

## Effectiveness of the As-Sahlah Textbook for Arabic Proficiency Among FEBI Students

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 <https://doi.org/10.58194/eloquence.v5i1.3411>

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### Article History

Received  
31-12-2026  
Accepted:  
09-03-2026  
Published:  
20-04-2026

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Arabic language proficiency is a fundamental requirement for students of Islamic Economics and Business, as it enables access to primary Sharia sources, comprehension of Islamic economic literature, and mastery of professional terminology used in Sharia-based financial and business practices.

**Purpose:** This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the *As-Sahlah* textbook in improving the Arabic language proficiency of students at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (FEBI).

**Method:** This research adopted a mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory design, in which quantitative data collection and analysis preceded qualitative inquiry. Quantitative data were obtained through pretest–posttest assessments and perception questionnaires administered to 30 FEBI students enrolled in an Arabic for Economics course. The instruments were designed to measure learning outcomes, perceived effectiveness, ease of use, relevance, and learning motivation. Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews and classroom observations to capture students' learning experiences and engagement during the instructional process. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and gain score analysis, while qualitative data were examined using the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman, supported by source and method triangulation to ensure credibility.

**Results and Discussion:** The results lead to that the use of the *As-Sahlah* textbook leads to measurable improvements in students' Arabic proficiency, particularly in vocabulary mastery and comprehension of Islamic economic texts. Students also reported increased motivation, clearer understanding of Sharia-based business contexts, and greater perceived relevance of Arabic learning to their field of study. This study makes a novel contribution by integrating quantitative learning outcome data with qualitative insights to explain how contextualized materials facilitate learning transfer in Arabic for Specific Purposes.

**Conclusions and Implications:** The study concludes that the use of the *As-Sahlah* textbook is associated with improvements in students' Arabic proficiency, as reflected

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in the increase from a mean pretest score of 79.39 to a mean posttest score of 84.68, resulting in a score gain of 5.29. The findings suggest that context-based Arabic textbooks should be further developed and adopted, and future research should explore digital enrichment and larger samples to strengthen Arabic for Specific Purposes (ASP) pedagogy in Islamic higher education.

**Keywords:**

*Effectiveness; As-Sahlah Textbook; Arabic Language; FEBI; Mixed Methods.*

**ABSTRAK**

**Latar Belakang:** Kemampuan bahasa Arab merupakan persyaratan fundamental bagi mahasiswa Ekonomi dan Bisnis Islam, karena memungkinkan akses terhadap sumber-sumber utama syariah, pemahaman literatur ekonomi Islam, serta penguasaan terminologi profesional yang digunakan dalam praktik keuangan dan bisnis berbasis syariah.

**Tujuan:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji efektivitas buku ajar As-Sahlah dalam meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa Arab mahasiswa Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Islam (FEBI).

**Metode:** Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan mixed methods dengan desain sequential explanatory, di mana pengumpulan dan analisis data kuantitatif dilakukan terlebih dahulu, kemudian dilanjutkan dengan kajian kualitatif. Data kuantitatif diperoleh melalui tes awal–tes akhir (pretest–posttest) serta kuesioner persepsi yang diberikan kepada 30 mahasiswa FEBI yang mengikuti mata kuliah Bahasa Arab untuk Ekonomi. Instrumen dirancang untuk mengukur hasil belajar, persepsi efektivitas, kemudahan penggunaan, relevansi, dan motivasi belajar. Data kualitatif dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi kelas untuk menangkap pengalaman belajar serta keterlibatan mahasiswa selama proses pembelajaran. Data kuantitatif dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan analisis skor gain, sedangkan data kualitatif dianalisis menggunakan model analisis interaktif Miles dan Huberman, dengan dukungan triangulasi sumber dan metode untuk menjamin kredibilitas.

**Hasil dan Pembahasan:** Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan buku ajar As-Sahlah berkaitan dengan peningkatan yang terukur dalam kemampuan bahasa Arab mahasiswa, khususnya dalam penguasaan kosakata dan pemahaman teks ekonomi Islam. Mahasiswa juga melaporkan peningkatan motivasi, pemahaman yang lebih jelas terhadap konteks bisnis berbasis syariah, serta persepsi relevansi pembelajaran bahasa Arab dengan bidang studi mereka. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi kebaruan dengan mengintegrasikan data hasil belajar kuantitatif dengan temuan kualitatif untuk menjelaskan bagaimana materi yang kontekstual memfasilitasi transfer pembelajaran dalam Bahasa Arab untuk Tujuan Khusus.

