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Understanding Chinese High School Students' Attitudes Toward Translanguaging in English Classrooms

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Abstract. Translanguaging has moved from a niche concept to a lively point of debate in language education, and it still feels like a space with plenty left to explore. Much of the existing work has looked at translanguaging in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms through teachers' eyes, often in university settings. But what about adolescents—students who are navigating English learning while also managing the everyday pressures of high school? This study turns to that group and examines how high school learners view translanguaging in their EFL classes. Drawing on questionnaire data from 70 high school students, the findings suggest that many students already recognize translanguaging when it happens and, in most cases, respond to it positively. They tend to feel comfortable with their own translanguaging and are also receptive when teachers weave multiple languages into instruction. More importantly, students commonly associate translanguaging with tangible learning gains, especially when it comes to picking up grammar patterns and expanding vocabulary—areas where learners often stall if they rely on English-only input. Students' attitudes also mattered in a predictive sense: those who viewed translanguaging more favorably were more likely to judge it as beneficial for their English learning overall. Taken together, the study offers practical guidance for teachers who want to use translanguaging in ways that feel supportive rather than distracting, points to several productive directions for research in secondary-school contexts, and encourages students to see translanguaging not as "cheating," but as a legitimate learning strategy and pedagogy.

Keywords: translanguaging, high school EFL classes, students attitudes, English education, English proficiency

1. Introduction

Translanguaging is often framed as a classroom discourse practice where teachers draw on one language for input and students reply in another [1]. Put more simply, learners do not keep meaning neatly locked inside a single linguistic "code"; they move across languages to make sense of what they hear, read, and try to say [1]. Over the past decade, that seemingly modest shift in perspective has sparked wide interest in language education and adjacent fields. In China's high school EFL classrooms, the debate underneath it all is familiar: should the first language (L1) be allowed in the room—and if it is, what counts as helpful rather than harmful?

For years, mainstream language theories treated languages as separate, self-contained systems. From that viewpoint, the rule of thumb is easy to state: if English is the goal, then English should dominate classroom interaction, and teachers should keep L1 to a minimum [2]. The problem is that

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real classrooms [2] rarely behave like tidy theories. Students constantly compare, translate, and test ideas across languages—especially when the lesson turns to dense grammar explanations, tricky vocabulary, or task instructions that need to be understood quickly to keep the class moving. In that everyday reality, insisting on "English only" can feel less like a principled pedagogy and more like an extra hurdle. It is not surprising, then, that scholars have pushed back against strict separationism and begun to treat strategic cross-linguistic movement as a learning resource. A growing body of research suggests that translanguaging can support learners' development in foreign language settings, including broader progress in language acquisition [3].

Still, important pieces of the picture remain missing. A substantial part of the literature is theoretical [3], which leaves a clear need for more evidence grounded in specific learning environments [3]. Where empirical work does appear, researchers often focus on university contexts [4], while secondary-school learners receive far less attention. Another pattern stands out as well: many studies examine translanguaging through classroom observation and analyses of teachers' instructional moves. That work is useful, but it can also leave students in the background—as if they were simply recipients of pedagogy rather than active interpreters of it. Yet students are the ones living through these language choices every day. Do they experience translanguaging as a support that helps them stay oriented, or as interference that pulls them away from English?

[3,4] A familiar scene in a Chinese high school EFL classroom: a student reaches for an English phrase, hesitates, slips into Mandarin to finish the thought, then pivots back—almost without noticing the switch—and the teacher, rather than policing the boundary, sometimes follows that movement, sometimes resists it, sometimes pretends not to see it (and yes, those micro-decisions can feel oddly consequential when you watch them closely). This is pivotal.

Against that lived texture, the present study looks at translanguaging in Chinese high school English classes from the learners' vantage point. Drawing on questionnaire data from 71 high school students, it pursues two questions. First, how do students appraise their own translanguaging, and how do they interpret their teachers' translanguaging in class? Second, do students experience translanguaging as supportive of English learning; if they do, which dimensions of learning, in their view, are most clearly assisted?

Learners' interpretations sit at the center here, because translanguaging—arguably celebrated in theory—can land very differently in the mess of real lessons. The study aims to clarify whether translanguaging operates, as students actually encounter it, as a workable pedagogical instrument in high school English classrooms. On the theoretical side, it supplies student-centered evidence to ongoing debates in translanguaging education, tightening the often-loose tether between conceptual claims and classroom realities. On the practical side, it speaks to teachers making on-the-spot language choices: when students move across languages, does that movement feel like scaffolding that steadies learning, or does it register as a kind of acoustic "background" that blurs the task at hand?

