



A Comparative Study on In-Class Assessment Practices by EFL Teachers in Uganda and Indonesia

Wanale Salama*, Sri Setyarini, Pupung Purnawarman

Department of English Education, Faculty of English Education and Literature, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received : June 09, 2025

1st Revision : September 07, 2025

Accepted : September 28, 2025

Available Online : October 30, 2025

Keywords:

In-class assessment; EFL; quantitative research; Uganda; Indonesia; teacher practices; comparative study.

*Corresponding Author

Email address:

wanalesalama@upi.edu

ABSTRACT

This comparative study investigates in-class assessment practices among secondary school EFL teachers in Uganda and Indonesia, guided by Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of learning. The study explores commonly used assessment strategies, teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness, and the key implementation challenges in both countries. A quantitative research design was employed, and data were collected from 120 EFL teachers (60 from each country) using structured questionnaires with Likert-scale and multiple-choice items. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses including means, standard deviations, and independent t-tests were conducted. The findings revealed significant differences in assessment approaches: Ugandan teachers predominantly used traditional techniques such as quizzes and oral questioning, while Indonesian teachers more frequently employed interactive, collaborative methods like peer assessment and project-based learning. Aligned with Vygotsky's emphasis on social interaction and scaffolding, Indonesian teachers demonstrated higher assessment literacy and greater engagement with formative practices. Nevertheless, educators in both contexts recognized the value of in-class assessment in supporting language development and learner engagement. Shared challenges included large class sizes, limited time, and inadequate resources. Based on the findings, the study recommends culturally responsive professional development, structural policy reforms, increased investment in infrastructure, and cross-national collaboration. These steps aim to foster inclusive, dialogic assessment practices aligned with Vygotsky's principles in diverse EFL classrooms

How to cite: Salama, W., Setyarini, S. and Purnawarman, P. (2025). A comparative study on in-class assessment practices by EFL teachers in Uganda and Indonesia. *International Journal of Pedagogy and Teacher Education*, 9(2), pp. 274–285. <https://doi.org/10.20961/ijpte.v9i2.103728>

1. INTRODUCTION

Global education systems have experienced significant transformations over the past decades, driven by a shift from teacher-centred instruction toward learner-centred and competency-based education. These reforms emphasise the development of critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning through instructional processes that prioritise interaction and active engagement. Assessment plays a central role in these processes, not simply as a tool for measuring learning outcomes, but as an embedded part of instruction that shapes both how teachers teach and how students learn (Allen et al., 2016; Arrafii, 2021; Wood & Doğan, 2024). Within the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, assessment influences the cultivation of linguistic competence, accuracy, and learner autonomy. The increased focus on formative assessment reflects the growing understanding that learning is dynamic, incremental, and socially constructed. Assessment practices must evolve to support students not only in demonstrating knowledge, but also in developing it through continuous feedback and reflective engagement.

Sociocultural theory provides a robust framework for understanding the role of formative assessment in supporting learning. Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) highlights how learning occurs through scaffolding within social interactions, where teachers and peers provide guided support to help learners reach new levels of understanding. Formative assessment functions as a scaffold, enabling students to receive feedback, correct misconceptions, and make progress toward learning goals. Research shows that formative assessment can enhance student motivation, foster deeper comprehension, and support differentiated instruction (Reinders & Wattana, 2015; Nakawuki et al., 2025). While many education systems have adopted policy frameworks that promote formative assessment, the implementation remains uneven due

to varying levels of teacher preparedness, institutional support, and resource availability. These gaps are particularly evident in countries with constrained infrastructure and limited professional development opportunities for educators.

Teacher assessment literacy is a key factor in determining the effectiveness of formative assessment. Teachers need to design learning activities that generate evidence of student understanding, interpret that evidence accurately, and provide timely and actionable feedback. Despite its importance, many teachers lack adequate preparation in this area. In Indonesia, EFL teachers continue to report challenges in integrating formative assessment into their classrooms due to insufficient training and high-stakes testing pressures (Latif, 2021; Fitriyah et al., 2022). Ugandan teachers face similar limitations, where curriculum mandates support formative practices, but the lack of resources and entrenched examination culture hinder implementation (Yazdani & Ghasedi, 2021). These findings suggest that improving assessment literacy through targeted professional development is essential for transforming policy into effective classroom practice (Al-Akbari, 2023; Wang et al., 2022).

Structural conditions within schools significantly influence how teachers apply formative assessment. Class size, access to technology, and institutional support affect the feasibility of giving individual feedback and designing responsive instruction. In Uganda, teacher-student ratios often exceed 80:1, which limits opportunities for differentiated instruction and regular feedback (Yazdani & Ghasedi, 2021). Indonesian schools, although somewhat better resourced, display stark disparities between urban and rural regions in access to digital tools and assessment platforms (Sulistio, 2023; Astalini et al., 2022). Teachers in under-resourced schools struggle to align national policy expectations with classroom realities. Addressing these challenges requires policy adaptations that are responsive to local conditions and the development of scalable, low-cost solutions to support teachers in delivering formative assessment.

