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Transforming Arabic Language Learning in Higher Education through the Flipped Classroom: Its Impact on Students' Autonomous Learning and Arabic Language Proficiency

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ABSTRACT. The integration of technology in higher education has encouraged the adoption of innovative learning models that promote active participation and learner autonomy. In Arabic language learning, conventional teacher-centred instruction often limits students' opportunities to practice language skills and develop independent learning habits. This study examines the effect of the flipped classroom approach on students' autonomous learning and Arabic language proficiency at STAI Darul Hikmah. A quantitative quasi-experimental design employing a non-equivalent control group pretest–posttest model was used. Undergraduate students enrolled in Arabic language courses were assigned to an experimental group receiving flipped classroom instruction and a control group experiencing conventional learning. Data were collected through Arabic language proficiency tests, autonomous learning questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis. The findings indicate that students in the flipped classroom group achieved significantly greater improvement in Arabic language proficiency and autonomous learning than those in the conventional group. Students became more responsible for preparing learning materials, utilizing digital resources, managing learning activities, and monitoring their progress. Interviews and observations also revealed higher levels of engagement, confidence, and classroom participation. Despite challenges related to time management and digital accessibility, the flipped classroom approach provided a flexible and student-centred learning environment, making it an effective strategy for Arabic language learning in Islamic higher education.

Keywords: *Flipped Classroom; Arabic Language Learning; Learner Autonomy; Language Proficiency; Higher Education; Digital Learning*

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has encouraged higher education institutions to reconsider how learning is designed, delivered, and evaluated (Hadiyanto, 2024;Xu, 2024). University learning is no longer expected to depend entirely on face-to-face lectures in which lecturers explain the subject matter and students passively receive information. Instead, contemporary higher education emphasizes student-centred learning, active participation, digital competence, collaboration, and the ability to continue learning independently (Yang, 2026). This

transformation is particularly relevant to foreign-language education because successful language learning requires continuous exposure, practice, reflection, and interaction that cannot be fully accommodated within limited classroom hours (Martins, 2015). Therefore, higher education institutions need instructional models that combine technological resources with meaningful classroom interaction to foster language proficiency and learner autonomy (Tsai, 2021a)

Arabic language education occupies a central position in Islamic higher education because Arabic functions not only as a medium of communication but also as the primary language for accessing the Qur'an, Hadith, classical Islamic scholarship, and contemporary Islamic academic discourse. Consequently, students in Islamic higher education institutions are expected to develop adequate Arabic proficiency to comprehend religious texts, communicate academic ideas, and engage effectively in scholarly activities related to Islamic studies (Warnis et al., 2019), (Nasution & Zulheddi, 2020). Previous studies have shown that Arabic language competence significantly supports students' academic achievement and understanding of Islamic sciences, as the language serves as a gateway to foundational Islamic sources and disciplinary knowledge (Rekan et al., 2025). Therefore, Arabic proficiency contributes not only to students' linguistic development but also to their broader academic competence within Islamic higher education.

However, learning Arabic as a foreign language presents considerable challenges. Students are required to master vocabulary, grammatical structures, pronunciation, writing systems, reading comprehension, listening, and communicative skills. These competencies demand continuous practice and meaningful exposure beyond regular classroom meetings. The linguistic complexity of Arabic, particularly its grammatical system (*nahwu* and *sharaf*), script, vocabulary acquisition, and language variations, often creates substantial difficulties for non-native learners (Muassomah et al., 2025),(Almelhes, 2024). Students may understand grammatical rules conceptually yet struggle to apply them effectively in speaking, reading, writing, and text interpretation. Furthermore, differences in educational backgrounds contribute to varying levels of readiness, as some students have previously studied Arabic in Islamic boarding schools or madrasahs, whereas others enter higher education with minimal prior exposure to the language (Khasanah & Tantowi, 2023)

In many language classrooms, instructional practices remain predominantly teacher-centred, with lecturers devoting a considerable amount of classroom time to explaining vocabulary, grammatical structures, sentence patterns, and text translations. Consequently, students have limited opportunities to actively practise the target language, discuss learning difficulties, receive individual feedback, and apply linguistic knowledge in authentic contexts. Such practices may foster learner dependency because students become accustomed to relying on lecturers for explanations, translations, and corrections. Research on learner autonomy indicates that excessive teacher control can reduce students' responsibility for managing their own learning and limit the development of independent learning skills (Alrabai, 2017). Furthermore, language learning conducted primarily through teacher-centred instruction often restricts opportunities for meaningful interaction and self-directed learning, which are essential components of successful second-language acquisition (Tsai, 2021). Limited instructional time also makes it difficult for lecturers to explain every unfamiliar word or language structure during classroom meetings, highlighting the need for learning models that encourage students to engage with instructional content independently before class and actively participate during classroom interaction (Izadpanah, 2022).

