



Wordwall as English for Young Learner Instructional Material to Augment Motivation

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Abstract

In the 21st century, the necessity of innovative teaching materials has become increasingly apparent to foster students' learning motivation. Teaching English to young learners poses a significant challenge, and educators must employ technology to create engaging instructional materials to cater to the needs of the alpha generation. Wordwall is a digital application that offers a variety of quizzes and games that teachers can utilize to enhance the teaching and learning process. The primary objective of this study was to augment the learning motivation of students enrolled in private tutoring centers. A qualitative approach was adopted in this investigation, with observation, questionnaire, and interviews serving as supplementary methods. The findings revealed that students' perceptions shifted after exposure to Wordwall-based instruction. The findings further suggested that integrating Wordwall could enhance students' learning motivation while reducing boredom and saturation during the learning process. Consequently, it holds the potential to alleviate student ennui and monotony. Moreover, the utilization of Wordwall has been observed to positively impact students' motivation to learn, making it one of the user-friendly interactive media that can augment students' motivation to learn English in the classroom.

Keywords: *Wordwall, Instructional material, Motivation*

1. Introduction

In an era where English proficiency is becoming increasingly important, the importance of effective English language teaching from an early age cannot be overstated. As global communication and opportunities for international collaboration continue to grow, so does the demand for English language skills. Learning English can give a chance to the students for communicating with others from different backgrounds (Arikan, 2015). At this point, education is the pawn, and it also becomes one of the most important parts of constructing a powerful nation (Lesia et al., 2021). It is therefore very important to develop a strong foundation in the language from an early age. Starting with the most basic level of schooling in Indonesia is elementary school. Teaching students in elementary schools differs from teaching adults due to their distinct motivations and characteristics. In the following disciplines, young children learn differently from teenagers and adults. They exhibit enthusiasm for learning and curiosity about the world around them, respond to meaning even when they do not understand individual words, learn indirectly from their environment, explore through touch and interaction, respond when their lives become the primary topic in class, talk about themselves, and respond when their lives become the main topic in class. They have a limited attention span and lose interest after approximately 10 minutes unless the activity is truly enjoyable, in which case they lose interest (Harmer, 2003).

However, the process of teaching English to young learners is full of challenges, especially when it comes to keeping them engaged and motivated. The main challenge in teaching English to young learners lies in maintaining their motivation throughout the learning process. Children are naturally curious and eager to learn, but their attention span is limited, and they need stimulating and fun learning experiences. Cameron, (2003) highlights several distinct characteristics of young learners: they tend to be more enthusiastic and energetic in their learning, often eager to please the teacher rather than their peers. Children are generally willing to engage in activities even when they do not fully grasp the purpose or process. However, they also tend to lose interest quickly and may struggle to maintain motivation when faced with challenging tasks. Traditional text-heavy materials often fail to capture their interest, leading to disinterest and reduced motivation. This lack of motivation can significantly hinder their language acquisition, as motivation is a key driver of success in learning a second language.

Furthermore, in classrooms where English is taught as a foreign language, the lack of exposure to authentic language use outside the classroom exacerbates this problem, making it all the more important to find effective ways to engage young learners. Children have a natural inclination towards enjoyment and play, hence teachers should select appropriate instructional approaches that align with children's inherent tendencies (Bakhsh, 2016). To address this challenge, educators are increasingly turning to digital tools that offer an interactive and engaging learning experience. Communication media, such as the telephone, computer, internet, e-mail, and so forth, can be utilized to create learning media. Internet-based learning media on the web is one form of e-learning that educational institutions have widely developed in this era. It is anticipated that Internet technology, which is flexible, interactive, and time-unrestricted, will be among the most effective learning resources.

In reality, however, technology as a learning tool in the classroom is still limited (Arimbawa, 2021). Selecting the appropriate media is a factor that contributes to learning success. Consequently, the media plays a crucial function in educational dissemination (Syamsidar et al., 2023). One such learning medium is Wordwall, an online platform that allows teachers to create and customize a variety of interactive activities, including quizzes, games and matching exercises. Wordwall's versatility and ease of use make it an attractive option for educators looking to enhance learning materials and increase student motivation. The interactive nature of the platform, combined with its ability to provide immediate feedback, aligns with contemporary educational theories that emphasize the importance of active learning and engagement in the classroom.