Sociocultural norms also shape how assessment is conceptualised and enacted. Educational traditions and cultural beliefs influence teacher authority, student participation, and the perceived purpose of assessment. In Uganda, a legacy of colonial examination systems continues to shape an assessment culture that prioritises summative tests over formative dialogue (Ssentanda, 2014). In Indonesia, collective values and hierarchical relationships between teachers and students may inhibit interactive assessment practices such as peer feedback or self-reflection (Setiawan, 2023). Teachers often navigate these cultural expectations while implementing externally driven reform agendas, creating tensions that must be carefully managed. Understanding the influence of sociocultural context is therefore critical in designing assessment strategies that are not only effective but also culturally appropriate.

Existing research has explored aspects of formative assessment and teacher assessment literacy within individual national contexts, but cross-country comparative studies remain limited. Uganda and Indonesia represent two low- and middle-income countries that are actively pursuing competency-based education and formative assessment reforms. Their shared reform goals contrast with distinct sociocultural and institutional environments, offering valuable insight into how global educational policies are interpreted and applied in diverse settings. A comparative approach enables identification of both context-specific challenges and transferable practices that can inform broader education reform efforts. The present study investigates how EFL teachers in Uganda and Indonesia apply in-class formative assessment strategies, exploring their perceptions of implementation challenges and opportunities. It addresses the following research questions: What in-class assessment practices are commonly used by EFL teachers in Uganda and Indonesia, and how do these teachers perceive the effectiveness and challenges of implementing these assessments?

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, comparative descriptive survey design to examine in-class assessment practices among secondary school English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Uganda and Indonesia. A total of 120 teachers (60 from each country) participated in the study, completing a structured, self-administered questionnaire. The comparative design allowed for the identification of similarities and differences between the two educational contexts. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize key trends, while inferential analyses supported cross-national comparisons. The design is grounded in Creswell's (2014) framework for descriptive and comparative educational research.

Participants and Setting

Participants included 120 secondary-level EFL teachers, with equal representation from Uganda and Indonesia. Teachers were selected through purposive sampling based on two inclusion criteria: (1) a minimum of two years of EFL teaching experience at the secondary level, and (2) active engagement in classroom-based assessment. The sampling frame was developed in collaboration with district education authorities and school networks in each country. Schools were identified based on their classification (public or private) and location (urban or semi-urban). In each country, 20 schools were selected 10 public and 10 private with further stratification by urban and semi-urban settings to ensure balance (i.e., five schools of each type in each setting). From each school, three teachers were invited, and non-respondents were replaced with comparable candidates to maintain the sampling quota. The final sample included 30 public and 30 private school teachers per country, with a 50-50 split between urban and semi-urban environments.

Instrument

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire developed in English and composed entirely of closed-ended items. The instrument consisted of three main sections. Section A captured demographic data across six variables: age, gender, highest qualification, years of experience, school type, and school location. Section B included ten items measuring the frequency of classroom assessment practices. Section C consisted of twelve items, split between perceived effectiveness (six items) and challenges in implementing assessment (six items). Responses in Sections B and C were recorded on five-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (Never/Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Always/Strongly Agree). Example items included “I use peer assessment during group activities” for frequency, and “Lack of time limits my ability to use alternative assessments” for challenges.

Each scale was conceptually uni-dimensional, and item-total correlations supported internal consistency. Due to the modest sample size, factor analysis was not performed; however, each sub-scale was developed from clearly defined constructs based on existing literature. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach’s alpha during the pilot study, conducted with 20 EFL teachers (10 per country). Sub-scale reliability coefficients were as follows: for assessment frequency, $\alpha = 0.80$ (Uganda) and 0.83 (Indonesia); for perceived effectiveness, $\alpha = 0.72$ (Uganda) and 0.76 (Indonesia); for assessment challenges, $\alpha = 0.78$ (Uganda) and 0.85 (Indonesia). These results indicate satisfactory to strong internal consistency.

Measurement Equivalence

The same English-language questionnaire was administered in both Uganda and Indonesia. English is the primary language of instruction in secondary EFL classrooms in both contexts, and all participants demonstrated adequate language proficiency. To ensure cross-cultural clarity and relevance, the instrument was reviewed by three senior EFL educators two based in Uganda and one in Indonesia who provided feedback on language precision, item clarity, and contextual appropriateness. Revisions were made accordingly. Additionally, pilot participants in each country confirmed item comprehension and cultural relevance, and no significant discrepancies were reported.

Procedure

The study was conducted over a six-week period between March and April 2025. Data collection used a hybrid model. In urban schools, where internet access was stable, participants completed the questionnaire electronically via Google Forms distributed through email. In semi-urban schools, printed questionnaires were distributed and collected in person by school administrators. Online responses accounted for approximately 52% of the total data-set, while paper-based responses comprised 48%. Unique tracking codes were assigned to all forms to prevent duplication, and distribution was centrally coordinated to ensure full participation within each school. Prior to survey administration, all participants received an informed consent form explaining the study’s purpose, voluntary nature, confidentiality assurances, and contact information for follow-up. Completion of the questionnaire was interpreted as consent to participate.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27. All variables were checked for completeness, outliers, and entry errors. Likert-scale responses were treated as interval data, consistent with best practices in educational research involving parametric testing of scale means (Gruhl et al., 2020; Jola, 2014). Assumption

checks were conducted: the Shapiro–Wilk test confirmed approximate normality, and Levene’s test indicated homogeneity of variances across groups. These procedures ensured the robustness and reliability of the statistical analyses performed in this study.

