Aligning Curriculum, Language, and Learners: An Evaluation of Arabic Reading Materials in Primary Education

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Abstract

This study examines the alignment of Arabic reading (*maharah qirā'ah*) instructional materials with the Indonesian curriculum policy KMA 183 of 2019 and evaluates their linguistic quality and pedagogical relevance in primary education. Using a qualitative content-based approach, the study analyzed an Arabic textbook for Grade 3 through document analysis, classroom observation, and semi-structured interviews. The findings show that the materials are generally aligned with curriculum requirements at the level of early reading competence, particularly in vocabulary recognition and simple sentence structures. However, the linguistic content demonstrates limited variation and a relatively flat progression of difficulty, while reading activities predominantly emphasize decoding and literal comprehension. Observational and interview data confirm that classroom practices largely replicate these patterns, with limited opportunities for contextual meaning-making. The study highlights a gap between curriculum expectations and pedagogical realization, emphasizing the need for instructional materials that better support gradual and meaningful reading development in primary Arabic education.

Keywords: *Arabic reading, textbook evaluation, curriculum alignment, primary education, KMA 183*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis keselarasan bahan ajar maharah qirā'ah dengan tuntutan Kurikulum KMA 183 Tahun 2019 serta mengevaluasi kualitas linguistik dan relevansi pedagogisnya dalam pembelajaran membaca bahasa Arab di pendidikan dasar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis analisis isi dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa analisis dokumen, observasi pembelajaran, dan wawancara semi-terstruktur. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bahan ajar secara umum telah selaras dengan tuntutan kurikulum pada level kompetensi membaca awal, khususnya dalam pengenalan kosakata dan struktur kalimat sederhana. Namun, variasi linguistik dan gradasi kesulitan membaca relatif terbatas, sementara aktivitas membaca lebih menekankan aspek pengenalan dan pemahaman literal. Data observasi dan wawancara menguatkan temuan bahwa praktik pembelajaran membaca di kelas merefleksikan karakteristik bahan ajar tersebut. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya evaluasi bahan ajar berbasis isi aktual untuk menjembatani kesenjangan antara tuntutan kurikulum dan realisasi pedagogis pembelajaran membaca bahasa Arab di pendidikan dasar.

Kata Kunci: *maharah qirā'ah, evaluasi buku teks, keselarasan kurikulum, pendidikan dasar, KMA 183*

Introduction

Reading skills constitute a fundamental foundation in primary education, as they play a crucial role in the development of literacy, conceptual understanding, and students' long-term academic success.[1] In the context of language learning, instructional materials, particularly textbooks, occupy a strategic position as a bridge between curriculum policy and classroom practice. Textbooks do not merely present linguistic content; they also represent learning objectives, pedagogical approaches, and underlying assumptions about learners' abilities and needs.[2] Therefore, the quality and curricular alignment of reading materials are key factors in ensuring the effective attainment of primary education goals.

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[1] Faruq, Umar. "Ta'lim al-Qira'ah Li al-Nathiqin Bi Ghair al-'Arabiyyah Bi al-Nushush al-Ashliyyah al-Muhtawiyah 'Ala al-Tsaqafah al-'Arabiyyah." *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 7, no. 2 November (November 2023): 389. https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v7i2.6621.

[2] Kalfut, Thamer. *English Language Textbook Evaluation Research in Saudi Arabia from 1920 to 2020s: A Systematic Review*. 2025. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-91443-0_11.

The teaching of Arabic reading at the primary education level does not occur in a vacuum; rather, it is strongly shaped by institutional contexts, curriculum demands, and learner characteristics. This complexity becomes more pronounced in faith-based primary schools or madrasahs, where Arabic serves a dual function; as a foreign language and as a means of accessing religious sources.[3] In such contexts, textbooks often function as the primary learning resource that structures reading activities in the classroom. These challenges are further intensified in full-day school settings, which involve longer instructional time and higher pedagogical expectations for students' literacy development. This institutional context characterizes the teaching of Arabic reading in madrasah ibtidaiyah, including MIMA Zainul Hasan Full Day School Balung, which serves as the empirical locus of this study.

