

TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND TRANSLANGUAGING IN EFL CLASSROOMS IN UZBEKISTAN: A COMPARATIVE MIXED-METHODS STUDY

Ozodova Muqaddas Sardorbek qizi^{1*}, Muradov Utkir Nurillayevich²

¹Student, Uzbekistan National Pedagogical University, Tashkent, Uzbekistan | Email: muqaddasozodova0@gmail.com

²Associate Professor, Uzbekistan National Pedagogical University, Tashkent, Uzbekistan | Email: utkirnurillayevich@gmail.com

***Corresponding Author:** Ozodova Muqaddas Sardorbek qizi | Email: muqaddasozodova0@gmail.com

Abstract

This study explores and compares EFL teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging in English language classrooms in Uzbekistan. Formative assessment and translanguaging are both considered learner-centered pedagogical practices; however, teachers may perceive and implement them differently depending on institutional expectations, classroom realities, and professional beliefs. The study employed a mixed-methods research design. Quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 120 EFL teachers working in secondary schools, universities, and private language centers in Uzbekistan. The questionnaire consisted of two main scales measuring teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, reliability analysis through Cronbach's alpha, and a paired-samples t-test to compare the two attitude scales. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants to gain deeper insights into teachers' perceptions, challenges, and classroom practices. The findings revealed that teachers held positive attitudes toward both formative assessment and translanguaging. However, their attitudes toward formative assessment were significantly stronger than their attitudes toward translanguaging. Formative assessment was viewed as a useful tool for identifying students' learning needs, providing feedback, and improving instruction, while translanguaging was perceived as helpful for explaining difficult grammar, supporting lower-proficiency learners, increasing participation, and reducing anxiety. Nevertheless, some teachers expressed caution toward translanguaging due to English-only beliefs and institutional expectations. The study concludes that both formative assessment and translanguaging can support learner-centered EFL instruction in Uzbekistan, but their effective implementation requires teacher training, institutional support, and clear pedagogical guidance.

Keywords: formative assessment, translanguaging, EFL teachers, teachers' attitudes, Uzbekistan, mixed-methods research, multilingual pedagogy

Introduction

English language education in Uzbekistan has undergone substantial development in recent decades, particularly as English has become increasingly associated with international communication, academic mobility, professional development, and access to global knowledge. National policy has also emphasized

the effective organization and promotion of foreign language learning, including English language education, as reflected in governmental measures on foreign language learning adopted in Uzbekistan in 2021. In this educational context, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms are expected not only to develop learners' linguistic competence but also to adopt pedagogical approaches that support learner engagement, continuous progress, and communicative participation.

Two pedagogical concepts are particularly relevant to contemporary EFL classrooms: formative assessment and translanguaging. Formative assessment refers to assessment practices used during the learning process to identify learners' needs, provide feedback, and improve teaching and learning. Black and Wiliam's influential review argued that strengthening classroom feedback and formative assessment practices can produce substantial learning gains. In EFL contexts, formative assessment may include oral questioning, teacher feedback, peer assessment, self-assessment, learning journals, diagnostic tasks, rubrics, and classroom observation. These practices shift assessment from a purely summative function toward a learning-oriented process.

At the same time, Uzbekistan's multilingual reality raises important questions about language use in English classrooms. Many learners use Uzbek, Russian, Karakalpak, Tajik, or other languages in their daily lives. Translanguaging, broadly understood as the flexible use of learners' full linguistic repertoires, challenges strict English-only classroom ideologies and views multilingual resources as pedagogical assets. García and Li Wei conceptualize translanguaging as a theoretical and pedagogical approach that has transformed understandings of bilingualism, language practices, and education. In EFL classrooms, translanguaging may support comprehension, scaffolding, vocabulary development, classroom interaction, and learner confidence, especially when students' English proficiency is still developing.

Although formative assessment and translanguaging are often discussed separately, they share an important learner-centered orientation. Formative assessment aims to understand learners' current performance and guide them toward improvement, while translanguaging can help learners access content, express complex ideas, and participate more fully in classroom activities. However, teachers may not perceive both practices in the same way. Formative assessment may be considered professionally acceptable because it aligns with assessment for learning, feedback, and modern teaching methodology. Translanguaging, by contrast, may be viewed more cautiously because of English-only expectations, institutional policies, examination pressure, and beliefs about target language exposure.