Descriptive statistics means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were used to summarize demographic characteristics and overall trends in assessment practices. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the frequency of practices and perceived effectiveness between Ugandan and Indonesian teachers. Results are reported with corresponding t-values, degrees of freedom, p-values, and Cohen’s d to reflect effect sizes. Given the number of comparisons, the Holm-Bonferroni method was used to control for the family-wise error rate. For categorical outcomes, particularly challenges related to assessment, chi-square tests were performed. These results include χ^2 values, degrees of freedom, significance levels, and percentage distributions per group. In addition to bivariate analyses, multiple regression was employed to examine between-country differences while controlling for covariates such as school type, years of teaching experience, and average class size. Regression diagnostics confirmed model assumptions, and the inclusion of covariates strengthened the validity of country-level comparisons.

Ethics

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from two institutional review boards. In Uganda, clearance was granted by Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU Protocol #UG2025-117), and in Indonesia, by Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI Protocol #ID2025-033). All participants were informed about the voluntary nature of the study, assured that non-participation would carry no consequences, and guaranteed that their identities would remain confidential. Data were anonymized prior to analysis. Digital records were stored in encrypted folders on a secure university server, while hard copies were stored in locked filing cabinets accessible only to the principal investigator. All data will be retained for five years in compliance with institutional policies and then permanently destroyed.

3. RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the comparative analysis of in-class assessment practices among EFL teachers in Uganda and Indonesia. Drawing on responses from 120 participants (60 per country), it addresses two core research questions: (1) What in-class assessment practices are commonly used by EFL teachers in Uganda and Indonesia? and (2) How do EFL teachers in both countries perceive the effectiveness of these practices, and what are the commonly reported challenges? Results are presented in three sections: demographic profile, assessment practices and perceptions, and implementation challenges. Statistical assumptions for parametric testing were met (Shapiro–Wilk $p > .05$, Levene’s test $p > .05$), and all comparisons use two-tailed significance thresholds with corrections for multiple testing where applicable.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The sample was demographically balanced, with 54% female and 46% male teachers. Most participants (38%) had between 6–10 years of teaching experience, and 62% taught in public schools. A majority of Ugandan teachers worked in larger classes, often in under-resourced settings, whereas Indonesian teachers were more likely to hold graduate degrees and work in institutions that had begun implementing curriculum reforms. These contextual differences frame how assessment is approached and practiced in daily instruction.

Assessment Practices in Use

Descriptive and inferential statistics indicate that the top five most commonly used assessment practices were remarkably consistent across both Uganda and Indonesia, with only oral questioning showing a statistically significant difference. Specifically, oral questioning was more frequently used in Uganda ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.41$) than in Indonesia ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.46$), yielding a significant result, $t(118) = 2.66$, $p = .009$, with a moderate effect size ($d = 0.54$). For the other top methods quizzes/tests, written assignments, homework review, and in-class feedback the mean differences were minimal and not statistically significant. For instance, quizzes/tests had nearly identical ratings ($t(118) = 0.42$, $p = n.s.$, $d = 0.06$), while written assignments ($t(118) \approx 0.37$, $p \approx .71$, $d = 0.07$), homework review ($t(118) \approx 0.41$, $p \approx .68$, $d = 0.08$), and in-class feedback ($t(118) \approx 0.39$, $p \approx .69$, $d = 0.08$) showed similarly negligible differences. These findings reinforce the conclusion that both systems emphasize teacher-centered, traditional assessments, with limited variation across the two contexts.

However, statistically significant differences emerged influenced in the use of alternative assessments. Peer assessment was used far more frequently in Indonesia ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.53$) than in Uganda ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.59$), with a large effect size ($t(118) = -6.21$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.13$). Similar patterns were observed for self-assessment (Indonesia $M = 3.74$ vs. Uganda $M = 3.05$, $t(118) = -5.33$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.97$), rubric-based evaluation (Indonesia $M = 3.77$ vs. Uganda $M = 3.08$, $t(118) = -5.11$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.94$), and project-based learning. These findings reflect a greater incorporation of student-centered strategies in Indonesian classrooms, possibly by curriculum reforms such as *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Ugandan classrooms, by contrast, remained more dependent on teacher-led assessments, consistent with examination-oriented instruction models. Full results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of Assessment Practices by Country

