The Use of The Flipped Classroom Strategy in Learning Arabic Literature Among Non-Arabic Speaking Students

Evan Najeh Al-Khalidi¹, Pabiyah Toklubok², & Nik Farhan Mustapha²

¹Smart Private School, Raparin, Sulaimaniyah, KRI, Iraq,
²Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
Email:pabiyah@upm.edu.my

Abstract
Previous studies have highlighted the negative view of learning Arabic literature among non-native students due to the difficulty in understanding literary texts. To focus on changing this view, a need to change the method of teaching and learning literature is required. Scholars have emphasised that the flipped classroom strategy is proven to improve the level of traditional learning. Therefore, this study aims to identify the use of the flipped classroom strategy in learning literature among Malaysian students. A survey was conducted on 85 students majoring in Arabic study from three public universities in Malaysia. The findings of this study provide an insight of their acceptance and satisfaction with the flipped classroom in learning Arabic literature. The most positive feedback generated by the results is active learning that relies on interaction between the learners themselves and the trainer. Moreover, most of the respondents found that this strategy helps them in understanding the words and main ideas in the literary text. Several recommendations have been offered and are expected to be used to improve the teaching and learning of Arabic literature for non-Arabic speakers.

Keywords: Flipped Classroom Strategy, Learning Literature, Non-Arabic Speakers, Teaching Method.

Introduction
The era we live in today is an era of rapid development, which sometimes exceeds people’s comprehension and the perceptions of their minds. One of the most prominent changes that we are experiencing is the digital technological revolution as this revolution has become part of the field of education in all parts of the world, including Malaysia. The integration of
technology has become very important in the learning process and, with the help of technology in thinking processes, Malaysian university students have developed the ability to criticise and search for knowledge in simple ways (Abdullah et al., 2019). Thus, it is confirmed that the avoidance of using the old approach in the learning process and the modern approach that is in line with current technological developments should be used in understanding poetic texts among undergraduate students in Malaysia (Toklubok et al., 2022). Regarding these various changes in all aspects of life, it has been necessary for educational systems to keep pace with this development and adapt to it. Therefore, researchers have seen the need to develop educational methods and use new strategies in learning based on modern technology in the educational process (Al-Tahrishi, 2018; Walsh et al., 2020).

The idea of flipped learning, or the flipped classroom strategy, is based on reversing the method of learning between the classroom and the home as it cannot be achieved without employing modern tools of technology and integrating them into the educational process. This is due to the changing skills of the current generation of students and their possession of modern technological tools and ability to learn skillfully and quickly (Fernández et al., 2020). This method of learning is one of the modern technology solutions, which is used to treat the weaknesses of traditional learning and helps in developing the level of thinking skills among students. Reflected learning is a learning strategy that includes the use of modern technology in learning; thus, enabling teachers to spend more time interacting with students and conducting conversations and debates in the classroom instead of giving traditional lectures. In addition, it enables students to watch video presentations dedicated to them at home and provides the highest amount of time to discuss the content inside the classroom under the supervision of the teacher. Despite the importance of videos in the strategy of the flipped classroom, this style of learning is not just as merely learning based on videos uploaded to the internet, but it goes much further, as it allows for the integration of learning styles represented in active learning that depends primarily on the learner, and this style of learning does not seek to be a substitute for the teacher. (Fernández et al., 2020).

In the context of learning literature for non-Arabic speakers, one of the primary goals is to develop students’ ability to understand and analyse literary texts. This goal is crucial to develop students’ aesthetic sense so that they can appreciate the literary text (Al Muhammad, 2012). However, it is found that the difficulty of learning literature among them is due to their lack of understanding of the nature of learning literature, as they did not reach the higher level of thinking than understanding, as analysis and conclusion, but they did focus on learning literature, at the lower level of knowledge and remembering (Ibrahim & Amelia, 2020). Through the adoption of modern theories in the study of the text, Syed (2020) noticed a lack of interest in adopting modern methods that deal with the study of literature texts in understanding and analysis, to contribute to the development and understanding of non-Arabic speaking students (Syed, 2020; Sahrir, 2019). The need to use modern strategies in the process of understanding poetic texts among non-Arabic speaking students have been suggested in recent studies (Toklubok et al., 2022).

Based on these findings, the need for a new strategy in the educational process has increased, which has contributed to the treatment of students’ low level in understanding literary texts. One of these strategies that achieve the goal and objective is the inverted classroom strategy. This is indicated by the study by Fernández et al. (2020) using the flipped classroom strategy, which has been proven as one of the modern technical solutions to remedy the weakness in traditional learning, and to develop the level of comprehension skills among students in
recent years. It is also found that learning in flipped classrooms has an effective impact on learning a second language. In addition, it is recommended to expand the use of the flipped classroom strategy in various disciplines to prove its positive impact on learning outcomes (Vitta & Al-Hoorie, 2020).

