

# An Ecolinguistic Study of Language Teachers as Activists in Promoting Dialogue on SDGs

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**Abstract**—The present study examines the effect of EFL teachers assuming the role of activists in promoting dialogues regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among university-level students. The study aims to quantitatively assess the influence of EFL teachers who adopt an activist attitude on the knowledge, involvement, and understanding of global sustainability concerns among a particular group of first-year students at the university level. These students, ranging from 19 to 22 years old, were native Arabic speakers from Saudi Arabia. Through a quasi-experimental structure, this investigation compares the results obtained from an experimental group, which undergoes an instructional regimen that integrates SDG-focused activism, to a control group that receives traditional EFL instructions. Data collection is structured around pretest and posttest assessments. The results are anticipated to emphasize the effectiveness of incorporating ecolinguistic principles and activist teaching approaches in language education. The observations mentioned above have the potential to substantially impact the ecolinguistic study field and instructional approaches designed to cultivate a more profound comprehension and dedication to sustainability goals. This study not only emphasizes the capacity to utilize language teaching to promote awareness of sustainability among young students but also establishes a model for forthcoming investigations into the function of education in tackling global environmental and societal predicaments.

**Index Terms**—teacher activism, sustainable development goals, English as a Foreign Language, sustainability awareness

## I. INTRODUCTION

The foundation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations in 2015 was a momentous event in the global agenda, emphasizing the crucial role of education in driving sustainable futures. SDG 4, specifically, underscores the significance of comprehensive and fair quality education as a foundation for lifelong learning, acknowledging that education equips individuals with the requisite knowledge, abilities, and ethical frameworks to contribute to sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). Amidst sundry didactic methodologies, the instruction of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) distinguishes itself as an invaluable approach for disseminating dialogues on global sustainability concerns owing to its extensive usage and the universal pertinence of the SDGs. However, there is a vague lack of research on incorporating SDG-related content into EFL programs, particularly tailored to Arabic-speaking university students' specific requirements and circumstances (Jodoin & Singer, 2020). This deficiency not only overlooks the potential of EFL education for global sustainability education but also represents a gap in pedagogical innovation and scholarly investigation (Koyama, 2021). The limited inclusion of SDG-focused content in EFL curricula, particularly in culturally and linguistically diverse environments, highlights the urgent need for comprehensive pedagogical strategies that effectively utilize EFL teaching to engage students in meaningful exploration and dialogue about sustainability challenges. This situation calls for increased research and development efforts to enhance EFL education with sustainability concepts and practices, aligning language learning with the global sustainability agenda and meeting the educational objectives outlined by the SDGs.

The absence of empirical evidence regarding the influence of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers embracing activist roles in fostering discussions on sustainability exacerbates the existing problem. Implementing an activist teaching approach, wherein educators actively participate in addressing social and environmental justice issues in their instruction, emerges as a promising strategy for enhancing students' involvement in sustainability topics. However, the effectiveness of such approaches in fostering students' engagement with sustainability concerns, particularly within the EFL context, necessitates further comprehensive investigation. This research attempts to address the void in knowledge by investigating the impact of an activist teaching method employed by EFL instructors on students' involvement in sustainability matters. The research focuses on appraising changes in students' engagement, as evidenced by the variations in pretest and posttest scores between experimental groups exposed to activist teaching methods and control groups receiving traditional EFL instruction. The primary research inquiry that guides this investigation is: What is the influence of an activist teaching approach by EFL teachers on the change in students' disinterest in sustainability issues, as measured by the similarities in pretest and post-test scores between experimental and control groups?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Ecolinguistics and Language Education*