Assessment Practice	Uganda mean(<i>SD</i>)	Indonesia mean(<i>SD</i>)	<i>t</i> (118)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>	Interpretation
Oral questioning	4.35(0.41)	4.12(0.46)	2.66	=.009	0.54	Significantly higher in Uganda
Quizzes/Tests	4.10(0.48)	4.07(0.44)	0.42	n.s.	0.06	No significant difference
Written assignments	3.92(0.47)	3.89(0.45)	0.37	=.71	0.07	Similarly negligible difference
Home work review	3.88(0.51)	3.84(0.49)	0.41	=.68	0.08	Similarly negligible difference
In-class feedback	3.83(0.50)	3.79(0.48)	0.39	=.69	0.08	Similarly negligible difference
Peer assessment	3.12(0.59)	3.85(0.53)	-6.21	<.001	1.13	Significantly higher in Indonesia
Self assessment	3.05(0.61)	3.74(0.56)	-5.33	<.001	0.97	Significantly higher in Indonesia
Rubric - Based Evaluation	3.08(0.60)	3.77(0.52)	-5.11	<.001	0.94	Significantly higher in Indonesia
Project-Based Learning	3.01(0.58)	3.68(0.55)	-5.06	<.001	0.91	Significantly higher in Indonesia

Perceived Effectiveness of Assessment Practices

Table 2. Perceived Effectiveness of Assessment Methods

Assessment Method	Uganda mean(<i>SD</i>)	Indonesia mean(<i>SD</i>)	<i>t</i> (118)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>	Interpretation
Oral questioning	4.31(0.45)	4.20(0.48)	1.33	.185	0.24	No Significant difference
Quizzes/Tests	4.14(0.46)	4.09(0.44)	0.56	.579	0.11	No significant difference
Peer assessment	3.29(0.60)	3.85(0.53)	-5.52	<.001	0.99	Significantly more effective in Indonesia
Rubric - Based Evaluation	3.08(0.67)	3.77(0.55)	-5.41	<.001	0.09	Significantly more effective in Indonesia
Self assessment	3.12(0.63)	3.74(0.58)	-5.07	<.001	1.02	Significantly more effective in Indonesia
Project-Based Learning	3.18(0.61)	3.72(0.57)	-5.06	<.001	1.92	Significantly more effective in Indonesia

Teachers in both countries rated oral questioning and quizzes as the most effective assessment strategies. For example, oral questioning was rated at $M = 4.31$ ($SD = 0.45$) by Ugandan teachers and $M = 4.20$ ($SD = 0.48$) by their Indonesian counterparts, a difference that was not statistically significant. However,

perceptions diverged significantly for alternative assessments. Indonesian teachers rated peer assessment ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.53$) and rubric-based evaluation ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 0.55$) as significantly more effective than Ugandan teachers did ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.60$ and $M = 3.08$, $SD = 0.67$, respectively), with large effect sizes (Cohen's $d > 0.90$). These findings suggest that perceptions of what constitutes effective assessment are shaped not only by training and exposure but also by institutional frameworks and curricular priorities. Complete results are presented in Table 2

The table confirms that while teachers in both Uganda and Indonesia rated traditional methods like oral questioning and quizzes as highly effective (with no significant differences), their views diverged significantly on alternative assessments. Indonesian teachers consistently rated peer assessment, rubric-based evaluation, self-assessment, and project-based learning as more effective, with large effect sizes ($d > 0.90$). These findings suggest that institutional context, curriculum reforms, and professional training significantly shape teachers' perceptions of assessment efficacy.

Interestingly, several practices that were rated as pedagogically valuable such as rubric-based and peer assessments were underutilized, particularly in Uganda. This points to a gap between teacher belief and practice, possibly due to constraints in training, resources, or classroom conditions.

Challenges to Implementation

The results show that structural and resource-related barriers remain the most significant obstacles to implementing effective in-class assessment. Ugandan teachers were significantly more likely than Indonesian teachers to report lack of training (88% vs. 70%, $\chi^2(1) = 6.89$, $p < .01$, $V = 0.24$) and large class sizes (82% vs. 65%, $\chi^2(1) = 5.21$, $p < .05$, $V = 0.21$) as challenges. While time constraints were nearly universal, differences between countries were not significant. Resource shortages, curriculum–exam misalignment, and lack of leadership support were also noted but without statistically significant variation across contexts. A visual summary is provided in the comparative bar chart in Figure 1 and full statistics are detailed in the Table 3.

