

# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Research Background

Digital technology in learning is an essential part of preparing a golden generation for the future. Digital-based learning in 21st-century education can create a more interactive classroom atmosphere and help students understand the material (Widiastari & Ryan 2024). According to Rahma Ritonga et al., (2024) stated that the use of digital media in education, such as interactive digital media and online learning platforms, creates new opportunities to improve the quality of learning, and teachers can create a more inclusive and adaptive learning environment. Kholid & Darmawan (2023) also stated that digital media presents material through games, quizzes, or simulations that relate to real-life situations, which can help the student increase their learning motivation. This not only helps them understand the material but also keeps them interested and makes them more motivated. Therefore, the use of digital learning platforms in the classroom makes learning easier and gives students important technological skills they will need as they grow up in a modern world.

In the field of education, especially in English language skills known as the global lingua franca, it is not only important in an academic context but also as a critical life skill in the era of globalization. English serves as a communication bridge that allows individuals to connect, interact, and collaborate with people from all over the world (Crystal, 2003). In the context of education in Indonesia, learning English at the elementary school level can be a key factor influencing individual progress and their contribution to national growth and innovation in the future (Kurniati et al., 2021). According to Oktaviani et al., (2019) teaching English to young learners in elementary schools is important because it will help them gain social and economic benefits in the future. Septy Lesia & Petrus (2021) also stated that starting English education for young learners can make the foundation for future language skills and open opportunities to communicate with people in another country. One of the essential things to learn when starting to study a new language is understanding the vocabulary used in that language.

According to Alqahtani (2015) stated that vocabulary is one of the important things in language learning as an essential part of foreign language learning. It helps students to understand what they hear, read, and speak. Without knowing the basic vocabulary, it is hard for students to express their ideas or understand what other people are saying. Renandya (2010) also stated that in learning English as a foreign language, vocabulary plays a key role in helping students build their language skills, like reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It is one of the key elements that students need to know more vocabulary when learning a new language. On the other hand, many researchers believe that learning vocabulary is the most important step in learning a second language. Rasouli (2016) stated that vocabulary is one of the most significant components of any language, which must be dealt with much care and attention in the early stages of second or foreign language learning. Knowing a lot of words is the key to understanding and using a second language because vocabulary helps people build sentences and communicate in more complex ways. Therefore, without enough words, students can struggle to communicate or understand the material being taught when learning a new language, which can make it difficult for them to use the four skills in the English language. To apply the four skills in English language components, we must understand the vocabulary in that language.

Based on the Learning Outcomes of the Merdeka Curriculum, elementary school students are expected to use English in simple daily communication and familiar contexts. However, many students still struggle to understand vocabulary in English. Many students in elementary school struggle to understand what they learn, not being used to speaking English in daily life, are unable to mention words, and are unable to spell words correctly, and challenges arise from both internal and external factors (Amalia R, 2023). Based on preliminary observations at SD Negeri 4 Padangkerta showed that fifth-grade students face similar problems. It was found that the phenomenon occurs during the English learning process in the class, such as students hard to focus in class and are not interested in learning English because traditional ways of learning, like still using schoolbook which does not make students feel interested in class to learn. This low interest can make it harder for them to learn English, and the learning process in class does not run optimally, as

they have difficulties understanding what they learn in English class, especially the meanings of new vocabulary words they learn. And as a result, some students have a small number of words they know well, which limits their ability to express ideas. The limited of vocabulary students know makes it difficult to say what they want to say or write clearly. The other problem is that the involvement of technology in the learning process is not optimal. The use of technology is still not fully utilized, even though the government has provided Chromebooks for the school. However, these devices are not being used effectively in English learning. As a result, students have limited opportunities to learn through interactive digital media that can support vocabulary development. Therefore, the implementation of digital learning media is needed to make learning more interesting and to help students understand and remember vocabulary more effectively. Harmer (2001: 38) as cited in Hashemi & Azizinezhad (2011) stated that young learners learn differently from adult learners because they easily get bored when the media does not make them interested, and make lose interest after a short period of time. Limitations of teaching media are one of the problems that can make students lose interest. Therefore, the use of learning media in class will have an effect on optimizing students' understanding of the material being taught. Many learning innovations were introduced in the modern era as media to improve vocabulary, such as the internet, digital media, and others. Sufri (2024) stated that digital media can be effectively used to improve student vocabulary in the learning process in the classroom. One of the digital media that can be used to teach vocabulary is Wordwall. Wordwall is a website-based digital worksheet that can be used to create educational media with several educational game templates. According to Swari (2023) stated that Wordwall is an online digital media that helps teachers can assist teachers in creating joyful learning for students. Students can play games where they match words with pictures, complete sentences, or answer questions about word meanings related to the vocabulary. These activities are not only fun but also help students to practice using the new words in different ways.

