



Review Article

# Trends, Challenges, and Benefits of the Flipped Classroom Model in EFL Context: A Systematic Literature Review

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the trends, challenges, and benefits of Flipped Classroom (FC) instruction within the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. Instructional techniques in the EFL environment have been attempting to transition from a teacher-centered to a student-centered approach. The advances in educational technology have enabled EFL educators to contemplate the FC model to achieve their educational aims. This study examined the current literature on the FC approach within the EFL setting and offers instructional recommendations for EFL trainers. This report synthesizes global quantitative and qualitative studies on flipped learning within the EFL context. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) was utilized for selection, screening, and reporting objectives. This study investigated scholarly articles published within the last ten years (2014-2024), culminating in the inclusion of eighty-eight articles for comprehensive analytical examination. There has been a heightened prevalence of FC in the EFL context since 2020. The analysis indicated that the majority of studies on FC within the EFL environment concentrated on students' language competencies, engagement, and academic performance. To enhance the evidence base and facilitate wider, context-aware adoption, future research should investigate under-explored domains, diversify methodologies (longitudinal and comprehensive qualitative designs).

**Keywords:** *Flipped classroom, EFL, systematic literature review, PRISMA, language learning*

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## INTRODUCTION

The flipped classroom (henceforth FC) concept has evolved as a revolutionary educational strategy that reverses the teaching and learning process in conventional classroom dynamics (Lundin et al., 2018; Stöhr & Adawi, 2018). In the FC model, learners initially access new content via online resources, such as explanation videos or texts related to the course subject, at their own leisure, prior to attending class, so that in the class, they can focus on participating in practical applications, discussions, and problem-solving exercises. Whereas in the traditional model, educators present material during class sessions, then students undertake practice and assignments autonomously, typically from home. Various studies have significantly informed that the FC model has revolutionized traditional educational methods by inverting the standard dynamics of instruction and learning, which has demonstrated its advantages.

The FC is a technology-enhanced teaching strategy that has gained popularity in recent years. This model creates a more interactive and engaging classroom environment since it allows students to work together to apply what they have learned and discuss it with their classmates and educators. In other words, it fosters a more student-centric and interactive learning atmosphere in EFL classrooms (Keskin, 2023a; McLaughlin et al., 2014; Tan et al., 2015). The incorporation of technology in EFL classes has transformed teacher-centered instruction into a more interactive, student-centered, and communicative approach. Therefore, the FC model has attracted widespread attention and interest from EFL practitioners and researchers, and is regarded as a promising pedagogical approach to increase learning outcomes (Z. Li & Li, 2022a).

*“In the FC model, learners initially access new content via online resources, such as explanation videos or texts related to the course subject, at their own leisure, prior to attending class”*

In the past decade, the implementation of the FC has been recorded in diverse educational settings and nations, indicating its increasing prevalence (Kostka & Marshall, 2018). Prior research across various disciplines has demonstrated its efficacy in enhancing student performance and retention (F. Zhang et al., 2024; Q. Zhang et al., 2021). The FC approach enhances the language skills of EFL learners, including writing, reading, speaking, grammar, and listening (Samiei & Ebadi, 2021). Y.-N. Huang & Hong (2016) indicated that the FC model has a favorable, significant, and rapid effect on the information and communication technology (ICT) of experimental groups. The FC has been shown to foster learner engagement and augment their motivation for learning. Furthermore, Meta-analyses indicate that FCs positively impact students' academic performance (Q. Zhang et al., 2021).

Even though the FC model has some benefits, it also has certain issues, the biggest of which is that educators as well as learners need to get used to this new way of teaching. Research has shown that there are problems with implementation, such as students not being ready and not having access to technology (Wang, 2017). Mehring (2016) noticed that the majority of EFL instructors were reluctant to implement FCs due to the increased effort

compared to conventional classes. The EFL educators expressed concerns about the FC model. They asserted that students' access to technology and technical proficiency may be restricted, potentially leading to complications in the learning process (G. Lee & Wallace, 2017). Furthermore, it was determined to be hazardous to depend on student assuming responsibility for their own learning.

The increasing number of studies on the usefulness of the FC model in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting requires a thorough literature review to integrate current research and highlight gaps, trends, and overall effectiveness (Fung et al., 2021; Rahmatika et al., 2024). One of the main reasons for doing a thorough literature review is to bring together all of the current research on the FC in EFL settings. A thorough study that combines these results can show the similarities in effective implementation strategies and the problems that arise, making it easier to understand the best ways to do things and the potential challenges that come with implementing FCs (Arslan, 2020). Moreover, current research suggests that although the FC approach often enhances engagement and academic achievement among EFL learners, significant variations in student experiences exist across different contexts (Li & Li, 2022a). Moreover, a comprehensive literature review facilitates the identification of trends in flipped EFL education and establishes a basis for future empirical research (Linling & Abdullah, 2023).

This systematic literature review (SLR) aims to synthesize existing research on the implementation and results of FCs in the English as a Foreign Language context. There are two research questions that lead this SLR:

- (1) What are the trends in research on FCs in the EFL context?
- (2) What challenges and benefits are reported in the reviewed articles?