Within educational research, the concept of alignment among curriculum, instructional materials, and learner characteristics is widely regarded as a prerequisite for meaningful learning. Curriculum alignment requires that the goals and competencies articulated in policy documents be consistently reflected in instructional materials and classroom practices.[4] At the same time, the linguistic quality of reading materials must correspond to students' cognitive development and language proficiency, while pedagogical considerations demand that learning materials and activities be relevant to learners' needs, experiences, and learning contexts.[5] A lack of coherence among these three dimensions may result in reading instruction that is mechanical in nature, oriented toward rote memorization, and insufficient in fostering deep comprehension.

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[3] Fu'adah, Shofwatul. "Tathbîq Tiknûlûjiyâ (Istirâtîjiyah al-Kharîthah al-Dzihniyah) Li Hilli Musykilah Ta'lîm Mufradât al-Lughah al-'Arabiyah Lada Thullâb al-Fashl al-Sâbi' Fî al-Madrasah al-Tsânawiyah 'Nurul Jadid Banyuputih - Situbondo.'" *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 2 (August 2020): 197–209. https://doi.org/10.19105/ajpba.v1i2.3572.

[4] Sapawi, Mior Syazril Mohamed, and Nik Mohd Rahimi Nik Yusoff. "Integrating Technology into the Arabic Language Curriculum: A Systematic Review of Trends, Strategies and Cultural Dimensions." *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 12 (2025): 101974. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2025.101974.

[5] Tamam Syaifuddin, Luthfiyah Nurlaela, and Sukma Perdana P. "Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Model to Students Improve Learning Outcome at Senior High School of Model Terpadu Bojonegoro." *IJORER : International Journal of Recent Educational Research* 2, no. 5 (September 2021): 528–35. https://doi.org/10.46245/ijorer.v2i5.143.

dies on language textbook evaluation indicate that research on instructional materials has largely focused on developing analytical frameworks, evaluation methodologies, and mapping research trends in the field. Pan et al. (2025), through a systematic review of English language textbook research, reveal that textbook evaluation is often conducted using partial approaches, such as content analysis, task analysis, or surveys of teacher and student perceptions.[6] Their study underscores the importance of evaluation criteria that integrate curricular, linguistic, and pedagogical dimensions, while also highlighting that most existing research remains concentrated on EFL contexts and secondary education. Similarly, Alshumaimeri and Alharbi (2024) evaluated English textbooks from teachers' perspectives in Saudi Arabia and demonstrated that users' perceptions play a significant role in assessing the suitability of instructional materials to curriculum demands and learners' needs.[7] These findings suggest that textbook evaluation should not rely solely on document analysis, but should be complemented by field-based data to provide a more contextualized understanding of how instructional materials are implemented in classroom practice.

Other studies have placed greater emphasis on the linguistic and pedagogical dimensions of instructional materials, particularly in the context of primary education and Arabic language learning. Nasirudin et al. (2022) developed an evaluation model for Arabic reading skills based on an integrated curriculum framework using a Fuzzy Delphi approach, highlighting the importance of linguistic indicators and assessment in *maharah qirā'ah* instruction.[8] Their study demonstrates that the quality of reading texts and the level of linguistic difficulty need to be systematically aligned with learners' abilities. From a broader perspective, Puspitasari et al. (2021) analyzed primary school English textbooks using critical discourse and multimodal analysis and

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[6] Pan, Molly Xie, and Yan Zhu. "Researching English Language Textbooks: A Systematic Review in the Chinese Context (1964–2021)." *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education* 7, no. 1 (October 2022): 30. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-022-00156-3.

[7] Alshumaimeri, Yousif, and Turki Alharbi. "English Textbook Evaluation: A Saudi EFL Teacher's Perspective." *Frontiers in Education* 9 (November 2024). https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1479735.

