IS WORDWALL EFFECTIVE IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OR NOT?

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of the use of Wordwall media on English language learning in elementary school. This research is experimental research. The study was conducted at SDN 04 Bukik Sikumpa, Lareh Sago Halaban District, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, involving two groups of students: an experimental group using Wordwall media and a control group using conventional methods. The results showed that the average value of the experimental group was 77, while the average value of the control group was 65. T-test analysis produced a t_hitung value of 6.078, which is higher than the t_tabelvalue of 2.021. This shows that there is a significant influence of the use of Wordwall media on English learning. Thus, the hypothesis proposed, namely the presence of the influence of Wordwall media in the teaching of English to elementary school students, is acceptable. This research makes an important contribution to the development of more effective methods of teaching English at the primary level.

Keyword : *Teaching English, elementary school, young learners, wordwall*

INTRODUCTION

English serves as a global lingua franca across various fields, including business, technology, education, and diplomacy. Proficiency in English enables effective cross-cultural communication, expands international networks, and enhances participation in the global community. Most scientific and educational resources are available in English, making it essential for accessing vital information and research. In todays' job market, especially in global industries, English proficiency is often a key requirement that boosts career prospects.

As globalization demands critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills, English helps students develop these competencies, allowing them to adapt to global challenges and work with diverse cultures. Learning English also fosters cultural understanding through literature and media, promoting tolerance and harmonious relationships. Additionally, many technological innovations originate in English-speaking

countries, and mastering the language helps individuals stay updated on advancements and utilize digital tools. For students, English proficiency opens doors to prestigious international institutions, enhancing educational quality and broadening global career opportunities.

Teaching English from an early age is an important investment to prepare young people to face the era of globalization. By mastering the English language, individuals are not only able to compete locally but also have competitiveness at the international level, support personal progress, and contribute to nation building. Teaching English at the elementary school level has an important role in forming the foundation of students ' language skills. English as an international language has become an essential necessity in the era of globalization, so learning this language must be done effectively from an early age. However, in practice, learning English at the elementary level often faces various challenges, such as low student motivation, Limited Learning media, and less interactive methods. This phenomenon shows the need for innovation in learning approaches and media that can attract students, increase their participation, and support the achievement of basic English language competencies.

English language learning at the primary school level presents a variety of unique phenomena that reflect the challenges and opportunities. English is often introduced as an additional subject (local content) in many primary schools in Indonesia, especially in urban areas. However, its non-mandatory status in the national curriculum causes the implementation of English learning to vary greatly, both in terms of methods, media, and teacher competence.

One of the main phenomena is the limitation of teaching resources and competencies. Many teachers at the elementary level do not have a formal English education background, so the methods used are often less innovative and tend to be rote-based. Learning usually focuses on mastering vocabulary and pronunciation, with little attention to communicative skills such as speaking and listening. This is in line with the findings of Renandya and Jacobs (2002) which states that English Language Teaching in developing countries is often focused on cognitive aspects without providing an active language experience.

In addition, low student motivation is also a phenomenon that is often encountered. Children of primary school age usually prefer to learn through activities that are fun, interactive, and involve play. In practice, however, English learning is often done in a monotonous way, such as reading texts or working on practice questions. This condition makes students feel bored and less interested in learning English. The growing digital technology actually presents a great opportunity to overcome this challenge. However, the

implementation of technology in learning English in elementary school is still limited. Many primary schools, especially in remote areas, do not yet have access to adequate technological devices or the internet. On the other hand, in urban areas, interactive media such as learning applications, educational games, and videos are often used, but have not been optimally utilized in English learning.

Another striking phenomenon is the lack of support of an English-speaking learning environment. Most students do not have access to an environment that supports the direct use of English. They rely solely on the learning process in the classroom, so their abilities often stagnate due to lack of language practice. According to Krashen (1982), to achieve good language skills, students need meaningful input and opportunities to practice language in real contexts.

From these phenomena, it is clear that learning English in elementary school requires a more innovative and fun approach. The use of interactive learning media, such as Wordwall or other digital platforms, can be a solution to increase student motivation and learning effectiveness. With the right approach, students will not only be more interested in learning English, but also be able to develop more comprehensive language skills early on. In line with Shabrina & Taufiq (2023), their study highlighted that Wordwall as an effective solution to address common teaching challenges in vocabulary acquisition. The interactive platform engages students through various game-based activities, making learning more enjoyable and effective. By incorporating Wordwall into the curriculum, teachers can enhance student motivation and participation, leading to improved retention of vocabulary. Using Wordwall not only facilitates a more dynamic learning environment but also helps students develop a deeper understanding of English vocabulary, ultimately contributing to their overall language proficiency.