2. Literature review

2.1. The application of translanguaging in language teaching

The term translanguaging is commonly traced to Williams, who used it to describe a pedagogical routine in which teachers deliver input in one language and students produce a response in another [1]. Framed that way, the idea can look almost procedural—language A enters, language B exits. Classroom life is less tidy. Teachers and students do not hold meaning inside a single linguistic "lane"; they shuttle across repertoires as the task, the pressure of the moment, and the need for precision (or speed) demand. What translanguaging [3-5] names, then, is not a trick of code alternation, but a mundane reality: sense-making tends to travel.

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[6] As the concept has circulated more widely, empirical work has increasingly linked translanguaging to favorable instructional consequences. Several studies point toward gains in students' grasp of lesson content and of particular language forms [3], alongside smoother interactional flow in everyday teaching—often attributed to strengthened teacher–student communication and rapport [5]. Within Chinese EFL contexts specifically, scholars argue that translanguaging can relax the rigid borders implied by monolingual pedagogies, opening space for students to negotiate meaning rather than remaining stranded in uncertainty [3,4]. Taken together, this line of research frames translanguaging less as a compensatory "crutch" for weaker learners than as a pragmatic classroom resource—one that can make instruction more workable and learning more reachable.

Work on high school English teaching remains comparatively sparse, yet the findings that do exist point in much the same direction. Some researchers report that when teachers allow translanguaging, students feel more engaged and more securely part of classroom interaction—less like they are constantly trying to catch up from the margins, and more like they belong in the conversation [6]. That matters because engagement is rarely cosmetic in language learning. It often determines whether students risk speaking, experimenting with new forms, and asking questions—or whether they retreat into silence to avoid mistakes.

Overall, prior research suggests that translanguaging holds real promise in foreign language classrooms. At the same time, its specific role in Chinese high school English teaching remains underexplored. Perhaps more importantly, we still need a clearer picture of how students themselves evaluate translanguaging: do they experience it as scaffolding that keeps learning moving forward, as a distraction that pulls them off task, or as something that depends heavily on how teachers use it?

2.2. Students' attitudes toward translanguaging usage in English classes

Much of the translanguaging literature has approached pedagogy through teachers' perspectives, often emphasizing instructional benefits. But classrooms do not run on teacher intentions alone. Students' attitudes matter because they shape what learners actually do with the linguistic options available to them—whether they participate, whether they ask questions, whether they take notes in ways that help them remember, and whether they feel that moving across languages is legitimate or somehow "wrong."

Existing studies that focus on students' attitudes generally report an encouraging pattern: many learners hold positive views of translanguaging and accept its use by both teachers and students in English classes [7,8]. That broad consensus, however, sometimes comes with a methodological trade-off. While we can say students tend to like translanguaging, we still know less about what exactly they find helpful. Which classroom moments matter most—teacher explanations, task instructions, vocabulary clarification, peer discussion, or something else entirely? Without that kind of granularity, "positive attitudes" risk becoming a blunt label: it sounds encouraging, but it offers teachers little guidance about what to do on Monday morning.

Some studies push beyond attitudes and classroom process, asking whether students' translanguaging is tied to measurable academic outcomes. Several report robust positive correlations between students' self-reported translanguaging in EFL classes and English achievement, most often operationalized through course grades [7]. The relationship appears to sharpen when translanguaging is treated as a set of concrete habits rather than a general tendency: switching languages to articulate an idea that feels slippery in English, or taking notes in a way that safeguards meaning rather than surface wording, has likewise been associated with higher grades. The picture that emerges is less about students "liking" translanguaging in principle and more about students using it instrumentally—something they reach for when they need to finish a task, protect understanding, and, in many cases, perform better.

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Yet even this strand of work leaves a central issue strangely under-specified. What do students believe translanguaging supports most, in practical learning terms? Is the perceived payoff concentrated in grammar and vocabulary, or does it extend to reading comprehension, listening, writing fluency, and the more composite skills involved in producing extended texts? The literature has not delivered a consistently fine-grained account.

