

Enhancing Learning Outcomes in Explanation Texts through the Make a Match Model

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ABSTRACT

This classroom action research (CAR) examines the effectiveness of the Make a Match cooperative learning model in improving students' learning outcomes and motivation in understanding explanation texts. The study employed an experimental design with two classes of 11th-grade students (N=64) at a senior high school in Ciamis Regency: an experimental class (XI-A5) using Make a Match and a control class (XI-S1) using conventional methods. Quantitative data revealed significant differences in outcomes between the two approaches. The experimental class achieved higher average scores on both the pretest (81.88 vs. 75.63) and posttest (86.88 vs. 78.44) compared to the control group. Beyond academic improvement, observational data showed the Make a Match approach increased student engagement through its interactive card-matching activities, which fostered peer collaboration and active participation. These findings demonstrate that Make a Match is more effective than traditional lecture methods for teaching explanation texts, as it simultaneously enhances comprehension and motivation. For classroom implementation, teachers should: (1) integrate game-based elements to increase engagement, (2) design matching tasks that align with key learning objectives, and (3) use collaborative activities to reinforce critical thinking. This approach is particularly valuable in EFL contexts where students struggle with text-based learning, offering a practical strategy to combine academic achievement with motivational support.

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I. INTRODUCTION

English, as a core subject in senior high school, presents significant challenges for students in Indonesia, particularly in regions like Ciamis Regency where it is not used in daily communication. This disconnect leads to low motivation, as many students fail to see the practical benefits of English proficiency (Tayebi et al., 2021). Motivation plays a pivotal role in language acquisition, influencing students' engagement, persistence, and overall achievement (Kurniawan et al., 2022). Without adequate motivation, even well-structured lessons may fail to resonate with learners, causing them to view English as a burden rather than an opportunity.

These challenges are compounded by prevalent conventional teaching methods that rely heavily on teacher-centered lectures and textbook-based instruction (Mahrlamova & Chabanovych, 2021). Observations in Class XI classrooms in Ciamis reveal passive learning environments where students merely listen to explanations without active participation—a model criticized for being outdated and ineffective (Arsana et al., 2019; Dadri et al., 2017). Such approaches stifle interaction, discourage critical thinking, and fail to accommodate diverse learning styles. Limited use of collaborative activities or multimedia tools further exacerbates disengagement, leaving students unprepared to apply concepts in subsequent lessons. To address these issues, innovative strategies like interactive media (Narawaty, 2022) or game-based learning are needed to revitalize classroom dynamics and foster meaningful language acquisition.

While the Make a Match technique has been studied as a way to enhance classroom interaction, existing research predominantly focuses on urban or well-resourced educational contexts, leaving its potential in low-motivation rural settings underexplored. This study addresses that gap by investigating how Make a Match—a collaborative, game-based method—can revitalize student engagement in a rural Indonesian EFL classroom. By examining its impact on participation and motivation in a traditionally teacher-centered environment, the research provides novel insights into adapting interactive learning strategies for underserved areas where conventional methods have consistently fallen short.

Nowadays, the implementation of cooperative learning model must be emphasized more by teachers by placing more emphasis on student centered learning which is able to create a conducive atmosphere in the classroom. In Indonesian education, cooperative learning has emerged as a key strategy (Sunggingwati, 2018). This method fosters collaboration, communication, and cooperative problem solving in addition to enabling students to learn from one another. Alongside curriculum changes and an increased emphasis on active and collaborative learning, cooperative learning has evolved in Indonesia. The educational strategy known as cooperative learning places a strong emphasis on students working together, supporting one another, and collaborating to accomplish academic objectives (Tran, 2019). In cooperative learning, students collaborate in small groups to finish a project or activity, with each member lending their own expertise to the group's accomplishment (Jacobs & Ivone, 2020). Baloch & Brody (2017) stated that students can benefit from cooperative learning model in a number of ways. For instance, it can raise motivation and engagement, boost social and communication skills, and improve academic achievement. Additionally, it can foster favorable attitudes toward education and other students with varying origins or skill levels (Yusuf et al., 2019). This learning model is distinguished by concurrent engagement, constructive mutual dependence, and happiness (Zhou and Zheng, 2022). However, thorough planning and preparation are necessary for the successful implementation of cooperative learning model (Erdogan, 2019). Consequently, the instructor has to use a few techniques to establish a classroom atmosphere that enhances student engagement. This problem should be solved by changing learning model in order students can be involved actively in the class.

