

## Development of Cerbon Children's Storybook (BCAC) as a Literacy Learning Media for Early Childhood in Cirebon

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon (BCAC) as a reading literacy learning media for early childhood, using the 4D development model which consists of four stages: Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate. In the Define stage, interviews were conducted with the head of the kindergarten and teachers as well as observations of learners to analyse needs and identify children's early literacy skills. The Design stage involved designing the BCAC by incorporating elements of Cirebon culture, such as characters, folklore, and illustrations typical of the region. This design aims to increase the attractiveness and relevance of the book for children, so that it can motivate them in reading activities. At the Develop stage, the BCAC prototype that has been designed is then developed and evaluated through validity and practicality tests by experts and early childhood education practitioners. The results of the material expert validation gave a score of 41 (81%), the linguist gave a score of 48 (96%) while the media expert gave a score of 45 (90%) indicating that the BCAC was very feasible in terms of the suitability of the material to the curriculum and the quality of the illustrations. In addition, after a limited trial, BCAC was also rated as very practical by 2 practitioners with an average score of 41.5 83%. in the aspect of suitability for the development of early childhood reading literacy, as well as increasing children's interest in reading literacy by 34,8 (87%), in the initial observation the score was 26,1 (65,25%). Thus, BCAC is feasible and practical to use as a medium for learning reading literacy in early childhood. The development of BCAC not only improves children's reading literacy skills, but also introduces and instils local cultural values from an early age. It is hoped that BCAC can be an effective alternative learning media in improving early childhood reading literacy in Cirebon and surrounding areas.

**Keywords:** *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon (BCAC), reading literacy, early childhood, learning media.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Childhood is a phase of rapid growth and development, often referred to as a developmental leap. This stage is considered the golden age because approximately 80% of a child's brain development occurs during this period, making it crucial for cognitive, social, and emotional growth (Amini & Suyadi, 2020). Early Childhood Education (PAUD) plays a fundamental role in shaping children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. At this stage, children absorb information quickly, and the stimulation provided through education significantly influences their future cognitive, language, motor, and socio-emotional skills.

Literacy is a fundamental skill in early childhood development. Reading literacy serves as the foundation for intellectual and social growth, encompassing not only the ability to recognize and understand letters, words, and sentences but also the skills to interpret, analyze, and critically respond to texts (Y. O. Wibowo, 2024). Research indicates that quality early childhood education contributes to better academic performance at later educational levels (Fadlilah, 2020). However, Indonesia still faces challenges with low literacy rates. According to a 2022 UNESCO report, Indonesia's reading interest index is only 0.001%, meaning that only one out of 1,000 Indonesians actively reads. Additionally, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) ranked Indonesia 62nd out of 70 countries in reading skills (OECD, 2019). This highlights the urgent need to improve literacy education from an early age through relevant and contextual approaches.

Fostering reading interest in early childhood is crucial. Studies show that children with strong early literacy skills are better prepared for future learning and exhibit higher motivation (A. Rahmawati et al., 2022). In Indonesia, early childhood literacy needs improvement, especially in areas with limited access to engaging reading materials. According to Vygotsky (1978), literacy skills in early childhood should be developed through age-appropriate methods, including storytelling, observing pictures, and letter recognition. These activities help children identify phonemes and letter forms while fostering an interest in reading (Ikhtiarani et al., 2024).

Recent studies emphasize that teaching methods and learning media significantly impact children's ability to acquire early literacy skills (Kindangen & Katuuk, 2023). Interactive and engaging educational media have been proven to increase children's reading interest, help them recognize letters, words, and sentence structures, and build comprehension skills (A. Rahmawati et al., 2022). However, despite its crucial role, many young children still exhibit low reading interest and skills due to limited access to engaging reading materials. In some schools, classroom libraries and reading corners are unavailable, making it difficult for children to access books easily.

Low early childhood literacy rates can have long-term effects, including difficulties in understanding school materials, which ultimately affect academic achievement. To address this issue, innovative and engaging learning media that align with children's playful and imaginative nature are needed. Interactive media, such as educational games, picture storybooks, and digital applications designed for early childhood, can effectively support the development of reading literacy (Bardner, 1983 as cited in Jaya (Jaya, 2024). Research by Bitu et al. (Bitu et al., 2024) shows that engaging learning media can increase student participation; however, such media have not been fully implemented in TK Al-Hikmah.

