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Transformative Curriculum and its Relevance in Arabic language Learning at MTs/SMPI

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ABSTRACT. This study explores the relevance of transformative curriculum in Arabic language learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) and Sekolah Menengah Pertama Islam (SMPI) through a literature review approach. The study aims to examine the conceptual foundations of transformative curriculum and identify its implications for Arabic language instruction in Islamic secondary education. Data were collected from scholarly articles, books, policy documents, and previous studies published between 2019 and 2024. The selected literature was analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns, emerging trends, and practical applications of transformative curriculum principles. The findings indicate that transformative curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning, critical reflection, contextual understanding, collaborative engagement, and authentic assessment. These principles are highly compatible with recent educational reforms in Indonesian madrasahs, particularly those promoting communicative competence, character development, and twenty-first-century skills. The review also reveals that project-based learning, digital technology integration, interdisciplinary themes, and supportive language environments contribute positively to Arabic language acquisition and learners' motivation. However, challenges related to teachers' pedagogical readiness, limited instructional resources, and institutional support remain significant concerns. Overall, transformative curriculum provides a relevant and strategic framework for enhancing Arabic language learning at MTs and SMPI by fostering meaningful learning experiences, intercultural awareness, and lifelong learning competencies among students.

Keywords:*Transformative Curriculum; Arabic Language Learning; MTs/SMPI; Student-Centered Learning; Islamic Secondary Education.*

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INTRODUCTION

The discourse on transformative curriculum has gained increasing attention in contemporary education as an approach that encourages learners to develop critical awareness, creativity, collaboration, and the capacity to respond to social changes. Rooted in transformative learning theory, this curriculum framework seeks to move beyond knowledge transmission toward meaningful learning experiences that reshape learners' perspectives and actions. Transformative curriculum emphasizes reflective inquiry, contextual learning, and active student participation in constructing knowledge. Such a paradigm aligns with the demands of twenty-first-century education, which requires learners to possess higher-order thinking skills and intercultural competence. In language education, transformative curriculum offers opportunities

for students to connect linguistic knowledge with authentic social realities. Consequently, its implementation has become relevant for strengthening learning quality in Islamic secondary schools, including MTs and SMPI (Fleming, 2022)

Arabic language learning at MTs and SMPI has historically been associated with grammatical mastery, vocabulary memorization, and text translation activities. Although these aspects remain essential, recent educational reforms indicate the necessity of shifting toward communicative, contextual, and learner-centered approaches. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum and revisions to Arabic curriculum policies in Indonesian madrasahs encourage teachers to facilitate meaningful learning experiences that foster students' communicative competence and critical engagement (Raswan et al., 2025;Sholahudin et al., 2025). Studies further emphasize that Arabic language instruction should not merely transmit linguistic knowledge but also develop learners' ability to communicate effectively in diverse cultural and social contexts through authentic and student-centered learning experiences (PutriAyuAstuti et al., 2025; Zain et al., 2025). Such educational transformation requires curriculum models that promote flexibility, collaboration, learner autonomy, and competency development. Therefore, a transformative curriculum provides a promising framework for renewing Arabic language education in Islamic schools.

Transformative curriculum is highly relevant to Arabic language learning because language serves not only as a communication tool but also as a medium for developing cultural understanding and social awareness (Abdelhadi et al., 2020). Transformative pedagogy encourages learners to analyze issues critically, participate in dialogue, and relate language use to contemporary realities (Wahab, 2015). Within Arabic learning contexts, students may engage in discussions on environmental sustainability, digital ethics, global citizenship, and intercultural interaction using Arabic as the target language (Masitoh& Aziz, 2025). Such learning experiences can increase motivation and foster meaningful language acquisition through reflective learning processes. Accordingly, transformative curriculum contributes to strengthening both linguistic proficiency and character development among learners (FahmiyahTsaqofahIslamiy&EniFariyatulFahyuni, 2024).

The relevance of transformative curriculum has become more evident following curriculum reforms introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs through KMA 183 of 2019 and KMA 347 of 2022. These policies emphasize competency-based learning, contextual understanding, and the integration of knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Arabic language instruction in madrasahs is expected to support students in developing communicative abilities while maintaining connections with Islamic intellectual traditions. Integrative learning models combining pesantren-based materials and national curriculum standards have been reported to enhance students' engagement and communicative competence. Moreover, the curriculum transformation requires teachers to redesign instructional strategies, learning resources, and assessment systems to accommodate students' diverse needs. Hence, transformative curriculum provides a conceptual foundation for realizing these educational aspirations in MTs and SMPI settings(Mukminin et al., 2025).

