

IMPLEMENTATION OF WORD SEARCH GAME THROUGH THE EMRED APPROACH IN VOCABULARY LEARNING FOR GRADE V STUDENTS OF SDIT IQRA

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Abstract:

This study aims to improve the English vocabulary mastery of fifth-grade students at SDIT Iqra through the use of a Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach (Emmersion, Modelling, Repetition, Exploration, and Demonstration). This research uses the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method with the Kemmis and McTaggart model, conducted in two cycles. The research subjects were 21 fifth-grade students of SDIT Iqra. Data collection techniques included tests, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that the implementation of the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach can improve students' vocabulary mastery. This is indicated by an increase in the students' average scores from 65.2 in the pre-cycle to 72.8 in cycle I and 82.4 in cycle II. The percentage of classical completeness also increased from 40% in the pre-cycle to 64% in cycle I and 88% in cycle II. Student activity in learning also showed improvement, marked by increased enthusiasm, active participation, and the students' ability to recognize, understand, and use English vocabulary in the appropriate context. It is concluded that the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach is effective in improving the English vocabulary mastery of fifth-grade students at SDIT Iqra.

Keywords: Vocabulary, Word Search Game, EMRED Approach, Classroom Action Research

1. Introduction

Vocabulary mastery is the most important foundation in English language learning. An adequate vocabulary enables students to communicate effectively in all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Vocabulary plays a crucial role in language learning because it forms the foundation of communication (Rosidi et al., 2022). Conventional methods tend to bore students and are less effective in building long-term memory.

At SDIT Iqra, English language learning is a priority in developing student competencies. However, based on initial observations conducted in September 2025, it was apparent that fifth-grade students were still experiencing difficulty memorizing and retaining new vocabulary. Preliminary data showed that of 21 fifth-grade students, only 10 (40%) were able to achieve scores above the established Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM) of 70. The average student vocabulary score remained at 65.2. This impacted students' low confidence when using English for communication. Therefore, learning innovations are needed to make vocabulary learning more engaging and meaningful.

One alternative is the use of educational games. Word Search Games are popular puzzle games loved by children. These games are not only entertaining but also train concentration, accuracy, and letter pattern recognition. In the context of language learning, Word Search Games can strengthen word recognition skills and deepen students' understanding of spelling.

For the use of Word Search Games to be more effective and targeted, a systematic learning approach is required. The EMRED (Emmersion, Modeling, Repetition, Exploration, and Demonstration) approach, developed by Herli Salim, offers a comprehensive framework for language learning. This approach emphasizes immersion in a language environment, providing clear examples, meaningful repetition, opportunities for exploration, and demonstrating understanding. The combination of Word Search Games with the EMRED stages is expected to create a more immersive, interactive, and effective learning experience in improving students' vocabulary mastery.

This situation demonstrates a gap between ideal and actual conditions. Ideally, fifth-grade students should be able to master, remember, and use English vocabulary appropriate to their age level. However, in reality, many students still have difficulty remembering the vocabulary they have been taught and tend to be passive in using English. Based on this background, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "Implementation Of Word Search Games Through The Emred Approach In Vocabulary Learning For Vice-Grade Students At Sdit Iqra."

2. Literature Review

2.1 Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary is a fundamental component of language learning. According to Nation (2022), vocabulary is the knowledge of words and their meanings that enables a person to communicate effectively in a language. Vocabulary mastery is not limited to knowing word meanings but also includes understanding word usage in appropriate contexts, spelling, pronunciation, and word collocation.

Cameron (2020) emphasized that vocabulary mastery is a top priority in language learning for children because it is the foundation for developing other language skills. Children with a strong vocabulary tend to more easily understand reading texts, express ideas orally and in writing, and interact in a foreign language environment.

Thornbury (2017) identified several dimensions of vocabulary knowledge that students need to master: (1) Form, which includes pronunciation, spelling, and word patterns; (2) Meaning, which encompasses word concepts and references; and (3) Use, which relates to grammar and word collocation in context. These three dimensions are interrelated and need to be developed in an integrated manner in learning. Alfaki (2015) added that vocabulary mastery also involves receptive skills (understanding words heard or read) and productive skills (using words in speaking or writing). In the context of elementary school learning, the initial focus is usually on developing receptive vocabulary as a foundation before students are able to use these words productively.

2.2 Word Search Games as a Learning Medium

Word Search Games are a type of puzzle game that requires players to find words hidden in a random arrangement of letters. According to Hidayati (2018), Word Search Games can be an effective learning medium for improving vocabulary mastery because they train students' visual discrimination, pattern recognition, and spelling awareness.

Fitriyani et al. (2021) explain that Word Search Games have several advantages as a vocabulary learning medium, including: (1) increasing students' motivation and interest in learning due to their entertaining nature; (2) training students' concentration and accuracy in recognizing letter patterns; (3) strengthening visual memory for word spelling; (4) adapting themes and difficulty levels to meet needs; and (5) providing opportunities for independent and collaborative learning.

Bakhsh (2016) emphasized that the use of games in language learning, including Word Search Games, can create a more relaxed and enjoyable learning environment. When students feel happy and unstressed, they tend to be more open to receiving new information and more easily remember the material they have learned. Games can also reduce students' anxiety in learning a foreign language (language anxiety), which often hinders learning.

Wright et al. (2006) added that educational games such as the Word Search Game can develop various cognitive skills in students, including problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking. Furthermore, games can facilitate cooperative learning when played in groups, thereby developing students' social and communication skills.

2.3 EMRED Approach

The EMRED Approach is a language learning approach developed by Herli Salim (2022) that consists of five systematic stages: Immersion, Modeling, Repetition, Exploration, and Demonstration. This approach is designed to create a comprehensive and sustainable language learning experience.