The continuation of teacher-centred instruction may negatively influence students' autonomous learning. When most learning decisions are made by lecturers, students may have few opportunities to set personal goals, select learning resources, manage study time, monitor their progress, and evaluate their weaknesses. As a result, learning may only occur when students attend classes or prepare for examinations. This condition is problematic because language proficiency develops through consistent practice over an extended period (Raitskaya et al., 2021).

Students need to read Arabic texts, listen to Arabic audio materials, review vocabulary, practise sentence construction, and communicate in Arabic beyond scheduled classroom sessions. Therefore, the transformation of Arabic language instruction should not focus solely on delivering course content. It should also develop students' ability and willingness to take responsibility for their own learning (Almelhes, 2025;Md Azmi et al., 2025)

One instructional approach that can address these concerns is the flipped classroom. In this approach, the initial delivery of learning materials takes place before the classroom meeting through instructional videos, digital presentations, readings, audio materials, online exercises, or learning management systems (LMS) (Shen, 2024). Classroom time is then used for active learning activities, such as discussion, collaborative work, language practice, problem-solving, presentations, text analysis, and feedback (Kim et al., 2017;(Förster et al., 2022). Thus, the flipped classroom does not merely transfer lectures into online videos. Rather, it reorganizes the learning process so that students acquire foundational knowledge independently before class and use face-to-face sessions to develop deeper understanding, interaction, and practical competence (Tsai, 2021).

Research has consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of the flipped classroom approach in improving student learning outcomes. A systematic review of 71 studies by Akçayır & Akçayır (2018)identified enhanced learning performance as the most frequently reported benefit of flipped instruction. Likewise, a meta-analysis conducted by van (Van Alten et al., 2019)revealed that flipped classrooms positively influence learning outcomes, particularly when face-to-face instructional time is maintained and pre-class quizzes are incorporated into the learning design. Furthermore, (Strelan et al., 2020), through a large-scale meta-analysis involving 198 studies across various disciplines and educational levels, reported a moderate positive effect of flipped classroom implementation on students' academic performance. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of flipped learning depends not only on the provision of pre-class materials but also on the integration of structured active learning activities during classroom sessions.

The flipped classroom is especially relevant to language learning because students need both individual preparation and interactive practice. Before class, students can watch explanations of Arabic grammar, listen to pronunciation models, study vocabulary, read short texts, or complete comprehension questions. They can pause, replay, or review learning materials according to their individual needs. During class, students can apply the knowledge through conversations, group discussions, text interpretation, peer correction, sentence construction, presentations, and writing activities. Lecturers can then act as facilitators who identify students' difficulties and provide more focused assistance.

A systematic review by Qi (2024)revealed that flipped language learning generally comprises three interconnected stages, namely pre-class preparation, interactive in-class activities, and post-class evaluation. The review further identified a wide range of learning outcomes, including writing, reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary acquisition, motivation, engagement, self-efficacy, and learner autonomy. However, the study found that approximately 92.98% of the reviewed publications focused on English language learning, while research examining flipped learning in other foreign-language contexts remained scarce. This imbalance highlights a significant research gap and underscores the need for further investigation into the effectiveness of flipped classroom implementation in Arabic language education. (Heredia Ponce et al., 2022).

One of the main characteristics of flipped learning is the responsibility given to students during pre-class activities. Students are required to access materials, organize their learning time, identify difficult topics, complete preliminary exercises, and prepare themselves for classroom participation. These activities are closely related to autonomous learning. Autonomous learning refers to students' capacity and willingness to take responsibility for their learning processes. It

includes setting learning objectives, selecting appropriate strategies and resources, managing study time, monitoring progress, seeking assistance when necessary, and evaluating learning outcomes. Autonomy does not mean learning without a lecturer or working entirely alone. Instead, it means that students actively manage their learning while using lecturers, peers, digital resources, and learning communities as sources of support.

