Enhancing Learning Outcomes on Surah Al-Ma'un through the Implementation of the Make-a-Match Method among Fifth Grade Students at SDN 5 Karangrau Banyumas

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Abstract:
The low learning outcomes of students in the subject matter of Surah Al-Ma'un in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) indicate the need for more active and enjoyable learning strategies. This study aims to improve students' learning outcomes on Surah Al-Ma'un through the implementation of the active learning strategy *Make a Match* in Grade V students of SDN 5 Karangrau. The research method used is Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted in two cycles, each consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through observation, documentation, and learning outcome tests, and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results showed that the *Make a Match* strategy significantly improved students' learning outcomes. Before the treatment, the mastery level was only 36%, increasing to 68% in Cycle I, and reaching 88% in Cycle II. These findings indicate that the *Make a Match* strategy enhances students' engagement in the learning process and their understanding of the content and meaning of Surah Al-Ma'un. Thus, the *Make a Match* strategy is effective in improving PAI learning outcomes and is recommended for similar material in elementary education.

Keywords:
Make a Match; Surah Al-Ma'un; Learning Outcomes.

Abstrak:
Minimnya hasil belajar siswa pada materi Surah Al-Ma'un dalam mata pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) menunjukkan perlunya inovasi strategi pembelajaran yang lebih aktif dan menyenangkan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan hasil belajar PAI materi Surah Al-Ma'un melalui penerapan strategi pembelajaran aktif *Make a Match* pada siswa kelas V SDN 5 Karangrau. Metode yang digunakan adalah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus, masing-masing terdiri atas perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi, dan refleksi. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, dokumentasi, dan tes hasil belajar, kemudian dianalisis secara kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan strategi *Make a Match* dapat meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa secara signifikan. Pada pra tindakan, ketuntasan belajar hanya mencapai 36%, meningkat menjadi 68% pada siklus I, dan mencapai 88% pada siklus II. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran dengan strategi *Make a Match* dapat meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dalam proses pembelajaran serta pemahaman terhadap isi dan makna Surah Al-Ma'un. Dengan demikian, strategi *Make a Match* efektif dalam meningkatkan hasil belajar PAI dan direkomendasikan untuk diterapkan pada pembelajaran materi serupa di jenjang sekolah dasar.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a central role in shaping students' character, noble morality, and spiritual development (Hakim, 2024). IRE is not merely concerned with transmitting cognitive knowledge about Islamic teachings but also aims to instill moral and social values that shape students' personalities from an early age. In the context of elementary education, IRE should be delivered through engaging and enjoyable approaches that facilitate comprehensive understanding by young learners.

However, field observations indicate that the implementation of IRE still faces various challenges. One pressing issue is the low level of student enthusiasm in IRE classes, often attributed to the use of conventional and monotonous teaching methods such as one-way lectures that fail to engage students actively. In fact, elementary school students are at the concrete operational developmental stage, which requires active, participatory, and contextual learning strategies (Alatas et al., 2022).

One of the essential components of the IRE curriculum is Surah Al-Ma'un (Hidayati, 2023). This Surah not only involves memorization but also conveys profound moral messages, such as the importance of caring for orphans, helping others, and avoiding hypocrisy. Therefore, teaching Surah Al-Ma'un should target the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains to ensure that its values holistically shape students' character.

Preliminary observations in Grade V at SDN 5 Karangrau, Banyumas District, revealed that students' learning outcomes in Surah Al-Ma'un remained below the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC). The low achievement is strongly suspected to be related to the lack of varied teaching methods that could stimulate students' interest and active involvement in the learning process.

An effective alternative to address this issue is the application of active learning strategies such as the Make-a-Match method (Sari et al., 2020). This method is designed to foster student engagement and collaboration through matching question and answer cards. Previous studies have shown that this strategy is effective in improving learning outcomes, especially in content that requires conceptual understanding and social interaction (Lie, 2004; Sanjaya, 2016). By applying the Make-

a-Match model to the teaching of Surah Al-Ma'un, it is expected that students will become more motivated and gain a deeper understanding of Islamic values.