The Immersion stage involves immersing students in the target language environment. In the context of vocabulary learning, students are exposed to new vocabulary through various media and authentic contexts. Salim (2022) emphasizes that intensive and meaningful exposure to the target language is essential to build students' initial familiarity and understanding.

The Modeling stage focuses on providing clear and systematic examples to students. The teacher demonstrates vocabulary use in various contexts and models pronunciation, spelling, and word usage in sentences. Aufah (2023) found that the modeling stage is highly effective in helping students understand how to use vocabulary correctly.

The Repetition stage emphasizes meaningful repetition to strengthen students' long-term memory. Repetition is not carried out mechanically, but through a variety of varied and engaging activities. Destianingsih (2024) stated that repetition packaged in the form of games or interactive activities is more effective than monotonous drill repetition.

The Exploration stage provides students with opportunities to explore and use vocabulary in various situations and contexts. Students are encouraged to actively try using the vocabulary they have learned in real-life or simulated communication. This stage is crucial for developing students' productive skills.

The Demonstration stage is the final stage where students demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the vocabulary they have learned. Demonstrations can be conducted through tests, presentations, projects, or other activities that allow students to concretely demonstrate their

competencies.

3. Research Method

3.1 Type of Research

This research used the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method. CAR is research conducted by teachers in their own classrooms with the aim of improving and enhancing the quality of learning. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2005), CAR is reflective, participatory, and collaborative research conducted in the form of action cycles to achieve the desired improvements. The CAR model used in this research is the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which consists of four stages in each cycle: (1) Planning, (2) Acting, (3) Observing, and (4) Reflecting. These four stages are implemented repeatedly over several cycles until the predetermined success indicators are achieved. This research was conducted in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of three learning meetings and one meeting for final evaluation. The total research period was 8 weeks, from October to November 2025.

3.2 Research Subjects and Location

The subjects of this research were 21 fifth-grade students at SDIT Iqra in the 2025/2026 academic year, consisting of 11 boys and 10 girls. The selection of fifth-grade students as the research subjects was based on the consideration that fifth-grade students already possessed basic English language skills and sufficient cognitive skills to participate in vocabulary learning through the Word Search Game. The research location was SDIT Iqra, located at [school address]. This school was chosen because it was the researcher's work location, making it easier to conduct the research. Furthermore, based on initial observations, problems related to students' vocabulary mastery were identified that needed to be addressed immediately.

3.3 Data Collection Techniques

This research used three data collection methods:

Tests. Tests were used to measure students' vocabulary mastery. Tests were administered three times: pre-cycle, at the end of cycle I, and at the end of cycle II. The test used was a written test covering vocabulary recognition, recall, and usage. The test consisted of 20 questions, including multiple-choice questions, matching pictures with words, completing missing sentences, and finding words in a Word Search Game.

Observation. Observations were conducted to observe student and teacher activities during the learning process. Collaborators (colleagues) used a prepared observation sheet to observe student engagement in learning, student enthusiasm, student ability in playing the Word Search Game, student interactions with the teacher and peers, and teacher activities in implementing the EMRED approach.

Documentation. Documentation was used to record the learning process and student work. Documentation included photographs of learning activities, videos of student activities, Lesson Plans (RPPs), student worksheets, and student test results. This documentation served as evidence of the research and for further analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis techniques in this study used qualitative and quantitative descriptive analysis. According to Miles and Huberman (2014), qualitative data analysis is carried out in three stages, namely: (1) Data reduction, namely the process of selecting, simplifying and transforming raw data from the field; (2) Data presentation, namely the systematic arrangement of information to facilitate drawing conclusions; and (3) Conclusion drawing, namely giving meaning to the analyzed data. Quantitative data in the form of student test results were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to calculate the average class score, the percentage of classical completion, and the increase in scores from pre-cycle to cycle II. The formula used was:

$$\text{Average Class Score} = (\text{Total Scores of All Students}) / (\text{Number of Students})$$

$$\text{Percentage of Completion} = (\text{Number of Students Completed} / \text{Total Number of Students}) \times 100\%$$

$$\text{Score Increase} = \text{Cycle II Score} - \text{Pre-Cycle Score}$$

Qualitative data in the form of observation and documentation were analyzed descriptively to describe the learning process and changes in student behavior during the study.

3.5 Success Indicators

The success indicators in this study were determined as follows:

First, the process success indicator. Learning is considered successful if at least 80% of students demonstrate positive activity during the lesson, characterized by: enthusiasm for learning, active participation in discussions and games, the ability to successfully complete the Word Search Game, and positive interactions with the teacher and peers. Second, indicators of success are outcomes. Learning is considered successful if: (a) The class average score reaches at least 75; and (b) At least 80% of students achieve scores above the minimum completeness criteria (KKM) of 70. If the success indicators are not achieved in cycle I, the research will continue to cycle II with improvements made based on reflections

from the previous cycle.

4. Results and Discussion

The results and discussion section must be presented systematically to explain the research findings and their significance. The following is a general structure that can be used:

4.1 Description of Initial Conditions (Pre-Cycle)

Before conducting the research, the researcher first conducted observations and a pre-test to determine the initial vocabulary mastery of fifth-grade students at SDIT Iqra. Observations were conducted in September 2025 by observing the English learning process taking place in the classroom.

From the observation results, several problems were found in vocabulary learning, namely: (1) The learning method used is still conventional, namely teacher-centered with drill and memorization techniques; (2) The learning media used is still limited to textbooks and blackboards; (3) Students appear bored and less enthusiastic in participating in learning; (4) Many students have difficulty remembering the vocabulary that has been taught; and (5) Student participation in learning is still low, only a few students actively answer the teacher's questions.