One of the educational components is learning model that being created to help enhancing education in Indonesia. To overcome this, cooperative learning make a match type can be applied in the class to improve students' motivation and actively involved which proposes to achieve a better learning outcome. In order to solve their challenges, students

are asked to discuss them in groups during the teaching and learning process. Make a match questions or activities are those in which students are given two or more lists of related items and are required to correctly pair or connect the corresponding items from each list. Sumarni (2021) claims that make a match learning model is a learning system that emphasizes the development of social skills, specifically the capacity in group work and interaction, in addition the ability to think fast through a game of choosing a partner with the help of cards. Students may solve issues, share ideas, and develop their language abilities with the help of cooperative learning (Uno & Iskandar, 2020).

Make a match is a cooperative learning activity which is looking for a pair from each question card and answer card that is owned by each student. This proposed that students have physical activities so they will not feel bored and can improve class interaction during teaching and learning activities ongoing. Students are more likely to be engaged in continuing the learning process when learning models are used to provide the content in a pleasant and suitable learning environment (Dörnyei & Muir, 2019). A recent study concluded that applying a cooperative learning model of the Index Card Match type can enhance the process and learning results of reading and analyzing data presented in bar charts (Zainal et al., 2024). Meanwhile Nur et al., (2024) claimed that in the context of studying English, this learning model provides students with an engaging and dynamic means of strengthening their comprehension of vocabulary, sentence structure, or grammatical issues.

II. METHODS

This classroom action research employed a quantitative experimental approach to examine the effectiveness of the Make a Match learning model in teaching explanation texts. The study involved 64 eleventh-grade students from a senior high school in Ciamis Regency, evenly divided into an experimental class that received the Make a Match intervention and a control class that followed conventional instruction. This design allowed for a direct comparison between the two teaching methods while maintaining the reflective, iterative nature of action research.

The research process unfolded systematically over two instructional meetings focused on reading comprehension of explanation texts. Prior to the intervention, both classes completed identical pretests to establish baseline understanding. The experimental class then engaged in the Make a Match activities, which utilized interactive card-matching exercises, while the control class continued with traditional lecture-based instruction. Following the intervention, both groups took posttests to measure learning gains, with the entire process adhering to rigorous classroom action research standards.

To ensure comprehensive and valid findings, the study incorporated multiple data sources through careful triangulation. Classroom teachers provided observational data, students offered feedback on their learning experiences, and standardized test scores provided quantitative measures of achievement. This multi-faceted approach strengthened the reliability of the results while maintaining the authentic classroom context characteristic of action research.

The analysis focused on two key variables: the instructional method as the independent variable and both learning outcomes and student motivation as dependent variables. Researchers employed statistical methods including prerequisite testing for normality and homogeneity, followed by comparative analyses to evaluate the effectiveness of the different approaches. The quantitative data was supplemented by qualitative observations to provide a more complete picture of the intervention's impact.

While the study design offers several strengths, including its controlled comparison and standardized assessment tools, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The relatively small sample size and brief intervention period may affect the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study could be enhanced in future iterations by extending the research timeline and incorporating more qualitative data collection methods, such as student interviews, to provide deeper insights into the learning process.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

During the procedure, the finding data was gathered after the students were given a pretest and posttest on explanation text. The pretest and posttest were administered to participants prior to and following the course of the treatment, respectively. This table below shows the data of score average for pretest and posttest category in both classes, which are control and experimental class.

Table 1. The average score of Pretest and Posttest

Class	Category	Average
Control	Pretest	75,63
	Posttest	78,44
Experimental	Pretest	81,88
	Posttest	86,88

As shown in table 1, at the control group which conducted at XI-S1 with 32 participants, the pretest score was obtained an average of 75.63, and the posttest score was obtained an average of 78.44. While at the experimental group which conducted at XI- A5 with 32 participants, the pretest score was obtained an average of 81.88 and the posttest score was obtained an average of 86.88. Due to the average value of learning outcomes in the pretest < posttest, there is a difference in the average learning outcomes between the two groups which experimental class was obtained higher average score in pretest and posttest than control class. This finding relates to recent study has been conducted by Nur et al., (2024) which discovered that the students' pretest and posttest results after learning English utilizing the Index Card Match type differed significantly.

To determine if the difference is indeed significant, a paired sample t-test is required. The researcher computed the t-test statistical analysis using the Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS) to ascertain if the difference between the pretest and posttest results is statistically significant.

Formulation of research hypothesis:

Ho = there is no difference in the average between the learning outcomes of the pretest and posttest.

Ha = there is a difference in the average between the learning outcomes of the pretest and posttest.

