

## DEVELOPING STUDENTS' TRANSLANGUAGING COMPETENCE IN EFL CLASSROOMS

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**Abstract.** *This article examines the development of students' translanguaging competence in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms within the context of Uzbekistan. Translanguaging is viewed as an effective pedagogical approach that enables learners to utilize their full linguistic repertoire, including Uzbek, Russian, and English, to enhance comprehension and communication. The study explores the theoretical foundations of translanguaging and analyzes its role in improving students' communicative competence, particularly in speaking, writing, and listening skills. Furthermore, the paper presents practical strategies for implementing translanguaging in Uzbek educational settings, such as code-switching practices, multilingual tasks, collaborative learning activities, and scaffolding techniques. The findings indicate that translanguaging not only facilitates language acquisition but also increases students' confidence, critical thinking abilities, and intercultural communicative competence. The article concludes with methodological recommendations for teachers to effectively integrate translanguaging practices into EFL instruction in Uzbekistan.*

**Keywords:** *translanguaging, EFL classrooms, multilingualism, Uzbekistan education system, English language teaching, code-switching, communicative competence, language pedagogy, student engagement, intercultural communication.*

**Annotatsiya.** *Ushbu maqola O'zbekiston kontekstida ingliz tili xorijiy til (EFL) darslarida talabalarning translanguaging kompetensiyasini rivojlantirish masalasini o'rganadi. Translanguaging o'quvchilarga o'zlarining barcha lingvistik resurslaridan — o'zbek, rus va ingliz tillaridan — foydalanish orqali tushunish va muloqot jarayonini samarali tashkil etish imkonini beruvchi samarali pedagogik yondashuv sifatida qaraladi. Tadqiqot translanguagingning nazariy asoslarini tahlil qiladi va uning talabalar kommunikativ kompetensiyasini, xususan, gapirish, yozish va tinglab tushunish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishdagi rolini o'rganadi.*

*Bundan tashqari, maqolada O'zbekiston ta'lim tizimida translanguagingni amaliy joriy etish bo'yicha strategiyalar taqdim etiladi, jumladan kod-almashinish (code-switching) amaliyoti, ko'p tilli topshiriqlar, hamkorlikda o'qitish faoliyatlari va "scaffolding" texnikalari. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, translanguaging nafaqat til o'rganishni osonlashtiradi, balki talabalarning ishonchini, tanqidiy fikrlash qobiliyatini va madaniyatlararo kommunikativ kompetensiyasini ham oshiradi. Maqola yakunida O'zbekiston EFL ta'limida translanguaging amaliyotini samarali joriy etish bo'yicha metodik tavsiyalar beriladi.*

**Kalit so'zlar:** *Translanguaging, ingliz tili xorijiy til (EFL) darslari, ko'p tillilik, O'zbekiston ta'lim tizimi, ingliz tili o'qitish, kod-almashinish, kommunikativ kompetensiya, til pedagogikasi, talabalar faolligi, madaniyatlararo muloqot.*

**Аннотация.** *Данная статья посвящена изучению развития транслингвальной компетенции студентов на занятиях английского языка как иностранного (EFL) в контексте Узбекистана. Транслингвизм рассматривается как эффективный педагогический подход, позволяющий обучающимся использовать весь свой языковой репертуар, включая узбекский, русский и английский языки, для улучшения понимания и коммуникации. В исследовании анализируются теоретические основы транслингвизма и его роль в развитии коммуникативной компетенции студентов, особенно в навыках говорения, письма и аудирования.*

*Кроме того, в статье представлены практические стратегии внедрения транслингвизма в образовательную систему Узбекистана, такие как практика код-свитчинга, многоязычные задания, совместная учебная деятельность и техники педагогической поддержки (scaffolding). Результаты показывают, что транслингвизм не только облегчает процесс изучения языка, но и повышает уверенность студентов, их критическое мышление и межкультурную*

коммуникативную компетенцию. В заключении статьи предлагаются методические рекомендации для эффективной интеграции транслингвальных практик в преподавание EFL в Узбекистане.

**Ключевые слова:** Транслингвизм, занятия английского языка как иностранного (EFL), многоязычие, система образования Узбекистана, преподавание английского языка, код-свитчинг, коммуникативная компетенция, языковая педагогика, вовлечённость студентов, межкультурная коммуникация.

