

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language serves as the main tool for communication, therefore language is an important aspect for humans. Not only for communication, language also functions to convey ideas, feelings, and build social relationships. Halliday explained that language is a resource to build meaning, not just a set of grammars. This means that language provides freedom for its speakers to freely choose structures, words, and expressions that are in accordance with the purpose of the social context to be faced. Furthermore, Halliday said, the Systemic Functional Linguistics approach emphasizes that language has three main functions, including the ideative function or conveying experiences and ideas, then the most personal function, namely building social relationships, and the last is the textual function, which is organizing messages to be coherent.¹ In the context of education, language has a strategic role to support learning success for students, especially in mastering English.

One of the languages that has a great influence in the world of education and professionalism is English, this is because English is a language used as an international language and in various fields including academia and business. Currently have entered the digital era, where in the current era of globalization

¹ M. A. K. Halliday dan Christian M. I. M. Matthiessen, *Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar*, ed. ke-4 (London: Routledge, 2014)

the development of the times is getting more advanced, so that mastery of English is very important. This is because English is not only an important global communication tool, but also a medium in various fields including science, business, and technology. This is in line with a report from the British Council, namely that there are 1.5 billion people around the world who already use English, both as a primary and second language.² In line with the statement said by Zou et al., that in the context of education, mastery of foreign languages, especially English, is a crucial spec in increasing global competitiveness, and that good English proficiency is the key to opening up opportunities to access resources in knowledge, international and professional conversations.³ English as an international language has several important aspects that must be mastered by learners, as emphasized by Renandya & Widodo said, in learning English there are five main aspects of skills that must be mastered by students, namely listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar. Each of these aspects is interrelated to form a complete language ability. Based on these aspects, the researcher chose the grammar aspect in the focus of this research, due to the low interest and motivation of students during grammar learning. Therefore, it can be concluded that an innovative approach is urgently needed in English teaching, especially in the aspect of English Grammar. Especially in facing challenges in the era of increasingly complex

² British Council, *The Future of English: Global Perspectives* (2020), accessed from <https://www.britishcouncil.org> accessed on March 20, 2025

³ X. Huang, D. Zou, G. Cheng, dan H. Xie, "A Systematic Review of AR and VR Enhanced Language Learning," *Sustainability*, Vol. 13, No. 9 (2021): 4639.

globalization.⁴

In a variety of learning contexts, grammar are often considered a complicated and tedious aspect of the learning english, reducing interest in learning and resulting in suboptimal educational outcomes. Conventional teaching methods that focus on memorizing rules and repetitive exercises have been widely criticized for their lack of appeal and relevance to real needs. In response, researchers and education practitioners have explored innovative pedagogical strategies to present language rules in a more interactive, engaging, and contextual way. One of the breakthroughs implemented is language-based games, which are designed to strengthen the understanding of grammatical structures while developing practical learning, analytical skills, and social interaction. By responding to the integration of digital technology in education, online language games have opened up wider opportunities for learners to understand grammar concepts personally and flexibly. As the focus on a student-centered learning approach intensifies, there is a growing need for systematic studies through the review of the scientific literature to evaluate the real impact of the game on the acquisition of English language skills.⁵ This is in line with the study conducted by Richard and Renandya, it is said that monotonous English grammar learning, often triggers boredom when learning

⁴ Willy A. Renandya dan Handoyo P. Widodo, *English Language Teaching Today: Linking Theory and Practice* (Cham: Springer, 2016), hlm. 3–11..

⁵ R. N. Inayah, L. Febrianti, dan N. Tarihoran, “*The Role of Grammar Games in Enhancing English Language Skills: A Systematic Literature Review*,” *International Journal of Society Reviews* 2, no. 9 (2025): 1168–1187

takes place and causes low motivation for students in learning English.⁶ So it is not surprising that currently many students find it difficult when learning English, especially in the field of grammar, even though grammar is a crucial component in language mastery. At SMP Negeri 2 Cisoka Tangerang, this phenomenon has become increasingly relevant, considering the challenges faced by students in understanding grammar, which is often considered boring and difficult. According to Gibbons, when students are able to master grammar well, it will improve their English communication skills.⁷

The emergence of the internet in today's digital era has had a great impact on students, so that the internet in the current era is the main source of needs for students in getting information and entertainment. So that education undergoes significant transformation with the emergence of various technologies that support the teaching and learning process. The use of game-based internet technology plays a very important role in increasing students' interest and involvement in learning, especially English, in the field of grammar in today's era of technological sophistication. According to Hamari et al, game elements combined with learning methods can improve students' learning experience and make material that is difficult to understand will feel easier.⁸ The integration of digital devices is increasingly prevalent in learning

⁶ Jack C. Richards dan Willy A. Renandya, ed., *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁷ Paul Gibbons, *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning: Teaching Second Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2002).

⁸ J. Hamari, J. Koivisto, dan H. Sarsa, "Does Gamification Work? A Literature Review of Empirical Studies on Gamification," in *Proceedings of the 47th Hawaii International Conference on System*

English as a Foreign Language (EFL). One of them is the emergence of various learning platforms such as wordwalls. This is one of the innovations that attracts attention, namely the use of educational games such as wordwalls. Mishra & Koehle said that wordwalls are digital platforms based on interactive games to increase student engagement during learning.⁹ So with this, teachers can creatively create a variety of diverse learning methods and also create fun learning activities. . In line with what Novalia, et al. Learning will be more effective and interesting if you use wordwall media.¹⁰ Therefore, in this context, wordwalls can be an innovative solution in the use of educational games.

