



Fostering Learner Autonomy through Contextual Teaching and Learning: Stake's Countenance Evaluation at UII Dalwa

Received :	6 th July 2025	Revised :	4 th October 2025	Accepted :	25 th October 2025
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Abstract

This study evaluates how Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) fosters learner autonomy among Arabic Language Education students at Universitas Islam Internasional Darullughah Wadda'wah (UII Dalwa). A qualitative evaluative design was organised through Stake's Countenance Model, which examines antecedents, transactions, and outcomes while comparing intended instructional conditions with observed practice and evaluative standards. The empirical corpus comprised semi-structured lecturer interviews, classroom observations, and learning artefacts reported during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The materials were organised in ATLAS.ti through document grouping, open coding, code consolidation, analytic memoing, and network mapping. The analysis identified a consequential movement across the three countenance components. Antecedent conditions were characterised by dependence on talaqqi, examination-oriented motivation, weak goal setting, and reliance on lecturer-provided resources despite an Arabic-rich pesantren environment. Transactional practices that disrupted these patterns included contextual problem orientation, guided inquiry, probing questions, rotating roles in learning communities, multiple forms of modelling, learning contracts, performance-based assessment, and weekly reflection. Outcomes were visible in more independent use of Maktabah Syamilah, Sinta-indexed journals, and digital dictionaries; improved self-evaluation; student-initiated Arabic discussion groups; and the production of Arabic educational content beyond the classroom. The evaluation nevertheless indicates that autonomy remained scaffold-dependent and uneven rather than complete. The study contributes an evidence-based account of how CTL can convert contextual exposure into purposeful learner agency when tasks, feedback, resources, and reflection are designed as an integrated cycle.

Keywords: *Contextual Teaching and Learning; Learner Autonomy; Stake Countenance Evaluation; Arabic Language Education; Pesantren Higher Education.*

Introduction

Arabic language education in Islamic higher education is expected to cultivate more than accurate knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and text interpretation. Students must increasingly use Arabic to investigate sources, communicate ideas, teach, write, translate, and participate in academic and religious communities. These expectations place learner autonomy at the center of programme quality because learners cannot depend indefinitely on lecturers to determine every goal, resource, strategy, and standard of success. Classic accounts define autonomy as the capacity to take charge of learning, while later scholarship stresses that responsibility is developed through supported participation rather than through the withdrawal of teaching.¹ In a university setting, autonomy is therefore both a learning outcome and a condition for continuing academic development. Indonesian studies likewise show that autonomous learning is culturally and institutionally situated, and that students may express confidence in their abilities while continuing to assign primary responsibility to the teacher.²

The concept is closely related to self-regulated learning. Autonomous learners formulate goals, select and adapt strategies, monitor comprehension and performance, manage learning resources, respond to feedback, and evaluate the consequences of their choices. These processes correspond to cycles of forethought, performance control, and self-reflection described in self-regulation research.³ Meta-analytic and review evidence further indicates that explicit support for planning, monitoring, and reflection can improve strategy use and academic performance.⁴ Autonomy should consequently not be interpreted as an innate

¹ Henri Holec, *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* (Pergamon Press, 1981); David Little, *Learner Autonomy 1: Definitions, Issues and Problems* (Authentik, 1991); Phil Benson, "Autonomy in Language Teaching and Learning," *Language Teaching* 40, no. 1 (2007): 21–40, doi:10.1017/S0261444806003958; Richard Smith, "Learner Autonomy," *ELT Journal* 62, no. 4 (2008): 395–97, doi:10.1093/elt/ccn038.

² Nenden Sri Lengkanawati, "Learner Autonomy in the Indonesian EFL Settings," *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 6, no. 2 (2017): 222–31, doi:10.17509/ijal.v6i2.4847; Andrzej Cirocki, Syafi'ul Anam, and Pratiwi Retnaningdyah, "Readiness for Autonomy in English Language Learning: The Case of Indonesian High School Students," *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research* 7, no. 2 (2019): 1–18, doi:10.30466/ijltr.2019.120695; Daflizar Daflizar and Eleni Petraki, "Readiness for Autonomous English Language Learning: The Case of Indonesian Undergraduate Students," *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 11, no. 3 (2022): 515–26, doi:10.17509/ijal.v11i3.34259.

³ Barry J. Zimmerman, "Becoming a Self-Regulated Learner: An Overview," *Theory Into Practice* 41, no. 2 (2002): 64–70, doi:10.1207/s15430421tip4102_2; Paul R. Pintrich, "A Conceptual Framework for Assessing Motivation and Self-Regulated Learning in College Students," *Educational Psychology Review* 16, no. 4 (2004): 385–407, doi:10.1007/s10648-004-0006-x; Ernesto Panadero, "A Review of Self-Regulated Learning: Six Models and Four Directions for Research," *Frontiers in Psychology* 8 (2017): 422, doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00422.

⁴ Charlotte Dignath and Gerhard Büttner, "Components of Fostering Self-Regulated Learning among Students: A Meta-Analysis on Intervention Studies at Primary and Secondary School Level," *Metacognition and Learning* 3, no. 3 (2008): 231–64, doi:10.1007/s11409-008-9029-x; Jaclyn Broadbent and Walter L. Poon, "Self-Regulated Learning Strategies and Academic Achievement in Online Higher Education Learning Environments: A Systematic Review," *The Internet and Higher Education* 27 (2015): 1–13, doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2015.04.007; Matthias Theobald, "Self-Regulated Learning Training Programs Enhance University Students' Academic Performance, Self-Regulated Learning Strategies, and Motivation:

personal characteristic. It is a pedagogically cultivable capacity whose development depends on the opportunities, responsibilities, and forms of mediation built into the learning environment. Motivation research reinforces this point: autonomy-supportive teaching can be learned and can strengthen engagement when learners experience meaningful choice, competence, and internalized purpose.⁵

UII Dalwa offers a particularly significant context for examining this development. The university is embedded in a pesantren ecology in which Arabic is present in religious texts, dormitory routines, formal instruction, public speaking, and institutional activities. Such exposure appears favourable to autonomous learning, yet exposure alone does not ensure that students will independently define purposes, locate reliable sources, or evaluate their own performance. An environment may be linguistically rich while classroom habits remain transmissive. Students can become proficient at receiving explanations, copying notes, and memorizing material without learning how to investigate a problem or justify a learning decision. This tension between contextual abundance and instructional dependence is the central evaluative problem addressed in the present study.

Contextual Teaching and Learning provides a plausible pedagogical response. CTL links disciplinary knowledge with situations that learners recognize as socially, academically, or professionally meaningful. It draws on experiential, situated, and constructivist traditions that regard knowledge as something built through activity, participation, and reflection rather than merely transferred as finished information.⁶ Authentic learning environments similarly require students to encounter realistic problems, use multiple resources, collaborate, articulate reasoning, and produce performances that have value beyond a conventional test.⁷ In Arabic education, these principles can connect language forms with pesantren life, academic reading, public communication, microteaching, translation, and digital content production.

However, the claim that CTL fosters autonomy cannot be established by the presence of contextual examples alone. Group work can conceal unequal participation; inquiry can become a worksheet exercise; authentic assessment can remain lecturer-controlled; and reflection can deteriorate into a routine summary. The evaluative question is therefore not only whether CTL activities occurred, but how antecedent conditions shaped their implementation, what transactions actually took place, and what forms of learner agency followed. Problem-based and authentic learning studies show that meaningful problems can deepen engagement and application, but their value depends on scaffolding, criteria, and the

A Meta-Analysis," *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 66 (2021): 101976, doi:10.1016/j.cedpsych.2021.101976.

