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Development of a Decodable Book Based on Systematic Synthetic Phonics for Beginning Reading Instruction in Phase A: An ADDIE Research and Development Study

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Abstract:
Beginning reading requires explicit grapheme–phoneme instruction and opportunities to decode appropriately sequenced texts. This research developed a Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP)-based Decodable Book package for Phase A learners at SDN Wiyu, Mojokerto, Indonesia. Research and Development followed ADDIE stages of needs analysis, phonological sequencing and design, expert-reviewed development, staged user trials, and formative evaluation. The package comprises controlled texts progressing from vowels to CV, CVC, and CCV patterns, with teacher and parent guides. Expert validation covered content, design, and media quality; individual (three learners), small-group, and field trials assessed user responses. Feasibility percentages represent obtained scores divided by maximum possible scores multiplied by 100; category labels follow the study's evaluation scheme, whose precise cutoffs require confirmation from the original rubric. Content-expert ratings were 96%–100%, design-expert ratings 96%–100%, and media-expert ratings 76%–92%. Individual, small-group, and field trial responses ranged from 89%–98%, 88%–96%, and 89%–96%, respectively; peer-practitioner ratings were 92%–100%. The results support product feasibility and favorable user evaluations, not demonstrated improvement in reading proficiency. Complete pretest–posttest and N-Gain results were unavailable. The contribution is an Indonesian phonology-sensitive SSP sequence combining controlled text with coordinated teacher and parent guidance.

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Introduction (مقدمة)

Beginning reading is a major foundation for literacy development in elementary education. At the initial stage of primary schooling, reading is not limited to pronouncing written symbols; it involves establishing grapheme–phoneme correspondences, blending sounds, reading words accurately, and gradually developing increasingly automatic word recognition. Mastery of these processes provides an important basis for using reading as a means of acquiring knowledge at subsequent stages of learning.

Reading difficulties in the early grades should not be viewed solely as a matter of reading interest. Learners who have not mastered grapheme–phoneme correspondences and decoding may encounter difficulty when they face unfamiliar words. In such situations, learners may rely on memorizing word forms, guessing from pictures, or applying inconsistent spelling strategies. Beginning reading instruction therefore requires explicit, systematic, sequenced instruction that gives learners opportunities to apply letter–sound relationships in meaningful reading contexts.

One approach relevant to these needs is Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP). This approach explicitly and sequentially teaches grapheme–phoneme relationships and then provides opportunities for learners to blend individual sounds into syllables and words. The systematic principle is important because learners are not introduced to multiple patterns randomly; instead, phonological knowledge is built through a structured instructional sequence.

Phonics instruction needs to be supported by reading materials that allow learners to apply the grapheme–phoneme knowledge they have acquired. One relevant form of reading material is the Decodable Book. Unlike conventional children's storybooks, which may contain vocabulary without regard to the sound patterns already mastered by the reader, a Decodable Book uses vocabulary and text controlled according to previously introduced phonics knowledge. Learners therefore have opportunities to apply decoding directly.

Research on Decodable Book development has begun to emerge in Indonesia. Sushanty et al. (2024), for example, developed Decodable Books for primary-school learners with reading difficulties using the ADDIE model. The product was developed as a digital book with several word-pattern levels and obtained validation results indicating product feasibility. This work suggests that the Decodable Book concept has potential for beginning reading instruction.

Despite growing Indonesian interest in early-reading media, an important design gap remains. Conventional beginner texts can introduce unfamiliar spelling–sound patterns before they have been taught, encouraging picture-based guessing or memorization rather than independent decoding. Sushanty et al. (2024) documented the feasibility of decodable books, but that work does not establish whether a coordinated Phase A package can align a staged Indonesian phonological sequence, controlled text, and guidance for both school and home. International scholarship likewise emphasizes explicit alphabetic instruction while cautioning that phonics alone does not establish comprehension or long-term reading gains (Castles et al., 2018; Torgerson et al., 2019). Accordingly, the gap addressed here is the design and feasibility evaluation of an integrated Indonesian SSP-aligned instructional package, not an untested claim of superior instructional effectiveness.