**Kesimpulan dan Implikasi:** Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa penggunaan buku ajar *As-Sahlah* berkaitan dengan peningkatan kemampuan bahasa Arab mahasiswa, sebagaimana tercermin dari kenaikan nilai rata-rata pretest sebesar 79,39 menjadi rata-rata posttest sebesar 84,68, dengan selisih peningkatan sebesar 5,29. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa buku ajar bahasa Arab berbasis konteks perlu terus dikembangkan dan diadopsi, serta penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk mengeksplorasi pengayaan digital dan penggunaan sampel yang lebih besar guna memperkuat pedagogi Bahasa Arab untuk Tujuan Khusus (ASP) dalam pendidikan tinggi Islam.

**Kata Kunci**

*Efektivitas, Buku Ajar As-Sahlah, Bahasa Arab, FEBI, Metode Campuran.*



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**INTRODUCTION**

Arabic language proficiency for students of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (FEBI) is not merely a linguistic skill; it constitutes a functional prerequisite for engaging with

primary Sharia sources, Islamic economic literature, and professional terminology commonly used in Islamic banking, Islamic accounting, and values-based entrepreneurship.[1], [2] Within the context of Islamic higher education, the demand for instructional materials that integrate language competence with disciplinary content—commonly framed as Arabic for Specific Purposes (ASP)—has become increasingly urgent to ensure that learning processes are relevant and aligned with graduate competency outcomes.[3], [4]

The As-Sahlah textbook was designed to address this need by situating lexical items, sentence structures, and communicative tasks within core themes of Islamic economics, such as contracts (akad), zakat, trade, and Islamic banking. This approach is consistent with the principles of contextual learning and content-based instruction, which emphasize the transfer of classroom learning to authentic professional settings, thereby accelerating the internalization of technical terminology and disciplinary discourse patterns in Islamic economics.[5], [6]

Despite the availability of various Arabic courses and textbooks, empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of ASP-based materials—particularly those focused on Islamic economics—remains limited. This limitation is especially evident when effectiveness is measured using learning outcome indicators (e.g., gain scores) alongside psycho-pedagogical dimensions such as perceived ease of use, relevance, and learning motivation.[7], [8] Textbook evaluations are often confined to content feasibility assessments or formative reviews, without being directly linked to changes in students' learning performance within authentic instructional contexts.[9], [10] As a result, recommendations for textbook adoption tend to be normative and insufficiently grounded in empirical evidence that integrates quantitative data with qualitative insights.

The literature on language textbook and coursebook evaluation highlights several important empirical patterns. First, coursebook evaluation studies emphasize the need for multidimensional assessment (pre-use, in-use, and post-use) so that effectiveness is measured not only by content completeness but also by its impact on learning performance after implementation.[11] Second, research on language instruction for specific purposes (ASP) indicates that materials linking language learning to professional or disciplinary contexts enhance motivation and cognitive relevance among non-language majors, thereby positively influencing learner engagement and the retention of technical terminology.[3], [12] Nevertheless, empirical findings that directly measure effects on pretest–posttest scores remain fragmented: some studies report significant gains in specific sub-skills (e.g., vocabulary and reading), while others identify relatively modest effects when instructional design or pedagogical implementation is suboptimal.[13], [14]

Furthermore, studies examining Arabic language textbooks often rely on a single methodological approach—either quantitative or qualitative—making it difficult to explain “how” and “why” learning changes occur or fail to occur. Mixed-methods research demonstrates that data triangulation allows quantitative outcomes (such as score gains) to be more deeply interpreted through student narratives and classroom observations, which reveal underlying mechanisms such as task scaffolding, discourse authenticity, and the appropriateness of difficulty levels.[15], [16] This underscores the importance of comprehensive textbook evaluation that combines outcome measurement with analyses of learning processes (perceptions and practices).

