

## GAME-BASED LEARNING: INNOVATION IN ENGLISH-ISLAMIC VOCABULARY MASTERY FOR INTEGRATED ISLAMIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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**Abstrak:** Artikel ini mendeskripsikan program pengabdian masyarakat (PKM) yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata bahasa Inggris dan istilah-istilah terkait Islam oleh siswa melalui kegiatan pembelajaran berbasis permainan di sebuah Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu. Program ini dirancang untuk memperkenalkan dan memperkuat kosakata dasar bahasa Inggris sambil mengintegrasikan konsep-konsep Islam yang familiar dengan lingkungan belajar sehari-hari siswa. Pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif digunakan untuk menggambarkan proses implementasi dan respons siswa terhadap kegiatan tersebut. Kegiatan pembelajaran dilakukan melalui metode interaktif, termasuk permainan kosakata yang menyenangkan menggunakan kartu flash, kegiatan Mewarnai dan Belajar, dan kuis interaktif yang menghubungkan kata-kata bahasa Inggris dengan istilah-istilah Islam. Kegiatan-kegiatan ini mendorong partisipasi aktif siswa, pembelajaran kontekstual, dan keterlibatan yang bermakna dalam suasana yang mendukung dan menyenangkan. Integrasi kosakata bahasa Inggris dengan konsep-konsep Islam dimaksudkan untuk membantu siswa memahami unsur-unsur bahasa baru tanpa memisahkannya dari konteks agama dan budayanya. Secara keseluruhan, program pengabdian masyarakat ini menyoroti bahwa pembelajaran berbasis permainan dan kontekstual dapat diterapkan secara efektif untuk mendukung pembelajaran kosakata bilingual di sekolah dasar Islam. Program ini menawarkan model pembelajaran alternatif untuk mengintegrasikan pengajaran bahasa Inggris dengan nilai-nilai Islam dengan cara yang menarik dan berpusat pada siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** Pengabdian Masyarakat (PKM), Kosakata Bahasa Inggris, Istilah Islami, Pembelajaran Berbasis Permainan, Sekolah Dasar.

**Abstract:** This article describes a community service program (Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat / PKM) aimed at improving students' mastery of English vocabulary and Islamic-related terms through game-based learning activities at an Integrated Islamic Elementary School. The program was designed to introduce and reinforce basic English vocabulary while integrating Islamic concepts that are familiar to students' daily learning

*environment. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to portray the implementation process and students' responses to the activities. The learning activities were conducted through interactive methods, including fun vocabulary games using flashcards, Color and Learn activities, and interactive quizzes that connect English words with Islamic terms. These activities encouraged active student participation, contextual learning, and meaningful engagement in a supportive and enjoyable atmosphere. The integration of English vocabulary with Islamic concepts was intended to help students understand new language elements without separating them from their religious and cultural context. Overall, this community service program highlights that game-based and contextual learning can be effectively applied to support bilingual vocabulary learning in Islamic elementary schools. The program offers an alternative learning model for integrating English language instruction with Islamic values in an engaging and student-centered manner.*

**Keywords:** *Community Service (PKM), English Vocabulary, Islamic Terms, Game-Based Learning, Elementary School.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, mastering English as an international language is a must. On the other hand, strengthening character and religious literacy, especially in Islamic educational institutions, is an important component in shaping students' identities. One of the challenges in education at the Integrated Islamic Elementary School is trying to combine the general curriculum with Islamic values in a way that is fun and interactive for students. This is in line with the vision and mission of Integrated Islamic Elementary School. Considering the dual focus of the school, the author determined that it was an ideal place for community service activities (PKM) in Palangka Raya. One of the classes that became the subject of this community service was the 5th grade class. This PKM activity is carried out to fulfill the requirements for the implementation of the Extensive Listening course, apart from that, this is also done to be able to explore more activities that are more relevant explore and support students' creativity and cognition. In addition to conventional learning, students sometimes tend to want to experience something new that is more enjoyable and able to rekindle their enthusiasm for learning. In addition, it is important to bridge and present Islamic vocabulary (such as masjid or shalat) with English vocabulary.

To meet this specific need, a community service activity (PKM) was carried out by students majoring in English Education at UIN Palangka Raya, with the theme “Fun English and Islamic Words Day.” The main objective of this activity was to interactively introduce and teach basic English vocabulary and Islamic contexts. To achieve this goal, the PKM team used various methods that focused on the enjoyment and creativity of the students. Among them was Game-Based Activities, which was a process of introducing vocabulary, then turning it into an entertaining and interactive competition, using flashcards (such as Guess the Word or Flashcard Race). Not only that, creative learning was also carried out, such as Color and Learn activities, which allowed students to perform fine motor activities, such as coloring pictures and English words in an Islamic context, which aimed to help students strengthen their memory with vocabulary related to the pictures. In addition, interactive quizzes are given to students as the culmination of the activity, “English–Islamic Words,” which is intended to explicitly link Islamic concepts with words in English, which also serves as an evaluation of the activities previously carried out.