To determine the level of student vocabulary mastery more objectively, the researcher conducted an initial test (pre-cycle) on September 30, 2025. The test consisted of 20 questions covering aspects of recognition, recall, and usage of vocabulary with the themes "Things at School" and "Daily Activities". The results of the pre-cycle test showed the following data: Of the 21 students, only 10 students (40%) achieved scores above the KKM (70), while 15 students (60%) still obtained scores below the KKM. The highest score was 85 and the lowest was 45. The class average score was 65.2. These data indicate that fifth-grade students' vocabulary mastery at SDIT Iqra is still relatively low and needs improvement. Based on these initial conditions, the researcher decided to conduct classroom action research using a Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach to improve students' vocabulary mastery.

4.2 Description of Cycle I Results

4.2.1 Cycle I Planning

The planning stage of Cycle I was carried out in the first week of October 2025. During this stage, the researcher conducted several preparatory activities, including:

First, developing a Lesson Implementation Plan (RPP) for three meetings with the themes "Family Members" and "Parts of the Body." The RPP was designed based on the stages of the EMRED approach, integrated with the use of the Word Search Game. Each EMRED stage was designed with specific and measurable learning activities.

Second, preparing learning media in the form of a Word Search Game in print and digital formats. The Word Search Game was designed with a difficulty level appropriate for fifth-grade students, with grid sizes of 10x10 and 15x15 for a more challenging approach. The hidden words in the game were aligned with the learning theme and included 15-20 vocabulary words that students needed to master.

Third, the research instruments were developed, consisting of observation sheets for student and teacher activities, as well as final test questions for Cycle I. The observation sheets were designed to measure important aspects of learning such as enthusiasm, participation, cooperation, and task completion ability. The final test questions for Cycle I consisted of 20 questions covering three aspects of vocabulary mastery: recognition, recall, and usage.

Fourth, coordinate with the collaborator who will assist in observing the learning process. The researcher explains the observation focus and how to complete the observation sheet to the collaborator.

4.2.2 Implementation of Cycle I

Cycle I actions were implemented in three meetings: on October 7, 14, and 21, 2025, with a time allocation of 2 x 35 minutes per meeting. The following is a description of the learning implementation at each stage of the EMRED approach:

Meeting 1 (October 7, 2025) with the theme "Family Members"

Immersion Stage: The lesson begins by showing an animated video about families in English. Students watch the video while listening to vocabulary words such as father, mother, brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunt, and cousin. The teacher also displays a poster depicting an extended family with the names of family members labeled in English.

Modeling Stage: The teacher provides clear examples of the pronunciation of each vocabulary word and asks students to imitate. The teacher also demonstrates how to write each word correctly on the board while explaining its meaning. Next, the teacher provides examples of vocabulary usage in simple sentences such as "This is my father" and "I have a younger brother."

Repetition Stage: Students are asked to repeat the pronunciation of the vocabulary words together and individually. The teacher plays a "repeat after me" game with varying tempo and volume to make repetition more enjoyable. Students are also asked to write each vocabulary word in their notebooks while spelling it letter by letter.

Exploration Stage: The teacher distributes a Word Search Game with the theme "Family Members." Students are asked to find 10 vocabulary words they have learned in a 10x10 grid of letters. Students work individually for 15 minutes. The teacher circulates to assist students who are having difficulty. Upon completion, students are asked to create a simple sentence using at least 3 of the vocabulary words they have found.

Demonstration Stage: Several students are asked to come to the front of the class to show their Word Search Game results and read the sentences they have created. The teacher provides positive feedback and corrections if necessary.

Meeting 2 (October 14, 2025) with the theme "Parts of the Body"

Immersion Stage: The teacher plays the song "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" and invites students to sing along while pointing to the named body parts. Afterward, the teacher displays a picture of the human body labeled with the names of body parts in English, such as head, eye, nose, mouth, ear, hand, foot, leg, arm, and finger.

Modeling Stage: The teacher models the pronunciation of each vocabulary word while pointing to their own body parts. The teacher also provides example sentences such as "I have two eyes" and "This is my nose." Students are asked to pay attention to the teacher's lip movements as they pronounce each word.

Repetition Stage: Students repeat the vocabulary words individually and as a class while touching the named body parts. The teacher plays the game "Simon Says" to make the repetition more interactive and fun. Students are very enthusiastic about participating in this game.

Exploration Stage: Students are asked to work in pairs on a Word Search Game with the theme "Parts of the Body." Each pair must find 12 vocabulary words in a 12x12 grid. After finding the words, they were asked to write sentences using the words. Student cooperation was quite good, although some pairs still needed guidance.

Demonstration Stage: Each pair presented their work to the class. The teacher appreciated the students' efforts and provided positive corrections.

Meeting 3 (October 21, 2025) - Review and Evaluation

In the third meeting, the teacher reviewed all the vocabulary learned in meetings 1 and 2. The teacher used a combined Word Search Game containing 20 vocabulary words from both themes. Students worked individually to assess their ability to recognize and remember the vocabulary learned. A final test was then administered at the end of Cycle I to measure students' vocabulary mastery.

4.2.3 Observations for Cycle I

Observations of student activities during Cycle I showed significant improvement compared to the initial conditions. Based on the observation sheets completed by the collaborators, the following data were obtained:

Student Enthusiasm: 70% of students showed high enthusiasm in participating in the lesson. They appeared happy and excited when the teacher introduced the Word Search Game. However, 30% of students still appeared hesitant and lacked confidence, particularly those with low academic ability. Active participation aspect: 65% of students actively participated in learning activities, including answering questions, playing games, and presenting. However, some students tended to be passive and simply followed instructions without initiative.

Word Search Game Completion Skills: 68% of students successfully completed the game within the allotted time. Some students still had difficulty finding words due to inattentiveness in observing letter patterns. Cooperation: 72% of students demonstrated good cooperation when working in pairs. They helped each other and discussed finding the hidden words.