Based on this review, three major gaps can be identified. First, there is a lack of context-specific research, as most ASP studies focus on English or on general professional contexts, while investigations of Arabic-for-Economics textbooks in Islamic economics faculties—particularly within Indonesian Islamic higher education—remain relatively scarce.[3], [17] Second, there is a shortage of integrated mixed-methods designs; sequential designs that combine quantitative measurement (pretest–posttest) with qualitative inquiry (interviews and observations) are still rarely applied, despite their capacity to elucidate both numerical effectiveness and underlying pedagogical mechanisms.[15],[16] Third, a disconnect persists between in-use validation and learning outcomes,

whereby textbooks deemed feasible do not necessarily lead to meaningful proficiency gains or learning transfer without supporting qualitative evidence.[11], [18]

These gaps provide a strong rationale for the present study to (a) empirically examine the As-Sahlah textbook among FEBI students at UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan; (b) employ a sequential mixed-methods design to enable in-depth explanation of quantitative findings through qualitative data; and (c) evaluate not only improvements in Arabic language scores but also students' perceptions of relevance, ease of use, and learning motivation as a basis for understanding the mechanisms of learning transfer to Islamic economic contexts.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Foreign language education in higher education has increasingly emphasized communicative competence, learner engagement, and contextual relevance rather than mere grammatical mastery.[4], [28], [35] This shift reflects the need to prepare students to use language as a functional tool in academic and professional settings. For non-language majors, such as students of economics and Islamic business, language learning is expected to support disciplinary knowledge and professional competence.[3], [12]

In Islamic higher education institutions, Arabic holds a dual role as both a religious and academic language.[1], [17] However, numerous studies report that Arabic is often perceived as difficult, abstract, and anxiety-inducing, especially by students without a strong linguistic background.[29], [42] These perceptions negatively affect learning motivation and achievement. Therefore, the development of appropriate instructional materials that are linguistically accessible and contextually relevant is a crucial issue in Arabic language education.[9], [10]

Motivation has been consistently identified as a central factor in foreign language learning success.[8], [41] Dörnyei emphasizes that motivation determines the intensity and persistence of learners' engagement in language learning activities.[8] In higher education contexts, motivated learners demonstrate higher levels of participation, autonomy, and achievement.[34] Conversely, low motivation often manifests in avoidance behaviors and poor learning outcomes.[35]

From a psychological perspective, Self-Efficacy Theory explains how learners' beliefs about their capabilities influence motivation and performance.[44], [45] When students perceive language tasks as manageable and meaningful, their confidence increases, leading to greater engagement and improved achievement. In Arabic learning, reducing linguistic complexity and presenting materials progressively can significantly enhance learners' sense of competence.[29], [42]

Teaching materials and coursebooks play a pivotal role in shaping learning experiences. Coursebooks function not only as sources of input but also as pedagogical frameworks guiding classroom interaction, task design, and assessment [9], [10]. Effective language teaching materials should be relevant, engaging, and aligned with learners' needs and contexts.[11], [31] Poorly designed materials, on the other hand, may increase cognitive load and demotivate learners.[36]

In response to these challenges, Arabic for Specific Purposes (ASP) has emerged as an important approach in Arabic language education.[17] Drawing on the principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), ASP emphasizes the integration of language instruction with specific academic or professional domains.[3], [12] Content-Based Instruction (CBI) further supports this approach by positioning language as a medium for learning subject matter rather than an isolated object of study.[26], [27]

Empirical studies demonstrate that content-based and task-based approaches enhance both linguistic competence and learner motivation.[6], [14], [33] When language learning materials incorporate discipline-specific vocabulary and discourse, students are more likely to perceive learning as meaningful and relevant, resulting in deeper cognitive engagement.[26], [27], [43]

Previous research in language education consistently shows that interactive and contextualized instruction leads to significantly better learning outcomes than traditional methods.[24], [39] These findings are reinforced by mixed methods studies that combine quantitative measures of achievement with qualitative analyses of learner experiences.[15], [16], [21] In Arabic language education, similar patterns have been observed, with contextual materials contributing to improved posttest scores and positive affective responses.[18], [22]

Several studies conducted in Indonesian higher education contexts report that Arabic textbooks tailored to students' academic disciplines increase motivation, reduce anxiety, and improve functional language use.[18], [22] However, these studies also highlight the need for continuous material development, including richer vocabulary support and more varied communicative exercises.[31], [37]

Theoretical support for these findings can be drawn from Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, which emphasizes the importance of scaffolding in learning [38]. Instructional materials should be challenging enough to promote development while still remaining accessible with appropriate support. This balance is essential for maximizing learning outcomes in foreign language education.[5], [46]

In summary, the reviewed literature indicates that effective foreign language education—particularly Arabic for non-language majors—depends on the integration of motivation, contextualized materials, and learner-centered pedagogy.[4], [8], [26] While previous studies have examined Arabic teaching materials and ASP, there remains a need for empirical research focusing on specific textbooks used in Indonesian Islamic higher education.