Despite the growing relevance of these practices, there is limited research comparing EFL teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging in Uzbekistan. Existing international research indicates that teacher beliefs, perceptions, and assessment literacy influence the effectiveness of formative assessment in EFL classrooms. However, less is known about how teachers in Uzbekistan evaluate formative assessment in relation to translanguaging, or whether they see both practices as complementary learner-centered strategies. Addressing this gap is important because teachers' attitudes strongly influence whether pedagogical innovations are accepted, adapted, resisted, or superficially implemented.

Therefore, this study aims to explore and compare EFL teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging in Uzbekistan. It investigates not only whether teachers hold positive or negative attitudes but also how they explain their beliefs, classroom practices, and perceived challenges. By integrating classroom assessment and multilingual pedagogy, the study contributes to research on EFL teacher cognition in Central Asia and provides practical implications for teacher education and language policy.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

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1. What are EFL teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment in English language classrooms in Uzbekistan?
2. What are EFL teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging in English language classrooms in Uzbekistan?
3. Is there a significant difference between teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging?
4. What factors do teachers identify as supporting or limiting the use of formative assessment and translanguaging in their classrooms?

Literature Review

Formative assessment is commonly understood as assessment for learning rather than merely assessment of learning. Its primary purpose is to support students' progress through continuous feedback, diagnostic information, and instructional adjustment. In language classrooms, formative assessment is especially valuable because language development is gradual, interactive, and dependent on meaningful feedback. Instead of waiting until the end of a course to measure achievement, teachers can use formative assessment to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses during instruction.

Black and Wiliam's work remains central to the theoretical foundation of formative assessment. Their review emphasized that frequent feedback, learner involvement, and teacher responsiveness can improve learning outcomes. In EFL education, formative assessment may include teacher-student conferences, peer review, self-reflection checklists, oral questioning, classroom tasks, short quizzes, portfolio assessment, and feedback on speaking or writing. A recent systematic review of formative assessment in K–12 EFL education also notes that formative assessment can support English language teaching and learning, while teachers' and students' beliefs influence its effectiveness.

However, formative assessment is not always easy to implement. Teachers may face challenges such as large class sizes, limited time, examination-oriented curricula, insufficient assessment literacy, and lack of institutional support. In many EFL settings, teachers may understand formative assessment theoretically but rely heavily on summative testing in practice. This gap between belief and implementation makes teachers' attitudes an important object of investigation.

Translanguaging has become an influential concept in multilingual education. It refers to the dynamic and flexible use of linguistic resources by bilingual and multilingual speakers. Rather than treating languages as completely separate systems, translanguaging recognizes that multilingual learners draw on their entire linguistic repertoire to construct meaning, communicate, and learn. García and Li Wei describe translanguaging as a concept that has contributed to new understandings of language, bilingualism, and education.

In EFL classrooms, translanguaging may occur when teachers or students use the first language or other familiar languages to explain grammar, clarify instructions, discuss complex ideas, compare vocabulary, support peer interaction, or reduce anxiety. In contexts such as Uzbekistan, where many learners already function in multilingual environments, translanguaging can reflect natural language practices rather than a failure to use English.

Nevertheless, translanguaging may be controversial in English language teaching. Some teachers believe that maximum exposure to English is necessary for language development. Others worry that using Uzbek, Russian, or other languages may reduce students' motivation to communicate in English. Institutional expectations and standardized examinations may also reinforce English-only ideologies. Therefore,

teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging may be shaped by their beliefs about language learning, classroom control, student proficiency, and professional identity.

Teachers' attitudes are closely connected to teacher cognition, which includes beliefs, knowledge, assumptions, values, and decision-making processes. In EFL classrooms, teachers' attitudes influence how they interpret curriculum requirements, choose teaching strategies, assess learners, and respond to multilingual realities. Even when educational reforms promote learner-centered practices, teachers may adapt or resist them depending on whether they believe such practices are useful, feasible, and appropriate.

In the case of formative assessment, positive attitudes may encourage teachers to provide regular feedback, use peer assessment, involve students in self-evaluation, and modify instruction based on evidence. Negative or uncertain attitudes may lead to superficial implementation, such as using quizzes without feedback or treating formative assessment as another form of grading. In the case of translanguaging, positive attitudes may lead teachers to use learners' linguistic resources strategically, while negative attitudes may lead them to prohibit first-language use even when it could support comprehension and participation.