Literature Review

Students’ Weaknesses in Understanding Literary Texts

Despite the keenness of educational institutions to provide learners with the skill of learning literature, observers note that they have an apparent weakness while reading literary texts, whether it is related to understanding or the method of learning. This weakness is confirmed by many specialised studies (Abu Khudairi, 2015; Novianti, 2016).

A study conducted by Yasser and Radia (2014) examine the level of students in the Malaysian secondary school in the field of learning literature, and discovered that their low level in understanding the literary text is attributed to their lack of understanding of literary texts and the lack of smoothness in choosing the literary text. This is addition to the fact that the literary texts were not built on clear scientific foundations as they do not encourage them to continue learning. In light of this, the results demonstrate an urgent need to choose appropriate texts in terms of form and content to suit the ages of students in the secondary stages in Malaysia.

On the other hand, a study by Al-Sawahili (2020) aims to overcome the difficulties in learning literary texts among non-Arabic speaking students. and provides appropriate criteria for selecting literary texts, poetry, or prose to be an expressive picture of the Arabic literature. The results showed that appropriate standards were set for choosing the literary texts to suit the ages of the students as well as their cultures and orientations.

A study was conducted by Toklubok et al. (2022) on outstanding Malaysian students in identifying the six strategies, namely memory, perception, compensation, metacognitive, emotional and social, for understanding Arabic poems. The results showed that the six strategies helped the outstanding students to increase their abilities to understand Arabic poems as well as their interactions. Therefore, the study recommended moving away from the traditional approach in students’ learning, using the advanced technological approach appropriate words in learning literature and linking it to their daily lives.

The Impact of The Role of Technology in Literature

The existence of modern technology has led to the development of learning strategies, which in turn have contributed to reducing the difficulties faced by the educational process. Technology has a clear impact on reforming the educational system with all its inputs, and the goal of learning in this era has become to acquire facts and skills, and to be self-reliant to be able to interact with the developments of the times (Abu Khudairi, 2015). Many educational institutions have been keen to pay attention to the use of technology to achieve the desired goals, so modern strategies and diversity in learning methods that depend on technology have emerged to activate digital (electronic) learning, blended learning, and flipped classes.
In view of the many advantages that have been followed in the use of technology, many studies have supported modern technology. For example, a study by Abdo (2020) aims at identifying the effectiveness of the technical approach through audio books in developing literary appreciation skills among first secondary students. The results showed the importance of the audio books although the vocal has a slight effect on the acquisition of literary appreciation skills.

In another study by Mokhtari (2019), it seeks to demonstrate the importance of modern technological media and methods in the literary field in general. The concepts presented in the novel *The One* by Muhammad Sanajleh were analysed in a special language of human communication. The issues in the novel are expressed through images cinematic scenes’ movements and sounds. Meanwhile, in a study by Tawfiq (2019) investigates the impact of the listening triangle strategy and learning cells in the development of imaginative thinking among students of a second intermediate grade in literature and motivation towards the subject in imaginative thinking and motivation in favour of the experimental group.

In their study, Al-Rouqi and Al-Otaibi (2018) confirm the impact of the effectiveness of the flipped classroom strategy in developing literary appreciation skills among first year secondary school students, using a list consisting of literary appreciation skills. The sample consisted of 51 students, who were divided into two groups, namely an experimental group consisting of 25 students and a control group consisting of 26 students. The experimental group used the flipped classroom strategy, and a control group studied using the traditional approach. The results found statistically significant differences in the skills of literary appreciation in favour of the experimental group. In contrast, a study by Al-Bakr (2013), examines the effects of using the reciprocal learning strategy in literary texts on developing the skills of literary appreciations for the intermediate stage.

In addition, a study by Muhammad (2008) investigates the use of a proposed strategy based on interactive learning and active learning to teach literature to develop the skills of literary appreciation by using various methods that have made students active, positive, and more interactive with colleagues. The survey showed a low level of first-year secondary students in literary appreciation, poor mastery of its skills and their inability to analyse. The reason for this is due to the selection of texts that are not suitable for students and not related to learning methods. The effectiveness of teaching methods in active learning has been proven in developing the skills of literary appreciation among high school students.

Most of the previous studies have been conducted on high school students, without focusing on literary texts in a certain era, or the flipped classroom strategy approach in learning Arabic literature. Hence, this study aims to:

- identify the strategy of the flipped classroom used by non-Arabic speaking students in learning literature.

