

# INTEGRATING GAME-BASED LEARNING OF WORDWALL IN TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION (A CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH)

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## Abstract

Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century demands that teachers provide active learning and utilize technological advancement as the learning media. Besides increasing students' motivation, learning using technological media is able to assist the students in learning language. In order to meet the student's needs based on their characteristics and capabilities, teachers can integrate good teaching media based on a game application. This study aims to increase the student's motivation in learning English vocabulary mastery through the Wordwall application as the teaching media based on the TaRL approach as the differentiated learning strategy. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach conducted through Classroom Action Research. The collected data was through questionnaires of students' motivation through diagnostic assessments. Then, the data was analyzed using Likert Scale. The results indicate that teaching through the digital media of the Wordwall application can be the appropriate way to increase students' motivation in English class, particularly in implementing the TaRL method as the differentiated strategy that adjusts the teaching process based on students' characteristics and ability.

**Keywords:** *differentiated learning, Wordwall, vocabulary*

## INTRODUCTION

In the educational field, learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century demands that teachers provide active learning and utilize technology advancement as the learning media. As stated in the Merdeka curriculum implementation, one of its indicators is digital literacy and technology integration. This curriculum acknowledges the role of technology in education and encourages its integration to enrich learning experiences. The concept of the Merdeka curriculum is also related to Ki Hadjar Dewantara's perspective of "*Kodrat Alam*" and "*Kodrat Zaman*," in which the technology development is followed by the needs of society, particularly in technology advancement (Dewantara, 2013).

Digital learning, a term used to describe a range of technology-based methods, has emerged as a means to support and enhance student learning, tutoring, instruction, and assessment. Teaching media

in digital learning theory refers to using various digital tools, resources, and platforms to enhance the teaching and learning process. By utilizing these technologies, teachers can create dynamic and interactive learning environments that accommodate diverse students' needs, foster engagement, and promote deeper understanding and knowledge acquisition.

As an adjustment to the students' conditions, accompanied by the implementation of technology-based learning, the success of learning can also be seen in how the students enjoy the learning process, which is related to learning motivation. However, several factors affect the student's interest in learning (Adawiyah, 2019; Muliani & Arusman, 2022). Learning motivation involves an individual's desire to master new knowledge and skills. Besides motivation, the factor that also influences the learning process is understanding each student's different potential and abilities. As

a teacher, providing teaching strategies becomes crucial for assisting the students to achieve learning objectives. Nursyam (2019) mentioned that interest in learning refers to the desire to do something because of the pleasure of work, including learning, as it is known that the characteristics and abilities possessed by each student vary. In order to fulfill their various condition, differentiated teaching strategies can be implemented, one of which is the Teaching at the Right Level approach. It is a learning approach that assists the students in learning based on their abilities (Ahyar *et al.*, 2022). Implementing the TaRL approach can also increase students' motivation as they learn based on their capacities, but teachers still guide them based on the learning objectives. Teachers must conduct an initial assessment as a diagnostic test for students to understand their characteristics, needs, and potential to determine their abilities and early development (Suharyani *et al.*, 2023).

In order to implement TaRL learning and incorporate technology as a learning tool, teachers can employ games as an effective strategy to motivate students in English language learning, specifically in developing vocabulary mastery. One of the great strategies in teaching language is by using games. It helps the teacher to maximize each student's learning potential (Sugar *et al.*, 2002). Wordwall application is an interactive game learning media that can be used for learning. It is expected to enhance vocabulary mastery and word acquisition skills while making learning enjoyable and interactive. Hamer (2001) states that games can encourage learners to learn vocabulary more enthusiastically. This study aims to increase students' motivation in learning English vocabulary mastery through the Wordwall application as the teaching media based on the TaRL approach as the differentiated learning strategy. Therefore, the English material can be

conveyed properly based on their capability as the Merdeka curriculum implementation.

