

## DEVELOPING A PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING TEXTBOOK FOR AL-KITABAH AL-'ILMIYYAH AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

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### Abstract

Research and development model research is essential to meet the quality of coursebooks. This study aimed to develop al kitabah al ilmiyyah textbooks based on problem-based learning and measure their effectiveness. The research adopted Borg and Gall's model, which includes seven stages: needs analysis, planning, initial product development, product validation, product revision, product trials, and final product refinement after field testing. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative descriptive methods. Data were collected through questionnaires, observations, and interviews, and analyzed using validation testing techniques. The findings indicate that the development of the al-Kitābah al-'Ilmiyyah textbook was effective, as demonstrated by improvements in pre-test and post-test scores in both the control and experimental groups. The experimental group showed a higher average post-test score than the control group, suggesting the textbook's positive impact.

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#### Keywords:

Developing; Al Kitabah Al Ilmiyyah; Problem Based Learning; University.

### مستخلص البحث

يجب إجراء بحوث نموذجية في مجال البحث والتطوير من أجل تحقيق جودة الكتب الدراسية. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تطوير الكتاب المقرر الدراسي "الكتابة العلمية" بناءً على التعلم القائم على المشكلة وقياس فعاليتها. وتعتمد النظرية المستخدمة على نظرية بروج وغال بسبعة مراحل وهي تحليل الاحتياجات، والتخطيط، وتطوير المنتج الأول، والتحقق من صحة المنتج، ومراجعة المنتج، وتجربة المنتج، وتصحيح المنتج الأخير بعد التجربة الميدانية. منهج البحث المستخدم هو الكيفي الوصفي والكمي الوصفي. تم الباحث الحصول على بيانات البحث من الاستبيانات والملاحظات والمقابلات. أما أسلوب التحليل المستخدم هو أسلوب تحليل اختبار التحقق من صحة المنتج. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن تطوير الكتب المقرر الدراسي "الكتابة العلمية" كان أكثر فعالية، ويلاحظ الباحث على ذلك من خلال نتيجة اختباري القبلي والبعدى في فصلي الضابط والتجريبي من حيث معدل نتيجة الاختبار البعدى في الفصل التجريبي أكثر من الفصل الضابط.

كلمات أساسية: تطوير؛ الكتابة العلمية؛ التعلم القائم على المشكلة؛ الجامعة.

## Introduction

The implementation of National Admission Test for Religious Universities has significantly affected the quality of incoming students, particularly in departments such as Arabic language and literature. New students in the department should at least be able to write in Arabic or have prior exposure to the language before entering university. However, a lack of Arabic writing proficiency among some new students in this department impacts the teaching and learning process, particularly in developing language skills in general and writing skills in particular. Writing is one of the four essential language skills that play a crucial and interdependent role in language learning.<sup>1</sup> Writing is one of the four essential language skills, playing a crucial and interdependent role in language acquisition. It is a fundamental skill that should not be overlooked, as it contributes greatly to the development of critical thinking and the ability to articulate ideas clearly in written form. Writing is not only a means of communication but also a process that enhances analytical thinking, fosters creativity, and improves one's capacity to structure thoughts logically. Thus, strong writing skills are essential for effective self-expression and academic or professional success.<sup>2</sup> In response to these challenges, instructional materials for teaching writing skills need to be developed in a way that directly addresses these issues.

Arabic language learning challenges can be categorized into two main areas: linguistic issues and non-linguistic issues.<sup>3</sup> Fikri et al.'s article stated that linguistic issues include phonology, morphology, and structure, while non-linguistic issues include learning motivation, tools, teaching methods, learning time, and learning environment.<sup>4</sup> Faraj and Zawawi also emphasized the topic and said that Arabic language learning issues include linguistic issues, such as phonology, vocabulary, sentences, and writing, as well as non-linguistic problems, such as those related to social and cultural aspects.<sup>5</sup>

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is recognized as one of the most effective educational methods for improving the learning process and equipping students with the necessary skills to adapt to future changes in the workplace. On one hand,

<sup>1</sup> Ken Hyland, *Teaching and Researching Writing*, 4th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003198451>.

<sup>2</sup> Jack C. Richards, "Theories of Teaching in Language Teaching," in *Methodology in Language Teaching* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 19–26, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667190.004>.