Uzbekistan provides a significant context for studying formative assessment and translanguaging because English language education operates within a multilingual society and a rapidly modernizing educational system. English is taught as a foreign language rather than as a dominant societal language. Students may bring Uzbek, Russian, Karakalpak, Tajik, or other linguistic resources into the classroom. This makes translanguaging both a natural classroom reality and a potentially useful pedagogical strategy.

At the same time, educational institutions increasingly emphasize communicative competence, foreign language proficiency, and international standards. Governmental attention to the promotion of foreign language learning creates pressure for effective English instruction. However, teachers may experience tensions between communicative, learner-centered methodologies and traditional assessment practices. These tensions make Uzbekistan an important setting for investigating how teachers understand formative assessment and translanguaging.

Previous studies have investigated formative assessment in EFL contexts, and translanguaging has been widely discussed in multilingual education. However, limited attention has been paid to the relationship between teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging in Uzbekistan. More specifically, few studies have compared whether EFL teachers view formative assessment and translanguaging with similar levels of acceptance or whether one practice is perceived as more legitimate, useful, or feasible than the other.

This study addresses this gap by examining both practices within the same empirical framework. The comparative focus allows the study to reveal not only teachers' attitudes toward each practice separately but also broader patterns in how teachers respond to learner-centered innovation in EFL classrooms.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research design to explore and compare EFL teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging in English language classrooms in Uzbekistan. The quantitative phase was conducted through a questionnaire, while the qualitative phase was carried out through semi-structured interviews. This design was chosen because teachers' attitudes can be measured statistically through survey responses, while interviews provide deeper explanations of the reasons behind their attitudes.

Participants

The participants of the study were 120 EFL teachers working in different educational institutions in Uzbekistan. They included teachers from secondary schools, universities, and private language centers.

Among them, 52 teachers worked in secondary schools, 38 teachers worked in universities, and 30 teachers worked in private language centers.

In terms of teaching experience, 46 participants had 1–5 years of experience, 41 participants had 6–10 years of experience, and 33 participants had more than 10 years of teaching experience. Regarding academic qualification, 63 teachers held a bachelor's degree, 52 held a master's degree, and 5 held a PhD or equivalent qualification.

Research Instrument

The main instrument of the study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section collected demographic information, including institution type, teaching experience, and academic qualification. The second section measured teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment. The third section measured teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging.

The questionnaire used a **five-point Likert scale**:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

The formative assessment scale included items related to feedback, peer assessment, self-assessment, classroom questioning, and instructional adjustment. The translanguaging scale included items related to the use of students' first language, Uzbek or Russian for grammar explanation, classroom participation, English-only instruction, and students' anxiety.

Data Collection Procedure

The data were collected from EFL teachers in Uzbekistan through an online questionnaire. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their participation was voluntary. After the questionnaire stage, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected teachers to obtain deeper insights into their attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. First, mean and standard deviation were calculated for each questionnaire item. Then, the overall mean scores for the formative assessment scale and the translanguaging scale were calculated.

Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire scales. The formative assessment scale showed good reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha value of **0.86**, while the translanguaging scale showed acceptable reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha value of **0.81**. The overall questionnaire reliability was **0.88**.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging. The qualitative interview data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The main themes were identified based on repeated ideas in teachers' responses.

Results

A total of **120 EFL teachers** from Uzbekistan participated in the study. The participants represented three main teaching contexts: secondary schools, higher education institutions, and private language centers. Most participants had between one and ten years of teaching experience, while a smaller proportion had more than ten years of experience. This diversity allowed the study to examine teachers' attitudes across different professional backgrounds.

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Institution type	Secondary school	52	43.3%
	University	38	31.7%
	Private language center	30	25.0%
Teaching experience	1–5 years	46	38.3%
	6–10 years	41	34.2%
	More than 10 years	33	27.5%
Highest qualification	Bachelor's degree	63	52.5%
	Master's degree	52	43.3%
	PhD or equivalent	5	4.2%

Teachers' Attitudes toward Formative Assessment

The results showed that teachers generally had positive attitudes toward formative assessment in EFL classrooms. The overall mean score for the formative assessment scale was $M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.56$, indicating a high level of agreement with the usefulness of formative assessment. The highest mean score was found for the item "Regular feedback improves students' English language development" ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.61$), suggesting that teachers strongly valued feedback as an important part of language learning.

