

## Implementation of the Make a Match Learning Model in Improving Vocabulary Understanding in Students at State Senior High School 6 Kendari

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### Abstract

Arabic language learning at the secondary school level requires effective instructional strategies to enhance students' vocabulary (mufradat) mastery, which serves as a fundamental component of language proficiency. However, conventional teaching methods that rely heavily on memorization often lead to low student engagement and limited vocabulary comprehension. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of the Make a Match learning model in improving students' Arabic vocabulary mastery at the secondary school level. This research employed a quantitative experimental approach using a true experimental design with a pre-test and post-test control group. The participants consisted of 20 students from SMA Negeri 6 Kendari, who were randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group. Data were collected through vocabulary achievement tests, classroom observations, interviews, and documentation. The experimental group was taught using the Make a Match learning model, while the control group received conventional instruction. Data analysis was conducted using quantitative statistical techniques to compare students' vocabulary mastery before and after the treatment. The results indicated that students who were taught using the Make a Match learning model demonstrated higher levels of vocabulary mastery compared to those taught using conventional methods. Improvements were observed in students' pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary recognition, and ability to match vocabulary with visual representations. The interactive and cooperative nature of the Make a Match model also increased students' motivation and active participation during the learning process. In conclusion, the Make a Match learning model is effective in enhancing students' Arabic vocabulary mastery by promoting active learning, cooperation, and the use of visual media. This model can be considered an alternative instructional strategy for Arabic language teachers to improve vocabulary learning outcomes and create a more engaging learning environment.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic language learning at the secondary level plays a crucial role in developing students' linguistic competence, both in understanding religious texts and in supporting academic communication. One of the main components of Arabic language learning is vocabulary mastery (mufradat), as this knowledge forms the foundation for other language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Poor vocabulary mastery often

leads to students having difficulty understanding Arabic texts and accurately conveying meaning, resulting in poor overall Arabic language learning outcomes (Tarigan, 2015).

Various previous studies have examined efforts to improve mastery of vocabulary through learning innovations, including:

1. Muhammad Aswar Amir, Journal Title: "The Application of Simulation Learning Models in Improving Vocabulary Memorization Skills of Grade VIII Students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah DDI Kanang" The similarity between Muhammad Aswar's research and the researcher's is that both are aimed at improving vocabulary mastery. The difference between this research is that Muhammad Aswar wants to improve students' vocabulary mastery by using a simulation learning model, while the prospective researcher uses the Make a Match learning model to improve students' vocabulary memorization.
2. Muhammad Anas Idris, Journal Title: "The Application of Image Media in Al-Alwan Learning to Improve Vocabulary Skills of Grade VII Students of MTsN Baranti, Sidrap Regency" The similarity between Muhammad Anas Idris' research and the researcher's is that both are aimed at improving vocabulary mastery. The difference between this research is that Muhammad Anas Idris uses image media to improve Arabic vocabulary skills, while the prospective researcher uses the Make a Match learning model.

Muhammad Aswar Amir (2017) demonstrated that the implementation of a simulation learning model was effective in improving students' ability to memorize Arabic vocabulary (*mufradat*) through contextual learning activities that actively involved students in the learning process. Meanwhile, Muhammad Anas Idris (2017) found that the use of picture media in Arabic language instruction helped students understand and remember vocabulary more effectively by creating visual associations between words and their meanings. In addition, studies on Arabic language learning emphasize that instructional practices which remain oriented toward memorization and teacher-centered approaches tend to be less effective in enhancing students' engagement and comprehension (Hidayat, 1996).

Although these studies reported positive results, most of the existing research focuses on the application of a single instructional model or a specific type of learning media in isolation. Studies that examine the implementation of cooperative, game-based learning models that integrate peer interaction, enjoyable learning activities, and systematic reinforcement of vocabulary mastery within a unified instructional design remain limited. Therefore, further research is needed to explore alternative instructional models that not only improve vocabulary memorization but also promote students' active participation and overall engagement in the learning process.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in the application of the *Make a Match* learning model as a cooperative, game-based instructional strategy for improving Arabic vocabulary mastery. Unlike previous studies that emphasized simulation-based learning (Muhammad Aswar Amir, 2017) or the use of picture media (Muhammad Anas Idris, 2017), the *Make a Match* model integrates peer collaboration, card-matching activities, and an interactive and enjoyable learning environment. This model is considered capable of strengthening vocabulary understanding through students' active involvement in the learning process.