[8] Zulkifli Din Mohamed Nasirudin, Harun Baharudin, Nik Mohd Rahimi Nik Yusoff, and Nabihah Yusof. "Evaluation of The Arabic Text Reading Skills Model Based On The Integrated Dini Curriculum Inquiry Activity: A Fuzzy Delphi Approach." *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 5, no. 2 (2022).

found that verbal and visual texts play a significant role in constructing meaning and pedagogical values.[9] These findings are relevant to the evaluation of reading materials in primary education, particularly in assessing visual support and learning contexts. In the context of Arabic language education, Al-Qatawneh (2021) examined the representation of multiple intelligences in Arabic language textbooks and revealed that variations in activities and task design have not yet fully accommodated learners' diverse learning styles.[10] Meanwhile, Nassiri et al. (2022) investigated the readability of Arabic texts as a second language using a quantitative approach and confirmed that vocabulary complexity and sentence structure have direct implications for reading comprehension.[11] Taken together, these studies indicate that research on reading instructional materials has developed across multiple dimensions; however, it remains largely fragmented and rarely integrates curriculum alignment, linguistic quality, and learner needs simultaneously, particularly within the context of primary madrasah education.

Based on these research trends, it can be concluded that evaluations of reading instructional materials are generally conducted in a compartmentalized manner, focusing separately on textbook evaluation methodologies, teachers' perceptions as material users, linguistic quality of texts, or pedagogical design and activity variation. While each of these approaches offers important contributions, studies that integrate curriculum alignment, linguistic characteristics of materials, and learners' needs within a unified analytical framework remain relatively limited. Moreover, most prior research has concentrated on English language learning or secondary education

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[9] Puspitasari, Dewi, Handoyo Puji Widodo, Lulut Widyaningrum, Alhasan Allamnakhrah, and Reni Puspitasari Dwi Lestariyana. "How Do Primary School English Textbooks Teach Moral Values? A Critical Discourse Analysis." *Studies in Educational Evaluation* 70 (September 2021): 101044. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2021.101044.

[10] Al-Qatawneh, Sami Sulieman, Najeh Rajeh Alsalhi, Mohd. Elmagzoub Eltahir, and Omar Ahmed Siddig. "The Representation of Multiple Intelligences in an Intermediate Arabic-Language Textbook, and Teachers' Awareness of Them in Jordanian Schools." *Heliyon* 7, no. 5 (May 2021): e07004. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07004.

[11] Nassiri, Naoual, Abdelhak Lakhouaja, and Violetta Cavalli-Sforza. "Arabic L2 Readability Assessment: Dimensionality Reduction Study." *Journal of King Saud University - Computer and Information Sciences* 34, no. 6 (June 2022): 3789–99. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jksuci.2020.12.021.

contexts, whereas evaluative studies of Arabic reading materials at the primary education level, especially within madrasah settings that implement full-day learning systems, have received limited scholarly attention. Consequently, there remains a research gap for comprehensive analyses that position reading instructional materials as a convergence point between curriculum demands, linguistic quality, and learner needs within specific institutional contexts.

Building upon this research gap, the present study offers a novel approach to evaluating Arabic reading (*maharah qirā'ah*) instructional materials by integrating three key dimensions: curriculum alignment, linguistic quality, and pedagogical relevance to the needs of primary-level learners. This study does not merely assess the administrative conformity of instructional materials to the prevailing curriculum, but also examines how linguistic features of reading texts, as well as the design of exercises and visual elements, support—or constrain—meaningful reading instruction. Accordingly, this study aims to evaluate Arabic reading instructional materials in primary education, with madrasah settings serving as the empirical locus. Specifically, the study seeks to address the following research questions: (1) to what extent are *maharah qirā'ah* instructional materials aligned with the curriculum requirements stipulated in KMA 183 of 2019, and (2) how do the linguistic quality and pedagogical relevance of these materials support Arabic reading instruction for primary education learners.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a document analysis design, strengthened by classroom observation and interview data.[12] This approach was selected because the primary objective of the study was to conduct an in-depth evaluation of *maharah qirā'ah* instructional materials through systematic examination of textbook content, its alignment with the curriculum, and its relevance to learners' needs and instructional contexts. Document analysis enabled the researcher to examine the structure, content, and linguistic characteristics of the instructional materials in a systematic manner, while field data were used to reinforce and contextualize the interpretation of the document analysis findings.

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[12] Paul Mayring. *Qualitative Content Analysis: Theoretical Foundation, Basic Procedures and Software Solution*. Klagenfurt: Beltz, 2014.