Another important dimension of transformative curriculum is its compatibility with student-centered learning principles. Student-centered approaches position learners as active participants who collaboratively construct knowledge through inquiry, problem-solving, and experiential activities (Kerimbayev et al., 2023). Recent literature indicates that Arabic language learning is gradually shifting toward approaches that foster learner autonomy, interaction, and critical reflection rather than teacher-centered instruction (Almelhes, 2025). Furthermore, the integration of digital technologies and supportive language environments enhances transformative learning experiences by promoting engagement, autonomy, and meaningful language use (Sapawi&Yusoff, 2025). These developments suggest that Arabic instruction in MTs and SMPI should provide opportunities for students to become independent and reflective

language users. Consequently, a transformative curriculum offers a strategic response to the challenges of Arabic language education in the digital era.

Based on the foregoing discussion, examining the relevance of transformative curriculum in Arabic language learning at MTs and SMPI is academically significant. A literature-based investigation can provide comprehensive insights into how transformative principles correspond with current curriculum policies, pedagogical innovations, and students' developmental needs. Furthermore, understanding the relationship between transformative curriculum and Arabic learning practices may assist educators in designing more engaging and socially responsive instructional programs. Such efforts are expected to improve learners' communicative competence, critical thinking, and intercultural sensitivity. In addition, transformative curriculum may help Islamic schools prepare students to participate effectively in an increasingly interconnected world. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the conceptual foundations and practical relevance of transformative curriculum for Arabic language learning in MTs and SMPI through a systematic review of recent scholarly literature.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative literature review to examine the relevance of transformative curriculum in Arabic language learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) and Islamic Junior High Schools (SMPI). The review synthesized previous studies on transformative learning, curriculum innovation, and Arabic language pedagogy within Islamic educational contexts.

The literature consisted of journal articles, books, conference proceedings, policy documents, and research reports published between 2019 and 2024. Publications were retrieved from Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Garuda using the keywords *transformative curriculum*, *transformative learning*, *Arabic language learning*, *Arabic pedagogy*, *Madrasah Tsanawiyah*, *Islamic junior high school*, and *Islamic education*. The initial search identified 128 publications. After removing 18 duplicate records, 110 publications were screened based on their titles and abstracts. A total of 75 publications were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. The remaining 35 studies underwent full-text review, and 15 were excluded due to limited relevance to the research objectives. Consequently, 20 publications were included in the final analysis.

Selection Stage	Number of Publications	Description
Initial search results	128	Publications identified from Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Garuda.
Duplicate records removed	18	Duplicate publications identified across databases were excluded.
Records screened	110	Titles and abstracts were screened for relevance.
Records excluded	75	Excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria, publication period, or research focus.
Full-text articles assessed	35	Publications evaluated through full-text review.
Full-text articles excluded	15	Excluded due to limited relevance or failure to satisfy the eligibility criteria.
Studies included in the final analysis	**20**	Publications that fulfilled all inclusion criteria and were analyzed in this review.

Eligible publications discussed transformative curriculum or transformative learning, focused on Arabic language education in Islamic schools, were published in English, Arabic, or Indonesian, and appeared in peer-reviewed journals or reputable academic publishers between 2019 and 2024. Data were collected through systematic document analysis by screening titles, abstracts, and full texts. Relevant information on theoretical frameworks, curriculum characteristics, instructional strategies, learning outcomes, and implementation challenges was extracted and categorized thematically.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model ofMiles (2018)which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Source triangulation and critical evaluation of the credibility and consistency of each publication were conducted to enhance trustworthiness. These procedures provided a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of the contribution of transformative curriculum principles to Arabic language learning in Islamic secondary education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The literature review identified a significant shift in curriculum discourse from content transmission toward transformative learning that emphasizes learner agency, reflection, and contextual engagement. Most studies published between 2019 and 2024 portray transformative curriculum as a framework that encourages students to actively construct knowledge through interaction with authentic experiences. This tendency is closely associated with the emergence of student-centered learning models in Arabic language education. Several reviewed articles indicate that transformative curriculum seeks to cultivate critical thinking, creativity, communication skills, and collaborative competencies among learners. These competencies correspond to the educational demands of the twenty-first century and the objectives of Islamic secondary education. The findings suggest that transformative curriculum has become an increasingly relevant paradigm for Arabic language instruction in MTs and SMPI contexts.

