

## CEFR-Aligned Formative Assessment: Teachers' Perception, Attitudes and Practices

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v15-i1/24429> DOI:10.6007/IJARBS/v15-i1/24429

**Published Date:** 03 January 2025

### Abstract

The objective of this research is to explore the perceptions, attitudes and frequency of use of The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)-aligned formative assessment strategies among the teachers in the primary English language classroom. The study used quantitative design which involved 56 respondents in the Johore Bahru district using convenience sampling. The survey was validated by two experts in the same field in terms of face validity and content validity. Then it was piloted before conducting the main study. Descriptive analysis was used to analyse the data. Overall, the respondents have the positive attitude and perception towards the formative assessment. Nevertheless, they hardly use the formative assessment strategies in the classroom. The study raises the concerns the reasons why these teachers failed to use formative assessment daily in the teaching and learning. The paper ended with some suggestions for a better use of formative assessment in the future.

**Keywords:** Formative Assessment, Assessment for Learning, Student-Centred, Primary School, Classroom

### Background

Assessment is a crucial stage in teaching and learning which largely reflects the students' level. It is intended to serve the principal objective of facilitating learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009). Assessment is essential in university education around the world. There are two forms: summative as well as formative assessment (FA). Note that summative assessments occur at the end of the term. Meanwhile, formative assessment is done in the classroom. It will help you understand the effectiveness of this guide. Additionally, it helps develop learners' skills and build qualifications. It also helps learners integrate into different parts of society and take on different roles (Rueter et al., 2016). Formative assessment is an important part of the learning process to ensure student success. Formative assessment is employed to evaluate progress and provide feedback.

Providing constructive feedback is essential for improving students' performance and fostering the growth of their knowledge. Moreover, it has the potential to support students in monitoring their own learning progress, empowering them to recognize and address areas of improvement. The need for growth in both strength and knowledge is evident, as well as the importance of understanding complex concepts that demand additional focus (Kubiszyn & Borich, 2024). The literature reveals that in many countries, teachers are encouraged to use formative assessment as an essential strategy for achieving the learning targets in their teaching-learning process (Klinger et al., 2012; Looney, 2011; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2005; Swaffield, 2011). For instance, in New Zealand, the national assessment strategy was established and implemented based on formative assessment in 2000 (Ozan & Kincal, 2018). Similarly, in England, teachers are encouraged to use formative assessments in their classrooms from pre-school and primary school levels (Hill, 2013). Different assessment methods are used for each student in countries such as Finland, Germany, Sweden, and Spain and they emphasize the necessity of constant assessment in the teaching-learning process (Hill, 2013). In Singapore, teachers employ a range of assessment activities and strategies in their classrooms to gain a comprehensive insight into how much students learn as part of formative assessment (OECD, 2005).

Furthermore, many countries have developed guidebooks to assist teachers in systematically implementing formative assessment practices in the classroom (Marope et al., 2013). Moss and Brookhart (2019) also emphasise that both teachers and students become enthusiastic participants in the formative assessment process when there is a powerful and effective association between them in the teaching-learning environment. Therefore, it is essential to investigate formative assessment practices that can be useful in the classroom assessment. However, FA implementation strategies can be challenging. More emphasis is placed on how students perform in the classroom than on preparing students for future challenges. The study found that primary school teachers implemented various strategies to prepare students for written assessments through brainstorming and mind mapping. It also uses leading questions to make writing easier for students. This study found that in order to build better relationships with students, young teachers are more willing to provide positive rather than negative feedback on students' writing assignments.

A good relationship with the teacher makes students feel safer and more comfortable in the classroom. Moreover, previous research has indicated that students who form positive relationships with their teachers are more likely to obtain perfect grades than other students (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). In 2000, Leah Dickins and Gardner were among the first researchers to look at the details of formative assessment. Their research involved interviews with English as an Additional Language (EAL) teachers as well as classroom observations. Consequently, their findings presented those decisions made based on student performance in the classroom matter, as decisions made carelessly may not accurately reflect a student's language proficiency. They also questioned the validity as well as reliability of classroom assessments and proposed that alternate approaches be employed to assess these issues. Their research found that the validity of inferences about how children use language is equally significant whether the goal is summative or formative assessment and examines performance assessment (Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000).

