



Students' Voice: Wordwall as Game-Based Learning Media to Enhance Interest in Learning English

Diva Maulida¹, Dhanita Puspita Anjarsari², Nurul Ngaini Khusniyati³, Lilia Indriani⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Tidar, Magelang, Jawa Tengah

E-mail: divamaulidapbi@students.untidar.ac.id

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Abstract

Wordwall is a Game-Based Learning media that can be used as a platform to enhance students' interest in learning English. This research aims to discover students' voices about Wordwall as a learning media and how Wordwall enhance students' interest in learning English. The researchers used qualitative research design which the instrument is a questionnaire provided offline survey using written paper. The data was obtained from 40 undergraduate students taken from general English courses at one of the prestigious state universities in Central Java, Indonesia. In the application of Game-Based Learning in this study, students must understand the use of Wordwall in the form of practice questions to improve their English skill development. From the analysis of students' voices, this research successfully shows that 95% of students consider Wordwall as Game-Based Learning to be an interactive and fun learning media. From this agreement, there are three issues obtained from students' voices, such as Wordwall has various themes, easy to understand, and many animation features have the highest percentage in this study. However, 5% of students who are constrained in using Wordwall as an English learning media because it is difficult to access and understand the features. However, the results of this study cannot simplify the application of Wordwall in another general subject. Thus, further researchers who are interested in studying issues relevant to this study are advised to use in-depth interviews related to the implementation of Wordwall learning media with teachers and students. Implementation of Wordwall learning media to teachers and students, as well as research in schools that have internet networks.

Keywords: *Game-Based Learning, Wordwall, Learning Media, Learning Strategy, Students' Interest*

Introduction

As the world develops rapidly, this results in increasingly advanced languages, especially English. English is an international language, and a universal language of instruction used almost worldwide. Therefore, English language teaching is carried out almost worldwide. Apart from increasingly advanced language developments, technology worldwide is also increasingly sophisticated. The frequency of technology usage in individuals' daily lives serves as a testament to the rapid development of technology in the twenty-first century. The progress in technology has yet to supplant the importance of education. The influence of technology on education has been substantial and noteworthy.

According to Hauer (2017), implementing technology is essential for the execution of learning activities. Integrating technology in education presents novel opportunities for the facilitation of digital transformation. Nevertheless, the impact of technology in education can be both advantageous and disadvantageous for professionals in this subject. Integrating information, communication, and technology components into the curriculum has been implemented in response to the evolving demands of English language learners and diverse educational contexts.

This finding provides empirical evidence in line with Koc's (2005) argument that students can engage in interactions, collaborations, and knowledge-sharing in any given context, as highlighted in the study conducted by Adeline and Irwansyah (2022). Moreover, using information, communication, and technology fosters students' intrinsic motivation to acquire knowledge, stimulates their intellectual curiosity, and enhances their aptitude for innovative thinking.

Furthermore, the notion of Gamification entails the utilization of game-design elements and principles in non-game contexts (Putra et al., 2021). It is a way to incorporate technology as a learning medium. Instead, the word is described as a compilation of actions and protocols intended to address problems by utilizing or applying the unique characteristics of game elements (Mee et al., 2020). Numerous scholarly investigations have been undertaken regarding Gamification, as evidenced by numerous articles in renowned international academic journals.

The research findings suggest that the implementation of Gamification positively influences educational endeavors. Integrating gamification within the educational setting is frequently regarded as a strategy to augment students' involvement and participation in the process of acquiring knowledge. The proposition suggests that this methodology has the potential to indirectly enhance students' competency in several language skills, such as oral communication, written expression, reading comprehension, and auditory comprehension, particularly within the realm of acquiring the English language.

Implementing gamification techniques in educational settings has positively impacted the overall learning experience. By incorporating elements of games into the curriculum, educators create a more engaging and entertaining atmosphere for students. It facilitates enhanced comprehension and retention of subject matter among the student population.

Moreover, Serrano (2019) highlighted digital game-based learning as a promising technique for attracting students' attention, particularly among those fondly playing video games and increasing their participation in learning. This digital game allows students to participate in instructional activities through games, creating chances for learning that are not restricted by physical or temporal boundaries. The only prerequisite for engaging in the activity is owning a mobile device with internet capabilities. Furthermore, the educational experience will be enhanced by the inclusion of interactive activities. Skala (2019) posits that the utilization of digital games can bolster pupils' self-confidence by fostering a sense of achievement while instilling the belief that their successes are dependent upon diligent effort.

Game designs are meticulously developed with the primary objective of optimizing appeal, minimizing the potential for rapid tedium, and maintaining a high level of player involvement for the entirety of the gaming encounter. In addition to possessing aesthetic appeal, it is imperative that the actions inside the game properly interest students and facilitate the transfer of knowledge.

Thus, in teaching English, teachers can utilize existing technology to improve the quality of learning. According to (Xiao, 2019), every educator must think about, update concepts, dare to innovate, let advanced science and technology help English language education in universities, and familiarize multimedia technology with a large amount of information, immediacy, and interactivity in language teaching English at school. The involvement of technology has several positive impacts on foreign language learning for teachers and students. Technology can support students' teaching practices in the classroom and make the teaching and learning process more effective, offering motivation, engagement, and enjoyment in the classroom.