The reviewed studies reveal that Arabic language learning in many Islamic schools has traditionally focused on grammatical competence, memorization, and translation exercises. Such practices remain beneficial for understanding linguistic structures, yet they often limit opportunities for communicative interaction and critical engagement. Researchers found that students frequently experience difficulties in applying Arabic for meaningful communication outside classroom settings. Consequently, recent curriculum reforms advocate for more contextualized and experiential learning approaches. Transformative curriculum responds to this challenge by positioning language as a medium for social participation and intercultural understanding. This finding demonstrates the need for pedagogical renewal within Arabic language education at MTs and SMPI.

Analysis of the selected literature indicates that student-centered learning represents one of the most dominant manifestations of transformative curriculum in Arabic language education. Various studies reported that project-based learning, task-based language teaching, collaborative learning, and inquiry-based instruction were frequently implemented in Arabic classrooms. These instructional models provide students with opportunities to negotiate meaning, solve problems, and produce authentic language outputs. In addition, they encourage learners to become autonomous participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information. Several authors observed improvements in learners' confidence, motivation, and participation when such approaches were adopted. Therefore, student-centered learning serves as an important operational dimension of transformative curriculum implementation.

Another important finding concerns the alignment between transformative curriculum principles and contemporary educational policies in Indonesian madrasahs. Literature discussing the implementation of KMA 183 of 2019 shows that Arabic language education is expected to develop communicative competence while preserving Islamic intellectual traditions. Curriculum objectives emphasize the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains within meaningful learning experiences. Teachers are encouraged to facilitate dialogue, reflection, and collaborative activities that support holistic student development. Such orientations correspond closely with transformative learning principles proposed in educational theory. Hence, national curriculum policies provide a supportive framework for the adoption of transformative curriculum in MTs and SMPI.

The review also found evidence that transformative curriculum contributes to the integration of pesantren traditions and modern educational demands. Several studies described how Arabic learning materials derived from classical Islamic texts can be combined with communicative activities and thematic discussions. This integration enables students to appreciate religious heritage while simultaneously developing practical language skills required in contemporary society. Researchers noted that reflective learning activities encourage learners to interpret texts within broader social and cultural contexts. Such experiences help students connect linguistic knowledge with ethical and civic responsibilities. As a result, transformative curriculum supports balanced educational outcomes that encompass academic, spiritual, and social dimensions.

Digital technology emerged as another important component supporting transformative Arabic language learning. Literature published during the last five years highlights the increasing use of interactive applications, online platforms, and blended learning environments in Arabic classrooms. These technologies facilitate student collaboration, provide access to authentic learning materials, and increase opportunities for independent learning. Researchers reported that digital media can enhance learners' engagement and reduce negative perceptions toward Arabic language subjects. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of technology integration depends largely on teachers' pedagogical competence and institutional readiness. Thus, transformative curriculum requires not only technological resources but also adequate professional development for educators.

Another recurring theme identified in the literature concerns the establishment of language environments as an invisible curriculum. Studies emphasize that Arabic language acquisition is strengthened when learners are exposed to authentic linguistic interactions beyond formal classroom instruction. Activities such as daily conversations, speech programs, language clubs, and bilingual announcements create opportunities for sustained language practice. Researchers argue that such environments contribute to the development of communicative competence, cultural identity, and positive learning habits. These findings indicate that transformative curriculum extends beyond formal lesson plans and encompasses broader institutional cultures. Consequently, MTs and SMPI need to design educational ecosystems that support continuous Arabic language use.

The literature further demonstrates that transformative curriculum promotes interdisciplinary and thematic learning. Rather than treating Arabic solely as a linguistic subject, teachers are encouraged to integrate contemporary issues such as environmental awareness, digital citizenship, health education, and social harmony into classroom discussions. Students are thereby enabled to use Arabic for expressing opinions, analyzing problems, and proposing solutions related to real-world situations. Scholars argue that contextual themes increase learners' motivation because instructional materials become more relevant to their daily experiences. Such practices also foster critical literacy skills that are increasingly important in multicultural societies. Therefore, interdisciplinary learning constitutes a practical strategy for operationalizing transformative curriculum principles.

