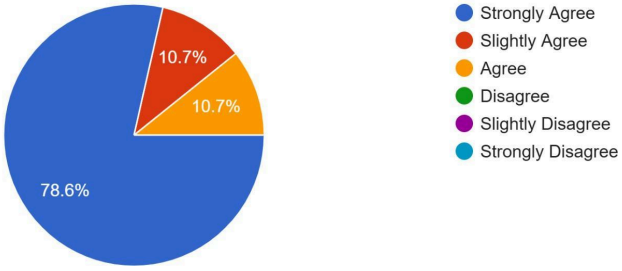
Analysis of the ENG 101 and ENG 102 course outlines reveals a profound and systematic ignorance of environmental themes being explicitly mentioned in course outlines, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria. The data below shows a high level of awareness among the students who believe that both humans and nature should be protected equally. They also acknowledge their responsibility as an individual to contribute towards sustaining our environment.





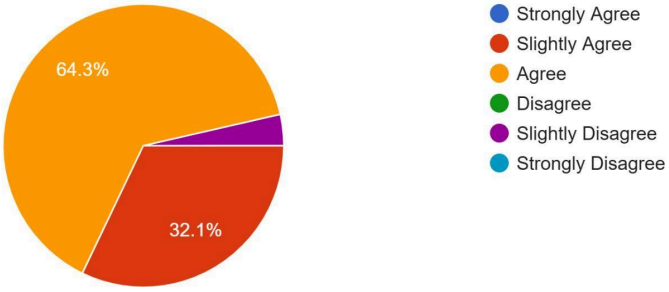
1. Humans must live in harmony with nature to survive.

28 responses



2. Protecting the environment is as important as economic growth.

28 responses



3. I feel personally responsible for helping to solve environmental problems.

28 responses

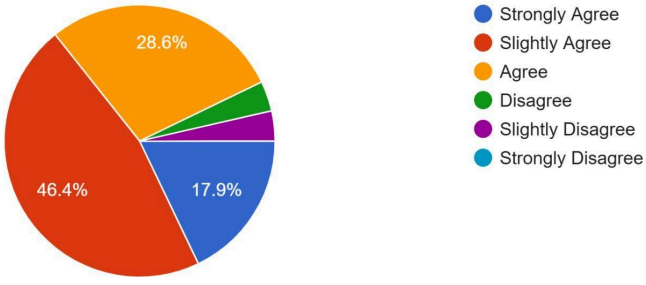


Figure: Data distribution of Section A and B.

The above data demonstrates students' interest and awareness towards the environment. This gives a reason to analyze to what extent are environmental or sustainability-related themes (green linguistics) present or absent in the existing English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum and materials at IUB?

4.1.1 ENG 101: English Listening and Speaking Skills

ENG 101 aims to "improve freshmen students' English language skills for communication in everyday situations in an academic setting." The 12-week course emphasizes functional communication, pronunciation, and public speaking.

Keyword Analysis

A systematic search of the entire course outline is discussed below:

1. Environmental keywords (environment, nature, climate, sustainability, ecology, pollution, conservation, green): no occurrences found.
2. Market/business keywords (product, presentation, business, corporate, consumer): few occurrences found (4).
3. The word "academic" appears 11 times; "communication" appears 15 times; "environment/sustainability" appears 0 times.

Week-by-Week Ecolinguistic Analysis:

Week	Topic	Ecolinguistic Analysis
Week 1	Introduction, Personal Elevator Pitch	**Destructive Story—Market Identity:** The "elevator pitch" metaphor originates from corporate culture, framing students as "products" to be marketed in 30-60 seconds. This reinforces neoliberal ideology: *value is determined by marketability*. Complete erasure of students' ecological identity or connection to place.

Week 2	Greetings and Small Talk (polite requests, asking/giving directions)	**Missed Opportunity—Erasure:** "Small talk" is framed purely as social lubricant for academic/professional contexts. No acknowledgment that weather (climate), food (agriculture), or surroundings (ecology) are common small talk topics that could connect language practice to environmental awareness.
Week 3	Small Talk (expressing opinion, making suggestions); Class Test 1	**Neutral Content—Potential Underutilization:** Skills of "expressing opinion" and "making suggestions" are ideal for discussing environmental issues, yet no environmental topics are suggested.
Week 8	Product Presentation, Group Discussion	**Destructive Story—Consumerism:** Students explicitly asked to present a "product." This normalizes the production-consumption cycle without critique of environmental costs, waste generation, or resource extraction. Reinforces the story: *prosperity comes from consumption* (Stibbe, 2015, p. 143).
Week 10	Signposting in Presentation	**Form Over Content:** Focus is purely structural (how to organize presentations). No specification of presentation content, missing opportunity to require presentations on sustainability solutions or environmental issues.

Table 1: Week-by-Week Ecolinguistic Analysis of ENG101 Course Outline

Course Learning Outcomes Analysis

The seven CLOs emphasize communication skills but make no reference to sustainability:

1. CLO 1: "Understand the use of a variety of expressions for effective communication (social and academic)". It is nowhere mentioned to include content related to environment or sustainability.

2. CLOs 3-6: Focus on communication strategies, language accuracy, and public speaking. No specific guidelines for topic selection.
3. CLO 7: "Produce an academic presentation by synthesizing ideas from various sources". Environmental and sustainability related themes can be easily integrated.

Assessment Strategy Analysis

1. Class Test 1 (Week 3): Pair work on small talk.
2. Presentation (Week 11): Develops "public speaking skills" (15% of grade)
3. Midterm Speaking Exam: Pair work
4. Final Speaking Viva: Content unspecified

ENG 101 constructs a linguistic area where success means pitching, marketing, productivity means creating products for consumption, and communication skills serve primarily academic and professional advancement. The natural world is completely erased in the learning outcomes, neither as topic, concern, nor context. This represents what Stibbe calls "convenienceerasure": the systematic deletion of inconvenient realities (environmental crisis) that might complicate narratives of progress and prosperity.

