

FEMINIST PEDAGOGY AS A TRANSFORMATIVE FRAMEWORK IN BOYS' ESL CLASSROOMS: EVIDENCE FROM MIXED-METHOD EXPERIMENTAL STUDY IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Despite extensive research on feminist pedagogy (FP) in coeducational and female centered settings, its application within all male secondary English classrooms remains largely unexplored particularly in non Western, culturally conservative contexts. This study addresses that gap by investigating the impact of FP informed instruction on English language learning outcomes for male secondary school students in Pakistan. Using a mixed methods experimental design, students were assigned to an experimental group receiving feminist pedagogy informed instruction and a control group receiving conventional instruction over a ten-week period. Performance across five language skills grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and speaking was measured through pre- and post-tests. A post-treatment questionnaire captured student perceptions of classroom climate, participation, and self-assessed skill development, while semi-structured interviews with school principals provided institutional perspectives on the feasibility and challenges of FP implementation. Findings reveal that the experimental group achieved substantially higher gains than the control group across all five skill domains, with the largest improvements observed in reading and vocabulary. Students reported positive perceptions of classroom safety, equitable participation, and respect. Principals confirmed FP's practical promise while identifying structural constraints including examination pressure, rigid syllabi, and limited teacher training. The study demonstrates that FP, when contextually adapted, constitutes a pedagogically effective and socially transformative framework for male English language learners and extends feminist pedagogical theory into an under-researched demographic.

1. INTRODUCTION

Feminist pedagogy (FP) a transformative educational orientation grounded in critical, emancipatory, and participatory principles has

generated substantial scholarly interest over four decades (Shrewsbury, 1987; hooks, 1994; Webb et al., 2002). Rooted in the intellectual traditions of Paulo Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy,

Gramsci's (1971) critical theory, and second-wave feminist scholarship, FP challenges hierarchical power structures in the classroom, foregrounds student voice and collaborative inquiry, and positions education as a vehicle for social transformation (Elwell & Buchanan, 2019; Chow et al., 2003). Its core commitments equity, empowerment, community building, and critical reflexivity have been operationalized in diverse educational settings, from teacher education programs to higher education writing courses and ESL programs in Western contexts (Cannizzo, 2021; Pereira da Silva, 2024; Roberts, 2021). Yet a pronounced gap exists in the literature. The overwhelming majority of FP scholarship has been conducted in contexts involving female students, mixed-gender classrooms, or institutions in North America and Europe. The application of FP principles in all male secondary classrooms, particularly within non-Western, culturally conservative educational systems, remains marginal in the empirical record (Garton, 2022; Mustapha, 2013). This absence is theoretically significant: if FP's value lies in its capacity to challenge oppressive hierarchies and promote inclusive dialogue, its efficacy should not be contingent upon the gender of the learner. Pakistan presents a particularly instructive case. The country's secondary school system is largely gender segregated, and boys' schools are predominantly governed by teacher centered, examination driven pedagogies (Shah et al., 2022). English language instruction in such settings frequently privileges rote memorization and grammatical drilling over communicative competence or critical engagement (Ranjha et al., 2018). Male students consequently exhibit limited participation in discussion based activities, restricted speaking confidence, and constrained written expression. This study was designed to address this gap directly. It examines the impact of a ten-week feminist pedagogy intervention on male secondary students' English language outcomes in District Bahawalpur, Pakistan, investigating whether feminist pedagogical strategies can improve grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and speaking performance among male secondary learners.

The study makes three principal contributions. First, it provides empirical evidence that FP can produce significant gains in language skills among male learners, extending the theoretical and empirical scope of feminist pedagogical research beyond its traditional constituencies. Second, it offers the first quantitative intervention study on FP in English language teaching in a Pakistani boys' school context. Third, it generates practitioner relevant insights into the institutional conditions that enable or constrain FP implementation in conservative educational settings.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundations of Feminist Pedagogy

Feminist pedagogy emerged in the United States during the 1980s as a synthesis of Freirean critical literacy (Freire, 1970, 1985), Gramscian critical theory (Gramsci, 1971), and Giroux's (1983) emancipatory citizenship education (Adler & Goodman, 1986; Chow et al., 2003). Its foundational premise is that conventional pedagogical structures reproduce social inequalities by privileging certain forms of knowledge, silencing marginalized voices, and reproducing hierarchical authority relations between teacher and student. Rather than a discrete instructional method, FP represents what Shrewsbury (1993, p. 8) called 'a theory about the teaching and learning process' a normative orientation that guides instructional choices toward empowerment, equity, and transformative social engagement.

Webb et al. (2002) distilled FP into six operative principles: reformation of the teacher student relationship, empowerment, community-building, privileging individual voice, respecting diverse personal experience, and challenging traditional epistemological hierarchies. The theoretical framework guiding this study integrates Role Congruity Theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987), and Gender Role Theory as complementary lenses for understanding how socialized gender norms shape participation patterns in male English

classrooms. Feminist pedagogy, from this theoretical vantage point, functions as a corrective: by creating equitable, dialogue-based, and psychologically safe classroom environments, it decouples language learning from restrictive masculine performance norms.