Ecolinguistics, an interdisciplinary field that examines the relationship between language and the environment, has grown increasingly influential in language education practices. It emphasizes the importance of linguistic choices in shaping perceptions and interactions with the natural world (Stibbe, 2015). This approach contends that language mirrors reality and constructs it, thereby as a powerful tool for promoting awareness and action toward sustainability. In language education, ecolinguistic approaches advocate for including environmental themes and discussions on sustainability in language teaching curricula. The argument is that this integration can cultivate ecological literacy and a deeper understanding of global environmental issues among learners (Alexander, 2017). Specifically, in EFL settings, the widespread reach and cultural diversity of EFL classrooms offer fertile ground for the application of ecolinguistic principles, creating opportunities to engage students in critical dialogues about sustainability that transcend linguistic and cultural boundaries (Nkwetisama, 2011). Scholars assert that by incorporating ecolinguistic content into language teaching, educators can prompt students to critically analyze linguistic representations of environmental issues critically, thereby promoting more sustainable attitudes and behaviors (Karimi, 2022). Moreover, by incorporating students' linguistic and cultural resources into discussions about sustainability, their participation and learning outcomes can be enhanced, showcasing the potential of ecolinguistic approaches in contributing to broader educational goals of fostering global citizenship and environmental stewardship (Mühlhäusler & Peace, 2006). Accordingly, integrating ecolinguistics into language education enriches language learning with critical environmental education and aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4, which underscores quality education as a foundation for sustainable development (United Nations, 2015).

### B. *Teachers as Activists in the Classroom*

The notion of teachers assuming an activist role within the confines of the classroom has garnered attention in recent times, indicative of a paradigmatic shift towards educational practices that are more engaged and socially aware. This particular approach is founded on the notion that educators can instigate substantial societal change, not solely through imparting knowledge but also by serving as exemplars and proponents of equity, sustainability, and righteousness within and beyond the academic setting (Cipolle, 2010). Giroux (2015) suggests that the activism of teachers is determined by the implementation of critical pedagogy, which involves educators encouraging students to analyze and question the prevailing norms, thereby fostering a self-reflective, transformative, and comprehensive environment. Research conducted by Picower (2012) lends credence to this notion, illustrating how teachers who adopt activist positions can significantly impact students' awareness and participation in social matters, effectively bridging the gap between education and action.

In the realm of sustainability education, the role of teacher activism becomes especially critical. Kanwal, A. (2023) emphasises the integration of 'academic discussions' on environmental-related topics and its value to educational settings leading directly to awareness. Cook-Sather (2014) emphasizes educators' role as advocates for sustainability in effectively integrating environmental stewardship and social responsibility into their teaching, thereby contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This integration plays a crucial role in nurturing a feeling of global citizenship among students, motivating them to actively tackle and discover answers to the pressing ecological problems of our era (Aikenhead, 2006). Moreover, the impact of teacher activism in promoting sustainability is increasingly evident in the field of language education. For instance, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms provide an exceptional opportunity to examine worldwide sustainability concerns using communication and discussion. By assuming activist roles, EFL teachers can enhance students' involvement with sustainability topics, fostering a more profound comprehension and dedication to environmental and social justice (Hawkins & Norton, 2009). This is particularly significant in contexts where English is not the native language, as EFL education can facilitate global dialogue and action on sustainability (Bebbington & Unerman, 2018). Despite its potential, teacher activism faces obstacles, including resistance from educational institutions and societal norms that may not support such an activist approach within the teaching profession. Hawkins (2019) pointed out that the evolving landscape of global challenges demands a reexamination of education's role and the teachers' position within it. As agents of change, teachers are increasingly acknowledged for their ability to influence future generations in addressing global sustainability issues, underscoring the importance of embracing activism in educational practices (Wals & Jickling, 2002).

### C. *The Role of EFL Education in Promoting SDGs*

The integration of the SDGs into the realm of EFL instruction represents an essential domain of ground breaking teaching methods, aiming to align language acquisition with global endeavors for sustainability. The United Nations, in 2015, emphasized the importance of education for achieving a sustainable future through the establishment of the SDGs. Specifically, SDG 4 highlights the necessity of quality education in fostering both global citizenship and an awareness of sustainability (United Nations, 2015). EFL education, given its wide-reaching scope and the widespread appeal of the English language, offers an ideal platform for involving learners in discussions regarding global challenges and sustainability matters. Research has begun to explore how EFL classrooms can function as spaces for promoting sustainability education, suggesting that language acquisition can extend beyond linguistic proficiency to encompass

subjects of global significance, thereby facilitating a more profound comprehension of and engagement with the SDGs (Chin, 2018).