<sup>3</sup> Sicong Shao et al., "AI-Based Arabic Language and Speech Tutor," in *2022 IEEE/ACS 19th International Conference on Computer Systems and Applications (AICCSA)* (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates: IEEE, 2022), 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.1109/AICCSA56895.2022.10017924>.

<sup>4</sup> Ahmad Fikri, Noza Aflisia, and Harisah Harisah, "The Effectiveness Of Problem Based Learning In Improving Arabic Reading Skills," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 6, no. 2 (July 25, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v6i2.17392>.

<sup>5</sup> Jihad Faraj and Abdalkarim Zawawi, "Unraveling Arabic Learning Challenges: A Case Study at SOAS," *An-Najah University Journal for Research - B (Humanities)* 38, no. 12 (December 2024): 2425–40, <https://doi.org/10.35552/0247.38.12.2297>.

this approach encourages active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, which are essential for professional success in the evolving job market.<sup>6</sup> The Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model is characterized by several key features. It emphasizes problem-oriented learning, positions students as active participants, promotes interdisciplinary understanding, and integrates real-world experiences into the learning process. PBL also encourages the creation of practical solutions and reinforces the application of acquired knowledge in everyday life.<sup>7</sup> In this model, teachers do not simply deliver content; they serve as facilitators who guide students in exploring topics more deeply, focusing on essential issues, and engaging in meaningful group discussions. Additionally, teachers provide feedback to support students in their learning journey, ensuring they develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to apply knowledge effectively.<sup>8</sup>

Today's technological advancements are progressing unprecedentedly, significantly influencing nearly every aspect of life, including education. The integration of technology in teaching and learning has transformed traditional educational methods and provided new opportunities for interactive, efficient, and accessible learning experiences.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the development of teaching materials is crucial for supporting student learning. In Indonesia, Arabic teaching materials differ from those of other foreign languages, such as English. Many religious schools still rely on Arabic textbooks from the Middle East. However, with the rapid advancement of science and technology, the innovation and development of Arabic teaching materials have become necessary. To keep pace with these changes and ensure effective language instruction, Arabic language teachers must possess the competence to develop relevant and tailored instructional materials tailored to their students' needs.<sup>10</sup>

Arabic language acquisition involves four core skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. These interconnected components are essential for

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<sup>6</sup> Ida Bagus Amertha Putra Manuaba, Yi -No, and Chien-Chih Wu, "The Effectiveness of Problem Based Learning in Improving Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving and Self-Directed Learning in First-Year Medical Students: A Meta-Analysis," ed. Huijuan Cao, *PLOS ONE* 17, no. 11 (November 22, 2022): e0277339, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0277339>.

<sup>7</sup> Resti Ardianti, Eko Sujarwanto, and Endang Surahman, "Problem-Based Learning: Apa Dan Bagaimana," *DIFFRACTION* 3, no. 1 (January 11, 2022): 27–35, <https://doi.org/10.37058/diffraction.v3i1.4416>.

<sup>8</sup> Yung-Chuan Lee, "Changes in Learning Outcomes of Students Participating in Problem-Based Learning for the First Time: A Case Study of a Financial Management Course," *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher* 34, no. 1 (February 2025): 511–30, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-024-00873-y>.

<sup>9</sup> Azmil Hasan Lubis et al., "Effectivity of Interactive Multimedia with Theocentric Approach to the Analytical Thinking Skills of Elementary School Students in Science Learning," *Premiere Educandum : Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Dan Pembelajaran* 11, no. 2 (August 30, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.25273/pe.v11i2.9658>.

<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Syaifullah and Nailul Izzah, "Kajian Teoritis Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Bahasa Arab," *Arabiyatuna : Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 3, no. 1 (May 14, 2019): 127, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v3i1.764>.

developing comprehensive language proficiency.<sup>11</sup> To ensure effective teaching and learning in foreign language courses, these skills must be systematically nurtured and tailored to learners' proficiency levels and specific needs. A balanced approach to skill development enables learners to attain communicative competence and holistic language mastery.<sup>12</sup>

Implementing an autonomous curriculum at universities plays a crucial role in shaping curriculum changes, including modifications in course names and subjects. Consequently, teaching materials must be adjusted to align with the context of the newly implemented curriculum. This adaptation occurs in the Department of Arabic Language and Literature at the Faculty of Humanities, Maulana Malik Ibrahim Islamic State University, Malang.