Table 2 Paired Sample Test

		Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre - Post (Experimental)	-5,000	7,620	1,347	-7,747	-2,253	-3,712	31	,001
Pair 2	Pre – Post (Control)	-2,813	7,719	1,364	-5,595	-,030	-2,061	31	,048

The paired sample test output table above indicates that the experimental class's significance value is 0.001, while the control class's is 0.048. The pretest and posttest learning results vary on average, as shown by the significance value of less than 0.05. In contrast to the traditional learning model for learning explanation texts, make a match learning model has an impact on the activities and learning outcomes in the experimental class, as evidenced by the table's mean paired differences for the experimental group being 5.00 and the control class being 2.81. The experimental class and the control class did not appear to have significantly different test outcomes at the time of the first test (pretest), however the test results improved after learning using make a match learning model. The study discovered that English learning results specifically on explanation text material can be enhanced by utilizing cooperative learning make a match type. This is because the learning model make a match type has the potential to promote student involvement. This finding is similar to Nur et al., (2024) which discovered that Students' English learning outcomes can be effectively improved by using the Index Card Match type. This learning model is appropriate for simple tasks. Furthermore, this paradigm allows each group member to participate more freely, making interaction simpler.

Discussion

The quality of the learning process is one factor that determines learning outcomes on cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor levels. Make a match learning model is a systematic learning model to education that places a high priority on the development of social skills, namely the capacity to cooperate, communicate, and think fast when playing a game of card-based partner-finding (Gosachi et al., 2020; Utami et al., 2020). Make a match uses a cooperative learning model make a match type with card media, where this learning model provides a concept of understanding difficult material to students and can be used to determine the extent of students' knowledge and abilities of the material (Nurfiati et al., 2020). Make a match is a learning model that involves finding a partner while learning ideas in a pleasant environment (Ari et al., 2019; Kuswari, 2019). A learning model that uses a pair card game to encourage students to discover solutions to a topic or a pair of ideas within a certain time limit would improve their social interactions (Mustika et al., 2022; Sukri et al., 2017). Furthermore, make a match is a conceptual method that enables students to grasp concepts actively, creatively, effectively, interactively, and enjoyably, resulting in concepts that are simple to learn and stick with students for a long time in their cognitive structures.

Based on the elements discussed, the cooperative learning model of make a match that has been created appears to promote students' engagement, thereby achieving the goal of this study, which is to improve student learning outcomes. This conclusion is supported by prior study, which found that make a match learning model, helped by puzzle media, improved scientific learning outcomes (Widayanti et al., 2020). Make a match learning model, combined with image card media, increases English learning outcomes for

explanatory text content (Gosachi et al., 2020). Based on the discussion of student learning outcomes at the second meeting, which exceeded the success indicators in this study, this study has been able to address the research questions posed in the issue formulation. The findings of this study suggest that make a match learning model might be utilized as an alternative learning model to improve students' learning results. Despite the fact that both are significant, the experimental class's average difference in pretest and posttest learning outcomes is much greater than that of the control group. As a result, learning utilizing make a match method is more effective in improving student motivation and learning results. It also makes classroom activities engaging and interactive.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The implementation of the Make a Match learning model in teaching explanation texts demonstrates its potential to enhance student engagement, motivation, and collaborative learning in the EFL classroom. While the study did not show a dramatic difference in learning outcomes between the experimental and control classes, the Make a Match strategy succeeded in fostering a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. Students in the experimental class exhibited greater participation and enjoyment, as the game-based approach encouraged movement, peer interaction, and active problem-solving—key factors that conventional lecture methods often lack. Although the improvement in academic performance was not statistically significant, the observed increase in student motivation and classroom interaction suggests that Make a Match can be a valuable supplementary strategy in teaching reading comprehension, particularly in low-motivation settings like rural Indonesian schools.

Suggestion

To maximize the benefits of this approach, several recommendations are proposed. First, future research should expand the sample size and incorporate mixed-method designs to better assess the long-term effects of Make a Match on both cognitive and affective learning outcomes. Second, teachers should receive training on effectively integrating game-based techniques into their lessons while maintaining alignment with curriculum objectives. Third, schools in under-resourced areas should explore low-cost adaptations of Make a Match, such as handmade cards or digital variations, to ensure sustainability. Finally, educators are encouraged to combine Make a Match with other student-centered strategies (e.g., think-pair-share or role-playing) to reinforce comprehension and critical thinking. By adopting these measures, teachers can create a more stimulating and cooperative learning atmosphere that not only improves reading skills but also equips students with essential social and cognitive abilities for lifelong learning.

This study underscores the importance of interactive pedagogy in overcoming the limitations of traditional instruction, offering a practical pathway to revitalizing English language education in underserved communities.

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