Autonomous learning is essential in Arabic language education because classroom instruction alone is insufficient to develop comprehensive language proficiency. Autonomous learners tend to review vocabulary independently, utilize dictionaries and digital applications, engage with Arabic media, monitor grammatical accuracy, and actively seek opportunities to practice the language. Recent research by Md Azmi (2025)revealed that technical, psychological, sociocultural, and political-critical dimensions significantly contribute to the development of learner autonomy among tertiary-level Arabic learners. Their findings further indicate that collaborative learning and peer interaction can strengthen learner autonomy by providing social support, feedback, and opportunities for meaningful language use. Consequently, autonomous learning should be understood not merely as individual responsibility but also as a socially mediated process that is fostered through supportive learning communities.

The relationship between flipped learning and autonomous learning has also been demonstrated in foreign-language research. Challob (2021) found that a flipped learning environment supported students' writing performance, autonomy, and motivation. The flexibility of time and place, availability of various learning resources, peer interaction, and lecturer feedback encouraged students to participate more actively in learning. Öztürk & Çakıroğlu (2021)similarly found that integrating self-regulated learning strategies into a flipped foreign-language course positively affected students' speaking, reading, writing, and grammar performance. These findings indicate that the benefits of flipped learning are not automatically produced by technology. Students need structured learning guidance, clear objectives, monitoring activities, and opportunities to reflect on their progress.

In addition to developing autonomy, flipped learning may improve students' language proficiency. By moving basic content instruction outside the classroom, lecturers can allocate more classroom time to language production, communication, feedback, and application (Yan et al., 2024), in an 18-week quasi-experimental study involving university students, found a causal relationship between flipped learning and improvement in second-language performance. However, the degree of improvement differed across language skills, with stronger gains identified in reading than in writing and listening. This finding demonstrates that flipped learning can improve language proficiency, although its effectiveness may depend on the skill being taught, the design of activities, the duration of implementation, and students' participation.

Within Arabic language teaching, flipped classrooms have been reported to increase learning flexibility, promote active participation, and provide greater opportunities for students to engage with instructional materials beyond classroom time (Zainuddin et al., 2019). Nevertheless, systematic reviews indicate that empirical studies remain limited in number and scope, particularly in language-learning contexts (Lo & Hew, 2017). Moreover, previous studies have tended to focus on either learning outcomes or learners' perceptions, while the relationship between flipped learning, autonomous learning, and comprehensive language proficiency has received considerably less attention (Lai, 2019)

The effectiveness of the flipped classroom also depends on several practical conditions. Students may fail to access or study the materials before class, particularly when they have limited motivation, weak time-management skills, or unstable internet access. Learning videos that are too long, difficult, or disconnected from classroom activities may also reduce engagement. Lecturers may face additional workloads when designing digital materials, monitoring pre-class preparation, and preparing interactive classroom tasks. Akçayır and Akçayır (2018) identified

inadequate student preparation as one of the most frequently reported challenges of flipped learning. Therefore, its implementation should include concise and accessible learning materials, clear instructions, pre-class accountability, lecturer feedback, and classroom activities that directly use the content studied beforehand.

In the context of STAI Darul Hikmah, the flipped classroom represents a relevant alternative for transforming Arabic language learning from lecturer-dominated instruction into a more active and student-centred process. However, the effectiveness of this approach cannot be assumed without empirical evidence. The specific characteristics of students, available technological facilities, previous Arabic learning experiences, digital literacy, lecturer preparation, and institutional learning culture may influence its implementation. Evidence obtained from English-language learning or institutions in other countries may not be directly generalizable to Arabic learners at STAI Darul Hikmah.

Accordingly, a contextual study is needed to examine whether the flipped classroom can promote students' autonomous learning and Arabic language proficiency at STAI Darul Hikmah. Investigating both outcomes is important because proficiency scores alone may not fully explain the transformation of students' learning behaviour. Students may achieve short-term improvements while remaining dependent on lecturer guidance. Conversely, students may demonstrate greater responsibility and motivation without immediately showing equal improvement across all Arabic language skills. Examining autonomy and proficiency together can therefore provide a more comprehensive understanding of the educational impact of flipped learning.

This study aims to investigate the impact of the flipped classroom on students' autonomous learning and Arabic language proficiency at STAI Darul Hikmah. It seeks to determine whether students who participate in flipped Arabic language instruction demonstrate stronger autonomous learning and higher Arabic language proficiency than those who experience conventional instruction. The study also examines how flipped learning activities encourage students to prepare before class, use learning resources independently, monitor their progress, collaborate with peers, and apply Arabic language knowledge during classroom activities.

