



DESIGN AND VALIDATION OF THEMATIC ARABIC TEXTBOOK BASED ON DEDUCTIVE APPROACH FOR STRENGTHENING MAHARAH KITABAH STUDENT OF ISLAMIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

The low mastery of Arabic writing skills (maharah kitabah) among elementary school students remains a significant challenge in Arabic language learning in Indonesia. Many students at the MI level still struggle to write hijaiyyah letters correctly, connect letters to form words, and write vocabulary independently due to the limited availability of systematic and structured teaching materials. This study aims to (1) design a thematic Arabic textbook based on a deductive approach for strengthening maharah kitabah of MI students, and (2) validate the textbook based on expert assessment. This research employs a Research and Development (R&D) method using the ADDIE model. The textbook was developed using the Canva application and contains materials organized into three thematic units: sports, my friends, and garden. Expert validation results showed scores of 89.41% from content experts, 94.55% from design experts, and 92.14% from learning experts, all categorized as "very valid." These findings indicate that the designed thematic Arabic textbook based on the deductive approach meets the validity criteria and is suitable for use in maharah kitabah learning at the Islamic Elementary School level. These findings are expected to serve as a practical reference for Arabic language teachers at the Islamic Elementary School level in designing systematic, structured, and visually engaging writing skill teaching materials that align with student developmental characteristics.

Keywords: Textbook Design; Thematic Arabic Textbook; Deductive Approach; Writing Skills

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INTRODUCTION

مقدمة

Writing skills (*maharah kitabah*) are one of the important language skills in learning the Arabic language. Through this skill, students can express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings in writing. In the context of learning Arabic in elementary Islamic schools (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*), mastery of maharah kitabah becomes an important foundation that must be built from an early age, including the ability to recognize Arabic letters (*huruf hijaiyyah*), connect letters, and write simple vocabulary correctly (Rathomi, 2020).

Based on the results of pre-research interviews conducted at MI Diponegoro Kota Malang on October 9, 2025, with the Arabic language teacher of grade III, it was found that many students still experience difficulties in writing Arabic letters correctly and neatly. Some students are not yet able to connect letters to form a word, and some of them are not used to writing vocabulary independently. In addition, the available teaching materials are still limited to Student

Worksheets (LKS) that are not specifically designed to train writing skills intensively and gradually (Islam, 2024). This condition is exacerbated by the lack of systematic thematic Arabic textbooks that are suitable for the characteristics of third grade students of Islamic elementary school.

Various previous studies indicate the urgency of developing maharah kitabah teaching materials. Munaya and Mukhlisah (2025) argue that developing maharah kitabah learning media through language games for fourth-grade MI and proving that engaging learning media can increase students' motivation and writing skills (Munaya & Mukhlisah, 2025). Yusuf, Alhafidz, and Luthfi (2019) emphasized the importance of structured writing exercises as an urgency in learning maharah kitabah (Yusuf et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Supardi, Gumilar, and Abdurrohman (2022) demonstrated the effectiveness of the deductive (qiyasi) approach in nahwu learning, which is relevant to be applied in writing skill learning because it helps students understand language patterns systematically (Supardi et al., 2022).

The deductive approach was chosen because it is considered suitable for the characteristics of third-grade MI students who are still at the concrete thinking stage. This approach begins learning with the presentation of general rules or concepts, followed by examples, and ends with application exercises. According to Winarso (2014), the deductive approach is more effective in improving students' conceptual understanding compared to the inductive approach (Winarso, 2014). In the context of maharah kitabah learning, the deductive approach helps students understand the patterns of writing letters and words before practicing them independently (Ningsih et al., 2018).

Based on this background, this study aims to: (1) design a thematic Arabic textbook based on a deductive approach for strengthening maharah kitabah of MI students; and (2) validate the feasibility of the textbook based on expert assessments. This research is expected to produce an innovative teaching material that contributes to improving the quality of Arabic language learning at the Islamic elementary school level.

METHOD

منهج

This study employs a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model, which consists of five stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (Tegeh & Kirna, 2013). The ADDIE model is chosen because it is systematic, structured, and oriented towards continuous improvement, making it suitable for instructional material development (Syahid et al., 2024)

Research Subject

The research subjects are the students of class III-A at MI Diponegoro, Malang City, in the 2025/2026 academic year, totaling 25 students. The selection of subjects was done purposively because class III A is the class that experiences the most significant kitabah maharah problems based on the results of initial interviews with the Arabic language teacher.