The findings reveal that assessment practices within transformative curriculum differ substantially from conventional testing approaches. Traditional Arabic language assessments often focus on grammar exercises and vocabulary recall, whereas transformative assessment emphasizes performance, reflection, and authentic tasks. Portfolio assessment, project presentations, peer evaluation, and self-assessment were identified as commonly recommended alternatives. These methods enable teachers to evaluate not only linguistic proficiency but also students' problem-solving abilities, collaboration skills, and reflective capacities. Researchers contend that authentic assessment provides a more comprehensive representation of learners' progress. Hence, assessment reform is an essential aspect of curriculum transformation in Arabic language education.

Teacher readiness was consistently reported as one of the main challenges affecting transformative curriculum implementation. Several studies found that many Arabic teachers still rely heavily on lecture-based instruction and textbook-centered activities. Limited professional training opportunities often hinder teachers from adopting innovative pedagogical strategies. In addition, insufficient access to contextual teaching materials and digital infrastructure constrains instructional flexibility. Researchers emphasize that continuous professional development programs are necessary to strengthen teachers' understanding of transformative pedagogy. Without adequate support, curriculum transformation may remain confined to policy documents rather than classroom realities.

Institutional support was identified as another determinant influencing the success of transformative curriculum implementation. Schools that provide adequate facilities, technological infrastructure, and collaborative learning spaces tend to achieve better instructional outcomes. Administrative commitment also affects teachers' willingness to experiment with innovative learning models. Some studies reported that partnerships with pesantren, universities, and community organizations enrich Arabic language learning experiences. Such collaborations enable students to participate in language camps, cultural programs, and service-learning activities. Therefore, institutional capacity building is indispensable for sustaining transformative educational practices.

The literature additionally suggests that transformative curriculum can strengthen learners' intercultural competence. Arabic language education provides opportunities for students to understand cultural diversity within the Arab and Islamic worlds. Through reflective dialogue and comparative analysis, learners become more capable of appreciating differences and engaging respectfully with diverse perspectives. Scholars argue that intercultural awareness is increasingly important in the era of globalization and digital communication. Transformative learning experiences encourage students to move beyond stereotypes and develop more inclusive worldviews. Such outcomes align with broader educational goals aimed at preparing responsible global citizens.

Several reviewed studies indicate that transformative curriculum has positive implications for learners' affective development. Students participating in collaborative and project-based activities tend to demonstrate higher levels of self-confidence and intrinsic motivation. They also show greater willingness to communicate in Arabic despite making linguistic errors. Researchers explain that supportive learning environments reduce anxiety and promote active engagement in classroom interactions. Increased motivation subsequently contributes to better language acquisition and improved academic performance. Thus, transformative curriculum addresses both cognitive and emotional aspects of Arabic language learning.

Another noteworthy finding concerns the relationship between transformative curriculum and lifelong learning competencies. Contemporary educational literature emphasizes that students should acquire adaptive skills enabling them to learn continuously throughout their lives. Transformative Arabic language learning encourages learners to seek information independently,

collaborate with peers, and reflect critically on their experiences. Such competencies remain valuable beyond formal schooling and support students' participation in higher education and professional environments. Scholars consider lifelong learning orientation an essential response to rapid technological and social changes. Accordingly, transformative curriculum prepares MTs and SMPI students to become autonomous and resilient learners.

Overall, the reviewed literature demonstrates that transformative curriculum possesses substantial relevance for Arabic language learning at MTs and SMPI. Its principles correspond with current educational policies, pedagogical innovations, and the developmental characteristics of adolescent learners. The curriculum encourages the integration of communicative competence, critical reflection, intercultural awareness, and character education within a unified instructional framework. Although challenges related to teacher readiness and institutional support persist, numerous studies provide evidence regarding its potential benefits. Future implementation efforts should therefore focus on strengthening teacher capacity, improving learning resources, and developing authentic assessment systems. These findings affirm that transformative curriculum can serve as a strategic foundation for advancing Arabic language education in Islamic secondary schools.