This review aims to add to the growing body of research on FCs and give EFL teachers, curriculum designers, and researchers who want to improve how foreign languages are taught some useful information.

## METHOD

### Research Method

This systematic literature review (SLR) looked into the FC model in the context of EFL. It focused on research trends and both the benefits and challenges that have been reported. To ensure a transparent and replicable review process, the review followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines (Moher et al., 2009). This SLR has four parts:

#### *Identification Phase*

The primary database utilized for this review was the SCOPUS database. The selection of SCOPUS was based on its extensive repository of peer-reviewed articles across various fields, including education and linguistics, thereby providing a robust platform for sourcing relevant literature in the context of EFL. The literature search was conducted using the

following Boolean search string within the Title, Abstract, and Keywords (TITLE-ABS-KEY) fields:

("flipped classroom" OR "flipped learning" OR "flipped model") AND (EFL OR "English for foreign language" OR "English as foreign language").

The articles were subsequently evaluated against the inclusion and exclusion criteria to confirm their alignment with the framework required for the evaluation, as illustrated in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

*Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for this SLR*

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
a. Articles published between 2014 and 2024	a. Conference paper, book chapter, review, conference paper, errata, editorial, book
b. Journal articles	b. Article in press for journal publication
c. Articles focused on the implementation of the FC model specifically within the EFL context	c. Articles that are not published in the English language
d. Articles with Gold open access type (full paper is available)	d. Non-empirical works and review articles

### *Screening Phase*

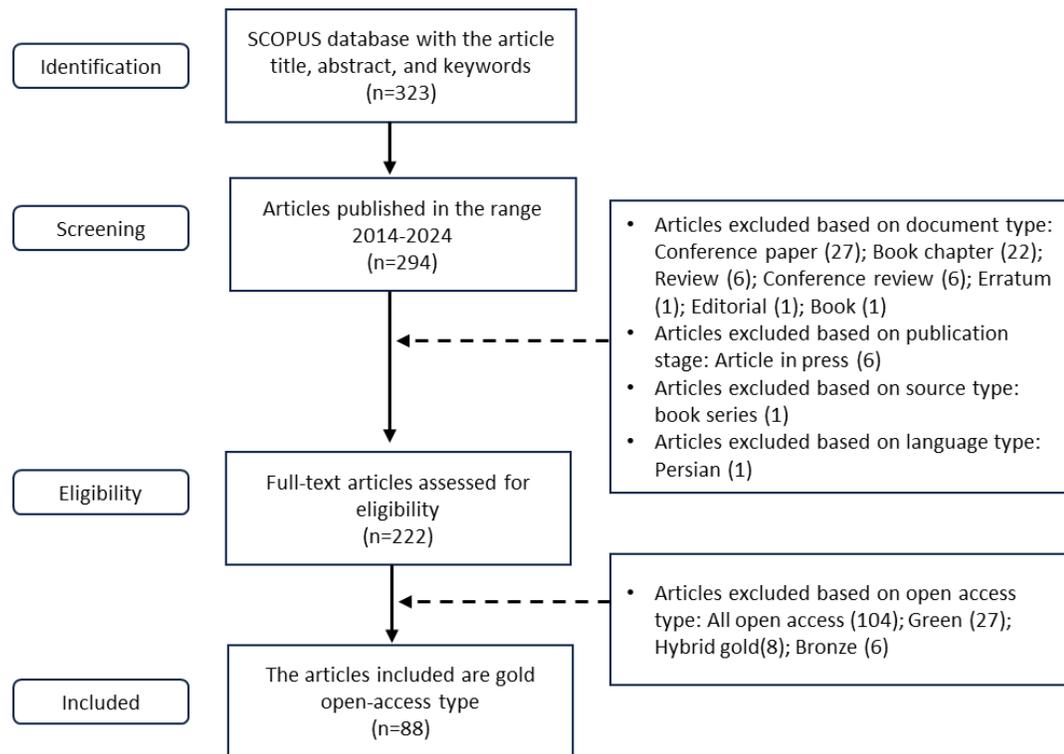
The screening phase involved two stages. The first stage excluded articles published outside the 2014-2024 period, and non-peer-reviewed articles (such as proceedings, book chapters, books, etc.), including only articles published in journals. Furthermore, articles not in English were also excluded. The next stage was to check and ensure that the submitted articles truly focused on the implementation of the FC model in an EFL context, contained empirical data, and that the full text articles are available.

### *Eligibility Phase*

During this phase, the articles were reviewed and assessed for their eligibility. The articles must conform to the inclusion and exclusion criteria outlined in Table 1. The downloaded text was eligible, and restricted articles were omitted. The selection of articles must be aligned to address the research questions. Consequently, both inclusion and exclusion criteria were essential in the formulation of high-quality research.