[7,8] Methodologically, questionnaires have become one of the default routes for accessing students' perspectives. Most instruments cluster around three domains: the translanguaging practices students encounter, their attitudes toward translanguaging (both their own and their teachers'), and their perceptions of learning benefits [7,8]. That survey tradition offers a workable platform for learner-centered inquiry, including the design adopted in the present study.

At the same time, the evidentiary terrain is uneven. A substantial portion of the research concentrates on university populations, while studies involving high school learners remain comparatively sparse. When secondary-level work does appear, it often stays at a wide-angle level—whether students evaluate translanguaging positively—without tracing which skills, tasks, or classroom routines students experience as most supported. That omission is not trivial. "Translanguaging helps" can denote very different classroom realities depending on whether a student is decoding a reading passage, untangling grammar, preparing to speak, or drafting under time pressure. On these grounds, the present study seeks a more detailed portrait of high school students' awareness of translanguaging and their perceptions of how it functions in the learning process, with the broader aim of identifying instructional approaches that more directly support English learning and strengthen overall proficiency.

3. Research method

3.1. Participants

This study drew on a sample of 71 students from Wuhu No. 12 High School in China to explore how high school learners perceive translanguaging in English classes. The cohort comprised 20 first-year students, 48 second-year students, and 3 third-year students. Of the 71 participants, 27 were male and 44 were female, and most were between 16 and 18 years old—an age range typical of Chinese upper-secondary schooling.

Academically, the group was relatively steady overall. That profile is useful for the present purpose: it allows the analysis to focus on routine perceptions of classroom language practices, rather than views that might be disproportionately shaped by unusually high or unusually low academic performance.

3.2. Questionnaire design

A questionnaire survey was used to document students' views of translanguaging in high school EFL classrooms. The instrument was adapted from the questionnaires developed by Tang and Qiu [7,8], which investigate learners' attitudes toward translanguaging in secondary English education. Building on that framework, the final questionnaire comprised four sections, progressing from background information to awareness, then attitudes and perceived learning effects, and concluding with students' own comments and recommendations.

Part 1: Background information.

The first section collected basic demographic details—grade level, gender, and class type—using short gap-filling items.

Part 2: Awareness of translanguaging in class.

The second section examined students' awareness of translanguaging in their English lessons, with attention to two issues: (a) the languages teachers typically draw on during instruction and (b) how

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translanguaging is enacted in everyday classroom practice. This section contained two multiple-choice items (Questions 1 and 2).

Part 3: Attitudes and perceived learning impact.

The third section formed the core of the instrument. It measured (i) students' attitudes toward translanguaging (their own and their teachers') and (ii) their perceptions of its influence on English learning. All items in this section used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"), enabling item-level comparison as well as analysis at the dimension level. Specifically, Questions 3–5, 7, and 9 targeted Dimension 1, capturing students' attitudes toward translanguaging used by themselves and by their teachers. Questions 6, 8, and 10 targeted Dimension 2, focusing on students' perceived effects of translanguaging on English learning.

Part 4: Open-ended responses.

The final section included two open-ended questions (Questions 11 and 12) intended to elicit students' subjective accounts and practical suggestions. This component was included to complement the numerical ratings: when students are given space to explain their views, what do they describe as helpful, distracting, or in need of adjustment in teachers' translanguaging practices?

The overall structure of the questionnaire is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The design of the questionnaire

Aspects	Part 1 Basic Information	Part 2 Awareness of Translanguaging	Part 3		Part 4 Suggestions
			Dimension 1 Attitudes Towards Translanguaging	Dimension 2 Perception of the Impact of Translanguaging	
Question Types	Gap Filling	Multiple Choices	Likert 5-point Scale		Subjective Questions
Question number	i ii iii	1,2	3,4,5,7,9	6,8,10	11,12

3.3. Procedure

This study relied primarily on questionnaire data to document students' attitudes toward translanguaging in their English classrooms. The questionnaire was administered to all 71 participants in order to obtain a broad snapshot of learner perspectives. Data were collected in two formats: an online version hosted on the Wenjuanxing platform https://www.wjx.cnand a printed paper version.

With teachers' assistance, the survey link was circulated via class communication groups (QQ or WeChat), and paper copies were also distributed during class time. Students completed the questionnaire either online or on paper, largely depending on school- and teacher-level policies regarding smartphone use. The online survey was open from March 9, 2024, to March 16, 2024. Paper responses were subsequently entered into Wenjuanxing by the author so that all entries were consolidated within a single dataset. After the collection period ended, the full set of responses was exported for analysis.

