

BAB II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Vocabulary Mastery for English Learners at Junior High School

1. Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a fundamental component in learning a second language because it enables learners to understand and produce meaningful communication. Without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, learners will face difficulties in comprehending spoken and written language. In second language acquisition, vocabulary knowledge is generally viewed as a multidimensional construct consisting of two major aspects, namely vocabulary breadth and vocabulary depth (Sun et al., 2023; Yanagisawa & Webb, 2020). Vocabulary breadth refers to the number of words a learner knows. In contrast, vocabulary depth refers to how well a learner understands words, including their meanings, uses, and relationships with other words.

In addition, Nation (2001) explains that vocabulary mastery involves three essential components: form, meaning, and use. The form dimension includes pronunciation and spelling of a word, and use relates to grammatical functions and contextual appropriateness. For beginner-level learners, receptive vocabulary knowledge, such as recognizing meaning and form, tends to develop earlier than productive vocabulary knowledge, which involves using words actively in speaking and writing.

Furthermore, Nation (2017) explains that vocabulary learning is a gradual process that involves repeated exposure and multiple encounters with words in meaningful contexts. Through

repeated contact, vocabulary learners are more likely to remember word form, meaning, and use over time. This means that learners cannot master vocabulary instantly, but through continuous interaction, practice, and reinforcement. At the junior high school level, this process is especially important because students are still building their foundational English knowledge.

In the context of Indonesian education, the English curriculum for junior high schools is included in the Merdeka Curriculum framework. The Learning Outcomes (CP) for seventh grade emphasize the ability to understand simple spoken and written texts related to daily life. Therefore, vocabulary mastery at this level is directed at the introduction of high-frequency vocabulary relevant to contextual themes.

Nation (2001) asserts that high-frequency vocabulary dominates everyday language use and becomes a priority for elementary-level learners. Mastery of this vocabulary supports understanding and the gradual development of language ability. Supporting this view, (Nation 2017) state that learners need sufficient exposure to high-frequency vocabulary to develop reading and listening comprehension effectively. Without mastery of these essential words, learners will struggle to understand even simple texts.

Moreover, Laufer & Haifa, (2010) highlight that vocabulary size is strongly correlated with reading comprehension ability. Learners with a larger vocabulary size tend to understand texts more easily compared to those with limited vocabulary knowledge. This reinforces the importance of teaching vocabulary systematically at

the junior high school level to support overall language proficiency development.

In this quantitative study, vocabulary mastery is operationalized as receptive vocabulary mastery measured through the following indicators:

- a. Students can identify the meanings of high-frequency vocabulary.
- b. Students can recognize the correct word forms, including spelling.
- c. Students can identify the appropriate vocabulary in the context of simple sentences.
- d. Students can match vocabulary with appropriate visual representations.

Language mastery in this study is defined as seventh-grade students' quantifiable capacity to identify and comprehend high-frequency language associated with the subject "Home Sweet Home," based on the theoretical framework and literature evaluation, as reflected through the results of a receptive multiple-choice test.

2. Levels of Vocabulary

Vocabulary can be categorized into different levels based on frequency, usefulness, and context of use in language learning. According to Nation, (2001), Vocabulary can be understood in terms of frequency levels, which include high-frequency vocabulary, academic vocabulary, technical vocabulary, and low-frequency vocabulary. This classification is widely used in second language acquisition studies to determine which types of vocabulary should be prioritized at different stages of learning.

High-frequency vocabulary refers to words that occur very often in everyday communication. These words are essential for basic comprehension and interaction because they cover a large proportion of daily spoken and written language. Examples of high-frequency vocabulary include common words such as go, eat, school, house, and friend. For beginner learners, especially at the junior high school level, mastery of high-frequency vocabulary is crucial because it enables them to understand simple expressions and communicate in basic contexts.

Academic vocabulary refers to words that are commonly used in educational or academic contexts, such as in textbooks, assignments, and formal writing. These words are less frequent in daily conversation but are important for understanding school-related materials. Examples include words such as analyze, compare, explain, and define. Although academic vocabulary becomes more relevant at higher levels of education, early exposure can help students prepare for more complex language use in the future.

