

Application of Make a Match Type Cooperative Learning Strategy to Improve Learning Outcomes of Basic Competency PAI Mentioning the Names of the Last Day in Grade VI Students of SDN 1102 Aek Buatun, Aek Nabara Barumun District

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the application of the *Make a Match type cooperative learning strategy* in improving the learning outcomes of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in the basic competency of mentioning the names of the last day in class VI of SDN 1102 Aek Buatun, Aek Nabara Barumun District. The research method used is classroom action research (PTK) with two cycles which include the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The subject of this study is a grade VI student of SDN 1102 Aek Buatun. Data collection was carried out through learning outcome tests, observations, and interviews. The results of the study show that the implementation of the *Make a Match* strategy can significantly improve student learning outcomes. In the first cycle, the average student learning outcomes increased compared to before the action, and in the second cycle there was an even better increase. In addition, this strategy also increases students' active involvement in learning and creates a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. Thus, the *Make a Match type cooperative learning strategy* can be used as an alternative in improving students' understanding and learning outcomes in PAI subjects.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning, Learning Outcomes, Islamic Religious Education.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has an important role in shaping the character and faith of students from an early age. One of the basic competencies in PAI subjects at the elementary school level is to understand and mention the names of the last days. However, in the learning process, there are still various obstacles that hinder students' understanding of this material, such as the lack of active student involvement, low interest in learning, and teaching methods that are still conventional. This is in line with research that states that the use of less interactive methods can have an impact on low student learning outcomes (Sagala, 2019).

Based on initial observations at SDN 1102 Aek Buatun, Aek Nabara Barumun District, it was found that the learning outcomes of students in the basic competency of mentioning the names of the last days were still relatively low. Many students have difficulty remembering and understanding the concept of the last day because the learning methods used have not fully appealed to them. To overcome this problem, innovative and interactive learning strategies are

needed. One of the strategies that can be applied is the *Make a Match* type of cooperative learning. This strategy involves students in the learning process in pairs to match questions and answers, so that learning becomes more fun and meaningful (Slavin, 2020).

This study aims to analyze the application of the *Make a Match type cooperative learning strategy* in improving PAI learning outcomes in the basic competency of mentioning the names of the last day in grade VI of SDN 1102 Aek Buatun. In addition, this study also wants to find out the effectiveness of *the Make a Match strategy* in improving student learning outcomes. The benefits of this research are expected to be felt by various parties. For students, this strategy is expected to increase their understanding and interest in learning the names of the last days. For teachers, this research can be a reference in choosing more effective and innovative learning methods. As for schools, the results of this research can be the basis for the development of a curriculum based on cooperative strategies that are more varied and attractive to students (Rusman, 2021).

Thus, this research is expected to make a real contribution to improving the quality of PAI learning, especially in the basic competency of mentioning the names of the last days in elementary schools. Through the implementation of the *Make a Match strategy*, it is hoped that there will be a significant increase in student learning outcomes, as well as a more active and fun learning atmosphere.

METHODS

This study uses the classroom action research method (PTK) which aims to improve student learning outcomes through the application of the *Make a Match* type cooperative learning strategy in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects. The classroom action research model used refers to Kemmis and McTaggart, which consists of four stages in each cycle, namely planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2021). This research was conducted in two cycles, where each cycle consisted of two meetings involving the application of learning strategies to measure their effectiveness on improving student learning outcomes.

The subjects in this study are grade VI students of SDN 1102 Aek Buatun, Aek Nabara Barumun District, with a total of 30 students, consisting of 15 male students and 15 female students. The selection of this subject is based on the existence of problems in student learning outcomes that are still low in the basic competency of mentioning the names of the last days. This research was carried out in the school during a predetermined period of time, in accordance with the applicable learning schedule.

Data collection in this study was carried out through several techniques, namely learning outcome tests, observations, interviews, and documentation. Learning outcome tests are given in the form of pretest and posttest to find out the extent of improvement in student understanding after the implementation of *the Make a Match strategy*. Observations are carried out during the learning process to assess the level of activity and involvement of students in the learning strategies applied. Interviews were conducted with students and teachers to find out their responses to the methods applied, as well as the obstacles that may be faced during the learning process. Meanwhile, documentation is used to record various activities that occur during the study, such as photos of learning activities, student work results, and reflection notes from teachers regarding the effectiveness of this strategy.

The data obtained were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative descriptive methods. Quantitative analysis was carried out by comparing the results of the pretest and posttest using the calculation of the average student score to determine the level of improvement in learning outcomes after the implementation of the *Make a Match strategy*. Meanwhile, qualitative analysis is carried out by interpreting observation, interview, and documentation data to understand student responses and obstacles faced in learning.

