THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WORDWALL MEDIA ON INCREASING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY ON DESCRIBING PEOPLE AT SMP NEGERI 1 JATIBARANG

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of the interactive digital media Wordwall in improving students' speaking skills, particularly in describing a person. A quasi-experimental method was employed, involving two eighth-grade classes at SMP Negeri 1 Jatibarang, each consisting of 34 students. The experimental class (8G) received treatment using Wordwall media, while the control class (8F) was taught using conventional teaching methods. Data were collected through pre-tests, post-tests, and interviews. The paired sample t-test analysis showed a significant improvement in speaking skills in the experimental class after the treatment. Furthermore, the independent sample t-test results revealed a significant difference between the post-test scores of the experimental and control classes (Sig. < 0.001), indicating the effectiveness of Wordwall media. Interviews with 20 students from the experimental class revealed that comprehension and vocabulary aspects showed the highest improvement, while fluency remained the most challenging aspect. Therefore, it can be concluded that Wordwall media is effective in enhancing students' speaking skills, encouraging active engagement, and reducing speaking anxiety. Teachers are encouraged to integrate interactive digital media into English language teaching to optimize student learning outcomes.

Keywords: Wordwall, speaking skills, interactive learning, digital media

1 INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential tool of communication that enables people from different cultures and regions to share ideas, exchange information, and build relationships. Among the many languages spoken worldwide, English holds a special position as an international language that connects people across nations. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and plays a significant role in the educational curriculum, from junior high school to university level. Proficiency in English is recognized as providing broader opportunities, such as access to global knowledge, the pursuit of higher education, and enhanced career prospects.

Of the four language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing speaking is considered one of the most important and challenging productive skills. Speaking requires students to produce language in realtime, combining mastery of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency when interacting with others. According to Valdman (1966), speaking is the most highly valued skill in language learning because it reflects a learner's actual ability to use the language in everyday communication. However, for many students in Indonesia, speaking English presents a major challenge. Differences in pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and grammatical structures between English and Indonesian often cause students to feel hesitant, lack confidence, and speak with limited fluency.

This challenge becomes even more apparent in schools where students have little or no prior experience learning English in their earlier education. Based on preliminary observations and interviews with English teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Jatibarang, it was found that many eighth-grade students have low speaking proficiency. This is partly due to their varied elementary school backgrounds, where English is no longer a compulsory subject in the current curriculum. As a result, students entering junior high school often have minimal vocabulary and speaking skills, making it difficult for them to actively participate in classroom communication.

Given this situation, there is a need for engaging and interactive learning strategies to motivate students and help them practice speaking in an enjoyable atmosphere. One promising medium is Wordwall, an online learning platform that offers a variety of interactive games and activities tailored to specific learning objectives. Wordwall allows students to actively engage through quizzes, matching games, and

word puzzles that can be adapted for language learning. Previous studies have shown that the use of interactive media such as Wordwall can improve students' motivation, participation, and learning outcomes, particularly in language learning (Yusri et al., 2024).

In the context of speaking skills, Wordwall can be integrated into descriptive text activities, where students describe a person, place, or object. This approach not only enriches students' vocabulary but also helps improve their pronunciation and speaking fluency. Moreover, the interactive nature of the games can reduce students' anxiety, encouraging them to speak more confidently in front of their peers.

Although digital learning media are becoming increasingly popular, there is still limited research specifically examining the effect of Wordwall on improving students' speaking ability, particularly at the junior high school level in Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using Wordwall in enhancing students' speaking skills in descriptive texts at SMP Negeri 1 Jatibarang.

2 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental research design. The quantitative approach was chosen because the study focused on collecting numerical data and performing statistical analysis to test the hypothesis and examine the cause-and-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The research design used was the pre-test and post-test control group design. In this design, two groups were compared: the experimental group, which received treatment using Wordwall media in the learning process, and the control group, which was taught using conventional methods without Wordwall media. Before the treatment was given, both groups took a pre-test to determine their initial English-speaking ability. The experimental group then received instruction using Wordwall media for eight sessions (each lasting 2 × 40 minutes), while the control group continued with traditional teaching methods. After the treatment period ended, both groups took a post-test to measure the improvement in speaking skills.

The population of this study consisted of all eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Jatibarang in the 2025/2026 academic year, totaling 306 students spread across nine classes. The sample was selected using the cluster random sampling technique, ensuring that each class had an equal chance of being chosen. Based on the random draw, two classes were selected as the research sample: Class VIII-F as the control group and Class VIII-G as the experimental group.

The variables in this study consisted of the independent variable (X), which was the use of Wordwall media, and the dependent variable (Y), which was the students' English-speaking ability. The relationship between these variables was measured to determine whether the use of Wordwall had a significant effect on improving speaking skills.

Data were collected through oral tests administered during both the pre-test and post-test stages. In the pre-test, students were asked to orally describe a person or object around them to assess their initial speaking ability. The experimental group received instruction using Wordwall media, while the control group was taught using student worksheets (LKS) and printed teaching materials. After the treatment, the post-test was conducted using a similar format, in which students described a person in English. The assessment was based on five aspects: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension.

The instrument used in this study was an oral test with an assessment rubric adapted from Brown (2014). This rubric evaluated five main aspects, with a maximum score of 25, which was then converted into a scale of 100. The validity of the instrument was tested through expert judgment by the academic supervisor and an English teacher, ensuring that the test items matched the learning objectives, the taught material, and the relevant components of speaking skills.

Data analysis was carried out in several stages. First, a normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method was conducted to ensure that the data were normally distributed. Second, a homogeneity test using Levene's Test was performed to confirm that the variances between groups were equal. Once the assumptions of normality and homogeneity were met, a paired sample t-test was used to examine differences in scores before and after treatment within the same group, and an independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences in scores between the experimental and control groups after the treatment. The results of these statistical analyses were used to address the research questions and test the study's hypotheses.