Technical vocabulary consists of words that are specific to particular fields or subject areas, such as science, mathematics, or technology. These words are used in specialized contexts and are usually not encountered in general communication. For example, in science, terms such as photosynthesis, evaporation, and cell are considered technical vocabulary. This type of vocabulary is generally introduced when learners begin studying specific subjects in more depth.

Low-frequency vocabulary refers to words that are rarely used in everyday communication or academic contexts. These words often appear in advanced texts, literature, or highly specialized materials. Because of their limited occurrence, low-frequency vocabulary is usually learned at more advanced stages of language proficiency and is not a primary focus for beginner learners.

In the context of junior high school English learning, particularly for seventh-grade students, high-frequency vocabulary is considered the most important level. At this stage, students are still developing their foundational English skills; therefore, they need exposure to commonly used words that are relevant to their daily lives. High-frequency vocabulary supports students in understanding simple spoken and written texts and enables them to communicate basic ideas effectively.

Therefore, vocabulary instruction at the junior high school level should primarily focus on high-frequency vocabulary before gradually introducing academic or technical vocabulary. This sequence helps learners build a strong lexical foundation that supports further language development. In relation to this study, the material “Home Sweet Home” is classified as high-frequency vocabulary because it contains common words related to home environment, daily activities, and familiar objects that students frequently encounter in real life.

By focusing on high-frequency vocabulary, this study aims to enhance students’ basic vocabulary mastery in a meaningful and contextual way. This approach is consistent with Nation, (2001) view that vocabulary learning should be guided by frequency and

usefulness, starting from the most common words that provide the greatest support for comprehension and communication.

3. Types of Vocabulary

Vocabulary in second language learning is typically divided into two categories: productive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary. Words that students can identify and comprehend when reading or listening but may not be able to actively utilize in conversation are referred to as receptive vocabulary. For instance, when they come across the terms "playground," "friend," and "together" in a reading text, middle school students might be able to comprehend them. On the other hand, words that are not only understood but can also be actively employed in writing or speaking are referred to as productive vocabulary. An example of this would be the statement "My friend and I play together at the playground." Receptive vocabulary generally develops faster because it involves a lower cognitive load compared to productive vocabulary, which demands the ability to recall, produce language output, and use forms and meanings (Jia et al., 2024). Nation, (2001) explains that receptive knowledge usually comes before productive knowledge, because learners tend to recognize words before they can use them correctly.

For seventh-grade junior high school students, transition from receptive to productive vocabulary requires repeated exposure and meaningful language use, not mere memorization. For example, after students recognize the words "classroom," "teacher," and "learn" through listening activities or visual media, they should be guided to produce language by constructing sentences such as "I learn in the classroom with the teacher." However, receptive

vocabulary competence as determined by recognition-based assessment is the exclusive emphasis of this study.

However, receptive vocabulary mastery as determined by a recognition-based assessment was the exclusive focus of this study. Therefore, the Wordwall was used to strengthen students' vocabulary recognition and comprehension skills.

4. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary mastery is one of the essential components of language learning because it enables learners to understand and use language effectively in both spoken and written communication. Students with adequate vocabulary mastery can comprehend texts more easily, express ideas clearly, and participate actively in language-learning activities. Therefore, vocabulary mastery plays a significant role in supporting the development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

According to Nation, (2001) Mastering vocabulary involves three interconnected aspects: form, meaning, and use. The aspect of form refers to learners' knowledge of how a word is pronounced, spelled, and recognized in its written and spoken forms. Meaning concerns understanding the relationship between a word and the concept it represents, including its association with other words. Meanwhile, use relates to how a word functions in different contexts, including its grammatical patterns, collocations, and appropriate situations for use. These three aspects indicate that vocabulary mastery is not merely knowing the translation of a word, but also understanding its form and applying it appropriately in communication (Nation, 2001).