A needs analysis at SDN Wiyu, Pacet District, Mojokerto Regency, showed that some Phase A learners still experienced difficulties recognizing letter–sound relationships, blending syllables into meaningful words, and reading simple words and sentences fluently. This condition indicates a need for media that are not only visually attractive but also structured to help learners develop decoding skills progressively.

Based on these needs, this study developed a Decodable Book based on SSP. The product organizes learning content according to the development of Indonesian phonological patterns, beginning with vowels and progressing to CV, CVC, and CCV patterns. Each stage uses controlled vocabulary and controlled text so that reading difficulty can be aligned with the phonics knowledge learners have already acquired.

The novelty of the study does not lie in claiming that Decodable Books are an entirely new concept. Rather, its contribution lies in integrating several components into one instructional media design: SSP principles, Indonesian phonological patterns, the characteristics of Phase A beginning readers, controlled vocabulary, controlled text, contextual illustrations, a teacher's guide, and a parent guide. The product is therefore designed not merely as a book but as an instructional medium embedded in a beginning-reading learning system.

This integrated design is important because the instructional value of a Decodable Book depends on the match between the reading patterns and the phonics knowledge already learned by students. When a text contains too many patterns that have not yet been taught, its decodability is reduced. Conversely, text controlled according to previously taught phonics knowledge enables learners to apply decoding strategies more consistently.

Previous Indonesian studies on beginning-reading media also indicate the practical value of materials accompanied by guidance for teachers and parents. Azizah et al. (2024), for instance, developed beginning-reading media for Grade I students in the form of a learner practice book supplemented with teacher and parent guides and reported very good validation results. This finding reinforces the importance of viewing instructional media as part of a learning ecosystem rather than as a stand-alone product.

This study addresses three research questions: (1) How was an SSP-based Decodable Book package designed around Indonesian vowel, CV, CVC, and CCV patterns for Phase A learners? (2) What feasibility judgments did content, instructional-design, and media experts provide? (3) How did learners and peer practitioners evaluate the package across individual, small-group, and field trials? Its design contribution is the integration of sequenced grapheme–phoneme practice, controlled vocabulary and text, contextual illustrations, and complementary teacher and parent guides. This contribution is evaluated at the level of product development and acceptance rather than reading-gain effectiveness.

Method (منهج)

1 Research Design

This Research and Development study used the ADDIE framework (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) to develop and assess an SSP-based beginning-reading package. Analysis identified learner decoding needs at SDN Wiyu; Design produced the scope and sequence and specifications for controlled texts and guides; Development produced and revised the books and accompanying materials after expert review; Implementation comprised individual, small-group, and field trials and peer-practitioner appraisal; Evaluation synthesized quantitative feasibility percentages and qualitative revision suggestions. These

phases were iterative rather than a controlled intervention. The available manuscript does not report the full sampling frame, the total number in small-group and field trials, or all individual selection criteria; these details should be supplied from the original research records before publication.

2 Analysis Stage

At SDN Wiyu, Pacet District, Mojokerto Regency, needs analysis focused on Phase A learners' grapheme–phoneme knowledge, blending of syllables, unfamiliar-word decoding, and reading of simple sentences. The reported difficulties informed the decision to sequence patterns progressively and to include explicit support for teachers and parents. The manuscript does not provide the number or demographic profile of learners included in this preliminary analysis, so representativeness cannot be assessed from the reported data.

3 Design Stage

The design output was a blueprint for a series of Decodable Books progressing from vowels to consonant–vowel (CV), consonant–vowel–consonant (CVC), and consonant–consonant–vowel (CCV) patterns. Vocabulary and connected text were controlled to reflect previously introduced patterns. The accompanying teacher guide was intended to support explicit modeling and blending practice; the parent guide was intended to support consistent practice outside school. Contextual illustrations supported meaning without substituting picture cues for decoding. This sequence reflects the Indonesian-language context and should not be assumed to transfer unchanged to languages with different orthographies (Castles et al., 2018).

4 Development Stage

The development stage converted the blueprint into print-based reading materials and guidance documents. Content experts evaluated suitability, accuracy, language, presentation, and usefulness; instructional-design experts evaluated visual design, typography, layout, illustration, and consistency; media experts assessed feasibility, usability, engagement, technical quality, and perceived instructional suitability. The product was revised using expert suggestions before user trials. The manuscript reports the evaluated domains and scores but not the number of experts, complete item-level rubrics, or a dated revision log; those source details should be added if available rather than reconstructed.