4.1.2 ENG 102: English for Academic Reading and Writing

ENG 102 aims to "equip students with reading and writing skills required for university level education." The course helps to train students in scanning, skimming, note-taking, paraphrasing, and academic paragraph writing.

Keyword Analysis

1. Environmental keywords: 0 occurrences
2. Academic process keywords (scanning, skimming, paraphrasing, citation): 22 occurrences
3. Content descriptor keywords (argument, comparison, synthesis): 9 occurrences

Week-by-Week Analysis:

Week	Topic	Ecolinguistic Analysis
Weeks 2-5	Scanning, Decoding Meaning, Identifying Keywords, Skimming, Note Taking	**Erasure Through Content Neutrality:** Skills are taught without content specification. Standard academic texts used for practice typically privilege abstract concepts (economy, policy, technology) over ecological realities.
Weeks 6-7	One Sentence Summary	**Missed Opportunity:** Summary skills could be practiced on climate reports (e.g., IPCC summaries), connecting reading skills to urgent global data. Instead, content remains unspecified.
Week 13-15	Paraphrasing, Citation and Referencing	**Technocratic Focus:** Emphasis on form (APA style) rather than substance. Critical ecopedagogy would encourage researching sources giving voice to marginalized human and non-human communities.
Weeks 16-22	Writing Paragraphs (Topic Sentence, Support, Conclusion), Argumentative Paragraph, Comparison/Contrast Paragraph	**Content Vacuum:** Students learn paragraph structures but topics are unspecified or left to student choice. Without prompts, students typically choose "safe" topics (technology, education, uniforms) rather than complex existential threats like climate change.

Table 2: Week-by-Week Analysis of ENG102 Course Outline

Course Learning Outcomes Analysis

1. CLO 1: "Understand the strategies of academic reading". (Strategies segregated from content)
2. CLO 5: "Write different types of academic paragraphs" (Focus on type only and no focus on content.)
3. CLO 7: "Produce an academic text by synthesizing ideas from various sources" (Could mention natural world and environmental sources)

Assessment Analysis:

1. Project/Assignment (20% of grade): Content unspecified
2. Class Tests: Focused on skills (scanning, note-taking) without content guidelines.

ENG 102 promotes English as a neutral instrument for academic survival. By not explicitly including environmental texts, the course implicitly suggests that "serious" academic writing is distinct from "nature writing" or environmental activism. This reinforces false binaries between culture/academia (high status) and nature/environment (low status, resource/background).

Quantitative Summary

Total weeks across both courses: 36 weeks of instruction

Weeks with explicit environmental content: 0

Weeks with market/consumer-oriented content: 3

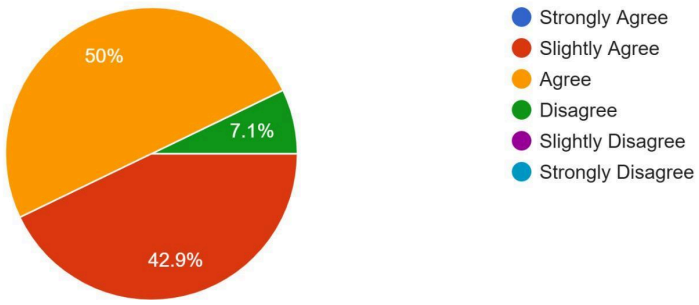
Percentage of curriculum explicitly addressing sustainability: 0%

This represents complete curricular erasure of environmental discourse in foundational English education at IUB.

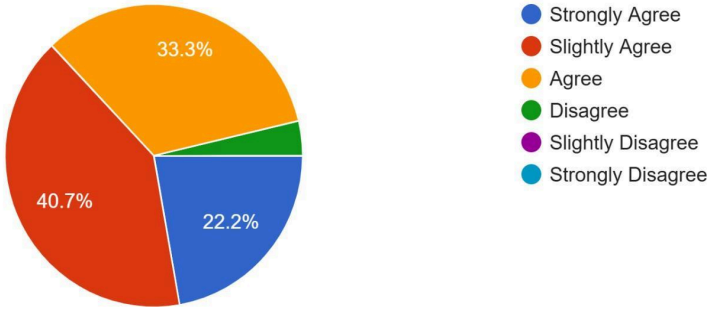
4.2. Student Perceptions- Imbalance between awareness and relevance in studies.

Survey and interview data reveal a striking disconnect between student environmental consciousness and curricular reality. The data below helps to find students' perceptions, awareness, and attitudes regarding the inclusion of environmental themes in English courses, and types of sustainability-related content or activities they consider meaningful for integration.

4. Learning English through environmental topics makes lessons more meaningful.
28 responses

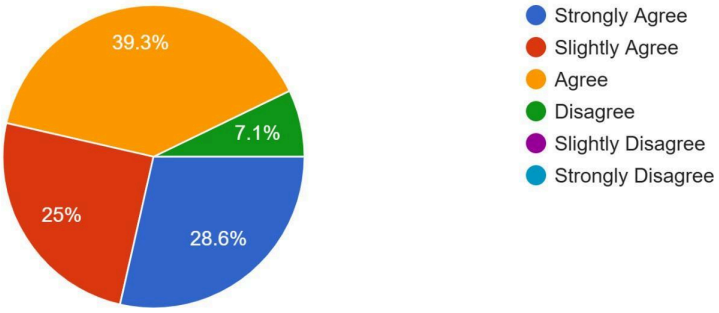


5. Environmental issues should be included in English language courses.
27 responses



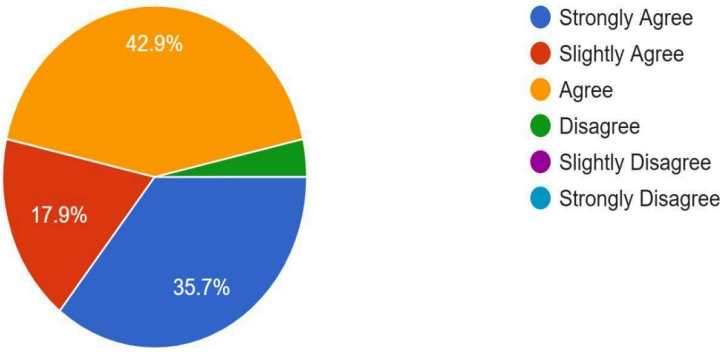
6. English can help me participate in global discussions about sustainability.