3.4. Data analysis

This study analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data from the questionnaire.

The quantitative analysis focused on the Likert-scale items in the third section. To address the research questions, the study calculated the mean score for each item and computed average scores for each dimension at the individual-student level. Paired-samples t-tests were conducted in SPSS 29.0 to examine whether students' ratings differed significantly between the two dimensions

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(attitudes toward translanguaging use vs. perceived learning impact). Pearson correlation analysis was then used to test associations between students' attitudes toward translanguaging and their perceptions of its effects on English learning. If the correlation reached statistical significance, regression analysis was conducted to evaluate whether students' attitudes could predict their perceived impact.

The qualitative analysis drew on the open-ended responses in the fourth section. Responses to Questions 11 and 12 were coded to identify recurring themes and patterns in students' attitudes and suggestions. This thematic coding was used to surface student-driven directions for improving translanguaging practices and, more broadly, for refining English classroom instruction from the learner perspective.

4. Results

A total of 71 valid responses were collected, with all participants completing the questionnaires diligently. This section focuses primarily on analyzing data from the second part (multiple-choice questions) and the third part (Likert scale questions) to gain insights into students' attitudes toward and perceptions of translanguaging use.

4.1. Results of multiple-choice questions

Questions 1 and 2 in Part 2 of the questionnaire examined students' awareness of translanguaging practices in high school EFL classes. The distributions are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

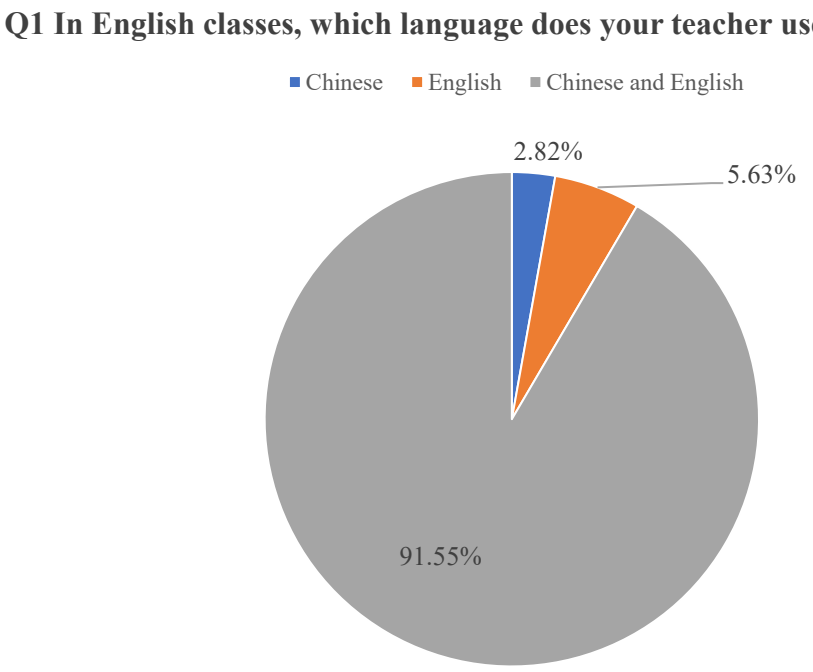

Figure 1. Results of question 1

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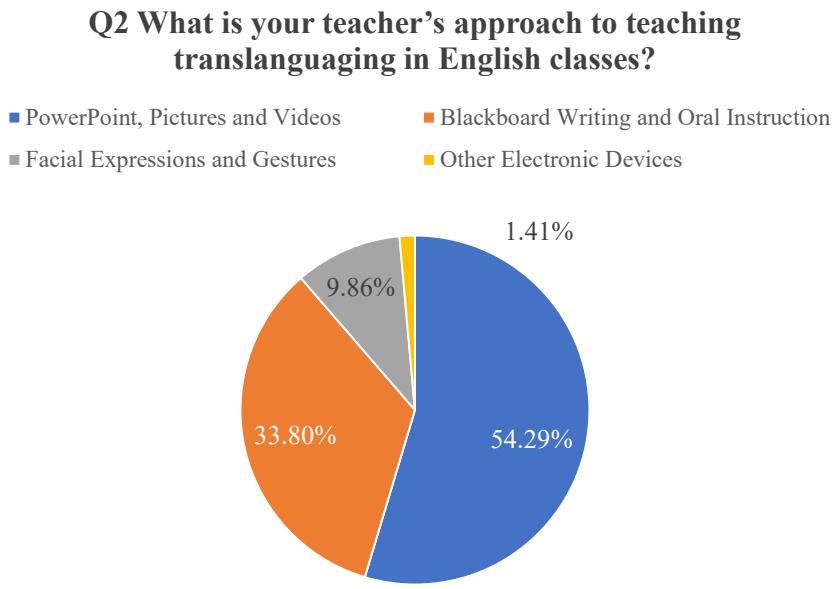