Educators recognize the need for innovative teaching materials to foster early reading interest and skills. Teachers at TK Al-Hikmah expect the development of learning media that enable interactive, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate literacy education. One effective medium is children's storybooks, which can captivate children's reading interest and enhance their literacy skills.

TK Al-Hikmah, located in Pabuaran District, Cirebon Regency, is committed to improving early childhood literacy. However, major challenges are still faced. Initial research through interviews with teachers and principals revealed that children's

literacy levels are still low. Observations show that students' literacy skills only reach 65.25%. Many children have difficulty recognizing letters and simple vocabulary, and have low reading interest due to the lack of interesting reading materials. Meanwhile, according to research by Tati Hamdani and Nita Priyanti, the use of image media where students can remember reading more easily, are more interested in reading (Tati Hamdiah & Nita Priyanti, 2023)

Currently, teachers mainly use plain-text learning books without illustrations, which are less appealing to children. The scarcity of books reflecting local cultural characteristics poses a major obstacle to fostering reading habits in early childhood. The development of culturally based children's storybooks from Cirebon is a strategic solution to enhance early literacy skills in the region. Storybooks that incorporate Cirebon's cultural elements, such as folklore and local legends, can increase children's reading interest while introducing them to local cultural values (Y. O. Wibowo, 2024). By using familiar characters and stories, children at TK Al-Hikmah are more likely to engage in reading activities. Additionally, culturally themed books help children develop social, emotional, and cognitive skills while fostering pride in their cultural heritage.

The importance of culturally based educational media is also emphasized by Indonesia's National Literacy Movement (Gerakan Literasi Nasional, GLN), which advocates for the use of contextually relevant reading materials to enhance children's reading interest. The development of culturally themed children's storybooks aligns with GLN's goal of enriching children's reading materials with cultural and moral values.

A survey by Haryono & Wahyudi (2022) found that 72% of early childhood educators struggle to find culturally relevant children's books for literacy instruction. This underscores the need to develop culturally themed storybooks that are not only visually appealing but also effective in improving early literacy skills and introducing local wisdom. Furthermore, research by (M. Rahmawati & Suryadi, 2019) found that culturally based storybooks improved children's storytelling abilities by 40% compared to general storybooks. This is due to children's ability to better understand context and relate narratives to their personal experiences.

Based on the issues outlined, this study aims to develop the "Cerebon Children's Storybook" (BCAC) as an innovative literacy learning tool. The study focuses on creating an engaging educational medium for early childhood that is relevant to the culture of Cirebon Regency. The BCAC is expected to enhance early childhood reading interest and literacy skills while providing meaningful, educational, and enjoyable learning experiences.

Research by Wibowo et al. indicates that children understand texts more easily when they can connect them to their cultural environment, thereby increasing reading motivation. Storybooks that integrate cultural values help children understand their cultural identity and strengthen their emotional connection to stories. Localized narratives also support history- and value-based learning, deepening children's connection to their culture (E. W. Wibowo et al., 2023).

Anisa Wahyuni found that culturally based educational media effectively enhance children's motivation, engagement, and comprehension. Integrating local culture into teaching materials also supports character development and instills values such as responsibility, discipline, and perseverance (Wahyuni, 2024). Thus, this study

develops the Cerbon Children's Storybook (BCAC) as a literacy medium based on Cirebon's culture to enhance early childhood reading skills and cultural understanding.

In developing the Cerbon Children's Storybook (BCAC), it is essential to establish conceptual and operational definitions to ensure clarity and consistency in the research. According to Sugiyono (2011), development is a research process used to produce a specific product and test its effectiveness. In the educational context, development involves systematic steps to create or improve educational products that meet the needs and characteristics of users (Suleman et al., 2021).

Kurniawan (2009) defines children's storybooks as literary works written in simple and concrete language, aligned with children's cognitive and emotional development, making them easy to understand and engaging (Pramanta et al., 2018).

1. Cerbon (Cirebon): Cerbon is another name for Cirebon, a region in West Java rich in local culture and traditions.
2. Conceptually, the development of the Cerbon Children's Storybook (BCAC) is a systematic process of creating children's storybooks using simple and concrete language while incorporating elements of Cirebon's local culture and traditions. This ensures that the book aligns with children's cognitive and emotional development.
3. Operationally, the development is defined as a series of steps based on a specific development model, such as the 4D model, which includes needs analysis, design, production, validation, testing, and product revision to produce a feasible and practical children's storybook as a literacy learning medium for early childhood.