The discussion began with an introduction to the topic of formative assessment and the skills needed to conduct this type of assessment. Gattullo (2000) conducted a case study with four teachers and analysed the use of formative assessments in the classroom. This study focuses only on teaching children and reports on specific methods used in these age groups, excluding other age groups. Assessment Reform Group (2001) developed principles with regard to classroom assessment guidelines that have influenced the EFL/ESL community. These principles emphasised the continuous nature with regard to formative assessment as well as its integration with learning. Consequently, Leung and Mohan (2004) established a case study in their EAL school using the above principles. We concluded that observing different classes enables teachers and students to make informed decisions about assessment rather than relying on guesswork. Furthermore, additional levels of learning, weaknesses and strengths are achieved through peer reviews, discussions, as well as formative assessment methods compared to standardised tests (Leung & Mohan, 2004). However, further research is needed to determine the problem. Cheng et al. (2004) developed research on classroom assessment in three regions (Hong Kong, Beijing, as well as Canada). According to these studies, little is known about EFL/ESL teachers' classroom assessment. Given the high number of students, the influence of formal testing, as well as the fundamental role of such assessments in the learning and teaching process. Note that this is a significant issue (Cheng et al., 2004). Their research examines the goals, processes, and methods of assessment in the classroom. University lecturers from three different language environments (Chinese-dominated, bilingual, as well as English-dominated) were chosen by a detailed purposive random sampling. Consequently, a total of 461 questionnaires were examined as well as 267 questionnaires were obtained. This result shows that the complexity of educational assessment varies by setting. Factors, for instance, the course type, the teaching experience of the teacher, the level of the students, as course type, teacher teaching experience, student level, as well as the role with regard to external testing also influence classroom ratings. For example, Hong Kong teachers reported using less objective assessment methods and being less objective. Cheng et al. (2004) suggest that this may be because Hong Kong instructors have more experience than instructors in Beijing as well as Canada. Ke (2006) investigated the language proficiency of 222 adult Chinese learners before proposing a strategy for formative task-based language evaluation. The model is criterion-based, skill-integrated, and focused on classroom activities. In addition, when constructing the model, researchers took curricular goals and task-based education into account (Ke, 2006). On the other hand, Wei (2010) performed an action study and discovered that formative assessment boosted learners' motivation and success considerably. The author recommended completing a requirements analysis and building an assessment strategy as ways to increase the quality of formative assessment. The opinions, feelings, and mental images that teachers hold about their students and educational systems are known as teacher perceptions. These perceptions can vary from one teacher to another based on their background and thought patterns (Kanjee, 2020).

According to social constructivists, a teacher's philosophy, beliefs, background, biases, and practices can influence the performance of their students. The qualifications and professional degrees of teachers also play a significant role in how they understand the education system, which in turn affects their perception of different methods of assessing students (Kanjee, 2020). It is important to note that each teacher has their own unique perception, which may differ from their colleagues. Teacher perceptions are crucial in shaping how they approach

and teach in the classroom, ultimately impacting student motivation and active engagement in learning activities (Hardré & Sullivan, 2008). Corrective feedback is a fundamental component of formative assessment. By offering precise, prompt, and precise feedback, learners are encouraged to assume accountability and are eager to glean knowledge from the feedback they receive. Self-assessment and peer-assessment contribute to the gradual and consistent advancement of students in their educational journey (Berisha et al., 2023). Feedback, according to various researchers (Adarkwah, 2021; Alt et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2020) is a crucial element in formative assessment and plays a significant role in influencing learning. Duss (2020) emphasises the importance of feedback as a powerful tool for enhancing learning and achievement, noting that it can have both positive and negative effects. Shute (2008) refers to feedback as formative feedback, which is information provided to students with the intention of improving their thinking and knowledge. She further suggests that feedback has a positive impact on students and promotes learning. In order to foster a positive learning environment, educators must exercise prudence in their delivery of feedback, opting for constructive criticism rather than simply providing it. In conclusion, feedback guides students on what actions to take and what to avoid.

The implementation of formative assessment by educators is an integral aspect of identifying the educational requirements of students. This specific type of assessment allows for a dynamic appraisal of each student's progress and development in accordance with their individualized learning needs. Formative assessment encompasses more than just grading and evaluating students; it is a process of providing educational tools and resources that can greatly enhance academic performance (William, 2013) and foster achievement. According to Kincal and Ozan (2018), formative assessment refers to assessment methods that are intended to provide individual students or entire classes with guidance towards program improvement and/or adjustment. This includes quizzes, drafts or drafts, homework, class questions, etc. Ultimately, formative assessment is an ongoing evaluation process that furnishes valuable insights into learners, with the objective of better catering to their needs and ensuring overall success. According to Bennett (2011) and Dix (2017), formative assessment provides students with constructive feedback and promotes self-learning. Cauley and McMillan (2010) suggest that teachers regard formative assessment as having a positive impact concerning student motivation as well as performance. Cañadas (2023) indicates that incorporating formative assessment into teacher education programs can significantly enhance the development of teaching competences. This can be achieved by implementing clear criteria that are communicated to students, collecting evidence throughout the training period, providing constructive feedback on student performance, and actively involving students in the assessment process.

While Young and Jackman (2014), reported that teachers view practising formative assessment favourably, studies by Leahy et al. (2005), and Marshall and Drummond (2006), suggest that teachers are less confident in enforcing formative assessment strategies. This lack of confidence may be due to several factors, including educational reform, curricular changes, learning culture, collaborative working environments, accountability, stakeholder awareness, and school conditions (Gil & Adamson, 2011; Hui et al., 2017; Verger et al., 2013). These limitations may influence teachers in different disciplines, especially those in external fields. Educational research has identified various factors that could potentially influence teachers' adoption of formative assessment. Moreover, these factors include external,

contextual, resource-related, as well as internal factors such as educational policies. However, educators have pointed out that these factors can sometimes create a divide between the theory and practice with regard to formative assessment. Hence, it is essential to identify teachers' perceptions of these factors in order to bridge this gap and address any barriers that could hinder the implementation of these factors in schools. Overcoming any judgment and identifying these barriers is essential for successful implementation. Studies by Antoniou and James (2014), İzci and Eroğlu (2016), Alotaibi (2016), and Kyaruzi et al. (2018) have all emphasized the importance of identifying and addressing these factors. A teacher's perception is the opinion, feeling, or conceptual image that a teacher has of a student or a system. It depends on the teacher's background and thinking patterns (Hassan & Shahid, 2010). Social constructivists argue that philosophies, beliefs, backgrounds, prejudices, and practices can affect student performance. Teacher qualifications and professional qualifications also play an important role in understanding educational systems and directly influence students' perceptions of particular assessment methods (Antoniou & James, 2014). Another important point about teacher perception is that every teacher has their own perception and is different. Teacher perception is an important factor influencing how teachers engage and teach in the classroom, ultimately leading to student motivation and active participation in learning activities (Hardré & Sullivan, 2008). Differences in a teacher's own skills and knowledge, and social and personal relationships with students can also affect student learning and motivation. There has been minimal study on teachers' perspectives and attitudes in the classroom that impact formative assessment processes.