The study is expected to contribute theoretically and practically to Arabic language education. Theoretically, it extends flipped classroom research into an Arabic language context that remains underrepresented in previous studies. It also strengthens the connection between flipped learning, learner autonomy, and foreign-language proficiency. Practically, the findings can provide evidence for Arabic lecturers when designing pre-class materials, classroom activities, assessments, and student-support strategies. For STAI Darul Hikmah, the study may serve as a basis for developing technology-supported and student-centred Arabic language instruction. Ultimately, transforming Arabic learning through the flipped classroom is expected not only to improve students' academic achievement but also to develop responsible, active, and independent learners who can continue improving their Arabic proficiency beyond formal classroom instruction.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest control group design to examine the effect of the flipped classroom model on students' autonomous learning and Arabic language proficiency at STAI Darul Hikmah. A quasi-experimental design was considered appropriate because the participants were assigned to intact classes rather than randomly selected groups, allowing the intervention to be conducted within an authentic educational setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The participants consisted of 60 undergraduate students enrolled in Arabic language

courses, selected through purposive sampling based on their active participation in the learning program. The students were divided into an experimental group (n = 30), which received instruction through the flipped classroom model, and a control group (n = 30), which experienced conventional teacher-centered instruction. The intervention was conducted over eight weeks with two instructional meetings per week.

The flipped classroom implementation followed three stages adapted from Bergmann and Sams (2012). First, during the pre-class stage, students independently studied digital learning materials, including video lectures, reading texts, and online exercises. Second, classroom sessions were devoted to interactive activities such as discussions, collaborative problem-solving, language practice, and feedback. Third, post-class activities involved reflection, self-assessment, and formative assignments designed to reinforce learning and encourage self-regulation.

Data were collected using two instruments. Students' autonomous learning was measured through a 30-item questionnaire adapted from learner autonomy frameworks proposed by Benson (2011), covering learning responsibility, goal setting, learning strategies, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Arabic language proficiency was assessed using a standardized achievement test consisting of 50 items that measured vocabulary mastery, grammar, reading comprehension, and language application skills. Both instruments were administered before and after the intervention.

To ensure instrument quality, content validity was evaluated by three experts in Arabic language education and educational assessment, while construct validity was examined through factor analysis. Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha produced coefficients of 0.91 for the autonomous learning questionnaire and 0.88 for the Arabic proficiency test, indicating high internal consistency (Taber, 2018).

The collected data were analysed using SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistics were used to identify students' levels of autonomous learning and Arabic language proficiency. Prior to hypothesis testing, normality and homogeneity assumptions were examined. Inferential analysis included paired-sample t-tests to identify within-group improvement and independent-sample t-tests to compare outcomes between the experimental and control groups. In addition, Cohen's d effect size was calculated to determine the magnitude of the flipped classroom intervention (Cohen, 1988). Through this methodological design, the study sought to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of the flipped classroom model in promoting learner autonomy and improving Arabic language proficiency in higher education contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Improvement of Students' Arabic Language Proficiency through Flipped Classroom Implementation

The findings showed that the implementation of the flipped classroom approach contributed to an improvement in students' Arabic language proficiency. Students who participated in the flipped classroom demonstrated better engagement with Arabic learning materials compared to students who experienced conventional instruction. Before the intervention, many students showed difficulties in applying Arabic vocabulary, understanding grammatical structures, and constructing sentences during classroom activities. However, after participating in flipped learning activities, students demonstrated increased confidence in using Arabic through discussions, reading activities, and language practices.

The improvement was reflected in the comparison between students' performance before and after the implementation of the flipped classroom. The experimental group showed a higher increase in Arabic proficiency scores compared with the control group. Students in the flipped

classroom group had more opportunities to review learning materials before class, allowing classroom sessions to focus on language application rather than only receiving explanations from the lecturer.

Table 1. Comparison of Students' Arabic Language Proficiency Scores

Group	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Improvement
Flipped Classroom Group	68.45	82.60	14.15
Conventional Group	67.90	74.25	6.35

The improvement was supported by students' experiences during the learning process. One student explained:

"*Before this method was applied, I usually depended on the lecturer's explanation because I did not know how to start learning Arabic independently. After using the flipped classroom, I could study the material first and understand the topic before entering the classroom*." (Student 4)

Another student stated:

"*The learning videos helped me understand difficult Arabic grammar because I could watch them repeatedly until I understood the explanation.*" (Student 7)

These statements indicate that the flipped classroom provided students with greater flexibility to process Arabic learning materials according to their individual learning pace. Students were no longer limited to classroom explanations but were able to access additional materials outside classroom hours.