Based on the Nation's framework, this study focuses on several indicators of vocabulary mastery that are appropriate for junior high school students. The indicators include identifying meaning, which measures students' ability to identify the correct written form of words; understanding vocabulary in context, which evaluates students' comprehension of word meanings within sentences or short texts; and matching words with pictures, which measures students' ability to connect vocabulary items with their visual representations. These indicators represent the aspects of meaning, form, and use proposed by Nation, (2001) and are suitable for measuring students' vocabulary development at the junior high school level.

In this study, vocabulary mastery is operationally defined as students' ability to understand and recognize English vocabulary, measured through a vocabulary test covering four indicators: identifying meaning, recognizing spelling, understanding vocabulary in context, and matching words with pictures. The students' level of vocabulary mastery is reflected in the scores obtained from the pre-test and post-test administered during the research.

5. The Importance of Vocabulary for Adolescent Learners

For teenagers learning a language, lexical knowledge is essential since it supports comprehension and production in all language abilities. For junior high school students, strong vocabulary knowledge, supported by listening and reading abilities, serves as the foundation for speaking and writing skills by providing the lexical resources needed to express meaning effectively Sun et al., (2023) state that Vocabulary knowledge remains a crucial

threshold for achieving higher language proficiency, with factors such as learning strategies affecting the development of vocabulary breadth and depth.

Nation (2013) emphasizes that high-frequency vocabulary or general vocabulary should be prioritized in language learning for young and adolescent learners because these words cover most everyday language use. Mastery of this vocabulary enables students to participate more confidently in classroom communication and basic interactions.

Effective vocabulary training and ongoing exposure to new words are essential for seventh-grade junior high school students because they frequently require help integrating terminology into their written and spoken language. The study by Sun et al. (2023) asserts that early exposure and more strategic vocabulary-learning interventions can significantly enhance lexical development, which in turn facilitates the progression from receptive recognition to productive use, an outcome that is especially important for adolescents acquiring English as a foreign language.

6. Vocabulary Teaching Theory

Vocabulary teaching is an important aspect of English language instruction because vocabulary serves as the foundation for communication and language comprehension. Effective vocabulary teaching helps learners understand the meanings of words, use them appropriately in context, and retain them for future communication. Therefore, teachers need to provide meaningful learning experiences that encourage students to encounter and practice new vocabulary repeatedly.

According to Williams, (2002), Vocabulary teaching for young learners should focus on helping students build connections between word forms and meanings through meaningful and engaging activities. Young learners tend to learn vocabulary more effectively when words are presented in context and supported by visual aids, games, and interactive tasks. Cameron also emphasizes that vocabulary learning should involve repeated exposure to words in different situations so that learners can gradually develop a deeper understanding of their meanings and uses.

Similarly, Thornbury, (2002) states that successful vocabulary teaching involves presenting new words clearly, providing practice opportunities, and helping learners store and retrieve vocabulary from memory. Teachers should create learning activities that encourage students to notice, understand, and use new words actively. Therefore, vocabulary teaching should not be limited to memorization, but should also involve meaningful interaction with words in various learning contexts. These principles support the use of interactive learning media, such as educational games, to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition.

7. Vocabulary teaching models

Various models and methods can be used to teach vocabulary effectively. The selection of an appropriate method depends on learners' characteristics, learning objectives, and classroom conditions. Effective vocabulary instruction should provide opportunities for students to encounter, practice, and use new words in meaningful contexts.

Thornbury, (2002) suggests several vocabulary teaching techniques, including the use of pictures, real objects, definitions,

examples, translation, and contextual clues. These techniques help learners understand word meanings and remember them more effectively. In addition, interactive activities such as games, matching exercises, quizzes, and group competitions can increase students' motivation and engagement during vocabulary learning.

One approach that has gained attention in recent years is game-based learning. According to (Mitra, 2016) Game-based learning creates an enjoyable learning environment that encourages active participation and reduces students' anxiety in learning a foreign language. Educational games provide opportunities for repeated exposure to vocabulary while maintaining learners' interest and motivation. In this regard, digital learning platforms such as Wordwall can support vocabulary instruction by offering interactive activities, including quizzes, matching tasks, word games, and picture-based exercises. Therefore, the use of game-based learning media can be considered an effective method for improving students' vocabulary mastery.