IRE is not solely about knowledge transmission; it is also about character development through holistic approaches (Maulida & Hikmah, 2025). In line with the Merdeka Curriculum, teachers are encouraged to design student-centered learning that accommodates diverse learning styles. One relevant approach is PAIKEM (Active, Innovative, Creative, Effective, and Joyful Learning), which promotes contextual, participatory, and meaningful learning. This approach becomes increasingly urgent, considering that the current lecture-dominated practice fails to optimize students' learning achievements.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in constructivist theory, which posits that knowledge is not transmitted passively but constructed actively by learners through interaction and experience. In meaningful learning, students are actively engaged in thinking, exploring, and constructing understanding, while the teacher acts as a facilitator in creating a learning environment that fosters full student engagement.

The Make-a-Match model is part of the cooperative learning approach aligned with constructivist principles (Sari et al., 2020). In this model, students work in pairs to match question and answer cards, an activity that enhances critical thinking, reinforces understanding, and fosters interaction and collaboration in a joyful atmosphere. This model not only facilitates conceptual comprehension but also nurtures social skills and a sense of togetherness.

Learning motivation is also a crucial factor in student achievement. According to Djamarah (2010), motivation is a key determinant of successful learning. Teachers, therefore, hold the responsibility to spark and sustain student motivation through relevant and engaging instructional strategies such as the Make-a-Match method.

Prior studies affirm the effectiveness of the Make-a-Match model. Imawati (2011) found that Make-a-Match and Numbered Heads Together (NHT) were more effective than conventional methods in improving learning outcomes. Ikasari (2013) demonstrated that using flashcards in the Make-a-Match model increased student learning activity in science classes. Likewise, Wulandari et al. (2018) confirmed that a portfolio-based Make-a-Match strategy enhanced both academic performance and students' sense of responsibility.

This study shares similarities with previous research in using Make-a-Match as an active learning strategy. However, it offers several novelties: first, the model is applied specifically in IRE instruction, focusing on Surah Al-Ma'un. Second, the study is

conducted in a small classroom setting with only 14 students, allowing for more personalized interaction. Third, the effectiveness of the learning model is measured using two key indicators: learning motivation and learning outcomes, including students' spiritual and social values.

The aim of this study is to improve students' learning outcomes in Surah Al-Ma'un through the implementation of the Make-a-Match instructional model. The choice of Surah Al-Ma'un is based on its relevance to the development of students' social and spiritual character. It is expected that the Make-a-Match model will foster active, joyful, and meaningful learning experiences, enhancing both students' understanding and internalization of Islamic teachings.

This study contributes to the advancement of active learning methods in the context of Islamic Religious Education. While Make-a-Match has been widely applied in science-based subjects, this research provides evidence of its effectiveness in value-based education. It underscores the potential of Make-a-Match in integrating both cognitive and affective dimensions in a unified instructional design.

Theoretically, this study enriches the academic discourse on IRE grounded in constructivism and cooperative learning. Practically, it offers a valuable reference for IRE teachers in developing instructional strategies that enhance both students' motivation and academic achievement, while also contextually strengthening character education.

METHOD

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted in two cycles, based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model. Each cycle consisted of four main stages: planning, implementation of action, observation, and reflection. The primary objective of this research was to improve the learning outcomes of fifth-grade students at SDN 5 Karangrau, Banyumas District on the topic of Surah Al-Ma'un through the application of the Make-a-Match instructional method. A qualitative approach was adopted, supported by quantitative data to objectively demonstrate students' learning progress.

The participants of the study were all 20 students of Grade V at SDN 5 Karangrau. The sample was selected purposively, as prior evaluations had indicated that this class encountered significant challenges in understanding the content of Surah Al-Ma'un. The data sources included the students as the primary subjects, the

classroom teacher as a supporting informant, and relevant instructional documents such as lesson plans, score sheets, and observation notes.

The data collected comprised both qualitative and quantitative types. Qualitative data were obtained through observation of teacher and student activities during the learning process and through classroom documentation. Quantitative data were derived from the results of students' learning assessments conducted at three points: pre-cycle (baseline), post-cycle I, and post-cycle II. The assessments consisted of multiple-choice and short-answer questions, aligned with the learning indicators for Surah Al-Ma'un.

Data collection was conducted through observation, testing, and documentation. Observation involved the use of structured observation sheets to record student and teacher activities throughout the implementation of the learning model. Tests were used to measure improvements in students' learning outcomes after each cycle. Documentation included photos, field notes, and other written records capturing the classroom learning process.

The data analysis employed two approaches. First, quantitative data were analyzed by calculating the average test scores and the percentage of students meeting the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC), which was set at 70. Second, qualitative data were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach following the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This analysis aimed to explore the dynamics of classroom learning and students' responses to the Make-a-Match method.