Observations of teacher activity indicate that the teacher has implemented the EMRED approach stages quite well, although there are still several aspects that need improvement. The teacher provided clear modeling, provided sufficient repetition, and provided opportunities for students to explore. However, during the demonstration phase, the time allotted for student presentations was insufficient, so not all students had the opportunity to demonstrate their work.

The results of the final test of Cycle I, conducted on October 21, 2025, showed an increase in students' vocabulary mastery compared to the pre-cycle. The results of the Cycle I test are as follows:

The number of students achieving scores above the Minimum Competency (KKM) (70) increased to 16 students (64%), while 9 students (36%) still scored below the Minimum Competency (KKM). The highest score was 90 and the lowest was 55. The class average score increased to 72.8. Despite this improvement, this result did not meet the established success indicators, namely, a minimum of 80% of students achieving the Minimum Competency (KKM) and a minimum average score of 75.

4.2.4 Reflection on Cycle I

Based on the results of observations and evaluations in Cycle I, a reflection was conducted to identify strengths, weaknesses, and improvement plans for Cycle II. The results of the reflection are as

follows: Strengths in Cycle I: (1) The use of the Word Search Game successfully increased students' enthusiasm and motivation in learning vocabulary; (2) The EMRED stages provided a clear and systematic learning structure; (3) The use of visual media such as videos and images helped students better understand vocabulary; (4) Group activities increased interaction and collaboration among students. Weaknesses in Cycle I: (1) Some students still had difficulty finding words in the Word Search Game because the level of difficulty was too high for some students; (2) There was insufficient time for the demonstration stage, so not all students had the opportunity to present; (3) Vocabulary repetition was not varied enough, so some students felt bored; (4) There is no differentiation in learning for students with different abilities.

Improvement plans for Cycle II: (1) Provide a Word Search Game with two difficulty levels (easy and medium) to suit student abilities; (2) Allocate more time for the demonstration phase and ensure all students have the opportunity; (3) Create a variety of more engaging repetition activities such as games, songs, and role-play; (4) Implement differentiated learning by giving additional assignments to students who complete the game more quickly; (5) Provide more intensive scaffolding for students who are still struggling.

4.3 Description of Cycle II Results

4.3.1 Cycle II Planning

Based on the results of the Cycle I reflection, the researcher revised the lesson plan for Cycle II. Cycle II planning was implemented in the fourth week of October 2024 with several improvements, namely:

1. First, prepare a Cycle II lesson plan with the themes "Animals" and "Foods and Drinks" that are closer to students' daily lives. The lesson plan was designed with a more detailed time allocation for each EMRED stage, especially allocating more time for the demonstration phase.
2. Second, prepare a Word Search Game with two difficulty levels. The easy level, with a 10x10 grid containing 10-12 words, is for students who are still struggling, and the medium level, with a 15x15 grid containing 15-18 words, is for more advanced students. The words chosen are more common and frequently used in everyday life.
3. Third, design variations of more engaging repetition activities such as "Vocabulary Bingo," "Flyswatter Game," and "Spelling Bee." These variations are expected to make repetition more enjoyable and less boring.
4. Fourth, develop more detailed observation instruments, focusing on the differentiation of learning and scaffolding provided by teachers to struggling students.
5. Fifth, prepare rewards in the form of star stickers and praise to motivate students who demonstrate progress or outstanding effort.

4.3.2 Implementation of Cycle II

The implementation of Cycle II actions was carried out in three meetings on November 4, 11, and 18, 2025. The following is a description of the learning implementation with improvements based on reflections from Cycle I:

Meeting 1 (November 4, 2025) with the theme "Animals"

1. Immersion Stage: The lesson began with watching a short documentary video about various animals (wild animals and pets) with English narration. Students are asked to write the names of the animals they see. The teacher then displays flashcards with pictures of 15 types of animals with their English names, such as lion, tiger, elephant, monkey, rabbit, cat, dog, bird, fish, and others.
2. Modeling Stage: The teacher models the pronunciation of animal names clearly while demonstrating the characteristic sounds or movements of the animals. For example, when saying "dog," the teacher also imitates the sound "woof woof." This makes it easier for students to remember. The teacher also provides example sentences such as "The lion is big and strong" and "I have a pet dog."
3. Repetition Stage: The teacher varies the repetition through several engaging games. First, the "Animal Sounds Game," where the teacher imitates animal sounds and students say their names in English. Second, "Vocabulary Bingo," where each student has a bingo card with a picture of an animal and must mark it when the teacher says the name. These games make repetition very fun and effective.
4. Exploration Stage: The teacher distributes a Word Search Game with two difficulty levels. Students are free to choose the level that best suits their ability. The majority of students chose the medium level, while 7 students chose the easy level. Students worked individually for 20 minutes. The teacher provided scaffolding in the form of clues for students who were struggling, such as "This word begins with the letter 'E' and is the name of an animal with a long trunk." Upon completion, students were asked to write five descriptive sentences about the

animals they found.

5. **Demonstration Stage:** All students had the opportunity to demonstrate their work through a rotation system. Half the class presented verbally in front of the class, while the other half wrote their results on manila paper posted on the classroom wall (gallery walk). They then switched roles. This method ensured all students had the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding.