With the many benefits of this wordwall, there are several advantages of Wordwall can provide numerous benefits and enhance the learning experience, especially at the elementary school level. Wordwall in education can be tailored to

meet the developmental and educational needs of students. At this stage, students are able to learn in a fun and interactive way of learning. Several studies have been conducted before, related to the use of Wordwall for learning English. The study conducted by Widyaningsih et al. (2023) found that Wordwall improves English vocabulary mastery among students in elementary school. This is also supported by Pradini & Adnyayanti (2022) implemented Wordwall on young learners at the elementary school, showing that Wordwall can increase students' vocabulary achievement and motivation to learn English.

In a similar study by Minh & Nguyễn (2024), Wordwall improved vocabulary in English lessons at a senior high school. In the same level study by Amaliyah & Rahayu (2023) found that the Wordwall web-based application helped senior high school students, and the number of students in the study was 28 students, 10 male, and 18 females. As seen from the findings, student scores continue to increase, starting from the pre-test, where only 21% of students fulfilled the KKM, then post-test I, where student scores begin to improve for about 71% of students who fulfilled the KKM, and post-test II, where the results were satisfactory, that 86% of students have fulfilled the KKM that has been determined. With this, the use of the Wordwall web-based application can be stated to increase students' vocabulary achievement. Then, this is supported by a questionnaire given to students regarding their responses to the Wordwall, 93% of students gave positive opinions that said it was fun and easier to do exercises in Wordwall.

Apart from that, Adnyana & Sintya Dewi (2022) investigated the effect of using Wordwall in providing a better understanding of teaching English procedural text in junior high school and showed that there are significant differences in the learning of class IX students when it comes to creating procedural texts with Wordwall. And at the end of that research, the researchers suggest conducting this study on a wider and more diverse population and conducting research in other grade levels. Besides that, the study conducted by Gantari et al., (2024) found that using Wordwall was very good to be implemented for students. Experts rated the media as 80% valid for instruments, 90% for the product, and 78% for the material, which means the media Wordwall is suitable for use with students. After testing, students gave an average response of 84.3%, showing that the media is effective in

helping them learn new words to improve their vocabulary and learning motivation in English lessons. Moreover, at the end of the research recommended to use that media for other grade levels, use new materials, add more interesting vocabulary, and conduct a more in-depth analysis than this study.

Based on the explanation above, previous findings that found related to whether Wordwall is effective for students to learn English, this study is not only conducted based on classroom problems but also to experimentally test previous research findings and theoretical claims regarding the effectiveness of Wordwall on students' vocabulary. To fill that gap based on the suggestion from previous studies, researcher conducting research in another grade level that is in elementary school, especially in fifth-grade students with a different material and research setting, namely “The effect of Wordwall digital worksheet on students’ vocabulary achievement at fifth grade of SD Negeri 4 Padangkerta,” The aim of this study is to testing the effect of Wordwall digital worksheet as learning media on vocabulary achievement of fifth-grade students. This study employs a quasi-experimental design with a posttest-only design, comparing students who learn vocabulary through Wordwall worksheets and those who are taught using a printed worksheet. This quasi-experimental research aims to provide empirical evidence by comparing two teaching methods and evaluating whether Wordwall has a statistically significant give effect or not.