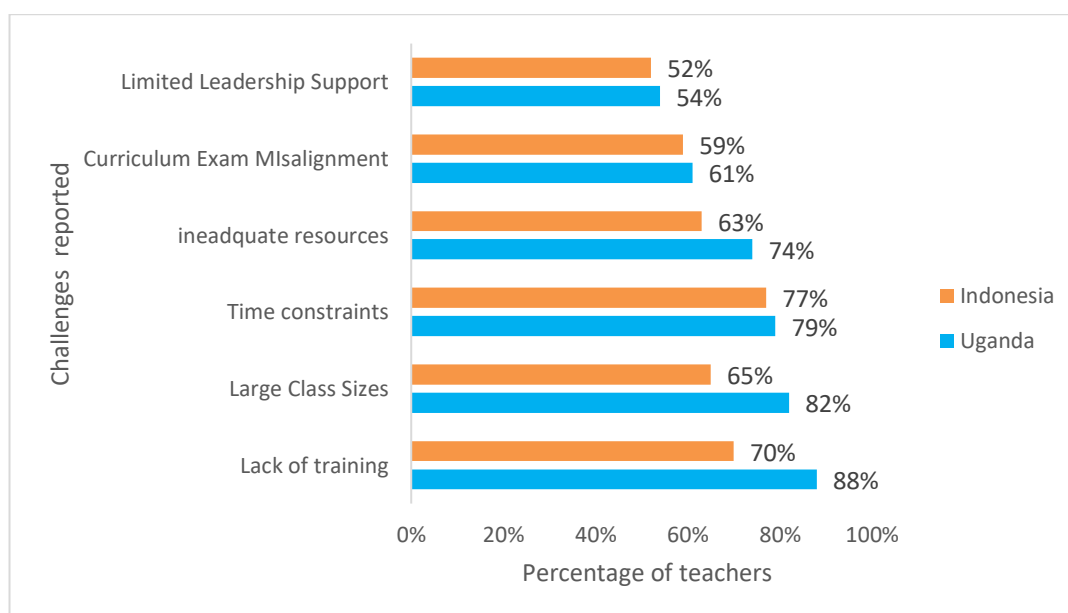


Figure 1. The percentage of teachers reporting assessment challenges

These results underscore the fact that while both education systems aim to enhance classroom assessment quality, the barriers they face are shaped by differing structural and policy contexts. In Uganda, challenges are largely infrastructural, while Indonesian teachers more often face systemic pressures related to workload and reform adaptation. Drawing upon data collected from 120 respondents (60 per country), the chapter effectively addresses the two core research questions, results are examined through descriptive statistics, comparative analyses using t-tests, and a contextualized discussion informed by pedagogical theory (Vygotsky (1978) and regional dynamics.

Table 3. Reported Challenges to Assessment Implementation

Assessment Practice	Uganda mean(SD)	Indonesia mean(SD)	$\chi^2(1)$	p	Cramer's v	Interpretation
Lack of training	88%	70%	6.89	<.01	0.54	Significantly more reported in Uganda
Large class sizes	82%	65%	5.21	<.05	0.21	Significantly more reported in Uganda
Time constraints	79%	77%	0.08	n.s.	-	Universally acknowledged, no significance
Inadequate resources	74%	63%	2,25	n.s.	-	More pronounced in Uganda but not significant
Curriculum Misalignment	Exam 61%	59%	0.03	n.s.	-	No significance
Limited Leadership Support	3.12(0.59)	3.85(0.53)	-6.21	<.001	1.13	No significantly

4. DISCUSSION

Principal Findings

The findings of this study reveal a complex and layered landscape of assessment practices and perceptions among teachers in Uganda and Indonesia. Traditional assessment methods such as oral questioning and written quizzes continue to dominate both educational contexts, illustrating the persistence of teacher-centered and examination-oriented classroom cultures (Laily et al., 2023; Carlson et al., 2021). These practices are sustained by institutional traditions where measurable outcomes and examination results are prioritized as indicators of learning success. Teachers in both countries often rely on structured and repetitive forms of evaluation because such approaches align with established expectations of efficiency, accountability, and curriculum compliance. The absence of significant cross-country variation in these practices underscores the enduring influence of cultural norms and policy legacies that privilege summative assessment over formative engagement (Monteiro et al., 2021). This continuity demonstrates that educational transformation requires not only curriculum reform but also a shift in teachers' epistemological beliefs about what it means to assess learning.

A deeper contrast emerges in the adoption and perceived value of alternative assessment strategies. Indonesian teachers reported more frequent use of peer assessment, self-assessment, rubric-based evaluation, and project-based learning, which collectively reflect a movement toward formative and dialogic assessment practices (Azis, 2015; Kamal, 2024). The higher prevalence of these approaches corresponds to the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka, a reform that emphasizes learner autonomy, reflective feedback, and collaborative inquiry (Wahyudi et al., 2024). The policy encourages teachers to treat assessment as a process that guides and improves learning rather than as a final test of achievement (Huang et al., 2017). Ugandan teachers, however, encounter multiple systemic constraints that limit the use of such approaches. Large class sizes, restricted access to instructional resources, and insufficient training continue to shape their dependence on summative examinations (Kim et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2022). These contextual limitations reveal that while teachers may recognize the pedagogical value of formative assessment, structural realities often dictate the extent to which they can apply it effectively in classrooms.

The interaction among teacher competence, institutional infrastructure, and policy implementation determines the depth of assessment reform in both nations. Professional development programs that enhance assessment literacy can play a transformative role when they are contextually responsive and sustained over time. Teachers who understand how to collect, interpret, and act upon learning evidence are better positioned to foster active student participation and reflective learning (Sulistio, 2023; Astalini et al., 2022). However, teacher expertise alone is insufficient without parallel support from institutional systems that provide manageable workloads, equitable access to resources, and technological infrastructure. Effective assessment reform therefore depends on systemic coherence that aligns teacher capacity with school support and national policy. When this alignment is achieved, assessment evolves into a reflective and dialogic practice that empowers teachers and students alike. Both Uganda and Indonesia have the potential to advance toward this vision by

integrating formative assessment within broader educational strategies that promote equity, professional growth, and learner-centered pedagogy (Monteiro et al., 2021; Wahyudi et al., 2024).