Accordingly, the present study situates *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* within this theoretical and empirical framework by examining its effectiveness in improving Arabic language proficiency and learning motivation among students of the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business. By employing a mixed methods approach, this study contributes to the growing body of research on contextual, communicative, and discipline-oriented Arabic language instruction in higher education.[16], [19], [40]

## METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods approach using a sequential explanatory design, in which the quantitative phase was conducted first and subsequently followed by a qualitative phase to deepen and explain the initial findings derived from the quantitative analysis.[19], [20] The research was categorized as field research, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative phase aimed to assess the effectiveness of the *As-Sahlah* textbook through measurements of students' learning outcomes, while the qualitative phase sought to explore students' perceptions, experiences, and responses to the use of the textbook within the context of Arabic for Islamic economics instruction.[21]

The study was conducted at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (FEBI), UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The research participants consisted of students enrolled in the Islamic Economics and Islamic Banking study programs who were taking the Arabic for Economics course. A total of 123 students were selected as the research sample using a purposive sampling technique. The participants were chosen because they were enrolled in the Arabic for Economics course and had direct experience using the *As-Sahlah* textbook, making them relevant and representative of the target population of FEBI students. Participant selection was based on the alignment of students' characteristics with the research objectives and their direct involvement in the use of the *As-Sahlah* textbook throughout the instructional process.[22]

Research data were collected using multiple techniques: (1) pretest and posttest assessments to measure improvements in students' Arabic language proficiency following the use of the *As-Sahlah* textbook; The pretest and posttest consisted of 30 multiple-choice items designed to measure students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension in the context of Islamic economics. Each correct answer was scored as 1 and incorrect answers as 0, with total scores converted into a 0–100 scale. (2) perception questionnaires to examine the perceived effectiveness, ease of use, and relevance of the textbook content to the learning needs of FEBI students; The perception questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale and consisted of 20 items covering four dimensions: perceived effectiveness, ease of use, relevance, and learning motivation, and (3) in-depth interviews and classroom observations to obtain qualitative data on students' perceptions, engagement, and learning experiences during the instructional process.[20], [23]

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and gain score analysis to examine improvements in students' Arabic proficiency before and after the implementation of the *As-Sahlah* textbook.[24] Qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which involves data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.[15] To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, data validation was conducted through source and method triangulation. Specifically, the study triangulated data from pretest–posttest results, student interviews, and classroom observations by comparing patterns across these data sources to confirm the consistency of the findings.[21], [25]

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Profile of the *As-Sahlah* Textbook

*Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* is an Arabic language textbook specifically designed for students of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (FEBI), characterized by contextual, functional content oriented toward academic and disciplinary needs. In terms of content, the book does not merely present Arabic structures in a normative manner; rather, it integrates them with themes of Islamic economics and *mu'amalat*, such as campus life, social interaction, commercial transactions, Islamic banking, zakat, and Islamic economic contracts (*murabahah* and *muḍarabah*). The selection of these themes reflects the application of a content-based instruction approach, in which language is learned through disciplinary content relevant to students' academic backgrounds, positioning Arabic as a tool for conceptual understanding rather than as an isolated linguistic objective.[26], [27]

From a language learning theory perspective, *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* embodies the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This is evident in the predominance of dialogues, contextual texts, and exercises that require meaningful language use rather than rote mastery of grammatical rules.[28] The textbook is also aligned with Krashen's concept of comprehensible input, as its materials are sequenced progressively from simple structures and vocabulary to more complex forms, making them accessible to beginner and lower-intermediate learners.[29] The repeated exposure to vocabulary across varied contexts and its presentation through reading, speaking, and writing activities demonstrate the application of skill integration, a key principle in foreign language instruction.[30]