Yan and Cheng (2015), showed that teacher self-efficacy, subjective norms, as well as instrumental attitudes influence the intention to perform formative assessment, but emotional attitudes and controllability do not. Increase. On the other hand, contextual factors play an important role in the study of formative assessment practices. Nevertheless, Tan and Tan (2012) discovered that teachers' acceptance with regard to responsibility concerning formative assessment relies on teacher involvement, course content, motivation, students' ability, availability of assessment resources, ease of administration regarding assessment practices, as well as classroom learning outcomes impact the program. Subsequently, Ní Chróinín and Cosgrave (2013) address the difficulties teachers encounter when incorporating formative assessment and highlight constraints such as a lack of time to develop formative assessment practices and difficulty selecting assessment practices that are suited for students' diverse competencies. Several studies from different countries have analyzed factors that hinder teachers from conducting formative assessment. For example, in a study of a bilingual school in Shanghai, China, Poole (2016) described factors that prevented teachers from performing formative assessment. These factors are: Teacher and student resistance to innovative approaches to introducing formative assessment. Teachers' and students' thoughts on formative assessment methods. The focus of the assessment material is on imparting knowledge rather than improving students' learning skills and abilities.

Matos-Garcia et al. (2017) conducted a study in European Basque and Valencian schools and found that students rejected assessments that required more effort to meet different criteria with regard to formative assessment. Nonetheless, Deneen and Brown (2016) present that teachers can make a difference by changing formative assessment methods in time.

Nonetheless, Beatty et al. (2006) pointed out that teachers can use a variety of methods and strategies to effectively conduct formative assessment. Teachers can improve classroom response systems to achieve different learning goals. Finally, teachers will create new formative assessment methods and collect appropriate feedback to obtain insight into student performance (Trumbull & Lash, 2013). Nonetheless, Minstrell et al. (2011) state that teachers influence the practice as well as the process with regard to peer assessment. Lai (2010) asserts that teachers' formative assessments are subject to influence by a variety of factors, such as the characteristics of the assessment itself, which may not provide the necessary information to diagnose students' learning accurately, as well as instructional practices that can be hindered by reluctance to utilize feedback to improve pedagogy and learning outcomes. In addition, other factors such as a lack of subjectivity concerning rubrics as well as inadequate instructional methods, can impede progress towards improved learning outcomes.

Meanwhile, Safari and Rashidi (2015) indicate that both experienced as well as novice teachers may face obstacles to implementing formative assessment due to cultural, political, and ideological changes concerning the learning process. According to Clark (2011), teachers possess the ability to influence pedagogy that concentrates on the cultural growth of their students. This is achieved by utilizing formative assessment methods to evaluate feedback from students while acknowledging the cultural context in which it is given. When discussing formative assessment and its impact on teachers, it is clear that their perspectives on the matter vary. Meusen-Beekman et al. (2016) cited that teachers generally agree that formative assessment would add to their workload, but do not see it as an overwhelming burden. On the other hand, Toh et al. (2006); Chin and Wong (2013) argue that it is the teacher's perception of formative assessment that matters most for its successful implementation, rather than external factors such as classroom size or educational policies. Some teachers have also noted that a lack of professional training in assessment could hinder inquiry-based learning in formative assessment (Rahman et al., 2021). Cañadas (2023) claim that both educators and students share the responsibility of cultivating positive attitudes and perceptions, and endeavouring to transmute any negative ones. The meaning of formative assessment has been a source of confusion for teachers, owing to the differing perspectives, definitions, and approaches to implementing it within schools (Chappuis & Chappuis, 2007). Attitudes are learned dispositions that direct our actions by examining particular items based on their resemblance or dissimilarity.

Note that people usually possess attitudes focusing on objects, individuals, institutions, or even spiritual matters (Ministry of Education, 2011), and these attitudes can be expressed as opinions or objectives, and can manifest in the form of behavioural actions or states of mind. As a result, teachers' attitudes as well as views impact their teaching style, information sources, and the establishment with regard to a certain atmosphere in the classroom. Attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs are considered by many researchers to be part of a set, which constructs that denote, define, as well as describe the content and structure with regard to mental states regarded to control human behaviour. It is critical to stress that the attitudes of teachers are frequently expressed to students throughout the classroom (Barnyak & Paquette, 2010). As a result, not only may teachers' attitudes impact students' motivation to study but also the overall teaching/learning environment (Figa et al., 2020). Numerous studies on assessment attitudes and practices have been done by researchers.

However, most research emphasises a single component of assessment (Dixon & Haigh, 2009).