To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation techniques. Methodological triangulation was conducted by comparing results from observations, tests, and documentation, while source triangulation was carried out by cross-verifying information from both students and the classroom teacher. Furthermore, the researcher was actively and continuously involved in the learning process to ensure that the collected data accurately reflected the real conditions in the classroom. With a systematic methodology and rigorous data validation, this research is expected to provide a meaningful contribution to improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education at the elementary school level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Initial Condition of Students' Learning Outcomes before the Intervention

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a vital role in shaping students' character and moral values. One of the essential topics in IRE is the comprehension of Surah Al-

Ma'un, which contains profound messages on social empathy and sincerity in practicing religion. However, in practice, students' learning outcomes regarding this material remain relatively low. This is evident from their limited ability to explain the meanings of verses, comprehend moral messages, and connect the content of the surah with real-life situations. This condition may be attributed to the use of conventional teaching methods, such as lectures and rote memorization, which fail to engage students actively in the learning process.

Based on preliminary observations in Grade V of SDN 5 Karangrau, it was found that out of 20 students who participated in the lesson on Surah Al-Ma'un, only 6 students (30%) reached the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) of 70. Meanwhile, 14 students (70%) scored below the threshold. The average class score during the pre-intervention stage was 61.5. These findings indicate that the majority of students had not yet achieved sufficient mastery of the subject matter.

This low achievement reflects issues within the teaching and learning process. According to (Abidin, 2019), students' learning outcomes are influenced by various factors, one of which is the teaching method employed by the teacher. When teaching strategies do not involve students actively, the internalization of knowledge tends to be passive and superficial. A teacher-centered approach often results in students becoming demotivated, disengaged, and unable to relate the material to their personal experiences.

In this context, an innovative teaching strategy is required to activate student engagement, foster learning enthusiasm, and facilitate deeper understanding of Islamic teachings. One promising approach is the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model. This method requires students to interact with one another in a joyful learning atmosphere by matching question-and-answer cards. As noted by (Sinaga et al., 2025), the Make-a-Match model effectively enhances student participation by integrating elements of play, cooperation, and healthy competition. Thus, this model is believed to be capable of addressing the issue of low student achievement in understanding Surah Al-Ma'un while simultaneously promoting the contextual internalization of Islamic values.

Improvement of Students' Learning Outcomes in Cycle I

The first cycle of the intervention was implemented using the Make-a-Match method, a cooperative learning technique involving students in matching question-and-answer cards. This method aimed to create an active, enjoyable, and interactive

learning environment. In the context of IRE—particularly the topic of Surah Al-Ma'un—this strategy was expected to enhance students' comprehension of the verses through a collaborative and meaningful learning process.

The evaluation results from Cycle I showed a significant improvement compared to the initial condition. Out of 20 students, 12 students (60%) achieved the MMC score of 70, while 8 students (40%) remained below the threshold. The class average score also improved from 61.5 to 71. This indicates that the implementation of the Make-a-Match method in Cycle I positively impacted students' learning outcomes.

In addition to academic improvement, there were notable changes in students' learning behaviors. Most students appeared enthusiastic when participating in the card-matching activities involving questions and answers related to the content of Surah Al-Ma'un. They actively engaged in discussions, read the verses, and interpreted their meanings before matching the correct pairs. These activities encouraged critical thinking and collaborative work among peers.

According to (Sari et al., 2020) the Make-a-Match method, as part of cooperative learning, enhances conceptual understanding and student motivation due to its playful nature and social interaction components. Furthermore, this strategy helps alleviate the boredom typically associated with traditional lecture-based teaching. By actively seeking matching cards, students not only memorize the verses but also grasp their meanings through contextual and experiential learning.

Despite the progress, the target success indicator—namely, at least 85% of students achieving the MMC—was not yet met. This suggests that additional support and instructional refinement were needed for the remaining students. Therefore, the intervention proceeded to Cycle II, with improvements to the instructional steps to better achieve the expected outcomes.

Improvement of Students' Learning Outcomes in Cycle II

Cycle II was implemented based on the reflection from Cycle I, which revealed that the learning outcomes had not yet reached the desired success indicator: ≥85% of students scoring ≥70. Accordingly, instructional refinements were made by increasing student engagement, providing clearer teacher instructions, and preparing more visually appealing and contextually appropriate learning cards for Surah Al-Ma'un.