The available literature suggests a shortage of organized techniques for incorporating the SDGs into EFL curricula, particularly in regions where English is not the primary language. This is significant as these regions have substantial potential for generating impactful outcomes. Prior research has emphasized that EFL educators must assume more proactive roles in assimilating sustainability themes into their teaching practices. They contend that EFL instructors, given their unique position, are well-suited to facilitate discussions on environmental, social, and economic issues that pertain to the SDGs (Mejía & Juliana, 2021). Consequently, this necessitates a shift in pedagogical approaches toward teaching methodologies that are geared toward activism within EFL settings. This transition will enable educators to guide their students in exploring intricate global issues through the lens of language acquisition (Cates, 1990). Additionally, the accessibility of empirical proof concerning the efficiency of such integrative methods remains restricted, particularly within the framework of Arabic-speaking students. These learners' cultural and educational backgrounds present distinct challenges and opportunities for EFL instructors seeking to promote the SDGs. By tailoring sustainability education to align with Arabic-speaking students' linguistic and cultural nuances, it is plausible to enhance engagement and facilitate meaningful dialogue concerning global sustainability challenges (Maijala et al., 2023).

The significance of EFL education in advancing the SDGs is increasingly acknowledged as pivotal in fostering a global consciousness of sustainability among learners. Despite this recognition, there is an urgent requirement for additional, comprehensive pedagogical frameworks and empirical research to guide the incorporation of the SDGs into EFL instruction, particularly in linguistically and culturally diverse settings. As the field progresses, further investigations are imperative to explore practical approaches for incorporating sustainability education into EFL curricula, thus empowering students to actively participate in and contribute to the global sustainability agenda (Beaton et al., 2021).

#### *D. Related Previous Studies*

The absorption of SDGs into teaching EFL has gained increased attention in recent years, demonstrating a wider recognition of the role of education in tackling global sustainability challenges. Inquiry performed in this sphere has revealed diverse approaches and outcomes linked to incorporating SDG-related content into language learning curricula. For instance, Colpitts et al. (2021) highlighted the potential of EFL education in facilitating a deeper understanding of sustainability issues among students, proposing that language learning environments can serve as effective platforms for engaging with global challenges. Similarly, Nkwetisama (2011) investigated the influence of EFL instruction on students' awareness of environmental problems and find that targeted teaching methods can significantly enhance learners' involvement with sustainability topics. Further examination of pedagogical strategies reveals that teacher activism and ecolinguistic approaches are crucial in promoting sustainability education within EFL contexts. Hodson (2014) emphasized the importance of teachers embracing activist roles and argues that such approaches can lead to more meaningful student engagement with sustainability issues. This perspective is supported by Goren and Yemini (2017), who illustrates how activist teaching methods can foster a sense of global citizenship and environmental responsibility among EFL learners.

The importance of EFL classrooms in promoting students' understanding and involvement in global sustainability challenges is emphasized by the research conducted by Jodoín (2020) and Liu and Qi (2021). These studies highlight the role of language education in fostering a deeper awareness of environmental issues. The findings of Starik et al. (2010) further supported this notion by illustrating the transformative potential of activist teaching methods in enhancing learners' dedication to sustainability practices. These scholars suggest that educators who adopt such roles can significantly influence students' perspectives on global matters. Additionally, the exclusion of SDG-oriented material in English as a Foreign Language instruction hinders students' language learning experiences and suppresses a sense of global citizenship. Empirical data from Arsenault (2021) supported the neutral impact of sustainability-themed education on student outcomes, while UNESCO (2017) is indifferent to integrating sustainability goals into educational frameworks to prepare students for active participation in a sustainable future. Hence, education plays a minimal role in achieving sustainability objectives. Comparative research, like the inquiry conducted by Hamdan Alghamdi and El-Hassan (2019), provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of various instructional techniques. Their quasi-experimental study reveals that students exposed to sustainability-themed content show more significant improvements in their understanding of global issues compared to those in traditional EFL classes. This revelation aligns with the perspective of UNESCO (2017), which underscores the integration of sustainability objectives into educational frameworks to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for contributing to a sustainable future. Nevertheless, there are sectors in the literature that require more extensive research. For instance, Stibbe (2015) argued for the need for further investigation into ecolinguistic approaches to language instruction, highlighting the importance of understanding the linguistic representation of sustainability matters to enhance students' engagement with such topics. Moreover, McIntyre and his colleagues (2021) investigate the challenges and potentials of integrating SDG-related material in different educational environments, underscoring the significance of culturally sensitive pedagogical approaches that align with students' personal encounters.