**Figure 1.**

Flowchart of screening and selection procedure (Moher et al., 2009)



### Inclusion Phase

In the final inclusion phase, all full-text articles that passed the eligibility assessment were included in the systematic review. Of the 222 articles, 134 were excluded because they were not open access or the full text was unavailable. The remaining 88 journal articles met all established criteria, published between 2014 and 2024, were empirical research on the implementation of FCs in EFL contexts, English-language, and accessible, and were therefore included in the qualitative synthesis. These 88 studies formed the evidence base for our analysis of the effects of FCs on teaching and learning in EFL environments. The details are summarized from the searching process using the PRISMA flow chart in Figure 1.

## FINDINGS

### The Trends in Research of the FC Model in the EFL Context

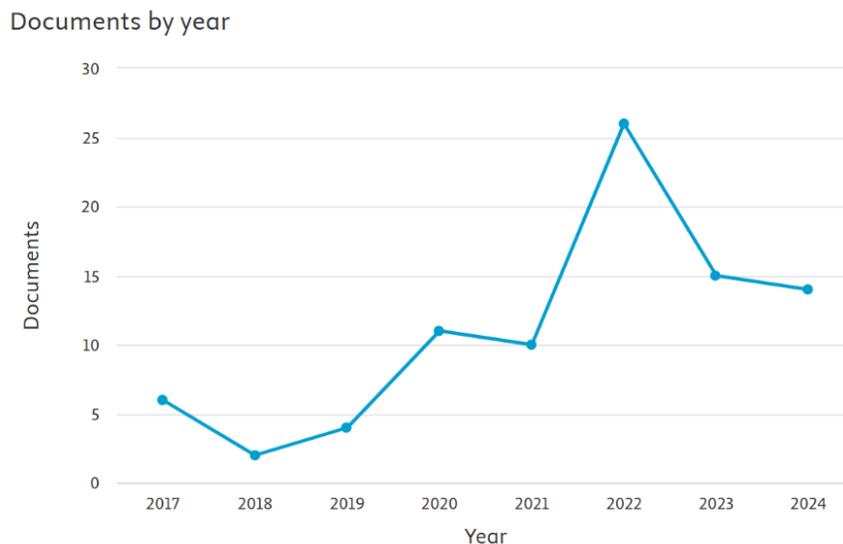
In addressing RQ1, the authors analyzed subcategories including the annual distribution of studies, the geographical distribution of the nations in which the studies were done, the research methodologies employed, and the focused aspect of the studies. This section provides descriptions for each category.

### *Distribution of the Studies by Years*

Figure 2 shows that research related to the FC model published in SCOPUS began in 2017.

**Figure 2.**

*The number of articles by year*

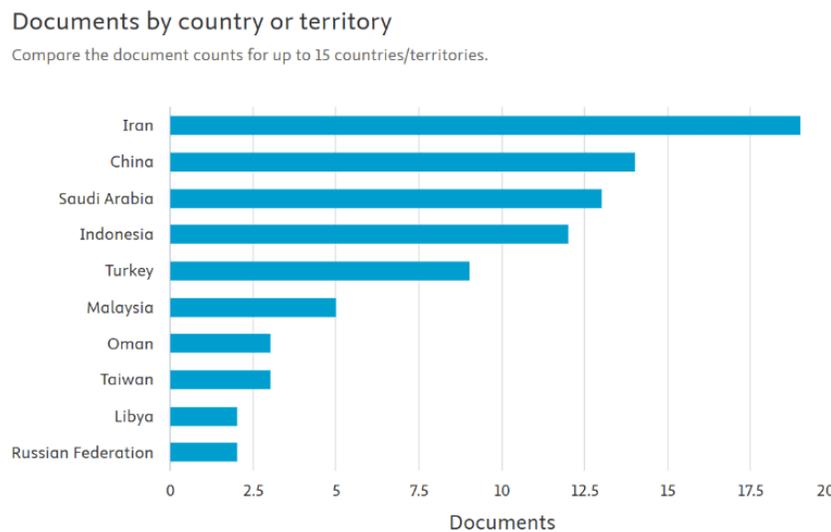


The distribution of research on FCs in EFL contexts shows a significant upward trend over time. The lowest point in the number of publications was in 2018 (2 studies), although there was little research on this topic between 2017 and 2019, there was a fairly steady increase starting in 2021. A significant spike occurred in 2022, which also saw the peak number of publications, with 26 studies. This indicates that around this year, following the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increase in research interest in this topic. After this peak, the number of publications decreased slightly in 2023 (15 studies) and 2024 (14 studies), but remained higher than in previous years, indicating continued interest in the topic. Overall, this upward trend reflects the growing research focus on FC implementation in EFL settings over the past ten years.

### *Distribution by Countries*

Figure 3 indicates that the majority of studies on FCs in EFL contexts originated from authors in Iran (19 publications), followed by China (14) and Saudi Arabia (13). The first three countries excel in research output, indicative of their growing investment and interest in novel EFL teaching methodologies. Moreover, notable contributions emerged from Indonesia (12 papers) and Turkey (9 papers), reflecting vigorous academic involvement in EFL research, especially in tailoring blended learning approaches to regional educational requirements. Countries like Malaysia (5 papers) and Oman (3 papers) also surfaced, indicating a regional dedication to investigating flipped learning methodologies. Nonetheless, there remain a limited number of nations with publications addressing FCs in EFL contexts. This indicates that the implementation of FC models in EFL environments has not progressed uniformly across nations.