5 Implementation Stage

Implementation proceeded through an individual trial involving three Phase A learners, followed by a small-group trial and a classroom field trial at SDN Wiyu. Peer-practitioner assessment provided an additional perspective on instructional suitability. The trials evaluated ease of use, attractiveness, comprehension as perceived by respondents, engagement, usefulness, and classroom suitability. The original manuscript does not specify the participant counts for the small-group and field trials or whether participants overlapped; therefore, no unreported counts or independent-sample assumptions are introduced. Feedback at each stage informed subsequent refinement, although the exact revision actions require confirmation against the study documentation.

6 Evaluation Stage

Evaluation was formative across ADDIE stages, using expert validation, staged user responses, and peer-practitioner ratings to identify areas for revision. Media technical quality (76%) was the clearest reported improvement priority. The thesis envisaged beginning-reading pretest–posttest assessment and N-Gain analysis, but complete baseline, follow-up, and gain-score data were not available for this article. Accordingly, the study assesses product feasibility

and perceived usability only; no statistical test or causal estimate of reading improvement is reported.

7 Data Analysis

For each scored dimension, percentage attainment was calculated as P = (obtained score / maximum possible score) × 100%. For example, 24 of 25 points corresponds to 96%, and 19 of 25 corresponds to 76%. The article retains the original category labels ("Very feasible"), but the source manuscript does not state the numerical cutoff intervals or complete scoring rubric; the original instrument and classification thresholds must be verified before those labels are treated as reproducible. Trial response percentages were summarized descriptively, and qualitative comments were considered for revision. These ratings are judgments of feasibility, acceptance, or perceived instructional value—not objective tests of gains in reading accuracy or fluency. No inferential statistical procedures were performed or reported.

Results (نتائج)

1 Product Characteristics

The developed product is a beginning-reading instructional medium based on the Decodable Book concept and designed according to SSP principles. It functions not merely as a reading book but as instructional media connecting learning objectives, content sequence, texts, illustrations, reading activities, and implementation guidance.

The content structure follows a progression of Indonesian phonological patterns: Vowel → CV → CVC → CCV. This sequence allows learners to move from relatively simple to more complex word structures.

2 Content Expert Validation

Content-expert validation indicated a very high level of feasibility. The lowest percentage was 96% for content presentation, while the other assessed aspects reached 100%.

Table 2. Content Expert Validation

Aspect	Score	Percentage	Category
Content suitability	25	100%	Very feasible
Content accuracy	25	100%	Very feasible
Language suitability	25	100%	Very feasible
Content presentation	24	96%	Very feasible
Usefulness and attainment of objectives	25	100%	Very feasible

3 Design Expert Validation

Design-expert validation also placed the product in the very feasible category. Visual design, typography, illustration/graphics, and design consistency and attractiveness each received 100%, while layout received 96%.

Table 3. Design Expert Validation

Aspect	Score	Percentage	Category
Visual design	25	100%	Very feasible
Typography	25	100%	Very feasible
Layout	24	96%	Very feasible

Illustration and graphics	25	100%	Very feasible
Consistency and design attractiveness	25	100%	Very feasible

4 Media Expert Validation

Media-expert scores ranged from 76% for technical quality to 92% for perceived instructional suitability. The original assessment classifies these scores as "Very feasible," but its classification thresholds are not reproduced in the manuscript. In particular, the instrument item named "instructional effectiveness" is an expert perception rating, not an observed learning outcome. Technical quality was the lowest-rated domain and warrants further refinement.

Table 4. Media Expert Validation

Aspect	Score	Percentage	Category
Media feasibility	21	84%	Very feasible
Usability	21	84%	Very feasible
Interactivity and engagement	20	80%	Very feasible
Technical quality	19	76%	Very feasible
Instructional effectiveness	23	92%	Very feasible

5 Student Responses in the Individual Trial

The individual trial involved three learners. Ease of use received the highest response (98%), while material comprehension received 89%. All assessed aspects remained in the very feasible category.