2.2 Feminist Pedagogy in English Language Teaching

The intersection of FP and English Language Teaching has been developed in a small but growing body of scholarship. Vandrick (1994) made an early case that FP offers a vital corrective to traditional ESL practices that silence marginalized voices, arguing that empowering students to interrogate identity and power promotes more authentic communicative competence. Laverick (2008) subsequently identified institutional conservatism and structural linguistics dominance as deterrents to FP adoption within TESOL. More recent empirical work has begun to close this gap: Cannizzo (2021) implemented feminist language pedagogy in a U.S. university EAP course and found increased L2 writing fluency and critical consciousness; Pereira da Silva (2024) documented enhanced motivation, psychological safety, and collaborative learning in a Fulbright ESL program; and Granger and Gerlach (2023) and Nagashima and Lawrence (2023) reported heightened gender awareness and autonomy in German and Japanese EFL classrooms respectively.

Mustapha's (2013) systematic review of over fifty gender and language studies found that unchecked masculine classroom dynamics

suppress communicative competence, and argued that FP frameworks could disrupt these hierarchies through equitable questioning and reflective dialogue. Garton (2022), drawing on data from Bangladesh, Malawi, Mexico, and Uzbekistan, further demonstrated that classroom practices in single-sex male groups subtly favored competitive and directive discourse patterns that FP's collaborative orientation could counterbalance. Critically, neither study quantitatively measured FP's impact on language proficiency outcomes in all-male secondary classrooms, a gap that the present study is designed to address.

2.3 Male Learners, Gender Norms, and Language Learning

Research consistently documents that male learners' language learning behaviors are shaped by gender socialization. Oxford and Ehrman (1995) found that male language learners tend to favor analytical and competitive learning strategies over affective and social ones. Hruska (2004) demonstrated that gendered speech norms reward assertiveness in boys, constraining dialogic participation. Kaylani (1996) and Griffiths (2008) confirmed that affective and social learning strategies correlate positively with L2 achievement across genders, suggesting that male learners who resist collaborative and reflective approaches may be inadvertently suppressing their own linguistic development. Feminist pedagogy is positioned here as a structural intervention that creates the conditions of safety, collaboration, equitable participation that both FP theory and communicative language teaching research identify as optimal for L2 development.

2.4. Review of the Past researches related to Feminist Pedagogy (FP)

Author & Year	Context	Pedagogical Focus	Methodology	Main Findings	Effect on Male Learners	Gaps / Limitations
Pereira da Silva (2024)	U.S. Fulbright Pre-Academic ESL program;	Feminist pedagogy elements (reciprocal learning, empathy,	Retrospective qualitative case study (teacher interviews, classroom	FP enhanced motivation, sense of safety, and collaborative	Male learners gained confidence when topics linked to ethics and	Limited to single program; lacks quantitative proficiency

	instructors and students	shared authority)	docs, student reflections)	learning; no loss in language achievement	leadership rather than emotion	data; no longitudinal follow-up
Cannizzo (2021)	U.S. university EAP writing course	Feminist language pedagogy via collaborative authorship, reflection, critical readings	Classroom-based action research with thematic analysis	Increased L2 writing fluency, argument depth, and critical consciousness; students linked identity with writing	Male learners overcame resistance to reflective writing; displayed higher lexical variety	No control group; qualitative data only; small sample
Mustapha (2013)	Review of 50+ gender and language studies	Gendered discourse and participation; theoretical FP alignment	Systematic literature review (1980-2012)	Found male-dominated talk patterns and teacher bias; argued FP can correct inequity	Suggests FP may rebalance speech opportunities in male groups	Review lacks direct intervention data; no empirical testing
Garton (2022)	Primary ELT in Bangladesh, Malawi, Mexico, Uzbekistan (ESS project)	Gender representation, teacher-learner interaction	Multi-country qualitative interviews & focus groups	Teachers unaware of subtle gender bias; boys received more directive speech; suggested training in FP	FP predicted to reduce dominance and promote reflective talk	Descriptive only; no FP implementation; no outcome metrics
Viana & O'Boyle (2023)	Global ELT teacher-education contexts	Integrating gender equality and feminist perspectives in practice	Practitioner essays, reflections, classroom reports	Reported improved empathy, engagement, and reduced gender stereotyping among learners	Boys showed improved listening and cooperative behaviors	No systematic data; anecdotal evidence; lacks statistical rigor
Vandrick (1994)	U.S. higher education ESL programs	Foundational theory of feminist pedagogy in	Conceptual essay and case illustrations	Advocated FP as means to empower marginalized	Theorized that FP benefits male learners	No empirical data; pre-digital, early FP stage