28 responses



7. Using texts about climate change or ecology improves my English skills.

28 responses



4.2.1 Quantitative Survey Results (n=28)

Students demonstrated high environmental awareness and values:

Statement	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neutral	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
1. Humans must live in harmony with nature to survive	82.1% (23)	17.9% (5)	0% (0)
2. Protecting the environment is as important as economic growth	75.0% (21)	21.4% (6)	3.6% (1)
3. I feel personally responsible for helping to solve environmental problems	71.4% (20)	21.4% (6)	7.1% (2)

Table 3 Data demonstrating students' environmental awareness.

These findings confirm that IUB students have strong environmental values, likely shaped by lived experience with Dhaka's air pollution, seasonal floods, and heat waves.

Students expressed overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward integrating sustainability themes:

Statement	**Strongly Agree/Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree/Strongly Disagree**
4. Learning English through environmental topics makes lessons more meaningful	89.3% (25)	7.1% (2)	3.6% (1)
5. Environmental issues should be included in English language courses	85.7% (24)	11.1% (3)	3.7% (1)
6. English can help me participate in global discussions about sustainability	92.9% (26)	7.1% (2)	0% (0)
7. Using texts about climate change or ecology improves my English skills	85.7% (24)	10.7% (3)	3.6% (1)
8. Discussing sustainability in English class motivates me to learn more	82.1% (23)	14.3% (4)	3.6% (1)
9. Teachers should integrate ecological topics into English lessons	80.8% (21/26)	15.4% (4)	3.8% (1)
10. ELT can raise students' awareness of environmental issues	89.3% (25)	10.7% (3)	0% (0)

Table 4 Attitudes Toward Environmental Content in English Education

The survey findings indicate a strong student demand for meaningful and relevant learning content. Nearly ninety percent of respondents agreed that environmental topics make English lessons more engaging, suggesting that students value real-world relevance in their language learning. In addition, an overwhelming majority of participants recognized English as a global tool, with ninety-three percent agreeing that proficiency in English enables participation in international discussions on sustainability, climate action, and environmental advocacy.

Motivation also emerged as a significant factor. More than eighty-two percent of students reported that discussing sustainability-related issues in English classes would increase their motivation to learn the language. This highlights the potential of green linguistics not only to raise environmental awareness but also to support language acquisition.

Altogether, these findings reveal a clear “green gap” within the current curriculum. While a large proportion of students support the inclusion of environmental content and believe it would enhance their learning experience, such content is currently absent from their foundational English courses. This disconnect underscores the need for curricular reform that aligns student expectations with instructional practice.

4.2.2 Qualitative Interview Findings

Three student interviews provided rich narrative depth to survey findings. Analysis using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) revealed four major themes.

Theme 1 - English as a Bridge to Global Environmental Discourse

All three participants acknowledged and emphasized English's role in connecting local environmental experiences to global conversations.

Participant 1

"I think English is the language commonly used around the globe. If we learn environmental terms in English, we will be able to understand international news and research

better. It helps us connect our local problems, like floods in Bangladesh, to the global conversation."

This quote illustrates students' understanding that environmental challenges are simultaneously local and global, requiring linguistic competence to participate in international solutions.

Participant 3

"English classes that include meaningful topics help us think critically. By reading texts or watching videos about the climate crisis will teach us to be aware regarding these issues. English classes will seem more relatable to what we encounter regularly. We can learn to spot fake news and understand the real urgency of the situation."

This student recognizes that environmental discourse in English education serves dual purposes: developing linguistic skills and cultivating critical literacy about urgent global issues.

Theme 2 - Desire for Culturally and Locally Relevant Content

Students consistently expressed preference for environmental topics connected to Bangladeshi realities rather than abstract global issues.

Participant 1

"I would like topics that are relevant to Dhaka city, like air pollution, traffic, drainage or waste management. Dhaka city is highly populated and polluted, and the consequences are increasing day by day. For activities, maybe writing letters to the city corporation or local companies about sustainability would be good practice."

Participant 2

"I would like to study topics on 'Green Lifestyle' like fashion, food habits, eco-education or recycling. Activities could include making a poster or a presentation on how to make our daily life go greener, or case study on how to make our campus eco-friendly."

Participant 3

"Reading materials on how other countries fixed their pollution problems could be helpful. We could read about it and then discuss if those solutions would work in Bangladesh or how we can improvise those solutions to make them suitable for our country."

These responses demonstrate students' desire for content that:

1. Addresses issues they experience daily (air pollution, waste)
2. Connects to potential actions (writing letters, campus initiatives)
3. Balances local and comparative perspectives (learning from other contexts while considering Bangladesh-specific feasibility)

Theme 3 - Pedagogical Preferences

Students articulated clear preferences for how environmental content should be delivered, favoring active and multimodal approaches over passive reading.

Participant 1

"Definitely debates and documentaries. Debates force you to research facts, and watching short documentaries or TED Talks is more engaging than just reading a textbook... For speaking, we could do role-plays where one person is a polluter and the other is an activist. It's fun but effective."

Participant 2

"I prefer visual things. Short animated videos or Instagram-style stories about the environment would be cool. Reading long academic articles is boring for me... Maybe for listening tasks, we could listen to a podcast about endangered animals. For writing, we could maintain a ‘journal' for a week and write about what eco-friendly things we did and the habits we changed that affect the climate.."

Participant 3

"Problem-solution essays are great. Specifically, if we are given a real problem like plastic in the ocean and we have to write a structured proposal on how to fix it using formal English."

Students expressed clear preferences for engaging and interactive forms of learning when it comes to integrating environmental content into English classes. Multimedia materials such as videos, TED Talks, podcasts, and selected social media content were particularly favored, reflecting students' interest in authentic and contemporary language input. Interactive activities, including debates, role-plays, and group discussions, were also highly preferred, as they provide opportunities for active participation and meaningful communication.