⁵ Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation from a Self-Determination Theory Perspective: Definitions, Theory, Practices, and Future Directions," *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 61 (2020): 101860, doi:10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101860; Johnmarshall Reeve and Sung Hyeon Cheon, "Autonomy-Supportive Teaching: Its Malleability, Benefits, and Potential to Improve Educational Practice," *Educational Psychologist* 56, no. 1 (2021): 54–77, doi:10.1080/00461520.2020.1862657.

⁶ John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (Kappa Delta Pi, 1938); Timothy A. Brown, *Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Applied Research*, 2nd ed. (Guilford Press, 2015), <https://www.guilford.com/books/Confirmatory-Factor-Analysis-for-Applied-Research/Timothy-Brown/9781462515363>; Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (Cambridge University Press, 1991); Elaine B. Johnson, *Contextual Teaching and Learning: What It Is and Why It's Here to Stay* (Corwin Press, 2002).

⁷ Jan Herrington and Ron Oliver, "An Instructional Design Framework for Authentic Learning Environments," *Educational Technology Research and Development* 48, no. 3 (2000): 23–48, doi:10.1007/BF02319856.

quality of participation.⁸ context-aware learning research likewise emphasizes that relevance must be connected to learner characteristics, tasks, feedback, and technological resources rather than treated as a superficial setting variable.⁹

The existing draft was initially designed as a mixed-methods article and explicitly left empirical findings as placeholders. Such a structure was useful for planning but could not support evaluative judgments about the actual instructional process. The availability of interview and observation material makes it possible to reconstruct the study as a qualitative evaluation centered on lived instructional evidence. This move is methodologically necessary because autonomy is expressed through choices, dependencies, negotiations, resource practices, and transfer behaviors that require deep contextual interpretation. Qualitative inquiry is essential here, as it allows us to analyze why a student waits for a PDF, how a rotating group role changes participation, or why a learning contract becomes meaningful—nuances that numerical data alone cannot capture.

Stake's Countenance Model was selected because it preserves the relationship between programme intentions, observable activity, and evaluative judgment. It organizes evidence into antecedents, transactions, and outcomes, while encouraging the evaluator to examine congruence between what was intended and what occurred, as well as contingency between conditions, processes, and results.¹⁰ The model is especially suitable for CTL because the intervention is not a single treatment but a configuration of tasks, interactions, materials, assessments, and reflections. It allows learner autonomy to be evaluated as an emerging consequence of instructional relationships rather than as an isolated score.

Accordingly, this study addresses three questions: (1) What antecedent conditions enabled or constrained learner autonomy before and during CTL implementation? (2) How were CTL transactions enacted through inquiry, learning communities, modelling, authentic assessment, and reflection? (3) What outcomes of learner autonomy were evidenced in resource management, metacognitive regulation, collaboration, and transfer beyond the classroom? By answering these questions, the article aims to contribute a context-sensitive evaluation of Arabic pedagogy in a pesantren-based university and to identify design principles that can make contextual learning genuinely autonomy-supportive.

2. Conceptual Framework

⁸ David Gijbels et al., "Effects of Problem-Based Learning: A Meta-Analysis from the Angle of Assessment," *Review of Educational Research* 75, no. 1 (2005): 27–61, doi:10.3102/00346543075001027; John R. Savery, "Overview of Problem-Based Learning: Definitions and Distinctions," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning* 1, no. 1 (2006): 9–20, doi:10.7771/1541-5015.1002; Johannes Strobel and Angela van Barneveld, "When Is PBL More Effective? A Meta-Synthesis of Meta-Analyses Comparing PBL to Conventional Classrooms," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning* 3, no. 1 (2009): 44–58, doi:10.7771/1541-5015.1046.

⁹ Hasan Abu-Rasheed, Christian Weber, and Madjid Fathi, "Context Based Learning: A Survey of Contextual Indicators for Personalized and Adaptive Learning Recommendations – A Pedagogical and Technical Perspective," *Frontiers in Education* 8 (2023): 1210968, doi:10.3389/feduc.2023.1210968; Bruce M. McLaren et al., "How Instructional Context Can Impact Learning with Educational Technology: Lessons from a Study with a Digital Learning Game," *Computers & Education* 178 (2022): 104366, doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2021.104366.

¹⁰ Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1995); Robert E. Stake, *Standards-Based and Responsive Evaluation* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2004); Robert E. Stake, "The Countenance of Educational Evaluation," *Teachers College Record* 68, no. 7 (1967): 523–40.

2.1 Contextual Teaching and Learning and Learner Autonomy

CTL is frequently described through seven mutually reinforcing components: constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning community, modelling, reflection, and authentic assessment. Constructivism activates prior experience and requires learners to reorganise knowledge rather than reproduce an explanation. Inquiry turns a topic into a problem that can be investigated. Questioning exposes assumptions and directs attention to evidence. A learning community distributes expertise and responsibility. Modelling makes strategies and standards visible through lecturers, peers, experts, texts, or media. Reflection helps learners identify what changed and what should be attempted next. Authentic assessment evaluates the quality of a meaningful performance and the process used to produce it.¹¹ These components form a cycle: contextual orientation generates a need to know; inquiry and collaboration support construction; modelling and feedback provide scaffolds; authentic performance reveals competence; and reflection converts experience into a future learning plan.

In language education, autonomy has both individual and social dimensions. Early formulations emphasised self-direction, but subsequent work clarified that autonomous learning does not require social isolation. Learners develop responsibility through interaction, negotiated decisions, and progressively reduced dependence. A classroom pedagogy for autonomy should therefore create recurrent opportunities to define goals, select resources, choose strategies, monitor progress, seek assistance, and evaluate results. Collaboration becomes autonomy-supportive when members make accountable contributions and learn to regulate collective work, not when a dominant student completes the task for everyone.¹²¹³

Technology expands the resource dimension of autonomy but also creates new forms of dependence. Learners can use digital dictionaries, corpora, electronic libraries, journals, podcasts, and communication platforms outside scheduled lessons. Yet access does not automatically generate productive use. Students need criteria for source credibility, task relevance, and ethical use, as well as strategies for transforming information into learning. Research on informal digital language learning shows that out-of-class activity can support motivation and engagement when learners perceive agency and meaningful communicative purposes. Mobile language learning similarly becomes valuable when students regulate goals, time, collaboration, and feedback beyond the classroom.¹⁴¹⁵¹⁶

¹¹ Johnson, *Contextual Teaching and Learning: What It Is and Why It's Here to Stay*; Herrington and Oliver, "An Instructional Design Framework for Authentic Learning Environments."

¹² Hayo Reinders, "Towards a Classroom Pedagogy for Learner Autonomy: A Framework of Independent Language Learning Skills," *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 35, no. 5 (2010): 40–55, especially pp. 46–49.

¹³ Leslie Dickinson, "Autonomy and Motivation: A Literature Review," *System* 23, no. 2 (1995): 165–174, especially pp. 165–168.; Marie-José Gremmo and Philip Riley, "Autonomy, Self-Direction and Self Access in Language Teaching and Learning: The History of an Idea," *System* 23, no. 2 (1995): 151–164, especially pp. 151–155.; William Littlewood, "Autonomy: An Anatomy and a Framework," *System* 24, no. 4 (1996): 427–435, especially pp. 427–430.; Sara Cotterall, "Promoting Learner Autonomy through the Curriculum: Principles for Designing Language Courses," *ELT Journal* 54, no. 2 (2000): 109–117, especially pp. 109–112.