Mechanisms and Context

The reliance on traditional assessment practices in both Uganda and Indonesia can be understood through the lens of institutional norms that privilege exam preparation and measurable outcomes. Black and William (2009) formative assessment framework emphasizes that teachers who do not receive sustained professional development often revert to questioning and testing practices that mirror high-stakes examination models. This pattern is evident in Uganda, where oral questioning remains the most common and cost-effective method for assessing student understanding. Such an approach allows teachers to manage large classes efficiently, yet it constrains opportunities for feedback, reflection, and formative dialogue. The predominance of these practices highlights how institutional pressures related to examinations shape teacher behavior and limit pedagogical flexibility. Cultural expectations surrounding examination success also reinforce this tendency, resulting in assessment environments where efficiency takes precedence over diagnostic or developmental feedback (Kim et al., 2020; Wahyudi et al., 2024). The persistence of this model underscores the importance of designing professional learning structures that enable teachers to reinterpret assessment as a process that informs instruction rather than merely certifies achievement.

Distinct patterns emerge in Indonesia, where curricular reforms have encouraged a gradual transition toward competency-based and student-centered assessment practices. The implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka has reshaped teachers' approaches by emphasizing authentic evaluation, collaboration, and learner autonomy (Palangda et al., 2023; Effendi et al., 2024). This reform has led to the adoption of diverse strategies such as peer assessment, self-assessment, and rubric-guided evaluation. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) and its later extensions (William, 2011; Yu et al., 2021) provide a strong theoretical foundation for these practices by positing that learning occurs through social interaction and guided participation within the zone of proximal development. Peer and self-assessment thus function not merely as evaluative tools but as mechanisms that stimulate cognitive engagement and metacognitive awareness. Teachers trained under this reform report higher levels of confidence in applying varied assessment approaches, which reflects a paradigm shift from teacher-centered evaluation toward shared responsibility for learning. Nevertheless, the introduction of such reforms also brings new challenges. Teachers often experience workload intensification and administrative expectations that complicate consistent application, demonstrating that pedagogical innovation requires institutional support and balanced policy design (Lui & Andrade, 2022; Wahyudi et al., 2024).

Structural conditions within schools further influence the feasibility and depth of assessment transformation. In Uganda, large class sizes, often exceeding seventy students, make interactive and individualized assessment practices impractical (Huang et al., 2022). Approximately eighty-two percent of Ugandan teachers in this study reported that class size directly limited their ability to conduct peer assessment or project-based learning. The resulting reliance on oral questioning and brief written quizzes reflects a pragmatic adaptation to overcrowded classrooms rather than a pedagogical preference. Indonesian teachers, in contrast, operate within more moderately sized classes and have greater access to instructional materials and digital tools, which creates opportunities for experimentation and the integration of innovative assessment practices. However, even within this relatively supportive context, teachers describe tension between reform demands and available resources. Administrative requirements linked to curriculum implementation often increase workload and reduce the time available for reflection and feedback (Palangda et al., 2023; Effendi et al., 2024). The interplay between these institutional, structural, and cultural forces suggests that improving assessment practices cannot rely solely on curricular reform. Effective change requires coherence among teacher preparation, policy mandates, and contextual realities to create conditions where assessment serves both accountability and learning enhancement.

Limitations and Alternative Explanations

Several limitations warrant caution in interpreting these findings. The study relied on a modest sample of 120 participants, and self-selection may have favored more motivated or reform-engaged teachers. Data were drawn from self-report surveys, raising concerns about response bias and the possible gap between stated and actual classroom practices. Future research should include classroom observations, analysis of student outcomes, and replication across multiple regions to validate and extend these findings.

Boundary Conditions and Practical Implications

The findings must be interpreted within clear boundary conditions that define the feasibility of assessment innovation. In educational settings characterized by large class sizes, interactive assessments such as peer feedback and project-based evaluations may be impractical regardless of teacher belief or intention. Ugandan teachers, in particular, face structural constraints that limit the use of collaborative assessment methods. Oral questioning remains the most accessible strategy because it allows quick engagement and immediate feedback in resource-limited environments. Indonesian teachers, while more open to rubric-based and peer assessment practices, continue to struggle with exam pressures and heavy workloads that reduce the time available for consistent implementation. These contextual realities emphasize that educational reform cannot rely solely on the introduction of new methods but must consider the conditions under which teachers operate daily (Andema et al., 2013; Ssegantebuka, 2018).

Professional development should be carefully designed to address these contextual differences. For Uganda, targeted training programs focusing on practical, low-cost strategies such as rubric design, oral questioning enhancement, and structured peer assessment protocols could empower teachers to diversify their assessment practices even within limited resource environments (Andema et al., 2013). Tailoring professional development to teachers' existing pedagogical strengths and constraints ensures that improvement efforts are relevant and sustainable. In Indonesia, ongoing reform initiatives under Kurikulum Merdeka require policy measures that are sensitive to teacher workload and implementation capacity. Without structured workload management and administrative support, even well-intentioned reforms may not translate into effective classroom practice (Paramartha et al., 2021). Professional development initiatives should therefore integrate reflective and collaborative elements that allow teachers to share strategies, adapt innovations, and balance policy expectations with classroom realities.