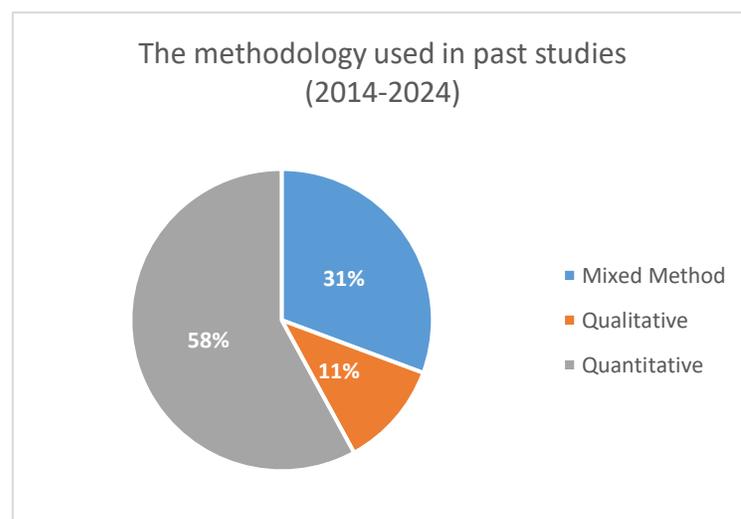
**Figure 3.**  
*The countries where the article published*



***The Research Methodology in the Reviewed Articles***

The distribution of research methods used in flipped-classroom studies between 2014 and 2024 is depicted in Figure 4. Quantitative designs predominate, comprising 58% of the analyzed studies. Mixed-method approaches account for the second biggest proportion at 31%, indicating a tendency towards the integration of quantitative data with qualitative insights. Qualitative research constitutes merely 11% of the total, suggesting that comprehensive, non-numeric investigations of flipped-classroom phenomena are still quite uncommon.

**Figure 4.**  
*Research methods used in the reviewed article*



### *The Focused Aspects in the Reviewed Articles*

The examined publications encompassed a variety of facets pertaining to the FC in EFL settings. Based on Table 2, the predominant focus of investigation was students' writing performance, featured in 16 research studies, indicating a significant interest in the impact of flipped learning on productive language abilities. This was succeeded by students' engagement/performance (10 studies) and students' motivation (8 studies), underscoring the significance of behavioral and affective reactions to flipped learning contexts. Additional significant areas of focus encompassed learners' perspectives on the efficacy of the flipped model (7 studies), reading comprehension (7 studies), speaking performance (6 studies), and self-regulated learning (6 studies), highlighting the cognitive and metacognitive development facilitated by flipped instruction. Topics that were investigated less frequently were spoken English performance (4 studies), learner autonomy (3 studies), and learning self-efficacy (2 studies). Factors like as intercultural sensitivity, problem-solving, vocabulary retention, instructor expertise, and active engagement were mentioned only once, suggesting potential deficiencies or nascent areas for future investigation within the FC and EFL context.

**Table 2.**

*The Focused Aspects in Reviewed Articles*

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Article</i>
<b>Self-regulated learning</b>	7	(Samadi et al., 2024; Zhong, 2024); (Alkhalaf, 2023); (Y. Wang, 2023); (M. Öztürk & Çakiroğlu, 2021); (Izadpanah, 2022); (Nicholes, 2020)
<b>Speaking competence/performance</b>	6	(Zhong, 2024); (Pan et al., 2022); (A Roohani & Etemadfar, 2021); (Yoon & Kim, 2022); (Abdullah et al., 2019); (Abdullah et al., 2020)
<b>Students writing performance</b>	16	(Muluk & Dahliana, 2024); (Khosravi et al., 2023); (Alpat & Görgülü, 2024); (Mohammad & Khan, 2023); (Maharani et al., 2023); (Zhao & Yang, 2023); (Syarifuddin & Husnawadi, 2022); (Sengul et al., 2022); (Yoon & Kim, 2022); (Ali Roohani & Rad, 2022); (Shooli et al., 2022); (Afrilyasanti et al., 2017); (Ekmekci, 2017); (Ginting, 2018); (H.-W. Huang et al., 2024); (Kanwal, 2024)
<b>EFL learners' perspectives on the efficacy of the flipped learning model.</b>	7	(Jamshed et al., 2024); (Keskin, 2023b); (Maharani et al., 2023); (Mahmood & Mohammadzadeh, 2022); (F. Li, 2022); (Butt, 2014); (Yan et al., 2024)