The results from Cycle II demonstrated significant improvements in both cognitive outcomes and student learning activities. Data showed that 18 out of 20 students (90%) achieved scores ≥70, thus exceeding the MMC. The class average

score increased to 78, showing a substantial rise from the 71 average in Cycle I. This indicates that most students were now able to comprehend the content of Surah Al-Ma'un more effectively through the Make-a-Match strategy.

Moreover, the classroom learning process showed positive developments. Observations revealed that students were more enthusiastic and actively involved in matching cards related to the meaning and values of Surah Al-Ma'un. Peer interaction intensified, discussions emerged naturally, and students appeared to enjoy the learning experience. This activity provided students with the opportunity to construct meaning through collaborative exploration of the material.

This improvement can be explained through the lens of cooperative learning theory. According to (Bialangi & Kundera, 2018) cooperative learning offers opportunities for both social and cognitive interactions, thereby deepening conceptual understanding. In the Make-a-Match model, students engage in intensive interactions as they discuss and agree on appropriate card pairings, making the learning process active and meaningful. The simultaneous cognitive and physical engagement also strengthens their retention of the material.

In conclusion, the implementation of the Make-a-Match strategy in Cycle II proved to be effective in improving student learning outcomes. It not only enhanced academic achievement but also created a joyful and stimulating learning environment. These findings support Lie's (2005) assertion that the Make-a-Match method fosters an active learning atmosphere that encourages student participation and collaboration, while also promoting conceptual understanding through playful learning experiences.

Overall, the success of Cycle II marked the achievement of the study's objective: to improve students' understanding of Surah Al-Ma'un through an active and collaborative learning strategy. The results also indicate that the Make-a-Match method is a viable instructional alternative for IRE, particularly for teaching short Surahs that require contextual understanding of Islamic values.

Reflection and Implications for Learning

The implementation of the Make-a-Match method in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) provided valuable insights for the future development of effective classroom practices. The learning process carried out over two cycles demonstrated that this strategy not only improved students' academic performance but also transformed classroom dynamics into a more engaging and participatory environment. One teacher noted that "the Make-a-Match strategy was helpful because students were easier to

guide and became more active," highlighting increased classroom management efficiency and student involvement.

From the students' perspective, positive responses were also observed. One student remarked that "learning was more fun because it felt like we were playing while learning." This reflects a shift in students' perceptions of learning—from a boring activity to an enjoyable and meaningful experience. The integration of game-based learning evidently motivated students to participate more actively and engage deeply with the material.

This phenomenon aligns with Vygotsky's theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning. He argues that learning is more effective in collaborative contexts supported by active participation and scaffolding. In this case, the Make-a-Match method provided a platform for students to collaborate, discuss, and support each other in understanding the content of Surah Al-Ma'un.

In summary, the application of the Make-a-Match method in IRE contributes significantly to the reinforcement of activity-based and collaborative learning approaches. The strategy not only supported the achievement of cognitive learning goals but also helped build a more interactive, communicative, and enjoyable learning environment. Therefore, IRE teachers are encouraged to consider this method as an innovative alternative for designing meaningful and relevant lessons, particularly within the Merdeka Curriculum framework.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this classroom action research conducted over two cycles, it can be concluded that the application of the active learning strategy Make-a-Match significantly improves learning outcomes in Islamic Religious Education, specifically on the topic of Surah Al-Ma'un, among fifth-grade students at SDN 5 Karangrau. This strategy not only enhances students' cognitive performance—as indicated by the increase in the percentage of students achieving the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) from 35% in the pre-action phase to 90% in the second cycle—but also positively influences motivation, active participation, and contextual understanding of the meaning contained in the verses.

This success reflects the alignment between 21st-century learning demands— which emphasize activeness, collaboration, and meaning-making—and the interactive nature of the Make-a-Match model. In line with Vygotsky's constructivist theory and

Slavin's principles of cooperative learning, this approach fosters social interaction as a medium for internalizing knowledge in an engaging and meaningful way.

Implicitly, the results of this study also present a promising outlook for the further development of the Make-a-Match method in teaching other Islamic Religious Education materials, particularly those that require deep understanding of meaning and reinforcement of spiritual and social values in daily life. The application of this method is highly adaptable for use in integrative thematic learning contexts as well as in character education grounded in religious values.

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