Development Procedure

The development procedure followed the five stages of the ADDIE model: Analysis Stage, this stage included three forms of analysis: (a) needs analysis, conducted through in-depth interviews with third-grade Arabic language teachers to identify student learning difficulties, availability of teaching materials, and real needs in the field; (b) curriculum analysis, reviewing the Arabic Language Learning Achievements of the Merdeka Curriculum phase B (grades III-IV) to ensure the suitability of the material to be developed; and (c) student characteristics analysis,

to understand the level of initial ability, learning styles, and interests of third-grade MI students towards Arabic language material. The second stage is Design, which involves creating a framework for the textbook that includes: (a) developing a concept map of the material, ranging from writing the Arabic alphabet, connecting letters, to writing vocabulary; (b) designing three thematic units (sports, my friends, and the garden) that align with the students' environment and experiences; (c) determining the sequence of material presentation based on a deductive approach: introduction of general rules → specific examples → tracing exercises → copying → independent writing; and (d) designing assessment instruments for each theme. The third phase is Development, which involves turning the design into a tangible product using the Canva app, featuring colorful designs and engaging illustrations in A5 format. The finished product is then reviewed by three experts a subject matter expert, a design expert, and a learning expert to gather feedback and assess its suitability before it is pilot-tested. The fourth stage is Implementation, which involves testing the revised product with 25 third-grade students in Class III A at Islamic Elementary School of Diponegoro during an actual Arabic language learning session. The fifth stage is Evaluation, which involves evaluating the entire product based on data from expert validation and student feedback in order to determine the final revisions to the product (Hidayat & Nizar, 2021).

Instruments and Data Analysis

The research instruments included: (1) an interview guide for needs analysis; and (2) an expert validation questionnaire using a 1–5 Likert scale to measure the product's suitability in terms of content, design, and learning. Quantitative validation data were analyzed using the percentage formula $P = (\text{score obtained} / \text{maximum score}) \times 100\%$, with the following criteria: 81–100% = highly valid, 61–80% = valid, 41–60% = moderately valid. Qualitative data in the form of suggestions and feedback from experts were analyzed descriptively to improve the product (Rahma & Kurniawati, 2024).

RESULT | نتائج

Design of a Thematic Arabic Textbook Based on a Deductive Approach

The textbook design was developed through a systematic analysis and design process using the ADDIE model. Based on the results of the needs analysis, it was found that third-grade students at MI Diponegoro require instructional materials capable of training them in writing the Hijaiyyah alphabet in stages from writing individual letters, connecting letters to form words, to writing vocabulary independently yet such materials are not yet available at the school. The results of the analysis of the Merdeka Curriculum Phase B also indicate that the learning outcomes for Arabic require students to be able to produce vocabulary with correct grammar, yet these outcomes have not been met due to the limited availability of instructional materials.

In the design phase, the book was structured as follows: cover page, foreword, table of contents, transliteration guide, learning objectives, instructions for use, introductory material on writing the Hijaiyyah alphabet, three thematic units (sports, my friends, the garden), final assessment, bibliography, and author profile. Each thematic unit is organized according to the steps of the deductive approach: (1) introduction to general writing rules/patterns, (2) provision of specific examples in the form of pictures and vocabulary, (3) exercises in tracing letters/words, (4) copying words, and (5) independent writing (Winarso, 2014).

This thematic Arabic textbook, based on a deductive approach, was designed through a series of systematic stages, beginning with problem analysis and culminating in the completion

of all textbook components. The overall textbook design planning process is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