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Article</i>
<b>Students' listening skills/performance</b>	5	(Heredia-Arboleda et al., 2024); (Birova et al., 2023); (Ebadi et al., 2022); (Qiu & Luo, 2022); (Etemadfar et al., 2020)
<b>Learners' motivation</b>	8	(Aldaghri, 2024; Kantamas, 2023; Liu et al., 2023); (Pan et al., 2022); (Jeong, 2021); (Josifović-Elezović, 2022); (Yaşar & Polat, 2021); (B. Lee, 2017)
<b>Grammar</b>	6	(Aldaghri, 2024); (Alkhalaf, 2023); (Rad, 2021); (Noroozi et al., 2020); (Alolaywi & Alkhalaf, 2024); (Suranakkharin, 2017)
<b>Learners' engagement</b>	8	(Liu et al., 2023); (Pang, 2022); (Z. Li & Li, 2022a); (Ravandpour, 2022); (Pasaribu & Wulandari, 2021); (Josifović-Elezović, 2022); (Yaşar & Polat, 2021); (Nicholes, 2020)
<b>Students' achievements/performance</b>	10	(Alzahrani, 2022; Baltaci, 2022; Bin-Hady & Hazaea, 2022; Kantamas, 2023; Zheng & Lee, 2023); (Hajebi, 2020); (Yaşar & Polat, 2021); (Alnuhayt, 2018); (Teng, 2017); (Yavuz & Ozdemir, 2019)
<b>Critical thinking</b>	5	(Alpat & Görgülü, 2024); (Pang, 2022); (Ravandpour, 2022); (Etemadfar et al., 2020); (Yulian, 2021)
<b>Students' perspective/ attitudes</b>	7	(Gasmi & Al Nadabi, 2023); (Jeong, 2021); (Josifović-Elezović, 2022); (Huynh & Nguyen, 2019); (Afrilyasanti et al., 2017); (Zainuddin, 2017); (Alnuhayt, 2018)
<b>Reading comprehension</b>	9	(Yalew & Filate, 2024); (AlManafi et al., 2023); (Y. Wang, 2023); (Quadir et al., 2022); (Uran, 2022); (Samiei & Ebadi, 2021); (Maharsi et al., 2021); (Yulian, 2021); (Khonamri et al., 2020)
<b>Students' oral English performance</b>	4	(Fischer & Yang, 2022); (E Solimani et al., 2019); (Yaroslavova et al., 2020); (Martínez, 2020)
<b>Active participation</b>	1	(Ebadi et al., 2022)
<b>EFL learners' autonomy</b>	3	(Izadpanah, 2022); (Ravandpour, 2022); (Aprianto et al., 2020)
<b>Teacher knowledge and efficacy</b>	1	(M. Zhang & Fang, 2022)

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Article</i>
Strategies and challenges of FC	1	(Al-Naabi, 2022)
Learning self-efficacy	2	(Luo & Gan, 2022); (B. Lee, 2017)
Intercultural sensitivity (ICS) and intercultural effectiveness (ICE)	1	(Khabir et al., 2022)
Vocabulary recall and retention	1	(Soltanabadi et al., 2021)
Problem solving	1	(Khonamri et al., 2020)

### Challenges & Benefits of the FC Model in EFL Context

To address RQ2, the researchers identified and analyzed the following subcategories: the challenges and benefits of the FC method within the EFL environment. The subsequent section provides a detailed description of the subcategories.

#### *The challenges reported from the reviewed article*

The comprehensive literature review revealed numerous significant issues related to the application of the FC methodology in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. These issues are varied and encompass educational, technical, and learner-related dimensions. It can be seen in Table 3 that an often-mentioned issue is the lack of access to digital material, unstable internet connectivity, and technology-related problems (n = 16). Numerous studies highlighted the substantial impact of technology infrastructure on the efficacy of FC implementation, particularly in developing contexts where dependable internet connection and sufficient digital tools are often lacking. A restricted duration of class time (n = 15) constituted a significant obstacle. Numerous studies indicate that although flipped classrooms facilitate enhanced active learning in class, educators frequently have time limitations in addressing all essential material and effectively engaging every student. A persistent issue is the deficiency of experience, resources, and readiness in executing the FC model (n = 15). Numerous instructors are unacquainted with the flipped approach, lacking the requisite pedagogical training and institutional support to shift from conventional teaching approaches.

**Table 3**  
*Challenges reported in reviewed articles*

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Articles</b>
Unfamiliarity with The FC model as a teaching method/limited preparation	10	(H.-W. Huang et al., 2024); (Kanwal, 2024); (Liu et al., 2023); (Zheng & Lee, 2023); AlManafi et al., 2023); (Bin-Hady & Hazaea, 2022); (Kantamas,