¹⁴ Olga Viberg and Agnes Kukulska-Hulme, "Fostering Learners' Self-Regulation and Collaboration through Mobile Language Learning," *British Journal of Educational Technology* 54, no. 3 (2023): 1125–1143, especially pp. 1128–1135.

Feedback is another critical mechanism. Autonomy is weakened when students treat feedback as a lecturer's final verdict; it is strengthened when they interpret criteria, compare current performance with a model, and decide what to revise. Feedback literacy involves appreciating feedback, making judgments, managing affect, and taking action. Formative assessment can support self-regulation by clarifying goals and enabling learners to monitor the gap between current and desired performance. Internal feedback and evaluative judgment further help students generate comparisons independently rather than waiting for external correction. Rubrics can contribute when their descriptors are intelligible and used during learning, although their reliability and formative value depend on design and interpretation. More recent work also emphasises that feedback literacy is jointly shaped by teacher design and student uptake, while students' perceptions of self-assessment depend on its clarity, usefulness, and implementation conditions.¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹²⁰²¹

Recent research published between 2020 and 2022 strengthens this multidimensional view of autonomy. Studies in technology-assisted language learning show that goal setting, motivational regulation, social strategies, and learning evaluation are positively associated with language-learning outcomes, while writing research demonstrates that self-efficacy and self-regulated strategy use jointly shape performance.²²

¹⁵Ju Seong Lee and Kilryoung Lee, "Is It Possible to Enhance L2 Learners' Motivation and Engagement with Informal Digital Learning of English?," *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 34, nos. 1–2 (2021): 1–24, especially pp. 5–12.

¹⁶Robert Godwin-Jones, "Emerging Technologies: Autonomous Language Learning," *Language Learning & Technology* 15, no. 3 (2011): 4–11, especially pp. 4–8.; Chun Lai and Mingyue Gu, "Self-Regulated Out-of-Class Language Learning with Technology," *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 24, no. 4 (2011): 317–335, especially pp. 318–322.; Chun Lai, "Modeling Teachers' Influence on Learners' Self-Directed Use of Technology for Language Learning outside the Classroom," *Computers & Education* 82 (2015): 74–83, especially pp. 74–78.; Hayo Reinders and Cynthia White, "20 Years of Autonomy and Technology: How Far Have We Come and Where to Next?," *Language Learning & Technology* 20, no. 2 (2016): 143–154, especially pp. 143–148.

¹⁷David Carless and Naomi Winstone, "Teacher Feedback Literacy and Its Interplay with Student Feedback Literacy," *Teaching in Higher Education* 28, no. 1 (2023): 150–163, especially pp. 150–156.; Zi Yan et al., "Students' Perceptions of Self-Assessment: A Systematic Review," *Educational Research Review* 38 (2023): 100503, pp. 1–18, especially pp. 5–12.

¹⁸Anders Jonsson and Gunilla Svingby, "The Use of Scoring Rubrics: Reliability, Validity and Educational Consequences," *Educational Research Review* 2, no. 2 (2007): 130–144, especially pp. 130–137.; Ernesto Panadero and Anders Jonsson, "The Use of Scoring Rubrics for Formative Assessment Purposes Revisited: A Review," *Educational Research Review* 9 (2013): 129–144, especially pp. 129–136.

¹⁹David Nicol, "The Power of Internal Feedback: Exploiting Natural Comparison Processes," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 46, no. 5 (2021): 756–778, especially pp. 756–764.

²⁰David J. Nicol and Debra Macfarlane-Dick, "Formative Assessment and Self-Regulated Learning: A Model and Seven Principles of Good Feedback Practice," *Studies in Higher Education* 31, no. 2 (2006): 199–218, especially pp. 199–205.; John Hattie and Helen Timperley, "The Power of Feedback," *Review of Educational Research* 77, no. 1 (2007): 81–112, especially pp. 86–90.; Valerie J. Shute, "Focus on Formative Feedback," *Review of Educational Research* 78, no. 1 (2008): 153–189, especially pp. 153–160.

²¹David Carless and David Boud, "The Development of Student Feedback Literacy: Enabling Uptake of Feedback," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 43, no. 8 (2018): 1315–1325, especially pp. 1315–1319.

²²Zhujun An et al., "Technology-Assisted Self-Regulated English Language Learning: Associations With English Language Self-Efficacy, English Enjoyment, and Learning Outcomes," *Frontiers in Psychology* 11

Evidence from speaking, writing, and grammar contexts further indicates that autonomy is skill-specific and therefore needs to be cultivated through explicit strategy instruction, valid diagnostic instruments, and opportunities for learners to monitor progress across different language tasks.²³

Recent scholarship also emphasises the social and motivational foundations of autonomy. Autonomy-supportive teaching, learner enjoyment, grit, resilience, reflective agency, and collaborative exchange can strengthen persistence and purposeful engagement when learners receive structured opportunities to make decisions and evaluate consequences.²⁴

Within digitally mediated and post-pandemic education, autonomy depends not only on access to technology but also on the quality of pedagogical design. Context-sensitive digital tasks, balanced technology–pedagogy–social presence, learning analytics, and human–technology partnerships can support monitoring and transfer, provided that learners retain meaningful control over goals, resources, and feedback.²⁵

Taken together, the 2020–2022 literature suggests that learner autonomy should be evaluated as a supported, situated, and developmental capacity rather than as complete independence. This position is consistent with a CTL design that combines meaningful contexts, inquiry, authentic performance, feedback, collaboration, and reflection.²⁶

(2021): 558466; Barry Bai and Jing Wang, "Hong Kong Secondary Students' Self-Regulated Learning Strategy Use and English Writing: Influences of Motivational Beliefs," *System* 96 (2021): 102404; Ting Sun and Chuang Wang, "College Students' Writing Self-Efficacy and Writing Self-Regulated Learning Strategies in Learning English as a Foreign Language," *System* 90 (2020): 102221; Lin Sophie Teng and Lawrence Jun Zhang, "Empowering Learners in the Second/Foreign Language Classroom," *Journal of Second Language Writing* 48 (2020): 100701.

²³Mohialdeen Alotumi, "EFL College Junior and Senior Students' Self-Regulated Motivation for Improving English Speaking," *Heliyon* 7, no. 4 (2021): e06664; Lin Sophie Teng, "Explicit Strategy-Based Instruction in L2 Writing Contexts," *Assessing Writing* 53 (2022): 100645; Jing Chen, Lawrence Jun Zhang, and Xi Chen, "L2 Learners' Self-Regulated Learning Strategies and Self-Efficacy for Writing Achievement," *Language Teaching Research* (2022); Thi Nhu Ngoc Truong, "Psychometric Properties of Self-Regulated Learning Strategies in Learning English Grammar," *Frontiers in Education* 7 (2022): 801570.

²⁴Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation from a Self-Determination Theory Perspective," *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 61 (2020): 101860; Johnmarshall Reeve and Sung Hyeon Cheon, "Autonomy-Supportive Teaching," *Educational Psychologist* 56, no. 1 (2021): 54–77; L. Wang, "The Role of Students' Self-Regulated Learning, Grit, and Resilience in Second Language Learning," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (2021): 800488; Robert O'Dowd, "What Do Students Learn in Virtual Exchange?," *International Journal of Educational Research* 109 (2021): 101804.