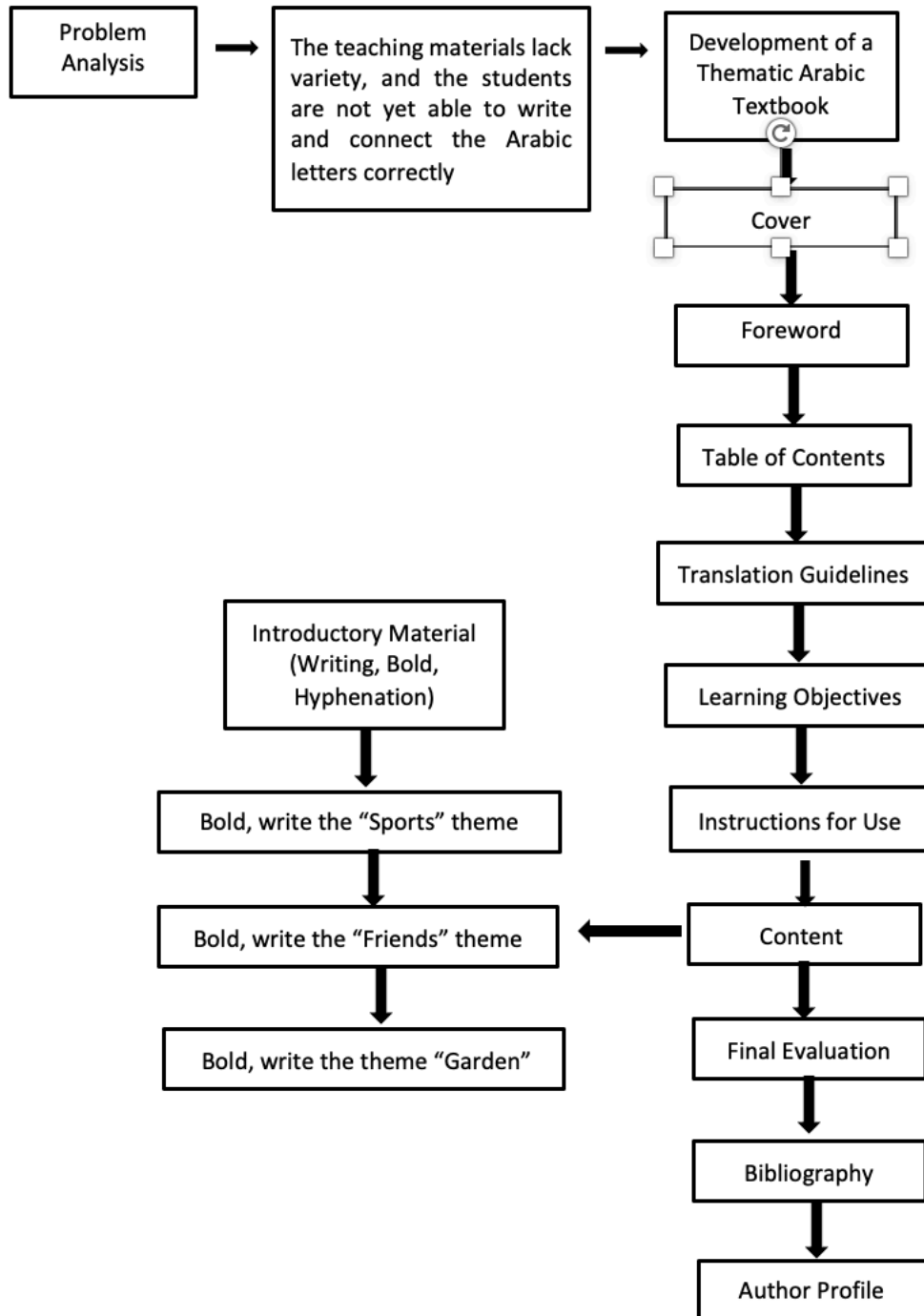


Figure 1. Flowchart of the Design Planning Process for a Thematic Arabic Textbook Based on a Deductive Approach

Based on the chart above, the book's design began with a problem analysis that found that teaching materials lacked variety and that students were not yet able to write and connect Hijaiyyah letters correctly. This led to the development of a thematic Arabic language textbook comprising the complete components described earlier. The material was then organized thematically into three themes: sports, friends, and the garden.

The product was developed using the Canva app with a full-color design in A5 size. The choice of a colorful design was intended to attract attention and boost the learning motivation of third-grade students, who tend to prefer visually appealing designs. After the initial product was completed, it was validated by three experts before being pilot-tested.

The design of this book adopts the principles of effective instructional material development as outlined by Srihartini, Mulyana, and Purwaningsih (2025), namely relevance (content aligned with the curriculum and students' needs), consistency (consistent presentation of content following a deductive approach in each unit), and adequacy (a sufficient number of exercises to achieve the expected writing competencies) (Srihartini et al., 2025). The results of this design were then developed into a textbook ready for validation by experts.