The BCAC is an illustrated children's storybook designed for early childhood with the following characteristics:

1. Uses simple and easy-to-understand language.
2. Contains stories that reflect Cirebon's culture and traditions.
3. Includes engaging illustrations to support story comprehension.
4. Has a length of fewer than 60 pages, suitable for early childhood reading interest and needs.

By establishing these conceptual and operational definitions, the research can proceed with a clear foundation, ensuring that each stage of BCAC development and evaluation aligns with the established goals and objectives.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **a. Development Model**

This research is a type of RnD (Research and Development) research and development. Research and Development can be interpreted as a business process in creating new products or varying, modifying old or existing products so that their quality increases, which of course this process has validation and reliability according to certain criteria. RnD research is one of the research actions that requires a fairly long process, but the results of RnD research can provide benefits to many people. The type of RnD research is one of the studies that has real benefits for the world of education because the final result of the implementation of RnD is the birth of a "product" either a product in the form of a system (Pangesti, 2019).

This research allows researchers to develop and test the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) product used in Al-Hikmah Kindergarten. This research adapts the

4D model (Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate), which consists of four main stages. The four stages are carried out sequentially and systematically (Maydiantoro, 2021).

This study employs the Four-D Model (4D), developed by Thiagarajan, Semmel, and Semmel (1974)(Maydiantoro, 2021). This model consists of four main stages: **Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate**. It is chosen due to its systematic approach and suitability for developing educational products, such as the *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC), which aims to enhance early childhood literacy based on local culture.

#### a. Research Stages

##### 1. Define Stage

This stage aims to analyze the needs and identify issues related to early childhood literacy at TK Al-Hikmah. The steps involved include, Preliminary Analysis: Conducting interviews with teachers and school principals to identify literacy problems. Student Analysis: Observing the literacy skills of early childhood students at TK Al-Hikmah. Curriculum Analysis: Reviewing the alignment of *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) with the current early childhood education curriculum. Task Analysis: Determining the competencies that need to be achieved in reading and understanding texts.

##### 2. Design Stage

In this stage, a prototype of *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) is designed based on the previous analysis. The steps involved are, Manuscript Preparation: Writing a children's story based on Cirebonese culture using language appropriate for early childhood, Illustration and Book Design: Creating engaging illustrations and a layout suited to children's reading interests., Expert Validation Seeking input from experts in early childhood education, linguistics, and instructional media regarding the quality of the book.

##### 3. Develop Stage

This stage involves revisions based on expert feedback and testing the *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC). The steps include, Feasibility Testing: Evaluating the content and design of *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) through expert and teacher assessments after testing it with children. Limited Trial: Implementing *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) in a classroom setting at TK Al-Hikmah to assess its effectiveness. Product Revision: Making necessary improvements based on trial results.

##### 4. Disseminate Stage

The final stage aims to distribute *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) for broader use. The steps include, Publication and Socialization: Sharing research findings in educational seminars and journals, Book Distribution: Providing *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) to early childhood teachers in the Cirebon region, Final Evaluation: Gathering feedback from teachers and parents regarding the book's usage in classrooms.

#### b. Research Subjects and Location

This study is conducted at TK Al-Hikmah, located in Pabuaran District, Cirebon Regency. The research subjects include Early childhood students (ages 4-6 years) who will use *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC). Early childhood teachers, who will evaluate the book's effectiveness in learning. Educational and instructional

media experts, who will provide input on the development of *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC).

#### **c. Data Collection Instruments**

The instruments used in this research include, Observation Conducted to assess children's literacy needs and their responses to *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC). Interviews Conducted with teachers to understand the initial literacy needs of early childhood students in Cirebon. Questionnaires Used to evaluate the book's feasibility based on expert feedback and to assess its practicality based on teacher evaluations. Documentation: Recording the testing process of *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) in classroom activities.

#### **d. Data Analysis Techniques**

The collected data is analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative descriptive approaches. Qualitative analysis is used to evaluate children's, teachers', and experts' responses to *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC). Quantitative analysis involves using percentages to assess the book's feasibility and practicality based on teacher and expert questionnaires, as well as children's observation results. By following the 4D model, this research is expected to produce a high-quality, practical, and effective *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) for improving early childhood literacy based on local culture.