The success of this study is determined based on several indicators. First, the improvement of student learning outcomes, which is said to be successful if $\geq 75\%$ of students get a score above the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) that has been set by the school. Second, the increase in student activity in learning, which is measured based on the results of observation of student involvement during the learning process with *the Make a Match*

strategy. Third, increasing student learning motivation, which is assessed through interviews and observations related to students' enthusiasm in participating in learning. By applying this research method, it is hoped that *the Make a Match strategy* can be one of the effective alternatives in improving student learning outcomes in PAI subjects.

RESULTS

Learning outcomes are an important indicator in measuring the effectiveness of a learning method. Learning outcomes reflect students' level of understanding and mastery of the material taught in a learning process (Sudjana, 2021). In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, learning outcomes not only include cognitive aspects, but also affective and psychomotor aspects that show the extent to which students understand and practice religious values in daily life (Mulyasa, 2020).

The learning strategies implemented by teachers have a significant influence on student learning outcomes. Conventional learning that is only teacher-centered tends to make students passive and less motivated to understand the material in depth. On the contrary, the use of innovative learning methods, such as *the Make a Match type cooperative learning strategy*, can increase student involvement in the learning process as well as their learning outcomes (Slavin, 2020).

This study found that the implementation of the *Make a Match strategy* had a positive impact on the learning outcomes of grade VI students of SDN 1102 Aek Buatun. Data obtained from the learning outcome test showed an increase in the average score of students after the implementation of this strategy. In the early stages before the implementation of *Make a Match*, most students obtained grades below the minimum completeness standard (KKM). However, after the first and second cycles in classroom action research, student learning outcomes have improved significantly.

This increase can be explained by several factors. First, *the Make a Match strategy* allows students to learn in a fun and non-boring atmosphere. Interaction between students in matching question cards and answers helps them to better understand the concepts being taught (Rusman, 2021). Second, this method also strengthens students' memory because they learn through hands-on experience, not just listening to the teacher's explanations.

In addition to improving learning outcomes in the cognitive aspect, *the Make a Match strategy* also has an impact on the affective aspect of students. Students become more active, confident, and motivated in participating in learning. They are more enthusiastic in finding suitable card pairs, which indirectly encourages them to understand the material better (Sagala, 2019). Additionally, game-based learning like *Make a Match* can improve students' social skills, such as effective cooperation and communication.

In the psychomotor aspect, the application of this strategy also provides real benefits. Students not only sit still and listen to the teacher, but they are also active in finding a suitable pair of cards. This activity makes learning more dynamic and helps students remember concepts better through a direct and fun learning experience (Daryanto, 2020).

The results of observations during the study showed that *the Make a Match strategy* succeeded in creating a more lively and interactive learning atmosphere. Teachers also find it easier to deliver material because students are more enthusiastic about receiving learning. In addition, this method reduces saturation in learning, especially in PAI subjects which are often considered difficult for some students (Trianto, 2020). Apart from the results of tests and observations, interviews with students showed that most of them found it easier to understand the material after applying *the Make a Match* method. They revealed that learning by matching cards is more interesting than just listening to lectures from teachers. This is in line with previous research which stated that game-based learning can improve students' memory of the material learned (Arends, 2021).

However, there are some challenges in implementing this strategy. One of them is the limitation of time in the learning process. Since students have to find a pair of cards, the time it takes is longer compared to the traditional lecture method. However, these challenges can be overcome with better planning and sufficient time allocation in each learning session

(Santrock, 2021).

In terms of effectiveness, the results of this study support previous findings that stated that cooperative learning is able to significantly improve student learning outcomes compared to conventional methods. Cooperative learning not only improves cognitive understanding, but also develops students' social and emotional skills (Johnson & Johnson, 2019).

Furthermore, increased learning outcomes also contribute to an increase in students' overall learning motivation. When students feel more successful in understanding the material, they will be more motivated to study harder in the future. High motivation will have an impact on improving academic achievement in the long term (Ormrod, 2020).

In addition, the success of *the Make a Match* strategy in improving learning outcomes also shows the importance of innovation in the world of education. Teachers need to continue to find and apply interesting methods so that students can more easily understand the material and not feel bored in the learning process (Rusman, 2021). Overall, this study shows that the *Make a Match* type cooperative learning strategy can be an effective alternative in improving student learning outcomes, especially in PAI subjects. The success of this strategy lies not only in improving academic grades, but also in the development of students' social and emotional aspects. Thus, this method can be one of the solutions in improving the quality of learning in elementary schools.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that the implementation of the *Make a Match type cooperative learning strategy* can improve student learning outcomes in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects, especially in the basic competency of mentioning the names of the last days. This finding is in line with previous research which states that active and interactive learning methods are able to increase students' understanding and involvement in the learning process (Slavin, 2020).