The primary object of this study was the textbook *Ayo Belajar Bahasa Arab* for Grade 3, which is used as an Arabic language instructional material at the primary education level. The analysis focused on *maharah qirā'ah* components, including reading texts, vocabulary, exercises, and visual elements accompanying the texts. The study was conducted in a primary madrasah implementing a full-day learning system, namely MIMA Zainul Hasan Full Day School Balung. This site was selected because the textbook is actively used in Arabic language instruction and represents an institutional context relevant to the research objectives.

Data sources in this study consisted of document data and field data. Document data comprised the Grade 3 Arabic textbook, which was analyzed in terms of curriculum alignment, linguistic quality of the texts, and pedagogical relevance. Field data were obtained through classroom observations of Arabic reading instruction and semi-structured interviews with the subject teacher and the school principal. Observations were conducted to understand how the textbook was utilized in instructional practice, while interviews aimed to explore users' perceptions and experiences regarding material suitability, linguistic difficulty, and learners' needs.

Data collection techniques included document analysis, observation, and interviews. Document analysis was carried out through a systematic examination of textbook content based on predefined analytical categories, namely curriculum alignment, which assessed the correspondence between *maharah qirā'ah* materials and the Core Competencies and Basic Competencies of KMA 183 of 2019; linguistic quality, which covered vocabulary characteristics, sentence structure, and text readability for primary-level learners; and pedagogical relevance, which examined the suitability of materials to learners' needs and characteristics, including visual support and types of reading exercises presented. Observations were conducted directly during Arabic reading lessons to record patterns of textbook use, student engagement, and instructional strategies, while interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to allow for in-depth yet focused data collection.

The research instruments consisted of a document analysis checklist encompassing three main groups of indicators: (1) curriculum alignment, including the correspondence of reading materials with the Core Competencies and Basic Competencies of KMA 183 of 2019; (2) linguistic quality, covering vocabulary characteristics, sentence

structure, and text readability; and (3) pedagogical relevance, including suitability to learners' age and needs, visual support, and types of reading exercises. In addition, observation and interview guides were used as supporting instruments. In this qualitative study, the researcher served as the primary instrument responsible for data collection, interpretation, and verification.

Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, categorization, and interpretation. Document data were analyzed using a content analysis approach by identifying relevant textual units, grouping them according to analytical categories, and interpreting the findings in relation to the research objectives. Observation and interview data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns that supported or clarified the document analysis results. Findings from the three data sources were then synthesized to obtain a comprehensive understanding of curriculum alignment, linguistic quality, and pedagogical relevance of the instructional materials.

Data trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation by comparing findings from document analysis, observations, and interviews. In addition, limited confirmation was conducted with informants to ensure that interpretations of field data accurately reflected the actual instructional context. Ethical considerations were addressed by obtaining permission from the school, informing participants about the research objectives, and maintaining the confidentiality of informants' identities.

Results and Discussion
Findings from Document Analysis

The findings of this study were derived from a content analysis of *qirā'ah* texts, vocabulary items, and reading exercises presented in the textbook *Ayo Belajar Bahasa Arab* for Grade 3 at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level. The analysis was conducted by defining units of analysis in the form of actual texts and reading-related learning activities appearing on each page, rather than relying on chapter divisions or thematic headings in the table of contents. Each unit of analysis was then examined against the indicators of Arabic reading competence for primary education as formulated in KMA 183 of 2019. The document analysis was further reinforced by classroom observations and teacher interviews to ensure consistency between textbook content and instructional practice.

The analysis reveals that *qirā'ah* texts in the textbook are presented in several relatively consistent patterns. The mapping of *qirā'ah* text types to the reading competence indicators of KMA 183 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of Qirā'ah Texts and Their Alignment with KMA 183 Reading Indicators

Type of Qirā'ah Text	Text Characteristics	Concrete Examples from the Textbook	KMA 183 Reading Indicators
Instructional classroom dialogues	Short sentences, imperatives, direct question–answer patterns	ما درسنا الآن؟ درسنا الآن اللغة العربية؛ انظر إلى الجدول!	Recognition and comprehension of simple sentences
Very simple descriptive texts	Single statements conveying one piece of information	هذا سالم، هو صديقي؛ هذه آمنة، هي صديقتي	Reading meaningful simple sentences
Object identification texts	Repetitive question–answer patterns	ما هذا؟ هذا حصان؛ هل هذه نملة؟ نعم، هذه نملة	Recognizing meanings of simple words and phrases