### **RESEARCH RESULTS**

This study is a type of Research and Development (R&D). Research and Development can be defined as the process of creating new products or modifying existing ones to improve their quality, ensuring validation and reliability according to specific criteria. This research allows the researcher to develop and test the *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC), which is used at TK Al-Hikmah. The study adopts the 4D model (Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate), which consists of four main stages conducted sequentially and systematically (Maydiantoro, 2021).

#### **1. Description of the Define Stage (Definition)**

Based on the needs analysis conducted through interviews with the principal and teachers at TK Al-Hikmah, the findings indicate that early childhood literacy development at TK Al-Hikmah, Cirebon Regency, remains underdeveloped, despite efforts to improve it.

The researcher identified several findings in the needs analysis stage, Early childhood literacy skills vary and require engaging learning media. Storybooks are frequently used in learning, but their quantity and variety remain limited. Culturally relevant books are highly needed because children find it easier to understand stories that are closely related to their environment. Attractive and interactive illustrations are crucial to increasing children's reading interest. There is no existing storybook based on Cirebon's local culture that not only enhances children's literacy but also introduces them to Cirebon's cultural heritage, fostering pride in their local traditions.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that there is a need for a learning medium that can improve early childhood literacy, especially by increasing reading interest, while also introducing and fostering pride in Cirebon's local culture in an engaging and interactive manner, tailored to children's developmental stages.

The researcher designed the *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) as a solution, expected to serve as an effective learning medium for early childhood children by improving literacy skills and nurturing pride in their regional culture.

Furthermore, a post-test was conducted through observations aimed at analyzing the literacy needs of children. The observation took place at TK Al-Hikmah, involving 10 children from Group B1. The results showed that the average literacy level was 26.1 or 65.25%, indicating that early childhood literacy at TK Al-Hikmah was still relatively low. This data further reinforces the urgent need for developing the *Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon* (BCAC) to enhance children's interest and reading abilities.

## **2. Description of Design Stage Results**

The development of the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) through a planning or design process carried out after a needs analysis was carried out. At the product development stage, materials that support the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) can be used as a learning medium for early childhood in the school environment. The learning media development model is in the form of the Cerbon Children's Story Book which takes the theme "Otong and the Mystery of Sunyaragi Cave". In the early stages of book development, it has the following contents and specifications:

1. Product Form, The Cerbon Children's Story Book is in the form of an interactive story book developed for early childhood with a size adjusted to early childhood. This book was developed as a learning medium in developing reading literacy in children and introducing the local culture of Cirebon.
2. Product Content, The Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) has the following main characteristics:
  - a. contains stories about Cirebon children which contain stories of local Cirebon culture. The aim is not only to develop reading literacy in early childhood but also to foster a sense of love and pride in their regional culture.
  - b. Using a simple story line adapted to the development of early childhood, accompanied by attractive illustrations with contrasting color choices so that they attract children's attention.
  - c. The language used is simple and adapts to early childhood language development so that it is easy for children to understand.
  - d. It contains interactive games such as coloring activities and mazes. The aim is that this book can develop all aspects of development in early childhood.

## **3. Description of the Results of the Develop Stage (Development)**

After going through the initial product stage, namely the development of the first model of the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC), validation was carried out by material experts, language experts, and media experts with the aim of testing the feasibility of the product. The results of the validation are:

### **1. Validation by Material Experts**

The Cerbon Children's Story Book went through a material validation test carried out by material experts to assess the feasibility of the story book used as a medium for learning literacy for early childhood reading. In this study, the material expert who assessed was Mrs. Rina Hizriani, M. Pd. I. who is a PAUD lecturer from the Muhammadiyah University of Cirebon. The results of the assessment are as follows:

No	Aspects assessed	Assessment Scale					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	The material is in accordance with the cognitive development of early childhood.				√		4
2	The material supports the development of early childhood language.				√		4
3	The content of the story can stimulate children's interest in reading.				√		4
4	The story contains positive moral and character values.				√		4
5	The story is relevant to the local culture of Cerbon.					√	5
6	The message in the story is easy for early childhood to understand.				√		4
7	Simple language and in accordance with the understanding ability of early childhood.				√		4
8	Short, concise, and interesting sentences.				√		4
9	Illustrations support understanding of the story content.				√		4
10	The visual display is attractive, not confusing, and in accordance with the local culture of Cerbon				√		4
TOTAL							41
PERCENTAGE							81%

The results of the validation of material experts show that this book has advantages, The material is in accordance with the development of early childhood, covering various aspects. The story is strong and relevant to the local culture of Cirebon, so that it attracts children's interest in reading. Illustrations support understanding of the content of the story, not confusing. Good moral messages, encourage children to behave positively.