Results of the Textbook Validation by Experts



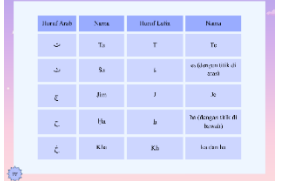
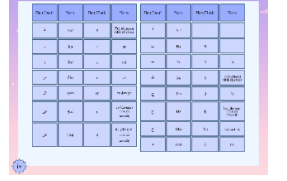
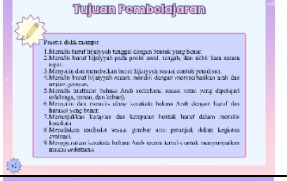
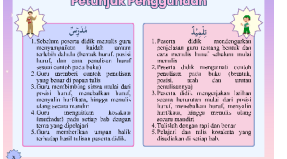
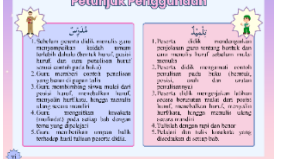
The validation was conducted by three experts using a 1-5 Likert scale questionnaire. The validation results are presented in the following table:






Table 1. Expert Validation Results

Expert Validator	Percentage	Category
Content Expert	89,41%	Highly recommended
Design Expert	94,55%	Highly recommended
Instructional Expert	92,14%	Highly recommended

Based on feedback and suggestions from the three experts, revisions were made to several sections of the textbook before it was used in the field trial. The revisions focused on the aspects highlighted by each expert, including content refinement, design improvements, and adjustments to the learning components. A comparison of the textbook's appearance before and after the revisions is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Comparison of the Book's Appearance Before and After Validation

No	Improvements made	Before	After
1.	Corrections to the book title, corrections to the book's identification on the cover		
2.	Reducing the size of the transliteration guide table		
3.	Add learning objectives	No learning objectives have been set yet	
4.	Clarifying the instructions for using the book		

5.	Clarifying the instructions for using the book	There is currently no specific cover page for the section on how to write the Hijaiyyah alphabet and the learning assessment	
6.	A summary of how to write the Arabic alphabet		
7.	Convert the author's profile into paragraph format		

The content expert scored the material at 89.41%, categorizing it as “highly valid,” and recommended adding explicit learning objectives and simplifying the introductory material. The design expert scored the material at 94.55%, categorizing it as “highly valid,” and recommended revising the book title, improving the cover, adding theme-specific covers, and adjusting the size of the transliteration guide. The learning expert gave a score of 92.14% with a rating of “highly valid” and generally assessed the book as excellent. All suggestions from the three experts were addressed through product revisions prior to the field trial.

Results of Field Trial and Students Response

Following the expert validation and product revision, a field trial was conducted with 25 students of Class III-A at MI Diponegoro Malang. A pre-test was administered before the use of the textbook and a post-test was administered after the completion of all instructional materials. The results of the pre-test and post-test are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Pre-test, Post-test, and N-Gain Results

No.	Average pre-test	Average post-test	N-Gain Score	Category
1	73.24	96.88	0.89	High

Based on Table 3, the average pre-test score was 73.24, which increased to 96.88 in the post-test. The N-Gain calculation yielded a score of 0.89, falling into the high category (N-Gain > 0.7). A descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS showed a mean N-Gain score of 0.8990 with a standard deviation of 0.1174, with scores ranging from 0.64 to 1.00. This indicates that the use of the thematic Arabic textbook based on a deductive approach is highly effective in improving students' maharah kitabah.

Table 4. Student Response Results

No.	Respondent	Total Score	Percentage	Category
1	25 Students	1170 / 1250	93.60%	Very Attractive

The student response results showed a total score of 1,170 out of a maximum score of 1,250, yielding a percentage of 93.60% in the "very attractive" category. Students demonstrated high enthusiasm throughout the learning process, particularly during tracing, copying, and picture-based evaluation activities. These results indicate that the textbook was not only valid but also engaging and well-received by the students.

These validation results are consistent with the findings of previous studies. Maulidi and Aisa (2023), in the development of an Arabic textbook based on educational games, obtained a feasibility percentage of 93.33% (Maulidi & Aisa, 2023). Meanwhile, Ba, Asrori, and Aziz (2025) achieved a content validity of 92% in the development of writing materials based on Project-Based Learning (Chusna et al., 2025). The high validation rate in this study indicates that the textbook developed meets the standards for a systematic, engaging, and curriculum-aligned instructional resource.

The strength of this book compared to previous research lies in the combination of three aspects: (1) a systematic deductive approach, (2) a contextual thematic presentation featuring three themes relevant to elementary school students (sports, my friends, and the garden), and (3) an engaging visual design with colorful illustrations. Fatikhasari and Irawati (2024) developed the My Kitabah digital platform, which is effective but requires electronic devices, whereas the printed book developed in this study can be used anytime without relying on technology and is also more effective for developing students' fine motor skills in writing Arabic (Fatikhasari & Irawati, 2024).