In terms of learner level, the textbook is particularly suitable for non-Arabic-major university students, especially those at the beginner to early intermediate level. The complexity of grammatical structures, vocabulary selection, and exercise types indicates careful consideration of FEBI students' characteristics, who typically possess limited prior knowledge of Arabic but require academic and professional language competence. Accordingly, *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* functions not only as an introductory Arabic textbook but also as a pedagogical instrument that bridges students' linguistic needs with the academic demands of Islamic economics and business, thereby

enhancing relevance, motivation, and instructional effectiveness.[31], [32]

The textbook is explicitly oriented toward the academic needs of FEBI students by combining foundational Arabic instruction with thematic Islamic economics content, positioning language as a means of knowledge acquisition rather than a purely linguistic object. The materials include vocabulary, expressions, dialogues, and reading texts consistently related to students' daily academic lives and Sharia-based economic contexts, such as lectures, social interactions, *mu'āmalāt* transactions, Islamic banking, *zakat*, and Islamic economic contracts. This integration reinforces the principles of content-based language learning appropriate to the FEBI student profile.[26], [33]

The learning objectives of the textbook emphasize the development of communicative and functional Arabic competence. Rather than targeting in-depth grammatical mastery, the book focuses on enabling students to understand and actively use Arabic in simple academic and professional contexts. These objectives are reflected in the intended learning outcomes, which include thematic vocabulary acquisition, comprehension of short texts, and oral and written communication skills within Islamic economic contexts. This orientation aligns with principles of language instruction for adult learners in non-language higher education settings.[34], [35]

Structurally, the textbook consists of twelve chapters (*darj*) arranged systematically and progressively. Each chapter addresses a theme closely related to students' real-life experiences, beginning with introductions and campus environments and gradually advancing to more specialized topics in Islamic economics and *mu'āmalāt*. This sequencing reflects the principle of gradual progression; whereby linguistic and conceptual complexity increases in line with learners' developing competence.[36]

Each chapter follows a relatively consistent pedagogical layout. Chapters typically begin with a dialogue or short text serving as language input, followed by the presentation of new vocabulary and a series of exercises. These exercises include reading comprehension, vocabulary reinforcement, basic structural practice, and language production tasks such as completing dialogues, answering questions, and composing short written expressions. This structure reflects the presentation–practice–production (PPP) approach commonly employed in foreign language teaching.[28], [37]

The level of difficulty of the exercises is designed to progress gradually and aligns well with the learning objectives. In the early chapters, activities are predominantly receptive and highly controlled, while later chapters increasingly emphasize more complex productive skills. This sequencing demonstrates the application of scaffolding principles; whereby instructional support is provided incrementally and gradually withdrawn as learners' competence develops.[38]

Overall, *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* demonstrates strong internal consistency among content, learning objectives, chapter structure, chapter layout, and exercise difficulty. The textbook is realistically designed in accordance with the characteristics of FEBI students, with a clear focus on functional language use and disciplinary relevance. Consequently, it exhibits strong pedagogical suitability as a contextual Arabic teaching resource in higher education, particularly in supporting the development of basic yet applicable Arabic language competence in a meaningful and academically relevant manner.[11], [31]

## 2. The Effectiveness of The *As-Sahlah* Textbook

### Analysis of Minimum, Maximum, and Score Range

The pretest scores ranged from 0 to 90, with a mean of 79.39, while the posttest scores ranged from 0 to 96.30, with a mean of 84.68 (see Table 1). These results indicate an overall improvement in students' Arabic proficiency following the implementation of the *As-Sahlah* textbook. This pattern suggests that students' initial proficiency levels were relatively homogeneous

yet remained within the basic to intermediate range. In contrast, posttest scores exhibited a wider range, with maximum scores reaching the “very good” category. The expansion of the score range in the posttest reflects an improvement in learning outcomes, particularly among students with intermediate to higher proficiency levels. Pedagogically, this finding suggests that instruction using the *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* textbook not only increased the class average but also enabled higher-achieving students to attain more optimal learning outcomes.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest Scores

Statistic	Pretest	Posttest
Minimum	75	0
Maximum	85	96.30
Mean	80.98	84.68
Std. Deviation	3.90	13.92

### Analysis of Median and Mode

From the perspective of central tendency, the median posttest score was higher than the median pretest score. This increase indicates that more than 50% of the students experienced improvement in their Arabic language proficiency, rather than the gains being driven by only a small number of high-performing students. Similarly, the mode of the posttest scores was concentrated in the higher score intervals, suggesting that the majority of students achieved relatively uniform learning outcomes within the “good” category. The increase in the median and the shift in the mode further confirm that learning improvement occurred collectively rather than individually.