²⁵Yu Han, Shanshan Zhao, and Lee Luan Ng, "How Technology Tools Impact Writing Performance, Lexical Complexity, and Perceived Self-Regulated Learning Strategies," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (2021): 752793; Bruce M. McLaren et al., "How Instructional Context Can Impact Learning with Educational Technology," *Computers & Education* 178 (2022): 104366; Chrysi Rapanta et al., "Balancing Technology, Pedagogy and the New Normal," *Postdigital Science and Education* 3 (2021): 715–742; Inge Molenaar, "Towards Hybrid Human–AI Learning Technologies," *European Journal of Education* 57, no. 4 (2022): 632–645.

²⁶David Little, "Language Learner Autonomy: Rethinking Language Teaching," *Language Teaching* 55, no. 1 (2022): 64–73; Xiaoyu Deng et al., "Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of Macau English as a Foreign Language Learners," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (2022): 976330; Anita Habók, Andrea Magyar, and Gyöngyvér Molnár, "English as a Foreign Language Learners' Strategy Awareness across Proficiency Levels," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (2022): 1019561; Ju Seong Lee and Kilryoung Lee, "Is It Possible to

For the present evaluation, learner autonomy was operationalised through seven connected dimensions. Goal-setting autonomy concerns the formulation of specific and personally meaningful targets. Strategic autonomy concerns the selection and adjustment of learning methods. Metacognitive autonomy concerns monitoring comprehension and performance. Resource autonomy concerns locating, evaluating, and combining human, print, and digital sources. Collaborative autonomy concerns responsible interdependence. Reflective autonomy concerns the interpretation of feedback and experience. Transfer autonomy concerns the use of Arabic learning in new academic, social, pedagogical, or digital contexts. This multidimensional framing avoids equating autonomy with unsupervised work and enables the evaluation to identify which forms of independence developed and which remained scaffold-dependent.

2.2 Stake's Countenance Evaluation

Stake's Countenance Model adds an explicitly evaluative architecture to this framework. Antecedents include learner histories, motivational orientations, institutional ecology, lecturer assumptions, and access to resources. Transactions include the actual interactions among learners, lecturers, tasks, materials, peers, and assessment practices. Outcomes include immediate performances, changed learning practices, and transfer to settings beyond the course. In the descriptive matrix, intentions are compared with observations. In the judgment matrix, the observed condition is considered against defensible standards. Horizontal comparison examines congruence within each component; vertical analysis examines contingency across components. This distinguishes a simple description of classroom activity from an evaluation of whether the activity was appropriate and consequential.²⁷

The standards used in this study were not numerical institutional targets. They were theoretically derived criteria: CTL transactions should connect Arabic learning with authentic contexts, require active investigation, distribute accountable participation, make strategies and standards visible, provide usable feedback, and culminate in reflection and transfer. Autonomy outcomes should show an increased capacity to set purposes, choose strategies, manage resources, monitor work, collaborate responsibly, evaluate performance, and apply learning beyond lecturer-directed tasks. These criteria served as sensitising standards for judgment while preserving openness to unexpected findings.

Table 1. Evaluative framework linking Stake's Countenance Model, CTL, and learner autonomy

Component	Intended condition	Observed evidence focus	Evaluative standard
Antecedents	Arabic-rich university and pesantren ecology; students	Talaqqi dependence, assessment-driven	Contextual exposure should be accompanied by

Enhance L2 Learners' Motivation and Engagement with Informal Digital Learning of English?," Computer Assisted Language Learning 34, nos. 1–2 (2021): 1–24.

²⁷Robert E. Stake, "The Countenance of Educational Evaluation," Teachers College Record 68, no. 7 (1967): 523–540, especially pp. 525–534; Robert E. Stake, *Standards-Based and Responsive Evaluation* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2004), pp. 103–121.; Daniel L. Stufflebeam and Chris L. S. Coryn, *Evaluation Theory, Models, and Applications*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2014), pp. 377–393.

Component	Intended condition	Observed evidence focus	Evaluative standard
	prepared to use Arabic for academic and social purposes.	motivation, weak goal setting, and reliance on lecturer-provided files.	readiness to set goals, seek resources, and tolerate inquiry uncertainty.
Transactions	CTL implemented through constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning community, modelling, reflection, and authentic assessment.	Dormitory critique, failed-teaching video analysis, rotating halaqah roles, senior/native models, learning contracts, debate, microteaching, journals.	Tasks should transfer consequential responsibility while providing criteria, models, feedback, and accountable scaffolding.
Outcomes	Students increasingly manage goals, strategies, resources, collaboration, reflection, and transfer.	Use of Maktabah Syamilah, journals, and Al-Maany; self-review of lesson plans; lajnah lughawiyyah; Arabic social-media/video content.	Evidence should show changed learning practice and transfer beyond lecturer-directed completion, while recognising unevenness and continuing support needs.

Method

The study employed a qualitative evaluative design guided by Stake's Countenance Model. The design was interpretive because the object of evaluation was not only whether activities occurred, but how participants understood changes in responsibility, learning strategy, and resource use. It was evaluative because descriptions were compared with CTL and learner-autonomy standards and used to formulate judgments about congruence and contingency. Qualitative evaluation is appropriate when programme quality depends on context, interaction, and meaning, and when evidence must remain traceable to participants' accounts and observed practice.²⁸

The study was situated in the Arabic Language Education programme at UII Dalwa during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, reported in the supplied corpus as July to December 2025. The institutional environment combines university study with a pesantren-based linguistic ecology. The primary informants represented two complementary instructional domains: Lecturer A taught Arabic skills or maharah, and Lecturer B taught Arabic pedagogy. Their respective student cohorts were observed as the instructional context. The available corpus did not preserve a verified total number of students or observation sessions; therefore, no numerical participant claim is introduced in this article. Participant labels are retained as Lecturer A and Lecturer B to protect identity and to avoid implying a level of demographic precision that the source material cannot support.

²⁸Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2015), pp. 35–78.; Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1995), pp. 8–12 and 99–102.

Data consisted of semi-structured interview excerpts, classroom observation descriptions, and learning artefacts referenced in the corpus. The interviews probed initial learning habits, CTL implementation, student responses, and perceived changes in autonomy. Observation evidence focused on how contextual problems were introduced, how questions were used, how group responsibilities were organised, what models were presented, and how students performed and reflected. Artefactual evidence included learning contracts, group logbooks, reflective journals, microteaching products, and student-created Arabic outputs. These sources made it possible to examine both stated experience and visible instructional arrangements. Indonesian excerpts are retained in the findings, followed by English translations, because the original wording conveys culturally situated meanings such as *talaqqi* and *halaqah*.

The corpus was organised and analysed with ATLAS.ti as a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis environment. First, interview and observation materials were assigned to document groups reflecting source type and instructional domain. Second, open coding identified concrete actions, dependencies, resources, and consequences without forcing every segment into a predetermined category. Third, semantically overlapping codes were consolidated and assigned to three major code groups: Antecedents, Transactions, and Outcomes. Fourth, axial comparison linked CTL transactions to dimensions of learner autonomy; for example, rotating group roles was connected to accountable collaboration, while weekly journals were connected to metacognitive monitoring. Fifth, analytic memos recorded judgments about congruence and contingency. Finally, a network view was used conceptually to display how antecedent dependence was interrupted by particular transactions and followed by observable forms of agency. Code recurrence supported attention, but no frequency table was treated as a measure of importance because a rare segment could be evaluatively decisive.