Based on Table 1, the qirā'ah text types consistently operate at the level of recognizing and understanding simple sentences, as required by the initial reading indicators of KMA 183. Reading texts are generally not structured as continuous paragraphs but rather as sequences of isolated sentences or short dialogues with very limited communicative functions. For example, in the introductory text, students read the sentence هذا سالم، هو صديقي without any subsequent sentences that elaborate on relationships, activities, or contextual information. This indicates that although basic reading indicators are met, the texts are not designed to train sustained or contextual reading comprehension, which is also implicitly emphasized in KMA 183.

The subsequent analysis focused on the linguistic characteristics of the qirā'ah texts, including vocabulary types and sentence structures. A summary of the linguistic analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Linguistic Characteristics of Qirā'ah Texts

Linguistic Aspect	Main Findings	Concrete Examples from the Textbook
Vocabulary type	Dominance of concrete and nominative vocabulary	قطة، كلب، حصان، أسد، كتاب، مدرسة
Sentence structure	Simple sentences with repetitive patterns	هذا ... ؛ هذه ... ؛ هو ... ؛ هي ...
Sentence length	Very short (3–5 words)	أنا تلميذ في الصف الثالث
Difficulty progression	Relatively flat across texts	Similar sentence patterns across different themes

Table 2 shows that the vocabulary used in *qirā'ah* texts largely consists of concrete nouns that can be immediately understood with the support of visual illustrations. Vocabulary items such as قطة (cat), حصان (horse), الرياضيات and اللغة العربية, are presented either in isolation or within single-sentence constructions. Sentence structures are also highly limited and repetitive, commonly following patterns such as هذا + *noun* or أنا + *simple verb*. These patterns appear across different thematic contexts; introductions, school activities, and animals, without a meaningful increase in syntactic complexity. As a result, the progression of linguistic difficulty across texts remains relatively flat; although themes change, the linguistic demands placed on learners remain constant. From the perspective of KMA 183, this finding indicates that the textbook supports the initial stage of reading literacy but does not progressively develop reading competence toward broader meaning-making.

The next aspect analyzed concerns the types of reading exercises accompanying the *qirā'ah* texts. The mapping of exercise types and their implications for reading competence in KMA 183 is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Types of Reading Exercises and Levels of Reading
Competence Developed

Type of Exercise	Activity Format	Concrete Examples from the Textbook	Level of Reading Competence
Sentence substitution	Replacing subjects or objects based on models	عمر / صديقي ← هذا عمر، هو صديقي	Sentence structure recognition
Word–picture matching	Matching vocabulary items with illustrations	Picture of a cat قطة →	Word meaning recognition
Sentence completion	Completing simple sentences	أنا ... في الصف الثالث	Literal comprehension
Direct questions	Answering explicit information	ما هذا؟ ;هل هذه دجاجة؟	Literal comprehension

Based on Table 3, reading exercises in the textbook predominantly focus on activities aimed at recognizing linguistic forms and achieving literal comprehension. For instance, after a text about animals, students are asked to answer questions such as ما هذا؟ or to substitute animal names according to pictures, without being guided to explain the content of the text or relate it to their own experiences. No exercises were found that require students to retell the text, derive simple meanings, or connect the text to everyday contexts. Within the framework of KMA 183, this condition indicates that reading indicators are largely interpreted at the level of recognition and pronunciation, while the development of contextual text comprehension has not been consistently implemented.

Overall, the content-based analysis demonstrates that *Ayo Belajar Bahasa Arab* for Grade 3 fulfills the initial requirements of Arabic reading competence as formulated in KMA 183, particularly in terms of vocabulary recognition and simple sentence structures. However, the uniformity of text types, limited linguistic variation, and dominance of literal exercises constrain the development of reading competence at more advanced levels. Consequently, the gradual progression of reading skills expected in KMA 183 has not yet been fully realized in this instructional material.