In addition, students showed strong interest in action-oriented tasks that allow them to apply language skills to real-world contexts. These included writing proposals, drafting letters to corporations or policymakers, and composing problem–solution essays on environmental issues. Creative formats such as maintaining green journals, designing posters, and participating in campus greening projects were also viewed positively, suggesting that students value opportunities to combine creativity, critical thinking, and social engagement within ELT.

Theme 4 - Perceived Disconnect Between Curriculum and Reality

Students expressed frustration with the gap between their environmental concerns and course content.

Participant 2

"We spend so much time in English classes reading passages. If those passages were about nature or how to live sustainably, it would subconsciously change our mindset while we learn grammar and language skills."

This quote captures the missed opportunity: students are captive audiences in required English courses, yet the curriculum fails to utilize this time for awareness raising.

Participant 3

"I think English is the global language... We could read about environmental solutions and then discuss if those solutions would work in Bangladesh."

The implicit critique here is that the current curriculum provides neither the content nor the discussion opportunities for meaningful engagement with pressing issues.

4.2.3 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Convergent analysis reveals strong alignment between survey and interview data. High environmental values (82.1% agree humans must live in harmony with nature) are elaborated through interviews showing sophisticated understanding of climate change as both local experience and global challenge.

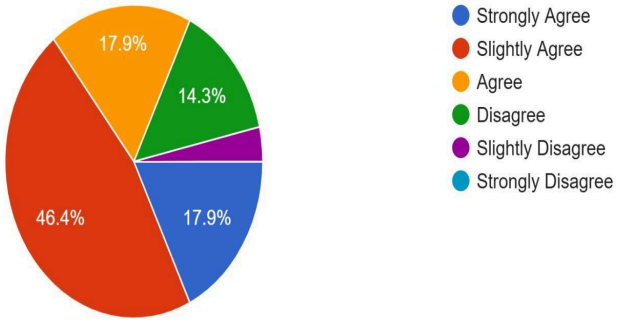
Strong support for integration (85.7%) is explained by students' perception that environmental content would make learning more meaningful, provide real-world relevance, and address issues they care about.

Survey data showing 93% believe English helps them participate in global sustainability discussions is enriched by interview narratives demonstrating students understand English as the language of international climate negotiations, research, and advocacy.

The "Green Gap" is not simply an absence of content but a lack of motivation. Students possess environmental awareness, desire to act, recognize English's instrumental value for global engagement, yet their foundational English courses provide no opportunity to develop the linguistic repertoire for environmental action. This represents a pedagogical failure in not anchoring students' motivation and missing a critical opportunity for transformative education.

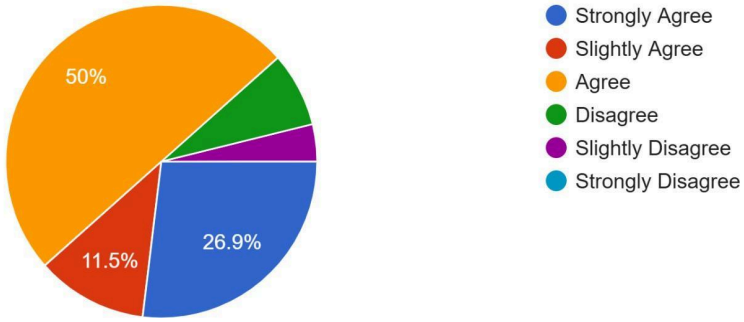
8. Discussing sustainability in English class motivates me to learn more.

28 responses



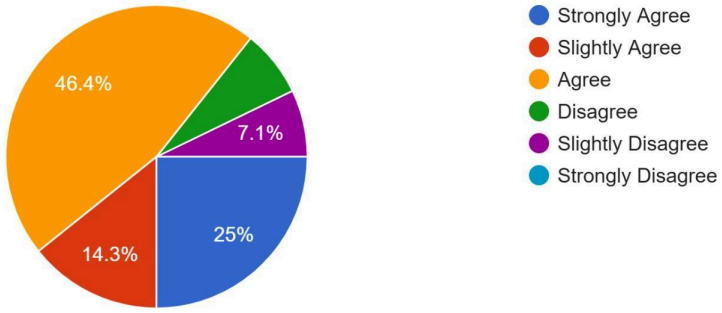
9. Teachers should integrate ecological topics into English lessons.

26 responses



10. ELT can raise students' awareness of environmental issues.

28 responses



4.3 Toward Practical Integration - Bridging the Gap

Based on curriculum analysis revealing systematic erasure and student data revealing strong desire for environmental content, this section proposes a framework for feasible integration.

4.3.1 Principles for Integration

The proposed integration of green linguistics into ELT is guided by several key principles. First, environmental content should be infused into existing course structures rather than added as separate units or courses. Given existing credit hour limitations, this approach allows sustainability themes to be incorporated by adjusting topics while maintaining the original focus on language skills.

Second, the integration should establish a meaningful connection between local and global contexts. By linking environmental issues relevant to Bangladesh with broader international discourses, students can draw on their lived experiences while developing the linguistic competence needed for global engagement.

Third, the pedagogy should be action-oriented. Instead of limiting instruction to awareness-raising, English should be used as a tool for analyzing environmental problems, critiquing dominant narratives, and proposing possible solutions. This approach encourages student agency and critical engagement.

Fourth, the use of multimodal materials such as videos, podcasts, articles, and debates can help sustain student interest and accommodate diverse learning preferences. These varied resources also provide authentic language input across different modes of communication.

Finally, it is essential that the integration of environmental content does not compromise linguistic rigor. Sustainability themes should support, rather than replace, language learning objectives, ensuring that the development of core skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening remains central to ELT instruction.