According to the Ministry of National Education, school textbooks are essential reference materials designed to promote not only academic excellence but also the development of character, spiritual values, scientific and technological literacy, aesthetic appreciation, and physical well-being. These textbooks must be aligned with national education standards to ensure relevance and quality.<sup>13</sup>

The development of learning materials is a crucial factor in ensuring the success of education, especially during the implementation of a new curriculum. Instructional materials are essential tools that enable teachers to guide students in effectively achieving predetermined learning outcomes. Furthermore, an independent learning approach fosters freedom and enjoyment in the learning process, enhancing student engagement and participation. According to Torkar et al., teachers must be creative and innovative in delivering learning materials to prevent monotony and maintain students' interest in the subject matter.<sup>14</sup> In addition, lecturers need to develop learning materials to support an effective learning process.<sup>15</sup>

Learning language skills in the Department of Arabic Language and Literature, particularly writing skills, is structured into three stages: the first, the second, and the third. The names and focus of these courses have evolved, although

<sup>11</sup> Mohammed Naji and Anas Malmus, "Ta'lim Al-Lughah Al-Arabiyah Li An-Nathiqin Bi Ghairiha Raqmiyan," *HuRuf Journal : International Journal of Arabic Applied Linguistic* 1, no. 1 (January 3, 2022): 38, <https://doi.org/10.30983/huruf.v1i1.4982>; Rusydi Ahmad Thu'aimah, *Al-Marja' Fi Ta'lim Al-Lughah Al-Arabiyah Li An-Nathiqin Bi Al-Lughah Al-Ukhra* (Makkah: Jamiah Ummul Quraa, 1986).

<sup>12</sup> Yasemin Darancik, "Students' Views on Language Skills in Foreign Language Teaching," *International Education Studies* 11, no. 7 (June 28, 2018): 166, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v11n7p166>.

<sup>13</sup> Dedi Wahyudi and Anisa Rahmi Gina, "Analysis of Arabic Textbooks by H. Darsono and T. Ibrahim Based on Mackey's Theory | Tahlil Al-Kitab Al-Madrasat Ta'lim H. Darsono Wa T. Ibrahim Li Ta'lim Al-Lughah Al-'Arabiyyah 'Ala Nadzariyah Mackey's," *Ta'lim al-'Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 7, no. 1 (June 1, 2023): 110–27, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpba.v7i1.24847>.

<sup>14</sup> Gregor Torkar, Miha Kovač, and Mojca Kovač Šebart, "The Role of Textbooks in Teaching and Learning Processes," *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal* 12, no. 2 (June 23, 2022): 7–10, <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.1479>.

<sup>15</sup> Zuzana Sikorova, "The Role of Textbooks in Lower Secondary Schools in the Czech Republic," *IARTEM E-Journal*, February 22, 2012, 1-22 Pages, <https://doi.org/10.21344/IARTEM.V4I2.774>.

they remain centered on writing. The first writing skill course was renamed Functional Writing (Al-Kitābah Al-Waḥḍiyyah), the second writing skill became Scientific Writing (Al-Kitābah Al-ʿIlmiyyah), and the third writing skill was redefined as Creative Writing (Al-Kitābah Al-Ibdāʿiyyah). This research specifically focuses on developing instructional materials for teaching the second writing skill, Scientific Writing (Al-Kitābah Al-ʿIlmiyyah).

Zawawi emphasizes that writing is a fundamental language teaching and learning skill, whether for a first language or a foreign language. Therefore, writing proficiency should be a primary focus for teachers and students, as it plays a crucial role in language mastery and effective communication.<sup>16</sup> Insights from interviews conducted with the course lecturer revealed that the Department of Arabic Language and Literature at the university adopts both small and large class formats, depending on student enrollment. For skills-based courses, such as writing, the department implements small class settings comprising approximately 15 to 25 students. This strategy acknowledges the distinct nature of language skills instruction, which requires more focused interaction, individualized feedback, and intensive practice to facilitate meaningful skill development.

Several studies have explored the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in various educational contexts. For example, one study examined the use of PBL and case-based learning in teaching ectopic pregnancy to fifth-year medical students.<sup>17</sup> Another study focused on enhancing students' Indonesian language learning outcomes through the application of the PBL model.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, research conducted at Najran University investigated medical students' perceptions of the effectiveness of PBL and team-based learning.<sup>19</sup> In relation to the development of language skill textbooks, Suwandi conducted a study titled *Developing a Book to Teach Reading Skills in the Context of Local Culture*, which was implemented in the Arabic Language Education Department at an Indonesian university.<sup>20</sup> These studies highlight the versatility of PBL across

<sup>16</sup> Moh Zawawi, "Istirātijyyatu Al-Ta'allum al-Dzāti Fi Ta'limi Mahārati al-Kitābati 'Abra al-Ta'allum al-Iliktronī," *Ta'lim al-'Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 5, no. 2 (December 28, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpba.v5i2.14516>.