Challenges	Frequency	Articles
		(2023); (Mahmood & Mohammadzadeh, 2022); (Uran, 2022); (Teng, 2017)
Limited class time	15	(H.-W. Huang et al., 2024); (Y. Wang, 2023); (Syarifuddin & Husnawadi, 2022); (Sengul et al., 2022); (Pang, 2022); (Uran, 2022); (Al-Naabi, 2022); (F. Li, 2022); (Sengul et al., 2022); (Pang, 2022); (Uran, 2022); (M. Zhang & Fang, 2022); (Al-Naabi, 2022); (Yaşar & Polat, 2021); (Huynh & Nguyen, 2019); (B. Lee, 2017)
Students' low/difficulties in self-regulation/self-directed learning	7	(Samiei & Ebadi, 2021); (Jamshed et al., 2024); (Ha, 2024); (Alkhalaf, 2023); (Fischer & Yang, 2022); (Uran, 2022); (Jeong, 2021); (M. Öztürk & Çakiroğlu, 2021)
Students' low motivation	8	(Muluk & Dahliana, 2024); (Jamshed et al., 2024); (Kanwal, 2024); (Liu et al., 2023); (Kantamas, 2023); (Quadir et al., 2022); (Quadir et al., 2022); (Syarifuddin & Husnawadi, 2022)
Time management issues	13	(Muluk & Dahliana, 2024); (Gasmi & Al Nadabi, 2023); (Birova et al., 2023); (Izadpanah, 2022); (Sengul et al., 2022); (Pang, 2022); (M. Zhang & Fang, 2022); (Al-Naabi, 2022); (Pang, 2022); (M. Zhang & Fang, 2022); (Al-Naabi, 2022); (M. Öztürk & Çakiroğlu, 2021); (Maharsi et al., 2021); (Butt, 2014)
Different students' behaviors and abilities	9	(Muluk & Dahliana, 2024); (Gasmi & Al Nadabi, 2023); (Mohammad & Khan, 2023); (Maharani et al., 2023); (Zhao & Yang, 2023); (Ebadi et al., 2022); (Quadir et al., 2022); (Syarifuddin & Husnawadi, 2022); (Teng, 2017)
Lack of expertise/resources/and preparation in implementing the FC	15	(Jamshed et al., 2024); (Fischer & Yang, 2022); (Ebadi et al., 2022); (M. Zhang & Fang, 2022); (Al-Naabi, 2022); (Uran, 2022); (M. Zhang & Fang, 2022); (Ravandpour, 2022); (Al-Naabi, 2022); (Pasaribu & Wulandari, 2021); (Josifović-Elezović, 2022); (Maharsi et al., 2021); (Butt, 2014); (B. Lee, 2017); (Suranakkharin, 2017)
Heavy workload of learning	6	(Ha, 2024); (Keskin, 2023b); (Z. Li & Li, 2022b); (Uran, 2022); (Etemadfar et al., 2020); (A Roohani & Etemadfar, 2021)
Distraction from social media hinders students	1	(Ha, 2024)

Challenges	Frequency	Articles
from engaging with the recorded materials		
Lack of access to digital media; unstable internet connection/ technology issue	16	(Heredia-Arboleda et al., 2024); (Gasmi & Al Nadabi, 2023); (AlManafi et al., 2023); (Birova et al., 2023); (Mahmood & Mohammadzadeh, 2022); (Z. Li & Li, 2022b); (Uran, 2022); (Sengul et al., 2022); (Mahmood & Mohammadzadeh, 2022); (Z. Li & Li, 2022b); (Uran, 2022); (Baltaci, 2022); (Soltanabadi et al., 2021); (Khonamri et al., 2020); (Yavuz & Ozdemir, 2019); (B. Lee, 2017); (Alnuhayt, 2018); (Ginting, 2018)
Levels of technology skill among students	4	(Aldaghri, 2024); (M. Zhang & Fang, 2022); (Luo & Gan, 2022); (Sengul et al., 2022);
Challenges in appropriate assessment criteria	2	(F. Li, 2022); (Pang, 2022)

### *The benefits reported from the reviewed article*

The comprehensive literature review identified numerous advantages linked to the widespread use of the FC model in EFL settings. These advantages encompass linguistic, cognitive, emotional, and intercultural areas. As shown in Table 3, a commonly cited benefit is the positive effect on students' writing performance (n = 13). Multiple studies have shown that students in FC environments exhibit enhanced writing skills, organization, and coherence as a result of greater exposure to linguistic input and increased opportunity for practice. The improvement of English language skills and performance (n = 13) was a commonly acknowledged advantage. Students allegedly enhanced various skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and overall fluency, due to the blended approach of FC and its focus on active involvement with learning resources.

**Table 4.**

*The benefits reported in the reviewed articles*

Benefits	Frequency	Article
Enhance grammar skill	6	(Alolaywi & Alkhalaf, 2024); (Mohammad & Khan, 2023); (Alkhalaf, 2023); (Rad, 2021); (Noroozi et al., 2020); (Suranakkharin, 2017)
Positive impact on students' writing performance	13	(H.-W. Huang et al., 2024); (Muluk & Dahliana, 2024); (Kanwal, 2024); (Khosravi et al., 2023); (Alpat & Görgülü, 2024); (Mohammad & Khan, 2023); (Zhao & Yang, 2023); (Yoon &