4.3.2 ENG 101 Sample Course Outline Redesign

Week	Current Topic	Proposed Green Integration	Linguistic Skills Preserved	Rationale
Week 1	Personal Elevator Pitch	**"My Environmental Identity"**: 1-2 minute speech describing a place in nature important to you and why it deserves protection.	Descriptive language, self-presentation, fluency, pronunciation	Builds connection to place while maintaining speech structure and timing requirements.
Week 2	Greetings & Small Talk	**"Climate Conversations"**: Role-play discussing extreme weather impacts, expressing concern, offering support. Practice: "Have you been affected by the heatwave?" "Our neighborhood flooded last month."	Functional language for polite requests, expressing concern, conversational turn-taking	Uses authentic small talk about weather—extending to climate reality—while teaching functional language.
Week 8	Product Presentation	**"Green Solution Pitch"**: Present a solution to a campus environmental problem (waste, energy, water). Model: "Shark Tank" for sustainability.	Persuasive language, presentation structure (introduction, problem, solution, benefits, conclusion), signposting	Maintains presentation skills focus while replacing consumerism with problem-solving. Students still practice persuasive techniques.

Week 9	The Art of Asking Questions	**"Eco-Audit Interview"**: Interview a peer about their environmental practices using various question types. Report findings.	Question formation (Wh-, Yes/No, follow-up), listening skills, reporting information	Practices question types while gathering real data on campus sustainability behaviors.
Week 10	Signposting in Presentation	**Continue with environmental topics for presentations**	Transition phrases, organizational language ("First," "Furthermore," "In conclusion")	Signposting skills are content-neutral—can be practiced with any topic. Using environmental content provides meaningful context.

Table 5 Proposed Reframe - From "Generalised Communication" to "Communication for Change"

CLO Additions

Add CLO 8: "Demonstrate ability to use English to discuss environmental challenges and sustainability solutions in both casual and formal contexts."

Assessment Modifications

Class Test 1 (Week 3): Pair work on climate-related small talk scenarios

Presentation (Week 11): Require environmental or sustainability focus

Midterm/Final: Include environmental topics in speaking/listening components

4.3.2 ENG 102 Sample Course Outline Redesign

Week	Current Topic	Proposed Green Integration	Linguistic Skills Preserved	Rationale
Weeks 2-4	Scanning, Decoding Meaning, Keywords	**"Scanning the Crisis"**: Use climate reports (IPCC Bangladesh summaries, Daily Star environmental articles) to practice scanning for data, statistics, key facts.	Scanning techniques, vocabulary strategies, keyword identification	Authentic materials provide rich context for practicing reading skills while building environmental vocabulary.
Weeks 6-7	One Sentence Summary	**"Headline Writing"**: Read environmental news articles and write one-sentence summaries capturing main ideas. Compared to actual headlines.	Synthesis, concision, identifying main ideas	Journalism format makes summary skill immediately applicable while addressing current issues.
Weeks 13-15	Paraphrasing, Citation & Referencing	**"Reframing the Narrative"**: Paraphrase texts promoting environmentally harmful practices (e.g., "clearing land for development") to reveal ecological costs ("destroying habitats for profit"). Practice ethical citation.	Paraphrasing techniques, avoiding plagiarism, APA format	Teaches paraphrasing while developing critical awareness of how word choice shapes perception.
Weeks 16-19	Argumentative Paragraph	**"Debating Development"**: Write argumentative paragraphs on local environmental controversies (e.g., Rampal Power Plant, Dhaka's traffic emissions).	Thesis statements, supporting evidence, logical reasoning, counterargument acknowledgment	Controversial local issues provide authentic argumentation contexts while developing civic engagement.

Weeks 21-22	Comparison & Contrast Paragraph	**"Solutions Across Borders"**: Compare/contrast how Bangladesh and another country address similar environmental challenges (e.g., air pollution in Dhaka vs. Beijing).	Comparison structures (similarly, whereas, in contrast), balanced analysis	Comparative analysis builds global awareness while practicing rhetorical patterns.

Table 6 Proposed Reframe **-** From "Generic Academic Skills" to "Critical Environmental Literacy"

CLO Additions

Add CLO 8: "Analyze environmental texts critically, recognizing underlying ideologies, erasures, and framing strategies."

Assessment Modifications

Project/Assignment (20%): Research project on Bangladesh environmental issue, demonstrating all reading/writing skills learned

Class Tests: Use environmental texts for skills assessment

Final Exam: Include environmental topic options for paragraph writing tasks

4.3.4 Practicality of Reframed Course Outlines

The proposed integration of green linguistics offers several practical advantages. First, it does not require any structural changes to the existing curriculum. Given the course credit hours, the number of course learning outcomes, and the distribution of assessments remain unchanged, makes the approach feasible within current institutional frameworks.

Second, the integration demands minimal additional resources, as a wide range of environmental materials are freely available online. These include international sources such as IPCC reports and United Nations climate resources, as well as locally relevant materials from national news outlets like *The Daily Star*.

Moreover, the inclusion of sustainability-related content has the potential to enhance student motivation. Survey findings indicate that a substantial majority of students believe that environmental topics increase their engagement and interest in learning English. Finally, aligning ELT practices with the Sustainable Development Goals positions institutions such as IUB as proactive contributors to global sustainability efforts, which may enhance their academic profile and institutional reputation.

Potential Challenges and Solutions:

Challenge	**Solution**
Teacher unfamiliarity with environmental content	Briefing about "Ecolinguistics for ELT" in the faculty meeting and providing curated materials.
Concern about "politicizing" the classroom	Frame environmental issues as scientific consensus requiring solutions, not controversial politics. Focus on problem-solving, not political ideology.
Time constraints for material development	Create shared faculty resource repository with authentic articles, videos, and activity templates
Assessment standardization across sections	Develop shared rubrics focusing on linguistic criteria (grammar, organization, vocabulary) applicable to any content

Table 7 Potential Challenges and Solutions for Recommendations

Chapter 5

Interpreting the Green-Gap in ELT

5.1 Interpreting the "Green Gap" in ELT

The convergence of curriculum analysis (0% environmental content) and student survey data (85.7% desire integration) reveals what this study terms the "Green Gap", a profound disconnect between educational supply and learner demand. This gap is not simply an oversight but reflects deeper ideological structures within ELT curriculum design.