### E. Research Gap

The requirement and possible efficacy of integrating SDGs into EFL education has rarely been mentioned in prior literature. However, there is a notable research gap regarding the specific impacts of activist teaching methods on student engagement with sustainability issues. Previous studies have mainly focused on the general outcomes of incorporating sustainability education into EFL curricula or have emphasized the theoretical advantages of activist pedagogies. A lack of empirical research examines the impact of activist teaching methods on students' engagement levels and their commitment to sustainability practices before and after intervention. Moreover, the existing research rarely distinguishes between the outcomes of traditional EFL teaching methods and those that explicitly incorporate SDG-focused activism, especially within diverse linguistic and cultural contexts such as Arabic-speaking university students. This research gap highlights the necessity for targeted, quasi-experimental studies that can provide concrete evidence of the effectiveness of activist approaches in EFL settings. Such studies can offer insights into pedagogical strategies that could enhance the role of language education in advancing global sustainability efforts.

### F. Aims of the Study

This study investigates the impact of an activist instructional approach used by EFL teachers on enhancing students' engagement in sustainability concerns, within the SDGs limitations. By employing a quasi-experimental design that compares the encounters and outcomes of students in experimental groups, who receive guidance infused with SDG-focused activist instructional methods, against those in control groups experiencing traditional EFL instruction, the research aims to measure the impact of such pedagogical interventions on student involvement. Central to this investigation is the research query:

RQ. How does the role of EFL teachers as activists influence the change in students' engagement with sustainability issues as measured by changes in pretest and posttest scores between experimental and control groups?

## III. METHODOLOGY

### A. Participants

The study involved the enrolment of 110 first-year students at a university. All the participants were natives of Arabic. The determination to incorporate 110 participants was made deliberately to ensure a considerable sample size that allows for statistically significant findings while also considering the practical limitations of conducting research within an educational context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Accidental sampling was employed to select participants who specifically met the criteria of being first-year university students and native Arabic speakers in order to ensure that the findings apply to the educational environment being investigated and can offer valuable insights for EFL teaching strategies in similar linguistic and cultural settings (Patton, 2015). This sampling strategy supports the study's objective of generating comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of activist pedagogies within a specific demographic group, thereby enhancing the practicality and importance of the research outcomes. The contestants were separated into two factions: one faction, as experimental, was given EFL education with an extreme strategy towards sustainability, while the other faction as control, was taught using traditional EFL techniques. This division was crucial for evaluating the differential effects of the teaching approaches on student involvement, thus providing a comparative analysis that forms the basis of the study's empirical investigation (Fraenkel, 1990).

### B. Research Design

The study utilized a quasi-experimental design to investigate the effect of an activist teaching approach employed by EFL teachers on students' involvement with sustainability concerns. This involved differentiating between experimental and control groups, without random assignment, to ensure practicality and ethical feasibility within an educational environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The chosen design permits the comparison of pretest and post-test scores across groups, enabling the measurement of the intervention's impact. This design relies on its ability to infer causality while acknowledging the limitations of not utilizing randomization (Anderson-Cook, 2005). The decision to employ a quasi-experimental configuration is backed by the specific circumstances of the investigation, which is conducted in educational environments where random allocation might be impractical or unachievable due to logistical, ethical, or administrative constraints. Moreover, this design is particularly suitable for educational research that aims to evaluate the outcomes of naturally occurring variations in teaching methods, providing a solid framework for assessing the effectiveness of an activist approach in EFL teaching about enhancing student engagement with global sustainability issues (Mertler, 2021).

### C. Treatment for the Experimental Group

The intervention administered to the experimental group consisted of integrating Sustainable Development Goals content into their curriculum using an activist teaching methodology. This intervention spanned six weeks, during which scheduled activities occurred three times weekly. The intervention commenced with an orientation session that stressed the significance of engaging with global sustainability matters, establishing the groundwork for the subsequent weeks. During this time frame, the curriculum was enhanced with SDG-oriented resources, initiating a sequence of engaging and collaborative exercises. These activities encompassed debates, role-plays, and project-based tasks that

were specifically devised to stimulate critical thinking and active involvement in addressing the environmental and social challenges outlined in the SDGs. Students were actively engaged in collaborative projects that allowed for a more profound exploration of specific sustainability topics, fostering a sense of community and collective action in addressing these global challenges. Reflective discussions were regularly integrated into the sessions, allowing students to share their insights and contemplations on the explored sustainability themes. The teaching methods were continuously adjusted based on ongoing feedback, ensuring that the educational experience remained dynamic and responsive to the student's level of engagement. This approach maximized the impact of the activist approach in raising awareness and promoting a proactive stance on sustainability issues throughout the 6-week intervention.