8. Vocabulary Teaching Procedures

Vocabulary instruction is an important part of English learning, especially for adolescent learners. Effective vocabulary instruction that uses systematic procedures helps students understand, remember, and use new words correctly. According to Nation (2001), vocabulary learning involves understanding the meaning, form, and use of words, and these aspects should be taught gradually through a structured learning process.

In general, procedures for teaching vocabulary consist of several stages. The first stage is vocabulary introduction. The teacher introduces new vocabulary that is appropriate to the learning

topic. During this phase, the teacher clarifies the definitions of the words and provides contextual examples in sentences to aid students' comprehension.

The next phase involves practicing pronunciation. The teacher models the correct pronunciation of the vocabulary and asks students to imitate. This stage helps students to recognize the oral form of the vocabulary and pronounce it correctly.

The third stage is vocabulary practice. Students are allowed to practice vocabulary through various activities, such as matching words with meanings or pictures and completing simple vocabulary exercises. These activities reinforce understanding and memory of the vocabulary learned.

The final stage is reinforcement and evaluation. The teacher reviews the learned vocabulary, provides feedback, and corrects students' errors. Evaluation is a measure of students' mastery of vocabulary after the learning process. Thus, vocabulary learning not only focuses on word introduction but also on systematic practice and assessment.

These vocabulary teaching procedures provide the theoretical basis for implementing vocabulary learning using digital media, such as the Wordwall application, during the treatment stage of this study.

B. Wordwall Application for English Learners at Junior High School

1. Theoretical Foundation of Wordwall in Language Learning

Wordwall is a web-based digital learning platform that integrates gamification principles into the learning process. In order to boost student motivation and engagement in non-gaming learning situations, gamification is the use of game components like points, challenges, time constraints, leaderboards, and instant feedback. This method promotes both recurrent exposure to the vocabulary being learnt and active participation in language learning.

Repetition and retrieval exercises improve long-term memory retention cognitively. As a result, Wordwall's organized interactive exercises help students identify, comprehend, and remember terminology. For 7th-grade junior high students, the implementation of gamification-based media needs to be adjusted to their developmental level, such as using clear instructions, visual supports, simple language, and directed tasks.

Thus, Wordwall functions not only as a digital tool but as a learning medium aligned with cognitive and motivational principles in vocabulary mastery.

2. Pedagogical Principles of Wordwall in Vocabulary Learning

The application of Wordwall in vocabulary learning reflects several pedagogical principles, namely:

- a. Active student engagement through interactive activities.
- b. Repetition and practice of receptive vocabulary recognition.
- c. Provision of immediate feedback on student answers.
- d. Motivational elements through scoring systems and time limits.
- e. Structured practice within thematic contexts.

These principles indicate that Wordwall serves as a learning strategy that supports the development of junior high students' receptive vocabulary.

Wordwall is a gamification-based digital learning tool that can support vocabulary practice in an organized, repeated, and interesting way, according to the theoretical and pedagogical explanations given above. Wordwall is the independent variable employed in this study's treatment phase to enhance the receptive vocabulary knowledge of seventh-grade pupils.

C. Definition of Wordwall Application

1. Definition of Wordwall Application

Wordwall is a web-based, game-driven learning tool that lets teachers create a range of interactive activities that can be accessed through web-enabled devices, such as laptops, computers, smartphones, and tablets. These activities include quizzes, word games, anagrams, matching tasks, and other vocabulary-focused exercises (Ilahiyati et al., 2023). Rather than serving merely as a display tool, Wordwall functions as an active learning medium that can be used individually or collaboratively to support students in understanding, memorizing, and acquiring vocabulary independently (Fadhilah & Daulay, 2025). In addition, Wordwall provides extensive flexibility through its wide selection of templates, designs, and animations, as well as its ability to switch between activities quickly. These features distinguish it from traditional instructional media and have been shown to enhance students' motivation, engagement, and vocabulary mastery (Syarifah & Fedyanto, 2025).