### **1.2 Problem Identification**

Based on the background of the problem that has been stated above, the problem can be identified in the learning process where the English teacher has not optimally integrated learning any digital media into classroom activities. This does not make students feel interested in class to learn. The low interest can make it harder for them to learn English and to learn more about vocabulary. And as a result, some students have a small number of words they know well, which limits their ability to express ideas. The limited of vocabulary students know makes it difficult for them to say what they want to say or write clearly, which can affect their learning of English in class. Besides the previous study that found related to whether Wordwall is effective for students to learn English, this study is not only conducted based on classroom problems but also to experimentally test previous research

findings and theoretical claims regarding the effectiveness of Wordwall digital worksheet on students vocabulary. To fill that gap based on the suggestion from previous studies, researchers tried to use the Wordwall in teaching students, especially teaching vocabulary in grade fifth, this was also supported by students, most of whom were already able to use learning digital media so that it would make it easier for researcher to apply this Wordwall digital media in the fifth-grade of SD Negeri 4 Padangkerta.

### **1.3 Problem Limitation**

Based on the problem statement above, this study is to investigate whether there is a statistically significant effect on vocabulary achievement between students who are taught using Wordwall digital worksheets and those who are taught using schoolbooks. This research specifically focuses on the grade V students of SD Negeri 4 Padangkerta. The material used in this study will be adjusted to the vocabulary topics appropriate for the selected grade V at the elementary school.

### **1.4 Research question**

Based on the background of the problem above, it is necessary to analyze the use of Wordwall Digital worksheet on vocabulary achievement of the students in the fifth-grade elementary school. The author formulates the research questions as follows:

1. Is there any significant effect of using Wordwall digital worksheet on the vocabulary achievement of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 4 Padangkerta compared to those who use a printed worksheet as a learning medium?

### **1.5 Research Objective**

1. To investigate whether there is a significant effect on vocabulary achievement between students who use Wordwall digital worksheets and those who use printed worksheets as a learning medium.

## 1.6 Research Significance

- **Theoretical Significance**

It can provide scientific evidence on the impact of using Wordwall Digital worksheet in English vocabulary learning activities. This evidence supports Wordwall as an effective alternative learning media that can be applied in elementary school learning activities.

- **Practical Significance**

- a. For Teacher

This study can give teachers more information about new types of educational digital media that can make the learning activity more interactive and enjoyable; besides that, it can also improve the teacher quality in English Teaching in the classroom.

- b. For Students

By using digital Wordwall media in the learning process, students get a new and enjoyable way of learning, which can make students more interested in learning vocabulary and also their knowledge in English class.

- c. For further researchers

For the further researchers, this study can be used as basic information or a reference about new types of digital media for learning vocabulary for those who are interested in teaching English.

## 1.7 Key Terms of the Study

To avoid misconception and confusion on the part of the readers concerning the key terms that are used in the context of the current study, the researcher needs to operationally define the following terms:

- a. Wordwall

Conceptually, according to [www.wordwall.net](http://www.wordwall.net), Wordwall is an online platform that allows teachers to create interactive educational. This platform provides various activity templates such as Match up, Labelled Diagram, find the match, group short, and Unjumble to support learning in classes. Operationally, Wordwall

is an interactive learning tool that is used to see the significant effect on students' vocabulary through engaging digital activities. In this research, Wordwall serve as the independent variable.

#### b. Vocabulary Achievement

Conceptually, vocabulary achievement refers to how well a student learns and uses words in a language. It shows a student's ability to understand, remember, and apply vocabulary in different situations of communication. According to John Read, as cited by Fauzi (2007), explains three components of vocabulary there are the context of use, the pronunciation, and the techniques learners use to improve their vocabulary. Operationally, in this research, vocabulary achievement is defined as students ability to recognize, understand, and correctly use English vocabulary after engaging with Wordwall. This variable serves as the dependent variable in this research.

#### c. Young Learners

Conceptually, according to Scott & Ytreberg (1990), young learners a children aged five to twelve who are in the early stages of formal education. Operationally, in this research, young learners refer to elementary school students who are learning English as a second or foreign language. They are the sample in this research.