Wordwall is an online-based learning media widely studied for its potential to increase student motivation and learning outcomes. For instance, research from Nurmelati (2023), focused on applying Wordwall in a vocational high school setting, especially for students in grade X in a motorcycle business engineering program. This research uses inductive analysis of documentation and observation data. Another researcher Shofiya Launin et al., (2022) examined the influence of Wordwall on students in grade IX for interest in learning. The other researcher, Arafah & Ahmad, (2020), investigated the effectiveness of Wordwall in enhancing vocabulary acquisition for secondary-level students through observation sheets and vocabulary tests.

While these studies demonstrate the benefits of Wordwall in fostering motivation and learning outcomes, they primarily focus on learners aged twelve and above. Research on Wordwall for young learners, particularly in English for Young Learners (EYL) contexts, remains limited. Young learners have distinct motivational needs and learning characteristics that differ significantly from older students, necessitating tailored instructional approaches and tools. This study addresses this gap by exploring how Wordwall can be utilized as an instructional material to augment motivation among young learners in EYL contexts. By focusing on this younger demographic, the research seeks to provide insights into the influence of Wordwall for early language development and its role in fostering enthusiasm for learning at an early stage who are six to twelve years old student.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative research is used to narrate the results of the activities that have been carried out. The researcher used observation, interview, and questionnaire as instruments. First, the observation activities are carried out in the form of note-taking and documentation on students. Then, it was carried out by distributing questionnaires to students. The questionnaire consisted of 11 closed questions. Closed questions require respondents to answer by selecting alternative answers that are already available in the questionnaire. The questions were adapted and developed from instruments submitted by Khudhair (2016); Mahmoud & Tanni (2014). The researcher interviewed to strengthen the data that had been obtained. This research was conducted in a private tutoring center in Magelang. The study focused on vulnerable students between the ages of six to twelve. The study involved 32 students, which consisted of 15 girls and 17 boys.

3. Results

This section presents the results of the research conducted to explore the impact of Wordwall as an instructional tool for young learners. The findings are derived from a combination of observational data, questionnaire responses, and interviews.

The observation data collected during this study revealed several significant insights into the use of Wordwall as a teaching tool. The observations were conducted in a private tutoring center in Magelang involving 32 students. The key findings from the observation include. First, increased engagement. Students demonstrated heightened engagement during learning activities by using Wordwall. The interactive and gamified nature of the platform captured their attention and maintained their focus.

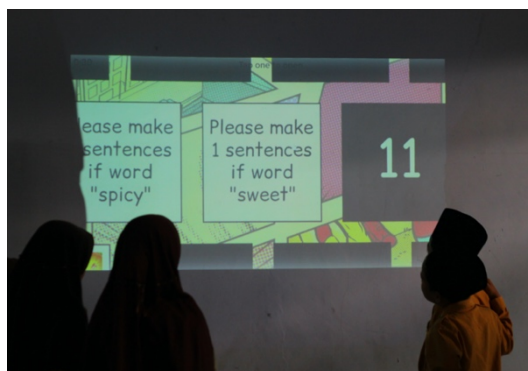


Figure 1. Students' interest in the Wordwall

The second is Active Participation. During Wordwall-based activities, students were more active in responding to questions, completing tasks, and interacting with their peers and teachers. This was particularly evident in activities that involved quizzes and matching games, where students exhibited enthusiasm and competitiveness.

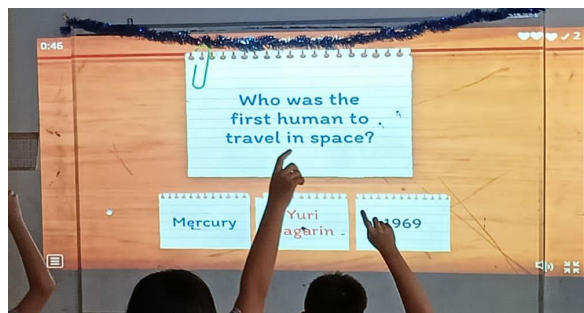


Figure 1. Students exhibited enthusiasm and competitiveness

The observation results are also in line with the results of the questionnaires that have been given. The following are the results of the questionnaire.