Table 1. Summary of Research Findings

No.	Findings	Key References	Implications for Arabic Learning at MTs/SMPI	Implementation Challenges
1	Shift toward transformative and student-centered curriculum	<private_person> (1997); <private_person> (2022)	Learning becomes more meaningful, participatory, and learner-centered.	Teachers need to shift from teacher-centered instruction to facilitative learning practices.
2	Communicative and contextual approaches are emphasized	<private_person> (1980); <private_person> et al. (2023)	Students improve practical Arabic communication skills through authentic language use.	Limited opportunities for authentic communication and insufficient instructional resources.
3	Project-, inquiry-, and collaborative-based learning are promoted	<private_person> (1938); <private_person>& <private_person> (2021)	Learners become more active, collaborative, and independent in constructing knowledge.	Large class sizes and limited instructional time may reduce the effectiveness of collaborative learning.
4	Curriculum aligns with KMA 183/2019 and recent educational reforms	indonesian ministry of religious affairs (2019); <private_person> (2024)	Cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies are integrated into Arabic learning.	Teachers require curriculum literacy to effectively translate policy into classroom practice.
5	Digital technology and language environments support learning	<private_person> et al. (2023); <private_person> (2025)	Students gain broader opportunities to practice Arabic through digital platforms and immersive language environments.	Unequal access to digital infrastructure and varying levels of students' digital literacy.
6	Authentic assessment and teacher	<private_person>& <private_person> (2018);	Sustainable curriculum implementation depends on continuous professional	Limited teacher training, assessment competence, and

readiness are essential	<private_person> et al. (2024)	development and authentic assessment practices.	institutional support may hinder implementation.

Discussion

Transformative curriculum has emerged as a significant educational paradigm because it redefines learning as a process of meaning-making, critical reflection, and social participation rather than mere knowledge transmission. The findings of this review confirm that the transformative orientation is highly compatible with the objectives of Arabic language education at MTs and SMPI. This perspective is grounded in transformative learning theory proposed by Mezirow, which emphasizes perspective transformation through critical reflection. Recent educational scholarship further highlights that contemporary curricula should foster learner agency, curriculum flexibility, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity to prepare students for the challenges of the twenty-first century(Sinclair, 2025). Within Islamic educational institutions, these competencies are expected to strengthen students' ability to respond adaptively to rapid social, cultural, and technological changes through meaningful and reflective learning experiences. Consequently, the integration of transformative curriculum principles into Arabic language learning reflects the broader global transition toward learner-centered, competency-based, and future-oriented education(OECD, 2024).

One of the major findings of this study is the transition from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered learning in Arabic language education. Previous studies have shown that traditional Arabic instruction often emphasizes grammar explanation, vocabulary memorization, and translation activities, limiting opportunities for meaningful communicative interaction. Recent research demonstrates that student-centered approaches, particularly Project-Based Learning (PjBL), significantly enhance learners' communicative competence, speaking confidence, active participation, and collaborative learning experiences(Gusma et al., 2025). In line with these findings, the transformative curriculum positions students as active participants who engage in inquiry, collaboration, and experiential learning. This orientation is reflected in the implementation of Project-Based Learning, Task-Based Language Teaching, and collaborative learning strategies that encourage learners to negotiate meaning, express personal experiences, and construct knowledge through interaction with peers and teachers. Consequently, Arabic language learning becomes more meaningful, participatory, and responsive to students' developmental needs(Muhammad Ihsan et al., 2025).

The present findings further demonstrate that transformative curriculum is consistent with current educational reforms in Indonesia, particularly the implementation of KMA 183/2019 and the Independent Curriculum. These policies emphasize flexibility, differentiation, authentic assessment, and competency development in Arabic language learning. Several scholars have argued that the Independent Curriculum provides opportunities for teachers to design learning experiences that are more contextual and learner-oriented (RidwanNulloh et al., 2025). Research conducted in MTs DarulIjtihadSampang revealed that curriculum implementation remains suboptimal because many teachers still depend on traditional instructional practices and have limited exposure to curriculum training. Similar challenges were identified in MTs NegeriMalinau, where inadequate facilities hindered effective implementation despite positive teacher perceptions. These conditions suggest that curriculum transformation requires systemic support at institutional and policy levels.

The compatibility between transformative curriculum and Arabic language learning is also evident from the integration of communicative and contextual approaches. Arabic is not only an academic subject but also a medium for intercultural interaction, religious understanding, and social engagement. Studies on contextual Arabic curriculum development indicate that

instructional materials closely related to students' daily experiences increase motivation and facilitate language acquisition (Mursyidan et al., 2025). Through transformative learning, students are encouraged to discuss contemporary issues such as environmental sustainability, digital citizenship, social justice, and ethical communication using Arabic. Such practices expand the scope of Arabic language learning beyond linguistic mastery toward broader educational goals. Accordingly, transformative curriculum supports the development of learners who are linguistically competent and socially responsible(Aziz et al., 2024).