Benefits	Frequency	Article
		Kim, 2022); (Ali Roohani & Rad, 2022); (Shooli et al., 2022); (Afrilyasanti et al., 2017); (Ekmekci, 2017); (Ginting, 2018)
Enhance students' engagement	12	(H.-W. Huang et al., 2024); (Samadi et al., 2024); (Aldaghri, 2024); (Ebadi et al., 2022); (Ravandpour, 2022); (M. Öztürk & Çakıroğlu, 2021); (Pasaribu & Wulandari, 2021); (Josifović-Elezović, 2022); (Yulian, 2021); (Yaşar & Polat, 2021); (Zainuddin, 2017); (Alnuhayt, 2018)
Promotes flexibility and accessibility	2	(Ha, 2024); (Kantamas, 2023); (Zhao & Yang, 2023)
Enhancing students' listening skill	5	(Heredia-Arboleda et al., 2024); (Birova et al., 2023); (Etemadfar et al., 2020); (Martínez, 2020); (Yaroslavova et al., 2020)
Enhance academic passion, motivation and responsibility	6	(Liu et al., 2023); (Kantamas, 2023); (Pan et al., 2022); (Jeong, 2021); Josifović-Elezović, 2022); (B. Lee, 2017)
Enhance english language proficiency/performance	13	(Zheng & Lee, 2023); (Bin-Hady & Hazaea, 2022); (Kantamas, 2023); (Fischer & Yang, 2022); (Alzahrani, 2022); (Mahmood & Mohammadzadeh, 2022); (Al-Naabi, 2022); (F. Li, 2022); (M. Öztürk & Çakıroğlu, 2021); (Hajebi, 2020); (Yaşar & Polat, 2021); (Alnuhayt, 2018); (Teng, 2017)
Enhance critical thinking, problem solving, autonomy	10	(Alpat & Görgülü, 2024); (Keskin, 2023b); (Ravandpour, 2022); (Josifović-Elezović, 2022); (Etemadfar et al., 2020); (Yulian, 2021); (Yavuz & Ozdemir, 2019); (Aprianto et al., 2020); (Zainuddin, 2017); (Samadi et al., 2024)
Improvement in Reading comprehension/performance	4	(Y. Wang, 2023); (Uran, 2022); (Samiei & Ebadi, 2021); (Khonamri et al., 2020)

Benefits	Frequency	Article
Improved vocabulary	4	(Ebadi et al., 2022); (Ali Roohani & Rad, 2022); (Soltanabadi et al., 2021); (Yaroslavova et al., 2020)
Improvement in intercultural sensitivity (ICS) and intercultural effectiveness (ICE)	1	(Khabir et al., 2022)
Enhance speaking performance	5	(Pan et al., 2022); (A Roohani & Etemadfar, 2021); (Yoon & Kim, 2022); (Elahe Solimani et al., n.d.); (Abdullah et al., 2020)

A significant advantage is increased student involvement ( $n = 12$ ), as students demonstrated more participation, concentration, and motivation throughout lessons. This is intricately associated with the augmentation of academic enthusiasm, drive, and accountability ( $n = 6$ ), highlighting the significance of FC in fostering learner autonomy and proactive learning behaviors. The evaluation indicated that FC fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and autonomy ( $n = 10$ ), since students must independently analyze knowledge prior to class and apply their comprehension through collaborative assignments during class.

Further language-related enhancements encompass grammar proficiency ( $n=6$ ), auditory skills ( $n = 5$ ), reading comprehension/performance ( $n = 4$ ), speaking proficiency ( $n = 4$ ), and vocabulary acquisition ( $n= 4$ ). These improvements are frequently ascribed to the multimodal and recurrent exposure to linguistic information offered by pre-class materials. Furthermore, the FC technique was determined to enhance flexibility and accessibility in learning ( $n= 2$ ), enabling students to progress at their own pace and review content as required. Certain research emphasized enhancements in intercultural sensitivity (ICS) and intercultural effectiveness (ICE) ( $n= 2$ ), especially within varied or multinational educational contexts.

The review indicates that the FC approach possesses significant pedagogical merit in EFL instruction, promoting language development, learner autonomy, motivation, and crucial abilities vital for academic achievement.

## DISCUSSION

This review reveals that FC research in EFL contexts has increased substantially since 2017, peaking with 26 publications in 2022 before settling at 15 in 2023 and 14 in early 2024 (Figure 2). The surge in publications in 2022 likely reflects increased attention from researchers and academics to technology-based FC pedagogy, a result of the global shift to online and hybrid instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic (Linling & Abdullah, 2023; Rahmatika et al., 2024). The increasing number of publications indicates continued interest in the implementation of the FC model. As Kostka & Marshall stated that in the past decade, the

implementation of the FC has been recorded in diverse educational settings and nations, indicating its increasing prevalence (Kostka & Marshall, 2018).