5.1.1 Neoliberal Capture of ELT

The explicit presence of market-oriented content ("product presentations," "elevator pitches") alongside complete environmental erasure reveals what scholars call the "neoliberal capture" of education (Holborow, 2015). Neoliberalism, as an economic and ideological system, privileges market logic, viewing individuals as rational self-maximizers and nature as resource capital (Harvey, 2005).

The IUB curriculum reflects this ideology in three ways. Firstly, The "elevator pitch" constructs students as commodities to be marketed. This framing aligns with neoliberal employment regimes where workers must continuously self-brand. However, it normalizes precarious labor conditions and obscures alternative identity constructions (e.g., student as ecological citizen, community member, activist).

Secondly**,** The "product presentation" treats consumption as the primary form of social engagement. Missing are presentations on community organizing, civic participation, or environmental stewardship—forms of engagement incompatible with consumerist logic.

Lastly, Language is treated as a neutral tool for individual advancement rather than a medium for collective meaning-making or social transformation. This instrumentalism divorces language from ethics, ecology, and social responsibility.

The curriculum's neoliberal orientation is particularly problematic in Bangladesh's context. As a climate-vulnerable nation, Bangladesh's survival depends on challenging, not reinforcing, the global economic systems driving environmental degradation. Yet IUB's ELT curriculum prepares students to succeed within these systems without questioning them.

5.1.2 Erasure as Ideological Work

Stibbe (2015) argues that erasure is not passive absence but active ideological work. By systematically excluding environmental discourse, the curriculum performs several functions:

When curricula present skills like "writing persuasively" without contextualizing these skills in environmental challenges, they implicitly normalize the status quo. The message is: "These are the important skills; environmental issues are not important enough to mention."

Environmental issues are inherently political, involving questions of power, resources, and justice. Erasing them creates an illusion of political neutrality, which in practice supports existing power structures (Freire, 1970).

Students who receive environmental education elsewhere (through families, international schools, travelling abroad) gain advantages in global citizenship and climate-related careers. Working-class students dependent on university education for all knowledge are disadvantaged, reproducing inequality.

5.2 Students' Quest for Meaning

The survey found that 89.3% of students agree "learning English through environmental topics makes lessons more meaningful" deserves careful interpretation. This suggests students experience current curriculum as lacking meaning—a profound indictment of education prioritizing form over substance.

5.2.1 Meaningful Learning and Motivation

Sociocultural theory positions that learning is most effective when culturally and personally meaningful (Vygotsky, 1978). For Bangladeshi students, environmental issues are unavoidably meaningful—they shape daily life through air quality, weather extremes, food prices, and future prospects. Excluding these issues from English education creates artificial separation between "school learning" and "life learning," undermining motivation and retention.

Interview data corroborates this. Participant 2's statement—"If those passages were about nature or how to live sustainably, it would subconsciously change our mindset while we learn grammar", reveals sophisticated metalinguistic awareness. Students recognize that the *content* of language learning shapes consciousness, not just the *form*. They understand intuitively what Whorf (1956) argued: language shapes thought.

5.2.2 The Desire for Action

The 71.4% of students reporting personal responsibility for environmental problem-solving, combined with 92.9% believing English helps them participate in global sustainability discussions, reveals a desire for agency. Students don't just want to learn *about* environmental issues; they want to learn *how to address* them using English.

This finding aligns with Freire's (1970) distinction between "banking education" (passive reception) and "problem-posing education" (active transformation). Students are asking for the latter, education that equips them to "read the world" and act upon it, not merely "read the word."

The current curriculum focuses on generic communication skills without substantive content, it prepares students to be linguistic technicians rather than transformative actors. This represents a missed opportunity with serious consequences in Bangladesh that needs English-proficient environmental advocates, policy analysts, climate journalists, and sustainability entrepreneurs. The current curriculum does not cultivate these roles.

5.3 The Pedagogical Case for Green Linguistics

Beyond responding to student demand, there are strong pedagogical reasons for integrating environmental content. Although this study mainly focuses on student perceptions, pedagogical cases are incomplete without addressing how integration can be made feasible and practical for English language teachers.

5.3.1 Authentic Materials Enhance Acquisition

Second language acquisition research consistently shows that authentic, meaningful content promotes deeper learning than decontextualized exercises (Krashen, 1982). Environmental issues provide inherently authentic content. Participant 1's preference for "debates and documentaries" and Participant 3's interest in "problem-solution essays" reveal students' intuitive understanding that environmental content provides cognitively demanding, authentic language practice superior to generic exercises.

5.3.2 Content-Based Instruction Advantages

Content-Based Instruction (CBI), where language is learned through meaningful content rather than as an isolated skill, has demonstrated superior outcomes in numerous studies (Stoller & Grabe, 1997).

Environmental CBI offers specific advantages. Environmental discourse includes technical terms (mitigation, biodiversity, sustainability), academic vocabulary (significant, impact, contribute), and metaphorical language (footprint, green, sustainable) providing rich linguistic input adding to the learners' linguistic repertoire. Students encounter multiple genres (scientific reports, news articles, policy documents, advocacy campaigns), building genre awareness. It also promotes critical thinking as analyzing environmental texts requires evaluating evidence, recognizing bias, understanding causation, skills transferable across disciplines. Environmental issues integrate science, economics, politics, ethics—preparing students for university-level interdisciplinary thinking.

5.3.3 Motivation and Retention

Dörnyei's (2001) research on L2 motivation emphasizes the importance of "integrative motivation" (learning connected to identity and values). For students with strong environmental values (82.1% agree humans must live in harmony with nature), environmental content provides integrative motivation lacking in the generic curriculum.

This has practical implications for retention and achievement. Students who find learning meaningful persist longer, engage more deeply, and achieve better outcomes (Dörnyei, 2001). Given the challenges many students face with English courses, motivation is not a luxury but a necessity.