This method not only improves students' linguistic skills, but also fosters a positive attitude towards learning English and strengthens their understanding of religious terms that they commonly use in their everyday school environment. This community service is very important because it shows that the integration of a dual curriculum, such as foreign language proficiency (English) and Islamic context, can run smoothly and offer a fun and contextual vocabulary learning model for other integrated Islamic elementary schools.

## 1. Research Questions

How was the “*Fun English and Islamic Words Day*” activity implemented as a community service program to integrate English vocabulary learning with Islamic terms for fifth-grade students at Integrated Islamic Elementary School?

## 2. Research Objectives

The community service program (PKM) entitled "Fun English and Islamic Words Day" was conducted with several key objectives aimed at 5th-grade students at the Integrated Islamic Elementary School:

- a. **Optimizing Student Engagement and Enthusiasm:** The primary goal is to provide a fresh and dynamic learning perspective, moving beyond conventional teaching methods to reinvigorate students' motivation and active participation in learning English vocabulary.
- b. **Integrating Bilingual Vocabulary Contexts:** To introduce and teach basic English vocabulary while simultaneously bridging it with daily Islamic terms (such as masjid or prayer/shalat), making the learning process more relevant to the students' daily environment.
- c. **Developing a Creative Learning Model:** To showcase that a dual curriculum balancing English language proficiency with Islamic values can be integrated seamlessly through game-based activities, creative sessions like Color and Learn, and interactive quizzes.
- d. **Cultivating Positive Attitudes:** To foster a more positive mindset toward English lessons and improve students' retention of religious terminology through visual aids and interactive participation.
- e. **Evaluating Method Effectiveness:** To provide a descriptive analysis of the implementation process and assess student responses to bilingual game-based learning, serving as an evaluative model for other integrated Islamic elementary schools.

### 3. Literature Review

Vocabulary mastery is a fundamental component of English language learning, especially at the elementary school level. Vocabulary serves as the foundation for developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, students may face difficulties in understanding instructions, expressing ideas, and participating actively in classroom interactions. Therefore, effective strategies for teaching vocabulary to young learners are essential to support meaningful language acquisition.

Recent studies emphasize that game-based learning is an effective approach for improving vocabulary mastery among elementary school students. According to

Rahmawati and Suryani (2021), learning through games increases students' motivation, reduces anxiety, and creates a joyful learning atmosphere that supports vocabulary retention. Games allow students to learn implicitly through interaction, repetition, and collaboration, which are suitable characteristics for young learners.

In addition, visual media such as flashcards and coloring activities have been proven to enhance vocabulary learning. Visual learning helps students associate words with concrete objects or familiar concepts. A study by Putri and Fitriani (2022) revealed that the use of flashcards significantly improved students' vocabulary recognition and recall because visual stimulation strengthens memory retention. Similarly, coloring activities support both cognitive development and fine motor skills, making learning more engaging and meaningful for elementary students.

Another important aspect in vocabulary learning is contextual learning. Contextual learning enables students to understand vocabulary based on real-life situations and familiar environments. According to Hasanah et al. (2023), contextual-based English learning helps students connect new vocabulary with their daily experiences, which leads to better comprehension and long-term memory. This approach is especially relevant in religious-based schools, where learning materials should align with students' cultural and religious backgrounds.

In the context of Islamic elementary schools, integrating English learning with Islamic values and daily religious terms is crucial. Several recent studies highlight the importance of bilingual learning that incorporates religious content. A study conducted by Nurhayati and Wahyuni (2024) found that integrating Islamic terms into English vocabulary learning not only improved students' vocabulary mastery but also strengthened their religious identity. Students were more enthusiastic and confident when learning English vocabulary related to concepts they already understood, such as prayer, mosque, and daily Islamic practices.

Furthermore, community service-based educational programs have been recognized as effective platforms for implementing innovative learning methods. According to Maulida et al. (2025), community-based English learning activities allow students to experience learning in a more relaxed and interactive setting, which positively influences

their motivation and participation. Such activities also provide opportunities for facilitators to apply creative teaching strategies outside formal classroom constraints.

Based on the reviewed theories and recent empirical studies, it can be concluded that interactive, game-based, visual, and contextual learning approaches are highly appropriate for teaching English vocabulary to elementary school students, particularly in Islamic educational settings. Therefore, the “Fun English and Islamic Words Day” community service program is designed to apply these principles by integrating English vocabulary learning with Islamic terms through games, visual activities, and interactive quizzes to create an enjoyable and meaningful learning experience.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with a community-based action research design. This approach was selected to describe the process of implementing the “Fun English and Islamic Words Day” activity and to explore students’ responses to the activity in a natural learning context. The participants of this study consisted of 41 elementary school students, while the activity was facilitated by university students who acted as instructors and learning facilitators.