**Research Methodology**

In conducting this study, the research employed a quantitative method. The appropriate design that determines the method for data collection is the use of a survey after an experimental class for teaching and learning literary text using the flipped classroom strategy. Choosing one group of students is the appropriate method for designing the study, which has benefits in terms of cost and effort, ease of work, is not restricted to a certain period and does not take a long time to obtain valid results (Mairing et al., 2021; Dawood et al., 2021). The step begins with identifying and defining the target group of users.
Table 1 demonstrates the demographic data of the respondents studied. They are 85 university students in Malaysia specialising in the Arabic language as non-native speakers. A total of 72% of the respondents were female, and the fact that language specialisation has less involvement from males is probably due to the less physical demands of learning activities. They were chosen because the universities teach the same system of the Arabic language in terms of curriculum. The numbers represented by the students are 18 from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), 35 from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and 32 from the International Islamic University (IIUM).

To achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers prepared three data collection tools, namely the literary text and video, the questionnaire, and the lecturer’s instructions. Below is a description of these tools.

**Literary text & video**

The literary text chosen as material for this study is a pre-Islamic poetry, the poetry of “wuquf ala al athlal” by Imri al Qais, verses 15-27. This period of literature was chosen because it has great literary values but is considered as a difficult text for students to understand (Al Ulaimat & al Qubailat, 2015).

The researchers rephrased the targeted educational content in the chosen poetic text due to the importance of students’ comprehension with regards to its meanings, words, and rhetorical images. The educational videos designed present effective scientific materials in a short time (al-Maliki, 2021; Murillo-Zamorano et al., 2019). The video material has been divided into two categories: self-produced by the researchers and educational programmes from multiple sources. Five-minute video clips were prepared, which were selected based on three criteria in terms of content, image and sound, and the style of the image was visual with sound input.

**Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was developed to collect data. This instrument was constructed based on the constructivist theory pioneered by Jean Piaget (1965), which contains thirteen items arranged in an appropriate logical manner. The instrument was distributed to the participating respondents as soon as the literature class using the flipped classroom strategy was over.

To test the reliability of the questionnaire, it had been distributed in a pilot study that consists of twenty-three students studying the Arabic language in one of the public universities in Malaysia, which is like the real sample. The stability of the internal consistency was calculated by Cronbach Alpha, and the value was 0.88 which indicates a good level of reliability.
Lecture’s instruction
The researchers prepared a guide for the lecturer, in agreement with the experts, showing how to use the flipped class strategy, and ways to implement it. The instruction consists of the educational activities in addition to the use of a slideshow that included how to use them in presenting the general introduction. It also included a presentation comprising the explanation of the poetic verses, and the conclusion included feedback as well as the tools used in the strategy, evaluation strategies, and the time of the lecture (Al-Shabiba, 2019).

Data Analysis and Discussion
The Statistical Package Programme (SPSS) was used to analyse the data collected from the questionnaire to identify the strategy of the flipped classroom used by non-Arabic speaking students in learning literature. It consists of three parts of analysis:

1) Analysis of the students’ points of view in using the strategy in learning literature in general
2) Analysis of the students’ points of view with regards to the benefits of the flipped classroom strategy in learning literature
3) Analysis of the students’ views on the contributions of the flipped classroom strategy to their understanding of literature.

Analysis: The Flipped Classroom Strategy in Learning Literature Among Students in General
The purpose of learning literature in the flipped classroom is to show the students’ points of view using the strategy. Therefore, the researchers analysed all the items from the questionnaire that consists of thirteen items in closed questions. The mean score from the descriptive analysis is shown in the graph below.

Graph 1: The mean score of students’ views of using flipped classroom strategy in learning literature (n=85)

Graph 1 shows the average percentage of students’ views in using flipped classroom when learning literature as their answers of “strongly agree” were calculated with an average percentage of 49.3%, and the average percentage of the answer “agree” was 40.1%. Meanwhile, the average percentage of their views of “undecided” were 8.6%, while their views of “disagree” were represented by a very small percentage of 0.8% and “strongly disagree” of 1.0%. From the above chart, it shows most of the respondents of non-Arabic students were very satisfied (89.4%) with the literature class, and this result indicates that most of them found that flipped classroom strategy really helps them in learning literature.

Analysis Of Their Points of View with Regards to the Benefits of the Flipped Classroom Strategy in Learning Literature
To analyse the benefits of the flipped classroom strategy in learning literature, the data gathered from eight items of the questionnaire and the findings are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2:
Data distribution with regards to the benefits of the flipped classroom strategy in learning literature (n=85)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>The flipped classroom helped me communicate with colleagues and collaborate better.</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>The flipped classroom helped me communicate with the lecturer more effectively than traditional learning.</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>The flipped classroom helped me spend more time on learning activities than traditional learning.</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td>I think flipped classroom retains me longer in learning literature.</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5)</td>
<td>I believe that learning in the flipped classroom is more flexible and effective than traditional learning.</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6)</td>
<td>The flipped classroom availability and accessibility of technical support helped me improve my learning</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7)</td>
<td>This class helped me to overcome the problem of absence and the loss of opportunity to attend the class.</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8)</td>
<td>The availability of videos and other multimedia helped me better understand the poetic texts</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>21.10</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the analysis performed in Table 2, it can be concluded that the highest score is related to the interaction and activities managed in the classroom. The three items are related to communication with friends (95.4%) and lecturers (92.5%), and activities conducted in class (94.2%) which reached the highest percentage and are considered as the benefits of using the flipped classroom in learning literature. The respondents also found that this strategy motivated them to learn literature effectively compared to the traditional one, and they preferred the technology used in this method of learning.