<sup>17</sup> Weimin Xie, Ya Li, and Xiaohang Liu, "Application of Problem-Based Learning and Case-Based Learning in Teaching Ectopic Pregnancy to Fifth-Year Medical Students," *BMC Medical Education* 24, no. 1 (November 22, 2024): 1346, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-024-06327-9>.

<sup>18</sup> Yulianti Rasyid et al., "The Supreme of Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes for Students through the Application of Problem-Based Learning Model," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 15, no. 1 (February 26, 2023): 805–12, <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v15i1.2939>.

<sup>19</sup> Ahmad Zaker Almagribi et al., "Perceptions of Medical Students at Najran University on the Effectiveness of Problem-Based Learning and Team-Based Learning," *BMC Medical Education* 24, no. 1 (October 16, 2024): 1150, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-024-06148-w>.

<sup>20</sup> Suwandi Suwandi et al., "Developing a Book for Teaching Reading Skills in the Context of Local Culture: The Department of Arabic Language Teaching at Indonesia University | Tathwir Kitab Li-Ta'lim Maharat al-Qira'ah Fi Siyaq al-Thaqafah al-Mahalliyyah: Qism Ta'lim al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah Fi Jami'ah



disciplines and underscore the importance of culturally relevant materials in language instruction. In terms of material preparation, several relevant studies have been identified. These include: (1) the development of appropriate materials for teaching the Arabic language, and (2) the use of original materials to enhance the writing skills of EFL learners at the college level.<sup>21</sup> These studies emphasize the importance of designing instructional resources that are contextually relevant and tailored to learners' specific needs, particularly in developing writing proficiency and supporting effective language acquisition.

Previous studies on teaching writing skills have explored various contexts and tools to enhance learners' writing proficiency. These include: (1) Writing Assessment Literacy and Its Impact on Learning to Write: A Net Study Focusing on Duolingo English Test Takers, which investigates how familiarity with assessment principles influences writing development.<sup>22</sup> (2) Developing Writing Skills: The Role of ChatGPT as a Learning Aid – A Case Study, which examines the potential of AI tools in supporting students' writing practice.<sup>23</sup> (3) A Portrait of Indonesian Language in Writing Skills: A Case Study from a School Organization in Darul Maarif, Thailand, which highlights how language learning occurs within a specific institutional and cultural setting.<sup>24</sup> These studies provide valuable insights into the diverse strategies and technologies employed in writing instruction.

Based on the above-mentioned previous research, the researcher found similarities and differences between this research and prior studies. The difference between this research and previous research lies in the context of the research, because the sample of this research is the Department of Arabic Language and Literature students who study the al-kitabah al-'ilmiyyah course in the fourth semester.

While these studies have examined various aspects of PBL, language skill development, material preparation, and writing instruction, there remains a gap in research specifically addressing the integration of PBL in the development of

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Indonesia," *Al-Ta'rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 12, no. 2 (December 5, 2024): 393–410, <https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v12i2.8842>.

<sup>21</sup> Nurlaila Nurlaila, "I'dad Al-Mawad Al-Mula'imah Li Ta'lim Al-Lughah Al-Arabiyyah," *An Nabighoh: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* 22, no. 01 (June 30, 2020): 101, <https://doi.org/10.32332/an-nabighoh.v22i01.1909>; Mercedes Chamba, Martha Reinoso, and Elena Rengifo, "Authentic Materials to Foster Writing Skills in College EFL Learners," *English Language Teaching* 12, no. 6 (May 16, 2019): 112, <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v12n6p112>.

<sup>22</sup> Chengyuan Yu and Wandong Xu, "Writing Assessment Literacy and Its Impact on the Learning of Writing: A Netnography Focusing on Duolingo English Test Examinees," *Language Testing in Asia* 14, no. 1 (July 8, 2024): 24, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-024-00297-x>.

<sup>23</sup> Nermin Punar Özçelik and Gonca Yangin Ekşi, "Cultivating Writing Skills: The Role of ChatGPT as a Learning Assistant—a Case Study," *Smart Learning Environments* 11, no. 1 (March 18, 2024): 10, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-024-00296-8>.