People's attitudes are developed based on their own experiences as well as the information and facts they have about a certain issue. Meanwhile, people's attitudes are developed based on their own experiences as well as the information and data they have about a certain issue. According to Fazio and Olson (2003), developed beliefs are attitudes that occur when a person believes that an item or person possesses desirable or unpleasant characteristics that result in favourable or unfavourable results. On the other hand, Musai (1999) defines perception as the ability to perceive what is normal, what we know, and to comprehend what we do not know. Understanding the role of the teacher, according to Ballantine and Spade (2006), is crucial to understanding the educational system because teacher attitudes are critical to understanding and enhancing the teaching/learning process. Researchers have researched teacher attitudes and assessment practices but have been unable to grasp the connections between these factors within a theoretical framework (Buyukkarci, 2014). Note that they are established by establishing them based on the experiences of parents, schools, peers and information media. Since attitudes relate to a set of personal values, there are several factors that influence their formation and change. In the concept of the teacher's personal knowledge, there is a strong similarity between knowledge and belief. Practical knowledge, first explored by Elbaz (2018) in classroom practice and further progressed by Connelly and Clandinin (1998), refers to the teacher's knowledge with regard to the classroom situation or it explains what you understand. Attitude is a key concept in the educational process, classroom behaviour and acceptance of change. Attitudes and classroom behaviours influence the change process in teachers and are therefore of great importance in understanding classroom practice and cultivating critical thinking in teachers. It is also important to target change in practice as part of the process (Connelly & Clandinin, 1998).

Various authors have focused on the study of teachers' attitudes because they are so important to the teaching/learning process (Darling-Hammond, 2000). This is because a major controversy in the literature on teacher turnover relates to the difficulty regarding changing habits as well as attitudes. Some scholars believe that this transition will be difficult, if not impossible. This seeming difficulty is frequently cited to explain teachers' consistent attitudes. Other academicians and teachers, on the other hand, consider that teachers and students may change, that their attitudes and practices frequently change, and that the program can benefit them in significant and meaningful ways. Some people believe they can. According to research, teachers' perspectives and attitudes regarding teaching and learning have a significant impact on classroom practice and outcomes (Brown, 2004). Although many studies suggest that teachers' practices are influenced by their beliefs (Haney & McArthur, 2002; Tsai & Liang, 2009), teachers' practices do not always align with their beliefs and attitudes. Yao (2015) conducted six comprehensive qualitative case studies regarding teachers as well as their perceptions and formative assessment practices. According to the authors, three teachers regarded formative assessment as an excellent technique to assist students in developing and improving their learning as well as accomplishing positive results in public tests, while three others considered it as only somewhat helpful in attaining the same aim.

The researchers also stated that teachers' perceptions of formative assessment clearly influence classroom practice. Despite the assumption that positive attitudes should lead to excellent practice, some researchers argue that favourable attitudes among teachers regarding formative assessment do not result in effective practice for a number of reasons. Teachers' perceptions toward formative assessment may be unfavourable due to the difficulties connected with specific strategies such as peer assessment and self-assessment (Volante & Beckett, 2011). This suggests that teachers who feel that enforcing a formative assessment strategy requires a significant investment of time and resources tend to refrain from using it, even if they feel that the strategy is worthwhile. Schildkamp et al. (2020) found that teachers who consider themselves incapable to perform formative assessment tasks are more likely to have negative attitudes towards formative assessment, leading to inappropriate assessment practices or avoidance of different assessment practices. While there is a substantial body of research on formative assessment in general, there is only a few studies addressing classroom assessment in Malaysia.

### **Research Objectives are as Follows**

1. To explore the Malaysian primary school teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) -aligned formative assessment
2. To explore the Malaysian primary school teachers' attitudes towards CEFR-aligned formative assessment
3. To investigate the Malaysian primary school teachers' frequency use of CEFR-aligned formative assessment strategies

### **The Research Questions are as Follows**

1. What are the perceptions towards CEFR-aligned formative assessment of Malaysian primary school teachers?
2. What are the attitudes towards CEFR-aligned formative assessment of Malaysian primary school teachers?
3. How often teachers use of CEFR- aligned formative assessment strategies in the classroom?

### **Significance of the Study**

The research main aim to highlight the teachers' perception of formative assessment in the CEFR curriculum. Teachers are the main stakeholder in the implementation of formative assessment in the classroom and the assessment reflects their needs, perspectives, and input.

### **Literature Review**

Black and William (1998) originally defined formative assessment as any activity that provides information that may be utilized as feedback to improve the teaching and learning activities in which teachers or/and their students engage. Additionally, Green (2019) found that formative assessment is student-centered. What matters is not how the teacher presents the information, but how the students acquire it, how well they comprehend it, as well as how they implement it. Teachers utilize formative assessment to acquire information about student progress and learning requirements, which they then use to adapt lessons. More recently, Duy and Vien (2020) also agreed with these earlier studies, indicating that the aim with regard to formative assessment is not to assess student competence or to recognize



achievement by awarding grades. Rather, we agreed that it was about learning by exploring students' weaknesses and encouraging them to take action. Both formative and summative assessments offer distinct advantages in the classroom. However, in order to obtain the intended result, the teacher must be able to differentiate between these two sorts of assessments. Duy and Vien (2020) mentioned that formative assessment refers to feedback to both students as well as teachers on their current comprehension and skill development to lead future directions. In contrast, summative assessment has an entirely different purpose: describing learning outcomes at a particular point in time for reporting purposes to parents. Correspondingly, de Almeida et al. (2022) state that the primary distinction between summative and formative assessments is the objective of the assessment. Summative assessments are frequently given at the end of the semester to judge how well students have learnt what they were meant to study. Formative assessments, on the other hand, are not included in final grades. Constructive feedback is used to promote learning and understanding.