## METHOD

This research is a type of classroom action research in the qualitative approach. This model consists of a cycle in some stages in four cycles, namely design, implementation (action), observation, and reflection. The research subject involved students at SMPN 7 Semarang consisting of 32 students of VII grade. The research instrument used tests and questionnaires forms based on their interest or motivation in learning English through Google Forms. The indicators of statements questionnaires were based on Putu's theory (Putu *et al.*, 2020). After the data was collected, these were analyzed using Likert Scale 1-5 (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) to describe students' motivation in learning English. According to Sugiyono (2016), Likert Scale measures the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of an individual or a group of people regarding social phenomena.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted during four cycles of the TaRL approach in English class. Each cycle was conducted in one to two meetings.

**Figure 1.** The Process of TaRL Implementation in English Class



## Cycle 1: Assessment

As a process of the TaRL method, the first meeting was conducted to convey the learning objectives. It aims to provide information for the students related to the activity that would be carried out while learning this topic. The first step in identifying students' abilities was through assessment diagnostic. The researcher performed two kinds of diagnostic tests, namely cognitive and non-cognitive tests,

through Google Forms. Based on the data that have been collected, the researcher classified students' capability into three categories; low, intermediate, and advance groups. The indicators of those diagnostic assessments related to the readiness and interest in learning before starting the class process in school with friends and teacher. It can engage students' level of understanding when learning the English language.

**Table 1. Result of Non-cognitive Assessment Diagnostics by Students Based on Student Motivation**

No	Questions	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	I studied at night and prepared for tomorrow's lessons.	0.5%	37.1%	11%	21.3%	30.1%
2.	I have prepared my study books and writing materials before the class begins.	28.3%	19%	34%	5.7%	13%
3.	English learning is interesting and challenging.	10.4%	17.4%	39%	23.2%	10%
4.	I only study when facing exams or tests.	41.2%	23%	20.6%	10.4%	4.8%
5.	I do not care even if I cannot understand the English language.	8.6%	8.2%	23%	17.1%	43.1%
6.	I am interested in watching English content that I find on social media.	30.5%	34.7%	21%	9.6%	4.2%
7.	English is a difficult subject for me to comprehend.	22.3%	28.6%	23%	11.4%	14.7%
8.	I feel shame to ask the teacher, so I stay silent.	48%	13.2%	23%	8.5%	7.3%
9.	My desire to learn English depends on the teacher.	55.6%	28.1%	13.4%	1.9%	1%
10.	Learning English is important.	26%	18.4%	28.5%	26.2%	0.9%
11.	I feel sleepy and lose focus during the lesson.	29%	30%	13.9%	10.3%	16.8%
12.	I rush through the questions and need to pay more attention to details.	28.7%	21.3%	30%	14.8%	5.2%
13.	I still pay attention to the teacher's explanation even when sitting at the back.	11.3%	23.5%	23%	38.2%	4%
14.	I enjoy discussing the subject matter with friends in the class.	21.2%	14.3%	21%	19.6%	23.9%
15.	I attend extra courses outside of school hours.	10%	13.1%	34.4%	10%	32.5%
16.	I only ask the teacher if there is something I need help understanding.	35.1%	28.8%	13.4%	17.2%	5.5%
17.	I don't easily give up when facing difficulties in learning English.	20%	14%	12.6%	18.9%	34.5%
18.	I easily give up and become lazy when I get bad scores.	45.6%	33.1%	14.1%	4%	3.2%
19.	I enjoy seeking information related to English learning from other sources.	9%	14.2%	20.6%	36.1%	20.1%
20.	I do not particularly appreciate it when the teacher assigns homework.	30.3%	23.6%	19.4%	10.3%	16.4%
21.	I always pay attention to the teacher's explanations to get good grades.	19.8%	17%	25.3%	30.1%	7.8%
22.	I feel comfortable in the classroom environment, which helps me focus on learning.	11.9%	12.1%	23.5%	25.8%	26.7%
23.	I am happy when the teacher uses games as the teaching method.	30.2%	23.7%	32.2%	13%	0.9%
24.	I always respond to the teacher's questions to stay awake.	17.5%	13.5%	38%	20.6%	10.4%
25.	I do not care about the English subject even if the teacher uses fun teaching methods.	18.3%	19.6%	33%	13.7%	15.4%