The significant improvement in student learning outcomes in this study shows that game-based learning such as *Make a Match* can improve students' memory of the material studied. This is in line with cognitive theory which states that fun learning experiences involving social interaction can strengthen students' memory in absorbing information (Santrock, 2021). In addition, this method also fosters higher learning motivation, as stated by Ormrod (2020), who states that activity-based learning can increase students' intrinsic motivation in learning.

In the cognitive aspect, *the Make a Match* strategy makes it easier for students to understand the concept of the last day through matching question cards and answers. In contrast to lecture methods that tend to be one-way, this strategy involves students actively in finding the correct answer, so that the concepts taught are easier to understand and remember (Arends, 2021). In addition, this method also encourages students to think critically in connecting questions with the right answers.

From the affective aspect, this study shows that students become more confident in participating in learning activities. They are more enthusiastic about learning because of the interesting game element. This supports the findings of Johnson & Johnson (2019) which states that cooperative learning can increase students' confidence and strengthen their social skills. The interaction between students in finding a card pair also helps them in developing communication and cooperation skills.

In the psychomotor aspect, *the Make a Match* strategy provides a more dynamic learning experience compared to traditional methods. Students not only sit quietly listening to the teacher's explanation, but also actively move in looking for the appropriate card. Physical activity in this learning contributes to increasing student involvement in understanding the concepts taught (Daryanto, 2020).

However, although this strategy has proven to be effective in improving student learning outcomes, there are several challenges in its implementation. One of the obstacles faced is the limitation of learning time. Because students have to find card pairs, the learning process becomes longer compared to conventional methods. This is in line with the findings

of Rusman (2021) who stated that game-based learning requires better time management to remain efficient. To overcome this obstacle, teachers can optimize learning time by providing clearer instructions and limiting the number of cards used.

Another challenge that arises is the difference in the level of understanding among students. Some students who have a faster understanding may complete the assignment earlier, while others need more time to understand the concepts being taught. In this case, teachers need to provide additional guidance to students who are experiencing difficulties so as not to fall behind in the learning process (Mulyasa, 2020).

In addition, the implementation of *the Make a Match strategy* also requires the readiness of teachers in designing appropriate materials. Teachers need to compile question and answer cards with varying levels of difficulty so that they can adjust to students' abilities. According to Trianto (2020), the effectiveness of cooperative learning is highly dependent on the preparation and creativity of teachers in designing strategies that suit the needs of students. Therefore, teachers need to do careful planning before applying this method in the classroom.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the *Make a Match strategy* is one of the effective learning methods in improving student learning outcomes. However, the application of this method requires the right strategy in order to overcome obstacles that arise during the learning process. In addition, this study also shows that fun and interactive learning methods have a positive impact not only on learning outcomes, but also on student motivation, social skills, and activeness in the classroom (Sudjana, 2021).

Thus, this research has implications for the world of education, especially in the development of innovative learning strategies. Teachers are advised to use more activity-based learning methods to improve student learning outcomes. In addition, further research can be carried out by exploring the combination of *the Make a Match strategy* with other learning methods to obtain more optimal results in improving the quality of learning in elementary schools.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the application of *the Make a Match type cooperative learning strategy* is effective in improving the learning outcomes of grade VI students of SDN 1102 Aek Buatun in the basic competency of mentioning the names of the last days in the subject of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). This strategy has a positive impact not only on improving students' cognitive aspects, but also on their affective and psychomotor aspects.

In the cognitive aspect, student learning outcomes have experienced a significant improvement after the implementation of *the Make a Match strategy*. Interactive and game-based learning helps students understand the material better, improves memory, and makes it easier for them to connect the concepts taught. The test results showed that the average student score increased after the application of this method, which indicates its effectiveness in improving students' academic understanding.

From the affective aspect, this strategy has succeeded in increasing students' motivation to learn. Students become more enthusiastic, confident, and active in participating in learning. The social interaction that occurs during the game also encourages them to work together in finding the right answers, thus creating a fun and not boring learning atmosphere.

Meanwhile, in the psychomotor aspect, *the Make a Match strategy* encourages students to be more active in finding the appropriate pair cards, so that the learning process becomes more dynamic. This activity helps students in building quick thinking skills as well as improving their social skills.

However, there are several obstacles in the implementation of this strategy, such as limited learning time and differences in student understanding levels. However, with good time management and proper guidance from teachers, these obstacles can be minimized so that this strategy is still effectively implemented in the classroom.

Thus, this study confirms that *the Make a Match strategy* is one of the innovative

learning methods that can be used to improve student learning outcomes, especially in PAI subjects. Therefore, it is recommended for educators to adopt this method as an alternative in improving the quality of learning in elementary schools. In addition, further research can be carried out to develop this method with a combination of other strategies to obtain more optimal results in learning.

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