

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consists of the background of the study, research questions, research objectives, research significances, and definition of key terms.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Mastering vocabulary is a key component of learning English and serves as the foundation for other language abilities including speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Students will find it difficult to understand books, communicate ideas, and follow conversations if they lack a significant vocabulary. As a result, vocabulary becomes the main emphasis of English language instruction, particularly in English Young Learners (EFL). A comprehensive command of vocabulary is pivotal in English language learning, serving as a critical foundation for students to develop proficient communicative skills. In language instruction, humans utilize language to express the thoughts and emotions we go through. A language's vocabulary comprises its entire inventory of words and expressions used for communication. Communication is facilitated by terminology; without human lexicon, communication is challenging. A key component of learning a language is expanding one's vocabulary, which forms the basis for the development of linguistic abilities in both the receptive domain (listening, reading) and the productive domain (speaking, writing).

English language instruction for young learners encompasses the development of four fundamental skills: productive skills (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading). Learning language components supports the four abilities. They are spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, and structure. To cultivate pupils' Language proficiency in speaking, writing, listening, and reading requires some level of vocabulary. Learning English vocabulary is particularly crucial for elementary school pupils since it gives them the foundational language abilities they need for

future study. Vocabulary that is often given few priorities, programs in, language lessons and is often permitted by itself to only get a minimum in English textbooks (Mohammad, 2014).

However, learning language is sometimes fraught with difficulties, particularly in English Young Learners. This age group of kids has a short attention span and becomes bored rapidly if the teaching strategies aren't engaging. Additionally, some schools' lack of interactive learning materials and resources makes it difficult for children to improve their vocabulary.

As the cornerstone of successful communication in speaking, writing, listening, and reading, vocabulary education is an essential component of language learning. Interactive and multimodal approaches are necessary since traditional rote memory techniques frequently fail to engage learners. Studies have demonstrated that digital resources like Wordwall, which provide interesting, adaptable activities that accommodate various learning preferences, greatly improve vocabulary acquisition (Ghanizadeh & Razavi, 2022). It has been discovered that technology-assisted training, contextual teaching, and game-based learning increase student motivation and retention (Lin & Lin, 2019; Alqahtani, 2022). Notwithstanding the advantages, problems such restricted digital access and the requirement for teacher preparation still exist (Laufer & Waldman, 2021). Digital vocabulary training is a promising field for additional research and pedagogical innovation because resolving these difficulties is essential to maximizing its effectiveness.

English Club, as one of the non-formal English learning platforms, has a strategic role in improving students' English skills. In this context, innovative teaching strategies are needed to make learning more effective and fun. Astuti (2017) states that English Club is a learning community that aims to improve students' English language skills through flexible, relaxed and communicative learning. In addition, Nugroho (2019) defines English Club as a learning group that helps create a natural English-speaking

environment through various practical activities, allowing students to improve their communicative skills to the maximum.

English Club plays an important role in creating a friendly and communicative environment for learning. According to Mustikasari (2021), activities at English Club can help increase students' confidence in using English actively. In addition, English Club provides a space for students to learn without pressure, which can foster their desire to learn English. A group of people who get together on a regular basis to practice their English in a relaxed environment is called an English club, according to Hanim (2018). It is an extracurricular activity that may be taken either inside or outside of a formal educational setting and is designed to help members become more proficient in the English language. It is thought that the English club's activities and atmosphere help EFL students become more proficient in the language, especially when speaking. According to Wardatun (2020), English clubs provide a laid-back and enjoyable setting where participants can practice different English speaking strategies, pique students' interest in learning the language, and form new friendships and connections.

Additionally, because they offer a safe environment for people to get over their fear of making mistakes and actively engage in English-language conversations, English clubs can help members feel more motivated and confident. In addition to the benefits, studies have also suggested certain drawbacks with relation to the function of English clubs in English language acquisition. In her research, Sugara (2018) identified three drawbacks to English clubs. He specifically notes that members of English-speaking clubs frequently ignore what their friends are saying.

In addition, they are too bored to speak up and lack enthusiasm for the subjects or materials that the teachers have assigned. The obstacles that students have when trying to enhance their speaking skills through English group are influenced by the previously listed drawbacks of the group. This study examines the obstacles students believe stand in the way of their

speaking improvement through English club in order to better understand the phenomena.

In order to create content that meets the needs of the students, the teacher of vocabulary needs techniques, methods, and materials (Lelawati et al., 2018) pupils may become disinterested and lose motivation to learn if an English teacher of young pupils does not employ appropriate media in the classroom (Permana, 2020). Even in online learning environments, the instructor must locate educational materials that offer engaging and entertaining learning activities that can boost the motivation of young students.