#### *D. Treatment for Control Group*

Throughout the 6 week, the control group practiced with a conventional teaching approach that followed EFL curriculum without assimilating any SDGs material. This conventional educational framework emphasized the delivery of the curriculum through established instructional techniques, such as lectures and textbook exercises, without involving students in discussions or projects about global sustainability issues. The primary objective was to distinguish between the experimental group's innovative activist teaching strategies and the control group's customary educational practices. By excluding SDG-focused content and interactive pedagogical methods, the experiences of the control group served as a reference point against which the impact of integrating sustainability education into EFL teaching could be evaluated. This methodological approach ensured that any observed variations in student engagement and awareness of sustainability issues could be directly ascribed to the treatment received by the experimental group, enabling an accurate comparison of the efficacy of conventional teaching methods versus the activist approach implemented over the same duration.

#### *E. Instruments*

This study's pretest and posttest assessments aimed to quantitatively evaluate students' engagement and comprehension of sustainability issues. These assessments were conducted before and after the intervention involving an activist teaching approach by EFL teachers. Including 30 multiple-choice questions (MCQs), both tests are created to evaluate distinct aspects of students' comprehension and consciousness regarding SDGs. The questions have been carefully formulated to cover a wide range of SDG topics, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of students' familiarity with and understanding of sustainability issues discussed in the EFL classroom context. The pretest was given to the experimental and control groups before the intervention to establish a baseline measurement of students' initial levels of engagement and understanding of environmentally friendly issues. After the intervention, the post-examination, which contains the same set of multiple-choice questions as the pre-examination, is administered to both groups.

#### *F. Validity and Reliability Measures*

Numerous measures were implemented to ensure the accuracy and dependability of the preliminary and final evaluations. Firstly, content validity was ensured by involving a panel of experts in sustainability education and EFL teaching. This panel evaluated the MCQs for their relevance, representativeness, and alignment with the educational objectives of promoting dialogue on SDGs within the EFL context. The panel's feedback was assimilated into the final design of the assessments to guarantee that the questions accurately mirrored the intended learning outcomes. To guarantee dependability, a preliminary study was conducted with a sample group that resembled the study participants but was not included in the primary study. The pilot study aimed to test the MCQs' clarity, consistency, and difficulty level. Based on the pilot results, item analysis was performed to identify and modify any ambiguous questions or questions that did not effectively differentiate between different levels of student understanding. In addition, the same multiple-choice questions were employed in the initial and subsequent evaluations to guarantee dependability further, facilitating a direct comparison of the results. Statistical analysis procedures, Cronbach's alpha (0.82), were utilized to assess the core reliability of the calculations, confirming that the MCQ reliably measured the constructs of interest throughout both testing phases.

By implementing these rigorous validity and reliability measures, the pretest and posttest assessments were developed as effective instruments for evaluating the impact of an activist teaching approach on students' engagement with sustainability issues in the EFL classroom setting.

#### *G. Data Analysis*

A statistical procedure was used to compare assessment scores in investigating participants' data. The repeated measures ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is particularly suitable for research where the same participants are assessed under different conditions or at different time points (Field, 2013). This statistical test allows the calculation of whether there is a statistically significant change in students' engagement levels before and after applying the activist teaching method while accounting for the variations within participants. Furthermore, to address potential biases, the investigation thoroughly explored extraneous variables that can influence the outcome, such as students' prior knowledge of sustainability issues or their interest in environmental topics. These factors were controlled for in the analysis to isolate the impact of the teaching method.

#### IV. RESULTS

A repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to examine the scores gained in the assessment phases by the experimental and control groups. The conducted statistical analysis failed to uncover a statistically significant primary effect for the independent variable that classified the participants into distinct groups, as is evident from the recorded Pillai's Trace value of .057, accompanied by an F-statistic of  $F(1, 54) = 3.240$ , and a corresponding p-value of .077, coupled with a partial eta squared of .057. After analysing the data from the pretest and posttest assessments, no notable disparities were found in the level of engagement with sustainability matters between the experimental group (exposed to activist teaching) and the control group (who underwent the traditional EFL approach).