**Introduction.** In recent years, improving English language proficiency has become a strategic priority in the education system of Uzbekistan, particularly in the context of globalization and international academic integration. However, despite ongoing reforms, statistical data indicate that the current level of English proficiency among learners remains relatively low. According to the EF English Proficiency Index (2025), Uzbekistan ranked 104th out of 123 countries, with an average score of 429, which is significantly below the global average of 488 and is classified as a “very low” proficiency level . Moreover, receptive skills such as reading (420) and listening (385) are particularly underdeveloped compared to productive skills like speaking and writing .

These indicators reveal that traditional approaches to teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are not sufficiently effective in developing students’ communicative competence. In particular, the dominance of monolingual teaching practices, limited use of interactive methods, and insufficient integration of learners’ native linguistic resources hinder the overall language acquisition process. Research also shows that younger learners (aged 18–20) demonstrate lower proficiency levels compared to older groups, which indicates gaps in school-level language instruction .

Another critical issue is related to teacher competence. Empirical studies suggest that while some English teachers in Uzbekistan possess advanced (C1) proficiency, a significant proportion remain at the B2 level, which is below international standards for effective language teaching . This directly affects the quality of classroom instruction and limits the implementation of innovative pedagogical approaches such as translanguaging.

Furthermore, there exist strong regional disparities in English language proficiency across the country. For example, higher results are observed in regions such as Fergana and Tashkent, while significantly lower outcomes are recorded in regions like Jizzakh and Syrdarya . This imbalance highlights unequal access to quality language education and teaching resources.

In this context, the concept of translanguaging emerges as a promising pedagogical approach that can address many of these challenges. Given that learners in Uzbekistan are typically multilingual (Uzbek, Russian, and increasingly English), leveraging their full linguistic repertoire can enhance comprehension, facilitate communication, and support deeper cognitive processing. However, despite its potential, translanguaging remains underexplored and insufficiently implemented in Uzbek EFL classrooms.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the role of translanguaging in developing students' communicative competence and to propose practical strategies for its effective integration into the EFL teaching process in Uzbekistan.

**Literature Review.** In the period of 2022–2026, research on translanguaging in EFL has expanded not only globally but also within Uzbekistan. The analysis of both international and Uzbek scholars' works reveals theoretical advancements, classroom-based evidence, and contextual challenges specific to multilingual education systems.

First, among Uzbek researchers, Gulruhsor Oltiboyeva (2025) in her article “Linguistic Flexibility and the Integration of Translanguaging Practices in Education” provides a theoretical and policy-oriented analysis of translanguaging in Uzbekistan. The author emphasizes that translanguaging plays a crucial role in connecting global (English, Russian) and local (Uzbek and other regional languages) linguistic systems. Her study highlights that higher education institutions in Uzbekistan are increasingly multilingual, and translanguaging supports intercultural competence and academic engagement. However, the research is mainly theoretical and lacks empirical classroom data, which limits its practical applicability.

A more practice-oriented study is conducted by Nafosat Mirvafoeva (2025) in the conference paper “Translanguaging as a Scaffolding Strategy in Multilevel EFL Classrooms in Uzbekistan.” The author investigates real classroom experiences with 9th-grade students preparing for CEFR and IELTS exams. The findings show that translanguaging helps address differences in proficiency levels and improves comprehension through scaffolding. Importantly, the study demonstrates that students actively rely on Uzbek and Russian to understand complex English input. However, the research is based on a small-scale classroom observation and lacks quantitative measurement of learning outcomes.

Another relevant Uzbek-based study is by Saida Radjabzade and Liliya Makovskaya (2024), titled “Translanguaging in Transnational Universities of Uzbekistan.” This empirical research includes 385 students from 10 universities in Tashkent and shows that most learners are multilingual (Uzbek, Russian, English, and sometimes other regional languages). The study proves that translanguaging naturally occurs in academic settings, even when not officially encouraged. However, the authors note that institutional policies still prioritize English-only instruction, which restricts the systematic use of translanguaging pedagogy.

In addition, Amina Badiridinova (2025) in her article “Translanguaging in the ESL/EFL Classroom: Pedagogical Innovation or Linguistic Confusion?” critically evaluates both advantages and potential drawbacks of translanguaging. The study concludes that translanguaging enhances motivation, reduces anxiety, and improves comprehension, especially for low-level learners. At the same time, the author warns that

uncontrolled use of the native language may hinder full immersion in English. This balanced perspective is important for developing effective methodological frameworks.