The observation results also supported these findings. During classroom activities, students appeared more prepared to participate in Arabic exercises because they had previously accessed the learning materials. The lecturer spent less time explaining basic concepts and more time facilitating discussions, correcting pronunciation, and guiding students in applying Arabic structures.

The classroom observation notes indicated:

"*Students actively participated in group discussions and Arabic language practices. Most students were able to respond to questions related to the materials provided before class. The lecturer acted as a facilitator by providing feedback and supporting students who experienced difficulties*." (Classroom Observation, Meeting 4)

This finding suggests that flipped classroom implementation transformed classroom interaction from a teacher-centred model into a more active learning environment where students played a greater role in constructing their Arabic knowledge.

Development of Students' Autonomous Learning through Flipped Classroom Activities

The implementation of the flipped classroom also influenced students' autonomous learning behaviour. The findings indicated that students developed greater responsibility in managing their own learning processes. Before the implementation, some students tended to study Arabic only when assignments or examinations were approaching. However, after participating in flipped learning activities, students gradually developed habits of preparing materials before class, reviewing unfamiliar vocabulary, and identifying their own learning difficulties.

Students' autonomous learning development was observed through several aspects, including learning preparation, self-management, learning strategy selection, and self-evaluation. The availability of digital learning materials encouraged students to organize their study time and select appropriate strategies based on their individual needs.

A student described this experience:

"*I learned that Arabic cannot be mastered only during classroom meetings. I need to practise regularly and prepare myself before attending class. The flipped classroom encouraged me to become more responsible for my own learning.*" (Student 2)

Similarly, another student explained:

"*When I did not understand some vocabulary or grammar, I searched for additional explanations from online sources. Previously, I usually waited for the lecturer's explanation*." (Student 6)

The observation results revealed changes in students' learning behaviour. During the pre-class stage, students accessed videos, digital materials, and reading resources provided by the lecturer. In classroom sessions, students were able to discuss learning problems and ask more specific questions because they had already interacted with the materials.

The observation record showed:

"*Students came to class with prior knowledge of the topic. Several students mentioned difficult vocabulary and grammatical structures that they found during individual study. This created more meaningful discussions between students and the lecturer.*" (Classroom Observation, Meeting 5)

The findings demonstrate that flipped classroom activities encouraged students to become active participants rather than passive recipients of information. The learning process gradually shifted responsibility from the lecturer to the students, supporting the development of autonomous learning characteristics.

Classroom Interaction and Learning Engagement during Flipped Classroom Activities

The observation findings indicated that the flipped classroom created more opportunities for meaningful interaction between students and lecturers. In conventional Arabic learning sessions, classroom time was often dominated by lecturer explanations, leaving limited opportunities for communication practice. However, after implementing the flipped classroom, classroom activities focused more on collaboration, problem-solving, and language practice.

During classroom observations, students were involved in various activities, including Arabic conversations, vocabulary exercises, text interpretation, and group presentations. Students demonstrated higher participation because they had already obtained basic understanding from pre-class materials.

The lecturer explained:

"*The flipped classroom changes my role from only explaining materials into guiding students during practice activities. Because students already studied the basic materials, classroom time can be used more effectively*." (Arabic Lecturer)

Students also reported that classroom activities became more interesting because they were able to practise Arabic directly.

One student stated:

"*The classroom activities became more active. We discussed, practised speaking, and corrected each other. It was different from previous classes where we mostly listened to explanations*." (Student 8)

The observation findings confirmed that students showed increased interaction during classroom activities. Students who were previously less active began participating in discussions and language practices. Although some students still required lecturer support, the overall learning atmosphere became more collaborative.

Students' Perceptions and Challenges in Implementing Flipped Classroom

Although the flipped classroom produced positive learning experiences, several challenges were identified during implementation. Students generally perceived the approach positively

because it provided flexibility, increased learning resources, and encouraged independent learning. However, some students experienced difficulties related to internet access, time management, and maintaining consistency in completing pre-class activities.

