

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Study

English teaching in Indonesia has been shaped by rapid technological growth. Teachers are expected to use technology effectively to improve learning results. They need the ability to integrate digital tools into classroom instruction and guide students in developing the four main language skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. With easy access to modern devices, today's students expect learning experiences that are not only informative, but also interactive, visually engaging, and web based. This situation encourages teachers to integrate innovative digital learning media in order to improve the quality and relevance of the teaching and learning process. However, many instructional materials currently used in classrooms still rely on conventional text based presentation, which often fails to motivate students and does not fully meet the learning demands of the twenty first century.

In line with these developments, English language teaching in Indonesia has also been strongly influenced by technological advancement. Teachers are required to use technology effectively to enhance learning outcomes. In addition, teachers are expected to integrate various forms of technology to support students in mastering the four English language skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Among these skills, writing plays a crucial role in modern education. Writing supports critical thinking, analysis, and information synthesis, and allows students to demonstrate their understanding of learning content (Scott et al., 2020).

Writing functions not only as a means of expressing ideas and information, but also as an indicator of students' ability to think critically, organize ideas, and apply language structures accurately.

Brown (2001) as cited in Luluk (2024) explains that writing involves the process of transferring ideas into written form, presenting main ideas, and constructing texts with clear structure and logical organization. This view indicates that writing is not limited to idea generation, but also requires the ability to develop ideas into connected sentences and coherent paragraphs. In the same view, Nunan (2003), as cited in Sari and Fahri (2016), emphasizes that writing is not simply arranging words into paragraphs or essays, but a complex process that involves multiple language elements. To produce effective written texts, writers must have sufficient mastery of grammar, vocabulary, and other written language components. This explanation shows that students need strong linguistic competence as well as the ability to organize ideas so that their writing becomes clear, logical, and easy to understand. With these skills, students can communicate their thoughts, opinions, and perspectives more effectively through written language. Furthermore, Harmer (2004) states that writing helps students become more careful in selecting and using words appropriately. During the writing process, students must pay close attention to language choices, sentence structure, and accuracy. The linguistic challenges encountered in writing activities can support language development and improve overall language proficiency.

At the junior high school level, students are introduced to various text types as part of developing their writing ability. These text types include procedure, recount, descriptive, report, and narrative texts. Each text type has its own purpose,

structure, and language features. Learning these genres helps students understand how to express ideas in different written forms. Among these text types, descriptive text is one of the most important genres that students need to master because it forms the foundation for describing people, objects, places, and animals clearly. Descriptive text plays a key role in helping students develop detailed and accurate writing. Zaharani (2022) as cited in Faisal and Rahmawati (2023) states that descriptive text is a paragraph made up of related sentences that focus on a single descriptive purpose. The main function of this text is to describe the appearance, behavior, condition, or characteristics of a person, place, or object.

Through descriptive writing, students learn how to observe details and express them in an organized way. This skill supports students in improving vocabulary use and sentence development. In writing descriptive texts, students must have clear ideas and sufficient vocabulary to express meaning effectively. Emilia (2011) as cited in Ratu explains that descriptive text aims to provide information about a person, object, or phenomenon. In descriptive writing, the writer describes physical features, settings, and characteristics in a natural and logical manner so that readers can form a clear picture in their minds. This explanation shows that descriptive writing requires careful word choice and logical organization of ideas.

Based on preliminary observation conducted with seventh-grade students at UPT SMPN 13 Medan, it was found that the teaching of descriptive text, especially describing objects, still relies on limited learning media. Teachers often use pictures or real objects as the learning media for descriptive writing activities. While this method helps students identify the physical characteristics of objects, it often leads

them to focus only on visible features, such as shape, size, and color. As a result, students rarely describe other important aspects, such as the object's function, material, or unique characteristics. This situation indicates that students do not fully understand the scope of descriptive text. Therefore, students need more varied and interactive learning media to help them understand descriptive text more comprehensively. Appropriate media can guide students to explore different descriptive aspects and support them in organizing ideas more clearly. With suitable learning tools, students can improve their ability to write descriptive texts that are detailed, coherent, and meaningful.

Based on the observation and percentage of questionnaires filled out by students at SMPN 13 Medan, the researcher found that 93,75% of the students from class VII-1 prefer media provided in an interesting form, such as interactive games.