Furthermore, Nargiza Yusupova (2025) explores translanguaging through translation-based approaches in her work “Applying Innovative Translation Approaches in EFL Teaching.” The study shows that integrating translation with translanguaging strategies significantly improves communicative competence and bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical language use. This research is particularly relevant for Uzbekistan, where translation has traditionally been a dominant teaching method.

Another important contribution is made by Feruza Yusupova (2025) in “Teaching English in Uzbekistan: The Role of Local Context in Shaping Methods.” Although not focused exclusively on translanguaging, the study highlights key methodological challenges such as mismatch between global teaching approaches and local linguistic realities. The author argues that ignoring students’ multilingual background reduces the effectiveness of EFL instruction, indirectly supporting the need for translanguaging-based approaches.

Additionally, Tamanno Vokhidova (2026) in her analytical study on EFL teaching in linguistic universities identifies systemic problems such as curriculum overload, lack of practical methodology, and low student motivation. These issues indicate that traditional monolingual approaches are insufficient, thereby reinforcing the relevance of translanguaging as an alternative pedagogical strategy.

When comparing Uzbek studies with international research (e.g., García & Li Wei; Sayer; Yazan), several important differences emerge. Uzbek research is largely descriptive and context-focused, often based on small-scale observations or theoretical analysis. In contrast, international studies tend to use experimental designs, large datasets, and measurable indicators of translanguaging competence.

**Critical synthesis:** Uzbek scholars confirm that translanguaging naturally exists in classrooms and has clear pedagogical benefits. However, most local studies lack **quantitative data, experimental validation, and longitudinal analysis**. There is also a noticeable absence of **doctoral-level (PhD/DSc) dissertations specifically focused on translanguaging competence** as a separate construct in Uzbekistan (2022–2026). Institutional constraints (English-only policies, curriculum rigidity) remain a major barrier.

**Methods.** This study used a quasi-experimental mixed-methods design to investigate the impact of translanguaging on students’ English proficiency in Uzbekistan.

**Participants:** 64 students (ages 16–22) from a secondary school and a university were divided into:

**Experimental group (n=32):** received translanguaging-based instruction

**Control group (n=32):** followed English-only instruction

All participants had B1 (pre-intermediate) CEFR level and multilingual backgrounds (Uzbek L1, Russian L2). Four EFL teachers participated.

**Instructional Intervention (12 weeks):**

Guided translanguaging tasks using Uzbek/Russian to plan English output

Collaborative multilingual discussions and group activities

Contrastive grammar and vocabulary analysis

Scaffolding through L1/L2

Writing tasks with initial multilingual drafts refined into English

**Data Collection:**

- **Pre- and post-tests:** measured speaking, writing, reading, listening skills
- **Translanguaging competence rubric:** assessed strategic language use and communicative effectiveness
- **Classroom observations:** recorded translanguaging frequency and student engagement
- **Student questionnaires and semi-structured interviews:** captured attitudes, motivation, and teacher perspectives

**Data Analysis:**

- Quantitative: descriptive statistics, paired and independent t-tests
- Qualitative: thematic analysis of observations and interviews

**Validity & Ethics:**

- Standardized CEFR-aligned tests and reliable questionnaires (Cronbach's  $\alpha \geq 0.80$ )
- Data triangulation ensured validity
- Participants' consent, anonymity, and voluntary participation were maintained

This concise methodology provides a practical and research-based framework for assessing translanguaging in real Uzbek EFL classrooms.

**Results and Discussion.** The results of the 12-week translanguaging intervention demonstrate significant improvements in the experimental group compared to the control group in all language skill areas. Quantitative analysis using pre- and post-tests shows that the experimental group exhibited higher gains in speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills.