<sup>24</sup> Nurul Nasyahirah and Mutia Febriyana, "Portrait of Indonesian Vocabulary in Writing Skills: Case Study of Darul Maaref School Foundation, Thailand," *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching* 12, no. 1 (January 9, 2024): 268, <https://doi.org/10.33394/joltt.v12i1.9865>.

textbooks for “Al-kitabah al-‘ilmiyyah” at the university level. Most existing studies on PBL primarily focus on its implementation in medical and general language learning contexts. Similarly, research on Arabic instructional materials has mainly examined reading or general writing skills without a specific emphasis on “Al-kitabah al-‘ilmiyyah”. Additionally, studies on Arabic writing skills in Islamic universities often do not address the challenges faced by students who enter university without a strong Arabic language.

Based on the previously discussed challenges and the recognized importance of developing effective instructional materials for Arabic language education, this study aims to design a textbook for al-kitābah al-‘ilmiyyah grounded in a problem-based learning approach and to evaluate its effectiveness in enhancing students’ academic writing proficiency.

## Method

The research utilized the Research and Development (R&D) approach introduced by Borg and Gall, which comprises ten stages. These stages included needs analysis to identify specific requirements, planning to design the framework, initial product development to create the first version of the materials, and initial product review to assess and refine them. The process continued with product trials and subsequent product reviews to ensure improvements. A first field trial with a small group, another product review, a final small-group field trial, and the deployment and implementation of the finalized product followed this.<sup>25</sup>

This research focused on only seven stages: needs analysis, planning, product development, product validation, product optimization, field trial, and product refinement. The data for this study were collected from experts and through questionnaires and interviews with lecturers and students. A needs analysis survey was conducted using a questionnaire to ensure the development of high-quality course materials—the questionnaire aimed to identify the specific needs of users, particularly students. Also, needs analysis served as the initial data collection stage to identify key issues and inform the development process.

The second stage of this research was the planning phase, during which the researcher designed the structure of the educational material. The initial planning was based on the specifications gathered through needs analysis, interviews, observations, and questionnaires completed by lecturers and students. In the third stage, which involved the initial product development, the researcher began designing the product in alignment with the established plan. The instructional material developed in this research was the textbook Al-Kitābah Al-‘Ilmiyyah, created based on the analysis results and refined according to the planning stage.

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<sup>25</sup> Neville Bennett, Walter R. Borg, and Meredith D. Gall, “Educational Research: An Introduction,” *British Journal of Educational Studies* 32, no. 3 (October 1984): 274, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3121583>.

The fourth stage was product validation, which assessed whether the developed product was suitable for use. At this stage, validation was conducted by two experts: a textbook design expert and an Arabic language learning expert. The fifth stage involved product optimization, in which improvements were made based on evaluations and expert feedback, validated through a questionnaire. The sixth stage was the field trial, carried out after optimizing the product based on expert assessments. Finally, the seventh stage was the final product refinement, in which further revisions were made based on the field trial results to ensure the instructional material's effectiveness and quality.

The result was taken from the pre-test and post-test on the students to obtain the value of textbook effectiveness. The sample of this research was the students of the Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Maulana Malik Ibrahim Islamic State University, Malang. The topic of the field test was chosen because it relates to the marketed courses. They are studying the course Al-kitabah al-'ilmiyyah and are sitting in the fourth stage. There are about 40 students, and they are sitting in two different classes. One class consisted of the control class, and the other was the experimental class. After the implementation of the textbook, the data from the experiment were analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the textbook. In addition, the researcher conducted a pre-test and a post-test as well.

The researcher employed qualitative and quantitative descriptive data analysis techniques in this study. Qualitative descriptive analysis was used to interpret non-numerical data, such as interview transcripts and expert suggestions, providing an in-depth understanding of the findings. Meanwhile, quantitative descriptive analysis was applied to analyze numerical data, including questionnaire responses and expert validation results. The validity of the developed materials was determined based on expert validation results, using the following formula:

$$Vah = \frac{Tse}{Tsh} \times 100 \%$$

Vah : Expert Validation

Tse : Total Empirical Score and

Tsh : Total Maximum Score

## Result and Discussion

### Analysis of Needs

At this stage, the researcher aimed to identify existing issues and analyze the needs related to the textbook's use. This process involved gathering information about the course instructors' and students' responses to the instructional materials they currently utilize and their specific needs for instructional materials designed for Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in the Al-Kitābah Al-'Ilmiyyah course. The



insights from this analysis serve as the foundation for developing more effective and relevant learning resources.