The analysis moved iteratively through data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. Reflexive thematic analysis informed the development and revision of themes, while the Countenance matrix prevented themes from becoming detached from programme sequence. The researcher asked four questions of each theme: What condition or practice is described? What evidence supports the description? What standard is relevant? What judgment follows? This procedure produced a transparent chain from data segment to code, code group, theme, and evaluation.²⁹³⁰

Trustworthiness was addressed through method and source triangulation, comparison of lecturer accounts with observation and artefactual descriptions, attention to disconfirming or incomplete evidence, and maintenance of an audit trail through code definitions and analytic memos. The quality criteria emphasised credibility, dependability, confirmability, and contextual transferability rather than statistical generalisation. ATLAS.ti strengthened organisation and auditability but was not treated as an automatic interpreter; the validity of the findings depended on defensible coding

²⁹Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101, especially pp. 79–86; Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "One Size Fits All? What Counts as Quality Practice in (Reflexive) Thematic Analysis?," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 18, no. 3 (2021): 328–352, especially pp. 328–337.

³⁰Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2020), pp. 8–14 and 263–286.

decisions and transparent links to the corpus . Ethical presentation was supported through anonymisation, omission of personally identifying information, and restrained claims.³¹³²

Data-integrity note: The article does not invent student totals, observation counts, code frequencies, or statistical effects. Claims are limited to the interview, observation, and artefactual evidence preserved in the supplied corpus.

Table 2. ATLAS.ti-oriented codebook used to structure the evaluative analysis

Code group	Representative codes	Analytic function
Antecedents	talaqqi dependence; passive reception; assessment-driven orientation; weak goal setting; lecturer-resource dependence; inquiry anxiety	Initial condition and constraints on autonomy
Transactions: contextual inquiry	dormitory critique; failed-teaching video; probing questions; problem diagnosis; source search	Meaningful problem creates a need to know and transfers epistemic responsibility
Transactions: learning community	halaqah; rotating roles; drafter; interviewer; note-taker; group logbook; peer accountability	Collaborative autonomy as accountable interdependence
Transactions: modelling and assessment	senior-student model; native-speaker podcast; learning contract; debate; adaptive microteaching	Standards become visible and goals become personally consequential
Transactions: reflection	weekly journal; difficulty identification; strategy evaluation; next-step plan; lesson-plan self-review	Experience converted into metacognitive regulation
Outcomes	digital source literacy; resource matching; reflective autonomy; strategic autonomy; lajnah lughawiyyah; content creation; transfer	Emerging agency within and beyond the course

³¹Susanne Friese, *Qualitative Data Analysis with ATLAS.ti*, 3rd ed. (London: SAGE Publications, 2019), pp. 1–18 and 215–236.; Megan Woods, Trena Macklin, and Gemma K. Lewis, “Researcher Reflexivity: Exploring the Impacts of CAQDAS Use,” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 19, no. 4 (2016): 385–403, especially pp. 388–397.

³²Lorelli S. Nowell et al., “Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16 (2017): 1–13, especially pp. 3–10.; Sarah J. Tracy, “Qualitative Quality: Eight ‘Big-Tent’ Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 16, no. 10 (2010): 837–851, especially pp. 839–848.

Results and Discussions

1 Antecedents: Arabic-Rich Context, Lecturer-Dependent Learning

The antecedent analysis revealed a productive contradiction. UII Dalwa provided frequent exposure to Arabic, but the dominant academic habit described by the lecturers remained receptive. Lecturer A located this habit in a familiar pedagogical tradition:

“Kondisi awalnya sangat dipengaruhi oleh tradisi pesantren tradisional. Mahasiswa terbiasa dengan metode talaqqi—mendengarkan, mencatat, dan menghafal.” [The initial condition was strongly influenced by the traditional pesantren tradition. Students were accustomed to talaqqi—listening, taking notes, and memorising.] (Lecturer A)

The excerpt does not present talaqqi as intrinsically deficient. Listening to a teacher, recording explanations, and memorising authoritative material can support accuracy, discipline, and the transmission of classical knowledge. The evaluative concern arose when these practices became the students' only recognised way of learning. Observation descriptions indicated that many students waited for explicit instructions before beginning a task and treated the lecturer as the principal source of vocabulary, examples, and correctness. The result was limited goal-setting autonomy: students could complete assigned work but were less accustomed to defining what they needed to learn or how to obtain it.

Lecturer B identified a related motivational antecedent: students were strongly assessment-driven and commonly associated learning with the immediate requirements of an examination or assignment.

“Tantangan terbesarnya adalah orientasi belajar yang 'assessment-driven'... Mereka tidak memiliki 'Resource Autonomy' atau kemandirian sumber daya. Semuanya menunggu materi PDF atau slide dari saya.” [The greatest challenge was an assessment-driven learning orientation... They did not have resource autonomy. Everyone waited for a PDF or slides from me.] (Lecturer B)

This pattern constrained resource autonomy. Students' first response to a new topic was often to wait for a lecturer's slide or PDF rather than search, compare, and evaluate Arabic sources. The countenance judgment is therefore mixed. The institutional antecedent was favourable because Arabic was present across academic and pesantren life; the learner antecedent was less congruent with autonomy because contextual exposure had not yet become self-directed academic practice. The gap between linguistic environment and learner agency justified a CTL intervention that made context actionable through problems, choices, and responsibilities.

A further antecedent concerned confidence. Students who had long been evaluated for reproducing correct answers could perceive independent inquiry as risky. Seeking a source, proposing an interpretation, or performing publicly made uncertainty visible. This explains why autonomy could not be promoted by simply telling students to be independent. The transactions needed to combine challenge with structured scaffolding, visible models, shared responsibility, and criteria for success.

4.2 Transactions: CTL as a Structured Redistribution of Responsibility

The transaction phase showed that CTL was implemented through a series of connected design moves rather than a single technique. The most effective transactions altered who was responsible for defining the problem, finding evidence, organising participation, and judging improvement.

Contextual problem orientation and inquiry. Lecturer A connected formal Arabic with immediate student experience by asking students to articulate and defend critiques of dormitory facilities. The task created a real communicative need: students required vocabulary for facilities and services, grammatical resources for argument, and pragmatic strategies for expressing criticism appropriately. Instead of beginning with a decontextualised list, the lecturer used the students' environment as a problem space. The observation account suggests that this transaction moved contextualisation beyond illustration because students had to formulate a position and locate the language needed to communicate it.

Lecturer B used a different inquiry trigger in the pedagogy course. Students watched a video showing unsuccessful teaching and were asked to diagnose the problems before receiving a formal explanation.

“Saya tidak memberi tahu mereka cara mengajar yang benar. Saya putarkan video guru yang gagal... lalu saya lemparkan pertanyaan.” [I did not tell them the correct way to teach. I played a video of an unsuccessful teacher... and then posed questions.] (Lecturer B)

The question reallocated epistemic responsibility. Students had to notice classroom events, compare them with prior experience, propose causes, and justify alternatives. The transaction was congruent with the CTL standard of inquiry because the lecturer withheld a ready-made answer long enough for students to investigate. It also supported strategic autonomy: students learned that a pedagogical problem could be approached by observation, comparison, discussion, and evidence rather than by recalling a single definition.

Learning community and accountable roles. Group work was organised as halaqah, but the lecturers recognised that a familiar small-group format could still reproduce dependence or permit free riding. Lecturer A therefore used rotating roles such as drafter, interviewer, and note-taker. A group logbook documented individual contributions and learning decisions. This arrangement transformed collaboration from an undifferentiated collective task into accountable interdependence. Students could rely on peers while still being responsible for a visible contribution. The transaction supported collaborative autonomy because regulation occurred within the group rather than exclusively through lecturer surveillance.