Based on the background and identified research gap, the research problem addressed in this study is whether the implementation of the *Make a Match* learning model can improve students' Arabic vocabulary mastery more effectively than conventional instructional methods. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of the *Make a Match* learning model in improving students' vocabulary mastery as well as enhancing their active engagement in Arabic language learning at the secondary education level.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

### 2.1. Research Design

This study employed a *quantitative experimental approach* using a **true experimental design** with a pre-test and post-test control group structure. This design was selected to examine the effect of the *Make a Match* learning model on students' Arabic vocabulary (*mufradat*) mastery by comparing learning outcomes between an experimental group and a control group (Sugiyono, 2009). The use of a control group was intended to minimize internal validity threats and to ensure that observed changes were attributable to the instructional treatment.

The research design is illustrated in Table 1.

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental Group	O <sub>1</sub>	X (Make a Match)	O <sub>2</sub>
Control Group	O <sub>1</sub>	–	O <sub>2</sub>

Note:

O<sub>1</sub> = Pre-test

O<sub>2</sub> = Post-test

X = Treatment using the *Make a Match* learning model

### 2.2. Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at **SMA Negeri 6 Kendari**, Indonesia. The selection of this site was based on preliminary observations indicating that Arabic language instruction primarily relied on traditional memorization methods, which often led to students' low vocabulary mastery and learning motivation.

The population of this study consisted of all students at the research site. The sample was selected using **random sampling**, as this technique provides equal opportunities for each participant to be included in the sample and reduces selection bias (Sugiyono, 2009). A total of **20 students** participated in the study and were divided into two groups: 10 students in the experimental group and 10 students in the control group.

### 2.3. Research Instruments

Data were collected using several instruments to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. The primary instrument was a **vocabulary achievement test** administered as both a pre-test and a post-test to measure students' vocabulary mastery before and after the implementation of the *Make a Match* learning model. The test items were designed based on the instructional materials and learning objectives of Arabic vocabulary instruction (Tarigan, 2015).

In addition to tests, **documentation techniques** were used to support the quantitative data, including lesson plans, students' attendance records, and learning materials. Documentation served to provide contextual information related to the implementation of the learning model (Arikunto, 2002).

### 2.4. Research Procedures

The research procedures were conducted in three main stages:

#### 1. Pre-test Stage

Before the treatment, both the experimental and control groups were given a pre-test to assess their initial vocabulary mastery.

#### 2. Treatment Stage

The experimental group received instruction using the *Make a Match* learning model, which involved matching vocabulary cards with corresponding meanings or images in a cooperative and game-based learning setting (Huda, 2013). Meanwhile, the control group was taught using conventional teaching methods commonly applied in Arabic language instruction.

### 3. Post-test Stage

After the treatment, both groups were given a post-test to measure changes in vocabulary mastery and to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional model.

#### 2.5.Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using **quantitative statistical techniques**. Pre-test and post-test scores were compared to identify differences in vocabulary mastery between the experimental and control groups. Statistical analysis was conducted using **SPSS software**, following standard procedures for experimental research analysis (Arikunto, 2002). The results were interpreted to determine whether the *Make a Match* learning model had a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1.Research Results

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the *Make a Match* learning model had a significant positive impact on students' Arabic vocabulary (*mufradat*) mastery. The results were obtained through pre-test and post-test assessments, classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, as well as documentation of learning activities. Overall, students in the experimental group demonstrated higher levels of participation, motivation, and vocabulary comprehension compared to those who received instruction through conventional teaching methods.

During the learning process, students were actively engaged in matching vocabulary cards with corresponding meanings and images. This activity required students to recall vocabulary, analyze visual cues, and collaborate with peers to identify correct matches. Such engagement allowed students to process vocabulary more meaningfully rather than memorizing words mechanically. This finding supports the view that vocabulary learning should emphasize understanding and contextual recognition instead of rote memorization (Tarigan, 2015; Muhammad, 1981). Quantitative data on students' vocabulary mastery after the implementation of the *Make a Match* model are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Students' Vocabulary Mastery Indicators after the Implementation of the Make**

Vocabulary Mastery Indicator	Number of Students
Able to pronounce vocabulary correctly	28
Able to translate vocabulary	22
Able to match vocabulary with images	25

As shown in Table 2, the highest achievement was observed in students' ability to pronounce Arabic vocabulary correctly. This improvement can be attributed to repeated exposure to vocabulary items during the matching activities, where students listened to their peers and teachers while practicing pronunciation collaboratively. In addition, the majority of students were able to match vocabulary with images accurately, indicating that visual representation played an important role in facilitating vocabulary comprehension. However, the number of students able to translate vocabulary accurately was slightly lower, suggesting that translation skills require more intensive practice and reinforcement.

Classroom observations further revealed that students were more enthusiastic and attentive during learning activities involving the *Make a Match* model. Students actively moved around the classroom, communicated with peers, and participated in group discussions to find matching pairs. This learning atmosphere differed significantly from conventional classroom settings, where students tended to be passive and focused primarily on memorization. These findings suggest that the *Make a Match*

model successfully transformed the classroom into an active and student-centered learning environment.

