

ENHANCING ELEMENTARY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH THE MAKE A MATCH MODEL: CASE STUDY AT SD NEGERI SELANGIT

Dafis¹ Agustriyogo²

Universitas PGRI Silampari¹²

dafis5352@gmail.com¹ Agustriyogo@gmail.com²

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Abstract: This research aims to explore the implementation of the Make a Match learning model in improving student learning outcomes in elementary school education. The study was carried out at SD Negeri Selangit using classroom action research (CAR) consisting of two cycles. The research subjects were 28 fourth-grade students during the 2024/2025 academic year. Each cycle consisted of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through tests, observation sheets, documentation, and field notes. The initial average score before the intervention was 64.50, with a learning completeness of only 46%. After the implementation of the Make a Match model, the average score improved to 72.14 in the first cycle and 84.67 in the second cycle. Completeness also increased to 67% in Cycle I and 89% in Cycle II. The Make a Match learning model encouraged student collaboration, increased enthusiasm for learning, and enhanced retention of subject matter. These findings suggest that the Make a Match model is a practical approach for improving student learning outcomes at the elementary level. Furthermore, it is recommended that future research apply this model to other grade levels and subject areas, explore its integration with digital tools, and evaluate its long-term impact on students' critical thinking and collaboration skills.

Keywords: Make a Match, cooperative learning, learning outcomes, classroom action research, SD Negeri Selangit

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in shaping the intellectual and moral development of students. One of the key indicators of educational success is student learning outcomes. However, many elementary schools in Indonesia face challenges in ensuring that students achieve the desired academic competencies. Based on observations at SD Negeri Selangit, many fourth-grade students showed low academic performance, especially in integrated thematic learning, which demands cognitive, affective, and psychomotor involvement.

According to Suyanto and Asep (2013), learning in primary schools should be fun, interactive, and contextual. However, the reality often shows that conventional teaching methods still dominate classrooms, leading to passive learning and minimal student engagement. This condition highlights the urgency

for implementing innovative learning models that can make learning more meaningful.

The Make a Match model, developed by Lorna Curran, is one of the cooperative learning strategies that emphasize pairing and matching concepts through interactive activities. This model is designed to help students find pairs of cards containing questions and answers or related concepts, thereby encouraging active participation, critical thinking, and teamwork. Previous studies by Andini & Ratmanida (2019) and Nurhayati & Maulidia (2021) have shown that Make a Match can improve student learning motivation and academic performance.

The research aims to: (1) describe the implementation process of the Make a Match model; (2) analyze improvements in learning outcomes; and (3) evaluate student responses to the learning process. By focusing on SD Negeri Selangit, this study contributes to local educational practices and provides a model that can be replicated in similar contexts.

Despite these advantages, there is still limited empirical research that specifically evaluates the impact of the Make a Match model on elementary students' academic outcomes within integrated thematic learning. Therefore, this study aims to answer the following research question: How does the implementation of the Make a Match learning model affect the academic performance and classroom engagement of fourth-grade students at SD Negeri Selangit? This central question guides the inquiry and provides a clear focus on evaluating both cognitive and affective aspects of student development through this cooperative learning approach.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized Classroom Action Research (CAR) based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which involves a repetitive cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The research was conducted over two cycles during the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

Research Subject

The research involved 28 students from class IV SD Negeri Selangit. The selection of this class was based on previous academic records and teacher recommendations, indicating the need for innovative interventions to enhance student performance. The gender distribution was relatively balanced, and students came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Data Collecting

Several instruments and techniques were used for data collection:

1. **Observation Sheets** – to monitor student activity, engagement, and participation.
2. **Learning Outcome Tests** – conducted at the end of each cycle.
3. **Documentation** – photographs, student work, and learning materials.
4. **Field Notes** – written by the teacher-researcher to record observations and reflections.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using percentage formulas to measure the improvement in learning outcomes and completeness. Qualitative data were analyzed descriptively by reviewing observation results, student behavior, and field notes. The criterion of success was set at a minimum average score of 75 and at least 85% student completeness.

RESEARCH RESULT

Finding

The research findings showed a consistent improvement in student performance and learning engagement throughout the cycles:

- **Pre-Cycle:** Students scored an average of 64.50, and only 46% of them met the minimum completeness criteria.
- **Cycle I:** After implementing the Make a Match model, the average score increased to 72.14, and completeness rose to 67%.
- **Cycle II:** Continued application of the model improved the average score to 84.67, with 89% of students achieving the learning target.

These results indicate that the model effectively enhanced student understanding of the learning material and improved cooperative skills. Students were more motivated, participated actively, and displayed better collaboration with peers.

| Cycle | Average Score | Completeness (%) |
|-----------|---------------|------------------|
| Pre-Cycle | 64.50 | 46% |
| Cycle I | 72.14 | 67% |
| Cycle II | 84.67 | 89% |

Discussion

The findings support the theory that cooperative learning models, such as Make a Match, create an interactive learning environment where students can learn from each other. According to Slavin (1995), peer interaction and collaboration significantly contribute to cognitive development and learning achievement.

During the implementation, students showed excitement and enthusiasm in the learning activities. The game-like nature of the cardmatching activity made the learning process enjoyable and less stressful. Teachers also found the model easy to apply and adapt to various topics in thematic learning. These advantages align with the findings by Nurhayati & Maulidia (2021), who concluded that the Make a Match model improves conceptual understanding and student participation.

The improved scores across cycles indicate that students were not only memorizing facts but also engaging in deeper understanding through discussion and repetition. The social aspect of learning also enhanced their interpersonal skills and sense of responsibility.

CONCLUSION

The application of the Make a Match learning model significantly improved student learning outcomes at SD Negeri Selangit. Through two cycles of classroom action research, student engagement and academic performance increased. The model promoted collaborative learning, fostered a positive classroom atmosphere, and helped students master the subject matter more effectively.

This research demonstrates that Make a Match is a suitable learning model for elementary education, especially in thematic subjects that require student involvement and contextual learning. Teachers are encouraged to integrate this

model with other active learning strategies to enhance its effectiveness. Further studies can explore its application in different subjects or combine it with digital learning tools for wider impact.

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