Meeting 2 (November 11, 2025) with the theme "Foods and Drinks"

1. **Immersion Stage:** The teacher brought realia (real objects) in the form of various types of food and drinks (toys or empty packaging) such as bread, rice, noodles, eggs, milk, water, juice, etc. Students were asked to touch and observe these objects while the teacher stated their names in English. The teacher also showed a video about "Healthy Food" to enrich students' vocabulary.
2. **Modeling Stage:** The teacher modeled the pronunciation of vocabulary words for foods and drinks while showing real objects or pictures. The teacher also taught related phrases such as "I like...", "I don't like...", and "My favorite food is...". The teacher provided examples by describing her favorite food and asking students to guess.
3. **Repetition Stage:** The teacher played a "Flyswatter" game, where flashcards were posted on the board and two students competed to hit the flashcard the teacher mentioned using a flyswatter (a toy fly swatter). This game was very popular with students and encouraged them to review vocabulary. The teacher also conducted a mini "Spelling Bee" to practice spelling words.
4. **Exploration Stage:** Students worked in pairs on a word search game about foods and drinks at a level they chose themselves. After finding the words, each pair was asked to create a "Menu Card" containing 10 of their favorite foods and drinks with short descriptive sentences in English. The students' creativity in designing the menu cards was excellent, and they appeared to thoroughly enjoy this activity.
5. **Demonstration Stage:** Each pair presented their menu card to the class, reading out the names of the food and drinks and their reasons for doing so. The teacher provided constructive feedback and rewarded pairs with star stickers for the best efforts. All students received appreciation to build their confidence.

Meeting 3 (November 18, 2025) - Review and Evaluation

In the third meeting, the teacher conducted a comprehensive review of all vocabulary learned in Cycles I and II (family, body parts, animals, foods and drinks). The teacher used various fun review activities such as "Vocabulary Relay Race," "Charades," and "Crossword Puzzle." Students were very enthusiastic and demonstrated a better understanding of the vocabulary learned. Afterward, a final test was administered in Cycle II to measure the improvement in students' overall vocabulary mastery.

4.3.3 Observation of Cycle II

Observations of student activities in Cycle II showed a very significant improvement compared to Cycle I. Based on the observation sheet, the following data were obtained: Student enthusiasm: 92% of students demonstrated very high enthusiasm in participating in the lesson. Almost all students appeared happy, enthusiastic, and eager to learn. Only 2 students still looked less enthusiastic due to poor health conditions on the day of the lesson.

Active participation: 88% of students actively participated in all learning activities. Students who were previously passive in cycle I began to show courage in asking questions, answering questions, and presenting. Improvements to the demonstration system, which provided opportunities for all students, successfully increased participation. Word Search Game Completion: 90% of students successfully completed the Word Search Game at their chosen level. Providing two difficulty levels proved effective in helping students with varying abilities feel challenged but not frustrated. Collaboration: 94% of students demonstrated excellent cooperation. They not only worked with their partners but also helped others who were struggling. The classroom atmosphere became more supportive and collaborative. Creativity: 85% of students demonstrated creativity in creating sentences and menu cards. They not only used the teacher's provided templates but also added their own creative ideas.

Observations of teacher activities showed that the teacher had implemented all planned improvements very well. The teacher provided appropriate scaffolding for students who were struggling, implemented differentiated learning by providing two difficulty levels, varied engaging activities, and ensured all students had opportunities to demonstrate. Classroom management was also improved with smoother transitions between activities. The results of the final test of Cycle II, conducted on November 18, 2025, showed very encouraging improvements. The results of the Cycle II test data are as follows: The number of students achieving scores above the Minimum Competency (KKM) (70) increased significantly to 22 students (88%), while only 3 students (12%) still scored below the KKM. The highest score was 95 and the lowest was 65. The class average score increased to 82.4. These results met the established success indicators, namely, a minimum of 80% of students achieving the KKM and a minimum average score of 75.

4.3.4 Cycle II Reflection

Based on the observations and evaluations of Cycle II, a reflection was conducted to evaluate the success of the actions taken. The results of the reflection are as follows:

Successes in Cycle II: (1) The use of the Word Search Game with two difficulty levels successfully accommodated the needs of students with different abilities; (2) A more engaging variety of repetition activities successfully increased student enthusiasm and participation; (3) Better time allocation for the demonstration phase ensured all students had the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding; (4) The scaffolding provided by the teacher significantly helped students who were struggling to continue learning; (5) The use of rewards and appreciation increased student motivation and self-confidence.

Improved learning outcomes: There was a very significant improvement from pre-cycle to cycles I and II. The average class score increased from 65.2 (pre-cycle) to 72.8 (cycle I) and 82.4 (cycle II). The percentage of classical completion also increased from 40% (pre-cycle) to 64% (cycle I) and 88% (cycle II). These data indicate that the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach effectively improved students' vocabulary mastery.

Changes in student behavior: In addition to improved test scores, positive behavioral changes were also observed in students. Students became more confident in using English, were more active in asking and answering questions, were more enthusiastic about participating in learning, and demonstrated a positive attitude toward English. Several parents also reported that their children began using English vocabulary in everyday conversations at home. Reflection conclusion: This classroom action research has achieved the established indicators of success. Therefore, the research was stopped in Cycle II and there was no need to continue it to the next cycle.

Table 1. Word Search Game Learning Outcomes

Cycle	Average Score	Ketuntasan	Completed	Incomplete
Cycle I	72,8	64%	16 students	9 students
Cycle II	82,4	88%	22 students	3 students

Source: Research Data 2025



Figure 1. Students working on a problem

5. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach can improve the English vocabulary mastery of fifth-grade students at SDIT Iqra. This improvement is evident in three main aspects: improved test results, increased student activity, and changes in student attitudes toward English learning. First, in terms of test results, there was a consistent and significant improvement from the pre-cycle to the second cycle. The class average score increased by 17.2 points (from 65.2 to 82.4), and the percentage of classical completion increased by 48% (from 40% to 88%). This improvement aligns with research by Hidayati (2018), which found that the use of Word Search Puzzles can significantly improve students' vocabulary mastery. Research by Simatupang (2020) also showed similar results, indicating that the Word Search Game is effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery. The effectiveness of the Word Search Game in improving vocabulary mastery can be explained from a cognitive psychology perspective. This game trains students' visual discrimination and pattern recognition, which are essential skills for language acquisition. When students

search for words in a grid of letters, they subconsciously repeat the spelling of the words visually, which helps strengthen their long-term memory (Fitria, 2023). Furthermore, the game element in learning creates a fun atmosphere and reduces students' anxiety in learning a foreign language, as explained by Bakhsh (2016).