Multiple modelling. Lecturer B deliberately expanded the range of models beyond the lecturer. Students examined work by senior students who had published in national journals and listened to native-speaker podcasts. These models served different purposes. Senior students provided attainable academic models and reduced the psychological distance between current ability and expected performance. Podcasts exposed students to authentic pronunciation, discourse patterns, and communicative

variation. In Countenance terms, modelling was congruent with autonomy when it made strategies and standards visible without prescribing one path that all learners had to copy.

Authentic assessment and goal setting. Lecturer A required a learning contract before a public Arabic debate. Students identified personal targets and anticipated the strategies and resources they would use. The contract converted a general assignment into an individual plan and allowed later reflection to compare intention with performance. Lecturer B used microteaching scenarios containing unexpected classroom-management problems. Because students could not rely on a fully memorised script, they had to adapt language and pedagogy in real time. These assessments sampled planning, resource use, performance, decision making, and reflection rather than only final recall.

Reflection and feedback. Weekly Arabic journals were used to record not only what had been studied but what had been difficult, which strategy had been useful, and what should be attempted next. Early journal entries reportedly resembled summaries; later entries became more evaluative. This shift is important because reflection becomes autonomy-supportive only when it influences a future decision. The journals also created continuity across CTL cycles: a difficulty identified after one task could become a goal or strategy in the next learning contract.

The transaction analysis nevertheless identified an important qualification. The learning design remained strongly scaffolded by lecturers. They selected the major contexts, structured roles, provided models, and designed assessment situations. This is not evidence of failure; it indicates a developmental form of autonomy. The evaluative standard was not absence of guidance, but a redistribution of responsibility in which students made consequential decisions within a designed support structure.

4.3 Outcomes: Emerging Resource, Reflective, Collaborative, and Transfer Autonomy

The outcome phase showed changes in how students accessed resources, evaluated their performance, collaborated, and used Arabic beyond the immediate assignment. These outcomes were interpreted as evidence of emerging autonomy rather than proof of permanent or universal change.

Resource autonomy. Lecturer B described a marked change in students' digital source practices:

“Perubahannya sangat signifikan... mereka kini fasih mengakses Maktabah Syamilah, jurnal-jurnal Sinta terbitan kampus lain, dan menggunakan kamus digital seperti Al-Maany.” [The change was very significant... they are now fluent in accessing Maktabah Syamilah, Sinta journals published by other institutions, and digital dictionaries such as Al-Maany.] (Lecturer B)

The significance of this outcome was not the mere use of named applications. Maktabah Syamilah, Sinta-indexed journals, and Al-Maany represented different resource functions: primary or classical text access, contemporary scholarly discussion, and lexical verification. Students began to match a resource with a learning need instead of treating lecturer-provided material as the complete curriculum. The observation and artefactual descriptions also suggest that source literacy had to be taught; initial access produced confusion until students were guided to evaluate relevance and credibility.

Resource autonomy therefore emerged from guided practice rather than spontaneous technological familiarity.

Metacognitive and reflective autonomy. Weekly journals gradually shifted from recounting activities to identifying strengths, weaknesses, and next steps. In the pedagogy course, students reportedly began to review their own lesson plans before implementation and anticipate problems that a lecturer might otherwise have identified after the fact. This outcome indicates an internalisation of evaluative criteria. Students were beginning to generate feedback through comparison, not merely receive corrections. The learning contract and journal formed a particularly important pair: one documented intention and the other interpreted performance.

Strategic and collaborative autonomy. The rotating roles in halaqah helped students recognise that collaboration involved planning, task distribution, communication, and monitoring. Students had opportunities to choose how to gather information, organise an argument, and respond to peer contributions. The evidence does not establish that every group functioned equally well, but it supports the judgment that the transaction created stronger conditions for accountable agency than unstructured group work.

Transfer autonomy. The clearest outcome beyond the formal classroom was the formation of student-initiated Arabic discussion groups or *lajnah lughawiyyah* in dormitory settings. Students also began creating Arabic educational content for social media and video platforms, including YouTube. These activities were not simply additional homework described in the corpus; they indicate that students were beginning to treat Arabic as a tool for participation and production. Transfer was also visible in the relationship between microteaching and prospective professional practice, because students had to adapt linguistic and pedagogical decisions to unpredictable classroom situations.

The Countenance judgment is positive but bounded. The observed outcomes were congruent with the intended direction of CTL and were plausibly contingent on inquiry, accountable collaboration, modelling, authentic assessment, and reflection. Yet the corpus does not establish long-term persistence, comparative effect, or equal development across all students. Some autonomy remained dependent on lecturer-created structures, and there was insufficient evidence to determine whether students could independently design equally demanding learning cycles. The appropriate conclusion is that CTL fostered emerging and transferable autonomy, not that it produced complete independence.

Table 3. Countenance congruence and contingency judgments

Antecedent transaction outcome →	Judgment	Evidence-based interpretation	Improvement priority
Resource dependence → guided source exploration → resource autonomy	Strong	The transaction directly addressed the antecedent constraint; students used differentiated digital and	Continue explicit instruction on credibility, citation, and source-task fit.

Antecedent transaction outcome → →	Judgment	Evidence-based interpretation	Improvement priority
		scholarly resources.	
Passive group membership → rotating roles and logbooks → collaborative autonomy	Moderate to strong	Roles made responsibility visible, although the corpus did not document every group's consistency.	Add peer/self-assessment and preserve role rotation across tasks.
Assessment-driven motivation → learning contracts and authentic performance → goal/strategic autonomy	Strong	Students had to define targets and adapt in debate or microteaching rather than reproduce memorised answers.	Use criteria before, during, and after performance; compare contract with evidence.
Weak self-monitoring → weekly reflective journals → metacognitive autonomy	Developing	Journal quality reportedly moved from summary to critical evaluation, indicating gradual internalisation.	Use prompts requiring evidence, causal explanation, and a next-step decision.
Class-bound Arabic use → learner-created communities and digital content → transfer autonomy	Promising	Lajnah lughawiyyah and public content demonstrate new purposes and audiences beyond assignment completion.	Collect longitudinal evidence and include audience feedback and ethical digital-literacy criteria.

5. Discussion

The evaluation demonstrates that learner autonomy at UII Dalwa developed through the conversion of context into responsibility. The pesantren environment already supplied Arabic texts, routines, and communicative occasions, but antecedent exposure did not automatically produce self-directed academic behaviour. This finding supports the distinction between opportunity and agency in autonomy research. Learners may inhabit a resource-rich environment and still rely on a teacher to select, sequence, and validate every learning object. The initial dependence on talaqqi and lecturer-prepared files was therefore not a simple lack of motivation. It reflected an established epistemic arrangement in which legitimate knowledge arrived through recognised authorities and assessment requirements.³³

³³Phil Benson, "Autonomy in Language Teaching and Learning," *Language Teaching* 40, no. 1 (2007): 21–40, especially pp. 21–28.; Chun Lai, "Modeling Teachers' Influence on Learners' Self-Directed Use of Technology for Language Learning outside the Classroom," *Computers & Education* 82 (2015): 74–83, especially pp. 74–78.