		ESL		learners and democratize classroom	through shared agency and mutual respect	
Laverick (2008)	TESOL teacher education	Resistance to FP and institutional constraints	Theoretical and practitioner reflection	Found that TESOL's structuralist traditions limit FP adoption	Indirect benefit—calls for FP training to reach male teachers	Conceptual only; lacks implementation evidence
Hruska (2004)	English-dominant kindergarten ESL (U.S.)	Gendered language use and socialization	Ethnographic classroom observation	Boys rewarded for assertive talk; girls for compliance	FP could redefine assertiveness as collaborative, aiding male discourse competence	Early-age focus; not FP-based study; theoretical extrapolation
Goldstein (2001)	Multilingual workplaces in Canada	Feminist discourse in multilingual interactions	Ethnographic study; interviews, discourse analysis	Solidarity talk improved efficiency and empowerment	Suggests FP discourse strategies can improve pragmatic skills in male learners	Adult workplace context; indirect link to ESL classrooms
Oxford & Ehrman (1995)	Adult L2 learners (U.S.)	Gendered learning strategies and cognition	Quantitative correlational study	Social/affective strategies predict success; men favor analytical strategies	FP may balance affective and analytical learning	Not FP-focused; gender lens used inferentially
Kaylani (1996)	Jordanian EFL secondary learners	Gender & motivation effects on strategy use	Cross-cultural quantitative survey	Motivation stronger predictor than gender; FP could enhance motivation for males	Male learners' strategies benefit from reflective, collaborative FP tasks	Lacks experimental FP testing

Griffiths (2008)	Cross-cultural L2 classrooms	Good language learner behaviors	Cross-case comparative analysis	Collaboration and self-reflection key to proficiency	FP complements these strategies for male learners	No gender-specific FP design
Meta-summary (weighted qualitative synthesis)	13 key studies (1987-2024)	Feminist and gender-aware pedagogy in ESL/EFL	Narrative meta-analysis integrating qualitative + limited quantitative findings	Overall: FP improves affective engagement, discourse equity, and learner autonomy	Moderate-to-strong positive influence on participation and motivation of male learners	Lack of standardized proficiency data; heterogeneity in design; small Ns; need for mixed-method, controlled trials

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Participants

The study adopts a convergent mixed-methods experimental design, integrating quantitative and qualitative strands. The quantitative strand employs an experimental pre test & posttest control group design. Sixty male secondary students (Grade 9-10, aged 14-16) from boys' schools in District Bahawalpur were randomly assigned to an experimental group (n = 30) receiving FP-informed instruction and a control group (n = 30) receiving conventional instruction across a ten-week period. Both groups were confirmed statistically equivalent at baseline. Ten school principals were recruited through purposive sampling for qualitative interviews. Table 2 summarizes participant characteristics. The independent variable in this study is Feminist Pedagogy. Within the context of English language teaching, feminist pedagogy involves

participatory activities, critical discussions about gender representation in texts, and teaching methods that empower students as active co-constructors of knowledge rather than passive recipients. The dependent variables are the measurable outcomes of students' English language skills, including grammar proficiency, vocabulary, reading, writing and speaking skills. Controlled variables include class size, grade level, instructional duration, curriculum content, and assessment tools. These are maintained uniformly across both experimental and control groups to minimize bias. Extraneous variables such as teacher personality, student motivation, school environment, and socio economic background were controlled before experimentation. To mitigate their effects, the study employs random sampling, pre-testing for baseline equivalence, and consistent classroom conditions.

Table 2. Participant profile

Characteristic	Category	Control Group (n=30)	Experimental Group (n=30)
Gender	Male only	100%	100%
Grade Level	9 (Secondary)	Grade 9	Grade 9
Age Range	14-16 years	14-16 yrs	14-16 yrs
School Type	Public Boys' School	Public	Public

Instruction Type	Conventional / FP-Informed	Conventional	Feminist Pedagogy
Principals Interviewed	Purposively Sampled	(n= 10)	(n= 10)

3.2 Intervention Design

The experimental group received English language instruction operationalizing five FP pillars: (1) collaborative learning tasks pair work, group discussions, debates, peer feedback; (2) shared classroom authority through co-construction of learning objectives; (3) critical dialogue engaging social and cultural texts in English; (4) psychological safety by normalizing errors and protecting students from ridicule; and (5) equitable participation through structured turn-taking and inclusive facilitation. The control group received conventional teacher-centered instruction aligned with standard curriculum requirements.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Four instruments were employed to gather data at different stages of the study. (1) researchers developed pre and post achievement tests assessing grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and speaking on a ten-point scale each (total = 50); (2) a 25 item post treatment Likert-scale questionnaire (1-5) capturing student perceptions of classroom climate and skill development; (3) semi-structured interviews with ten principals exploring implementation feasibility, perceived benefits, and challenges; and (4) instrument validation through expert review,

piloting, and inter-rater reliability testing for speaking (Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$). Quantitative data were analyzed using paired sample t-tests and independent samples t-tests in SPSS; effect sizes were computed as Cohen's d. Questionnaire data were analyzed descriptively. Interview data underwent qualitative content analysis with member checking.

4. Findings

4.1 Pre-Test Equivalence and Baseline Comparability

Pre-test results confirmed the groups were statistically comparable across all five skill domains. The control group achieved an overall mean of 24.47 and the experimental group 24.97. The between-group difference was not statistically significant ($p = .292$), confirming baseline equivalence and the validity of subsequent comparative analysis.

4.2 Skill-Level Pre-Test and Post-Test Performance

Table 3 presents the complete skill-level pre-test and post-test mean scores, gains, and standardized effect sizes (dz) for both groups. The experimental group's total gain of 16.26 points was approximately 2.6 times larger than the control group's gain of 6.33 points.