Figure 2. Results of question 2

Question 1 (languages used for instruction).

A large majority of respondents reported that both Chinese and English are used as instructional languages in their English classes (91.55%). This response pattern is consistent with the presence of translanguaging in participants' reported classroom experience.

Question 2 (how translanguaging is implemented).

Students most frequently associated teachers' translanguaging with multimodal instructional materials—PowerPoint slides, pictures, and video clips (54.29%). A substantial proportion also identified more traditional channels, including oral instructions and blackboard writing (33.80%). Taken together, these results indicate that students not only notice the use of multiple languages during instruction but can also specify the concrete classroom modalities through which teachers enact translanguaging.

4.2. Results of scale questions

Questions 3–10 in Part 3 used a five-point Likert scale to assess students' attitudes toward translanguaging and their perceived impact on English learning. Item means were computed for each question. All item means were above 3, indicating that responses tended to fall on the agreement side of the scale overall.

Dimension 1: Attitudes toward translanguaging use (teachers and students)

Across the core attitude items (Questions 3–5), mean scores were consistently high (all Ms > 3.80), suggesting broad endorsement of translanguaging as part of English classroom practice. One-sample t-tests using 4 ("agree") as the test value yielded non-significant results ($ts < 1.72$, $ps > 0.09$, $ds < 0.21$), indicating that students' average responses on these items were statistically close to "agree."

Students also differentiated when translanguaging should be used. For teacher use (Question 7), "teaching vocabulary and grammar" received the highest level of agreement (M = 4.20) and was rated significantly higher than "feedback" ($M = 3.66$), $t(70) = 3.74$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.44$. A parallel pattern appeared in students' self-reported use (Question 9): "learning vocabulary" showed the highest mean (M = 3.90), whereas "asking teachers questions" was lowest ($M = 3.41$). The contrast between these two options was statistically significant, $t(70) = 2.86$, $p < 0.05$, $d = 0.34$. Taken together, Dimension

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1 results indicate that students tend to view translanguaging as legitimate and useful, with particularly strong support for its role in vocabulary- and grammar-focused work.

Dimension 2: Perceived impact on English learning

Students also tended to endorse translanguaging as beneficial for English learning in general (Question 6: $M = 3.82$). When asked to identify specific areas of perceived improvement (Question 8), "vocabulary and grammar" again received the highest mean ($M = 4.01$) and was rated significantly higher than both "class participation" and "writing" (both Ms = 3.62; $ts > 2.95$, $ps < 0.05$, $ds > 0.35$). This pattern suggests that, in students' accounts, translanguaging is more strongly associated with gains in linguistic knowledge than with participation or writing development.

A similar tendency emerged for homework-related perceptions (Question 10). There was no statistically significant difference between the highest-rated option, "doing vocabulary and grammar homework" ($M = 3.76$), and the lowest-rated option, "doing writing homework" ($M = 3.55$), $t(70) = -1.84$. Notably, the comparatively lower evaluation of writing aligns with the Question 8 findings. Although students indicated relatively strong agreement that teachers should use translanguaging when teaching writing (Question 7: M = 3.90), they did not rate translanguaging as especially effective for improving their own writing performance. This discrepancy suggests that perceived instructional value and perceived personal payoff may not fully coincide in the writing domain.

Dimension-level comparisons and associations

Dimension-level means and standard deviations are reported in Table 2. A paired-sample t-test showed no significant difference between Dimension 1 and Dimension 2, $t(70) = 0.40$, $p > 0.05$, indicating that overall attitudes toward translanguaging and perceived learning impact were broadly aligned.