Findings from Observation and Interviews

In addition to document analysis, the findings of this study were further strengthened by classroom observation data and interviews with the subject teacher and the madrasah principal. Classroom observations revealed that the use of *Ayo Belajar Bahasa Arab* for Grade 3 in Arabic reading instruction primarily emphasized choral reading activities and the repetition of vocabulary and model sentences. Teachers typically initiated lessons by reading aloud the vocabulary items or sentences presented in the textbook and then asked students to repeat them collectively, following the instructional cues provided in the book, such as commands to read together, repeat after the teacher, or pay attention to sample sentences.

The observed instructional pattern was consistent with the characteristics of the *qirā'ah* texts and the dominant types of reading exercises in the textbook, namely instructional dialogues and isolated simple sentences.[13] In classroom practice, reading activities were largely focused on pronunciation accuracy and recognition of linguistic forms rather than comprehension of textual meaning. Observations also indicated that reading interactions were rarely extended into discussions of text meaning or connections between the reading content and students' personal experiences, except when teachers provided additional oral explanations beyond the textbook.

These observational findings were corroborated by interview data from the subject teacher, who stated that the textbook was effective in helping students recognize basic vocabulary and develop fluency in reading simple Arabic sentences. The teacher acknowledged that the simple sentence structures and visual illustrations in the textbook facilitated students' immediate understanding of word meanings. However, the teacher also noted that the textbook did not provide sufficient variation in reading exercises to encourage deeper comprehension or require students to restate the content of the text in their own words. As a result, the teacher frequently needed to supplement the textbook with additional oral questions or explanations to help students grasp the broader context of the reading materials.

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[13] Sodiq, Syamsul, and Lutfiyah Alindah. "The Hidden Indonesian Language Literacy Curriculum In Arabic Language Textbooks For Islamic Junior High School." *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 7, no. 1 (February 2024). https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v7i1.25049.

Overall, the observation and interview findings reinforce the results of the document analysis, indicating that the implementation of Arabic reading competencies in *Ayo Belajar Bahasa Arab* for Grade 3 continues to emphasize vocabulary recognition and technical reading fluency. Although this approach aligns with the initial stage of reading literacy outlined in KMA 183 of 2019, the development of contextual reading comprehension, as mandated by the curriculum, has not yet been fully facilitated through the instructional materials and classroom practices that rely primarily on this textbook.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that *Ayo Belajar Bahasa Arab* for Grade 3 consistently realizes Arabic reading instruction at the initial stage of literacy development, as evidenced by the dominance of *qirā'ah* texts in the form of instructional dialogues and isolated simple sentences. Texts such as هذا سالم، هو or ما درسنا الآن؟ ـ درسنا الآن اللغة العربية

صديقي underscore that the primary focus of reading instruction is appropriately directed toward vocabulary recognition and basic sentence structures.[14] This finding is consistent with Magdalena's (2017) argument that many language textbooks at the primary level prioritize linguistic accessibility over semantic depth in order to ensure that the language is accessible to beginning learners.[15] Within the framework of KMA 183 of 2019, such an approach can be understood as an effort to fulfill the initial requirements of reading competence, particularly in terms of decoding and recognition of literal meaning.[16]

However, the document analysis also reveals that this linguistic simplicity is not accompanied by a systematically developed progression of difficulty.[17] Although reading themes vary, ranging from

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[14] Haniff Mohd Tahir, Mohd, Intan Safinas Mohd Ariff Albakri, Airil Haimi Mohd Adnan, Mohamad Syafiq Ya Shaq, and Dianna Suzieanna Mohamad Shah. "The Application of Visual Vocabulary for ESL Students' Vocabulary Learning." Arab World English Journal 11, no. 2 (June 2020): 323–38. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no2.23.

[15] Lewicka Magdalena, and Waszau Anna. "Analysis of Textbooks for Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language in Terms of the Cultural Curriculum." *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 5, no. 1 (2017): 36–44.

[16] *Keputusan Menteri Agama Nomor 183 Tahun 2019 Tentang Kurikulum PAI Dan Bahasa Arab Pada Madrasah*. 2019.