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Figure 1.1 Questionnaire

Kurikulum Merdeka is based on competency oriented learning and constructivist principles. Kemendikbudristek (2022), states that this curriculum allows teachers to design learning activities according to students' abilities and learning needs. The main focus is on developing competencies rather than delivering content. Students are expected to be active learners, show independence,

and engage directly in learning tasks. In line with this approach, the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes student centered learning and encourages the use of digital learning media to support learning outcomes. Teachers are required to create learning activities that involve students actively and integrate technology to strengthen understanding and skill development. However, classroom realities often do not reflect these expectations. English teaching still relies largely on textbooks and teacher explanations, while digital tools remain underused. This condition lowers student participation and weakens learning effectiveness. Therefore, technology based learning is necessary to align classroom practice with curriculum objectives. Interactive digital media can create more meaningful learning experiences and support students in developing English language skills effectively.

In teaching English as a foreign language, learning media plays a vital role in supporting effective instruction. Learning media includes all tangible tools used to deliver learning messages and stimulate students' interest and participation. These tools help teachers present material more clearly and help students understand content more easily. Effective learning media improves communication between teachers and students and supports the learning objectives. Susilana and Riyana (2009) explain that learning media can increase students' creativity during the learning process. When teachers use appropriate media, students become more active and involved in learning activities. Media allows students to explore new information, experience different learning situations, and develop a deeper understanding of the material.

This condition supports meaningful learning rather than rote memorization. In recent years, interactive learning media has gained strong attention in educational

research, especially in language learning. Studies by Afrilyasanti et al. (2023), Cahya et al. (2020), and Widodo et al. (2023) show that interactive media can improve student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. Interactive media encourages students to respond, think, and practice language skills directly. In English learning, this type of media helps students practice vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills in a more structured and engaging way. Therefore, the use of interactive learning media is essential to support effective English language teaching and to meet the learning needs of students in the digital era.

The use of varied learning media enables teachers to create active and interactive learning environments that improve students' learning experiences (Mulyadi et al., 2020). Diverse media helps maintain students' attention and supports better understanding of learning materials. In the digital era, teachers need to design innovative learning media that aligns with students' learning habits and technological exposure. Well designed digital media can increase student engagement and support long term retention of learning content. Among current instructional strategies, game-based learning has shown strong effectiveness in sustaining active student participation (Rahma and Nurhayati, 2021). Learning activities that include game elements encourage students to participate, respond, and stay focused during lessons.

In response to these problems, the researcher considers it necessary to create a solution through the development of an innovative and interactive web-based learning media that integrates gamification features in writing instruction. Wordwall is selected as the teaching medium to support seventh grade students in learning and practicing descriptive text writing.

Game based learning is an instructional approach that can effectively capture students' attention during the learning process. This approach integrates learning objectives into game activities, making students more willing to participate. Rodríguez et al. (2023) explain that game based learning uses intrinsic motivation elements, such as challenge and curiosity, to encourage students to practice targeted skills. As a result, students engage in learning because they feel interested, not forced. Jääskä et al. (2022) state that game based learning increases student motivation, emotional engagement, and enjoyment. When students enjoy the learning activity, they tend to stay focused and show positive learning attitudes. Emotional involvement also helps students feel more confident, which supports better understanding and skill development, especially in language learning contexts.

In addition, game based learning media are designed to support cognitive growth. Andini et al. (2023) note that educational games help improve concentration, thinking ability, and problem solving skills. Through game tasks, students actively process information, make decisions, and solve problems. These activities support deeper learning and skill practice. Web based learning also responds to the demands of 21st century education that emphasize technology use (Ramadannisa and Hartina, 2021). Digital platforms provide interactive content, flexible access, and immediate feedback. These features support active and independent learning. However, low student motivation often appears when teachers lack innovation in teaching methods. This condition can lead to poor learning outcomes. To address this issue, teachers need to develop learning resources that use digital technology, such as web based and game based media.

These media can increase student engagement and support improved learning outcome

Wordwall is a digital learning platform that provides interactive and educational game activities that can be accessed through web browsers (Fakhruddin et al., 2021). The platform is designed to support active learning by combining instructional content with game elements. This design helps students stay focused and engaged during learning activities. Wordwall can be used both in the classroom and for independent practice, which makes it suitable for various learning situations. Wordwall provides strong instructional flexibility for teachers. Harmon et al. (2009) and Safitri et al. (2022) state that the platform enables educators to design and modify learning games that align with specific learning goals. Teachers can adapt the content, set difficulty levels, and choose question formats based on students' learning needs. This flexibility allows teachers to apply differentiated instruction and respond to varied student abilities in the classroom. Through interactive activities, students engage with language tasks more actively and practice skills in a meaningful context.