Table 1. Results of learning motivation items in the survey

No.	Learning Motivation Item (p)	SD	D	A	SA
	Learning English with word wall is fun	0%	3.1%	12.5%	84.4%
	English course is so difficult	33.4%	9.4%	12.5%	43.8%
	I feel bored to have class almost every day	34.4%	34.4%	9.4%	21.9%
	I feel more active in the class with word wall	0%	9.4%	53.1%	37.5%
	Word wall makes me more excited in learning	0%	0%	15.6%	84.4%
	I enjoyed the class with word wall	0%	0%	12.5%	87.5%
	Word wall helps me to have a better interaction between my classmate and the teacher	3.1%	6.3%	31.3%	59.4%
	Word wall has positively shaped my perception of language learning	3.1%	3.1%	18.8%	75%
	Interesting learning media helps me in understanding material	0%	0%	12.5%	87.5%
	Word wall helps me more understand the materials	0%	3.1%	31.3%	65.6%
	Word wall helps me in mastering the course	0%	0%	25%	75%

From the table above, four key points can be highlighted. First, most students (84.4%) strongly agree that learning English with Wordwall is fun, while no respondents strongly disagree. Second, a significant percentage of students (87.5%) strongly agree that they enjoy classes involving Wordwall. Next, using Wordwall enhances classroom interaction and engagement, as 59.4% strongly agreed that it fosters better interaction between classmates and teachers. The last one is that Wordwall is perceived as a

practical learning tool, with 84.4% strongly agreeing that it increases their excitement for learning and 75% strongly agreeing that it positively shapes their perception of language learning.

To support all the data above, the author also conducted interviews with students. The results of the interview support other data. Based on the results of interviews with students, most of them agree that Wordwall has an impact on learning English. Interviews with students further corroborate the survey results. Most students expressed that Wordwall positively impacts their English learning experience. They noted that the platform makes lessons more engaging and interactive, enhancing their understanding of the material and fostering a positive attitude toward language learning. This combination of survey data and qualitative insights underscores Wordwall as a tool for improving learning motivation and classroom dynamics in English language courses.

Interview with Student 1

Interviewer: Do you like learning English using Wordwall?

Student 1: Yes, I really like it! It's fun like playing a game.

Interviewer: Does Wordwall make you understand the lesson better?

Student 1: I understand better because there are funny pictures and sounds.

Interviewer: Do you feel more enthusiastic about learning when you use Wordwall?

Student 1: Yes! I like it when I get stars or win on Wordwall

Interview with Student 2

Interviewer: what do you think about learning English with Wordwall?

Student 2: I think learning with Wordwall is fun. I don't get bored because there are lots of games.

Interviewer: Does Wordwall help you understand the subject matter?

Student 2: yes, it really does. If there is a problem that is wrong, I can immediately know the correct answer, so I understand faster.

Interviewer: Does Wordwall make you more active in class?

Student 2: Yes, because I often participate in answering questions or playing quizzes. My friends are also excited.

This research describes the impact of Wordwall as an instructional tool for young learners, especially in its application to English language learning. A comprehensive understanding of its impact has been built through observational data, questionnaire responses and interviews.

The first aspect is, that Wordwall makes an active engagement and participation. Observations made at the private tutoring center revealed that Wordwall significantly increases student engagement. The gamification and interactive features of Wordwall grab

students' focus and attention. A high level of enthusiasm was observed during the quizzes and matching games provided by Wordwall. It made passive learning into an interactive and fun activity. This finding is strengthened by the questionnaire results, where 84.4% of students strongly agreed that learning English with Wordwall is fun. In addition, 87.5% of students stated that they enjoyed learning using Wordwall. This alignment between observational and survey data highlights the consistent impact of Wordwall in creating an engaging learning environment. As observed during the lesson, students' active participation reflects the platform's ability to encourage interaction. Activities such as games and quizzes foster a sense of competition and collaboration among students, leading to improved classroom dynamics. Interview results also support this, with students saying that Wordwall's interactive elements motivate them to participate more actively in class.

The second is Wordwall increases motivation and positive perceptions of learning. Motivation plays an important role in language learning, and Wordwall has proven to be an effective tool for enhancing it. According to the survey, 84.4% of students strongly agreed that Wordwall increased their passion for learning. Additionally, 75% of respondents stated that the platform positively shaped their perception of language learning. This positive perception is especially important for young learners, as it forms the basis for long-term engagement with the subject. The interviews further emphasized this, with students describing Wordwall as “fun like playing a game” and “not boring.” Gamification features, such as receiving points and instant feedback, create a rewarding experience that encourages students to continue learning. In addition, using Wordwall seems to overcome some challenges in language learning, such as boredom and difficulty. While 34.4% of students admitted to feeling bored with everyday classes, activities that involve Wordwall provide a fresh change. It is also in line with Hidayaty et al. (2022), word walls are utilized by the author as they simplify the process of creating educational materials and serve as a means to enhance learning motivation. This is proven from the responses, where most students stated that Wordwall made the class more fun and exciting.