[17] Qureshi, Mustapha, Dinnah Mahdiyyah, Yassine Mohamed, and Mounika Ardchir. "Scale For Measuring Arabic Speaking Skills In Early Children's

school activities and animals to the surrounding environment, the sentence structures employed remain repetitive, relying on the same patterns such as هذا... or أنا..., while the vocabulary presented is dominated by concrete nouns such as حصان قطة, and مدرسة. This finding reinforces the critique advanced by Karroum et al. (2024), who argue that text readability that remains overly stable without increasing complexity may hinder the development of reading comprehension, as learners are not provided with gradual linguistic challenges.[18] Within the KMA 183 framework, this condition indicates a gap between the principle of progressive reading competence development and its linguistic realization in the instructional materials.

From a pedagogical perspective, the predominance of reading exercises based on sentence substitution, word–picture matching, and literal questions such as هل هذه دجاجة؟ or ما هذا؟ suggests that reading activities are oriented more toward mastery of linguistic forms[19] than toward text meaning-making. This finding aligns with the study by Syafei et al. (2024), which emphasizes that language textbooks often fail to foster higher-order reading engagement when reading tasks focus solely on the recognition of linguistic elements.[20] In the context of primary education, such exercises are indeed effective for building foundational reading skills; however, they become problematic when not balanced with activities that promote basic meaning

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Education." Journal International of Lingua and Technology 1, no. 2 (August 2022): 114–30. https://doi.org/10.55849/jiltech.v1i2.81.

[18] Karroum, Amina, Zouhair Ouazene, and Rachida Gougil. *Relationship Between Arabic Reading Skills and Phonological Awareness in the First Level of Primary School*. 2024. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-68653-5_24.

[19] Muchsinul Khuluq, Moh. Ainin, Abdul Wahab Rosyidi, and Nurul Imamah. "The Development of Reading Skill Teaching Materials Based on Prezi Artificial Intelligence." Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab 9, no. 1 (June 2025): 327–46.

[20] Syafei, Isop, Eman Suleman, and Rohanda Rohanda. "The Development of Student Reading Skills in Arabic for Reading Islamic Classical Books Using the Arabic Learning Model at Indonesian Islamic Boarding Schools." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 14, no. 5 (May 2024): 1381–92. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1405.10.

comprehension,[21] such as retelling the content of a text or relating the reading to students' personal experiences.[22]

Classroom observation results further demonstrate that the presentation patterns of the textbook are directly replicated in instructional practice. Choral reading and repetition of vocabulary constitute the primary strategies employed by teachers in managing Arabic reading instruction. Teachers rarely extend reading activities into discussions of textual meaning, except through additional oral explanations. This finding is consistent with the report by Garton and Graves (2019), which notes that primary-level teachers tend to adhere closely to textbook structures,[23] particularly when the materials are perceived as being aligned with the curriculum. Consequently, the limited variation of reading exercises in the textbook has direct implications for the restricted implementation of meaningful reading practices in the classroom.[24]

Interviews with the subject teacher and the madrasah principal provided contextual perspectives on these findings. The teacher considered the textbook effective in helping students read and pronounce Arabic accurately, but acknowledged that it did not sufficiently support the development of deeper reading comprehension. The madrasah principal emphasized the need for instructional innovation to compensate for the limitations of the textbook. These findings reinforce the view advanced by Hasanah et al. (2021) that alignment between instructional materials and the curriculum does not

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[21] Saiegh-Haddad, Elinor. "Embracing Diglossia in Early Literacy Education in Arabic: A Pilot Intervention Study with Kindergarten Children." *Oxford Review of Education* 49, no. 1 (January 2023): 48–68. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2022.2090324.

[22] Aldawood, Zainab, Linda Hand, and Elaine Ballard. "Language Learning Environments for Arabic-Speaking Children in New Zealand: Family Demographics and Children's Arabic Language Exposure." *Speech, Language and Hearing* 26, no. 4 (October 2023): 266–77. https://doi.org/10.1080/2050571X.2023.2212537.

[23] Graves, Kathleen, and Sue Garton. "Materials Use and Development." In *The Routledge Handbook of English Language Teacher Education*, 417–31. London ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2019. | Series: Routledge handbooks in applied linguistics: Routledge, 2019. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315659824-33.