The two dimensions were strongly positively correlated, $r = 0.86$, $p < 0.001$. Given this association, a simple linear regression was conducted to test whether attitudes toward translanguaging (Dimension 1) predicted perceived impact on English learning (Dimension 2). The model was statistically significant, $F(1, 69) = 197.08$, $p < 0.001$, and explained approximately 74.1% of the variance in Dimension 2 ($R^2 = 0.74$). Dimension 1 was a significant positive predictor ($\beta = 0.86$, $t = 14.04$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that students with more positive attitudes toward translanguaging also tended to report stronger perceived learning benefits.

Table 2. Mean score and SD for the two dimensions

Dimensions	Dimension 1	Dimension 2
Mean Score	3.78	3.76
Standard Deviation	0.68	0.73

5. Discussion

5.1. Students' attitudes toward translanguaging

[7,9,10] Table 1 and the accompanying figures suggest that students' awareness of translanguaging is concrete rather than abstract. They do not merely report that "both languages are used"; they can identify what translanguaging looks like when it materializes in lessons—teachers shifting between Chinese and English, often alongside specific instructional supports such as PowerPoint slides, brief oral paraphrases, short bilingual reminders, or multimedia clips that make the flow of a lesson easier to track. In this sense, translanguaging appears less as a rare deviation or an emergency "repair" and more as an ordinary classroom practice, even in cases where neither teachers nor students explicitly label it as translanguaging. This general pattern echoes Zhang's findings in Chinese junior high school contexts, where translanguaging occurred frequently and was evaluated positively by both teachers and students [9].

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The attitudinal picture becomes more differentiated once the question shifts from whether translanguaging occurs to where it is wanted. Students in this study largely accept that both Chinese and English have a place in EFL instruction, consistent with earlier work suggesting that learners often treat bilingual classroom practices as necessary rather than inherently problematic [7]. At the same time, they appear to prefer translanguaging selectively, not indiscriminately. The strongest support is for teacher translanguaging during vocabulary and grammar instruction—precisely the points in a lesson where small interpretive slips can compound quickly, leaving students with memorized forms but fragile understanding. By contrast, students expressed less need for translanguaging during feedback. This pattern aligns with Zhang's observation that bilingual explanation is particularly valuable for clarifying word meaning and grammar usage [9], while feedback may be experienced differently: much classroom feedback is brief and routinized, often taking the form of short confirmations (e.g., "good," "right," "okay") that already carry a clear pragmatic signal and are quickly followed by the next move in the lesson [10]. In such moments, an additional language may be perceived as unnecessary—or, for some students, as a distraction from the pace of interaction.

Students' accounts of their own language choices introduce a further nuance. They reported using translanguaging most frequently when learning vocabulary, but they indicated relatively little use when asking teachers questions. This stands somewhat apart from Tang's findings, where students described translanguaging as a practical strategy for communicating with teachers—starting in English and [7] shifting into Chinese when needed, especially when responding in class [7]. One plausible explanation lies in a familiar feature of many high school English classrooms: limited student talk. Prior research suggests that some high school students remain quiet or disengaged, often avoiding participation or offering only minimal [11] responses [11]. If classroom interaction is sparse to begin with, then teacher–student questioning may not register as a salient context in which translanguaging feels "necessary," even if translanguaging could, in principle, reduce communicative pressure and support participation when students do attempt to speak.

5.2. The impact of translanguaging on students' English learning

[3,4,7-9,11] A central finding of this study is the tight association between students' attitudes toward translanguaging (Dimension 1) and their perceived learning benefits (Dimension 2). Statistically, students who evaluate translanguaging more positively also tend to report stronger beliefs that it supports their English learning. This relationship is consequential for interpretation: much of the translanguaging literature foregrounds outcomes—what translanguaging appears to produce—while giving less analytic space to the interpretive lens through which learners experience those practices in the first place [7,9]. Translanguaging does not operate independently of students' uptake. When learners regard it as legitimate and useful, they may be more inclined to attend to bilingual explanations, use cross-linguistic resources deliberately, and translate that engagement into a clearer sense of "benefit," at least as reflected in self-report.