It was also found that using technology in EFL teaching can help students achieve learning goals, develop students' performance of the four language skills, and improve students' learning (Mali, 2016; Solano et al., 2017). Technology, the latest definition agreed upon by educational technology experts, The American Association of Educational Communication & Technology (AECT), states that educational technology is the theory and practice of designing, producing, using, and evaluating learning processes and resources (Spector & Yuen, 2016).

Supporting the use of technology for language learning makes it possible to attract more students' interest in being willing to learn English. One technology that can be utilized is the Wordwall digital education platform, which allows teachers to carry out various English learning activities. Wordwall is a

multifunctional tool for creating interactive material and for providing teachers with practical tips on how to use it effectively (Bilova, 2023). Based on Yudha & Mandasari (2021) in their research talking about Wordwall was used as a tool specifically for teaching innovative alternative vocabulary in the EFL classroom.

Connected to this research, the researchers talk more about the use of Wordwall as a game-based learning media to enhance students' interest in learning English in EFL classes whereas in Wordwall media there are many choices of features and templates that can be used by teachers. There are many opportunities for teachers to incorporate the game process into teaching. So, students can experience learning in a fun way. In Wordwall, many types of games are available, including crossword puzzles, quizzes, random cards, and many more. Another advantage of Wordwall is that there is freedom in choosing learning templates.

In addition, designed games can be sent directly via WhatsApp and Google Classroom applications. However, with the supporting facilities, some students need to contribute more to implement this learning. Then, the teacher's inability to master technology can also affect the learning process. Previous scholars put forward several solutions to reduce this problem. Efriana (2021) recommends that teaching materials be made as attractive as possible and related to the teacher's IT skills. He also advised teachers to use flat forms or more easily operated applications. So, Wordwall is a game-based learning digital platform that can be used as an alternative. Thus, this research aims to discover students' voices about Wordwall as a learning media and how Wordwall increases students' interest in learning English.

Method

This study uses a qualitative research design, and the instrument used is a questionnaire. The Qualitative research method examines the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is the critical instrument (Fossey et al., 2002). The questionnaire tool used in this study is a direct survey provided using written paper. Several open-ended and/or closed-ended questions on one or more variables should be included in questionnaires, suggest Hernández-Sampieri, et al (2008). In this study, open & close-ended questionnaires to gain broader information. The questionnaire was adapted from previous studies conducted by Yudha & Mandasari, (2021).

This questionnaire was divided into two parts. First, students were asked some questions about their knowledge of Wordwall website as an English learning medium. Afterward, students were asked to apply Wordwall as their medium to learn English. Then they were asked to express their opinions on how they perceive the application of Wordwall as a learning medium and how Wordwall increases students' interest in learning English in the written paper questionnaire.

Questionnaire data was obtained from 40 undergraduate students taken from general English courses at one of the prestigious state universities in Central Java, Indonesia. In this study, researchers used the simple random sampling method to determine the sample with the specified amount. After the data was collected, statistical analysis was carried out using Microsoft Excel to find the percentage. Furthermore, students' perceptions were sorted based on their categories in a table. Finally, the data was presented and interpreted through in-depth descriptive analysis. In addition, to observe the actual situation and conditions, researchers made direct observations to support data analysis.

Results

After the data was collected and categorized by the researchers. The researcher obtained data that all students were not familiar with the Wordwall platform and all students had never used Wordwall to learn English. Therefore, the researcher provided treatment in the form of practice questions using Wordwall. The tables below present the students' opinions and voices on their interest in Wordwall as a Game-Based Learning media for improving English language skills:

Table 1. Students' opinion after using Wordwall as English skill development.

Opinion		Number of Students	Percentage
Agree	1. The theme is varied	4	10%
	2. Many animation features	20	50%
	3. Easy to understand	14	35%
Disagree	1. Difficult to access	1	2,5%
	2. Difficult to understand the features	1	2,5%

From the data, we can conclude that 95% of students feel happy, indicating students agree to use Wordwall to improve their English skill development. Students agree with several opinions such as varied themes, and many animation features, and Wordwall is easy to understand. The data also shows that 5% of students feel confused, which indicates that students disagree with using Wordwall to improve their English skill development. Students disagree due to two things, such as Wordwall is difficult to access and understand the features. From each opinion, there is a varying amount dominated by agreeing opinions.

Table 2. Students' voices of Wordwall as Game-Based Learning media to enhance student's interest in learning English.