Based on the results of the validation assessment of material experts, the validation score reached 41 or 81%, this shows that the Cirebon Children's Story Book is worthy of being tested without major revisions, although it is still recommended to be able to improve the material from the story book, namely the development of religious values and morals or spirituality is more prominent.

## 2. Validation by Language Experts

Validation by language experts was conducted to assess the quality of the language used in the Cirebon Children's Story Book (BCAC). In this study, the language expert who assessed was M. Arif Syarif H, M. Pd. Lecturer in Early Childhood Education at the Muhammadiyah University of Cirebon. The following are the results of the assessment by language experts:

No	Aspects assessed	Assessment Scale					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Use of vocabulary that is appropriate to the child's age and development.					√	5
2	Simple sentences that are easy for early childhood to understand.				√		4
3	Use of non-complex sentence structures.					√	5
4	The text is easy for children to read and understand.					√	5
5	The size and type of font are appropriate for early childhood.					√	5
6	The layout of the text supports readability.					√	5
7	The story reflects positive local cultural values.					√	5
8	Use of spelling that is in accordance with good and correct Indonesian language rules.				√		4
9	Grammar is consistent and in accordance with applicable guidelines.					√	5
10	The language used is able to attract children's interest in reading.					√	5
TOTAL							48
PERCENTAGE							96%

From the results of the validation by language experts, it can be concluded that the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) shows The language is in accordance with the development of early childhood, easy to understand, and uses correct spelling. The sentence structure is not complex, supports readability. The selection of font size and type is appropriate, and the layout of the text supports readability.

The language expert gave a score of 96% which indicates that this storybook is very suitable for testing, but the expert suggests adjusting the color harmony and direct command sentences in more detail according to the language development of early childhood.

### 3. Media Expert Validation

Media expert validation was conducted in order to determine the quality seen from the design and appearance aspects of the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC). In this study, the media expert who assessed was Dr. Irfan Fauzi Rahmat, M.Pd. a lecturer from the Muhammadiyah University of Cirebon. The following are the results of the media expert validation:

No	Aspects assessed	Assessment Scale					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Selection of attractive colors that are appropriate for early childhood.					√	5
2	Clear illustrations that support understanding of the story.				√		4
3	Neat and non-confusing layout.				√		4
4	Sharp and non-blurry image and text quality.				√		4

5	Use of safe and durable materials for children.					√	5	
6	The size of the book is appropriate and easy for children to hold.					√	5	
7	Visual content that is appropriate for the development of early childhood.					√	5	
8	Does not contain elements that are frightening or inappropriate for children.					√	5	
9	Selection of fonts that are easy for children to read.					√	4	
10	Good contrast between text and background.					√	4	
TOTAL								45
PERCENTAGE								90%

Based on the results of media expert validation, it shows that the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC), The selection of attractive colors and is suitable for early childhood, The illustrations are clear and support understanding of the story, The layout is neat, the image quality is sharp, and the materials are safe and durable for children.

The expert gave a score of 90%, this shows that the Cerbon Children's Story Book is very worthy of being tested, adjusting the selection of letters to make it more contrasting, improving the images to make them clearer, and arranging the layout to be more harmonious.

#### **b. Trial of Practicality of Cirebon Children's Story Book Media**

Based on the advice of product experts in the revision which was then carried out a limited trial to test the practicality of the revised product, the researcher chose:

##### **1. Practitioner**

The assessment results were obtained based on teacher responses at the stage of product practicality as a learning medium obtained through a questionnaire filled out by two educators, namely Teten Suteni, S.Pd. (Practitioner 1) and Evi Sugiarti Lamutari, S.Pd. (Practitioner 2), at TK Al-Hikmah Cirebon. The results of the teacher assessment are as follows:

Indicator	Practitioner		Average	%	Remarks
	Evi	Teten			
The material is in accordance with the basic competencies set in the curriculum	5	4	4,5	90	Very Practical
The illustrations are interesting and in accordance with the context of the story	4	5	4,5	90	Very Practical
The language used is in accordance with the level of student development	4	4	4	80	Practical
The story is interesting and relevant to the student's experience	4	4	4	80	Practical
The story contains elements that encourage students to think critically	4	4	4	80	Practical
The book can be used as an effective learning medium	4	4	4	80	Practical
The instructions for using the book are clearly conveyed	4	4	4	80	Practical

The book supports individual and group learning	4	4	4	80	Practical
The book encourages active interaction between teachers and students	4	4	4	80	Practical
The story contains positive values and is in accordance with applicable norms	4	5	4,5	90	Very Practical
Total	41	42	41,5		
Percentage	82	84	83		Very Practical

Based on the assessment data of the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) by two practitioners, Evi and Teten, with a total score of 41 and 42 respectively out of a maximum of 50, an average score of 41.5 was obtained, which is equivalent to a percentage of 83%. According to the criteria for the practicality of learning media, this percentage is included in the category of "Very Practical."

### 3. Students

Observations of students were also conducted at Al-Hikmah Kindergarten using a Likers scale of 1-4 on 10 children in group B1. The results obtained were:

	indicator										Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Initial total	25	25	27	24	27	25	28	25	26	29	261
R (%)	62,5	62,5	67,5	60	67,5	62,5	70	62,5	65	72,5	65,25
final total	36	32	38	32	38	33	33	31	37	38	348
R (%)	90	80	95	80	95	82,5	82,5	77,5	92,5	95	87

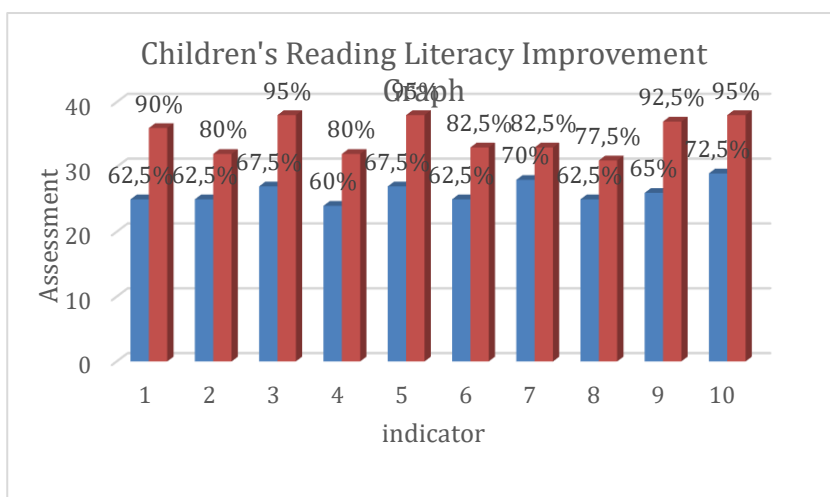
Based on initial observation data conducted, reading literacy in group B children totaling 10 children at Al-hikmah Kindergarten is still quite low, namely an average of 26.1 or 65.25%. In the indicators, children show enthusiasm when looking at books (for example, smiling, pointing, or opening books enthusiastically), children remain focused on reading or looking at books for at least 5-10 minutes, children can mention the values or messages contained in the story and children are able to mention words from the story with clear pronunciation getting a total score of 25 (62.5%) which means that children's reading literacy is developing as expected.

Meanwhile, on the indicator, the child can retell part or all of the story in his/her own language, getting a score of 24 (60%) or Developing according to Expectations (BSH), on the indicator, the child shows a desire to read with teachers/parents, getting a score of 26 (65%) or Developing according to Expectations (BSH), on the indicator, the child asks to reread the book independently or asks an adult to read it to him/her and the child can mention the values or messages contained in the story, getting a score of 27 (67.5%) means the child is developing according to expectations (BSH), on the indicator, the child recognizes several words or letters from the story book, getting a score of 28 (70%) means the child's literacy is developing

according to expectations (BSH), and on the indicator, the child shows a desire to know more about culture after reading the book, getting a score of 29 (72.5%), which means developing according to expectations (BSH).