A student explained:

"*The biggest challenge was managing time before class. Sometimes I had other assignments, so I could not watch the learning materials completely before the meeting.*" (Student 9)

Another student mentioned:

"*Internet connection was sometimes a problem because the learning videos required online access. However, the materials were useful because I could review them whenever I needed.*" (Student 10)

The lecturer also highlighted the importance of monitoring students' preparation:

"*The flipped classroom requires students' commitment. Some students actively prepare before class, but others still need reminders and motivation to complete the pre-class activities.*" (Arabic Lecturer)

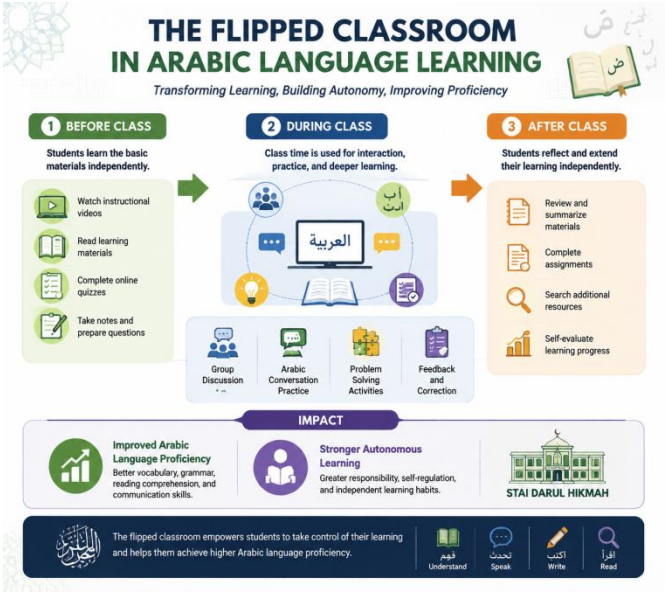


Figure 1. Flipped Classroom Model for Transforming Arabic Language Learning in Higher Education

Based on classroom observations, most students successfully adapted to the flipped learning system after several meetings. At the beginning of implementation, some students were unfamiliar with their responsibility to study materials independently before class. However, continuous guidance from the lecturer gradually improved students' participation and preparation. Overall, the findings indicate that the flipped classroom approach positively influenced Arabic language learning at STAI Darul Hikmah. The approach improved students' Arabic language proficiency, encouraged autonomous learning behaviours, increased classroom engagement, and created a more student-centred learning environment. Nevertheless, successful implementation requires careful instructional planning, accessible digital resources, and continuous support from lecturers to ensure that all students can actively participate in the learning process.

Discussions

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the flipped classroom approach positively influenced students' Arabic language proficiency and autonomous learning at STAI Darul Hikmah. The results showed that students who participated in flipped classroom

instruction achieved greater improvement in Arabic proficiency compared with students who experienced conventional learning. In addition, qualitative findings from interviews and classroom observations indicated that students became more active, prepared, and responsible for their learning process. These findings support previous research suggesting that flipped classroom learning can transform traditional teacher-centred instruction into a more student-centred learning environment by providing opportunities for independent preparation and meaningful classroom interaction (Akçayır & Akçayır, 2018; van Alten et al., 2019).

The improvement in students' Arabic language proficiency can be explained by the characteristics of the flipped classroom model. In conventional instruction, classroom time is often dominated by explanations of linguistic concepts, leaving limited opportunities for students to practise Arabic skills. In contrast, the flipped classroom transfers initial content delivery to the pre-class stage, allowing classroom meetings to focus on application, communication, and feedback. This learning structure provides students with more opportunities to practise vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and communication skills. The findings are consistent with Strelan et al. (2020), who found that flipped classroom implementation has a positive effect on students' academic performance across different educational contexts. The authors argued that the effectiveness of flipped learning is associated with increased active engagement and the opportunity for students to participate in higher-order learning activities.

In the context of Arabic language learning, this finding is particularly important because Arabic proficiency requires continuous exposure and active practice. Learning Arabic involves not only understanding grammatical rules but also developing the ability to apply linguistic knowledge in meaningful situations. Students often experience difficulties when classroom activities focus mainly on memorizing vocabulary and understanding grammatical structures without sufficient practice. The flipped classroom approach addresses this limitation by allowing students to study basic concepts independently before class and use classroom time for language production. This finding supports Zainuddin et al. (2022), who emphasized that flipped classroom implementation in Arabic language teaching provides greater flexibility and encourages students to engage more actively with Arabic learning materials.