Table 3. Pre-test and Post-test Comparison (Control Group vs. Experimental Group)

Skill	Ctrl Pre	Ctrl Post	Ctrl Gain	Exp Pre	Exp Post	Exp Gain	dz Ctrl	Dz Exp
Grammar	5.07	6.33	+1.26	5.07	8.00	+2.93	1.42	3.23
Vocabulary	4.90	6.27	+1.37	5.07	8.93	+3.86	1.69	3.48
Reading	4.83	6.73	+1.90	4.87	9.03	+4.16	3.96	4.77
Writing	5.07	6.50	+1.43	5.00	7.73	+2.73	1.75	3.01
Speaking	4.70	5.97	+1.27	4.77	6.17	+1.40	1.46	1.82
Total	24.47	30.80	+6.33	24.97	41.23	+16.26	—	—

Figure 1 presents the pre- and post-test mean scores for both groups across all five skill domains, clearly illustrating the differential magnitude of the intervention's effect.

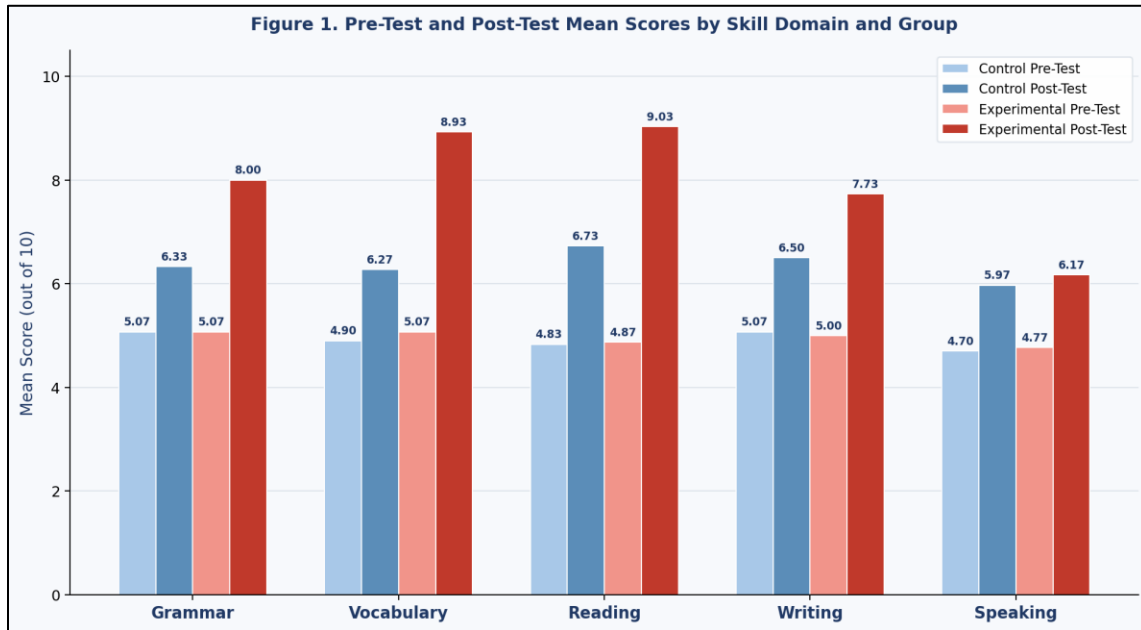


Figure 1. Pre-test and post-test mean scores by skill domain and group.

Figure 2 isolates the within-group mean score gains, enabling a direct visual comparison of how much each group improved per skill domain.