Student's voice	Issues
Student 24: <i>"This game is very unique and interesting so it makes learning more fun."</i>	The theme is varied
Student 29: <i>"Doing the exercise at Wordwall help me to understand and pay attention to every word I used, as to the part in different color, so it is easy to answer the exercise."</i>	
Student 27: <i>"Wordwall has many features that can support English learning."</i>	Many animations feature
Student 31: <i>"There are many features that can be used and fun"</i>	
Student 36: <i>"Wordwall is interesting because there are many features and it's easy to use."</i>	
Student 21: <i>"Wordwall is certainly very easy to understand."</i>	Easy to understand
Student 26: <i>"Using the website Wordwall makes me to know what is wrong and right and the writing of the question is also clear."</i>	
Student 30: <i>"Wordwall makes it very easy for beginners to learn English, so the material will be faster to understand."</i>	
Student 1: <i>"Do not be interested at all because its lagging to refresh multiple times."</i>	Difficult to access and understand the features
Student 7: <i>"Only give little knowledge."</i>	

The data shows that almost all students are interested in continuing to use Wordwall as their tool to learn English. 95% of the students indicated that Wordwall increased their interest in learning English. Then, there are only 5% who are not interested in continuing to use Wordwall. This data shows students' voices that have been grouped based on several issues. There are four issues obtained after students use Wordwall as a tool for learning English in class.

Discussion

From the data, all students do not understand Wordwall as a game-based English learning tool. Wordwall is a platform that offers an innovative and interactive learning experience. Although it has become one of the popular approaches in education, many students are still not thoroughly familiar with game-based learning, primarily through Wordwall. Students' unfamiliarity with

Wordwall can be a hindrance to their skill development. As a game-based learning platform, Wordwall offers various games designed to improve language, cognitive, and collaborative skills (Foster & Shah, 2020). Therefore, the researcher took concrete steps to introduce students to Wordwall so the students could integrate the use of Wordwall into the learning process.

After the researcher took a step by introducing Wordwall to students through treatment, table 1 explains that 38 out of 40 students think that learning English is fun using Wordwall. This is because Wordwall has a varied selection of themes, interesting animation features, and is easy to use. 4 students argued that learning using Wordwall is fun because it has a variety of exciting themes. Using media with varied themes makes it easier for teachers to visualize material that students cannot see or imagine (Kim et al., 2007). 20 students think that using Wordwall is fun because there are many animations features in Wordwall. According to Hayat (2021), learning media in the form of animation makes it easier for teachers to deliver material. 14 students think that learning using Wordwall is fun because the application is easy to use. 2 out of 40 students think that they do not enjoy learning English using Wordwall because the features are difficult to understand and require a signal.

Moreover, based on the finding in Table 2 shows that almost all students are interested in continuing to Wordwall as their tool to learn English, but two of them were still not interested. This indicates how remarkable the Wordwall is. Positive comments from students are added and can be seen in the table. By incorporating game elements into the curriculum, game-based learning influences an interactive, fun, and motivating learning environment (Qian & Clark, 2016). About the Wordwall, students stated that many features are introduced and various. Furthermore, the game is easy to understand and accessible.

Although some students say that Wordwall is quite difficult to access on their phones, the device can be a trouble if not compatible. When a device is incompatible with a game-based learning platform or application, it can negatively impact the learning experience (Singh & Ghazal, 2016). Device diversity among students can be challenging, as some devices may need to be capable of running the game or application smoothly or even not support certain features required for an optimal learning experience.

From the previous data, researchers conclude that is a tool to enhance interest in the English learning process because Wordwall has attracted attention in education due to its unique and diverse features. One of the aspects that makes Wordwall so appealing is the variety of themes and animations that can be used to personalize the learning experience (Kiili, 2005). By providing various theme options and fun animations, Wordwall provides an element of excitement that can increase student engagement in the learning process.

Despite this, there are some opinions that Wordwall is difficult to understand in terms of its features. Some users may have difficulty understanding certain functions or how to optimize these features for learning purposes.

Conclusion

Based on the previously discussed research results, Wordwall as Game-Based Learning implemented in the study offers an innovative and interactive English learning experience. At first, students were not familiar with the Wordwall platform that can be used in English language learning. However, after the researcher gave the treatment to the students most of the students stated that learning by using Wordwall felt more fun. From the opinion of students who expressed approval of the application of Wordwall, there were three issues obtained by researchers, such as the variety of themes, animation features, and ease of use. Then, it is possible that there are some students who disagree with the application of Wordwall during English learning because some students still have problems related to understanding Wordwall's features and difficulties in accessing the platform.

However, the results of this study cannot simplify the application of Wordwall in another general subject. Although there are many supporting factors that hold the Wordwall platform, it does not rule out the possibility of shortcomings of this platform that hinder the implementation of the use of Wordwall learning media. The inhibiting factors for the application of Wordwall during learning include unstable internet network conditions, students who have not mastered technology, and devices that are less supportive. However, all these obstacles can slowly be overcome properly.

The learning media used by teachers should be in accordance with the material, learning objectives, simple media, and practical but appropriate, so it is effective and efficient. Students are expected to be more active in working on problems and should be done thoroughly. Researchers who are interested in studying issues relevant to this study are advised to use in-depth interviews related to the implementation of Wordwall learning media for teachers and students, as well as research in schools or universities that have good internet networks. Thus, Wordwall is able to be an effective learning platform for students to enhance their interest in learning English by presenting an interactive and fun experience.

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