Even in online learning environments, the instructor must locate educational materials with engaging and entertaining learning activities that can boost the motivation of young students. Wordwall is an educational platform that enables educators to design both interactive and printable learning activities tailored for their students. It provides a variety of game-based learning formats, such as quizzes, word searches, flashcards, matching games, and more, making lessons more engaging. Wordwall is a fun and interactive approach for students to engage with vocabulary, grammar, and other disciplines. It may be used both online and offline. Instructors can monitor student progress and tailor activities to their course objectives. Wordwall is one useful learning tool that teachers of young learners can utilize to increase their students' enthusiasm for vocabulary acquisition. According to Usipa (2020), Wordwall can be utilized to facilitate vocabulary learning for young learners by providing interactive activities through various game-based templates. Wordwall provides various interactive templates with multiple game formats including matching, quizzes, missing words, word searches, anagrams, and maze-chase activities which can be utilized to enhance student engagement in the learning process.

English young learners, typically defined as children in the early stages of language acquisition, require specialized teaching methods to

facilitate effective language learning. Their cognitive, social, and emotional development plays a crucial role in shaping their ability to acquire vocabulary and language structures. Research suggests that young learners acquire language more effectively through interactive, play-based, and multimodal approaches that engage multiple senses and learning styles (Ghanizadeh & Razavi, 2022).

It has been discovered that traditional rote memorizing techniques are less successful at maintaining the motivation and interest of young students. Rather, a viable strategy is technology-enhanced language training, especially with the use of digital resources like Wordwall. Customized learning experiences offered by digital platforms increase the accessibility and engagement of vocabulary acquisition (Lin & Lin, 2019). For young learners, game-based learning, storytelling, and contextual teaching are especially successful methods that promote vocabulary retention over the long term and deeper comprehension (Alqahtani, 2022). Notwithstanding the benefits of digital learning resources, issues still exist, such as unequal access to technology and the requirement for teacher preparation to use these tactics successfully (Laufer & Waldman, 2021). To fully utilize digital vocabulary training for young English language learners, several obstacles must be removed. With an emphasis on interactive and technologically advanced techniques to improve language learning and engagement, this project attempts to investigate novel approaches to teaching vocabulary to young students.

The use of technology in English language learning has altered traditional teaching methods, making classes more interactive and interesting for young learners. Wordwall is one such digital tool that has become well-known due to its capacity to offer personalized, game-based learning experiences that improve vocabulary retention and acquisition. Interactive and multimodal techniques that address the cognitive, social, and emotional requirements of young English learners who are usually in the

early phases of language development are beneficial (Ghanizadeh & Razavi, 2022).

Since traditional rote memorizing techniques frequently don't keep kids motivated, teachers are looking for more interesting and successful alternatives. According to research, Wordwall and other digital platforms boost learning by offering individualized learning experiences, interactive exercises, and real-time feedback that increases student engagement and retention (Lin & Lin, 2019). Wordwall creates an engaging learning environment that promotes language development through a variety of activities like word searches, quizzes, and matching games (Alqahtani, 2022). Additionally, it has been demonstrated that contextual learning techniques aided by digital tools improve students' comprehension and vocabulary retention over the long term (Webb & Nation, 2017). With an emphasis on vocabulary acquisition, student engagement, and retention, this study attempts to investigate how well Wordwall can improve vocabulary young learners' English language skills.

The title of this research was chosen because vocabulary mastery is a key component in English learning, which is the foundation for other language skills such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening. However, vocabulary learning in elementary school students often experiences limitations in methods and media, making it less interesting for students, especially young English learners who have a short attention span. The use of digital media such as Wordwall offers an innovative solution to enhance students' vocabulary mastery by providing interactive, enjoyable, and customizable game-based learning activities tailored to students' needs. This research is relevant to expand the study of the use of Wordwall in vocabulary learning for young English learners as an effort to address the challenges of limited interactive learning media that teachers have faced. In addition, this research is expected to provide practical contributions for teachers in optimizing vocabulary learning using digital technology so as to

increase student motivation and vocabulary retention in a sustainable manner.

The research location was chosen based on several considerations. First, the school organizes English Club activities as a forum for informal English learning that allows for the flexible application of Wordwall with a communicative and fun approach. Second, there is a need to strengthen students' vocabulary to support their English language skills, both spoken and written. Third, the school location had digital learning support facilities such as internet connection and devices that enabled the use of Wordwall as a learning medium. Fourth, the students at the school showed enthusiasm in participating in English Club activities, making it easier for researchers to observe the effectiveness of Wordwall on their vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the research location was chosen because it suited the research needs, supported the successful implementation of Wordwall media, and had the potential to produce results that could be used as recommendations for the development of vocabulary learning more broadly.

Although a lot of research shows that Wordwall is good at increasing motivation and vocabulary retention (Ghanizadeh & Razavi, 2022; Lin & Lin, 2019; Alqahtani, 2022), research on using Wordwall for learning vocabulary in English Club activities at the elementary school level is still very limited. Therefore, this study is important to fill this gap and provide practical contributions for teachers in optimizing vocabulary learning using digital media in English Club.