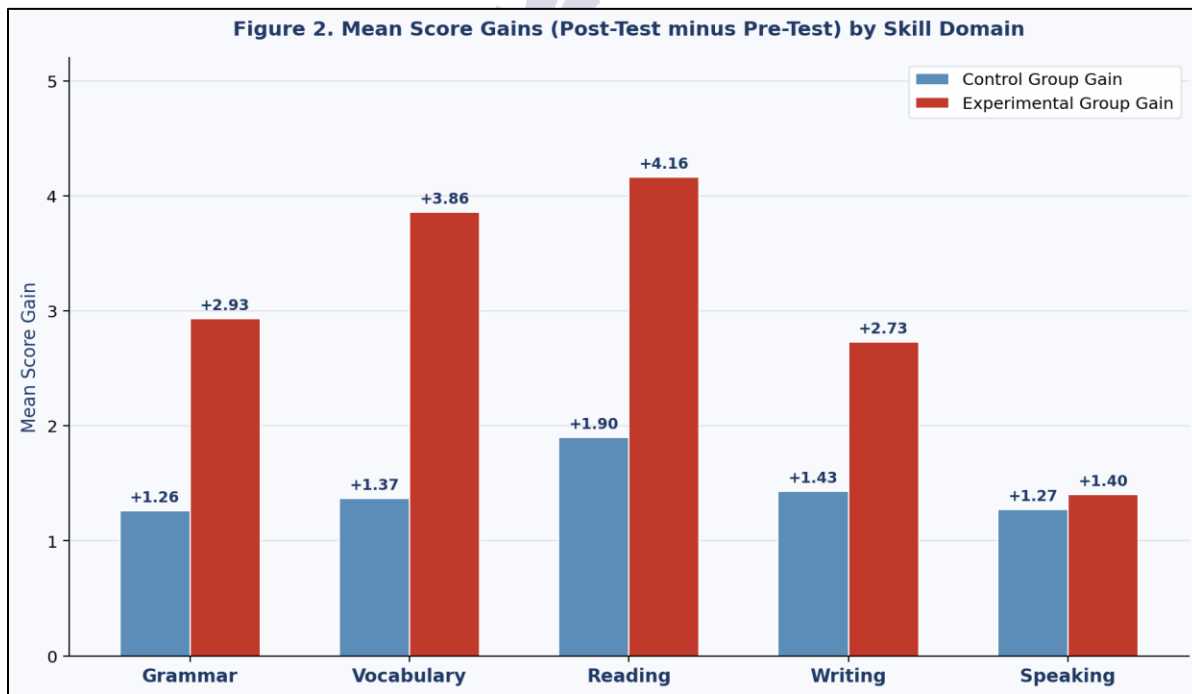


Figure 2. Mean score gains (post-test minus pre-test) by skill domain and group.

4.3 Between-Group Post-Test Comparison

Post-intervention comparison revealed a highly significant difference favoring the experimental

group across all skills. Table 3 summarizes the between-group comparisons at pre-test and post-

test levels, including the overall and skill-level mean differences, test significance, and effect size.

Table 3. Pre-test and post-test comparison (Control group vs. Experimental group)

Comparison	Control Mean (SD)	Experimental Mean (SD)	Mean Difference	Test Result	Cohen's d
Pre-Test Baseline	24.47 (1.87)	24.97 (1.77)	0.50	p = .292 (ns)	0.27
Post-Test Overall	30.80 (1.67)	41.23 (2.53)	10.43	p < .001	4.87
Grammar Post	6.33	8.00	1.67	p < .001	–
Vocabulary Post	6.27	8.93	2.66	p < .001	–
Reading Post	6.73	9.03	2.30	p < .001	–
Writing Post	6.50	7.73	1.23	p < .001	–
Speaking Post	5.97	6.17	0.20	p < .001	–

The overall between-group post-test difference of 10.43 points yielded a very large effect size (Cohen's d = 4.87), confirming that FP informed instruction produced practically significant, not merely statistically significant improvements in English language achievement. Vocabulary and reading showed the most pronounced inter group differences at post-test.

4.4 Student Questionnaire Findings

Table 4 presents the mean scores for selected questionnaire items alongside their rating category. The overall mean across all 25 items was 4.05 out of 5.00, indicating broadly positive student perceptions of the feminist pedagogy classroom environment.

Table 4. Student post-treatment questionnaire selected item mean scores and rating categories

No.	Questionnaire Item	Mean	Category
23	I can understand reading passages more easily than before.	4.47	Highest Rated
6	My teacher uses activities that allow students to participate actively.	4.37	Highest Rated
20	The teaching environment helps me respect others' perspectives.	4.20	Highest Rated
5	I feel safe asking questions when I do not understand something.	4.20	Highest Rated
7	I am encouraged to express my own views during English lessons.	4.20	Highest Rated
4	My teacher listens carefully to what students say.	4.00	Above Average
16	All students are given equal opportunities to participate in class.	3.93	Lowest Rated
13	I try to participate regularly in class discussions.	3.90	Lowest Rated
14	I feel confident speaking English during classroom activities.	3.83	Lowest Rated
19	The class includes activities where students work together and support each other.	3.83	Lowest Rated
24	My writing skills have improved due to classroom practice.	3.80	Lowest Rated
–	Overall Mean across all 25 items	4.05	Positive Overall

Figure 3 visualizes the full distribution of mean scores across the ten highlighted questionnaire

items, distinguishing highest-rated from lowest-rated experiences. The pattern is consistent with

the achievement data: receptive skill improvement (reading, vocabulary) and safety are perceived most strongly, while speaking

confidence and collaborative participation remain comparatively less developed.