Cross-country collaboration presents a valuable opportunity for mutual learning and professional enrichment. Ugandan teachers could benefit from Indonesia's experiences with rubric-based and peer assessment systems that promote formative engagement and student autonomy. Conversely, Indonesian educators might adopt Uganda's well-established oral questioning practices as an efficient formative tool for gauging understanding and stimulating classroom dialogue (Attan & Khalidi, 2015). Encouraging knowledge exchange between educational systems facing contrasting structural challenges can create adaptive models of assessment that are both contextually grounded and pedagogically progressive. Collaborative professional learning networks between the two countries could further support this process by fostering shared expertise, strengthening teacher agency, and promoting sustainable reform in assessment culture.

5. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine (RQ1) the assessment practices currently used, (RQ2) teacher perceptions of their effectiveness, and the barriers to implementation in Uganda and Indonesia. Results from Table 1 showed that both systems remain strongly reliant on traditional methods such as oral questioning and quizzes/tests. However, Table 2 revealed that Indonesian teachers reported significantly greater use and perceived effectiveness of alternative formative assessments, including peer and self-assessment, rubric-based evaluation, and project-based learning. Finally, Table 3 and Figure 1 highlighted that contextual constraints differed: Ugandan teachers most frequently cited lack of training (88%) and large class sizes (82%), while Indonesian teachers emphasized time pressures and resource constraints.

Together, these findings suggest that while both countries continue to anchor assessment in traditional teacher-led approaches, Indonesia is moving further toward diversified, student-centered strategies. The persistence of systemic barriers in Uganda underscores the influence of institutional conditions on assessment practice.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who supported me throughout the course of this research. First and foremost, my sincere thanks go to my supervisor, DR. ROJAB, Co-Authors: PROF SETIARINI & DR. PUPUNG, for their invaluable guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback at every stage of this study. I am also grateful to my lecturers and colleagues in the Department English Education for their academic

support and insightful discussions. Special appreciation goes to the students and schools who participated in this study your cooperation made this research possible. I extend heartfelt thanks to my family and friends for their unwavering love, patience, and moral support. Above all, I thank God for the strength and perseverance granted to me in completing this research paper.

7. REFERENCES

- Al-Akbari, S. (2023). Developing language assessment literacy of teachers: Needs, effective factors, and constraints. *Journal of Social Studies*, 29(3), 126–144. <https://doi.org/10.20428/jss.v29i3.2165>
- Allen, R., Elks, P., Outhred, R., & Varly, P. (2016). *Uganda's assessment system: A road map for enhancing assessment in education*. HEART Resources. <http://www.heart-resources.org>
- Andema, S., Kendrick, M., & Norton, B. (2013). Digital literacy in Ugandan teacher education: Insights from a case study. *Reading & Writing*, 4(1), Article 27. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v4i1.27>
- Arrafii, M. A. (2021). Indonesian teachers' conceptions of values and dimensions of assessment practice: The effect of teachers' characteristics. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 102, 103245. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103245>
- Astalini, A., Darmaji, D., Kurniawan, D. A., Jaya, H., & Husna, S. (2022). Analysis of teacher responses to the use of web-based assessment to assess students' attitudes towards science subjects. *Integrated Science Education Journal*, 3(3), 66–71. <https://doi.org/10.37251/isej.v3i3.282>
- Attan, A., & Khalidi, H. (2015). Exploring peer revision as a strategy in the ESL writing classroom. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 18, 05002. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20151805002>
- Azis, A. (2015). Conceptions and practices of assessment: A case of teachers representing improvement conception. *TEFLIN Journal*, 26(2), 129–154. <https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v26i2/129-154>
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2009). Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(1), 5–31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-008-9068-5>
- Carlson, C., Namy, S., Nakuti, J., Mufson, L., Ikenberg, C., Musoni, O., Hopson, L. M., Anton-Erxleben, K., Naker, D., & Wainberg, M. L. (2021). Student, teacher, and caregiver perceptions on implementing mental health interventions in Ugandan schools. *Implementation Research and Practice*, 2, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/26334895211051290>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Effendi, M., Rosyadi, A., Fatihah, S., Purnomo, H., & Abdullah, A. (2024). Web-based window shopping: A learning model in high school's mathematics curriculum. *TEM Journal*, 13(1), 213–220. <https://doi.org/10.18421/tem131-22>
- Fitriyah, I., Masitoh, F., & Widiati, U. (2022). Classroom-based language assessment literacy and professional development need between novice and experienced EFL teachers. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 12(1), 124–134. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v12i1.46539>
- Gruhl, K. R., Boucher, M., & Lacarte, S. (2020). Evaluation of an occupation-based, mental-health program: Meeting being, belonging and becoming needs. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 68(1), 78–89. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1440-1630.12707>
- Huang, K., Nakigudde, J., Rhule, D. M., Gumikiriza-Onoria, J. L., Abura, G., Kolawole, B., Ndyababangi, S., Kim, S., Seidman, E., Ogedegbe, G., & Brotman, L. M. (2017). Transportability of an evidence-based early childhood intervention in a low-income African country: Results of a cluster randomized controlled study. *Prevention Science*, 18(8), 964–975. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-017-0822-0>
- Huang, K., Nakigudde, J., Kisakye, E. N., Sentongo, H., Dennis-Tiway, T. A., Tozan, Y., Park, H., & Brotman, L. M. (2022). Advancing scalability and impacts of a teacher training program for promoting child mental health in Ugandan primary schools: Protocol for a hybrid-type II effectiveness-implementation cluster randomized trial. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, 16(1), Article 63. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-022-00538-7>

