

Al-‘Arabiyyah li al-Aṭfāl: Development of Teaching Materials for Early Childhood Arabic Language Learning in Brati Subdistrict, Grobogan Regency

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Abstract

Education is the face of a nation, while the curriculum is the spirit that guides its educational system. Among the various components of the curriculum, teaching materials play a crucial role because they serve not merely as learning aids but also as an essential foundation for achieving educational objectives. Therefore, teaching materials need to be continuously developed and updated in accordance with learners' needs, technological developments, and the demands of contemporary education. This study aims to develop an Arabic language textbook specifically designed for early childhood learners and to determine its validity and feasibility as a learning resource for Arabic language instruction. This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model, consisting of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The developed product was evaluated through expert validation and feasibility testing. The expert validation results showed that the design expert assessment reached 90%, the language expert assessment reached 90%, and the material expert assessment reached 92%. The feasibility test was conducted in two stages. In the small-scale trial, the scores were 90% for design, 92% for language, and 90% for material. Meanwhile, the large-scale trial resulted in scores of 92% for design, 93% for language, and 92% for material. These findings indicate that the developed Arabic language textbook is highly valid and feasible for use as a learning resource for early childhood Arabic language instruction in Brati Subdistrict, Grobogan Regency. The findings imply that appropriately designed and validated Arabic teaching materials can support more systematic, age-appropriate, and engaging Arabic language learning for early childhood learners. The developed textbook may also serve as a practical reference for teachers and as a foundation for further development of technology-integrated and contextually relevant Arabic learning materials for young learners.

Keywords: Teaching Materials, Textbooks, Arabic Language, Research and Development

INTRODUCTION

Education is not something static without development. On the contrary, education is something dynamic, which continues to evolve in line with the times and technological developments. The development of education is also one of the characteristics of a developing and advanced country. It is impossible for a country to develop and progress if its education system is static and stagnant (Dafit & Mustika, 2021).

This development in education can be seen, among other things, in the development of the curriculum. A good curriculum will produce competent, good, and strong individuals. Conversely, a poor curriculum will produce weak and incompetent individuals. It must be understood that the curriculum is the core and spirit of education. Therefore, the curriculum plays a vital role; it is the "heart" that ensures the

educational process runs smoothly and is able to achieve the desired goals (Stadtländer, 2009; Uyuni & Adnan, 2020).

When discussing curriculum, there are many components involved. Among the components contained in the curriculum are: (1) objectives, (2) material or content, (3) strategies and methods, and (4) evaluation (Chu, 2025; Niemelä, 2022). Therefore, when discussing the curriculum, it automatically includes discussions related to educational objectives, teaching materials, strategies, methods, and educational media, as well as evaluation (Kayanja et al., 2025; Suwandi, 2025). Among the many aspects contained in the educational curriculum, teaching materials are an integral and important part. Teaching materials do not only serve as learning aids. More than that, teaching materials are the core substance that acts as a bridge between the curriculum and the students for whom they are created and systematically compiled to achieve the desired and expected goals and competencies (Hadi, Dzulfikar, et al., 2026; Xin et al., 2025).

There are many types and kinds of teaching materials, including: (1) printed teaching materials such as books, modules, articles, handouts, etc., (2) audio teaching materials such as cassettes, audio recordings, and educational radio programmes, (3) audiovisual teaching materials such as films, videos, and television programmes (Nabulsi et al., 2023; Yalçın et al., 2023). Regardless of the type of teaching material, teaching materials are a series of materials that are structured and systematically arranged by teachers to be delivered and taught to students in learning activities. In this regard, teachers are the most important key to creating effective and efficient learning activities. Therefore, teachers must always pay attention to many aspects when selecting the teaching materials they will use. Furthermore, in this era of modern curricula, teachers must constantly strive to create and develop their own teaching materials as best as possible based on the needs of their students and, of course, in line with the demands of the times and technology (Nuraini et al., 2025; Nurul et al., 2026).