The findings also indicate that the flipped classroom contributed to the development of students' autonomous learning. Students reported that they became more responsible for preparing learning materials, managing study time, and searching for additional resources when they encountered difficulties. This change represents an important shift from dependence on lecturers toward greater learner responsibility. Learner autonomy is a fundamental element in foreign language education because language mastery requires continuous learning beyond classroom boundaries. Students who develop autonomous learning abilities are more likely to practise independently, monitor their progress, and select appropriate learning strategies according to their needs.

The relationship between flipped learning and autonomous learning can be understood through the principles of self-regulated learning. In a flipped classroom environment, students are required to plan their learning activities before class, monitor their understanding during learning activities, and evaluate their achievement after completing tasks. These processes are consistent with the characteristics of autonomous learners. Öztürk and Çakıroğlu (2021) found that integrating self-regulated learning strategies into flipped foreign language courses improved students' engagement and language performance. Their study suggested that flipped learning provides a structured environment that encourages students to become active managers of their own learning processes.

Furthermore, the development of autonomy observed in this study does not indicate that students learn completely independently without support from lecturers. Instead, autonomy developed through interaction between students, lecturers, peers, and digital learning resources.

The lecturer's role changed from being the primary source of knowledge to becoming a facilitator who guided students, provided feedback, and supported problem-solving activities. This finding is consistent with Azmi et al. (2025), who highlighted that autonomous learning among Arabic learners involves multiple dimensions, including psychological readiness, learning strategies, social interaction, and the ability to utilize learning resources. Therefore, developing autonomy requires not only individual motivation but also an appropriate learning environment.

The classroom observation results further explain why the flipped classroom was effective in improving students' learning outcomes. During classroom activities, students demonstrated higher participation through discussions, Arabic communication practices, and collaborative tasks. Compared with traditional learning, where students often remain passive listeners, flipped learning created opportunities for students to actively construct knowledge. This finding aligns with Akçayır and Akçayır (2018), who reported that increased student engagement is one of the major advantages of flipped classroom implementation. The researchers emphasized that classroom interaction becomes more meaningful when students have already obtained basic understanding before attending face-to-face sessions.

The positive results of this study also support previous evidence regarding the effectiveness of flipped learning in language education. Challob (2021) found that flipped learning positively influenced English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' writing performance, autonomy, and motivation. The study indicated that access to digital learning materials allowed students to learn at their own pace, while classroom activities provided opportunities for practice and feedback. Although previous studies have primarily focused on English language learning, the current study extends these findings by demonstrating that similar principles can be applied to Arabic language education in higher education.

However, the findings also reveal that the effectiveness of flipped classroom implementation depends on several supporting factors. Although most students responded positively, some students experienced challenges related to time management, internet access, and consistency in completing pre-class activities. These challenges indicate that providing digital materials alone is insufficient. Students need clear instructions, learning schedules, monitoring mechanisms, and continuous encouragement from lecturers. Akçayır and Akçayır (2018) identified student preparation as one of the main challenges in flipped classroom implementation. Without adequate preparation, students may not fully benefit from classroom activities because they lack the foundational knowledge required for discussion and practice.

Another important implication is the need for lecturers to carefully design flipped classroom materials. Pre-class materials should not simply replicate traditional lectures in digital form. Effective flipped learning requires concise, focused, and interactive materials that encourage students to engage with the content. Videos, digital presentations, online quizzes, and reading materials should be integrated with classroom activities so that students understand the connection between individual preparation and classroom practice. Van Alten et al. (2019) emphasized that flipped classroom effectiveness increases when pre-class activities are combined with meaningful in-class learning tasks and assessment strategies.

The findings of this study also contribute to the discussion regarding technology integration in higher education. Digital technology should not be viewed as a replacement for lecturers but as a tool that enhances learning opportunities. In Arabic language education, technology provides access to pronunciation models, authentic texts, online dictionaries, and multimedia resources that can enrich students' exposure to the language. Nevertheless, technology must be accompanied by appropriate pedagogy. The success of flipped learning depends not only on the availability of digital platforms but also on how lecturers design learning experiences that promote active participation and independent learning.

Although this study provides evidence regarding the benefits of flipped classroom

implementation, several limitations should be considered. First, the study was conducted in a single higher education institution, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other Arabic learning contexts. Second, the duration of implementation may influence the extent of changes in students' autonomous learning behaviour and language proficiency. Longer implementation periods may provide deeper evidence regarding sustained changes in learning habits. Future studies may involve larger samples, different institutional contexts, and longitudinal research designs to examine the long-term effects of flipped Arabic language learning.