There are several research findings that show the effectiveness of using wordwalls in classrooms with different environments. As the findings made by Mazeline et al. emphasized that, when using the wordwall approach, it is proven that students are more interested and tend to be more involved in online class discussions and look more enthusiastic than using conventional learning methods.¹¹ In line with the research of Laily Wahyuni Ilahi et al., this study shows that the use of wordwalls is the right tool to make students more

Sciences (IEEE, 2014): 3025–3034.

⁹ Punya Mishra and Matthew J. Koehler, “Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A Framework for Teacher Knowledge,” *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 108, No. 6 (2006): 1017–1054.

¹⁰ I. P. P. Harefa, S. Titi, L. Hulu, dan L. Novalia, “Mengintegrasikan Teknologi dalam Perencanaan Pembelajaran: Meningkatkan Minat dan Prestasi Hasil Belajar,” *Jurnal Kajian dan Penelitian Umum*, Vol. 2, No. 6 (2024): 47–54.

¹¹ N. Mazelin, M. Maniam, S. S. B. Jeyaraja, M. M. Ng, Z. Xiaoqi, dan Z. Jingjing, “Using Wordwall to Improve Students’ Engagement in ESL Classroom,” *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, Vol. 12, No. 8 (2022):.

interested and increase motivation to learn English. So that the impact of students feels more positive, more active, and more interested when learning uses digital platforms such as wordwall. So, it is proven that wordwall is effective in improving the quality of English learning.¹²

Although various studies have shown the effectiveness of technology in language learning, there is still little that focuses on the effectiveness of wordwalls in improving students' English grammar understanding, there are still few studies that specifically discuss the effectiveness of Wordwall in improving the understanding of English grammar in depth such as mastery of tenses, understanding the structure of traditional grammar. Therefore, in this research, the researcher aims to explore the extent to which the effectiveness of wordwall can improve students' understanding of English grammar by using quantitative methods to measure its effectiveness based on students' understanding and involvement. Thus, the author hopes to produce a better experience, and provide new insights into how effective wordwalls are in improving students' understanding of English learning, especially in grammatical aspects. That way, the author hopes to fill the void in literature. The findings of this study will produce more concrete recommendations for educators, in finding the best way to optimize the use of wordwall as a more modern learning medium to improve the quality of English learning in

¹² Laily W. Ilahi, C. Komara, and Y. Ismail, "EFL Students' Perception of Wordwall.net Used as Media for Learning English Grammar," in *UICELL Conference Proceeding 2022*, disunting oleh Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. DR. HAMKA, hlm. 313–322).

grammatical aspects at SMP Negeri 2 Cisoka Tangerang.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the extent to which the effectiveness of the use of Wordwall can increase students' understanding of grammar in the aspects of tenses, reading skills, and mastery of traditional grammar structures in more depth. With this, the author hopes that this research can provide the latest insights to support the learning of Grammar in English which includes an in-depth understanding of grammar concepts and is not just limited to practice questions.

The results of this study are expected to fill the gap in previous research and can be a practical recommendation for educators in optimizing the use of Wordwall as a learning medium in the digital era to improve the quality of English grammar mastery at SMP Negeri 2 Cisoka Tangerang.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background that has been described, there are several problems that can be identified by the author including:

1. Students' difficulties in understanding English grammar understanding
2. Low students' motivation in learning English grammar due to monotonous learning methods
3. Lack of utilization of interactive digital media in learning English

C. Scope of The Study

This study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of the use of Wordwall in improving the understanding of Grammar in English in grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Cisoka Tangerang. The focus of this research is directed at primary grammar topics that are in accordance with the school curriculum, namely by utilizing Wordwall-based learning activities carried out in teaching and learning activities in the classroom.

The scope of this research includes the aspect of tenses, reading skills in understanding grammar, and mastery of grammar based on structure in grammar and traditional grammar. In addition, this study also assesses students' understanding through the provision of pre-tests and post-tests with a quantitative quasi-experiment approach.

This study is also limited to grade VII students at SMP Negeri 2 Cisoka Tangerang, and only focuses on aspects of reading skills related to grammar in English learning, and does not discuss other English skills such as listening, writing, and speaking in depth. In addition, the material taught is tenses and certain types of grammar structures.

D. Formulation of the Study

Based on the identification of the problems above, the formulations in this study is:

How the effectiveness of using Wordwall to improve the English

grammar of grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Cisoka Tangerang?

E. The Objective of the Study

To find out the effectiveness of using Wordwall to improve the English grammar of grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Cisoka Tangerang.

F. Significance of the Study

This research is important because it has important value both in terms of theory and practice. From the theoretical side, this research plays a role in enriching the literature regarding the use of digital gamification-based learning media in teaching English grammar, especially the utilization of Wordwall which is still rarely researched comprehensively with quantitative methods. Practically, the results of this study can help educators in determining media and learning strategies that are more interesting, interactive, and effective to improve students' understanding of grammar material which is often considered difficult and boring. In addition, this research can be a reference for schools and educational institutions in applying technology as part of 21st century learning that demands innovation and digital integration in the classroom. In the current era of technological advancement, this research becomes very relevant to find out the extent to which interactive media such as Wordwall is able to increase student participation, improve learning outcomes, and create a fun and productive learning atmosphere.