The development of teaching materials is a common practice that must always be carried out by teachers in order to carry out daily learning activities. The development of the times and technology has certainly also influenced people's mindsets (in this case, students) regarding their future needs. Therefore, teaching materials must be developed in accordance with the needs and demands of the times, relevant to developments in the times and technology, relevant to the conditions and needs of students, and must be up to date with the latest conditions in which the teaching materials are created and developed (Kayanja et al., 2025; Luthfiani et al., 2026).

The existence of teaching materials is so important in the implementation of a curriculum in the education system that it must always be considered and developed in accordance with the developments of the times and technology. It is on this basis that this research was conducted, namely, an effort to develop teaching materials, namely, Arabic teaching materials for early childhood. As is widely known, Arabic language learning is compulsory for schools under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, as stipulated in KMA No. 184 of 2019 concerning Guidelines for Curriculum Implementation in Madrasahs (Alhumaid, 2023; Armaijn et al., 2024).

This research will result in the development of Arabic teaching materials for early childhood (*al-arabiyyah li al-athfal*) that are tailored to the conditions and needs of students and in line with the latest developments in technology.

Regarding the development of Arabic teaching materials for early childhood, there have actually been previous studies that also conducted research related to the development of Arabic teaching materials. For example, research conducted by Kurniawan Djody, S. Suharsiwi, Muhyiddin Tohir Tamami, and colleagues entitled "Development of Arabic language teaching materials based on information technology for elementary schools". In this study, Djody and colleagues developed information technology-based Arabic

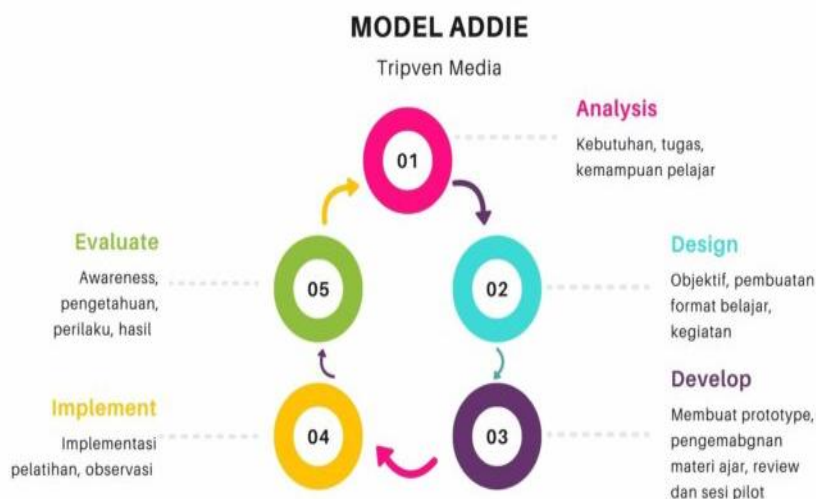
teaching materials for primary school children. Our research focused on developing Arabic teaching materials for early childhood education based on the mastery of as many vocabulary words as possible. Another study is "Development of Contextual and Curriculum-Based Arabic Teaching Materials in the Digital Age," written by Nurul Atifah Suyuti and Andi Abdul Hamzah. In this study, Nurul and Hamzah attempted to discuss innovations in the development of Arabic teaching materials that utilise digital technology. Meanwhile, our study focused on the development of new teaching materials for early childhood education with the aim of mastering as much Arabic vocabulary as possible at an early age.

Given the importance of teaching materials in ensuring effective and efficient learning processes, we conducted research on the development of teaching materials, particularly Arabic language materials for early childhood education. It is hoped that the resulting product will serve as an adequate reference source for Arabic language learning activities for early childhood education.