Second, in terms of student activity, there was a very encouraging increase in enthusiasm, participation, cooperation, and creativity. In cycle II, more than 88% of students demonstrated positive activity in learning, a significant increase compared to the initial condition where only around 40% of students were active. This increase indicates that the Word Search Game successfully created student-centered and engaging learning. This finding supports the theory of Wright et al. (2006) which states that games in learning can increase student motivation and active participation.

The integration of the Word Search Game with the EMRED approach has been proven to create a systematic and comprehensive learning framework. Each stage of EMRED plays a crucial role in building students' vocabulary mastery. The Immersion stage provides context and initial exposure to new vocabulary. The Modeling stage provides clear examples of pronunciation, spelling, and vocabulary usage. The Repetition stage strengthens memory through meaningful and varied repetition. The Exploration stage provides students with the opportunity to explore and interact with vocabulary through the Word Search Game. The Demonstration stage allows students to concretely demonstrate their understanding and mastery. Research by Aufah (2023) and Destianingsih (2024) also shows that the EMRED approach is effective in improving students' language skills. In this study, the combination of EMRED and the Word Search Game created a powerful synergy. EMRED provided a clear pedagogical structure, while the Word Search Game provided elements of fun and high engagement. This combination addresses the needs of elementary school students who require structured yet enjoyable learning.

Third, in terms of attitudes and behavior, this study found significant positive changes. Students became more confident in using English, demonstrated positive attitudes toward language learning, and even began using vocabulary in their daily lives. This attitudinal change is crucial because a positive attitude toward the target language is a key factor in successful language learning (Cameron, 2020). Several factors contributing to the success of this study were: (1) Selecting vocabulary themes that were close to students' lives, making them easy to understand and remember; (2) Use of varied media (video, flashcards, realia, games) that accommodate various student learning styles; (3) Implementation of differentiated learning by providing two levels of difficulty in the Word Search Game; (4) Providing appropriate scaffolding for students who have difficulties; (5) Adequate time allocation for each stage of learning, especially the demonstration stage; (6) Use of rewards and appreciation to build students' intrinsic motivation. However, this study also identified several challenges faced. First, in cycle I, some students still had difficulty finding words in the Word Search Game because the level of difficulty was not appropriate. This was overcome in cycle II by providing two levels of difficulty. Second, limited time in the demonstration stage in cycle I meant that not all students had the opportunity to present. Improvements were made in cycle II with a rotation system and gallery walk.

Third, some students with lower academic abilities require more intensive scaffolding to effectively participate in learning. Overall, the results of this study provide empirical evidence that the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach is an effective learning strategy for improving elementary school students' English vocabulary mastery. This research also demonstrates the importance of combining engaging learning media with a systematic pedagogical approach to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

5.1 Relationship to Research Objectives

The classroom action research entitled "Implementing the Word Search Game Using the EMRED Approach in Vocabulary Learning for Fifth-Grade Students at SDIT Iqra" successfully achieved its stated objectives, both general and specific. The results demonstrate a strong and consistent relationship between each research objective and the findings obtained during the research process.

Achievement of the General Research Objective

The general objective of this research was to improve fifth-grade students' English vocabulary mastery at SDIT Iqra through the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach. The results indicate that this objective was successfully achieved, as evidenced by the significant increase in students' vocabulary mastery. Quantitative data shows that the average class score gradually increased from 65.2 in the pre-cycle phase, to 72.8 at the end of Cycle I, and reached 82.4 at the end of Cycle II. This 17.2-point increase in the average score indicates that the implementation of the Word Search Game integrated with the EMRED approach had a substantial positive impact on students' English vocabulary mastery.

In addition to the increase in average scores, the percentage of students' classical completion also experienced a very encouraging increase. In the pre-cycle phase, only 40% of students, or 10 out of 21 students, were able to achieve scores above the established Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM) of

70. After the implementation of the actions in Cycle I, the percentage of completion increased to 64%, or 16 students. A more significant increase occurred in Cycle II, where the percentage of completion reached 88%, or 22 students successfully surpassed the KKM. This achievement has met and even exceeded the established success indicators, namely, a minimum of 80% of students achieving the Minimum Competency (KKM) with an average score of at least 75.

Achievement of the First Specific Objective

The first specific objective was to describe the planning of English vocabulary learning through the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach for fifth-grade students at SDIT Iqra. The results showed that the learning planning was carried out systematically and comprehensively in both research cycles. In the first cycle, planning included the development of a Lesson Implementation Plan (RPP) based on the five stages of the EMRED approach: Emersion, Modeling, Repetition, Exploration, and Demonstration. The researchers prepared learning media in the form of a Word Search Game in printed and digital formats with appropriate difficulty levels for fifth-grade students, namely 10x10 and 15x15 grids containing 15-20 vocabulary words according to the learning theme. The planning for Cycle II showed improvements based on the results of the reflection on Cycle I. The researcher revised the plan by providing a Word Search Game at two difficulty levels: an easy level with a 10x10 grid containing 10-12 words for students who were still struggling, and a medium level with a 15x15 grid containing 15-18 words for more advanced students. This plan also included designing more engaging repetition activities such as Vocabulary Bingo, Flyswatter Game, and Spelling Bee to prevent student boredom.