[24] Hadi, Nurul, Nuri Alvina, and Khaled Radhouani. "Ta'zîzu Dâfi'iyyati Thullâbi Riyâdh al-Athfâl Li Tathwîri Mahârât al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah al-Syafawiyyah Min Khilâli Barâmiji al-Ta'lîm al-Mukatstsaf." *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 2 (July 2024): 189–214. https://doi.org/10.19105/ajpba.v5i2.12195.

automatically guarantee optimal competence attainment, as pedagogical implementation and task design play equally important roles.[25]

One of the key contributions of this study lies in its identification of a misalignment between the thematic structure of the textbook and its actual pedagogical structure. Although the table of contents presents chapters that appear diverse and systematically organized, the content analysis reveals that language functions, types of *qirā'ah* texts, and reading exercise formats remain relatively uniform across pages. This finding underscores that evaluating curriculum alignment cannot be limited to the level of themes or content coverage, but must extend to the micro level; namely, the actual texts and reading activities experienced by learners in classroom practice.[26] Accordingly, this study extends research on Arabic language instructional material evaluation by emphasizing the importance of content-based analysis in assessing curriculum implementation.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study should be interpreted within the framework of its limitations. The study focused on a single Grade 3 Arabic textbook and a single primary education institution, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other Arabic textbooks or madrasah contexts. In addition, observation and interview data were obtained from a limited number of informants, thereby representing localized instructional practices. The study also concentrated specifically on reading skills (*maharah qirā'ah*), without examining their relationship to other language skills such as listening, speaking, and writing. From a methodological perspective, the linguistic analysis was conducted qualitatively and was not supported by quantitative measures of text readability, which may serve as a direction for future research.

Considering both the findings and the limitations, this study affirms that *Ayo Belajar Bahasa Arab* for Grade 3 has played an important role in establishing a foundation for Arabic reading literacy

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[25] Hasanah, Mamluatul, Ahmad Mubaligh, Risna Rianti Sari, Alfiatus Syarofah, and Agung Prasetyo. "ARABIC PERFORMANCE CURRICULLUM DEVELOPMENT: RECONSTRUCTION BASED ON ACTFL AND DOUGLAS BROWN PERSPECTIVE." *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 4, no. 3 (October 2021). https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v4i3.11900.

[26] Nisa', Luthfi Farihatun, and Nurul Murtadho. "Development of Educative Magazine as a Bilingual Learning Medium Based on Arabic and English Vocabulary." *Al-Ta'rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 11, no. 2 (December 2023): 197–212. https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v11i2.7311.

in primary education, yet still offers room for development to better align with the principle of progressive reading competence mandated in KMA 183 of 2019. In an international context, this study contributes empirical evidence to the discourse on language textbook evaluation by presenting insights from Arabic language learning in primary education; a context that remains relatively underrepresented in the global literature.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that *maharah qirā'ah* instructional materials in *Ayo Belajar Bahasa Arab* for Grade 3 are generally aligned with the requirements of KMA 183 of 2019 at the level of initial reading competence, particularly in vocabulary recognition and the comprehension of simple sentences. This alignment is reflected in the types of *qirā'ah* texts and reading exercises that support technical reading fluency and mastery of linguistic forms. However, document analysis reinforced by observation and interview data indicates that the implementation of reading indicators in KMA 183 tends to remain at the stages of recognition and pronunciation, such that the principle of progressive development of contextual reading comprehension has not yet been fully realized in either the instructional materials or classroom practices.

In addition, the linguistic quality of the instructional materials is characterized by concrete vocabulary and simple sentence structures that are appropriate for primary-level learners, yet display relatively limited linguistic variation and complexity. From the perspective of pedagogical relevance, the materials effectively support choral reading activities and vocabulary reinforcement, but do not optimally facilitate the development of reading comprehension through meaningful and varied reading tasks. Importantly, this study underscores the necessity of evaluating instructional materials based on actual content and classroom practices in order to assess curriculum alignment more comprehensively. Nevertheless, the study is limited to a single textbook and institutional context and focuses exclusively on reading skills. Future research is therefore recommended to involve comparative analyses across instructional materials, more diverse educational contexts, and mixed qualitative–quantitative approaches to further investigate curriculum alignment and the development of Arabic reading literacy in primary education.

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