Furthermore, Arimbawa (2021) explains that Wordwall offers ready to use game templates that simplify the creation of interactive learning materials. These templates help teachers save preparation time without reducing instructional quality. As a result, teachers can focus more on lesson delivery and student interaction instead of technical design issues. The interactive features of Wordwall also promote active participation and provide immediate feedback, which helps students identify mistakes and improve understanding. Therefore, Wordwall functions as an effective digital learning tool that supports engaging, goal oriented,

and efficient English language instruction. By integrating Wordwall into classroom practice, teachers can support the development of students' writing skills, strengthen communication abilities, and prepare students to learn effectively in a digital learning environment (Nenohai et al., 2022).

Based on the learning needs identified, the development of interactive digital learning media through Wordwall for teaching descriptive text writing is viewed as a relevant and strategic innovation at UPT SMP Negeri 13 Medan. This media responds to students' learning characteristics and supports more active involvement in the writing process. By using interactive tasks and game based formats, Wordwall can attract students' attention and sustain their interest during writing activities. Higher engagement allows students to participate more actively and reduces reluctance to write. Wordwall also helps students understand the structure and language features of descriptive texts in a clearer and more concrete way. Through guided questions, matching activities, and quizzes, students can identify text organization, vocabulary use, and grammatical patterns step by step. This structured practice supports students in organizing ideas logically and expressing descriptions more accurately in written form. The web based format allows repeated practice, which strengthens writing accuracy and confidence.

Based on the discussion above, this study emphasizes the need for innovative and interactive learning media to enhance students' ability to write descriptive texts. Many students still encounter difficulties when learning relies primarily on conventional approaches, such as printed textbooks and teacher centered instruction. This learning pattern often limits student engagement and provides insufficient practice in organizing ideas through writing. Digital learning

platforms such as Wordwall offer a practical alternative to address these challenges. Through Wordwall, teachers can create interactive writing activities that integrate game based and web based learning. These activities support vocabulary development, idea exploration, and sentence construction. As a result, students are encouraged to participate actively and develop written descriptions in a more structured and meaningful way. This media development seeks to link conceptual understanding with writing practice. Interactive tasks help simplify complex writing concepts and make them easier for junior high school students to understand. Consequently, students can improve writing accuracy, build confidence, and produce more effective descriptive texts.

1.2. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the problem of the study is formulated as follows: “How is wordwall develop for teaching writing of descriptive text for EFL junior high school students”?

1.3. The Objective of the Study

Based on the problem of the study above, the objective of the study in this research is to develop wordwall for teaching writing of descriptive text for EFL junior high school students.

1.4. The Scope of the Study

This research concentrates on the development of web based interactive learning media using Wordwall for teaching writing of descriptive text for EFL

junior high school students. The main goal of the study is to improve students' writing ability by providing learning activities that are interactive, structured, and engaging. The media is designed in the form of Wordwall games and online tasks that help students generate ideas, select suitable vocabulary, and construct clear sentences in descriptive writing. The development of this media is based on a needs analysis to ensure alignment with students' learning needs and writing challenges. The scope of the media is limited to teaching descriptive text writing, specifically in describing objects, and does not include other text genres. This research was carried out with seventh grade students of UPT SMP Negeri 13 Medan in the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

1.5. The Significances of the Study

The results of this research are expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits as follows:

1. Theoretically, this study can offer insights, references, and guidance on how to develop web based interactive learning media using Wordwall for teaching descriptive text writing in Junior High School. It can serve as a reference for educators and researchers who want to enhance writing instruction through digital and interactive approaches.
2. Practically, the final product of this research is web based interactive learning media using Wordwall for teaching descriptive text writing. This media can be used as a learning resource for seventh-grade students of UPT SMP Negeri 13 Medan, designed to increase their motivation and engagement in writing activities. In addition, it provides teachers with an

effective tool to support students in organizing ideas, improving vocabulary, and developing writing skills, helping them achieve the objectives of the teaching and learning process



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