

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

In today's digital era, the integration of technology in education has become an essential element in modern learning. According to Irmayanti et al. (2022), technology makes it easier for educators to design interactive and engaging learning experiences that suit students' interests and learning styles.

In Indonesia, schools are also beginning to implement digital platforms to support classroom learning, particularly in English language teaching, which many students still find challenging. The use of technology is expected not only to improve students' comprehension but also to enhance their motivation and interest in the learning process. However, the success of these tools depends on how effectively they are applied in the classroom.

One of the widely used digital learning platforms today is Wordwall, an online application that allows teachers to create interactive and game-based activities such as quizzes, matching tasks, and puzzles. Wordwall provides a fun learning atmosphere, in line with Mayer's (2001) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which states that students learn better when lessons include visual and interactive elements.

MTs Negeri Batu Bara has started in integrating technology to increase students' interest in learning English, there are still challenges where some students tend to be passive in following the learning process. This condition shows a gap that requires further research to understand the effectiveness of

technology implementation in depth in activating students' interest. According to Gardner (1985), students' interest in language learning is strongly influenced by motivation, teaching methods, and learning media. If students are only exposed to monotonous teaching methods, then their enthusiasm for learning will naturally decrease.

To overcome this problem, the use of interactive learning media is necessary to increase students' interest in learning English. One promising digital learning tool is Wordwall, an online platform that allows educators to create engaging game-based activities such as quizzes, matching exercises and interactive puzzles. Wordwall offers a fun learning experience, in line with Mayer's (2001) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which states that students learn better when exposed to visual and interactive elements. In addition, research by Safitri et al. (2022) shows that game-based learning environments, such as Wordwall, increase student motivation and participation, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective.

Currently, MTs Negeri Batu Bara has started to integrate technology, namely *Wordwall* especially in English teaching, which makes students more interested and motivated to participate in class activities. Many students have become more confident in speaking, participating in the learning process, responding to teachers' questions, and showing enthusiasm in discussions. However, some students are still passive in the learning process. This research gap is important, as there is still little focus given to how Wordwall specifically activates students' interest in learning in English, especially in contexts where

this tool has been introduced. At MTs Negeri Batu Bara, Wordwall has been used in English classes, but the extent to which this medium affects students' learning interest remains unclear. Therefore, this study aims to describe how Wordwall functions not only as a digital tool, but also as a medium that can activate interest in learning English in depth.

Previous studies by Mahwar Alfian Nisa and Ratnawati Susanto (2022), in their study *The Effect of Using Word Wall-Based Educational Games in Mathematics Learning on Learning Motivations* shows the hypothesis results obtained based on partial testing (t-test) were $11.796 (t_{hitung}) > 2.045 (t_{tabel})$ with a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$. These results indicate that H_1 is accepted and H_0 is rejected, indicating a positive and significant effect between the Wordwall-based educational game on learning motivation in mathematics for fifth-grade C students at SDN Kapuk Muara 03.

Gandasari and Pramudiani (2021), in their study *The Influence of Wordwall Applications on Students' Science Learning Motivation in Elementary Schools* stated that the use of Wordwall application has a significant effect on understanding learning materials. Their research results show that learning media has an impact on student learning motivation.

This research is also supported by Nissa & Renoningtyas (2021), in their study *The Use of Wordwall Learning Media to Increase Student Interest and Motivation in Thematic Learning in Elementary Schools* who stated that the use of Wordwall media can make a major contribution to thematic learning in the classroom, especially in terms of student interest and learning motivation. This means that Wordwall learning media has advantages in fostering students' interest and enthusiasm for learning.

The initial observation at MTs Negeri Batu Bara showed that students were more interested when teacher teaches English lessons used interactive methods

compared to monotonous methods. This was evident when I asked about their preferred learning methods, and some students expressed a strong preference for game-based activities that make lessons more interesting and fun. And some of students still passive. For example, one student stated, *“When the teacher uses Wordwall, sometimes I participate, but sometimes I just watch my friends play the game.”* This response illustrates that while Wordwall can stimulate enthusiasm, it does not consistently activate students’ interest across all learners.

This condition reflects the problem highlighted in the background of this study, namely that some students tend to be passive in following the learning process. Such findings strengthen the need to analyze how Wordwall can be optimized to encourage active participation and maintain students’ interest in English learning. Therefore, this research aims to describe and analyze the use of Wordwall and to see students’ responses toward its use, in order to provide a deeper understanding of its role as a medium to activate students’ interest in learning English at MTs Negeri Batu Bara.

B. Research Problems

Based on the background of the study, the problem formulations in this study are:

1. How is the use of Wordwall as media to activate students' interest in learning English at MTs Negeri Batu Bara?
2. What are the students’ responses toward the use of wordwall in learning English?

C. Research Objectives

1. To analyze the use of Wordwall as an interactive learning media can activate students' interest in learning English at MTs Negeri Batu Bara.
2. To describe students' response toward the use of Wordwall in English learning.

D. Scope of Study

According to Akanle et al. (2020), the scope of research is an important part of research that defines the boundaries within which a study is conducted. The scope of the study includes the research area, questions, objectives, population, and timeframe of the study. The scope helps to ensure that the study remains focused, manageable, and aligned with available resources.

Based on the research questions outlined above, this study is limited to analyze the use of Wordwall as a learning media for students at MTs Negeri Batu Bara, particularly in activating students' interest in learning and to describe students' responses toward using wordwall in English learning.

E. Significances of Research

According to Creswell (2014), research significance refers to the value and contribution that a research project offers to various stakeholders, including researchers, policy makers, practitioners, and the wider community.

1. Theoretical Significances

- a) This research contributes to the use of interactive technology in English language learning.
- b) It also enriches the literature on Wordwall as a digital learning tool that supports material delivery. This research provides insight into the role of technology in activating students' learning interest in the English language learning process.

2. Practical Significance

- a. For educators, this research offers practical guidance in integrating Wordwall into classroom learning practices to create a more engaging and dynamic learning environment.
- b. For students, this study helps reduce barriers to participation by providing a platform that encourages motivation and student participation.
- c. For other researchers, this study can be a useful reference for further exploration of technology integration in English language learning