Furthermore, the researcher designed a more detailed time allocation for each EMRED stage, specifically allocating more time for the demonstration stage so that all students had an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning outcomes. This thorough and adaptive planning was key to the successful implementation of the learning.

Achievement of the Second Specific Objective

The second specific objective was to describe the implementation of English vocabulary learning through the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach for fifth-grade students at SDIT Iqra. The results showed that the learning implementation followed the five EMRED stages consistently and systematically. In the Emersion stage, students are exposed to new vocabulary through various authentic media such as animated videos, songs, illustrated posters, and real objects (realia) relevant to the learning theme. This exposure creates a rich and meaningful language environment for students.

The Modeling stage is carried out by the teacher providing clear and correct examples of vocabulary pronunciation and demonstrating how to write each word with the correct spelling, and provide examples of vocabulary use in simple, contextual sentences. Teachers also use body language and facial expressions to help students understand the meaning of words. In the Repetition stage, vocabulary repetition is not done mechanically and monotonously, but through various fun educational games such as "repeat after me" with varying tempo and volume, "Simon Says," "Animal Sounds Game," "Vocabulary Bingo," and "Flyswatter Game." This variety of activities keeps students enthusiastic about reviewing vocabulary without getting bored.

The Exploration stage provides opportunities for students to explore and use vocabulary learned through the Word Search Game. Students work on the game either individually or in pairs, with difficulty levels they can choose according to their abilities. Teachers provide scaffolding or assistance in the form of clues for students who have difficulty finding words. After completing the game, students are asked to create descriptive sentences or creative works using the vocabulary they have found. The final stage is the Demonstration stage, where students demonstrate their work and understanding through oral presentations, writing on manila paper posted on the classroom wall (gallery walk), and a rotation system that ensures all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.

Achievement of the Third Specific Objective

The third specific objective was to describe the improvement in fifth-grade students' English vocabulary mastery at SDIT Iqra after implementing the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach. The results showed significant improvement in both quantitative and qualitative aspects. Quantitatively, test data showed a gradual increase from pre-cycle to cycle II. The class average score increased from 65.2 in pre-cycle to 72.8 in cycle I and reached 82.4 in cycle II, representing a total increase of 17.2 points. The percentage of classical completion also increased significantly from only 40% in pre-cycle to 64% in cycle I, and reached 88% in cycle II.

The range of student scores also shifted for the better. In pre-cycle, the lowest score was 45 and the highest was 85, indicating a significant gap in ability. In cycle I, the lowest score increased to 55 with a maximum of 90, and in cycle II, the lowest score reached 65 with a maximum of 95. This indicates that not only high-ability students experienced improvement, but also low-ability students showed good progress, indicating that learning with the EMRED-based Word Search Game is effective

for students of all ability levels.

Qualitatively, observations showed significant improvements in various aspects of student learning activities and behavior. Student enthusiasm for learning increased from 70% in cycle I to 92% in cycle II. Active student participation also increased from 65% to 88%, indicating that previously passive students began to ask questions, answer questions, and participate in presentations. Students' ability to complete the Word Search Game increased from 68% in cycle I to 90% in cycle II, indicating improved concentration, accuracy, and letter pattern recognition. Student cooperation also showed significant improvement, from 72% to 94%, creating a more collaborative and supportive classroom atmosphere.

In addition to improvements in learning activities, this study also identified positive behavioral changes in students outside of formal learning contexts. Students became more confident in using English, both in communicating with teachers and with peers. They displayed a more positive attitude toward learning English and no longer viewed vocabulary as difficult and boring. Several parents also reported that their children had begun using English vocabulary in everyday conversations at home, demonstrating that learning impacts not only the classroom but also the students' real lives. Summary of Improved Learning Outcomes To provide a clearer picture of the improvement in students' vocabulary mastery, here is a summary of learning outcome data from pre-cycle to cycle II:

Assessment Aspect	Pre-cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
Class Average Score	65.2	72.8	82.4
Classical Completion (≥ 70)	40%	64%	88%
Number of Students Completed	10 students	16 students	22 students
Highest Score	85	90	95
Lowest Score	45	55	65

The data in the table above clearly shows a consistent upward trend from pre-cycle to cycle II in all assessment aspects. The 17.2-point increase in the class average and a 48% increase in classical completion are strong indicators that the implementation of the EMRED-based Word Search Game is highly effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery.

Improvement in Qualitative Aspects of Learning

In addition to quantitative improvements in test scores, this study also identified significant improvements in the qualitative aspects of learning, as observed through observations of student activities. These qualitative aspects include student enthusiasm, active participation, ability to complete the Word Search Game, collaboration, and creativity.

Student enthusiasm for learning has increased significantly. In the first cycle, 70% of students showed high enthusiasm, but 30% still appeared hesitant and lacked confidence, particularly students with low academic ability. After improvements in the second cycle, including providing the Word Search Game with two difficulty levels and a variety of more engaging activities, student enthusiasm increased dramatically to 92%. Almost all students appeared happy, eager, and eager to learn. This increase in enthusiasm is crucial because students' intrinsic motivation is a key factor in successful language learning.

Active student participation in learning activities also increased significantly, from 65% in cycle I to 88% in cycle II. Students who previously tended to be passive and simply follow instructions without initiative began to show courage in asking questions of the teacher, answering questions, and presenting in front of the class. This increased participation was significantly influenced by improvements to the demonstration system, which provided opportunities for all students to showcase their work, both through oral presentations and through gallery walks. When students felt that their contributions were valued and that everyone had an equal opportunity, they became more confident and active in learning.