METHOD

This study employs and utilises the Research and Development (R&D) method. R&D itself is generally a creative and systematic work process oriented towards designing and developing new products based on human knowledge (Stadtlander, 2009). R&D generally aims to discover and create new things based on original concepts. R&D first emerged and developed rapidly in Europe in the 1960s, where it was often used primarily in the fields of technology and business. It was not until the 1980s that Borg and Gall used and developed R&D as a research model design in the field of education, with the aim and orientation of producing a new product to improve the quality of education.

In relation to this research, the final product will be Arabic teaching materials for early childhood, compiled based on an analysis of the needs and characteristics of the students. The product development procedure refers to the ADDIE model. ADDIE itself is actually an acronym for Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation, all of which are processes and methods used in this R&D model (ADDIE). This means that this research will go through a series of stages and processes, including analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation, with adjustments made to suit the context and limitations of the research. R&D based on the ADDIE model can be described as follows:



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Teaching Material

As mentioned above, teaching materials are an important component, even arguably the most important component, of a curriculum. If the curriculum is the spirit of education, then teaching materials are the spirit of the curriculum. Without teaching materials, it would be impossible for the educational process of learning to take place. Why? Because it is these teaching materials that provide all the scientific information in each field of scientific study. It is through teaching materials that teachers carry out the process of knowledge transfer. Thus, teaching materials are a medium that helps teachers to facilitate and clarify the process of knowledge transfer that they carry out with their students. These teaching materials can also be created and developed independently by teachers who, of course, understand the characteristics of their students, the surrounding social environment, and, of course, the demands of the surrounding community. Teaching materials are any form of written or unwritten materials that can be used by teachers to carry out learning activities in the classroom. In other words, teaching materials are a set of materials that are systematically arranged as a guide for learning conducted by teachers with their students. Similar to this definition is the opinion expressed by Pannen, who states that textbooks are materials that are systematically compiled and produced for use by teachers and students in their learning activities. Teaching materials come in various forms, including books, modules, handouts, worksheets, models or mock-ups, articles, journals, newspapers, and audio and audiovisual teaching materials.

In writing and compiling teaching materials, there are many characteristics that must be considered, namely: (1) teaching materials must be closely related to competency standards and basic competencies, (2) teaching materials must contain skill-based content, (3) teaching materials must be consistent, (4) teaching materials must meet the principle of adequacy, (5) teaching materials must contain motivational elements for students so that they can further master the material, (6) teaching materials must be relevant and connected to previous teaching materials, (7) teaching materials must be created and compiled in a coherent and systematic manner, and (8) practical.

Larlen et al. quote Prastowo, who argues that the purpose of compiling and developing teaching materials is to: (1) assist students in learning, (2) provide a variety of teaching materials, (3) facilitate learning for students, and (4) make learning activities more interesting.

Teaching materials compiled and developed by teachers or experts in their fields play a very important role in the continuity of learning activities. Among the functions of textbooks are: (1) guidelines for students, which aim to direct all student activities in the learning process, (2) a guideline for teachers, lecturers, and other teaching staff who will direct all their activities in the learning process, as well as the substance of the competencies that should be taught and trained to students, and (3) a tool for evaluating the achievement and or mastery of student learning outcomes from the learning activities they have undergone.

Arabic for Early Childhood

Arabic is the language used by the entire Arab world. This means that it is not only Saudi Arabia that speaks Arabic. Rather, many other countries are also included in the Semitic family. Arabic is a macro language with more than 27 sub-languages within it. According to Musthafa al-Ghalayini, Arabic is a series of sentences that are arranged into a language and used by Arab communities to express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings. Meanwhile, for Indonesians, Arabic is a foreign language that requires a series of learning processes to master. This means that Arabic is a second language for Indonesians, whose first language is, of course, Indonesian.

In general, language acquisition is divided into two types, namely: (1) language acquisition, which is the acquisition of the first language, or better known as the mother tongue. The mother tongue is the language that a child first hears from birth, which they then naturally imitate and master. And (2) language learning, which refers to the mastery and acquisition of a second language (in this case, Arabic), a process that a child undergoes through formal and conscious learning.