CTL altered that arrangement by creating a reason for students to seek, decide, and perform. The dormitory critique and failed-teaching video were effective because they generated problems that could not be resolved by copying a definition. This is consistent with situated and problem-based learning scholarship, which argues that knowledge becomes usable when learners interpret it within meaningful activity. The present evaluation adds a more specific insight: contextual relevance supported autonomy only when accompanied by an epistemic transfer of responsibility. A familiar topic without inquiry would have remained a lecturer's example; an authentic problem required students to identify what they did not know and construct a route toward an answer.³⁴

The halaqah findings also refine the idea of collaborative autonomy. Collective learning is sometimes presented as the opposite of autonomy because students depend on peers. The evidence here supports the view that autonomy includes responsible interdependence. Rotating roles and logbooks made contribution, coordination, and self-monitoring visible. They reduced the possibility that group work would hide passivity and allowed students to practise regulation in a social space. This interpretation is consistent with later autonomy frameworks that integrate interaction and negotiated responsibility rather than treating independent learning as solitary work. It is also compatible with virtual-exchange research showing that meaningful collaboration can produce linguistic, intercultural, and strategic learning when tasks require genuine contribution.³⁵³⁶

Modelling functioned as a bridge between dependence and agency. The use of senior students and native-speaker podcasts diversified authority and showed that standards could be inferred from multiple examples. This matters in a setting where the lecturer had previously been the primary source of correctness. Models did not eliminate the need for instruction; they helped learners compare possibilities and form internal criteria. Similar principles underlie authentic learning environments and feedback literacy, where exemplars and comparisons enable learners to make increasingly independent judgments. The attainable model of a senior student may have been especially important for self-efficacy because it represented a plausible trajectory rather than an unreachable expert ideal.³⁷

³⁴John Seely Brown, Allan Collins, and Paul Duguid, "Situated Cognition and the Culture of Learning," *Educational Researcher* 18, no. 1 (1989): 32–42, especially pp. 32–37.; David Gijbels et al., "Effects of Problem-Based Learning: A Meta-Analysis from the Angle of Assessment," *Review of Educational Research* 75, no. 1 (2005): 27–61, especially pp. 27–35.; John R. Savery, "Overview of Problem-Based Learning: Definitions and Distinctions," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning* 1, no. 1 (2006): 9–20, especially pp. 12–16.

³⁵Robert O'Dowd, "What Do Students Learn in Virtual Exchange? A Qualitative Content Analysis of Learning Outcomes across Multiple Exchanges," *International Journal of Educational Research* 109 (2021): 101804, pp. 1–13, especially pp. 7–11.

³⁶William Littlewood, "Autonomy: An Anatomy and a Framework," *System* 24, no. 4 (1996): 427–435, especially pp. 427–430.; Sara Cotterall, "Promoting Learner Autonomy through the Curriculum: Principles for Designing Language Courses," *ELT Journal* 54, no. 2 (2000): 109–117, especially pp. 109–112.; Hayo Reinders, "Towards a Classroom Pedagogy for Learner Autonomy: A Framework of Independent Language Learning Skills," *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 35, no. 5 (2010): 40–55, especially pp. 46–49.

³⁷Jan Herrington and Ron Oliver, "An Instructional Design Framework for Authentic Learning Environments," *Educational Technology Research and Development* 48, no. 3 (2000): 23–48, especially pp.

Authentic assessment was the transaction most directly linked to goal-setting and strategic autonomy. The learning contract required students to state intentions before performance, while debate and microteaching exposed those intentions to real-time demands. This sequence resembles self-regulation cycles in which goals guide action and reflection informs adaptation. The microteaching scenario also prevented overreliance on memorisation because unexpected management problems required responsive decision making. Authenticity therefore did not mean reproducing the real world in every detail; it meant preserving the uncertainty, criteria, and consequences that make knowledge actionable.³⁸

Reflection transformed CTL experience into a continuing learning process. The reported movement from summary-like journals to critical self-evaluation indicates that students were gradually learning how to use evidence about their own performance. This supports formative assessment research showing that feedback has limited value unless learners understand goals, compare current work with criteria, and take action. The combination of contracts, journals, and performance tasks helped students generate an internal feedback loop. Rubrics or criteria can strengthen this process when they remain tools for judgment and revision rather than bureaucratic scoring devices. More recent work also emphasises that feedback literacy is jointly shaped by teacher design and student uptake, while students' perceptions of self-assessment depend on its clarity, usefulness, and implementation conditions.^{39,40,41}

The emergence of digital resource practices illustrates a contemporary form of learner autonomy. Students' use of *Maktabah Syamilah*, scholarly journals, and digital dictionaries suggests movement from content receipt to resource orchestration. Technology did not serve merely as a delivery channel; it expanded the repertoire through which students could investigate and verify. This aligns with research showing that self-regulated use of technology outside class depends on purpose, strategy, and teacher support. It also resonates with Indonesian evidence that learners can develop

23–30.; David Carless and David Boud, “The Development of Student Feedback Literacy: Enabling Uptake of Feedback,” *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 43, no. 8 (2018): 1315–1325, especially pp. 1315–1319.; David Nicol, “The Power of Internal Feedback: Exploiting Natural Comparison Processes,” *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 46, no. 5 (2021): 756–778, especially pp. 756–764.

³⁸Barry J. Zimmerman, “Becoming a Self-Regulated Learner: An Overview,” *Theory Into Practice* 41, no. 2 (2002): 64–70, especially pp. 64–67.; Paul R. Pintrich, “A Conceptual Framework for Assessing Motivation and Self-Regulated Learning in College Students,” *Educational Psychology Review* 16, no. 4 (2004): 385–407, especially pp. 389–395.

³⁹David Carless and Naomi Winstone, “Teacher Feedback Literacy and Its Interplay with Student Feedback Literacy,” *Teaching in Higher Education* 28, no. 1 (2023): 150–163, especially pp. 150–156.; Zi Yan et al., “Students’ Perceptions of Self-Assessment: A Systematic Review,” *Educational Research Review* 38 (2023): 100503, pp. 1–18, especially pp. 5–12.

⁴⁰Anders Jonsson and Gunilla Svingby, “The Use of Scoring Rubrics: Reliability, Validity and Educational Consequences,” *Educational Research Review* 2, no. 2 (2007): 130–144, especially pp. 130–137.; Ernesto Panadero and Anders Jonsson, “The Use of Scoring Rubrics for Formative Assessment Purposes Revisited: A Review,” *Educational Research Review* 9 (2013): 129–144, especially pp. 129–136.

⁴¹David J. Nicol and Debra Macfarlane-Dick, “Formative Assessment and Self-Regulated Learning: A Model and Seven Principles of Good Feedback Practice,” *Studies in Higher Education* 31, no. 2 (2006): 199–218, especially pp. 199–205.; John Hattie and Helen Timperley, “The Power of Feedback,” *Review of Educational Research* 77, no. 1 (2007): 81–112, especially pp. 86–90.; Valerie J. Shute, “Focus on Formative Feedback,” *Review of Educational Research* 78, no. 1 (2008): 153–189, especially pp. 153–160.

agency through multilingual and digitally mediated practices when institutional spaces allow them to draw on diverse resources . Digital Arabic storytelling and content production can similarly connect language learning with meaning-making and audience awareness . In language production, self-regulated writing research also links strategy use and self-efficacy with performance .⁴²⁴³⁴⁴⁴⁵

The transfer outcomes are particularly important because they show that autonomy was not confined to better completion of course tasks. Student-initiated *lajnah lughawiyyah* and online Arabic content suggest that learners began to identify purposes and audiences beyond assessment. Informal and mobile language-learning research describes this movement as a shift from assigned activity to learner-created opportunity . The ability to review a lesson plan, organise a discussion group, or produce a public explanation also links autonomy with prospective professional identity. For Arabic education students, the outcome is not only personal language proficiency but the capacity to design and sustain learning for themselves and others.⁴⁶

Stake's model clarifies why these outcomes should not be attributed to CTL as an abstract label. The vertical contingency was strongest where a constraining antecedent was met by a targeted transaction. Dependence on lecturer resources was addressed through guided source exploration; passive participation was addressed through rotating roles; assessment orientation was redirected through authentic performance; and weak self-monitoring was addressed through contracts and journals. The horizontal congruence was also generally positive because observed transactions corresponded with

⁴²Ting Sun and Chuang Wang, "College Students' Writing Self-Efficacy and Writing Self-Regulated Learning Strategies in Learning English as a Foreign Language," *System* 90 (2020): 102221, pp. 1–17, especially pp. 5–12.