5.4 Positioning IUB within Global ELT Trends

IUB's current curriculum stands in contrast to global trends in ELT. Many leading institutions have embraced sustainability integration:

1. University of Cambridge ESOL: Environmental themes in speaking exam topics
2. British Council: "TeachingEnglish" website features extensive sustainability resources
3. TESOL International Association: 2019 position statement supporting inclusion of global issues in ELT

By environmental erasure in curricula, IUB risks falling behind international standards. Conversely, adopting green linguistics positions IUB as a regional leader, potentially attracting students, faculty, and partnerships interested in sustainability education. The current ELT curriculum does not prepare students for these roles. By integrating green linguistics, IUB can contribute to building Bangladesh's climate resilience through human capital development.

5.5 Addressing Potential Critiques

This research may give rise to several possible critiques of green linguistics integration, which merit response.

"English teachers are not environmental educators. We lack expertise."

Green linguistics doesn't require teachers to become environmental scientists. Teachers leverage existing expertise in language analysis, critical thinking, and communication. Environmental content provides *context* for language learning, not new disciplinary content to

master. Moreover, faculty development can provide sufficient background knowledge, and collaborative teaching with environmental science faculty offers another approach.

"This politicizes the classroom."

All curriculum choices are political (Freire, 1970). Choosing to teach "product presentations" is a political choice favoring consumerism. The question is not whether the curriculum is political, but who it is designed for. Environmental education serves students' interests in a livable future which is not politics but survival imperative.

"We don't have time. The curriculum is already packed."

The proposed framework involves content substitution, not addition. Replace "product presentation" with "solution presentation" within the same time framework, same skills, just different content. Replace generic reading passages with environmental articles addressing the same reading time with enhanced relevance.

“This is not an ESP course, it is an EGP course. Green Linguistics is irrelevant.”

Although the courses focus on English skills for general purposes, it has become crucial to address issues that have become a non-deniable part of our lives. Students are empty vessels that can be filled with knowledge. If so, then why not consciously provide input that promotes critical thinking and acknowledging the consequences of their actions. As these courses are mandatory for all students regardless of their academic majors, it is completely justified how these courses are the perfect space for integrating environmental and sustainability themes into education.

Chapter 6

Pedagogical and Curriculum Implications

6.1 Curriculum-Level Reformation

Formal Curriculum Revision and Resource Bank

It is recommended that the Department of English and Modern Languages formally revise the course outlines for ENG 101 and ENG 102 to incorporate environmental themes in a systematic manner. One key step would be to introduce an explicit course learning outcome that emphasizes students' ability to use English to analyze, discuss, and propose solutions to environmental and sustainability challenges within both Bangladeshi and global contexts.

In addition, the revised curriculum should specify minimum requirements for environmental content. Allocating approximately thirty percent of course material, equivalent to three to four weeks per course, to sustainability-related themes would ensure meaningful integration without disrupting the overall structure of the courses. Weekly topic descriptions within the course outlines should also be updated to clearly indicate environmental focus areas, in line with the proposed frameworks outlined earlier in the study.

Last but not the least, assessment criteria should be revised to reflect this integration. Including "relevance to sustainability" as an explicit evaluation criterion for presentations and writing assignments would encourage students to engage critically with environmental issues while applying their language skills in meaningful contexts.

Besides curriculum reform, It is further recommended that the department establish a centralized "Green ELT Resource Bank" to support instructors in integrating environmental themes into ENG 101 and ENG 102. This resource bank should include carefully curated reading materials, such as environmental articles from *The Daily Star*, Bangladesh-focused summaries of IPCC reports, United Nations climate resources, and accessible scientific texts suitable for

language learners. The repository should contain a range of video resources, including TED Talks on sustainability, short documentaries, and relevant news clips that provide authentic and engaging language input. To assist classroom implementation, the resource bank should also offer activity templates, such as debate prompts, role-play scenarios, and writing tasks centered on environmental topics.

Standardized assessment rubrics that emphasize linguistic criteria while allowing for sustainability-related content should be included to ensure consistency across courses. Finally, sample syllabi with week-by-week plans demonstrating practical integration of green linguistics would serve as useful models for instructors. To ensure accessibility and ease of use, this resource bank should be hosted on a shared platform such as Google Drive or the university's Learning Management System and made available to all ENG 101 and ENG 102 instructors.

6.2 Pedagogical Perspective Shift

Adopt Critical Ecopedagogy and Multimodal Approaches

Teachers should integrate critical ecopedagogy strategies to move beyond awareness-raising toward meaningful action. This includes questioning dominant narratives in texts that promote unsustainable practices, connecting local environmental issues, such as Dhaka's air pollution, to global patterns, and providing students with opportunities to share personal experiences. Tasks should encourage active engagement, such as proposing solutions, writing advocacy letters, or developing campus sustainability initiatives.

At the same time, multimodal pedagogy should be employed to respond to diverse learning preferences. This can involve visual materials like infographics and photo essays, audio resources such as podcasts and TED episodes, video content including short documentaries and news clips, and interactive tools like simulations, online quizzes, or collaborative mapping exercises. Combining critical ecopedagogy with multimodal approaches ensures both deep learning and sustained student engagement in integrating environmental themes into ELT.

6.3 Institutional Practices

Faculty Development

To effectively implement green linguistics, IUB should organize targeted faculty development programs including workshops and training. Contents may include, 1. “Introduction to Ecolinguistics”, (Stibbe’s “stories we live by” framework, along with practical applications for ELT materials). 2. “Teaching Environmental Content in English Classes” (content-based instruction principles, designing environmentally-themed language activities, and balancing content with language learning objectives). 3. “Assessment in Green ELT” (train faculty to develop rubrics for environmentally-themed assignments, maintain linguistic assessment standards, and provide effective feedback). Together, these practical workshops aim to train instructors with the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate content meaningfully into ELT courses.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

This study illustrates the absence of integrated green linguistics at the core of English Language Teaching in Bangladesh's private university, IUB. Through systematic analysis of curriculum documents (course outline, learning outcome, assessment analysis) at Independent University, Bangladesh, combined with student survey and interview data, the research has revealed what can only be termed a "Green Gap" (a disconnect between students' lived environmental realities and the content of their foundational English education).