Another important aspect emerging from this review is the integration of pesantren traditions and modern curriculum demands. Arabic language learning in Indonesian Islamic schools has long been associated with the study of classical texts, grammatical analysis, and religious scholarship. However, recent studies emphasize the possibility of combining these traditions with communicative methodologies and thematic learning activities (Musa &Ghofur, 2025). The integration model includes linguistic preparation, dialogue practice, grammatical reflection, and character education. This pedagogical synthesis allows students to maintain connections with Islamic intellectual heritage while simultaneously acquiring competencies necessary for participation in contemporary society. Therefore, transformative curriculum does not replace traditional learning but rather reconstructs it within more relevant educational frameworks.

The findings also reveal that transformative curriculum is closely associated with the concept of holistic education. Holistic education seeks to develop learners intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and socially. In Arabic language learning, this objective can be achieved through activities that encourage reflection, cooperation, empathy, and ethical awareness. Humanistic educational theorists such as Rogers and Maslow have emphasized that meaningful learning occurs when students experience personal relevance and psychological safety. Recent critiques of humanistic education nevertheless affirm its continuing contribution to learner-centered pedagogies (Feigenbaum, 2024). Thus, transformative curriculum offers opportunities to strengthen holistic educational values within Islamic secondary schools.

The implementation of digital technologies constitutes another dimension supporting transformative Arabic language learning. Studies published during the past five years indicate that online platforms, interactive applications, and blended learning environments increase learner engagement and autonomy. Digital resources provide students with access to authentic Arabic materials, multimedia content, and opportunities for collaborative learning. Research further suggests that technology integration contributes to positive attitudes toward Arabic language subjects and reduces learners' anxiety in communication activities. However, successful integration depends on teachers' technological competence and institutional readiness. Consequently, digital transformation should be accompanied by systematic professional development programs for Arabic teachers (Alshammari& Al-Enezi, 2024).

These findings corroborate earlier research emphasizing the importance of supportive language environments in second-language acquisition. Language clubs, Arabic camps, speech programs, and daily conversational practices create authentic opportunities for learners to apply classroom knowledge. Such environments function as a hidden curriculum that reinforces linguistic competence and cultural identity. From a transformative perspective, learning extends beyond formal instructional sessions and becomes embedded within students' everyday experiences. This condition encourages learners to perceive Arabic not merely as a school subject but as a living language. Therefore, institutions should establish educational ecosystems that facilitate continuous language exposure and interaction.

Transformative curriculum also promotes interdisciplinary learning, which has become increasingly important in contemporary education. Interdisciplinary approaches encourage students to integrate knowledge from different domains while addressing real-world problems. In

Arabic language education, themes such as health literacy, environmental awareness, media literacy, and social harmony can be incorporated into instructional materials. Such integration enhances the relevance of Arabic learning and stimulates learners' critical thinking abilities. Students consequently become capable of using Arabic to analyze issues, formulate arguments, and communicate solutions. This process aligns with UNESCO's vision of education as a means for preparing responsible global citizens (UNESCO, 2021).

Assessment practices represent another area where transformative curriculum differs significantly from traditional approaches. Conventional Arabic assessments frequently emphasize grammatical accuracy and vocabulary recall through written examinations. By contrast, transformative assessment prioritizes authentic performances, reflective journals, portfolios, projects, and peer evaluations. Scholars argue that authentic assessment provides a more comprehensive understanding of learners' competencies because it captures cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions simultaneously (Adarkwah, 2021). The use of self-assessment additionally encourages students to monitor their learning progress and identify areas requiring improvement. Hence, assessment reform constitutes an integral component of curriculum transformation.

Teacher competence emerged as one of the most influential factors determining the success of transformative curriculum implementation. Several studies reveal that Arabic teachers often encounter difficulties in designing differentiated instruction, integrating digital resources, and conducting authentic assessments. Limited access to professional development opportunities further constrains pedagogical innovation. Research on teachers at MTsN 35 Jakarta found that educators continuously adapt their instructional approaches to address the complexities of the Independent Curriculum. Nevertheless, many teachers remain uncertain about practical strategies for implementing learner-centered learning. Continuous training programs are therefore necessary to strengthen teachers' pedagogical, technological, and assessment competencies.