By looking at these results, reading literacy in children still needs to be improved, so a limited trial was conducted on the use of the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) media by telling stories in a classical and individual manner. According to the results of the observations carried out according to the data above, it can be concluded that the reading literacy level of Al-Hikmah Kindergarten children scored 34.8 or 87%, this data has increased from the initial observation data, namely the score obtained was 26.1 or 65.25%. In the indicator the child is able to mention words from the story with clear pronunciation increased to 31 (77.5) which can be interpreted as developing very well (BSB), in the indicator the child remains focused on reading or looking at the book for at least 5-10 minutes and the indicator the child can retell part or all of the story in his own words minutes increased to 32 (80%) or developing very well (BSB), in the indicator the child recognizes several words or letters from the story book and the indicator the child can connect the story content with his personal experience obtained a score of 33 (82.5%), in the indicator the child shows enthusiasm when looking at the book (for example, smiling, pointing, or opening the book enthusiastically) got a score of 36 (90%) which is developing very well (BSB), in the indicator the child shows a desire to read with teachers/parents and the indicator gets a score of 37 (92.5%) or developing very well (BSB), in the indicator the child asks to reread the book independently or asks an adult to read it to him, the indicator the child can mention the values or messages contained in the story, and in the indicator the child shows a curiosity to know more about culture after reading the book gets a score of 38 (95%) or developing very well good (BSB).

Based on the results of observations in the trial or limited final observation, the Practical Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) is used for early childhood. The increase can be described by the following graph: Increase in Children's Reading Literacy.



Based on the results of the limited trial, the product was revised again according to the suggestions of practitioners and the results of the final observations

on students to become a final product that is feasible and practical to be used as a medium for learning reading literacy in early childhood.

#### **4. Description of the Results of the Dissemination Stage (Dissemination)**

After going through the final stage of product revision of the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) which was developed through the define, design, develop stages which were adjusted to expert advice and a limited trial was carried out, the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) was declared feasible and practical, then Dissemination (dissemination) was carried out. In this case, the researcher only conducted a limited study in the Al-Hikmah Kindergarten school environment, Pabuaran District, Cirebon. This is due to limited costs, while looking for a publisher who wants to cooperate.

### **DISCUSSION**

Reading literacy in early childhood is very important because it is the basis for children's cognitive, language, social, and emotional development. Children who have literacy skills from an early age will be better prepared to face formal education and have better critical thinking skills. Based on research conducted by researchers at TK AL-Hikmah Cirebon which was conducted by interviewing teachers and principals and observing early childhood in group B1, it was found that reading literacy learning had been carried out with non-illustrated reading books, there were also story books but children's interest in reading was still lacking.

The importance of reading literacy in early childhood According to Vygotsky's research (1978), interaction with books and spoken language is very important in building children's cognitive development. Children who are often exposed to story books have a richer vocabulary and better communication skills than children who rarely read (Bus et al., 1995). They learn language structure, how to express ideas, and understand the meaning of words in different contexts. If children are accustomed to books from an early age, they tend to have a high interest in reading into adulthood. This will help them absorb knowledge more easily in school and increase awareness of the importance of reading as a means of obtaining information. The urgency of reading literacy in early childhood is not only limited to reading and writing skills, but also includes children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Therefore, support is needed from parents, teachers, and the environment to create a culture of literacy from an early age so that children can grow into intelligent, creative individuals with high cultural awareness. Local culture-based story books, such as "Buku Cerita Anak Cerbon (BCAC)", not only increase literacy but also introduce children to their cultural identity. This helps children feel closer to the traditions and noble values that exist in their environment.

The Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) was created based on the results of direct observation of group B students at Al-Hikmah Kindergarten, researchers found low reading literacy levels in children, namely 26.1 or 65.25%, this is also in line with the interviews conducted, researchers found several findings at the needs analysis stage including:

1. Early childhood literacy skills still vary and require interesting learning media.
2. Story books are often used in learning, but the number and variety are still limited.

3. Books based on local culture are very much needed because children find it easier to understand stories that are close to their environment.
4. Interesting and interactive illustrations are very important to increase children's interest in reading.
5. There are no story books based on Cirebon local culture that not only increase reading literacy in children but can also introduce Cirebon culture to early childhood children so that they can foster pride in Cirebon culture

Based on these problems, researchers feel the importance of creating learning media that can attract children's interest in reading literacy. The Cerbon Children's Story Book is one of the solutions in addition to trying to improve children's reading literacy, it can also foster children's understanding and love for their regional culture.