Table 5. Individual Trial Results

Aspect	Average score	Percentage	Category
Ease of use	29	98%	Very feasible
Media attractiveness	27	91%	Very feasible
Material comprehension	27	89%	Very feasible
Student engagement	28	92%	Very feasible
Usefulness	27	91%	Very feasible

6 Student Responses in the Small-Group Trial

The small-group trial yielded favorable descriptive responses, ranging from 88% for material comprehension to 96% for ease of use. These percentages describe the reported assessment domains and do not measure changes in reading proficiency. The original report does not identify the small-group sample size or selection criteria, which should be retrieved from trial records before publication.

Table 6. Small-Group Trial Results

Aspect	Percentage	Category
Ease of use	96%	Very feasible
Interaction and collaboration	91%	Very feasible
Material comprehension	88%	Very feasible
Attractiveness and engagement	92%	Very feasible

Usefulness	91%	Very feasible

7 Student Responses in the Field Trial

The field trial yielded positive ratings, from 89% for the domain labeled "comprehension and learning outcomes" to 96% for classroom usability. The domain label is retained from the instrument, but the percentage represents a response rating rather than a measured pretest–posttest gain. The number of field-trial learners and the precise revision steps after this stage are not specified in the available manuscript.

Table 7. Field Trial Results

Aspect	Percentage	Category
Classroom usability	96%	Very feasible
Student interaction and engagement	91%	Very feasible
Comprehension and learning outcomes	89%	Very feasible
Teacher's role in instruction	92%	Very feasible
Media effectiveness and feasibility	91%	Very feasible

8 Peer-Practitioner Assessment

Peer-practitioner assessment indicated that the product was suitable for instructional needs, easy to use, and implementable in learning activities. The highest score was 100% for instructional suitability.

Table 8. Peer-Practitioner Assessment

Aspect	Score	Percentage	Category
Instructional suitability	25	100%	Very feasible
Usability	23	92%	Very feasible
Instructional implementation	24	96%	Very feasible
Attractiveness and engagement	23	92%	Very feasible
Effectiveness and usefulness	24	96%	Very feasible

Discussion (مناقشة)

1 Integration of Systematic Synthetic Phonics and Decodable Books

The central finding of this study is that a Decodable Book can be designed as instructional media following the sequence of Systematic Synthetic Phonics. The integration is reflected in the progression from vowels to CV, CVC, and CCV patterns. Pedagogically, this sequence prevents learners from being immediately exposed to overly complex texts and instead gives them opportunities to apply previously learned grapheme–phoneme knowledge. Thus, the text functions as a context for applying phonics knowledge rather than merely as material to be orally pronounced.

This finding is consistent with Sushanty et al. (2024), who demonstrated the feasibility of developing Decodable Books to support beginning reading. The present study extends that

direction by making SSP the organizing principle of the content sequence and by developing the product as a broader instructional package containing teacher and parent guides.

2 Content and Design Feasibility

Content validation ranged from 96% to 100%, indicating strong alignment between the developed material, learning objectives, learner characteristics, and beginning-reading needs. A key strength of the product is the explicit relationship between instructional content and phonological patterns. In beginning reading, texts that are excessively complex can reduce opportunities for learners to apply decoding strategies. Controlled vocabulary and controlled text are therefore central to the product design.

Design validation ranged from 96% to 100%, suggesting that visual design, typography, illustrations, and layout supported readability. For beginning readers, visual design is not merely decorative. Consistent layout, appropriate type size, and relevant illustrations can provide context while still allowing the learner to engage in decoding rather than replacing it.

3 User Response and Practicality

Student responses were consistent across the stages of testing: 89%–98% in the individual trial, 88%–96% in the small-group trial, and 89%–96% in the field trial. This consistency suggests that the media were accepted in individual, group, and classroom contexts. Ease of use was particularly strong, reaching 98% in the individual trial. The practical nature of the product can plausibly be associated with its simple and progressive design, in which learners are not initially confronted with overly complex texts. The teacher guide also supports integration of the media into reading instruction.

These findings reinforce previous development research emphasizing instructional materials supported by teacher and parent guidance. Designing for users beyond the learner can help position instructional media as part of a wider learning system.