3 RESULTS

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of using Wordwall media in improving students' speaking skills in the topic of describing people. The research data were obtained through a speaking test administered before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the treatment in both the experimental and control classes. The speaking assessment was based on five aspects: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Before conducting the hypothesis testing, a series of instrument tests and assumption tests were carried out to ensure the statistical appropriateness of the data.

3.1 Data Analysis

3.1.1 Instrument Validity Test

The instrument used in this study was an oral test assessed using a rubric adapted from Brown (2014), which covered five main aspects of speaking skills. Each aspect was scored on a scale of 1-5, resulting in a maximum total score of 25, which was then converted into a scale of 100. To ensure the validity of the instrument, expert judgment was conducted involving the academic supervisor and an experienced English teacher. They evaluated the test items based on their alignment with the learning objectives, relevance to the taught material, and appropriateness in measuring the targeted components of speaking skills.

The expert validation results indicated that all items in the oral test met the established criteria, including content relevance, clarity of instructions, and suitability for the students' proficiency level. Minor revisions suggested by the experts, such as refining task instructions and adjusting the complexity of prompts, were incorporated to enhance clarity and fairness. After the revision, the experts agreed that the instrument was valid and appropriate for use in the data collection process. This finding confirms that the oral test could effectively measure the students' speaking ability in line with the objectives of this study.

3.1.2 Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the data were normally distributed, which is a prerequisite for using parametric statistical tests. The test was carried out using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. The criterion: data are considered normal if Sig. > 0.05.

Table 1. *Normality Result Experiment Class*

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
pretest_eksperimen	.234	34	.057	.886	34	.203
posttest_eksperimen	.158	34	.080	.901	34	.993
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Table 2. *Normality Result Control Class*

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
pretest_kontrol	.298	34	.087	.798	34	.420
posttest_kontrol	.242	34	.400	.823	34	.074
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Based on the results, all significance values were greater than 0.05, indicating that the data from both classes were normally distributed.

3.1.3 Homogenity Test

The homogeneity test was conducted to ensure that the variances of the two groups were equal. Levene's Test was used for this purpose.

Table 3. *Homogenity Result*

Independent Samples Test			
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	**Sig.**
POST_TEST	Equal variances assumed	.288	.593
	Equal variances not assumed		

The results showed a significance value of 0.593 > 0.05, indicating that the variances of both groups were homogeneous and met the requirements for parametric testing.

3.1.4 Paired Sample T-Test

This test was used to determine the significant differences in speaking ability before and after the treatment within the same group.

Table 4. *Paired Sample T-Test Experimental and Control Class*

		t-statistic	**Sig. 2 tailed**
Pair 1	Pre-test – Post-test Exsperiment	0,115	0,006
Pair 2	Pre-test – Post-test Control	-2,918	0,909

The results showed that in the experimental class, the significance value was 0.006 < 0.05, indicating an effective improvement in speaking ability after learning with Wordwall. In contrast, the control class had a significance value of 0.909 > 0.05, indicating no effective improvement with conventional methods.

3.1.5 Independent Sample T-Test

This test was used to compare the post-test results of the two groups.

Table 5. *Independent Sample T-Test*

		T-statistic	**Sig. 2 tailed**
Post_test	Equal variances assumed	4,226	<0,001

The results indicated a significance value of < 0.001 < 0.05, meaning there was an effective difference between the experimental and control classes. The experimental class had a higher average score than the control class.

Thus, based on several data analyses, this study found that the application of Wordwall media was effective in improving students' speaking skills compared to conventional methods. It also fostered a more interactive, enjoyable, and motivating learning environment, encouraging students to participate more actively in English speaking lessons.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the use of Wordwall media is effective in improving students' speaking skills, particularly in describing people. The instrument used in this study was an oral test assessed using a rubric adapted from Brown (2014), covering five main aspects of speaking skills: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension. Each aspect was scored on a scale of 1–5, resulting in a maximum total score of 25, which was then converted into a scale of 100.

To ensure the validity of the instrument, expert judgment was conducted involving the academic supervisor and an experienced English teacher. They evaluated the test items based on their alignment with the learning objectives, relevance to the taught material, and appropriateness in measuring the targeted components of speaking skills. The expert validation results indicated that all items met the established criteria, including content relevance, clarity of instructions, and suitability for the students' proficiency level. Minor revisions suggested by the experts, such as refining task instructions and

adjusting the complexity of prompts, were incorporated to enhance clarity and fairness. After revision, the instrument was confirmed valid and appropriate for use in data collection. This confirms that the oral test effectively measured the students' speaking ability in line with the study objectives.

The pre-test and post-test data met the requirements for analysis using parametric statistical tests. The normality test showed all data were normally distributed with significance values greater than 0.05. The homogeneity test produced a significance value of 0.593 (> 0.05), indicating homogeneous variance. Therefore, data analysis proceeded with paired sample t-tests and independent sample t-tests.

The results of the paired sample t-test showed a significant improvement in the experimental class, with a significance value of 0.006 (< 0.05), while the control class showed no significant improvement (Sig. = 0.909 > 0.05). The independent sample t-test revealed a significant difference in the post-test results between the two classes, with a t-value of 4.226 and significance < 0.001, indicating the experimental class achieved a higher average score.

The most notable improvements occurred in comprehension and vocabulary, suggesting that Wordwall helped students better understand and express ideas through its visual and interactive features. However, fluency showed relatively low improvement, indicating the need for additional practice such as role-playing, group discussions, and continuous speaking activities.

Therefore, Wordwall can be recommended as an effective learning medium to enhance students' speaking skills while also increasing their engagement and motivation in learning English.

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