Many researchers have established that formative assessment is essential for enhancing teaching and learning processes concerning the EFL classroom (Elliott & Yu, 2013; Good, 2011; Newton, 2007; Ruiz-Primo & Furtak, 2007). Ellis (2003) acknowledged that formative assessment is likely to be associated with task-based courses. Teachers want information on how effectively students comprehend course materials and develop the abilities connected with each stage of the course since task-based curricula are divided into phases that reflect communicative skill accomplishment. Furthermore, Popham (2008) addresses that formative assessment refers to a process utilized by teachers as well as students during the classroom to coordinate ongoing teaching and learning so that students can better achieve their intended outcomes in the classroom. In a study, Ruiz-Primo and Furtak (2007) discovered that there are various types with regard to formative assessment that teachers may use to gather detailed information about student performance. Different types of assessments may be utilised by teachers to obtain beneficial information concerning student learning.

Garrison and Ehringhaus (2011) argued that questioning strategies should be implemented into lesson or unit planning. Better questions promote deeper thinking and offer teachers crucial information about their students' level and depth of comprehension. In terms of the exit ticket and admission ticket ideas, Lemov (2010) referred to this exercise as an exit technique in which students must answer a question in order to leave the classroom. This encourages student autonomy while also justifying the teacher's position as a facilitator. Garrison and Ehringhaus (2011) use "thumb up/middle/down" as formative assessment examples. It will be readily available for teachers to refer to during class. In addition, self-assessments and peer assessments are also provided. This style of assessment aids in the formation of a learning community within the classroom. Additionally, goals as well as standards are significant with regard to EFL education. By setting clear expectations, teachers and students build them into the classroom and learning process. Darling-Hammond (2000) found that the continuous use of feedback and formative assessment has a profound impact on efficient teaching and learning. Correspondingly, early research by Perkins (1993) emphasized a combination regarding active student engagement or achievement and continuous, comprehensive, and relevant feedback from teachers. Chapelle and Brindley (2010) further argue that formative assessment helps diagnose learners' difficulties and problems in speaking and writing skills.

Therefore, once these problems are identified, ESL teachers can design and implement corrective tasks to help solve learners' problems. Airasian (2000) used some formative/pedagogical assessment techniques such as homework, observation, diary/anecdotal writing, and portfolios. Conclusively, teachers who are empowered with such a competence, ability or knowledge base are generally considered assessment literate (Gan & Lam, 2022). Karimi et al. (2014) established a case study in Iran. This study examined how EFL teachers perceive formative assessment. Interviews were conducted with participants, and audio recordings were transcribed, classified, and divided into four major themes. Note that 42 Iranian EFL teachers participated in the study. According to the findings of the research, formative assessment possesses a positive impact on the teaching and learning process. Additionally, participants expressed complete confidence in the benefits that formative assessment brings to the EFL course. Gonzales (2012) cited that centered around the practices as well as perceptions with regard to formative assessment at the University of Montreal. The primary objective of her study was to gain insight into how formative assessment is implemented and perceived in the classroom by teachers and students alike. Out of a total of 51 survey respondents, 9 were teachers while the remaining 42 were students. The survey results indicated that both groups found formative assessment to be a valuable and beneficial tool. The researcher, however, acknowledge that there were certain challenges, such as the constraints imposed by large class sizes, limited time availability, and the pressure that students face to excel academically. In addition, research by Thanh Pham and Renshaw (2015) presented the complexity concerning the process of performing formative assessment in higher education classes in Vietnam. The study involves her two lecturers and her 250 students from his two universities in Vietnam. Note that systematic interviews, informal discussions, and systematic classroom observations were used. The use of these data-obtaining approaches was designed to demonstrate how teachers embraced and altered formative assessment practice. Analysis and interpretation of the collected data revealed that there are various structural and cultural barriers that impede the practice of formative assessment. Therefore, this effort had to be changed to be a hybrid and innovative practice. Gan et al. (2017) investigated prospective her EFL learners' perceptions with regard to learning practice assessments as a function of their approach to learning in mainland China and Hong Kong. They conducted quantitative research at three different universities. Moreover, they discovered a substantial positive association between language learners' views of FA and their tendency to study in an outcome-based or exhaustive manner.

Nasr et al. (2018), examined Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions with regard to learning practices, specifically scaffolding and supervision assessment. The EFL teachers' perceptions of supervision and scaffolding were analysed based on their teaching experience, educational background, and level of competency. By using a mixed-method triangulation approach, it was found that most EFL teachers opted for AFL scaffolding as well as monitoring practices. Moreover, the results of the quantitative phase, which involved conducting AFL questionnaire (Pat-El et al., 2013), indicated insignificant differences in EFL teachers' perceived monitoring as well as scaffolding practices for problematic demographics. However, the study did not investigate the connection between EFL teachers' AFL practices and the textbooks they used or the context of their instruction. It is important to note that we employed the same factor structure of the AFL questionnaire (Pat-El et al., 2013) to assess language education in Iran utilizing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on Amos.

**Methodology**

This study employed descriptive survey research. It aims to describe, compare, contrast, classify, analyse and interpret an individual or a group's beliefs, point of view, or practice about a particular issue (Creswell & Poth, 2017). According to Creswell and Poth (2017), survey research is employed when the researcher intends to examine characteristics, behaviors, or opinions with regard to the population in the form of variables within a study. Similarly, research on teachers' attitudes on assessment has also relied on the use of questionnaires (Brown, 2004). The questionnaire was adapted from Young and Jackman (2014) for the purpose of this study. The researcher included some variables from the Teacher Handbook of Formative Principles and Practices (Cambridge Assessment, 2018). Besides that, the researcher also removed some of the negative statements from the questionnaire and reworded the sentences into a direct positive mode. Measures had to be taken in order to avoid ambiguity in the results. Moreover, it is best not to mix positive and negative wording as this may affect the reliability as well as validity concerning the survey (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The survey was validated by two experts in the same field in terms of face validity and content validity. Then it was piloted before conducting the main study.