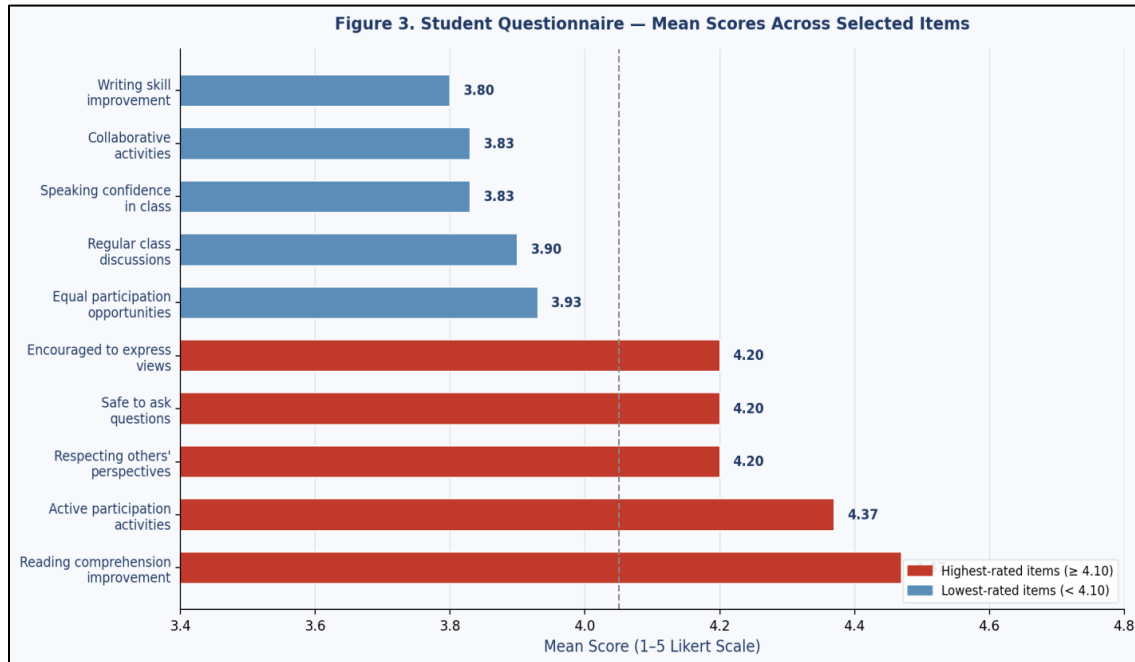


Figure 3. Student questionnaire mean scores across selected items.

Items rated ≥ 4.10 shown in red; items < 4.10 in blue. Dashed line represents the overall mean (4.05).

4.5 Findings obtained from Principals' Interviews

Qualitative Content analysis of the ten principal interviews produced five dominant themes. Perceived benefits: all principals acknowledged that FP aligned strategies led to increased student confidence, classroom participation, and critical thinking. Implementation challenges: teachers encountered difficulty transitioning from authoritative to facilitative roles; students' initially resisted student-centered activities; and the term 'feminist pedagogy' generated cultural misunderstandings. Teacher preparedness was characterized as moderate, with calls for structured professional development and mentoring. School leadership was identified as a critical enabler: principals who actively supported pedagogical innovation were linked to more sustainable reform outcomes. Long-term impact: principals anticipated that sustained FP implementation would contribute to improved

empathy, respectful communication, cooperation, and reduced aggressive behavior.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide robust quantitative and qualitative evidence that feminist pedagogy, when systematically implemented, produces significant and practically meaningful improvements in male secondary students' English language performance across all five assessed skill domains. The experimental group's substantially larger gain, yielding a very large effect size, represents compelling evidence that the differential was attributable to the pedagogical intervention rather than baseline differences or maturation effects. The differential magnitude of gains across skills is theoretically illuminating. Receptive skills reading and vocabulary showed the strongest experimental improvement. This pattern is consistent with FP's emphasis on collaborative text engagement, where dialogic unpacking of reading materials in

safe, participation rich environments provides multiple exposures to vocabulary in context, facilitating lexical acquisition through both input and interaction (Krashen, 1985; Nation, 2001). The de-centered classroom structure, in which students co-interpret texts rather than receive information passively, scaffolds deeper processing of textual meaning a known driver of reading comprehension gains. These findings extend those of Cannizzo (2021) and Pereira da Silva (2024), who documented enhanced engagement with language materials among learners in FP informed ESL classrooms.

Grammar improvement likely reflects the cognitive benefits of collaborative language production: when students negotiate meaning in group tasks and receive peer feedback, they attend more consciously to grammatical form within communicative contexts (Ellis, 2003; Swain, 2000). Writing gains, while substantial, were second smallest among productive skills, consistent with student perceptions that writing development was less immediate reflecting the greater cognitive demand of independent written production and the longer timeframe typically required for writing proficiency to consolidate (Cumming, 2016).

The speaking results deserve particular attention. Although statistically significant, the gain was comparatively modest and aligned with the lowest questionnaire ratings for speaking confidence. Male students in all-male classrooms, deeply socialized into competitive and face-saving communicative norms, may require longer exposure to feminist pedagogical conditions before speaking confidence transforms into measurable proficiency gains. Mustapha (2013) anticipated precisely this pattern, noting that gendered speech norms in male classrooms create structural barriers to open dialogue that a single-term intervention may only partially disrupt. These findings suggest sustained implementation across longer timeframes is necessary to achieve the more transformative shifts in oral interaction that FP's full theoretical potential implies. The students' questionnaire data reveal an important explanatory mechanism: the relationship between perceived psychological safety and linguistic

performance. Items related to feeling safe to ask questions and respected perspectives clustered among the highest-rated experiences, while productive skill confidence items were comparatively lower. This gradient suggests that FP successfully established the foundational affective conditions that reduce affective filters (Krashen, 1985) and enable greater engagement with comprehensible input consistent with hooks' (1994) argument that engaged pedagogy must first create conditions of care and mutual recognition before demanding intellectual risk-taking.

The principals' interview data add an essential contextual and institutional dimension. Principals' positive assessments of FP's potential resonate with the sociological argument that feminist pedagogical principles function as practices of democratic citizenship formation (Giroux, 1988; Scerif, 1997). Their identification of structural constraints examination pressure, rigid syllabi, large class sizes, insufficient professional development, and cultural resistance echoes those documented in TESOL contexts by Laverick (2008) and the British Council's practitioner compendium (Viana & O'Boyle, 2023), and indicates that effective FP implementation requires institutional alignment beyond willing teachers alone. Critically, this study demonstrates that FP's benefits are not restricted to female or coeducational learners. Male students in a conservative Pakistani educational context responded substantively to FP informed instruction, challenging the assumption that feminist pedagogy's emancipatory function is gender specific.