## **B. Research Questions**

The researcher formulated the research problem as follows:

1. How are the strategy used by the instructor in teaching vocabulary through Wordwall?
2. How are the strategy applied in the class during teaching vocabulary in English Club?

3. What are the perceptions of students regarding the effectiveness of Wordwall as a vocabulary learning tool in English club settings?

### **C. Research Objectives**

This research has several objectives, they are:

1. To identify and analyze the strategy used by instructor in teaching vocabulary through Wordwall.
2. To explore the application of vocabulary teaching strategy carried out in the classroom during English Club activities
3. To examine the perceptions of students regarding the effectiveness of Wordwall as a vocabulary learning tool in English club settings.

### **D. Research Significances**

There are several uses that the researcher wants to provide from this research:

1. For Teachers: This study provides insights into the effectiveness of Wordwall as a vocabulary teaching tool, offering practical strategies to enhance young learners' engagement and learning outcomes.
2. For Students: The research highlights the benefits of interactive, game-based learning, helping students develop their vocabulary skills in a fun and engaging way.
3. For Educational Institutions: Findings from this study can inform curriculum development and encourage the integration of digital learning tools like Wordwall to support English language education.
4. For Future Researchers: This study serves as a reference for further research on the use of digital tools in language learning,

contributing to the growing body of literature on technology-enhanced education.

## **E. Definition of Key Terms**

There are some operational definitions of the key words in the study:

1. Wordwall: A digital educational tool that allows teachers to create interactive games and activities for students, helping them engage in vocabulary learning through various exercises such as quizzes, matching games, and word searches.
2. Teaching Vocabulary: The process of helping students learn, understand, and use new words in context, which includes selecting appropriate vocabulary, using effective instructional strategies, and applying engaging media or tools to enhance word retention and comprehension.
3. English Club: A school-based extracurricular program designed to enhance students' English language skills in a more relaxed and engaging environment. It provides opportunities for learners to practice English communication through fun and meaningful activities beyond the regular classroom setting.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

This chapter consists of the conclusion and suggestions based on the research findings.

#### **A. Conclusion**

Based on the research conducted on vocabulary teaching strategy using Wordwall in the English Club at SD Negeri 2 Barabai Timur, several conclusions can be drawn. First, the instructor employed six main strategy in teaching vocabulary to English Club students using Wordwall. These strategy include contextual introduction, which involves presenting vocabulary through meaningful sentences or real-life situations relevant to the students' lives; repetition, which is done by repeating words in various forms of exercises to help students remember and understand more deeply; visualization, which involves using images or symbols to clarify word meanings; game-based learning, which utilizes interactive game features on Wordwall such as "Matching," "Open the Box," and "Jumble Words" to engage students; categorization/grouping, which organizes vocabulary based on specific themes (such as animals, colors, classroom objects, etc.); and formative assessment, which uses Wordwall as an evaluation tool to gauge students' understanding of the vocabulary taught. The application of these strategy was carried out systematically and interactively, demonstrating that Wordwall serves not only as a learning medium but also as an assessment tool and a source of motivation for students.

Second, the strategy implemented by the instructor were applied in a fun and participatory learning environment. The instructor actively combined contextual approaches with interactive games tailored to the age and characteristics of the students. This implementation proved effective in enhancing student engagement, both individually and in groups. Additionally, the instructor was able to manage the learning activities well

through material planning, execution of Wordwall activities, and evaluation of learning outcomes.

Third, the questionnaire results distributed to 16 English Club students indicated that the majority of students had a very positive perception of using Wordwall. Most students felt more motivated, active, and confident when learning vocabulary with Wordwall. They stated that Wordwall made learning more enjoyable, facilitated vocabulary comprehension, and increased their willingness to participate in class. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of Wordwall in vocabulary teaching in the English Club is effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery, engagement in learning, and creating a positive and interactive learning environment.

## **B. Suggestion**

Based on the research findings and conclusions presented, several suggestions are offered. First, for teachers, it is recommended to continue developing creativity in designing innovative and enjoyable vocabulary teaching strategy, such as through the use of Wordwall. The combination of contextual, visual, and game-based strategy has proven effective in enhancing student motivation and learning outcomes. Teachers should also conduct regular reflections on the learning process to improve the effectiveness of digital media usage. Second, for students, it is hoped that they will be more active in participating in English Club activities and utilize Wordwall not only as a learning tool in class but also as a self-learning resource at home. With active involvement, students will be able to significantly improve their vocabulary mastery and build confidence in using English. Third, for schools, it is essential to support extracurricular activities like the English Club, particularly by providing adequate technological facilities (such as projectors, computers, and internet access) to support the use of digital learning media.

Additionally, training for teachers in using interactive media like Wordwall is also important to optimize its utilization. Lastly, for future researchers, this study has limitation regarding the number of subjects and the scope limited to one school and one type of learning media. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to conduct comparative studies between Wordwall and other digital media or expand the research focus to other language skills such as speaking, reading, or grammar. Long-term studies to assess the impact of Wordwall on students' academic performance are also highly recommended.

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