### 3.2. Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that the *Make a Match* learning model is effective in improving students' Arabic vocabulary mastery. This effectiveness can be explained by the interactive and cooperative nature of the model, which emphasizes student involvement and peer interaction. According to Hamzah (2013), learning models that actively engage students are more likely to enhance motivation and improve learning outcomes. In this study, students showed increased enthusiasm and confidence when learning vocabulary through matching activities, indicating that motivation played a crucial role in vocabulary acquisition.

The improvement in students' pronunciation and vocabulary recognition supports the argument that vocabulary mastery is not limited to memorization but involves the ability to understand and use words appropriately in learning contexts (Tarigan, 2015). Through repeated practice and peer interaction, students were able to reinforce their pronunciation skills and strengthen their understanding of word meanings. This finding aligns with Umam (1980), who emphasized that vocabulary mastery serves as the foundation for developing broader language skills in Arabic.

Furthermore, the cooperative learning environment fostered by the *Make a Match* model enabled students to learn collaboratively and support one another. Cooperative learning strategies are known to promote social interaction, reduce learning anxiety, and provide opportunities for students with lower initial abilities to learn from their peers (Trianto, 2011; Tukiran et al., 2015). In this study, students with limited prior exposure to Arabic benefited from peer assistance during matching activities, which helped minimize differences in vocabulary mastery caused by diverse educational backgrounds.

The use of visual media in the *Make a Match* model also contributed to improved vocabulary comprehension. Visual representations helped students associate abstract vocabulary with concrete images, making it easier for them to remember and understand word meanings. This finding is consistent with the principle that effective language instruction should incorporate media that supports students' cognitive processing and learning needs (Hamdani, 2012). By integrating visual cues with cooperative activities, the *Make a Match* model facilitated multisensory learning experiences.

Interviews with teachers revealed that the *Make a Match* model created a more dynamic and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Teachers observed that students were more willing to participate in learning activities and showed greater interest in Arabic lessons. This observation supports Huda's (2013) assertion that game-based learning strategies can reduce boredom and foster positive learning attitudes. Students also reported feeling less anxious and more confident when learning vocabulary through interactive activities, which further contributed to improved learning outcomes.

Despite its effectiveness, the implementation of the *Make a Match* model was not without challenges. Teachers reported constraints related to limited instructional time and the need to prepare learning materials such as vocabulary cards and images. Additionally, students exhibited varying levels of vocabulary mastery and pronunciation ability, which required teachers to provide additional guidance and support. Such challenges are common in Arabic language instruction, particularly in classrooms with heterogeneous student backgrounds (Hidayat, 1996; Yusuf & Anwar, 1997).

Moreover, some students experienced difficulties in translating vocabulary accurately, indicating that translation skills may require different instructional strategies beyond matching activities. This finding suggests that while the *Make a Match* model is effective for improving vocabulary recognition and pronunciation, it should be complemented with other instructional approaches to enhance students' translation and productive language skills. As emphasized by Muhammad (1981), effective Arabic language instruction requires a combination of methods tailored to specific learning objectives.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that the *Make a Match* learning model provides a practical and effective instructional strategy for enhancing Arabic vocabulary mastery at the secondary school level. By promoting active participation, cooperative learning, and the use of visual media, this model supports meaningful vocabulary learning and addresses common challenges in Arabic language instruction. The integration of such innovative learning models is therefore recommended to improve the quality of Arabic language teaching and learning.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the *Make a Match* learning model has a positive impact on students' Arabic vocabulary (*mufradat*) mastery at the secondary school level. The findings indicate that students who participated in learning activities using the *Make a Match* model demonstrated better vocabulary comprehension, particularly in pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary recognition, and the ability to associate vocabulary with visual representations. The interactive and cooperative nature of this model encouraged active participation and created a more engaging learning environment compared to conventional teaching methods.

Furthermore, the results suggest that vocabulary learning becomes more effective when students are actively involved in the learning process through collaborative and game-based activities. The *Make a Match* model not only supported cognitive development in vocabulary acquisition but also enhanced students' motivation and confidence in learning Arabic. These findings highlight the importance of selecting instructional models that accommodate students' diverse learning backgrounds and promote meaningful learning experiences.

Despite these positive outcomes, this study has several limitations, including the relatively small sample size and the limited duration of the intervention. Future research is therefore recommended to involve larger samples, longer implementation periods, and the integration of additional language skills such as speaking and reading comprehension. Further studies may also explore the application of the *Make a Match* model in different educational contexts to strengthen its generalizability and contribution to Arabic language learning practices.

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