The availability of the flipped classroom strategy allowed the students to create groups during the lecture, which enhances the spirit of teamwork and participatory in one team and creates a strong sense of sharing, cooperation and motivation, and competitions in the educational communications between the lecturer and the students as well as with each other. Cooperation and discussions in the lecture have a wide impact on the learning process as the use of the flipped classroom strategy within the lecture and the activities and tasks added to
the students an atmosphere of fun and suspense. It also enhanced the spirit of participatory and teamwork, which contributed to stimulating the spirit of social communication among students. Thus, this process leads to an enhancing of the motivation for the process of learning literature and increasing the level of students’ ability towards learning.

In addition to the elements of the flipped classroom strategy being distinguished in multiple aspects as it is an integrated system in presenting and simplifying the educational materials for students, it allowed them to acquire learning in interesting ways. The educational video contains sound, tone and method of explanation, and the visual images provide the attractiveness and suspense factor. Furthermore, it gave students the opportunity to keep the educational materials sent to them through modern technology websites and made the learning process more flexible in relieving stress and fear while attending the lecture. This is because it gave them the opportunity to be reassured in the lecture by knowing the topic of the lesson previously, and the heightened the students’ abilities to comprehend and remember the literary text. Despite the difference in the results, this discrepancy between the scores is a positive rate in favour of using the flipped classroom strategy in understanding the poetic text.

**Analysis of Students’ Views on the Contributions of the Flipped Classroom Strategy to their Understanding of Literature**

Table 3:

**Data distribution for the strategy’s contributions in text comprehension**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The flipped classroom helped me conclude the literal meanings from the poetic texts.</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>This method of learning helped me analyse the main ideas in the poetic texts more deeply.</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The flipped classroom helped me have literary appreciation of the poetic texts.</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The flipped classroom helped me to better critique the poetic texts.</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The flipped classroom helped me identify the rhetorical images in the poetic texts.</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 demonstrates the findings related to the students’ views on the contributions of the flipped classroom strategy to their understanding of literature. Based on the analysis performed, (95.2% of the respondents revealed that this method of learning improved their understanding of the meanings of the words in the literary text, and 86.6% admitted that this method helped them analyse the main ideas in more detail. In addition, 84.8% of the respondents viewed that the flipped classroom helped them to develop literary appreciations of the poetic texts, 84.8% chose “to better critique the poetic texts” and 86.4% chose “to
identify the rhetorical images in the poetic texts”. An important finding to highlight relates to the students’ views of the literature class, where they focused more on the meanings of either the words or the entire text rather than an appreciation of the literary arts. This result is consistent with findings in previous studies, such as Toklubok et al. (2022), as it proves that the difficulty of learning literature among non-Arabic speaking students is due to their lack of understanding of the nature of learning literature. Therefore, they did not reach more than the level of understanding in thinking, such as analysis, interpretation, and synthesis. Instead, they focused more on the lowest level of thinking in learning it, like understanding and remembering (Ibrahim and Abdullah, 2020). It is also proven that they were not interested in appreciating the beauty of the text in terms of its aesthetic values as well as its rhetorical purposes (Toklubok et al., 2022).

Conclusion
The findings prove the importance of using the flipped classroom strategy in learning Arabic literature among non-Arabic speakers. The students believed that learning literature using this method is very beneficial for them in increasing their motivation and enthusiasm for learning, making them more active and more fun, compared to learning using traditional methods. It also helped them to understand the words and the main content of the literary text. It also gave flexibility in the student learning process by allowing them to interact with their friends and lecturer, which improved their understanding process. The strategy also affected the learning process through the results as it contributed to the increase in the cognitive performance of the students using modern technology in the search for enriching information. This, in turn, contributed to increasing their academic achievement in study Arabic literature. Based on the results, this study suggests that learning Arabic literature should be accompanied with the use of technology so that it can help increase students’ levels of understanding and enjoyment of learning literature. In addition, an approach that includes two-way interactions should be applied in classrooms. Students should also be encouraged to do preparations before attending each class. Furthermore, teachers are required to strive to increase students’ appreciations for the beauty of literary art as well as to enhance the level of thinking to achieve the main goal of learning Arabic literature.

References