⁴³Rizky Pratiwi Lestariyana and Handoyo Puji Widodo, "Engaging Young Learners of English with Digital Stories: Learning to Mean," *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 8, no. 2 (2018): 489–495, especially pp. 490–494.; Muhammad Yusuf Salam et al., "Digital Storytelling in Arabic Language Learning: Meaning-Making, Engagement, and Learner Production," *Arabiyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab dan Kebahasaaraban* 10, no. 2 (2023): 200–216, especially pp. 206–212.

⁴⁴Martin Lamb, "'It Depends on the Students Themselves': Independent Language Learning at an Indonesian State School," *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 17, no. 3 (2004): 229–245, especially pp. 229–237.; Noprival et al., "Learner Autonomy and Digital Practices in Indonesian Language-Education Contexts," *Computer Assisted Language Learning Electronic Journal* 22, no. 3 (2021): 1–20, especially pp. 7–14.

⁴⁵Chun Lai and Mingyue Gu, "Self-Regulated Out-of-Class Language Learning with Technology," *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 24, no. 4 (2011): 317–335, especially pp. 318–322.; Hayo Reinders and Cynthia White, "20 Years of Autonomy and Technology: How Far Have We Come and Where to Next?," *Language Learning & Technology* 20, no. 2 (2016): 143–154, especially pp. 143–148.; René F. Kizilcec, Mar Pérez-Sanagustín, and Jorge J. Maldonado, "Self-Regulated Learning Strategies Predict Learner Behavior and Goal Attainment in Massive Open Online Courses," *Computers & Education* 104 (2017): 18–33, especially pp. 20–28.; Olga Viberg et al., "The Current Landscape of Learning Analytics in Higher Education," *Computers in Human Behavior* 89 (2020): 98–110, especially pp. 100–106.

⁴⁶Robert Godwin-Jones, "Emerging Technologies: Autonomous Language Learning," *Language Learning & Technology* 15, no. 3 (2011): 4–11, especially pp. 4–8.; Ju Seong Lee and Kilryoung Lee, "Is It Possible to Enhance L2 Learners' Motivation and Engagement with Informal Digital Learning of English?," *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 34, nos. 1–2 (2021): 1–24, especially pp. 5–12.; Olga Viberg and Agnes Kukulska-Hulme, "Fostering Learners' Self-Regulation and Collaboration through Mobile Language Learning," *British Journal of Educational Technology* 54, no. 3 (2023): 1125–1143, especially pp. 1128–1135.

the intended CTL components. The evaluation nevertheless identified partial incongruence: lecturer scaffolding remained extensive, reflection developed gradually, and the corpus offered less direct student voice than lecturer interpretation. These qualifications are analytically useful because responsive evaluation should preserve variation and tension rather than force a uniformly positive verdict.

Several practical implications follow. First, contextual tasks should begin with a consequential problem, not merely a familiar example. Second, inquiry should include explicit resource-literacy instruction so that independence does not become unguided searching. Third, learning communities require role accountability and records of individual contribution. Fourth, models should be plural and attainable, including peers, alumni, experts, authentic texts, and digital media. Fifth, authentic assessment should connect a personal goal, public or professional performance, criteria, feedback, and a subsequent plan. Sixth, reflection prompts should require evidence and a next-step decision. These principles can be implemented in Arabic speaking, reading, writing, translation, and pedagogy courses.

The findings also have implications for technology-enhanced higher education. Hybrid learning systems and learning analytics can assist monitoring, but autonomy should not be reduced to dashboard compliance or algorithmic recommendations. Technology is autonomy-supportive when students understand why a resource is useful, can judge its credibility, and can decide how it contributes to a self-defined purpose. Post-pandemic pedagogical research similarly cautions that technology, pedagogy, and social presence must be balanced rather than treated as interchangeable components. In UII Dalwa's context, digital resources are most valuable when connected to pesantren knowledge traditions and authentic Arabic participation.⁴⁷⁴⁸

This study has limitations. The available corpus was lecturer-heavy and did not preserve a verified participant count, complete session metadata, or a systematic set of student interview quotations. The evaluation could therefore identify mechanisms and observed changes but could not estimate prevalence or compare subgroups. The analysis was retrospective and did not include a pre-defined longitudinal follow-up to determine whether transfer persisted. ATLAS.ti supported coding, retrieval, memoing, and relational display, but software cannot substitute for interpretive validity. Future research should include student voices across autonomy profiles, preserve document-level identifiers, collect repeated observations, examine learning artefacts over time, and combine qualitative countenance evaluation with carefully selected performance measures.

Conclusion

47Chrysi Rapanta et al., "Balancing Technology, Pedagogy and the New Normal: Post-Pandemic Challenges for Higher Education," *Postdigital Science and Education* 3 (2021): 715–742, especially pp. 719–731.

48Inge Molenaar, "Towards Hybrid Human-AI Learning Technologies," *European Journal of Education* 57, no. 4 (2022): 632–645, especially pp. 632–640.; Philip H. Winne, "Open Learner Models Working in Symbiosis with Self-Regulating Learners: A Research Agenda," *International Journal of Artificial Intelligence in Education* 31 (2021): 446–459, especially pp. 449–455.

This Stake's Countenance evaluation shows that CTL fostered learner autonomy at UII Dalwa by reorganising the relationship among context, task, resource, peer, lecturer, and assessment. The principal antecedent challenge was not a lack of Arabic exposure but a learning culture in which students commonly waited for explanation, materials, and examination direction. Transactions that made a difference were those that transferred bounded but consequential responsibility to learners: diagnosing contextual problems, investigating sources, rotating collaborative roles, comparing multiple models, setting goals through learning contracts, performing in authentic situations, and interpreting experience through weekly reflection.

The observed outcomes included more independent use of digital and scholarly Arabic resources, stronger self-evaluation, more accountable collaboration, student-initiated language communities, and Arabic content creation beyond the classroom. These outcomes were congruent with CTL intentions and plausibly contingent on the implemented transactions. They should nevertheless be understood as emerging autonomy because lecturer scaffolding remained important and the corpus did not establish long-term persistence or equal change for every learner.

The central contribution of the study is therefore a design proposition: contextual exposure becomes learner autonomy only when it is organised as a cycle of meaningful problem orientation, guided inquiry, accountable collaboration, visible modelling, authentic performance, feedback use, and reflective transfer. For Arabic education programmes in pesantren-based universities, this cycle offers a way to preserve valued traditions of guided learning while progressively enabling students to become purposeful users, evaluators, and creators of Arabic knowledge.

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