According to Brown (2001), effective language learning requires an approach that is contextual, involves active interaction, and utilizes relevant technology or media to facilitate student understanding. On the other hand, Piaget (1970) explained that students at the elementary age stage are in a concrete operational phase, in which they tend to understand concepts more easily through direct experiences and activities that involve manipulation of objects or visualization. This opinion supports the importance of using interactive and interesting learning media, such as technology-based applications.

One of the media that is now widely used in learning is Wordwall, an interactive digital platform that allows teachers to create technology-based educational games. Wordwall offers different types of learning activities, such as quizzes, puzzles or memory games, that can be

adapted to the subject matter. This medium is considered effective for increasing student engagement in learning. As stated by Prensky (2001), 21st century students are digital natives who are more interested in interactive technology than conventional learning methods. By using Wordwall, teachers can take advantage of this generational characteristic to create a fun and meaningful learning atmosphere.

In Indonesia, teaching English at the elementary level still often focuses on lecture and assignment methods, which lack active involvement of students. This makes students easily feel bored and less motivated to learn. Data obtained from several previous studies indicate that the low ability of students in English is caused by the lack of involvement of students during the learning process. According to Surya and Rahmawati (2018), the use of interactive learning media can significantly improve student motivation and learning outcomes, especially in foreign language learning.

In a study on the role of technology in education, Kim (2021), Nova et al. (2024), and Kalyani (2024) highlighted how technology can improve 21st century learning outcomes and skills. While this research provides a strong overview of the benefits of technology, there are still shortcomings in the specific exploration of certain technological tools, such as Wordwall, and their impact on learning at the primary education level. Then a research by Giyatmi (2021), Magasvaran et al. (2022), Sari (2024) and Baş et al. (2016), which examined teachers 'perceptions of ICT in the teaching process, showed that teachers' understanding of technology greatly influenced its implementation. However, no studies have specifically linked teacher perceptions to the use of Wordwall in the context of English language learning in primary schools, which is the main focus of this study. It was supported by Asri et al. (2024), Ilahiyati et al. (2023), and Junizar et al. (2020), in their research explore benefits of the Wordwall in promoting vocabulary development among students. Wordwall as a pedagogical tool for vocabulary enhancement. Wordwall involves displaying vocabulary words prominently in the classroom, allowing students to engage with the words visually and contextually. This media fosters an interactive learning environment where students can easily reference and recall vocabulary, thereby reinforcing their understanding and retention. It is not only aids in vocabulary acquisition but also encourages active participation and collaboration among students, making it a valuable strategy in language education.

Furthermore, a study by Sya'diyah et al. (2024) and Shabrina & Taufiq (2023) show the potential of Wordwall in teaching English vocabulary, but neither discusses in depth how the use of this medium can be adapted for students at a basic level. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the influence of the use of Wordwall in English language learning in

primary schools, as well as how teacher and student perceptions of this medium can affect the effectiveness of learning. Thus, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the understanding of the use of technology in the context of primary education.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine the effect of the use of Wordwall media in teaching English in elementary school. This research is expected to make a real contribution in the development of effective learning methods, interactive, and in accordance with the characteristics of elementary school students. In addition, the results of this study are also expected to provide new insights for teachers in utilizing technology as part of the learning process.

METHOD

This study used experimental research methods. Gay et al. (2012) stated that experimental research is defined as a research method designed to test the cause-and-effect relationship between variables by manipulating the independent variable and observing its impact on the dependent variable. This study has as main characteristics, such as the strict control of external variables, which allows the researcher to ensure that the changes that occur in the dependent variable are due to the treatment given. In this study the experimental approach is very relevant. Wordwall Media serves as an independent variable that is manipulated to see its effect on student learning outcomes, which is the dependent variable. By comparing the group of students who used wordwall media with the control group who did not use it, researchers were able to identify whether the use of such media significantly improved students ' English comprehension and skills.

Through the proper design of experiments, this study can provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of wordwall media in the context of learning, as well as provide valuable insights for educators in choosing more effective teaching strategies. Thus, this research not only contributes to the development of educational theory, but also to better learning practices in elementary school. The population in this study were elementary school students at SDN 04 Bukik Sikumpa, Kecamatan Lareh Sago Halaban, Kabupaten Lima Puluh Kota. The students were divided into two classes, namely experiment class and control class, as the sample. They were chosen by using random sampling technique, each class consist of 20 students. The experimental group was taught by using Wordwall media and a control group was taught by conventional methods. The instrument used in this study is vocabulary Test in the form of multiple choice. It has tried out before to get the valid items. So, the total questions were 40 questions and the time given is 1.5 hours. This test was given at the time of

post-test after the researchers did the treatment. The Data obtained from the test results were analyzed using the T-test formula to determine whether there are significant differences between the experimental group and the control group. The final result of this study was to answer whether Ho or Ha is acceptable.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that the use of Wordwall media in English language learning in elementary school has a significant effect on students ' reading skills. After analyzing the data using the t-test formula, $t_{calculated}$ value is greater than the value of t_{table}. This shows that there are significant differences between the group of students taught using Wordwall media and the group taught by conventional methods. The results of statistical data can be shown in the following table:

Table 1: Result of t-test

Class	Mean	$t_{calculated}$	t_{table}	Hypothesis answered
Experiment	77	6.078	2.021	$t_{cal} > t_{table}$
Control	65			H1 is accepted

From the results above, it can be concluded that the average value of the experiment class is 77 higher than the average value of the control Class of 65. And the results of t-test analysis obtained $t_{calculated}$ value is 6,078 and the value of t_{table} 2,021, which $t_{calculated}$ value is higher than the value of t_{table}. So that the hypothesis that was answered was H1, namely the influence of Wordwall media on English Language Teaching for elementary school students in SDN 04 Bukik Sikumpa, Kecamatan Lareh Sago Halaban, Kabupaten Lima Puluh Kota.

The above results support that interactive media such as Wordwall can improve student learning outcomes in vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. One possible factor contributing to this positive outcome is the interactive nature of Wordwall media. Students who engage in learning using Wordwall tend to be more active and motivated. This media provides various types of games and quizzes that make the learning process more enjoyable. Active involvement of students in learning can improve their retention of information and understanding of the material taught. This is in line with the theory of Constructivism which emphasizes the importance of interactive and participatory learning experiences.

In addition, the use of Wordwall allows teachers to provide faster and more effective feedback. In the context of English learning, timely feedback is essential to help students

understand their mistakes and improve their understanding. With the features built into Wordwall, teachers can easily track student progress and provide necessary assistance. This contributed to improved student learning outcomes, which was reflected in higher english test scores in the experimental group. Resti & Rachmijati (2020) supported that learning media have an important role in improving teaching effectiveness, especially for children. This theory is based on the principle that the right media can help students understand the material better and increase their motivation to learn. Learning Media, such as videos, images, and interactive tools, can create a more engaging and enjoyable learning experience. In the context of this research, this theory supports the argument that Wordwall, as an interactive medium, can improve student engagement and their learning outcomes.

However, although the results of the study show a positive influence, it is important to consider some other factors that may have influenced the results. For example, a student's initial motivation level, educational background, and previous experience in learning English can play a role in the final result. Therefore, further research is needed to explore these factors and how they interact with the use of learning media such as Wordwall. Insani et al. (2024), Pradini & Adnyayanti (2022), Nahdlatul & Blitar (2024), and Zakian (2022) highlighted the importance of technology in language learning. Technology-based learning theory suggests that the use of mobile applications can provide wider access to students to learn outside the classroom and improve vocabulary acquisition. The mobile application allows students to learn independently and in a more flexible context. In this case, Wordwall media which is also technology-based can provide a similar learning experience, where students can practice English vocabulary and skills in an interactive and fun way.

From this research, Wordwall can encourages collaborative learning through group activities and friendly competition, fostering a sense of community in the classroom. In line with this, Fitria (2023) emphasizes that the platform's interactive game-based approach not only makes learning more engaging but also caters to various learning styles, thereby enhancing student participation and motivation. Wordwall can be utilized to create customized educational games that reinforce vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension skills in a playful context. By incorporating elements of competition and collaboration, Wordwall fosters a dynamic learning environment that encourages students to actively engage with the language. Thus, Wordwall is a valuable tool for English language instruction, effectively promoting language acquisition among young learners. Due to this, Hasram et al. (2021) in their study are compelling evidence for the effectiveness of Wordwall in enhancing vocabulary learning among elementary school students. Their study demonstrates that

incorporating Wordwall's interactive games into English language lessons significantly improved vocabulary acquisition among Year 5 pupils. The engaging nature of Wordwall games motivated students to actively participate in learning, leading to increased engagement and retention of vocabulary. The study further emphasizes that Wordwall's variety of game formats and customizable features catered to diverse learning styles, making it an effective tool for promoting vocabulary mastery in the classroom.

Overall, the findings of this study provide strong evidence that the use of Wordwall media in English language learning in primary schools can significantly improve students' competence in English. With t-calculated value greater than t-table, this study confirms the importance of technology integration in education to create a more engaging and effective learning experience. It is hoped that the results of this study can be a reference for teachers and educators in designing more innovative and interactive teaching methods in the classroom.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The study concludes that using Wordwall media significantly enhances English learning in primary schools by improving students' understanding, skills, motivation, and interest through interactive games and quizzes. This innovative tool allows teachers to present material more engagingly, addressing challenges in capturing students' attention. However, to maximize its potential, teachers should receive training in designing curriculum-aligned activities, and regular evaluations of its effectiveness should be conducted. This study encourages schools to adopt technology-based methods to improve English education in Indonesia, fostering a more competent future generation.

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