6. Justification of the Research Questions

1. Feminist pedagogy significantly influences male students' comprehension and application of grammar and vocabulary by fostering an inclusive, collaborative, and student-centered environment. As observed by Malik (2023), gender-sensitive approaches within classrooms can create a more open and reflective learning atmosphere, encouraging male students to engage critically with the language learning

process. This approach emphasizes students' personal experiences, enabling them to relate language concepts to their lives, which enhances retention and application. In this study, students exposed to feminist pedagogy showed considerable improvement in both grammar and vocabulary, as evidenced by the significant differences in their pre-test and post-test scores. In line with the findings from Granger and Gerlach (2024), the study found that when male students were exposed to feminist teaching methods, their ability to understand and apply grammatical structures and vocabulary improved significantly. This result supports the idea that when students are encouraged to reflect on and question traditional power structures, such as those in the classroom, they are more likely to engage actively with learning materials. According to Borshuk (2017), the principles of feminist pedagogy particularly empowering students to express themselves and engage critically with the content lead to higher language proficiency, especially in grammar and vocabulary. The classroom environment, which promotes gender inclusivity and reflective discussions, has been found to increase male students' understanding and ability to use language structures more confidently. The experimental group's increased ability to apply grammatical rules and vocabulary in various contexts aligns with the work of Cpedro et al. (2006), who found that inclusive teaching practices lead to better retention and application of language concepts. This suggests that feminist pedagogy not only enhances male students' grammatical knowledge but also encourages them to use language in more meaningful, authentic ways. Overall, feminist pedagogy contributes to male students' language development by promoting critical engagement with language learning, creating a dynamic space for vocabulary and grammar to be understood and used creatively. These findings align with previous studies, indicating that feminist pedagogy improves not only linguistic skills but also students' critical engagement with language learning.

2. Feminist pedagogy positively influences the development of male students' reading skills

by promoting critical thinking, reflective engagement with texts, and fostering diverse perspectives in classroom discussions. This study shows that male students exposed to feminist teaching methods demonstrated significant improvements in their reading comprehension skills. The study's findings mirror the work of Granger and Gerlach (2024), who argued that feminist pedagogies improve reading comprehension by fostering dialogic learning in the classroom, where students discuss and analyze readings together, thus enhancing their understanding of the material. By applying these principles, male students in the experimental group were able to move beyond surface-level reading comprehension to engage critically with texts, increasing their ability to infer meaning, analyze themes, and draw connections between their reading material and their own experiences. This improvement in reading comprehension was further supported by the positive feedback from students, who reported feeling more confident and motivated to read texts critically. As highlighted by Leotta (2021), feminist pedagogy challenges traditional norms and encourages students to think critically about the content they engage with, which is crucial for developing advanced reading skills. Thus, feminist pedagogy enhances male students' ability to understand, analyze, and critically engage with reading materials, promoting deeper literacy development. Feminist pedagogies emphasize the importance of fostering a safe, inclusive space where students feel their voices are valued. This inclusive environment not only promotes reading comprehension but also supports individual critical reflection on texts, as evidenced in this study by the experimental group's marked improvement in their ability to analyze complex readings. As noted by UNESCO (2020), when students are encouraged to engage in group discussions and shared learning experiences, their reading skills are enhanced because they are exposed to multiple perspectives, allowing them to consider various interpretations of a text. This process, intrinsic to feminist pedagogy, allows male students to develop higher-order reading

skills and fosters a deeper connection to the material.

3. Feminist pedagogy shapes male students' writing performance and creativity by encouraging self-expression, critical reflection, and engagement with diverse voices. The empowerment fostered by feminist pedagogical practices allows male students to see writing as a tool for personal expression and social change. This study demonstrates that students exposed to feminist pedagogical approaches exhibited improved writing skills, with increased creativity and more nuanced arguments in their written work. These improvements are in line with the findings of Mustapha (2013), who noted that feminist pedagogy, through its focus on dialogue and inclusion, allows students to explore a wider range of ideas and self-expressions, enhancing their writing abilities. Additionally, feminist pedagogy encourages male students to write not just for academic purposes but as a way to express their thoughts on gender and societal issues, promoting both creativity and critical thinking in their writing. Feminist pedagogies promote a collaborative classroom environment where students engage in peer feedback and co-construct knowledge through writing activities. This collaborative approach to writing encourages male students to take more risks in their work, exploring ideas and perspectives they may not have previously considered. The study's findings, showing that students in the experimental group produced more creative and reflective writing, are consistent with the argument that feminist pedagogies create a learning environment where students feel more confident to experiment with their writing. Additionally, this approach encourages students to write not just for academic purposes but as a means of self-exploration and societal engagement, which increases their investment in writing tasks and enhances their overall creativity (Granger & Gerlach, 2024). As Borshuk (2017) argues, feminist pedagogies also facilitate a deeper connection between students' writing and their lived experiences, further enhancing both the quality and creativity of their work. Therefore, feminist pedagogy fosters a more inclusive and

reflective approach to writing, enhancing male students' creativity and writing skills.