The purpose of this Cerbon Children's Story Book development research is the first How to develop the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) as a reading literacy media for early childhood, the development of the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) as a learning media for reading literacy that is feasible and practical for early childhood. The ultimate goal is to be able to produce a product that can be used as a medium in developing reading literacy in early childhood.

In the development process, after conducting initial research conducted through observation and interviews, the researcher developed the Cerbon Children's Story Book with the stages of making an initial model, namely creating a story concept adjusted to the needs found in the needs analysis. Next, compile a story scenario that is in accordance with the development of the child's age and the Cirebon culture that will be told.

The next development stage is communicating with the kindergarten head teacher, cultural friends to determine the story idea. Based on this, the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) was created using simple language adapted to children's development. Illustrations were made using a combination of scanned manual paintings and the Canva application. Illustrations were made attractive according to the characteristics of early childhood.

The next stage is to conduct validation from experts including material experts, language experts and media experts, this is done to test the feasibility of the story book. Material experts gave a score of 41 which was expressed as a percentage of 81%, for almost all indicators the experts gave a score of 4 and for the indicator of the story relevant to the local culture of Cirebon the experts gave a high score of 5 if expressed as a percentage of 81%, it can be concluded according to material experts that the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) is very suitable for use for early childhood.

Validation carried out by language experts shows that the Cerbon Children's Story Book is very suitable as seen from the score given, namely 48 or 96%, out of 10 indicators, 8 indicators, experts gave a high score of 5 while for 2 indicators, experts gave a score of 4. Based on the validation of the language experts, the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) is very suitable for use. Media experts gave a score of 45 or 90% of the 10 indicators assessed, experts gave a score of 4 for 5 indicators and a score of 5 for 5 indicators. It can be seen from the results of the validation that experts assess the Cerbon Children's Story Book as very suitable.

In the practicality test conducted by 2 practitioners and observations of 10 children in group B, data from 2 practitioners assessed that the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) was very practical as seen from the average score given, which was 41.5 equivalent to 83%. Meanwhile, the results of the final observations carried out after product development and trials using classical or personal storytelling methods with different applications were in accordance with the results of Kurniasih and Priyanti's research which concluded that learning with a differentiation approach had a positive influence on reading, writing, and numeracy literacy skills in early childhood (Potensia, 2023). In this observation, data was obtained that the student's score was 34.8 equivalent to a percentage of 87%, this shows an increase in interest in reading literacy in children who previously in the initial observation the total score was 26.1 or 65.25%.

Overall, based on expert validation or the practicality test, the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) was assessed as "Very feasible and practical" indicating that this book is effective as a learning medium. However, several aspects such as clarity of language, attractiveness, and flexibility in learning methods can be improved to achieve more optimal practicality.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research conducted, conclusions can be drawn in accordance with the objectives of the research conducted, namely:

1. The development of the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) was developed through stages carried out systematically. The first stage is to determine and define learning needs and characteristics of students, based on the problems faced by educators, namely low reading literacy in early childhood, which is 26.1 or 65.25%, one of which is due to limited media. The next stage is Design or product design (Draft 1), by creating story concepts, illustrations, characters, and compiling story lines that are adjusted to the development of early childhood. The next stage is validation carried out by material experts, language experts and media experts. Based on the advice of experts, revisions were made to Draft 2, after going through a validation process and limited trials by practitioners and students, the model was refined and a final model was obtained that was ready to be used as a story book that could not only improve reading literacy in early childhood but also increase understanding and pride in their regional culture.
2. Based on the research results, the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) as a medium for learning reading literacy for early childhood has been proven to be feasible and practical for use in educational environments. In the validation process of the story book from the material side, experts gave a score of 81% which can be concluded that this book is very feasible, while language experts gave a score of 96% which means that this story book is very feasible, while media experts gave a score of 90% which means that this story book is very feasible. Meanwhile, in a limited trial, 2 practitioners after using this story book gave a score of 83% which means that the story book is practical for use in early childhood, while when observations were made on 10 children in group B, there was an increase in reading interest in children

which in the initial observation was 65.25% increasing to 87%. This book is easily accessible, interesting, and can be applied in various learning methods, both at school and at home. Thus, the Cerbon Children's Story Book (BCAC) is not only a useful reading medium, but also an educational tool that can support children's literacy development optimally.

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