The researcher collected data through student responses to questionnaires and lecturer interviews to comprehensively understand the needs analysis. The questionnaire included questions related to the development of the Al-Kitābah Al-'Ilmiyyah course materials, covering aspects such as connectors, structures, opinions, paragraphs, and scientific essays. Additionally, the questionnaire explored students' perspectives on the necessity of course material development. The needs analysis results showed a 77.8% approval rate, indicating that lecturers strongly supported the development of instructional materials for Al-Kitābah Al-'Ilmiyyah to enhance the quality of learning.

### **Planning**

The product design planning was developed based on interviews with lecturers regarding the criteria for effective teaching materials and responses from a questionnaire distributed to two experts: a learning design expert and a textbook design expert. This approach aligns with the study by Aladdin, which emphasizes the importance of tailoring Arabic language teaching materials to the specific needs of teachers and students through comprehensive needs analysis. Although the methodologies may differ, the emphasis on aligning instructional material development with user needs remains consistent.<sup>26</sup>

To produce a well-structured textbook, the researcher first examines the learning modules that have been previously used and explores relevant sources related to textbook standards. Additionally, the researcher reviews the Semester Learning Plan (RPS) to ensure that the developed instructional materials align with the course objectives and learning outcomes.

### **Developing the First Product**

The researcher identified the standards and specifications required for the textbook based on the results of reading, analyzing sources, and researching references. The textbook being developed consists of several key components: an introduction, a guide on how to use the textbook, content sections, learning objectives, learning activities, instructional materials, practice exercises, and example problems accompanied by step-by-step solutions for students.

Beyond following existing methods, the textbook also incorporates expanded learning materials, particularly linking tools and structures. These materials provide example problems that help students understand the use of connectors in short and long texts and guide them in composing texts using accurate and proper Arabic grammar.

<sup>26</sup> Ashinida Aladdin, "A Needs Analysis for the Course Materials Design of the Arabic Language Course," *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity* 6, no. 6 (June 2016): 423–26, <https://doi.org/10.7763/IJSSH.2016.V6.684>.

To integrate the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach, the textbook presents questions and real-world issues that students must solve. At the same time, lecturers provided structured guidance on the problem-solving process. Additionally, the PBL approach encourages collaborative learning, where students are divided into small groups of 4–5 members to discuss and solve problems together, enhancing their critical thinking and teamwork skills.

### **First Product Validation and Debugging**

Two experts—a content or subject matter expert and a textbook design expert—validated the initial design of the textbook development product. After the first version of the textbook development product was completed, the researcher sent these experts a questionnaire evaluating the book. In addition to assessing the textbook, the experts provided feedback on its strengths and weaknesses. The input and suggestions from these experts were used to refine the initial textbook design before proceeding with the field trial.

The product validation tool given to the validators included a rating table using a Likert scale of 1–5 and a section for comments and suggestions. The final part of the tool contained the overall validity conclusion from the experts. The main objective of product validation was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the initial design of the *Al-Kitabah al-'Ilmiyyah* textbook based on Problem-Based Learning (PBL). The feedback and suggestions from the validators served as essential references for improving the textbook before further testing. This aligns with the approach taken by Hasruddin, Pratiwi, and Harahap, who emphasized that initial expert evaluations should guide necessary revisions.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, according to M. Baharuddin, M. Masrek, and S. Shuhidan, expert validation is critical in instructional material development, ensuring content relevance, clarity, and pedagogical suitability before field implementation.<sup>28</sup>

The first expert concluded that the “*Al-kitabah al-'ilmiyyah*” textbook based on PBL was suitable for field testing, although some revisions were necessary. The leading suggestions included adding more example exercises and enhancing the textbook layout to make it more visually appealing. Similarly, the second expert found the textbook appropriate for testing but noted that the color gradient balance between the frame and the text needs improvement.

The experts gave the textbook's language a relatively high rating. The content of the developed material was also rated positive. The following section summarizes the textbook's overall evaluation based on a Likert scale of 1-5.