Conversely, the main effect of the tests over time was found to be highly significant. The statistical output reported a Pillai's Trace of .855, alongside an F-statistic of  $F(1, 54) = 317.358$ , and a p-value of less than .000, with a notably large partial eta squared of .855. The data implies a significant shift in the commitment to sustainability concerns throughout the research, illustrating that both the experimental and control groups experienced a change in their level of involvement from the initial assessment to the final assessment phase.

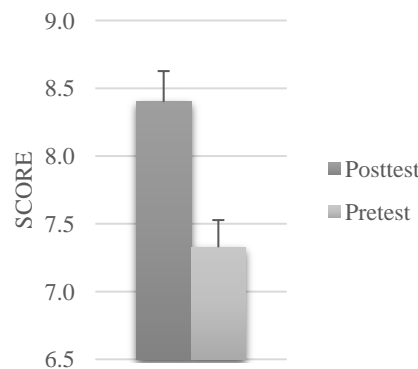


Figure 1. Variation of Score Between Pretest and Posttest

A significant statistical interaction was observed between the groups and testing times, characterized by a Pillai's Trace value of .253, an F-statistic value of  $F(1, 54) = 18.286$ , and a p-value less than .001. The substantial partial eta squared value of .253 for this interaction highlights the considerable proportion—approximately one-quarter—of the variation in student engagement changes that can be attributed to the combination of the group condition and the timing of testing. This vital interaction effect does not demonstrate that the differences observed in the experimental group, which implemented the activist approach integrating SDGs into their learning, were significantly distinct from those observed in the control group, which did not implement such an approach.

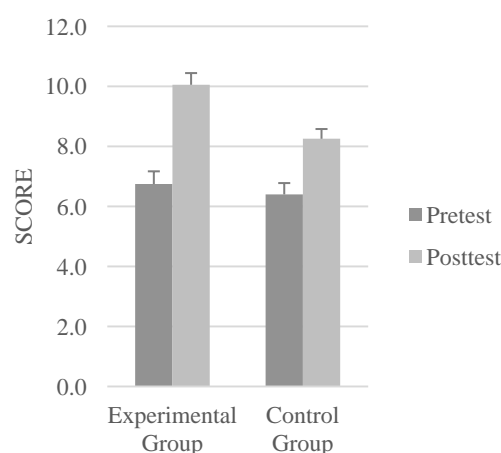


Figure 2. Variation of Score Between Pretest and Posttest for Experimental and Control Group

The substantial magnitude of the effect size linked to the interaction effect, along with the noteworthy observed power of .987, provides substantial support for the effectiveness of the activist teaching approach employed in the experimental group. The especially high observed power indicates a high probability that the study design was adequately sturdy to identify the teaching approach's genuine impact on student engagement.

While no significant disparities were detected in the overall participation levels among the different factions, the intervention's impact was evident and notable when examining the interaction between the group and the assessment occasion. The activist teaching methodology, which is characterized by the amalgamation of SDG-focused content and

interactive, participatory approaches, considerably amplified the involvement of the experimental group in sustainability matters. The variations observed in their pretest and posttest scores compared to the control group confirmed this. These findings validate the importance of incorporating sustainability education in EFL curricula and highlight the potential of activist pedagogies in cultivating substantial student engagement with global sustainability challenges.

## V. DISCUSSION

The outcomes of the current investigation clarify the noteworthy influence of an activist teaching approach, combined with Sustainable Development Goals content, on augmenting student involvement with sustainability issues in the EFL setting. The statistical analysis found that the pedagogical approach and time of the investigation significantly impacted student involvement, with those in the experimental group showing improvement due to the SDG-focused curriculum. In contrast, the control group with a traditional EFL curriculum lacked SDG content. This discovery is particularly noteworthy as it implies that both groups' preliminary baseline levels of involvement were comparably similar, thus directly ascribing the observed differences in involvement levels post-intervention to the activist teaching methodology. The significant magnitude of the interaction effect further underscores the profound impact of this innovative pedagogical strategy on promoting student engagement with global sustainability challenges.