Arabic for Children is an Arabic language learning approach designed specifically for early childhood, taking into account the comprehensive characteristics of child development, including cognitive, linguistic, emotional, and social aspects. This approach is based on the view that language acquisition in children occurs naturally through language exposure (input), imitation, and the use of language in meaningful communicative contexts, rather than through the explicit teaching of grammatical rules.

From a cognitive development perspective, young children are in the preoperational stage, where thinking processes are still concrete and contextual. Therefore, Arabic language learning for children emphasises the use of visual media, real objects, songs, games, and motor activities as the main means of introducing simple vocabulary and expressions in Arabic. Language is positioned as a communication tool that is integrated with children's learning experiences, rather than as an abstract system of symbols that is separate from the context of everyday life.

Linguistically, this approach is in line with language acquisition theory, which emphasises the importance of comprehensible input and natural language use. Children are introduced to Arabic language structures through simple, repetitive patterns in meaningful situations, enabling them to develop language competence implicitly. The focus of learning is directed towards listening and speaking skills as a foundation, while reading and writing skills are developed gradually according to the child's readiness.

Emotional and social aspects are important elements in the implementation of Arabic li al-athfal. The learning process is designed to be enjoyable, safe, and free from academic pressure, thereby increasing children's motivation and active participation. Social interaction between teachers and students, as well as among students, is utilised as a vehicle for authentic Arabic language use through collaborative activities such as singing, role-playing, and storytelling.

Furthermore, this approach integrates the principle of learning by doing by directly involving students in physical activities and/or direct experiences in learning activities (Arabic) delivered by teachers, with the hope that students will be able to directly observe and witness the learning process they are undergoing. The application of methods such as Total Physical Response (TPR) enables children to associate language meaning with body movements, which has been proven effective in improving vocabulary comprehension and retention. Thus, Arabic for Children aims not only to develop early linguistic competence but also to foster a positive attitude towards Arabic as a foundation for learning at subsequent levels of education.

The results of R&D research using the ADDIE model to produce a product in the form of an Arabic language textbook for children will be described in detail as follows:

Analysis

At this stage, the analysis was conducted directly at Raudlatul Athfal YATPI Pucang by interviewing teachers related to Arabic language subjects. These interviews were related to the position of Arabic language subjects at Raudlatul Athfal YATPI Pucang, whether as local content subjects or compulsory subjects. In addition to examining the position of Arabic language subjects, interviews were also conducted to obtain information related to the textbooks used and referred to in daily Arabic language learning. In analysing the textbooks, the researcher attempted to examine in depth whether the content of the Arabic textbooks at the

school was in accordance with the Ministry of Religious Affairs' regulations. It was found that the textbooks used were arbitrary and frequently changed, and were often simply downloaded from Google and YouTube. Based on government regulations through the Ministry of Religious Affairs, namely the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 3302 of 2024 concerning "Learning Outcomes for Islamic Education and Arabic Language in the Independent Curriculum at Madrasahs", the learning outcome for Arabic at Raudlatul Athfal is "Simple Arabic Vocabulary". Based on the Ministry of Religious Affairs' decree, the researcher attempted to analyse the textbooks used by Raudlatul Athfal YATPI Pucang.

Design

At this stage, a design will be developed for an Arabic textbook for early childhood education at Raudlatul Athfal YATPI Pucang. The design of this Arabic textbook for early childhood education will be made as attractive as possible with colourful illustrations in line with the psychology of early childhood. This design will include several criteria, namely: (1) the physical design of the book (cover and core pages), (2) text design for the content (written in Dubidam font), (3) visual design (the visual design will be full colour with cute and attractive background images), and (4) content component design (including the foreword, introduction, table of contents, core teaching themes, and bibliography).

In general, the design of this Arabic teaching material will include: cover page, foreword, introduction, table of contents, material along with simple exercises, and a bibliography.