2. Advantages of Wordwall Application

The use of Wordwall across diverse educational settings demonstrates several advantages that substantively enhance learning effectiveness. Wordwall offers an alternative approach to vocabulary instruction by integrating game-based activities with visual learning elements, which create a more enjoyable learning environment than traditional tools such as dictionaries or textbooks (Arsyad, 2024). Consistent with these findings, another study reported that students perceive Wordwall positively, noting that it helps them memorize new words more quickly, is easy to operate after initial guidance, and fosters a game-like experience that strengthens intrinsic motivation. However, some learners initially experienced confusion with the interface and gameplay rules. (Fadhilah & Daulay, 2025). Wordwall is described as adaptable and imaginative in the context of learning Indonesian. It also functions effectively as both an instructional and assessment tool, with printable worksheets adaptable to various grade levels, despite limitations such as its reliance on visual media and the additional time needed to design activities. (Maulana Hendrawan et al., 2025).

Moreover, in numeracy literacy development, Wordwall contributes substantially through its diverse templates, such as crosswords, matching tasks, and multiple-choice quizzes, which enable teachers to design engaging, student-centered activities. This impact is reflected in the medium N-Gain score. It shows that student achievements have significantly improved (Khasanah et al., 2024). All of these results support Wordwall's efficacy and versatility as a digital learning tool that improves academic

performance, motivation, and engagement across subjects and grade levels.

3. Disadvantages of Wordwall Application

Although Wordwall offers various instructional benefits, it also has limitations that can reduce its effectiveness in educational settings. Its reliance on internet connectivity can hinder use in areas with unstable networks, and the restricted features in the free version may require educators to purchase a paid plan to access advanced tools. Some complex templates can pose challenges for beginners, and the platform's analytics provide only limited evaluative depth. Because Wordwall functions primarily as a visual medium, it narrows the range of learning modalities available to students. Creating activities is relatively time-consuming; their use in assessments can be vulnerable to student cheating, and certain display elements, such as font size, cannot be adjusted, reducing accessibility for learners with specific needs. These issues are exacerbated in learning environments with limited digital infrastructure or inconsistent internet access. (Maulana Hendrawan et al., 2025).

4. Procedures for Using the Wordwall Application

- a. Step one: Create an account. Visit the Wordwall website (Wordwall.net) and sign up for a free account using an email address. Choose a teacher or educator profile to access all features.

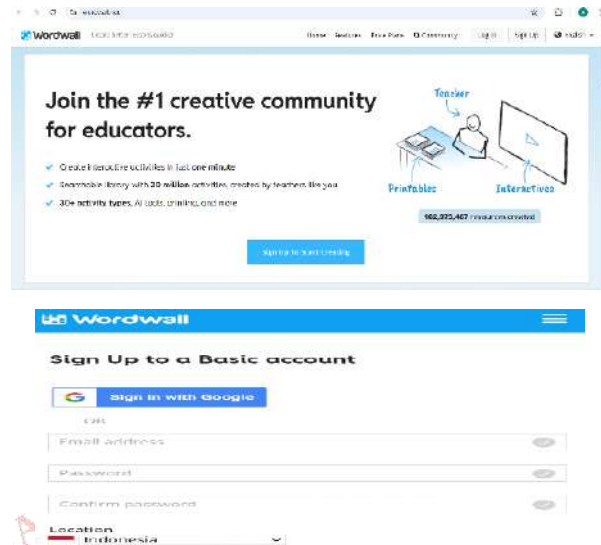


Figure 1. Wordwall Account Login

- b. Step two: Select a template. Log in and browse the available templates (e.g., quizzes, match-ups, or anagrams) from the dashboard. Click on a template that fits your lesson objective.