In addition, we asked two ESL specialist teachers to analyse the elements for face validity and identify any ambiguities they find within the items. They all checked that the items were completely understandable. To ensure the accuracy of research, it is important to consider

- a. the appropriate timescale for the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017).
- b. when selecting a methodology for the study, it is important to consider its appropriateness and alignment with the study's characteristics.
- c. the selection of an appropriate sampling method is crucial for the study's success.
- d. to ensure accurate results, it is essential to create an unbiased and open environment that allows respondents to freely choose from specific answer sets.

It is important to understand that while the reliability and validity of a study can never be completely compromised. However, researchers strive to minimise this threat. The researcher can come up and the insights we want to find. Therefore, validity was maintained in this study.

In convenience sampling, the researcher chooses participants because they are available as well as ready to be studied (Creswell, 2012) The respondents are the in-service teachers working in a district in Johor state, Malaysia. Questionnaire was administered via Google Form and sent to the respondents in the telegram group. Expert views were sought to give feedback on the questionnaire. It was found that the questionnaires are fit for the study. The survey questionnaire consists of four parts. Section I is a "Demographic Profile". Section II determines teachers' perceptions of CEFR aligned formative assessment with a five-point Likert-type scale that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Meanwhile, Section III examined teachers' attitudes toward CEFR-aligned formative assessment. The approval or disapproval of formative assessment processes was expressed using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Section IV was an inventory that assessed teachers' frequency of use of CEFR aligned 12 formative assessment strategies with a scale from "Very Often, Often, Seldom and Never". There is a supplementary of open-ended question should they have anything else to share, making it possible for the respondents to answer the question more openly and honestly with their own words. Other

than that, respondents in the survey were entirely voluntary, having confidentiality guaranteed. There were 56 responses received and it was analysed using SPSS.

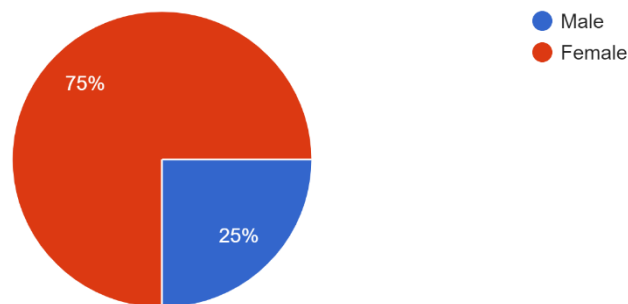
### Analysis and Findings

This section offers a brief summary of the demographics of the sample. The sample comprised primary school teachers ( $n=56$ ) who teach in the primary schools in Johor Baru District.

The demographics profile is as follows:

#### Gender

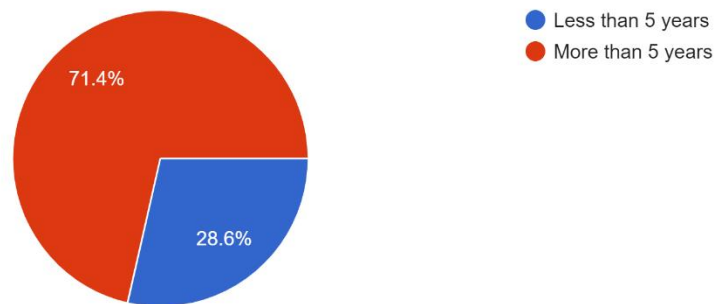
56 responses



From the pie chart, it shows 75% of the respondents are male and 25% are female.

#### Teaching experience

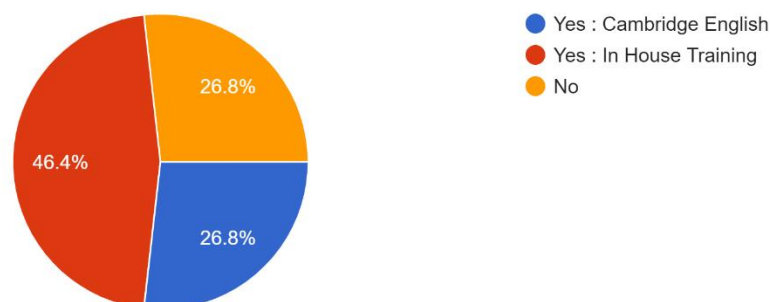
56 responses



In terms of teaching experiences, the pie chart shows that 71.4% of the teachers have more than 5 years of teaching and 28.6% of the teachers have fewer than 5 years of teaching experiences.

Have you undergone CEFR Formative Assessment training?

56 responses



The pie chart shows that 46.4% have undergone in house CEFR training while 26.8% have attended Cambridge English CEFR training.

Below is the analysis of the questionnaire in terms of mean and standard deviation for each subscale.