DISCUSSION

مناقشة

The Advantages of Textbook Design Based on a Deductive Approach

The strength of the book developed in this study lies in the integration of a deductive approach into the structure of the material presentation. Each thematic unit begins with an explanation of general rules for writing letters or words, followed by concrete examples through pictures and vocabulary, and then progressive exercises. This structure differs from conventional Arabic textbooks, which generally present exercises directly without a clear conceptual introduction, often confusing students who are just learning to write Arabic. In contrast, the textbook developed in this study consistently follows a deductive sequence in each unit: presentation of general rules → concrete examples → progressive exercises, thereby providing systematic scaffolding for students.

The choice of a deductive approach is also based on considerations of students' cognitive development. Third-grade MI students are in the concrete operational stage (ages 7–11), during which they find it easier to understand concepts when rules are presented first before they are asked to practice independently. Winarso (2014) asserts that the deductive approach is more effective in building students' conceptual understanding than the inductive approach for this age group. The application of this principle in the book's design makes it pedagogically relevant (Winarso, 2014).

In addition, the use of a thematic approach in developing instructional materials provides contextual advantages. The three selected themes (sports, my friends, and the garden) are closely related to the lives and experiences of elementary school students, so the vocabulary they learn holds real meaning and context for them. This aligns with the principle of contextual learning proposed by Perwitasari, Wahjoedi, and Akbar (2018), which states that meaningful

learning occurs when the material being studied is relevant to students' daily lives (Perwitasari et al., 2018).

Implications of the Validation Results for Textbook Quality

The high validation percentage from the three experts (an average of 92.03%) indicates that the designed textbook meets the quality standards for instructional materials across various dimensions: content, design, and learning. The highest percentage was obtained from the design expert (94.55%), indicating that the book's colorful, illustration-based visual presentation successfully met the principles of instructional design for elementary school students. These results support Syaifudin's (2020) findings, which emphasize the importance of visually engaging instructional media in the context of teaching basic writing skills (Syaifudin, 2020).

The suggestions provided by experts during the validation process also made a significant contribution to refining the book's design. Revisions based on expert feedback ranging from the addition of explicit learning objectives and improvements to the cover to the inclusion of theme-specific covers made the book more structured, user-friendly, and aligned with user needs. This iterative validation process is a key strength of the ADDIE model, ensuring that product quality is continuously improved before implementation (Syahid et al., 2024).

Effectiveness of the Textbook in Improving Maharah Kitabah

The N-Gain score of 0.89 in the high category ($N\text{-Gain} > 0.7$) demonstrates that the designed thematic Arabic textbook based on a deductive approach is highly effective in improving the maharah kitabah of Grade III students at MI Diponegoro. The significant increase from an average pre-test score of 73.24 to 96.88 in the post-test reflects the students' considerable progress in writing hijaiyyah letters, connecting letters to form words, and writing vocabulary independently after using the textbook.

This high effectiveness is closely related to the application of the deductive approach in the textbook's structure, which aligns with Robert Gagné's cognitive learning theory. Gagné (in Warsita, 2008) states that effective learning must follow a structured sequence of learning events, beginning with the presentation of new information, followed by guided practice, and concluding with feedback (Warsita, 2008). The textbook implements this sequence through the stages: introduction of general writing rules → specific examples → tracing exercises → copying → independent writing, thereby helping students understand Arabic writing patterns cognitively before practicing them motorically.

Furthermore, the student response of 93.60% in the "very attractive" category indicates that the colorful, illustration-based visual design of the textbook successfully increased students' motivation and engagement. This is consistent with the finding of Syaifudin (2020), who emphasized the importance of visually engaging instructional media in the context of teaching maharah kitabah at the elementary level (Syaifudin, 2020).

CONCLUSSION

خاتمة

Based on the results of the research and development, two main conclusions can be drawn. First, a thematic Arabic textbook based on a deductive approach to strengthen the writing skills of elementary school students was successfully designed using the ADDIE model with a structure of three thematic units (sports, my friends, and the garden) that were systematically arranged following the steps of the deductive approach: introduction of general rules → provision of examples → underlining exercises → copying → independent writing. The textbook design meets

the principles of relevance, consistency, and adequacy of content in accordance with standards for good instructional materials.

Second, the designed textbook was found to be valid and suitable for use in teaching writing skills based on expert validation results, with the following percentages: subject matter experts 89.41%, design experts 94.55%, and learning experts 92.14%, for an overall average of 92.03%, all of which fall into the “highly valid” category.

This study suggests that Arabic teachers in Islamic Elementary School adopt this textbook as a supplementary teaching material for maharah kitabah instruction. For future research, it is recommended to test the effectiveness of this book through a broader field trial, develop similar books with a wider range of themes, and integrate the book with digital media as a learning supplement.

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