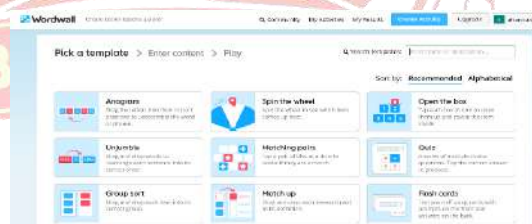


Figure 2. Wordwall Template

- c. Step three: Customize the content. Edit the template by adding your own questions, answers, images, or text. Use the drag-and-drop interface to arrange elements and set options like timers or scoring.

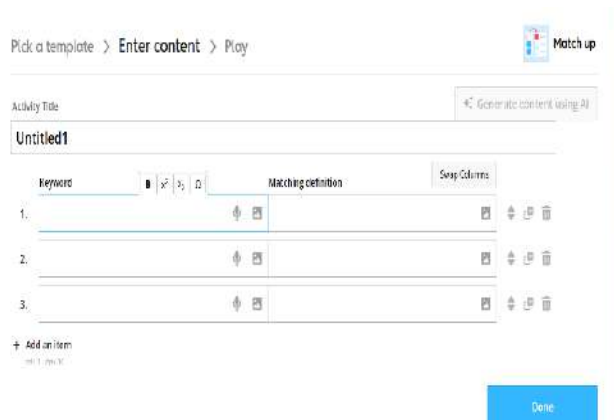


Figure 3. Wordwall Edit

- d. Step four: Test and save a preview of the activity to ensure it works correctly, then save it to your account.



Figure 4. Wordwall Test and Save

- e. Step five: Share or distribute the activity via a generated link for online play, or embed it in a website. Optionally, assign it to students and monitor progress through the analytics dashboard.

D. The Role of Wordwall Application to Vocabulary

By offering interesting and captivating game-based exercises that improve students' ability to acquire, review, and retain new words, Wordwall significantly contributes to vocabulary growth. Research shows that using Wordwall encourages active participation and enhances vocabulary recall due to its repetitive gamified learning structure. (Arsyad, 2024).

1. Teacher Role in Wordwall Application

Teachers serve as designers and facilitators in integrating Wordwall into vocabulary learning. They select or create game templates that match learning objectives, guide students in using the platform, and ensure that vocabulary items are practiced through interactive activities. Teachers also use Wordwall to boost students' motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes during lessons. (Jauharah Jilan Situmorang, 2025; Maulana Hendrawan et al., 2025).

2. Students' Role in Wordwall Application

Students act as active participants who directly interact with vocabulary games provided through Wordwall. Through activities such as matching words, identifying meanings, and completing word-based challenges, students strengthen their vocabulary knowledge. Studies indicate that students show positive perceptions, increased motivation, and significant improvement in vocabulary mastery when using Wordwall as part of their learning activities. (Fadhilah & Daulay, 2025; Ilahiyati et al., 2023).

E. Previous Related Studies

1. Studies on Wordwall in Teaching Vocabulary

Recent empirical research indicates that the gamified platform Wordwall can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition among junior high school students by providing interactive tasks, immediate feedback, and game-based learning. This platform has been used in various educational levels and contexts to promote vocabulary mastery, motivation, and learner engagement.

Sakkir et al. (2023) investigated the efficacy of Wordwall in enhancing vocabulary knowledge in a quasi-experimental study involving 35 EFL students in an Indonesian senior high school. The results showed that students who were instructed through Wordwall-based exercises, such as matching and quiz games, achieved significantly higher post-test scores and showed greater classroom engagement compared to those taught conventionally. This study demonstrated that gamified media enhances both cognitive and affective aspects of vocabulary learning, supporting the idea that Wordwall can increase students' motivation in the EFL classroom.

Similarly, Alfiah et al (2024) conducted an experimental study in Indonesian secondary schools to find out how Wordwall affected students' motivation to acquire vocabulary. The findings showed that Wordwall successfully increased students' engagement and zeal in English classes. The researchers came to the conclusion that including game features like leaderboards, badges, and points through Wordwall can maintain students' interest in vocabulary exercises, particularly among teenagers who do well in interactive learning settings.