4 Contribution to Beginning Reading Instruction

The principal contribution of the product is not simply the provision of easy-to-read texts but the creation of a bridge between phonics instruction and actual reading practice. Learners first develop grapheme–phoneme knowledge and then apply that knowledge in texts aligned with their level of mastery. From a reading-instruction perspective, this connection is important because decoding develops through repeated and meaningful practice.

Expert validation and favorable trial responses establish preliminary evidence about content suitability, design quality, and perceived practicality; they do not demonstrate that reading skills improved. In particular, questionnaire items labeled “effectiveness” and “learning outcomes” measure respondents’ evaluations, not independently assessed changes in decoding accuracy, fluency, or comprehension. International reviews identify phonics as an important component of beginning reading while highlighting variation in implementation and the need for rigorous outcome evidence (Castles et al., 2018; McArthur et al., 2018; Torgerson et al., 2019; Bowers, 2020). A subsequent study should preregister appropriate outcome indicators and use comparable pretest–posttest measures, ideally with a comparison group.

5 Technical Quality as an Area for Further Development

Although all media-expert dimensions were classified as very feasible, technical quality received the lowest score (76%). This is an important finding because it identifies a concrete area for product refinement. Expert feedback indicated a need to improve technical features and

interactivity. Future development could therefore extend the product toward a digital or hybrid format without weakening its core decodability principle.

Technology should not, however, be added merely to increase the number of features. Digital components are most valuable when they provide clear pedagogical benefits, such as sound models, blending practice, feedback, or accessible audio support. Future digital development should therefore remain anchored in beginning-reading objectives and child development characteristics.

6 Positioning the Study Relative to Previous Research

This study differs from earlier Decodable Book development in its instructional design orientation. Sushanty et al. (2024) developed Decodable Books for learners with reading difficulties through the ADDIE model and reported positive validation and implementation results. The present study specifically targets Phase A learners and integrates an SSP sequence with Indonesian phonological patterns. It also packages the product with teacher and parent guides.

Accordingly, the contribution should be understood at the level of instructional media design rather than as a claim that the Decodable Book itself is a completely novel medium. This distinction strengthens the precision and credibility of the novelty claim.

7. Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the product was developed and tested in a limited context involving Phase A learners at SDN Wiyu, Pacet District, Mojokerto Regency. Generalization to schools with different learner, teacher, and sociocultural characteristics should therefore be made cautiously.

Second, the product focuses on the progression of vowel, CV, CVC, and CCV patterns and does not cover the full complexity of Indonesian word structures. Third, the primary product is print-based, so its interactivity remains dependent on teacher facilitation. Future development may integrate audio or digital features while preserving the principles of SSP and decodability.

Fourth, complete numerical pretest–posttest data and N-Gain values were not available in the results used for this manuscript. Consequently, the study does not claim statistically established causal effectiveness. Future research should use a stronger effectiveness design, report complete baseline and outcome scores, and, where feasible, include a comparison group.

Conclusion (خاتمة)

The study developed an SSP-based Decodable Book package for Phase A beginning readers using ADDIE. Its principal design features are the Indonesian-language progression from vowels to CV, CVC, and CCV patterns, controlled vocabulary and connected text, and accompanying teacher and parent guides. These outputs answer the product-development research question and address a local need for explicit, progressively decodable practice.

Expert evaluations reported content feasibility of 96%–100%, design feasibility of 96%–100%, and media feasibility of 76%–92%. User response percentages were 89%–98% in the three-learner individual trial, 88%–96% in the small-group trial, and 89%–96% in the field trial; peer-practitioner ratings were 92%–100%. These are descriptive feasibility and acceptance findings. The underlying category cutoffs, unreported participant counts, and full trial-revision records should be supplied from the original instruments to improve methodological reproducibility.

The study's contribution is an integrated, Indonesian phonology-sensitive instructional design rather than proof of improved reading achievement. In the absence of complete pretest–posttest and N-Gain data, instructional effectiveness remains unestablished. Further research should refine technical quality, document sampling and scoring procedures, test implementation across diverse primary schools, and evaluate decoding accuracy, word reading, fluency, and comprehension using a suitable comparison design.

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