Teachers also agreed that formative assessment helps identify students' learning needs and supports instructional adjustment. However, the item related to time limitations received a moderately high mean score, showing that teachers may face practical challenges when implementing formative assessment regularly.

Formative Assessment Item	Mean	SD
Formative assessment helps me identify students' learning needs.	4.31	0.64
Giving regular feedback improves students' English language development.	4.42	0.61
Peer assessment is useful in EFL classrooms.	3.91	0.78
Self-assessment helps learners become more responsible for their learning.	4.07	0.72
I use classroom questioning to check students' understanding.	4.25	0.66
I adjust my teaching based on formative assessment results.	4.13	0.69

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Formative Assessment Item	Mean	SD
Formative assessment motivates students to improve.	4.19	0.70
Formative assessment is difficult to use because of limited class time.	3.76	0.84
Large class sizes make formative assessment difficult.	3.82	0.88
Formative assessment is more useful than relying only on final exams.	4.12	0.73
Overall formative assessment scale	4.18	0.56

Teachers' Attitudes toward Translanguaging

Teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging were also generally positive, although slightly lower than their attitudes toward formative assessment. The overall mean score for the translanguaging scale was **M = 3.79**, **SD = 0.63**. This indicates that teachers recognized the pedagogical value of using students' linguistic resources but were somewhat cautious about its broader use.

The highest mean score was found for the item "Uzbek or Russian can help explain difficult grammar" (**M = 4.12**, **SD = 0.74**). This suggests that teachers accepted translanguaging mainly as a support strategy for explanation and clarification. Similarly, teachers agreed that translanguaging can reduce students' anxiety and increase classroom participation.

However, the item "English-only instruction is always better" received a moderate score (**M = 3.21**, **SD = 0.91**), showing that some teachers still supported English-only instruction. This item was reverse-coded when calculating the overall translanguaging attitude score.

Translanguaging Item	Mean	SD
Students' first language can support English learning.	3.94	0.76
Uzbek or Russian can help explain difficult grammar.	4.12	0.74
Translanguaging increases classroom participation.	3.87	0.81
English-only instruction is always better.	3.21	0.91
Translanguaging can reduce students' anxiety.	3.96	0.79
Overall translanguaging scale	3.79	0.63

Comparison between Attitudes toward Formative Assessment and Translanguaging

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging. The results showed that teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment were significantly more positive than their attitudes toward translanguaging.

The mean score for formative assessment was **M = 4.18**, **SD = 0.56**, while the mean score for translanguaging was **M = 3.79**, **SD = 0.63**. The difference was statistically significant, **t(119) = 6.84**, **p < .001**.

This finding suggests that EFL teachers in Uzbekistan may view formative assessment as more familiar, institutionally acceptable, and professionally legitimate than translanguaging. Although teachers recognized the usefulness of translanguaging, they appeared more cautious about using students' first language or other languages in English classrooms.

Scale	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Formative assessment attitude	4.18	0.56	6.84	< .001
Translanguaging attitude	3.79	0.63		

Cronbach's alpha was calculated to examine the internal consistency of the questionnaire scales. The formative assessment scale showed good reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.86. The translanguaging scale also demonstrated acceptable reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.81. These results indicate that the questionnaire items were internally consistent and suitable for measuring teachers' attitudes toward the two constructs.

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Formative assessment scale	10	0.86
Translanguaging scale	10	0.81
Overall questionnaire	20	0.88

Interview Findings

The qualitative interview data supported the quantitative findings. Four major themes emerged from the interviews: formative assessment as a tool for monitoring progress, translanguaging as strategic support, institutional constraints, and the need for professional training.

Theme 1: Formative Assessment as a Tool for Monitoring Students' Progress

Most teachers viewed formative assessment as an important tool for understanding students' learning needs. They explained that regular questioning, short quizzes, oral feedback, peer assessment, and observation helped them identify students' strengths and weaknesses during the lesson.

One teacher stated:

"When I use short questions or feedback during the lesson, I can immediately understand whether students have understood the topic or not. It helps me change my teaching."

This finding shows that teachers connected formative assessment with practical classroom decision-making.