Furthermore, Syarifah & Fediyanto (2025) investigated the integration of Wordwall in English for Specific Purpose (ESP) instruction. They discovered that by offering quick feedback and promoting repeated repetition, Wordwall helped students retain vocabulary and enhance learning results. Although conducted in a tertiary-education context, this research implies that a gamified platform can enhance vocabulary learning across different educational levels.

A more recent study by Al Firdaus & Rahmawati (2024) focused on eighth-grade students in a junior high school. Their quasi-experimental design revealed a very large effect size (Cohen's $d = 2.20$) when Wordwall Online Games were used compared to traditional teaching methods. This finding provides strong empirical evidence that Wordwall significantly improves vocabulary mastery at the junior-high level, supporting its potential for younger learners in the Indonesian EFL context.

A review of previous studies indicates that Wordwall is effective in supporting students' vocabulary development, motivation, and engagement across different educational levels. However, the scope and focus of these studies vary depending on context, grade level, and skill emphasis. These findings collectively suggest that Wordwall serves as a promising digital tool for EFL vocabulary instruction, providing a strong basis for further exploration in different learning settings.

Nevertheless, limited studies have focused on seventh-grade students in the Bengkulu context, and more specifically on receptive vocabulary mastery. With one class getting the treatment and the other acting as the control group, this study aims to close this gap by

investigating the impact of Wordwall on students' receptive vocabulary mastery using a quasi-experimental paradigm.

2. Studies on Gamification for English Learning

A systematic review by Zhang & Hasim (2023) demonstrated that gamification consistently enhances learners' motivation and positively affects English language learning outcomes, particularly vocabulary development, through elements such as rewards, scores, and instant feedback. (Chan & Lo, 2024) further highlighted that gamified learning fosters engagement and repeated meaningful exposure to lexical items, which supports vocabulary acquisition among young learners. These findings provide theoretical justification for integrating Wordwall as a gamified tool in the elementary school English classroom context.

(Chowdhury et al., 2024) Employed a convergent mixed-methods case study design, combining quantitative (pretest-posttest and paired t-test) and qualitative (interviews, journals, and semantic network analysis) approaches, and found that digital game-based learning (DGBL) significantly improves students' vocabulary acquisition and short-term retention compared to conventional methods and immediate feedback. Similarly, Panmei & Waluyo (2023) employed a quasi-experimental method using the Quizizz application and concluded that gamification enhances student motivation, engagement, and vocabulary acquisition, particularly when activities incorporate immediate feedback and sufficient repetition. 32 seventh-grade students at SMPN 30 Makassar participated in a quantitative pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test (Rachmadi et al. 2023) using digital (Quizlet) and paper flashcards, and reported that both media

significantly enhance vocabulary achievement (Sig. (2-tailed) – $0.000 < 0.05$ for both) with no significant difference between them (Sig. (2-tailed) = $1.000 > 0.05$). Overall, previous studies indicate that gamification-based tools, including Wordwall and similar digital platforms, support vocabulary mastery through repetition and immediate feedback. The current study, which specifically looks at how Wordwall affects seventh-grade students' receptive vocabulary knowledge, is theoretically supported by these findings. Overall, these findings confirm that digital approaches, gamification, and simple media, such as flashcards, are effective for vocabulary development, with repetition and feedback as key success factors.

3. Research Gap and Relevance to the Present Study

Despite the extensive research on gamified vocabulary learning, several gaps remain relevant to the present study. First, most previous studies on gamification and vocabulary learning have focused on university or adult learners, while limited research has been conducted among junior high school students in Indonesia. This group is at a development stage where attention spans are shorter, and motivation is strongly influenced by enjoyment, competition, and interactive activities. Moreover, English vocabulary learning in Indonesian classrooms often relies on traditional and teacher-centered approaches, which may lead to low engagement and limited vocabulary growth. Therefore, investigating how gamified platforms like Wordwall affect vocabulary learning among junior high school students can yield new insights into age-appropriate, culturally relevant teaching strategies.