7.1 Summary of Key Findings

The curriculum analysis revealed a complete absence of environmental discourse across the 36 weeks of ENG 101 and ENG 102. Not a single week explicitly addresses sustainability or ecological themes. Where content is specified, it often emphasizes neoliberal values (elevator pitches, product presentations, and consumer-focused communication). Where content is unspecified, this apparent neutrality acts as passive erasure, systematically excluding environmental awareness from language learning.

In contrast, student data paints a different picture. Survey responses showed that 82.1% of students believe humans must live in harmony with nature, 85.7% support including environmental topics in English courses, and 89.3% find such topics make lessons more meaningful. Interviews added depth to these data, revealing students who view English as a tool for engaging with global environmental discourse, desire locally relevant content on issues like Dhaka’s air pollution and Bangladesh’s climate vulnerability, and seek learning that provides both skills and meaningful agency.

The study’s primary practical contribution is a practical framework for integrating green linguistics into existing ELT courses without requiring structural changes. By substituting topics rather than adding new components, the framework addresses resource constraints and

institutional agenda. Its feasibility rests on three pillars: infusing environmental content within existing activities, leveraging freely available materials, and aligning sustainability themes with core language learning objectives. This approach moves beyond critique, offering concrete strategies for meaningful curriculum reform that responds to both student aspirations and ecological imperatives.

This practical orientation distinguishes the research from purely theoretical critiques. The study doesn't merely argue that curriculum should change but demonstrates specifically how it can change. This study demonstrates that even foundational language courses, often considered peripheral to "serious" disciplines, play crucial roles in shaping environmental consciousness.

Green linguistics offers an education scheme that liberates by developing critical consciousness about human and nature relationships. It connects students' learning to lived realities and futures.

For Bangladesh, this is not theoretical abstraction but existential necessity. As natural calamities become unpredictable and increase in extremity with rising sea levels, cyclones intensify, agriculture fails, millions face displacement, the nation needs every possible resource to overcome or rectify further worsening. Resources include educated citizens with linguistic capacity to participate in global climate solutions. English courses with content integration can bridge this reality and represent strategic pedagogy and moral achievement.

7.2 Being Just to Earth

The title of this study, "Being Just to Earth" expresses dual meaning. Being just towards Earth is an abstract concept that can be reflected through right actions. It provokes justice by advocating for using Language education as a weapon to gather a student body who can contribute in making our future sustainable. It also invokes adequacy in the perspective that “Are we simply identifying the ‘Green Gap’ and ‘Deterioration of Environment’?” or “Are we also simultaneously evolving strategies and practical implementations to bridge the gap?”

It is high time that the ELT curriculum adequately paid attention to both market demands and sustainability of Earth. Green linguistics demands doing justice for students living in Bangladesh by providing students with education equipped with environment and sustainability themes. This prepares students with education worthy of meaning, using language as a practice of freedom and justice, advocating global issues- all while polishing language skills.

The path ahead of this study is evident and clear. The barriers are not unconquerable. The main challenge is to divert the will power of institutions and pedagogical perspectives. Shifting from traditional teaching strategies to modernized student-centered approaches makes it possible to overcome probable challenges.

According to the data collected, the students who play a bigger role in our society have spoken about their need to learn English through content that addresses real world issues, provokes critical thinking, and makes learning meaningful. Questions remain whether institutions and teachers equally believe and are ready to move towards educational policies contributing to a sustainable future.

This research shares that being just to Earth begins with us individuals being just in our use of language meaningfully and purposefully. Language plays a bigger role than just daily communication. It shapes realities and imagination of a liveable future, by our selection of stories to tell and which challenges to acknowledge. English Language Teaching in Bangladesh can no longer risk the deletion of mentioning environmental inclusion in curriculum. Multiple studies have already concerned the urgency of green linguistics into language pedagogy. For Bangladesh, it is no more possible to think ‘Maybe someday in the near future’, instead the implementation must begin ‘Today’.

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Appendix A

Survey on Green Linguistics and ELT

(6-point Likert scale - 1. Strongly agree **2.** Slightly Agree **3.** Agree **4.** Disagree **5. S**lightly Disagree **6.** Strongly Disagree**)**

Section A: Demographic Information
Gender:
University:
Year of Study: 1st year, 2nd Year

Section B: Environmental Awareness

1. Humans must live in harmony with nature to survive.
2. Protecting the environment is as important as economic growth.
3. I feel personally responsible for helping to solve environmental problems.

Section C: Relevance of Green Linguistics in ELT

4. Learning English through environmental topics makes lessons more meaningful.
5. Environmental issues should be included in English language courses.
6. English can help me participate in global discussions about sustainability.
7. Using texts about climate change or ecology improves my English skills.

Section D: Motivation and Perceptions

8. Discussing sustainability in English class motivates me to learn more.

9. Teachers should integrate ecological topics into English lessons.

10. ELT can raise students' awareness of environmental issues.

Section E: Open-Ended Questions

11. In your opinion, how can English classes help students become more environmentally aware?

12. What kind of topics or activities related to the environment would you like to see included in English lessons?

13. What types of materials (videos, stories, articles, discussions, debates) would help you learn English while also learning about the environment?

14. How could English activities (reading, writing, speaking, listening) be connected to sustainability topics in ways that feel interesting to you?

Appendix B

Student Interview Protocol

Section A: Environmental Awareness and Responsibility

1. How important are environmental issues to you personally, and why?

2. Do you feel that students have a responsibility to help address environmental problems?

3. In what ways do environmental problems affect your daily life or future concerns?

Section B: Role of English Classes in Environmental Awareness

4. In your opinion, how can English classes help students become more environmentally aware?

5. Do you think environmental or sustainability-related topics should be included in English language courses? Why or why not?

6. How do you see English as a tool for participating in global discussions about environmental or sustainability issues?

Section C: Preferred Content, Activities, and Skill Integration

7. What kinds of environmental or sustainability-related topics would you like to see included in English lessons?

8. What types of classroom activities related to the environment would you find most engaging?

9. What kinds of materials would help you learn English while also learning about environmental issues?

10. How could reading and writing activities in English be connected to environmental topics in ways that feel meaningful to you?

11. How could speaking and listening activities be used to discuss environmental issues more effectively in English classes?