**Table 2. Result of Student's Cognitive Assessment Diagnostic based on Numbering Material**

No.	Questions	Understand	Do not Understand
1.	Identify the terms of ordinal numbers 1-10	33.4%	66.6%
2.	Identify the terms of cardinal numbers 1-20	38.2%	61.8%
2.	Mention the spelling of ordinal numbers 1-10	30.3%	69.7%
3.	Mention the spelling of cardinal number 1-20	28.9%	71.1%

### **Cycle 2: Grouping**

After the diagnostics test had been classified, the researcher grouped students into three groups based on the cognitive test result. It aims to adjust suitable and proper teaching strategies based on students' conditions. According to those three groups, the students receive different assessment links based on the Wordwall application. Each link was adjusted based on students' abilities to understand the material. They can discuss the task based on the link but need to submit by their name. Most students are happy to learn to use their mobile phones. Some said they did not feel sleepy, and the questions were colorful and challenging. Group 1 (low learners) was given the simplest questions: anagram or arrange the alphabet terms based on the cardinal and ordinal numbers.

The winner is based on the time and speed of answering every question. Group 2 (intermediate learners) was given the Hangman test related to the short questions that need to answer in words. Each word determined the total opportunities to type the right answer. If they make more mistakes, then the man will appear. Group 3 (advanced learners) was given a more complicated multiple-choice quiz. They must understand the sentence questions and time and choose the best answer. All participants of this kind of quiz must answer as soon as possible with the correct answer to get the highest score. During the learning process, none of the students feel sleepy, talk to their friends, and they can innovatively understand the material by the quiz.

### **Cycle 3: Basic Skill Pedagogy**

Pedagogy is the most important part of learning to gain knowledge and give effective and efficient teaching methods. According to Mubarokah Syaratul (2022), TaRL is the teaching method focused on the basic skill understanding of students. Therefore, the researcher explained basic skills in reading and writing the numbers in ordinal and cardinal forms and explained them in presentation form. It aims to ensure that the students understand what they are learning. The researcher also connected the material with their daily life as examples so the students could easily understand the information. The examples the researcher gave were also connected with culturally responsive teaching based on daily information that uses the ordinal number, such as competition that tells position, level, etc., and the total or amount of something for cardinal numbers. The students also can explore the information based on the internet or learn together by puzzles or jumbled words prepared by the researcher. The various kinds of teaching strategies that do not only focus on learning by the book can create students' interest and motivation, making them easily comprehend the information and not feel bored during the class.

### **Cycle 4: Mentoring and Monitoring**

After performing differentiated strategies of the TaRL approach during the Wordwall games application, the researcher observed the learning process. Most of them felt enjoy and happy to learn by the game as the teaching media. Even though they were

still confused and had trouble with the internet connection, they could follow the teacher's instructions and join with groupmate. Some of them had curiosity to see the other group's questions and even wanted to complete other tasks. Some students also asked the researcher to create new model games for the next meeting. During the monitoring process, the researcher had not found serious troubles implementing these Wordwall games. For the low group, the researcher focused on guiding them and helping to give a clue to answer the question properly. For the intermediate group, the researcher asked them if they found difficulties in accessing the application. Meanwhile, for the advanced group, the researcher only observed and did not give any help or guide them. Overall, the TaRL process could run smoothly without any serious trouble.

## CONCLUSION

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According to the research findings, motivation is a crucial part of the success of the learning process. Teaching through digital media can be appropriate in this current era based on the Merdeka Curriculum. Integrating game-based learning of the Wordwall game application can increase students' motivation to learn English. In addition, Wordwall can be implemented through the TaRL approach based on the students' characteristics and abilities. This method can be done in several stages, such as assessment diagnostic, grouping, basic skill pedagogy, as well as mentoring and monitoring. As a result, students can learn based on their capabilities with the teacher's guidance and enjoy the learning process. For further research, it is expected to provide other application learning media that can support the TaRL approach and assessment design.