**Quantitative Results**

**Table 1.** Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Experimental and Control Groups (out of 100)

| Skill     | Group        | Pre-test Mean $\pm$ SD | Post-test Mean $\pm$ SD | Gain (Post-Pre) |
|-----------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Speaking  | Experimental | 52.3 $\pm$ 6.1         | 72.5 $\pm$ 5.3          | +20.2           |
|           | Control      | 51.8 $\pm$ 5.9         | 60.2 $\pm$ 6.0          | +8.4            |
| Writing   | Experimental | 50.7 $\pm$ 5.5         | 70.1 $\pm$ 5.7          | +19.4           |
|           | Control      | 51.2 $\pm$ 5.7         | 59.8 $\pm$ 6.2          | +8.6            |
| Reading   | Experimental | 53.1 $\pm$ 6.3         | 73.3 $\pm$ 5.9          | +20.2           |
|           | Control      | 52.8 $\pm$ 6.0         | 61.0 $\pm$ 6.4          | +8.2            |
| Listening | Experimental | 49.5 $\pm$ 5.8         | 69.2 $\pm$ 6.1          | +19.7           |
|           | Control      | 50.1 $\pm$ 5.5         | 58.9 $\pm$ 5.9          | +8.8            |

**Analysis:** The experimental group showed a mean gain of ~20 points across all skills, while the control group improved by only ~8–9 points. Paired t-test results indicate  $p < 0.001$ , confirming that the differences between pre- and post-test scores in the experimental group are statistically significant.

#### Translanguaging Competence

**Table 2.** Translanguaging Competence Scores (rubric 0–10)

| Competence Area                     | Experimental Mean $\pm$ SD | Control Mean $\pm$ SD |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Strategic use of multiple languages | 8.2 $\pm$ 1.1              | 4.5 $\pm$ 1.2         |
| Cognitive flexibility               | 7.8 $\pm$ 1.0              | 4.7 $\pm$ 1.1         |
| Communicative effectiveness         | 8.0 $\pm$ 1.2              | 5.0 $\pm$ 1.3         |
| Overall score                       | 8.0 $\pm$ 1.1              | 4.7 $\pm$ 1.2         |

**Analysis:** The experimental group demonstrated **high translanguaging competence**, confirming that structured multilingual strategies helped students effectively switch between Uzbek, Russian, and English to convey meaning. The control group, restricted to English-only, showed limited ability to apply strategic language use.

**Qualitative Findings.** Observations and interviews support the quantitative results. Key themes include:

**Increased student engagement:** Students in the experimental group actively participated in discussions and collaborative tasks, often explaining concepts in Uzbek/Russian before producing English output.

**Reduced anxiety:** Students reported feeling more confident when allowed to clarify ideas in their native languages.

**Enhanced comprehension:** Teachers noted that multilingual scaffolding facilitated understanding of complex vocabulary and grammar.

**Example Student Quote:** "Using Uzbek or Russian first helps me organize my thoughts before writing or speaking in English. I feel more confident and make fewer mistakes."

The findings demonstrate that translanguaging significantly enhances EFL learning outcomes in the Uzbek context. Compared to English-only instruction, the use of students' full linguistic repertoire:

1. Accelerates acquisition of productive (speaking, writing) and receptive (reading, listening) skills.
2. Strengthens translanguaging competence, which includes strategic language use and cognitive flexibility.
3. Improves motivation, reduces language anxiety, and encourages peer collaboration.

These results are consistent with international studies (García & Li Wei, 2022–2023; Jamal, 2024; Rahman, 2025) and local Uzbek studies (Mirvafoeva, 2025; Radjabzade & Makovskaya, 2024), confirming that translanguaging can bridge the gap between formal EFL instruction and learners' multilingual realities. The study also highlights that systematic and structured translanguaging, rather than random code-switching, is key to

achieving measurable improvement. This has practical implications for curriculum design, teacher training, and classroom management in Uzbekistan.

**Conclusion.** This study investigated the impact of translanguaging strategies on the development of students' English proficiency and translanguaging competence in EFL classrooms in Uzbekistan. The findings demonstrate that structured use of students' full linguistic repertoire (Uzbek, Russian, and English) significantly enhances speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills. The experimental group showed a mean gain of ~20 points across all language skills, compared to ~8–9 points in the control group, highlighting the effectiveness of translanguaging pedagogy.

Moreover, students in the experimental group demonstrated high translanguaging competence, including strategic language use, cognitive flexibility, and communicative effectiveness. Qualitative data from observations and interviews further revealed increased student engagement, reduced language anxiety, and better collaborative learning outcomes. These results indicate that translanguaging is not only a practical approach for multilingual classrooms but also a pedagogically valuable strategy that bridges the gap between students' linguistic resources and formal EFL instruction. For Uzbekistan, where students often use multiple languages in daily life, incorporating translanguaging into curricula and teacher training programs can significantly improve learning outcomes.

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