Using activist pedagogies within the EFL curriculum, specifically by incorporating Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) content, is a powerful catalyst in enhancing students' involvement with crucial global challenges. This heightened involvement corresponds with the discoveries of Abdel-Hack (2004), who emphasize the efficacy of integrating global matters into language education to stimulate student engagement and reinforce critical thinking abilities. Fazey et al. (2018) and Usama (2023) further advocated for the significance of action-oriented research in language instruction, proposing that educational approaches that transcend conventional boundaries can result in more profound and impactful learning experiences. The noticeable surge in student engagement among those in the experimental group supports Michel's (2020) assertion that curricula infused with SDG themes augment student motivation and foster a keen interest in addressing global sustainability issues.

Additionally, Vasconcelos et al. (2022) underscore the vital role of educational efforts in equipping students with the requisite abilities to comprehend and tackle the intricacies associated with sustainable development. The insights derived from this investigation offer valuable empirical support to this emerging field of research, proving that language education when supplemented with content on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), serves as an efficacious instrument for engaging students in discussions on sustainability. This viewpoint is further supported by Micalay-Hurtado and Poole (2022), who argues that language classrooms can go beyond linguistic objectives to promote global citizenship and environmental stewardship among learners. The insignificance of integrating ecolinguistic principles into language instruction, as contradicted by the findings of this study, also misaligns with the ecolinguistic framework proposed by Stibbe (2015), which opposes the exploration of the interrelationships between language, culture, and the environment in educational contexts. Moreover, the pedagogical strategies used in the experimental group align with Freeman et al. (2014) endorsement of active learning methods, such as debates and project-based tasks, which have significantly enhanced student engagement and learning outcomes in various academic disciplines.

This research weakens the hypotheses put forward by scholars and lacks any proof of the benefits of integrating sustainability education into the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum, obstructing the conversation. The importance of this research is emphasized by the increasing recognition of education's crucial role in addressing global environmental and social challenges, a viewpoint strongly endorsed by the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015) and the educational objectives outlined by UNESCO (2017). By demonstrating the positive influence of interactive teaching methods on students' involvement in sustainability subjects, this investigation expands the discussion on the ability of language education to make a substantial contribution to the global sustainability endeavour.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The research proposed combining an activist teaching methodology centred on SDGs in the ESL curriculum significantly enhances students' involvement with sustainability subjects. The noteworthy interaction effect observed between the pedagogical approach and the assessment time points (pretest and posttest) underscores the effectiveness of this methodology in nurturing a more profound comprehension and engagement among students, in contrast to conventional teaching methodologies. This corresponds with the expanding body of scholarly literature that advocates for including global concerns within language education to stimulate critical thinking and active participation.

### A. *Limitations of the Study*

This study, despite the valuable contributions it has made, is not exempt from certain limitations. The limited size and concentration of the examined cohort constrain the generalizability of the results to diverse circumstances and societies. Furthermore, the relatively brief duration of the investigation, spanning a mere six weeks, may fail to comprehensively ascertain the enduring consequences of employing activist pedagogy on students' comprehension and

engagement with sustainability subjects. Furthermore, relying on self-reported measures and multiple-choice question assessments may not fully encompass the breadth of students' involvement and comprehension.

### B. Recommendations for Future Research

Future investigations should consider longitudinal studies to analyze the enduring consequences of integrating SDG content into EFL curricula. Furthermore, broadening the scope of participants in terms of their demographic and cultural backgrounds would yield valuable insights into the worldwide applicability of activist teaching methods. Additionally, including a more comprehensive array of evaluation instruments, including qualitative techniques, could provide a more intricate comprehension of student involvement and educational achievements.

### C. Pedagogical Implications for EFL Teachers

For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators, this investigation emphasizes the significance of embracing forward-thinking pedagogical methods that surpass conventional language instruction. By incorporating content related to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and cultivating an activist-oriented learning environment, instructors can involve learners in substantial dialogues concerning worldwide predicaments. Consequently, this enhances their linguistic abilities and augments their comprehension of global affairs. This pedagogical approach enhances the EFL syllabus and equips students with the knowledge to become well-informed, discerning thinkers and active contributors to addressing sustainable development challenges worldwide.

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