Development

At this stage, researchers began compiling and creating Arabic textbooks for early childhood. These textbooks are designed with full colour illustrations on every page. The purpose of these illustrations is to help children understand simple Arabic. The images displayed are animations that correspond to the vocabulary presented. As mentioned above, this material or textbook will be written using Microsoft Office with the Dubidam font, which is attractive and appealing to children. The font size is between 18 and 20.

The size of the textbook is close to B5, so it feels large to look at because each vocabulary word is accompanied by a picture. The layout uses portrait orientation. The cover and everything related to the image design will be created using CorelDRAW.

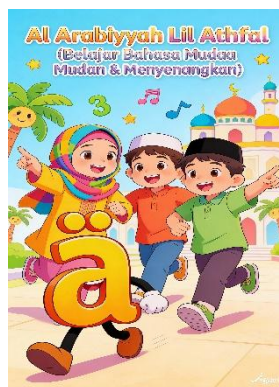


Figure 1. Contents and Front Cover of Textbook

Implementation

After the materials or teaching books have been completed and developed, the researchers then attempt to implement them. There are several stages in this implementation process: (1) the validity test stage.

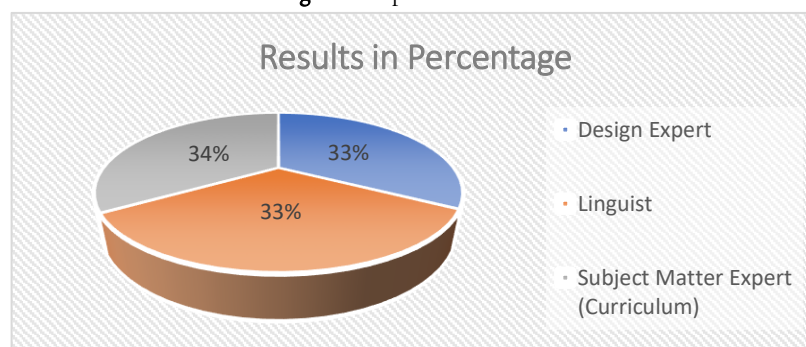
This stage is carried out by validating the teaching books with experts, namely, graphic design experts, language experts, and subject matter experts (curriculum). The results of the validation sheets given to the experts, namely the design experts, showed that 90% were highly valid. The validation sheets given to the language experts also showed highly valid results with a score of 90%. The sheets given to the subject matter experts were also highly valid, with a score of 92%. If these results are presented in tabular form, they are as follows:

Table 1. Expert Validation Results

Expert Validation	Results in Percentage
Design Expert	90%
Linguist	90%
Subject Matter Expert (Curriculum)	92%

If the experts' validation test is illustrated in a diagram, the results are as follows:

Figure 2. Expert Validation Results



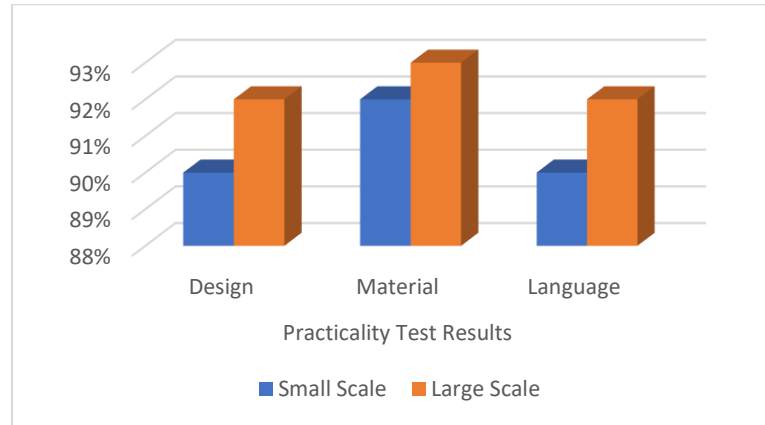
After the validation stage by experts, researchers improved and revised the Arabic textbook for early childhood based on the notes provided by the experts. (2) Practical testing stage. This practical testing stage was conducted in two ways, namely: a small-scale trial involving teachers at Raudlatul Athfal YATPI Pucang and a large-scale trial involving teachers at Raudlatul Athfal in Brati Subdistrict, Grobogan Regency, involving approximately 8 Raudlatul Athfal. The results of the trial of the textbook we compiled are as follows:

Table 2. Practicality Test of Arabic Textbooks

Scale	Practicality Test Results		
	Design	Material	Language
Small Scale	90%	92%	90%
Large Scale	92%	93%	92%

If the results of the practicality test are illustrated in a diagram, the results are as follows:

Figure 3. Results of the Practicality Test of Arabic Textbooks



The above results indicate that the small-scale practicality test of the Arabic textbook for early childhood is suitable for use in learning without any revisions. The same applies to the results of the large-scale practicality test, which is suitable for use in Arabic language learning for early childhood.

The development of Arabic textbooks for early childhood education has been carried out in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The Ministry of Religious Affairs regulates Arabic language learning for early childhood with the aim of enabling students to understand simple vocabulary in Arabic. On that basis, this book was developed with content consisting of simple Arabic vocabulary related to the students' surroundings (for example: body parts, family members, numbers, Hijaiyah letters, colours, animals, fruits, and vegetables).

Evaluations

The final point in the development of books or teaching materials using the ADDIE model is evaluation. Here, the evaluation is carried out by researchers based on brief notes provided by Raudlatul Athfal teachers during the practical implementation phase. After the evaluation is carried out by researchers based on input and notes from Raudlatul Athfal teachers, the final product is an Arabic textbook for early childhood education.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the development of Arabic teaching materials for early childhood was driven by a real gap between curriculum expectations and the teaching materials available in the field. The initial analysis at Raudlatul Athfal YATPI Pucang showed that the Arabic textbooks used by teachers were frequently changed and, in some cases, obtained from online sources such as Google and YouTube without a clear and consistent reference to the curriculum. This condition indicates that the availability of teaching materials does not necessarily guarantee their suitability for early childhood learners. Teaching materials need to be systematically organized, relevant to learning objectives, appropriate to learners' characteristics, and practical for teachers to use. In this study, the development of the textbook was therefore based on the learning outcome established by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, particularly the emphasis on simple Arabic vocabulary for Raudlatul Athfal students (Hadi, Listiyani, et al., 2026; Kuswadi et al., 2026). The selected vocabulary, including body parts, family members, numbers, colours, animals, fruits, and vegetables, was connected to children's immediate environment, making the material more contextual and

meaningful. This finding is consistent with the theoretical perspective that teaching materials function not merely as supplementary learning aids but as an important medium for transferring knowledge and directing learning activities (Adebayo et al., 2026; Raina et al., 2026)s. For early childhood Arabic learning, this function becomes particularly important because children are still developing their cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional capacities. Consequently, Arabic should not be introduced primarily through abstract grammatical explanations, but through concrete, meaningful, and enjoyable experiences. The textbook developed in this study reflects this principle through the use of colourful illustrations, child-friendly visual representations, relatively large text, and vocabulary accompanied by pictures. This approach is in line with previous studies emphasizing that visual and contextual media can facilitate children's understanding of Arabic vocabulary and increase their motivation to participate in learning. Thus, the visual component of the textbook should not be understood merely as decoration; rather, it functions as a pedagogical bridge between unfamiliar Arabic words and children's concrete experiences (Aboubacar Barry et al., 2025; Ichsan & Susanti, 2025).