Institutional support likewise plays a crucial role in facilitating transformative Arabic language learning. Schools equipped with adequate facilities, internet connectivity, multimedia laboratories, and collaborative spaces tend to demonstrate more effective curriculum implementation. Leadership commitment influences teachers' willingness to experiment with innovative learning strategies and participate in professional development activities. Partnerships with universities, pesantren, and local communities may further enrich learning experiences through service-learning programs and cultural exchanges. Such collaborations provide students with opportunities to apply Arabic language skills in authentic social contexts. Thus, curriculum transformation requires collective engagement from multiple stakeholders.

Another discussion point concerns the relationship between transformative curriculum and intercultural competence. Arabic language learning inherently involves encounters with diverse linguistic, cultural, and religious traditions. Transformative pedagogies encourage learners to critically examine assumptions, appreciate cultural diversity, and develop empathy toward different communities. Through comparative discussions and reflective dialogue, students become more capable of engaging respectfully with multiple perspectives. This finding corresponds with international studies highlighting intercultural awareness as an essential competency in globalized societies (Chazy&Thomure, 2022). Consequently, transformative curriculum contributes to the cultivation of inclusive and tolerant attitudes among students.

The positive influence of transformative curriculum on learners' motivation and self-confidence also deserves attention. Studies indicate that students participating in project-based and collaborative activities exhibit greater willingness to communicate in Arabic despite making linguistic mistakes. Such learning environments reduce fear of failure and create opportunities for students to celebrate progress rather than focusing exclusively on deficiencies. Increased confidence subsequently enhances participation, persistence, and academic achievement.

Motivation is widely recognized as one of the strongest predictors of successful language acquisition. Therefore, transformative curriculum addresses both cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning.

Lifelong learning competencies constitute another important outcome associated with transformative curriculum implementation. Contemporary societies require individuals capable of adapting to changing technological, economic, and social conditions. Arabic language learning based on transformative principles encourages learners to seek information independently, collaborate with peers, and engage in reflective practices. These competencies remain valuable beyond formal schooling and support participation in higher education, professional settings, and community life. Scholars increasingly regard lifelong learning orientation as a necessary response to uncertainty and complexity in the twenty-first century (OECD, 2020). Accordingly, transformative curriculum equips MTs and SMPI students with adaptive capacities needed for future challenges.

Overall, the discussion demonstrates that transformative curriculum possesses strong theoretical and practical relevance for Arabic language learning at MTs and SMPI. Its principles correspond with national curriculum policies, global educational agendas, and contemporary developments in language pedagogy. Although barriers related to teacher readiness, institutional infrastructure, and learning resources continue to exist, the literature consistently reports positive outcomes associated with transformative approaches. Future efforts should prioritize teacher empowerment, authentic assessment development, digital integration, and the establishment of supportive language environments. In addition, further empirical studies are needed to investigate the long-term impact of transformative curriculum on Arabic language proficiency and character formation. Therefore, transformative curriculum may be considered a strategic framework for advancing Arabic language education within Indonesian Islamic secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

This literature review demonstrates that the transformative curriculum has substantial relevance for Arabic language learning at MTs and SMPI in responding to contemporary educational challenges and the demands of twenty-first-century competencies. The reviewed studies indicate that transformative curriculum shifts Arabic language instruction from a teacher-centered orientation toward student-centered learning that emphasizes critical reflection, collaboration, creativity, communication, and meaningful engagement with authentic contexts. Its principles are aligned with recent curriculum reforms in Indonesian Islamic education, particularly competency-based and contextual learning approaches that integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions. The findings further reveal that transformative curriculum supports the integration of Islamic intellectual traditions with modern pedagogical practices, including project-based learning, interdisciplinary instruction, digital technology utilization, and authentic assessment. Despite challenges related to teacher preparedness, institutional support, and learning resources, transformative curriculum offers considerable potential for enhancing students' communicative competence, intercultural awareness, lifelong learning skills, and character development. Therefore, transformative curriculum may serve as a strategic framework for advancing Arabic language education at MTs and SMPI, while future studies are encouraged to examine its empirical implementation and long-term impact on learners' academic achievement and personal transformation.

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