<sup>27</sup> Hasruddin, Nanda Pratiwi, and Fauziyah Harahap, “The Development of Problem-Based Applied Microbiology Textbook,” *International Journal of Education and Research* 2, no. 9 (2014), <https://www.ijern.com/journal/2014/September-2014/16.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> Mohammad Fazli Baharuddin et al., “Evaluating the Content Validity of Digital Literacy Instrument for School Teachers in Malaysia through Expert Judgement,” *International Journal of Emerging Technology and Advanced Engineering* 11, no. 7 (July 26, 2021): 71–78, [https://doi.org/10.46338/ijetae0721\\_09](https://doi.org/10.46338/ijetae0721_09).

**Table 1.** Learning Design Expert Assessment Summary (first reviewer)

| No | The evaluated side | Result | Number of questions | Rate |
|----|--------------------|--------|---------------------|------|
| 1  | Content            | 14     | 3                   | 4,6  |
| 2  | Introduction       | 14     | 3                   | 4,6  |
| 3  | Material           | 37     | 8                   | 4,6  |
| 4  | Drills             | 18     | 4                   | 4,5  |
| 5  | Language           | 13     | 3                   | 4,3  |
|    | Total              | 96     | 23                  | 4,2  |

According to the formula described earlier, the score obtained by the first checker from the questionnaire evaluation of the developed textbook “Al-kitabah al-’ilmiyyah” based on Problem-Based Learning is 83,4%. While the score obtained by the second validator can be seen in the following table:

**Table 2.** Textbook Design Expert Evaluation Summary (Second Auditor)

| No | The evaluated side | Result | Number of questions | Rate |
|----|--------------------|--------|---------------------|------|
| 1  | Scale              | 8      | 2                   | 4    |
| 2  | Cover design       | 37     | 9                   | 4,1  |
| 3  | Book design        | 42     | 11                  | 3,8  |
|    | Total              | 87     | 22                  | 3,9  |

From the table above, the product validation score from the second validator or the courseware design expert is 79%. The product validation score obtained from the two validators is summarized in the following table:

**Table 3.** Summary of a reviewer’s evaluation of the developed textbook

| No | First checker | Second checker | Total | Rate |
|----|---------------|----------------|-------|------|
| 1  | 83,4          | 79             | 162,3 | 81,2 |

Based on the average scores obtained from both raters and the overall validity score table, developing the textbook “Al-kitabah al-’ilmiyyah” based on problem-based learning is valid, complete, and usable. This is consistent with what Saida wrote in her research on validity value criteria.<sup>29</sup>

### Product trial

The product trial was conducted at the Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang. This site was chosen due to the researcher’s affiliation as a lecturer in the department, which enabled close observation of the teaching and learning processes. Additionally, the department’s reliance on module-based teaching materials provided a relevant context for evaluating the developed textbook. The

<sup>29</sup> Karimatus Saidah and Rian Damariswara, “Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Materi Dongeng Berbasis Kearifan Lokal Jawa Timur Bagi Siswa Kelas III SD,” *Premiere Educandum : Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Dan Pembelajaran* 9, no. 1 (June 21, 2019): 73–81, <https://doi.org/10.25273/pe.v9i1.4320>.

trial involved four small classes, each consisting of 20 to 22 students. These classes were divided into experimental classes using the newly developed textbook and control classes using the existing materials.

While implementing the “Al-kitabah al-’ilmiyyah” textbook based on Problem-Based Learning (PBL), the researcher identified several shortcomings through direct observation. First, some vocabulary words in the textbook were unfamiliar to students, making comprehension more challenging. Second, numerous typos and errors needed to be corrected. Third, additional examples and variations of exercises were necessary, with more straightforward and precise language to aid understanding. Fourth, the textbook lacked diversity in learning methods, which could enhance student engagement.

Despite these limitations, using the “Al-kitabah al-’ilmiyyah” textbook based on PBL was effective. Students could follow the structured learning process and problem-solving stages outlined in the textbook and improve their understanding and application of scientific writing skills.

### **Correcting the final product**

Refining the final product is a crucial component of the Research and Development (R&D) model. Improving the final product involves addressing all aspects identified during developing the “Al-Kitabah al-’Ilmiyyah” textbook based on Problem-Based Learning (PBL). Enhancements were made based on feedback from the field testing conducted in the pilot class. This refinement process aimed to ensure that the final version of the textbook is practical and suitable for use in the learning environment. This approach aligns with the textbook development methods implemented by researchers such as Wulandari, Suharno, and Triyanto, emphasizing continuous revision and improvement based on user feedback. Their study on PBL-based civic education materials highlights the importance of iterative refinement to enhance the effectiveness of educational resources.<sup>30</sup>