4. Feminist pedagogy enhances the speaking skills and classroom interaction of male students by creating safe spaces for dialogue, promoting active participation, and encouraging respectful engagement with diverse perspectives. The study found that male students in classrooms where feminist pedagogical strategies were implemented exhibited increased confidence in speaking activities and more frequent participation in discussions. This aligns with the findings of Garton (2022), who noted that gender-responsive pedagogies, such as those based on feminist principles, foster more balanced and inclusive classroom interactions. By shifting the classroom dynamics from traditional teacher-centered to more dialogue-driven formats, feminist pedagogy allows male students to feel safer in expressing their opinions, which in turn increases their speaking confidence. This also encourages more collaborative learning, as male students feel that their voices are valued and that they are contributing to a collective knowledge-building process (Viana & O'Boyle, 2023). Feminist pedagogy, by encouraging collaborative learning and shared authority, provides male students with opportunities to practice speaking in less formal, more supportive settings. This approach contrasts with traditional, teacher-centered models where students have limited opportunities for active speaking practice. As noted by Shrewsbury (1987), feminist pedagogies encourage egalitarian classroom structures, which allow male students to feel more comfortable expressing their ideas without fear of judgment. The positive feedback from students in this study supports this idea, showing that they felt more motivated to speak in class when feminist principles of respect, fairness, and inclusion were applied. This approach transforms the classroom into a safe space for dialogue, where all voices are valued, and students feel more confident to engage in conversations. The study found that male students who were exposed to feminist pedagogical methods demonstrated a marked improvement in speaking skills, particularly in group discussions, debates, and peer feedback

activities. These findings are consistent with the work of Richards and Rodgers (2014), who emphasized the role of interactive pedagogies in promoting language use, particularly speaking, through authentic interaction and negotiation of meaning. The enhanced interaction and speaking skills can be attributed to the active engagement and equitable distribution of participation opportunities in feminist classrooms, providing male students with a platform to express themselves freely and meaningfully.

7. Implications of the study

Based on the findings, the study offers the following futuristic contributions and implications for practice, policy, and sustainability of English language teaching in boys' secondary schools. The strong gains in the experimental group show that English learning improves when students actively speak, negotiate meaning, and co-construct knowledge. Schools can gradually move from recitation-based teaching to structured dialogue, group tasks, and reflective activities that still align with curriculum targets (Hymes, 1972; Ellis, 2003). Principals' interviews show that feminist pedagogy can be reframed as respect, fairness, and shared learning for all students. This framing can reduce resistance in boys' schools and position gender consciousness as a part of good teaching rather than political debate (Shrewsbury, 1987; Webb et al., 2002). The major barrier identified by principals was teacher preparedness. Regular training in gender-responsive pedagogy, inclusive communication, and collaborative classroom management can make the approach sustainable. Short workshops are useful, but ongoing coaching and peer-observation cycles can produce longer-lasting change (FAWE, 2005). Speaking gains and questionnaire evidence on confidence suggest that feminist pedagogy can address the common problem of low oral participation in ELT. By building psychological safety and reducing fear of error, boys can practice speaking more frequently, which directly supports communicative competence. Principals stressed that leadership support shapes feasibility. School leaders can institutionalize participatory norms by

encouraging activity-based lesson planning, allowing time for discussion, and recognizing teacher innovation in evaluation systems. Policy-makers can include learner-centered indicators within monitoring frameworks to support adoption at scale. Beyond language scores, the approach can promote respectful interaction, empathy, and healthier masculinities through everyday classroom routines. Over time, this can contribute to more inclusive school cultures and broader civic attitudes, which is important for social cohesion and equitable development (Freire, 1993; Yamamura, 2021).

8. Conclusion

This study examined the role of feminist pedagogy in teaching English in boys' secondary-level classrooms in District Bahawalpur using a mixed-methods experimental design. The study compared pre-test and post-test performance of an experimental group taught through feminist pedagogy and a control group taught through traditional instruction. The quantitative results show that both groups improved; however, the experimental group demonstrated substantially higher gains across grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and speaking, as well as a much larger overall improvement. These findings indicate that feminist pedagogy, implemented through dialogue, collaboration, and shared classroom authority, can significantly enhance English language learning in boys' classrooms. The questionnaire findings offered an explanatory layer to these outcomes. Students generally agreed that the classroom climate under the intervention was respectful, fair, and supportive of participation. High perceptions of safety, teacher listening, and opportunities for discussion suggest that students experienced an inclusive learning ecology, which is central to feminist pedagogy and helps explain improved engagement and practice. The principals' interviews further confirmed that feminist pedagogy is feasible and beneficial in boys' schools, but conditional. School leaders expected positive effects on communication skills, confidence, engagement, and critical thinking, yet they also reported constraints such as large

class sizes, examination pressure, rigid syllabi, limited resources, and insufficient teacher training. Therefore, the study concludes that feminist pedagogy is both effective and contextually viable in boys' secondary education when implemented gradually and supported through leadership and professional development. Overall, the converging evidence supports the central conclusion of the study: feminist pedagogy can improve English language outcomes and classroom interaction in boys' secondary schools while promoting respectful social attitudes. The study contributes to an underexplored area in Pakistan by showing how feminist pedagogical principles can be adapted for boys-only ELT contexts.

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