Overall, the findings indicate that the flipped classroom approach represents an effective strategy for transforming Arabic language learning in higher education. The approach improves students' Arabic language proficiency by increasing opportunities for practice and interaction while simultaneously encouraging autonomous learning behaviours. The integration of digital resources, student preparation, and interactive classroom activities creates a learning environment that is more responsive to the needs of contemporary university students. Therefore, flipped classroom implementation can be considered a promising pedagogical approach for Arabic language education, particularly in Islamic higher education institutions such as STAI Darul Hikmah.

While previous studies have consistently reported the positive effects of flipped classroom implementation on language learning outcomes, most existing research has focused on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts and has primarily examined academic achievement, motivation, or general learner engagement. In contrast, the present study specifically investigates the simultaneous impact of flipped classroom implementation on both Arabic language proficiency and autonomous learning within an Islamic higher education context. This distinction is important because Arabic language learning involves unique linguistic characteristics, including complex grammatical structures, rich morphological patterns, and the integration of religious and academic texts, which may influence how students respond to technology-enhanced pedagogical approaches.

The novelty of this study lies not only in its focus on Arabic language education but also in its integration of cognitive and behavioural learning outcomes within a single analytical framework. Previous studies have generally examined language achievement and learner autonomy as separate constructs. The present study demonstrates that flipped classroom implementation can simultaneously enhance Arabic proficiency and foster autonomous learning behaviours through structured pre-class preparation, active classroom engagement, and continuous interaction with digital learning resources. This finding provides empirical evidence that learner autonomy functions as an important mechanism through which flipped learning contributes to language development.

Furthermore, this study extends existing literature by providing evidence from an Indonesian Islamic higher education institution, a context that remains underrepresented in international flipped learning research. Most studies have been conducted in Western educational settings or in English language classrooms. By examining Arabic language learning at STAI Darul Hikmah, this research contributes contextual evidence regarding how flipped learning can be adapted to Islamic higher education environments where language learning is closely connected with religious literacy and academic development.

From a practical perspective, the study contributes a pedagogical model that integrates digital learning resources, autonomous preparation, and interactive classroom activities. The findings suggest that successful Arabic language learning requires not only exposure to linguistic content but also learning environments that encourage students to regulate their own learning processes. Therefore, the study offers implications for Arabic language lecturers seeking to promote both language competence and learner independence in technology-supported learning

environments.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study was conducted within a single institution, which may limit the transferability of findings to other Arabic language learning contexts. Second, the intervention period was relatively limited and may not fully capture long-term changes in autonomous learning behaviours. Third, although the study demonstrated significant improvements in overall Arabic language proficiency, it did not examine differential effects across specific language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Future research could employ longitudinal designs, involve multiple institutions, and investigate the mediating role of learner autonomy in improving specific Arabic language competencies.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the flipped classroom approach provides a positive contribution to Arabic language learning in higher education, particularly at STAI Darul Hikmah. The findings indicate that students who experienced flipped classroom instruction demonstrated greater improvement in Arabic language proficiency compared with students who received conventional learning. The flipped classroom model created more opportunities for students to engage with Arabic materials before class and use classroom sessions for language practice, discussion, and feedback. This learning process supported students in developing a deeper understanding of vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and practical language use.Furthermore, the flipped classroom approach positively influenced students' autonomous learning. Through pre-class preparation, digital learning materials, and interactive classroom activities, students became more responsible for managing their learning process. They showed greater initiative in accessing learning resources, reviewing materials independently, identifying learning difficulties, and seeking solutions. The transformation of the lecturer's role from information provider to learning facilitator also contributed to creating a more student-centred learning environment.

Despite its benefits, the successful implementation of flipped classroom learning requires adequate preparation from both lecturers and students. Digital resources need to be carefully designed, learning instructions must be clear, and continuous guidance should be provided to ensure students actively participate in pre-class activities. Challenges related to time management, internet accessibility, and student readiness should also be considered when implementing this approach.Overall, the flipped classroom represents an effective pedagogical strategy for transforming Arabic language learning in higher education. By integrating technology, independent learning, and meaningful classroom interaction, this approach can enhance both students' Arabic language proficiency and autonomous learning capacity. The findings suggest that flipped classroom implementation can serve as an alternative model for Arabic language educators, particularly in Islamic higher education institutions seeking to develop more active, independent, and digitally supported learning environments.

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