Students' ability to complete the Word Search Game also showed consistent improvement. In cycle I, 68% of students successfully completed the game within the allotted time. However, some students still struggled to find words due to inattention to letter patterns and the difficulty level being too high for their abilities. In cycle II, with two levels of difficulty available for students to choose from, the success rate increased to 90%. This improvement demonstrates the importance of differentiated learning that accommodates the needs of students with varying abilities. Students with lower abilities remained challenged but not frustrated because they could choose easy levels, while students with higher abilities could explore more challenging levels.

Student collaboration improved significantly, from 72% in Cycle I to 94% in Cycle II. Students not only worked well with their partners to complete the Word Search Game but also demonstrated initiative in helping others who were having difficulty, even those not their partners. The classroom atmosphere became more collaborative and supportive, creating a positive learning environment. This ability to work together is a crucial soft skill to develop early, not only for academic success but also for students' social lives.

Student creativity also saw a significant increase, reaching 85% in Cycle II. When asked to create sentences using previously learned vocabulary or design a menu card on the theme of Foods and

Drinks, students not only used the templates or examples provided by the teacher but also added their own creative ideas. Some students created sentences with more complex structures, added illustrations, or used attractive colors and decorations to their work. This creativity demonstrates that students are not merely memorizing vocabulary mechanically, but truly understanding and using it in meaningful and personal contexts.

Changes in Student Behavior and Attitudes

This research not only successfully improved students' vocabulary mastery cognitively, but also brought about positive changes in the affective aspect, namely students' attitudes and behaviors toward learning English. These changes were observed both in the classroom and outside of formal learning contexts, indicating that the impact of this learning is holistic and sustainable.

One of the most prominent behavioral changes was students' increased confidence in using English. In the initial stages of the research, Many students exhibit language anxiety when asked to use English, both in speaking and writing. They fear making mistakes, being laughed at by their peers, and tend to remain silent when asked questions by the teacher. However, after implementing the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach, students became more confident in using English vocabulary in communication. They no longer felt pressured or afraid of making mistakes because the fun and supportive learning had built their confidence. Students even began to take the initiative to use English vocabulary when communicating with teachers and peers, even though it was not in a formal learning context.

Students' attitudes toward learning English also experienced a very positive change. Before the study, many students considered vocabulary learning difficult, boring, and unenjoyable because they had to memorize many words without meaningful context. The monotonous drill and memorization methods caused students to lose interest in English. However, after experiencing learning with the Word Search Game, which was packaged in a fun and engaging way, students developed a more positive attitude. They began to enjoy the process of learning vocabulary, looked forward to every English learning session, and even asked to play Word Search in their free time. This change in attitude is crucial because a positive attitude toward a subject will motivate students to continue learning and develop their abilities independently.

The impact of learning also extends to students' daily lives outside of school. Several parents reported that their children began using English vocabulary in everyday conversations at home. For example, when they see animals on television or on the street, students spontaneously name them in English. When eating, they sometimes name food or drinks in English. Some students even teach their younger siblings vocabulary they have learned in school. This transfer of knowledge from the school context to real life demonstrates that learning is not merely short-term memorization for test purposes, but is truly internalized in students' long-term memory and becomes part of their language competence.

Conclusion: Relationship between Objectives and Research Results

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that all research objectives, both the general objective and the three specific objectives, have been achieved very well. The general objective of improving students' vocabulary mastery was achieved with an increase in the average score from 65.2 to 82.4 and the classical completion rate from 40% to 88%. The first specific objective, regarding lesson planning, was achieved through the systematic development of lesson plans using the EMRED stages, the preparation of Word Search Game media with two difficulty levels, and adaptive planning based on reflection. The second specific objective, regarding learning implementation, was achieved through the consistent implementation of the five EMRED stages (Emmersion, Modeling, Repetition, Exploration, and Demonstration) combined with the Word Search Game and various enjoyable and varied supporting activities.

The third specific objective, regarding improving vocabulary mastery, was achieved not only quantitatively, in the form of improved test scores, but also qualitatively, including increased enthusiasm (92%), active participation (88%), game completion ability (90%), cooperation (94%), and creativity (85%). Furthermore, this study also successfully brought about positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors toward English, boosted their self-confidence, and facilitated the transfer of knowledge to everyday life. Thus, this study proves that the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach is an effective, comprehensive, and meaningful learning strategy for improving English vocabulary mastery among elementary school students, particularly fifth graders at SDIT Iqra.

6. Conclusion

First, the planning for English vocabulary learning through the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach was systematic and structured. The planning included developing lesson plans that integrated the EMRED stages (Emmersion, Modeling, Repetition, Exploration, and Demonstration) with the Word Search Game activities, preparing varied learning media, developing research instruments, and conducting continuous improvement based on reflections from each cycle.

Second, the implementation of English vocabulary learning through the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach was carried out in two cycles, each consisting of three learning sessions. Each session implemented the five EMRED stages sequentially and systematically. In Cycle II, improvements were made based on reflections from Cycle I, including the provision of a Word Search Game with two difficulty levels, a more engaging variety of repetition activities, better time allocation for demonstrations, and more intensive scaffolding.

Third, fifth-grade students at SDIT Iqra experienced significant improvement in English vocabulary mastery after implementing the EMRED-based Word Search Game. This was demonstrated by: (a) An increase in the class average score from 65.2 in the pre-cycle to 72.8 in Cycle I and 82.4 in Cycle II; (b) An increase in the percentage of classical completion from 40% in the pre-cycle to 64% in Cycle I and 88% in Cycle II; (c) An increase in students' positive learning activities from around 40% in the initial phase to over 88% in Cycle II; (d) A change in students' positive attitudes toward English learning, characterized by increased self-confidence, enthusiasm, and increased use of vocabulary in everyday life. Thus, it can be concluded that the Word Search Game based on the EMRED approach effectively improves fifth-grade students' English vocabulary mastery at SDIT Iqra and can be used as an alternative, innovative, interactive, and enjoyable learning strategy.

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