- Jola, C. (2014). "Some like it hot": Spectators who score high on the personality trait openness enjoy the excitement of hearing dancers breathing without music. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 8, 718. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2014.00718>
- Kamal, S. (2024). Kurikulum Merdeka in two senior high schools: Its implementation in EFL classroom. *Global Expert Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 11(2), 60–63. <https://doi.org/10.36982/jge.v11i2.3426>
- Kim, H., Cho, H., Yun, H., & Shin, C. (2020). Revisiting teacher-based assessment to enhance EFL teachers' assessment literacy in South Korea. *The Journal of AsiaTEFL*, 17(4), 1193–1213. <https://doi.org/10.18823/asiatefl.2020.17.4.3.1193>
- Laily, F. N., Suparno, S., & Ngadiso, N. (2023). Classroom-based assessment practices during the COVID-19 outbreak in Indonesia: EFL students' perceptions and challenges. *VELES: Voice of English Language Education Society*, 7(1), 105–116. <https://doi.org/10.29408/veles.v7i1.7088>
- Latif, M. W. (2021). Exploring tertiary EFL practitioners' knowledge base component of assessment literacy: Implications for teacher professional development. *Language Testing in Asia*, 11(1), Article 31. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-021-00130-9>
- Lui, A. M., & Andrade, H. (2022). The next black box of formative assessment: A model of the internal mechanisms of feedback processing. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 751548. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.751548>
- Monteiro, V., Mata, L., & Santos, N. (2021). Assessment conceptions and practices: Perspectives of primary school teachers and students. *Frontiers in Education*, 6, 631185. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.631185>
- Nakawuki, R., Kyasanku, C., & Tebenkana, T. (2025). Teachers' proficiency in designing competence-based curriculum formative assessment tools in selected public secondary schools in Mpigi District, Uganda. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 8(4), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.8.4.3769>
- Palangda, L., Walukow, M., Naharia, O., Wullur, M., & Sumual, S. (2023). Implementation of Merdeka Belajar policy: Constraints in the Pancasila students profile strengthening project. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Approach Research and Science*, 1(2), 104–116. <https://doi.org/10.59653/ijmars.v1i02.62>
- Paramartha, A. G., Dewi, N. P., & Wahyuni, L. E. (2021). Readability of English teacher assessment literacy instrument in Indonesian context. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 609, 145–151. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.211222.035>
- Reinders, H., & Wattana, S. (2015). The effects of digital game-based learning on EFL students' language learning attitudes and vocabulary retention. *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching*, 5(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJCALLT.2015010101>
- Setiawan, A. (2023). The effectiveness of simulation games in promoting critical thinking among Indonesian EFL students. *Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies (JEELS)*, 10(2), 198–214. <https://doi.org/10.30762/jeels.v10i2.765>
- Ssegantebuka, J. (2018). Pre-service visual arts teachers' perceptions of their experiences of school practice: A case of National Teachers College in Uganda. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 7(1), 45–55. <https://doi.org/10.2478/ajis-2018-0004>
- Ssentanda, M. E. (2014). The challenges of teaching reading in Uganda: Curriculum guidelines and language policy viewed from the classroom. *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 8(2), 1–22. <http://apples.jyu.fi>
- Sulistio, P. H. (2023). Language assessment literacy: Cases of pre-service English teachers. *International Journal of Language Education and Culture Review*, 9(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.21009/ijlecr.v9i1.33032>
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Harvard University Press.
- Wahyudi, D., Andayani, A., Anindyarini, A., & Sumarwati, S. (2024). Kurikulum Merdeka in learning Indonesia language: Study of high school students' perceptions. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 11(3), 304–312. <https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v11i3.5574>

-
- Wang, H., Sun, W., Zhou, Y., Li, T., & Zhou, P. (2022). Teachers' assessment literacy improves teaching efficacy: A view from conservation of resources theory. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1007830. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1007830>
- Wiliam, D. (2011). What is assessment for learning? *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 37(1), 3–14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2011.03.001>
- Wood, P. C., & Doğan, C. D. (2024). A comparative study on assessment methods used by high school teachers in Uganda and Turkey. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 19(3), 352–370. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17454999241256447>
- Yu, J., Lee, M., Kim, S., Yang, M., Cho, H., Noh, C., & Jung, Y. (2021). Assessment of medical students' clinical performance using high-fidelity simulation: Comparison of peer and instructor assessment. *BMC Medical Education*, 21(1), 65. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-021-02952-w>
- Yazdani, H., & Ghasedi, P. (2021). Efficacy of EFL teachers' assessment literacy and professional identity in boosting learners' autonomy. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 12(3), 395–403. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1203.09>