Table 1

*Analysis of Mean and Standard Deviation*

<b>I: Teachers' perceptions of formative assessment</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1. CEFR-aligned formative assessment advocates the 'can do statements' among the students	4.11	.593	High
2. CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to ensure students have understood and help correct misconceptions.	4.04	.571	High
3. CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to assist students in becoming more involved in their own learning.	4.21	.594	High
4. CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to give the students a better chance at passing their term work/assignment.	3.93	.759	Medium
5. CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to help the teacher plan his/her work more effectively.	3.48	.914	Medium
6. CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to help low-achieving students achieve more.	4.11	.562	High
7. CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to improve teacher instruction when dealing with mixed ability students in class.	3.57	.871	Medium
8. CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to motivate learning to achieve the target goals.	4.00	.603	High
<b>II: Teachers' attitudes towards formative assessment</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	
1. I want to learn new formative assessment strategies	4.13	.662	High
2. I think that students benefit more from being actively involved in their learning.	4.36	.616	High
3. I believe that students are assisted in learning when they develop and share their own learning goals.	4.20	.585	High
4. I feel that it is important to allow students to assess each other.	4.09	.549	High
5. I am interested in having students write reflections of their leaning in the class.	4.04	.713	High

6.	I like the idea of having students assess themselves.	4.13	.507	High
7.	I feel that portfolios are good to be used for assessing students in a worthwhile manner.	3.86	.699	Medium
8.	I feel that students do gain from non-graded feedback.	3.86	.883	Medium
9.	I believe students are capable of monitoring their own learning.	3.36	1.052	Medium
10.	I think feedback should be given appropriately as learning takes place in class.	4.21	.494	High
<b>III: Teachers' frequency of use of formative assessment strategies</b>		<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	
1.	I give oral feedback to students.	1.64	.520	Very low
2.	I use different questioning techniques to assess students' understanding during instruction.	1.82	.606	Very low
3.	I share assessment criteria with students.	2.21	.594	Low
4.	I assess a skill many times to ensure students have learnt.	1.80	.519	Very low
5.	I make provision during classes for students to work in groups.	2.13	.574	Low
6.	I give written non-graded feedback to students.	2.20	.724	Low
7.	I allow students the opportunity to assess their own work.	2.20	.616	Low
8.	I use portfolios as a means of assessing students' work.	2.50	.739	Low
9.	I allow students the opportunity to critique each other's work.	2.57	.759	Low
10.	I have students develop and share their learning goals and objectives.	2.68	.811	Low
11.	I encourage students to engage in journal writing about content covered.	2.64	.819	Low
12.	I allow students the opportunity to contribute to the making of tests and quizzes.	2.86	.862	Low

### RQ 1: Teachers' Perception of Formative Assessment

In term of mean analysis, the researcher uses the classification table (Ary et al., 2002) which is shown below.

Table 2  
*Classification Mean*

Classification Mean	Interpretation
1.00 – 1.99	Very low
2.00 – 2.99	Low
3.00 – 3.99	Medium
4.00 – 4.99	High
5.00	Very High

(Source: Ary et al., 2002)

The analysis shows that the mean ranges from 3.57-4.21, which indicate the high level of perception with regards to formative assessment among the teachers. Majority of the

teachers have a positive perception towards the implementation of formative assessment. With respect of individual statement, the highest mean 4.21 which the teachers agree that CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to assist students in becoming more involved in their own learning. while there was a less agreement that the assessment, the lowest mean is 3.48 which the teachers less agree that CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to help the teacher plan his/her work more effectively. For the item, *CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to ensure students have understood and help correct misconceptions*, the mean is 4.04 whereas on the item, *CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to give the students a better chance at passing their term work/assignment* receives a mean score of 3.9, Item on *CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to assist students in becoming more involved in their own learning* receives the mean 3.93. Items like *CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to help the teacher plan his/her work more effectively* (mean: 3.48) and *CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to improve teacher instruction when dealing with mixed ability students in class* (mean: 3.57) which indicate teacher has less agree with the statements. *CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to help low-achieving students achieve more* (mean: 4.11), and *CEFR-aligned formative assessment is to motivate learning to achieve the target goals* (mean :4.00) which indicate positive perception among the teachers.

#### *RQ2: Teachers' Attitudes Towards Formative Assessment*

The mean is between 3.36-4.36 which means that the teachers' attitude towards formative assessment is considered high. Majority of the teachers have positive attitudes towards formative assessment. They are willing to learn more about FA to improve their knowledge. With regard to individual statement, the highest mean is 4.36, which the teachers agree that students benefit more from being actively involved in their learning. The lowest mean is 3.36 which the teachers less believe students are capable of monitoring their own learning. On the item *CEFR-aligned formative assessment advocates the 'can do statements' among the students*, the mean is 4.11, which means that the teachers positively agree with the statement. Items like *I want to learn new formative assessment strategies* (mean:4.13), *I believe that students are assisted in learning when they develop and share their own learning goals* (mean: 4.20), *I feel that it is important to allow students to assess each other* (mean:4.09), *I am interested in having students write reflections of their leaning in the class* (mean:4.04), *I like the idea of having students assess themselves* (mean:4.13), *I think feedback should be given appropriately as learning takes place in class* (mean: 4.21), these statements show that teachers have positive attitude towards formative assessment. In addition, statements like *I feel that portfolios are good to be used for assessing students in a worthwhile manner* (mean:3.86) and *I feel that students do gain from non-graded feedback* (mean:3.86) indicate that teachers have average perception towards these statements.