The open-ended responses (Questions 11–12) help contextualize this quantitative pattern. Many students describe translanguaging in functional terms: a way to stay oriented during lessons, to clarify content that would otherwise remain opaque, and to stabilize grammar and vocabulary learning. These comments resonate with earlier studies that documented advantages of translanguaging through classroom observation and teacher-centered analyses [3,4]. The difference lies in emphasis. Students rarely talk about pedagogy as an abstract principle; they describe what keeps them from getting lost mid-lesson—what allows them to keep pace, follow classroom activity, and consolidate understanding as the lesson moves forward.

At the same time, students do not experience translanguaging as uniformly beneficial across learning domains. Their highest ratings cluster around grammar and vocabulary, whereas perceived

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effects are weaker for class participation and writing. The pattern is interpretable. Vocabulary meaning and grammar usage often hinge on fine distinctions, and a brief shift into Chinese can prevent small misunderstandings from cascading. This also aligns with students' earlier preferences regarding where teachers should concentrate translanguaging use, and it is consistent with Zhang's observation that bilingual explanation is particularly helpful for clarifying word meaning and grammar points [9].

Writing, however, emerges as a more complex case. Students expressed relatively strong support for teacher translanguaging in writing instruction, yet they still reported limited perceived gains in their own writing performance. This does not fully converge with Qiu's findings, which suggest that translanguaging pedagogy can improve text coherence, support smoother composing processes, and strengthen writing outcomes when comparing performance before and after translanguaging-informed instruction [8]. Read together, these strands point to a practical tension: translanguaging may support writing in measurable ways, while students continue to experience writing as slow, cognitively demanding, and emotionally taxing. On this reading, translanguaging does not "fail" in writing contexts; rather, explanation alone may not be sufficient. More deliberate translanguaging strategies may be needed across the full writing cycle—idea generation, organization and paragraphing, purposeful lexical selection, and revision—so that students can experience support during composing, not only in retrospect after assessment.

The comparatively weak perceived impact on class participation may also reflect contextual constraints. Silence is a persistent feature of many high school EFL classrooms [11], and it can limit the participation gains sometimes reported in university-level settings. Even if translanguaging lowers the linguistic barrier to speaking, it cannot automatically override reluctance rooted in classroom norms, exam pressure, fear of error, or peer evaluation. In this sense, translanguaging is best treated as a classroom resource rather than a universal remedy. Its effectiveness depends not only on language choice, but also on the participation culture of the classroom and the broader constraints associated with the educational level in which it is enacted.

6. Conclusion

This study examined how high school students understand translanguaging in EFL classrooms and how they perceive its contribution to their English learning. The findings converge on a coherent account. Students can identify translanguaging when it occurs, and they tend to evaluate it positively—both as a strategy they themselves use and as an instructional practice enacted by teachers. In their reports, the most visible learning payoff is in grammar and vocabulary [3], where a brief shift into Chinese can resolve fine-grained distinctions before confusion consolidates into misunderstanding. For many learners, that moment of clarification appears to mark the difference between rehearsing rules and developing a usable sense of how English works.

Several implications follow for high school EFL teaching. Students do not typically frame translanguaging as "noise" or as a shortcut that undermines learning; instead, they describe it as a legitimate classroom resource, particularly when teachers draw on Chinese and English strategically to unpack difficult content and reduce avoidable comprehension barriers. In this respect, translanguaging offers a workable alternative to strict monolingual approaches that may be rhetorically attractive but are often harder to sustain in everyday classroom conditions [3]. At the same time, the results point to areas where translanguaging may need to be more deliberately designed, rather than used primarily for explanation. Writing is one such domain: bilingual clarification may support instruction, yet students do not consistently experience it as translating into improved writing performance. Pedagogically, translanguaging can be extended across the writing cycle—supporting idea generation, organization, purposeful lexical choice, and revision—so that assistance is experienced during composing rather than only after evaluation.

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The comparatively weaker perceived impact on participation also suggests that language choice alone cannot dissolve classroom silence. Task design and interactional structure matter. Writing prompts anchored in students' lived experience can lower the affective and cognitive load of composing, while structured group discussion and peer collaboration can create lower-stakes opportunities for participation that do not require students to perform publicly in front of the whole class.

Overall, the study contributes student-centered evidence to ongoing discussions of translanguaging in EFL education. By showing that learners not only notice translanguaging but also largely experience it as supportive—especially for grammar and vocabulary—it provides practical direction for teachers seeking to implement translanguaging more effectively and, ultimately, to strengthen students' English proficiency.

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