Despite its global emergence, the geographic distribution of articles related to this FC model research appears uneven (Figure 3). Over 50% originate from Iran (19), China (14), and Saudi Arabia (13). While other regions are barely represented. This concentration raises important concerns regarding the transferability and contextual adaptability of the FC model. This lack of representation is alarming, particularly given that most successful flipped classroom implementations documented in more developed contexts may not be readily accessible or transferable to areas with distinct sociocultural dynamics and infrastructural conditions (Hung, 2017). Successful implementations in developed regions may not be easily applicable to low-resourced settings, necessitating tailored strategies (Ying & Ayub, 2022).

Methodologically, based on a review of the selected articles, quantitative designs dominate (58%), with mixed methods (31%) and qualitative studies (11%). While quantitative metrics provide clear measures of learning achievement, a deeper understanding of the implementation process of this learning model is still needed because measurable outcomes often fail to capture the nuanced, process-oriented dimensions of FC implementation (Creswell & Clark, 2017). There is a clear necessity for additional qualitative and longitudinal research to investigate the dynamics of teacher-student interactions, the growth of learner autonomy, and the long-term sustainability of flipped classroom practices. This corresponds with the literature's call for more interpretive and contextually aware methodologies in educational research (Yin, 2018).

The thematic focus of previous studies shows a clear gap, with writing skills being the most researched aspect (16 studies), followed by enhancing engagement (10 studies) and enhancing motivation (8 studies). Other aspects, however, receive less attention. This emphasis on productive skills and psychological implications indicates that researchers are mostly exploring elements that closely correspond with the concepts of active learning, a fundamental component of flipped classroom pedagogies as delineated by Bergmann & Sams (2016). Moreover, empirical research indicates that although FC can yield significant benefits in writing, the potential improvements in reading, listening, and speaking skills should not be disregarded. Some studies show that students who take part in flipped classrooms (FC) can do better on both receptive and productive tasks, with a focus on how their language skills improve in a variety of ways (Ebadi et al., 2022; Heredia-Arboleda et al., 2024; Martínez, 2020; Qiu & Luo, 2022). These findings affirm the need for more integrated research methodologies that can simultaneously assess several language skills, rather than treating writing as an isolated focus.

Challenges reported in the literature center on technological and logistical barriers: unstable internet access and limited digital resources (16 studies), inadequate instructor preparation (15 studies), limited class time (15 studies), and student self-regulation difficulties (7 studies). These findings confirm previous claims that the mere use of technology instruments does not ensure the successful execution of FC. The efficacy of this

pedagogical paradigm is contingent upon systemic support, comprehensive professional development for educators, and the use of deliberate scaffolding tactics that enhance learning (Mehring, 2016; Yaraghi & Shafiee, 2018). Öztürk indicates that although EFL teachers showed enthusiasm for incorporating autonomous learning concepts into their pedagogical practices, their actual implementation was affected by various extrinsic variables, such as inadequate training and lack of institutional support (Öztürk, 2019). The findings underscore the need for a more supportive educational framework that might enhance teachers' abilities to effectively promote learner autonomy within the FC model. Moreover, the difficulties surrounding self-regulated learning underscore this larger issue of readiness among students to manage their learning independently. Recent research has revealed significant problems that students encounter while trying to manage their own learning in flipped classrooms. Öztürk & Çakıroğlu (2021) assert that the appropriate application of self-regulated learning strategies, including self-evaluation, organization, and assistance-seeking, in flipped EFL classrooms is crucial for improving language abilities.

Despite its challenges, the benefits of FC in EFL contexts have been demonstrated. Beneficial results encompass advancements in writing skills (13 studies), general linguistic proficiency (13 studies), and student engagement (12 studies), in addition to improved critical thinking, problem-solving, and learner autonomy (10 studies). These findings support theoretical frameworks that highlight active and experiential learning (Abdullah et al., 2019), wherein students are intellectually involved in the construction and application of information. The FC model seems to promote a more customized interactive educational setting that corresponds with 21st-century learning competencies (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012).

These results underscore the potential of the FC model to foster active, student-centered learning and develop productive skills and higher-order capacities. However, without a wider range of methodologies and contexts, these promising results may overestimate the applicability of FC across the spectrum of EFL environments.

## CONCLUSION

This SLR has mapped a decade (2014–2024) of research on FC model implementation in EFL contexts, revealing both clear strengths and critical gaps. The number of publications has steadily remained up, reaching its highest point in 2022 when the pandemic forced educational institutions to switch to hybrid learning. Research on the FC model in EFL settings is mostly done in Iran, China, and Saudi Arabia. Quantitative and mixed methods studies are the most common, and they mostly look at writing skills, student engagement, and motivation. Empirical research consistently demonstrates the FC model's potential to enhance EFL learners' proficiency, autonomy, and classroom interaction. However, there are still a number of problems that make it hard to scale up, such as limited technology, instructors who are not ready, and students who have trouble regulating themselves. Also, the observed gains are not long-lasting because there has not been enough longitudinal and qualitative research. To strengthen the evidence base and support broader, context-responsive adoption, further studies should examine the model's flexibility within various

educational frameworks, emphasize longitudinal and qualitative analyses, and concentrate on comprehensive skill development to guarantee the FC model's efficacy and equity across all EFL contexts.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest reported by the authors

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