#### *RQ3: Teachers' Frequency of Use of Formative Assessment Strategies*

With regards to this, the mean is between 1.64-2.86. It indicates that the use of formative assessment strategies among the teachers are still low. The highest mean is 2.86, *which the teachers have students develop and share their learning goals and objectives*. The lowest mean is 1.64 which the teachers *less give oral feedback to students*. Items such as *I use different questioning techniques to assess students' understanding during instruction*, ( mean :1.82), *I share assessment criteria with students*, (mean :2.21) ,*I assess a skill many times to ensure students have learnt* (mean :1.80), *I make provision during classes for students to work in groups* (mean :2.13), *I give written non-graded feedback to students* (mean :2.20), *I allow*

*students the opportunity to assess their own work (mean :2.20), I use portfolios as a means of assessing students' work (mean :2.50), I allow students the opportunity to critique each other's work (mean :2.57), I have students develop and share their learning goals and objectives (mean :2.68), I encourage students to engage in journal writing about content covered (mean :2.64).* It indicates that majority of the teachers still do not use and they are struggling to implement variety of formative assessment strategies in the classroom despite having positive perception of FA.

### **Limitation of the Study**

One of the limitations in this study is the use of convenience sampling and the outcome might not accurately reflect the entire population as a whole. Furthermore, the respondents are limited to primary school teachers in Johor Bahru district. Therefore, readers are advised to interpret these findings with caution. In addition, the study was conducted only in Johore Bahru District, so they cannot be generalised to other regions of the country.

### **Discussion**

According to the study's findings, teachers displayed favourable attitudes based on the collected data. The discovery of the positive impact of formative assessment on educational improvement and growth is an extremely encouraging revelation. This finding is corroborated by the results of Tangdhanakanond and Wongwanich (2012), Veugen et. al. (2021) and Prastikawati (2021). It was discovered that teachers, in general, the implementation of effective formative assessment strategies relies on teachers' perceptions and their positive attitudes towards them. In addition, there is an indication of teachers demonstrating different assessment strategies. The majority of individuals possess a favourable mindset when it comes to acquiring fresh formative assessment techniques. While it is important to acknowledge this information, it should be approached with caution due to the manner in which it was obtained. Their willingness to embrace advancements that enhance student learning and achievement is commendable, as evidenced by their completion of a self-report assessment. Policy-makers and educational researchers should seize this opportunity and make the most of it. From the findings, it is evident that teachers perceived FA positively but failed to implement the FA strategies successfully in the real classroom teaching. Research conducted by Tangdhanakanond and Wongwanich (2012), and Rahman et al. (2021) has revealed that while teachers may have a positive attitude towards formative assessment, they may lack confidence in implementing these strategies and therefore may not use them frequently or at all. Several factors contribute to this hesitation, including insufficient training, resistance from parents and students towards new formative assessment methods, lack of instructional leadership, the school's culture and organization, as well as teachers' readiness and limited resources (Parr & Timperley, 2008; Schildkamp et al., 2020; Seecharan, 2001; Volante & Beckett, 2011). Additionally, teachers may encounter difficulties in utilizing these assessment strategies, as suggested by Volante (2010), Volante and Beckett (2011) and Wei (2010).

### **Conclusion, Implication, and Recommendation**

Regularly implemented throughout the instructional process, formative assessment is an excellent method for evaluating a student's performance. Unlike summative grading, formative assessment does not assign a final mark or grade. Instead, it functions as a practice exercise, similar to a meaningful homework assignment. The crucial component of successful



formative assessment lies in the descriptive feedback that teachers offer to their students. It is crucial for policy-makers to prioritise the ongoing provision of teacher education to all individuals. The discovery that there is no notable distinction in the formative assessment practices between trained and untrained teachers among in-service educators emphasises the necessity for additional research. Conducting research to uncover the obstacles that impede teachers from effectively implementing their strategies. These strategies could then be utilised by teacher education programs. Their approach to formative assessment education results in the design of their educational approach within the school setting. The focus of professional development is on transitioning from traditional teacher-centered methods to student-centered approaches, while also incorporating the integration of assessment practices. There is a pressing need to promote and foster education.

Based on the findings of this study, it is suggested that partners in education, including policy makers, school leaders and teachers preparing to become teachers, should prioritise the development of comprehensive professional development programmes to equip teachers with the critical skills and confidence they need to use formative assessment (FA) methods in practise. These programmes should address gaps in preparation, cultivate instructional management, and promote a strong school culture that supports the selection of inventive assessment methods. In addition, efforts should be made to communicate the value of FA to educators and students to reduce resistance and build collective support. Teachers should be provided with sufficient resources and clear rules to ensure that they have the necessary equipment and systems in place to consistently incorporate FA techniques into the classroom. Research-based interventions should be created to address challenges such as the status of teachers, organisational. Research-driven intercessions ought to be created to address challenges such as teachers' status, organisational boundaries, and the supportability of FA hones. At long last, progressing assessment and criticism components ought to be set up to refine FA usage forms and cultivate persistent advancement in instructing and learning results.

This examination enhances the theoretical comprehension of developmental evaluation by underscoring the pivotal significance of teacher behaviour and acknowledgment in its effective implementation. It elaborates on current knowledge by drawing attention to the gap between educators' favourable perceptions of developmental evaluation and the difficulties they encounter in applying these techniques within the classroom. The review identifies systemic constraints, including inadequate preparation and restricted resources, while offering insights for educational collaborators. By tackling these obstacles, this research underscores the necessity of a consistent environment and an emphasis on skill enhancement to promote the effective application of developmental assessment and, ultimately, to elevate student learning outcomes.

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