Second, although Wordwall has been used in the EFL classroom, most studies have primarily measured general vocabulary improvement without clearly specifying the type of vocabulary knowledge assessed. This study specifically focuses on receptive vocabulary mastery among seventh-grade students, measured through a structured multiple-choice test.

Lastly, there are not many long-term studies that assess students' vocabulary retention and usage following gamified instruction. Understanding these long-term effects is vital to determining whether gamification leads to sustained vocabulary development or merely short-term motivation.

based on the examined research, especially that of Sakkir et al. (2023), Alfiah et al (2024), Syarifah & Fediyanto (2025), and Al Firdaus & Rahmawati (2024). Wordwall helps kids become more engaged and proficient in language. Nevertheless, the majority of this research concentrated on higher-level learners and were restricted to short-term results. This study investigates the efficacy of the Wordwall application in enhancing students' vocabulary knowledge in order to fill this gap in the literature (a quasi-experimental study at Seventh Grade Students at SMPN 15, Bengkulu City).

F. Theoretical Framework

According to the research title "The Effect of Wordwall Application Toward Students' Vocabulary Mastery Among Seventh-Grade Students at SMPN 15, Bengkulu City," the following theoretical framework is organized in simplified terms. There are two primary variables in this study:

1. Using the Wordwall app as a learning aid was Variable X (Independent Variable). In order to ascertain its impact on students' vocabulary knowledge, this variable functioned as the study's main independent variable. The Wordwall app was used as a teaching tool to make learning vocabulary more dynamic and interesting.
2. Variable Y (Dependent Variable) was the students' vocabulary mastery in seventh grade. This variable represented the learning outcome mean after students used the Wordwall application. This study looked at mastery and whether utilizing the program improved students learning outcomes.

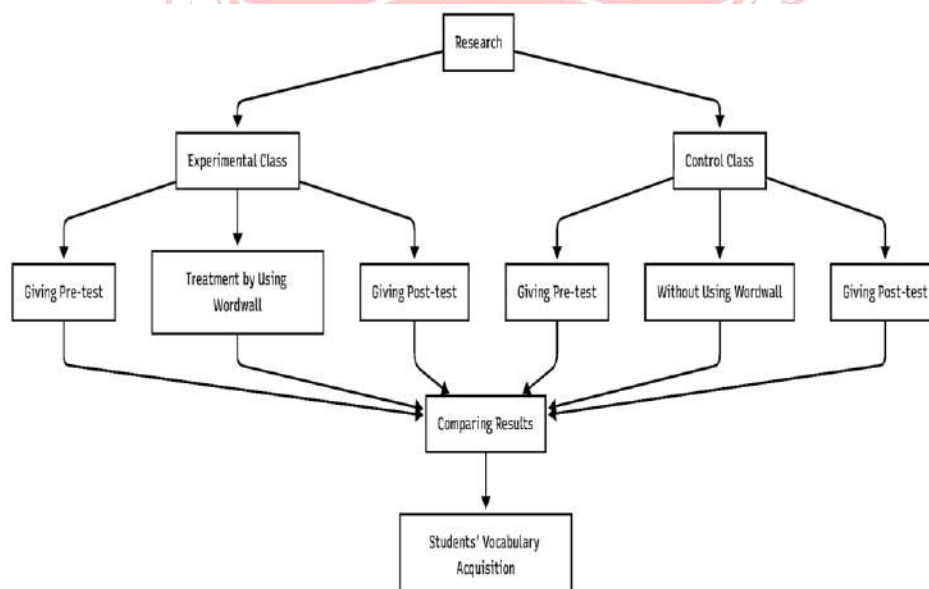


Figure 5. Conceptual Framework

G. Hypothesis

The following theories are put out in light of the research issue this study identified:

1. Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): At SMPN 15 in Bengkulu City, seventh-grade pupils' vocabulary acquisition is significantly improved by using the Wordwall program.
2. Null Hypothesis (H_0): At Junior High School Negeri 15, Bengkulu City, there is no statistically significant difference in vocabulary mastery between seventh-grade pupils taught using the Wordwall application and those taught without it.