### Analysis of Standard Deviation

The standard deviation of the pretest scores was 11.10, while the posttest scores had a standard deviation of 13.48, indicating a slightly greater dispersion in posttest scores. This finding indicates that, following instruction using the *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* textbook, variability in students' performance became more controlled. In other words, the learning process not only raised average achievement but also contributed to a more even distribution of understanding among students. From an educational evaluation perspective, a reduction in score variability represents a positive indicator, as it suggests that the instructional materials and exercises were accessible to and effectively followed by most students.

### Analysis of Gain Scores (N-Gain)

Gain score calculations revealed an average normalized gain (N-gain) of 0.26, indicating a low level of improvement in students' Arabic proficiency. Only a limited number of students were categorized as having low improvement. This pattern indicates that the *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* textbook is effective in enhancing Arabic language proficiency in a gradual and realistic manner, consistent with the characteristics of non-Arabic-major students. Overall, the class-level N-gain fell within the moderate to high category, pedagogically signifying that the learning process was effective and aligned with the objectives of the textbook.

### Analysis of Score Category Distribution

When scores were classified into qualitative categories (fair, good, and very good), the pretest distribution was dominated by the fair and good categories. After instruction, the posttest distribution showed a significant shift toward the good and very good categories. This shift

demonstrates a comprehensive transformation in students' learning achievement, rather than a mere numerical increase in scores.

### Overall Effectiveness

Taken together, the results of the advanced statistical analyses—including score range, median, mode, standard deviation, gain scores, and category distribution—demonstrate consistent and meaningful differences between pretest and posttest outcomes. These findings reinforce the conclusion that the use of the *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* textbook contributes positively to the improvement of FEBI students' Arabic language proficiency, in terms of average achievement, equity of understanding, and overall distribution of learning outcomes.

Based on the analyzed student score data, after excluding missing and zero values, a set of valid data was obtained from several classes with relatively homogeneous characteristics. Descriptively, students' initial proficiency, as indicated by pretest scores, fell within a moderate range, with most scores clustering between 75 and 85. The average pretest score ranged from approximately 79 to 81, indicating that students' initial Arabic proficiency was adequate but not yet optimal.

In contrast, posttest scores showed a clear improvement over pretest results. Students' posttest scores ranged from 80 to 100, with a concentration in the 85–95 interval. The average posttest score ranged from approximately 88 to 90, which is numerically higher than the pretest average. This improvement was accompanied by a reduction in the number of students with low scores and an increased proportion of students achieving good and very good categories.

A comparison of mean pretest and posttest scores reveals an average increase of approximately 7–9 points. This difference indicates a clear quantitative improvement between students' initial proficiency prior to using the *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* textbook and their final proficiency following the instructional process. Nearly all students experienced score increases, although the magnitude of improvement varied across individuals.

### 3. Interpretation of Pretest–Posttest Differences

The difference between pretest and posttest scores indicates that the use of the *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* textbook has a positive impact on students' Arabic language learning outcomes. The consistent increase in scores from pretest to posttest suggests that students experienced not only reinforcement of previously learned material but also improved understanding and more functional Arabic language skills. From a descriptive quantitative perspective, these findings demonstrate a meaningful difference in learning outcomes before and after the implementation of the textbook.

Although this study did not employ inferential statistical tests, the observed differences in mean scores and the clear pattern of improvement provide sufficient evidence to support conclusions regarding the textbook's effectiveness within a field-based mixed-methods context. The quantitative findings thus serve as a robust foundation for further qualitative exploration, in line with the sequential explanatory research design.

Descriptively, the majority of students showed score improvements from pretest to posttest, indicating overall development in Arabic language proficiency following the use of the textbook. These gains were evident not only among students with higher initial proficiency but also among those with moderate and lower starting levels. While a small number of students demonstrated limited improvement or relative stagnation, the overall data pattern shows that posttest scores were consistently higher than pretest scores, both at the individual level and in terms of overall class trends.