Theme 2: Translanguaging as Strategic Classroom Support

Teachers did not completely reject translanguaging. Most participants believed that Uzbek, Russian, or other familiar languages could be useful when students had difficulty understanding grammar, vocabulary, or instructions. However, they emphasized that translanguaging should be used carefully and only when necessary.

One participant explained:

"Sometimes students cannot understand grammar in English. In that case, using Uzbek or Russian helps them understand faster. But I think English should still be the main language of the lesson."

This indicates that teachers accepted translanguaging as a scaffolding strategy rather than as a replacement for English.

Theme 3: English-Only Beliefs and Institutional Expectations

Some teachers expressed concern that frequent use of students' first language might reduce English exposure. They believed that students should be encouraged to think and communicate in English as much as possible. In addition, several teachers mentioned that their institutions expected English to be used as the main classroom language.

One teacher commented:

"Our school encourages teachers to use English during the lesson. If we use Uzbek too much, students may become dependent on translation."

This finding explains why teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging were slightly less positive than their attitudes toward formative assessment.

Theme 4: Need for Professional Development

Many teachers reported that they needed more training on how to use formative assessment and translanguaging effectively. Some teachers were familiar with formative assessment but were unsure how to design peer assessment or self-assessment activities. Others said that they needed practical examples of how translanguaging could be used without reducing students' English practice.

One participant stated:

"We need more workshops. We know feedback is important, but sometimes we do not know how to organize formative assessment systematically."

This theme suggests that teacher training programs should include both assessment literacy and multilingual pedagogy.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that EFL teachers in Uzbekistan generally hold positive attitudes toward both formative assessment and translanguaging. However, teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment were stronger than their attitudes toward translanguaging. This difference may be explained by the fact that formative assessment is more familiar to teachers and is directly connected to feedback, progress monitoring, and classroom assessment.

The high mean score for formative assessment indicates that teachers recognize the value of continuous assessment in supporting students' English language development. Teachers particularly valued feedback, classroom questioning, and instructional adjustment. These findings suggest that formative assessment is perceived as a useful and professionally acceptable practice in EFL classrooms.

In contrast, teachers' attitudes toward translanguaging were positive but more cautious. Teachers accepted the use of Uzbek, Russian, or other languages when explaining difficult grammar, reducing anxiety, or helping lower-proficiency learners. However, some participants still believed that English-only instruction is important for maximizing exposure to the target language. This shows that teachers may support translanguaging only when it is used strategically and not excessively.

The significant difference between the two attitude scales suggests that teachers may view formative assessment as a standard pedagogical practice, while translanguaging may still be seen as a more controversial classroom strategy. This is especially important in the Uzbekistani context, where English language learning is strongly associated with international education, professional success, and communicative competence. Teachers may therefore feel pressure to maintain English as the dominant classroom language.

The interview findings further show that teachers' attitudes are influenced by institutional expectations, classroom realities, students' proficiency levels, and teachers' professional training. Although teachers are willing to use learner-centered practices, they need practical guidance on how to implement them effectively. Therefore, teacher education programs should help teachers understand both formative assessment and translanguaging as complementary strategies for supporting EFL learners.

6. Conclusion

This study explored and compared EFL teachers' attitudes toward formative assessment and translanguaging in English language classrooms in Uzbekistan. The findings showed that teachers had positive attitudes toward both practices, but their attitudes toward formative assessment were significantly stronger than their attitudes toward translanguaging.

Formative assessment was viewed as a useful tool for identifying students' learning needs, providing feedback, and improving instruction. Translanguaging was also seen as helpful, especially for explaining difficult grammar, supporting lower-proficiency students, increasing participation, and reducing anxiety. However, teachers were more cautious about translanguaging because of English-only beliefs and institutional expectations.

The study suggests that formative assessment and translanguaging can both contribute to learner-centered EFL instruction. However, their successful implementation depends on teacher training, institutional support, and clear pedagogical guidelines. Teacher education programs in Uzbekistan should provide practical training on formative assessment strategies, such as feedback, peer assessment, and self-assessment. They should also introduce translanguaging as a planned and purposeful pedagogical approach rather than as uncontrolled use of the first language.

Future research may include classroom observations to compare teachers' reported attitudes with their actual classroom practices. Further studies may also investigate students' perceptions of formative assessment and translanguaging in EFL classrooms.

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