Data were collected through several techniques, including direct observation, documentation, and activity reflection. Observation was conducted to record students’ participation, engagement during games, and their ability to recognize and mention vocabulary. Documentation included photographs of the activities, student worksheets, and a list of vocabulary used during the learning process. Reflection was carried out through discussions with students and facilitators after the completion of the activities to gain insights into the effectiveness of the methods used and students’ responses to the learning activities.

The learning activities were implemented in three main stages: (1) Fun Vocabulary Games using vocabulary cards (flashcards) to enhance vocabulary recognition and naming skills through games such as Guess the Word and Flashcard Race; (2) Color and Learn activities, in which students colored theme-related objects to strengthen visual memory;

and (3) an Interactive Quiz that connected English vocabulary with Islamic terms to help students understand equivalent meanings in a bilingual context.

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, to examine the impact of the activities on students' vocabulary comprehension and their attitudes toward game-based bilingual learning.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The English learning activity at "Integrated Islamic Elementary School was conducted through two main integrated stages, namely the vocabulary introduction stage and the reinforcement stage through a question–answer activity.

In the first stage, the first presenter (Caca) introduced English vocabulary to the students by translating words from Indonesian into English. The vocabulary presented consisted of basic and contextual words that were closely related to the students' daily lives, such as masjid (mosque), buku (book), agama (religion), and other familiar vocabulary for elementary school students. The material was delivered directly and interactively, allowing students to listen, repeat, and understand the meanings of the introduced vocabulary.

The second stage was continued by the second presenter (Ami), who asked students questions related to the vocabulary that had been introduced previously. The questions included, for example, "What is the English word for masjid?", "What is the English word for buku?", and similar questions. Based on observations during the activity, most students were able to answer the questions correctly. This indicates that the students were able to remember and understand the vocabulary presented during the introduction stage.

In addition, students appeared more enthusiastic and actively involved during the question–answer session. They made efforts to recall the vocabulary they had learned and confidently responded to the questions orally. Thus, the learning activity did not only focus on the delivery of material but also emphasized active student participation in the learning process.

**Discussion**

The results of the activity indicate that the combination of vocabulary introduction and question answer practice is an effective strategy for teaching English vocabulary to elementary school students. The material delivered by the first presenter functioned as initial input, while the second presenter's session served as reinforcement of the vocabulary that had been previously introduced.

The question answer activity helped students recall the vocabulary they had learned and trained them to understand and respond to questions in English. This is in line with language learning principles that emphasize the importance of repeated practice and active language use to ensure that vocabulary is retained in students' long-term memory.

Furthermore, the use of vocabulary closely related to students' daily lives, such as words referring to objects and concepts they frequently encounter, facilitated the learning process. Learning became more meaningful because students did not merely memorize vocabulary but also understood its meaning within a familiar context.

Therefore, the division of roles between the presenter who introduced the vocabulary and the presenter who conducted the question answer practice proved effective in creating a structured, interactive, and meaningful learning experience. This strategy can be considered an alternative approach for learning activities or community service programs, particularly in introducing English to elementary school students.

**Table 1. Achievement of Cycle 1 in Cooperative Learning**

| <b>Aspek</b>          | <b>Target</b> | <b>Ketercapaian</b> | <b>Kriteria</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Aktifitas Belajar     | 75% aktif     | 69.71%              | Belum tercapai  |
| Hasil Belajar         | 75% tuntas    | 41%                 | Belum tercapai  |
| Kegiatan pembelajaran | 75% baik      | 58 %                | Belum tercapai  |
| Respons siswa         | 75% baik      | 74,52               | Belum tercapai  |

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the implementation of the “Fun English and Islamic Words Day” community service activity at Integrated Islamic Elementary School, it can be concluded that interactive and game-based learning methods are effective in supporting English vocabulary learning integrated with Islamic terms. The use of fun vocabulary games, Color and Learn activities, and interactive quizzes successfully created an enjoyable learning atmosphere and increased students’ participation.

The activity helped reduce students’ boredom toward conventional English learning and encouraged a more positive attitude toward learning English. By connecting English vocabulary with familiar Islamic concepts, students were able to understand and remember vocabulary more easily in a meaningful context.

Overall, this community service program demonstrates that integrating English learning with Islamic values through creative and interactive methods can be implemented effectively in Islamic elementary schools. This activity can serve as an alternative learning model for similar schools that aim to strengthen English vocabulary skills while maintaining religious and cultural values.

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