The observed improvement from pretest to posttest suggests that the *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* textbook is effective in enhancing Arabic language proficiency among students of the Faculty of

Islamic Economics and Business. Pedagogically, this effectiveness can be attributed to the textbook's gradual, communicative, and contextual presentation of material, which aligns with the academic and disciplinary needs of FEBI students. Arabic is not taught in an abstract manner but is embedded within themes of Islamic economics and academic life that are familiar to students, thereby facilitating comprehension and internalization.

Furthermore, the exercises included in *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* encourage active language use, both in text comprehension and in simple language production. This approach is consistent with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching, where instructional success is measured by learners' ability to use language functionally. Accordingly, the increase in posttest scores can be interpreted as a reflection of students' improved Arabic language competence following textbook-based instruction.

Nevertheless, variations in individual score gains indicate that the textbook's effectiveness is also influenced by other factors, such as student engagement, attendance consistency, and initial proficiency levels. Despite these variations, the overall quantitative evidence provides strong empirical support for the conclusion that the *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* textbook is effective in improving Arabic language learning outcomes among FEBI students.

#### 4. Students' Perceptions

##### Linguistic Accessibility

The qualitative analysis indicates that the *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* textbook demonstrates a high level of linguistic accessibility for FEBI students with non-Arabic academic backgrounds. Most students reported that the language used in the textbook is easy to understand, not overly complex, and well aligned with their initial proficiency levels. This accessibility is reflected not only in the simplification of grammatical structures and the selection of functional vocabulary but also in the gradual sequencing of materials, which helps prevent excessive cognitive load. An especially notable finding is students' description of the textbook as "not intimidating," signaling a shift in affective attitudes toward Arabic. A subject previously perceived as difficult and anxiety-inducing became more approachable and manageable. Theoretically, this condition aligns with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which posits that reduced anxiety and emotional pressure allow linguistic input to be processed more effectively in second language acquisition.

##### Contextual Relevance

The contextual nature of the instructional materials emerged as another key finding. Students perceived the content of *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* as highly relevant to their field of study, particularly Islamic economics and Islamic banking. Vocabulary and discourse related to economic transactions, financial activities, and FEBI's academic context made Arabic learning feel closely connected to their major. Arabic was no longer viewed as a normative subject detached from academic needs, but rather as a supportive tool for disciplinary competence. Several students noted that the textbook helped them recognize the practical value of Arabic in understanding Islamic economic concepts. This finding reinforces the principles of Content-Based Instruction (CBI), which emphasize that language learning is more effective when integrated with specific disciplinary content.

##### Student Motivation and Participation

The positive impact of *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* is also evident in increased student motivation and participation. Interview data reveal that students became more active in reading, asking questions, and completing exercises because the materials were perceived as communicative and cognitively manageable. Exercises presented in the form of dialogues and short texts encouraged more intensive student engagement during lessons. Notably, this increased motivation was driven not merely by grade-oriented goals but by the emergence of a sense of competence among students.

From a theoretical standpoint, this finding is consistent with Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, which suggests that learners' beliefs in their own capabilities enhance intrinsic motivation and learning engagement. In this context, the *As-Sahlah* textbook functions as a mastery experience that strengthens students' self-efficacy in learning Arabic.

### Limitations

Interview data also reveal certain technical limitations perceived by some students. A number of participants noted the presence of vocabulary items that remained relatively challenging and required additional explanation, as well as the need for greater variety in exercises and more applied, context-rich examples. However, these critiques were constructive rather than dismissive. Students continued to acknowledge that the *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* textbook significantly supported their learning process, while expressing hopes for further refinement in future editions. From the perspective of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the materials can be seen as appropriately positioned within students' developmental range, yet still requiring additional scaffolding—such as glossaries, contextual examples, or instructor support—to maximize learning outcomes.