The suitability of this approach is further supported by the validation results. The design expert gave a score of 90%, the language expert 90%, and the subject-matter expert 92%, indicating that the product was considered highly valid from visual, linguistic, and content perspectives. These results suggest that the textbook successfully integrates three important dimensions of teaching-material quality. Attractive design alone would not be sufficient if the language were inappropriate for children, while linguistically accurate content would also be less useful if the presentation were not consistent with children's developmental characteristics. The findings therefore reinforce the view that early childhood teaching materials need to integrate pedagogical content with appropriate language and visual presentation. The results are also consistent with previous R&D studies using the ADDIE model, which demonstrate that systematic needs analysis, design, development, expert validation, and revision can produce teaching materials that are more responsive to learners' needs.

The practicality findings strengthen this interpretation. The small-scale trial produced scores of 90% for design, 92% for material, and 90% for language, while the large-scale trial involving teachers from approximately eight Raudlatul Athfal in Brati Subdistrict resulted in 92%, 92%, and 93%, respectively. The relatively high scores in both trials indicate that the textbook was not only acceptable according to experts but also considered usable by teachers in actual learning contexts. The improvement in scores in the large-scale trial further suggests that the product maintained its practicality when implemented beyond the initial development setting. This finding supports previous research on Arabic teaching-material development showing that products designed according to learners' characteristics and validated through expert and user evaluation tend to demonstrate high levels of feasibility and practicality. However, the present study offers a particular contribution by developing a printed Arabic textbook that is directly aligned with the learning outcomes of Raudlatul Athfal and the local conditions of early childhood education in Brati Subdistrict.

The findings also demonstrate the relevance of the ADDIE model as a systematic framework for developing early childhood Arabic teaching materials. The analysis stage identified the problems in existing materials, the design stage translated children's developmental characteristics into visual and content decisions, the development stage produced the textbook, and the implementation and evaluation stages provided opportunities for expert validation, practical testing, and revision based on teachers' feedback. In this sense, ADDIE functioned not merely as a procedural sequence but as a mechanism for ensuring that the final product remained connected to the actual needs of teachers and learners. This is consistent with previous development research that has used ADDIE to produce Arabic learning materials with acceptable levels of validity and practicality.

Nevertheless, the findings need to be interpreted within the scope of the research design. The validation scores of 90–92% and practicality scores of 90–93% provide strong evidence regarding the validity and feasibility of the developed textbook, but they do not by themselves establish its effectiveness in improving children's Arabic learning outcomes. The study did not employ a pre-test and post-test design or a comparison group to measure changes in children's vocabulary mastery after using the textbook. Therefore, the principal contribution of this study lies in producing a curriculum-aligned, developmentally appropriate, and practically usable Arabic textbook for early childhood rather than demonstrating causal effects on learning achievement. Future research can extend these findings by examining the effectiveness of the textbook through experimental or quasi-experimental designs. Overall, the study confirms that the development of Arabic teaching materials for early childhood should begin with an analysis of actual instructional needs and subsequently integrate curriculum requirements, children's developmental characteristics, appropriate visual representation, and teacher usability into a systematic development process.

CONCLUSION

This Arabic language textbook for early childhood, developed in accordance with the EDDIE method, was created and designed to assist teachers in teaching Arabic to all their students. The creation of this Arabic language textbook for early childhood education is expected to make a positive contribution to Arabic language learning in all Raudlatul Athfal in Brati Subdistrict, Grobogan Regency. The existence of this Arabic language textbook for early childhood education is also expected to make children more comfortable in learning Arabic. Referring to the results of the feasibility test of this textbook, namely the feasibility test by experts as validators, the results are as follows: (1) design experts scored 90%, (2) language experts at 90%, and (3) subject matter (curriculum) experts at 92%, this textbook is declared valid and highly suitable for use as a learning resource for Arabic at the Raudlatul Athfal level in Brati Subdistrict, Grobogan Regency. In addition to validation tests conducted by experts, researchers also conducted feasibility tests on Raudlatul Athfal teachers, both small-scale feasibility tests with a result of 91% and large-scale feasibility tests with a result of 90%. The results of these two feasibility tests show that this Arabic textbook for early childhood is very valid and very suitable for use as a reference book for teaching Arabic to early childhood.

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