### **Comparison of average test scores**

Learning effectiveness is a measure that reflects the level of success in the learning process. It is commonly evaluated by comparing pre-test and post-test results between control and experimental groups. The calculation of effectiveness can be obtained from the difference in average scores before and after the intervention. In this study, the average pre-test score in the control class was 71%, while in the experimental class it was 72%. After implementing different instructional strategies, the post-test was administered in both classes. The control class showed a post-test average of 77%, while the experimental class reached 83%. This represents a 6% increase in the control class and an 11% increase in the experimental class. These findings align with the perspective of Slavin, who

<sup>30</sup> Tita Wulandari, Suharno Suharno, and Triyanto Triyanto, “The Teaching Material Development of Problem Based Learning: Improving Students’ Civic Knowledge,” *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)* 12, no. 4 (November 1, 2018): 725–30, <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v12i4.9377>.

emphasized that learning effectiveness is best determined through systematic measurement of learning gains.<sup>31</sup> Additionally, Malik and Alam highlighted that pre-test and post-test comparisons remain one of the most reliable indicators of instructional impact in experimental educational research.<sup>32</sup>

The results of interviews with students indicated positive perceptions regarding the textbook's effectiveness in supporting scientific writing skills. One student mentioned that the textbook helped clarify the structure of scientific writing, making it easier to understand the organization from introduction to conclusion. This finding suggests that the textbook successfully facilitates systematic and structured writing processes. However, some areas for improvement were also identified. Students expressed the need for more practice questions and varied problem scenarios, particularly for topics requiring deeper comprehension. This insights highlight the importance of expanding problem-based exercises to better engage students and support diverse learning paces.<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, while the PBL approach was appreciated for its interactive and practical nature, concerns were raised about the fairness of the evaluation system. As learning is conducted in groups, some students felt that individual contributions were not adequately reflected in the assessment. This indicates the need to refine the evaluation system to balance group collaboration with personal accountability. The findings suggest that the PBL-based textbook improves students' ability to analyze complex problems and apply theoretical knowledge practically. Student engagement and participation increased significantly during the implementation phase, despite challenges related to self-directed learning and fair assessment.

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates the value of integrating a problem-based learning (PBL) framework into the development of Arabic academic writing materials, specifically for Al-Kitābah Al-'Ilmiyyah. The research adopted a structured development model to ensure that the resulting textbook was pedagogically sound, contextually relevant, and responsive to learner needs. The positive outcomes, reflected in improved student writing performance and favorable learner perceptions, affirm the textbook's effectiveness in fostering critical thinking, structured expression, and independent learning.

<sup>31</sup> Robert E. Slavin, "Evidence-Based Education Policies: Transforming Educational Practice and Research," *Educational Researcher* 31, no. 7 (October 2002): 15–21, <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X031007015>.

<sup>32</sup> Tayyaba Gul Malik Rabail Alam, "Comparative Analysis Between Pre-Test/Post-Test Model and Post-Test-Only Model in Achieving the Learning Outcomes," *Pakistan Journal of Ophthalmology* 35, no. 1 (April 1, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.36351/pjo.v35i1.855>.

<sup>33</sup> Thalia Rubio, "Using the Structure of the Abstract to Clarify and Organize Students' Thinking," in *2014 IEEE International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC)* (Pittsburgh, PA, USA: IEEE, 2014), 1–6, <https://doi.org/10.1109/IPCC.2014.7020358>.



Despite its contributions, this study has some limitations. First, the research was conducted within a single institution, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the sample size was relatively small, which may affect the statistical power of the results. Third, the study primarily focused on short-term learning outcomes, leaving the long-term impact of the developed materials unexplored. Future studies should expand the scope of research by involving multiple institutions and a larger sample size to increase the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the long-term effectiveness of PBL-based instructional materials on students' academic writing skills. Further research can also explore integrating digital learning tools to enhance the accessibility and efficacy of Arabic writing instruction. In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of developing targeted instructional materials to improve the quality of Arabic academic writing education. The findings suggest that a PBL-based approach can significantly improve students' writing proficiency, offering a valuable framework for future curriculum development and pedagogical innovation.

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## Author Contribution Statement

MZ designed the research framework, conducted the needs analysis, and drafted the textbook content. MAH contributed to the theoretical framework and coordinated the validation and field testing processes. S was responsible for data collection and analysis. KH provided support in refining the research methods. AWN contributed to the final editing and ensured alignment with international curriculum standards. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

## Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this article.

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