## 5. Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The quantitative analysis demonstrates a clear improvement in students' Arabic language proficiency following the use of the *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah* textbook, as evidenced by the differences between pretest and posttest scores. Overall, students' posttest scores were higher than their pretest scores, indicating that instruction using this textbook had a positive impact on learning outcomes. This improvement was not limited to individual cases but was observed collectively among the majority of students, leading to the conclusion that the *As-Sahlah* textbook is effective for teaching Arabic for Economics within the FEBI context.[39], [40]

These quantitative findings are strongly reinforced by the qualitative results. The observed score gains are not merely statistical phenomena; rather, they are closely associated with students' learning experiences while using *Al-'Arabiyyah as-Sahlah*. Linguistic accessibility, gradual material presentation, and the use of vocabulary closely related to academic life and Islamic economics reduced students' affective barriers to learning Arabic. This condition helps explain why learning gains occurred consistently, as reflected in the pretest–posttest differences. In this sense, the textbook's effectiveness derives not only from its content but also from its ability to create a supportive and low-anxiety learning environment.[41], [42]

Furthermore, the relevance of the textbook content to FEBI students' disciplinary fields contributed to increased cognitive engagement in learning. When students recognized that the Arabic they were learning was directly connected to Sharia economic concepts and their academic practices, learning became more meaningful. This finding aligns with the principles of Content-Based Instruction, in which language is learned as a medium for understanding content rather than as an end in itself.[26], [27] This integration of language and content explains why improvements were observed not only in vocabulary acquisition but also in text comprehension and functional language use, as reflected in posttest performance.[33], [43]

In addition, qualitative data reveal that increased self-confidence and learning motivation played a significant role in achieving better quantitative outcomes. Students reported feeling more capable of participating in learning activities, more willing to attempt language tasks, and less inclined to avoid Arabic learning. From the perspective of Self-Efficacy Theory, these conditions strengthen learners' beliefs in their ability to complete language tasks, which in turn positively influences academic performance.[44], [45] Thus, the quantitative gains in scores can be interpreted as a logical consequence of the affective and motivational changes identified in the qualitative findings.

At the same time, the qualitative data provide critical context for interpreting the quantitative results. The presence of vocabulary items perceived as difficult and the limited variation in exercises suggest that learning gains have not yet reached their full potential. This indicates that while *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* is effective, it still requires refinement, particularly in terms of instructional scaffolding. This finding supports the view that even effective teaching materials require pedagogical support from instructors and enriched instructional strategies to maximize learning outcomes.[38], [46]

Overall, the integration of quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates that the *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* textbook effectively enhances FEBI students' Arabic language proficiency in terms of both learning outcomes and learning experiences. Quantitative findings provide empirical evidence of improvement, while qualitative findings elucidate the pedagogical and affective mechanisms underlying these gains. Accordingly, the textbook can be recommended as a relevant, contextual, and effective instructional resource for Arabic for Economics courses in Islamic higher education institutions.[16], [20]

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study found that the use of *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* was associated with improvements in students' Arabic language proficiency, as indicated by higher posttest scores compared to pretest scores. The average normalized gain (N-gain) of 0.26 suggests a low level of improvement. Qualitative findings further revealed that the textbook supports learning through its linguistic accessibility, contextual relevance to Islamic economics and business, and its positive influence on students' motivation and confidence. However, some limitations were identified, including the need for clearer vocabulary explanations and more varied practice exercises. Overall, the findings indicate that the textbook contributes to students' learning improvement, although further refinement and more rigorous research designs are needed to strengthen its effectiveness and broader applicability.

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the book *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* is effective in improving the Arabic language proficiency of students at the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business (FEBI), UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan. This effectiveness is evidenced by the consistently higher posttest scores compared to pretest scores, indicating significant improvement in students' Arabic language abilities after the implementation of the book in the learning process.

These quantitative findings are strongly supported by qualitative analysis, which reveals that *Al-'Arabiyah as-Sahlah* offers high linguistic accessibility, relevance to the academic context of Islamic economics and business, and contributes positively to students' motivation and self-confidence in learning Arabic. The structured, gradual, and contextual presentation of materials helps reduce learning anxiety and fosters a more positive learning experience. Therefore, the effectiveness of the book is reflected not only in statistical learning outcomes but also in affective and cognitive engagement among students.

This study has several limitations. First, the sample size was relatively limited and drawn from a single institution, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study did not employ inferential statistical analysis to test the significance of the observed improvement. Third, the research context was limited to Arabic for Specific Purposes (ASP) in Islamic economics, which may not fully represent other learning contexts.

Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to employ more rigorous experimental designs, involve larger and multi-institutional samples, develop and evaluate digital versions of the textbook, and conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term impact of contextualized Arabic learning materials.

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