Wordwall improved comprehension and classroom interaction. Another important finding of this study is the impact of Wordwall on students' understanding of the learning materials. Based on the survey, 65.6% of students strongly agreed that Wordwall helped them understand the subject matter better. This improvement can be attributed to the visual and interactive elements of the platform, which simplify complicated concepts and provide immediate feedback. Interviews provided qualitative evidence supporting this claim. One student said that Wordwall's visuals and sounds made lessons easier to understand, while another student highlighted how immediate feedback on mistakes helped them learn faster. These features enhance comprehension and empower students to take control of their learning process. In-class interaction is another area where Wordwall shows significant impact. The survey revealed that 59.4% of students strongly agreed that Wordwall improved interaction between classmates and teachers. This is consistent with the observation data, which highlighted active peer collaboration during group activities. Wordwall fosters a more dynamic and inclusive classroom environment by creating opportunities for dialog and cooperation.

The last one is Wordwall effectively enhances young students' motivation, engagement, and comprehension in English classes. However, some limitations should be noted. For example, although most students enjoyed using the Wordwall, a small

proportion (9.4%) felt that the Wordwall did not make them more active in class. Concerning the aforementioned theory, Wigfield & Wagner (2005) discovered that pupils who possess intrinsic motivation exhibit greater activity and superior academic achievement compared to those who are driven by extrinsic motivation. Insufficient motivation ranks lowest among extrinsic motivation, while intrinsic motivation ranks highest. It demonstrated that student motivation must be increased for them to attain academic success. This highlights the need for teachers to tailor activities to individual students' preferences and learning styles. In addition, Wordwall's reliance on gamification elements may not fully achieve deeper learning outcomes, such as critical thinking or advanced language skills. Therefore, using Wordwall as a complementary tool along with other teaching methods is essential to provide a well-rounded learning experience.

Overall, Wordwall is a valuable instructional tool that increases engagement, motivation, and understanding among young learners. Its interactive and gamified features resonate well with students, making learning English a fun and rewarding experience. While not without its limitations, its potential to change classroom dynamics and improve learning outcomes is undeniable. Teachers should consider integrating Wordwall into their teaching strategies to create a more engaging and effective learning environment.

Finally, the results of this study regarding students' perceptions of the word wall's implementation as a meaningful online gamification element in the classroom have been disclosed. For one and a half months, this gamification-based learning was implemented. The researcher discovered through data analysis that there is a desire to comprehend the relationship between student motivation and engagement in the learning process. Educational games and Gamification were utilized in particular settings to facilitate the growth of students' motivation, emotions, and social perspective. Word walls protect the anonymity of students, thereby decreasing the likelihood that their privacy will be compromised. Further investigation is warranted to ascertain the efficacy of this tool, particularly concerning its applicability to older pupils. To bridge this knowledge gap, the researcher conducted interviews with students to gain a deeper understanding of word walls, including the conditions under which they provide the most value to both instructors and students and how they facilitate learning. It has been observed that word walls afford students increased opportunities to interact with instructors, peers, and acquire knowledge. Moreover, it facilitates the development of a "fun" learning environment, which promotes active participation in the classroom.

4. Conclusion

This research explores the implementation of Wordwall as an online gamification tool in English language teaching for six to twelve-year-old learners. The research findings revealed that integrating Wordwall into classroom teaching significantly increased students' learning motivation, engagement, and active participation. The platform's interactive features, such as quizzes and games, are effective in creating a fun and engaging learning environment, thus reducing boredom and improving students' perception of language learning. In addition, Wordwall encourages better interaction among peers and between students and teachers, which contributes to a collaborative and interactive classroom atmosphere.

However, this study has some limitations. Firstly, the study was conducted over a relatively short period of one and a half months, which may limit the ability to assess the

long-term impact on motivation and learning outcomes. Secondly, this study only focused on tutoring centers, which may not be representative of the broader context of formal classroom settings. In addition, the findings are based on a small sample size of 32 students, which may affect the generalizability of the results to a larger population. Future research could address these limitations by conducting a longitudinal study to examine the sustained effects of Wordwall on students' motivation and performance. Extending the research to formal school settings and involving a larger and more diverse sample size may provide more comprehensive insights. Additionally, exploring the use of Wordwall with older students or in other subject areas would further demonstrate the versatility of this tool and its potential impact in different educational contexts.

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