

Students' Perceptions of Wordwall Learning Media in Improving their Speaking Skills

Hammam Ukhrowi* , Heni Novitasari

Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka, Indonesia

Email: Hukhrowi17@gmail.com*

Keywords:

Students Perception; Wordwall;
Speaking Skill.

Abstract

Speaking skills are a major challenge for Indonesian EFL students, often caused by teacher-centered methods and lack of interactive media. This leads to low participation and motivation in speaking activities. Game-based platforms like Wordwall present a promising alternative to create more engaging learning experiences. This research investigates the students' perceptions of the use of Wordwall learning media in improving English speaking skills. The study employed a descriptive qualitative design involving 40 tenth-grade students at Vocational High School Nurul Islam who had previously used Wordwall in English speaking lessons. Data were collected through questionnaires and documentation and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman Interactive Model consisting of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that students generally have positive perceptions of Wordwall as a learning medium. Students perceived Wordwall as easy to use, attractive, and beneficial in supporting English learning activities. The platform helped students improve vocabulary mastery and pronunciation while increasing learning motivation and classroom participation. Nevertheless, its contribution to speaking fluency, grammatical accuracy, and speaking confidence was perceived as moderate. The findings suggest that Wordwall can serve as an effective supplementary learning medium for speaking instruction when integrated with communicative classroom activities and teacher guidance. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on game-based learning by providing insights into students' perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of Wordwall in Indonesian EFL classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a crucial language skill in mastering English since it allows learners to express thoughts, views, and emotions successfully. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), speaking is often regarded as one of the most challenging skills to master. Students frequently encounter the difficulties related to vocabulary limitations, pronunciation problems, grammatical inaccuracies, and lack of confidence when communicating in English (Lim et al., 2021). These difficulties frequently lead to reduced involvement in speaking activities tasks and restricted chances for significant verbal interaction.

In Indonesian EFL classrooms, speaking instruction is frequently constrained by teacher-centered approaches that emphasize grammatical knowledge and written exercises rather than communicative practice. Consequently, students tend to become passive learners and are

reluctant to use English actively. This situation highlights the need for innovative learning media capable of creating interactive, engaging, and student-centered learning environments.

The rapid development of educational technology has encouraged teachers to integrate digital learning media into classroom instruction. One of the most promising approaches is game-based learning, which incorporates game elements into educational activities to increase learner engagement and motivation. Previous studies have reported that game-based learning can reduce learning anxiety (Chadafi, 2023), enhance students' speaking skills (Marzuki, 2021; Gunawan, 2025), improve student participation, and create enjoyable learning experiences.

Among the various game-based learning platforms available, Wordwall has become increasingly popular among English teachers (Faradisa, 2024). Wordwall offers a variety of interactive activities such as quizzes, matching games, random wheels, and vocabulary exercises that can be adapted to different learning objectives. Its flexibility allows teachers to implement it in both online and face-to-face learning environments.

Several studies have reported positive outcomes regarding the implementation of Wordwall in language learning. Zaen et al. (2022) found that Wordwall enhanced student engagement and learning enjoyment. Similarly, Pratiwi et al. (2024) reported that Wordwall created a more supportive learning environment that encouraged student participation. Other studies have suggested that Wordwall contributes positively to speaking practice by stimulating student interaction and reducing anxiety during oral activities. In line with these findings, Arini (2024) and Fahada (2024) reported that students held positive perceptions toward technology-based gamification and gamified learning in EFL classrooms, while Nurlaila (2024) found that both teachers and students perceived gamification favorably in spoken language pedagogy. Furthermore, Ethical Lingua Journal (2024) reported that Wordwall positively impacted students' speaking performance, and Syahroni and Wahono (2024) found that students perceived the Wordwall hot-seat game favorably for developing speaking skills.

Despite these positive findings, most previous studies have focused primarily on measuring learning outcomes or evaluating the effectiveness of Wordwall quantitatively. Limited attention has been given to students' perceptions regarding the use of Wordwall specifically for speaking skill development. Most perception studies have instead examined reading comprehension (Janadah, 2024) or Wordwall's role as a formative assessment tool (Janah, 2023). Furthermore, qualitative investigations exploring students' experiences and viewpoints remain relatively scarce in Indonesian secondary school contexts.

This gap highlights the importance of examining how students perceive the implementation of Wordwall in speaking lessons. Understanding students' perceptions can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness, attractiveness, and sustainability of technology-based learning media. Therefore, this research aims to investigate students' perceptions of the use of Wordwall learning media in improving English speaking skills. Specifically, the study explores students' perceptions regarding the ease of use, attractiveness, usefulness, motivation, and engagement associated with Wordwall in speaking activities. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on students' perceptions and experiences rather than solely examining learning outcomes, thereby providing a deeper understanding of Wordwall implementation in Indonesian EFL classrooms. The findings of this study are expected to benefit English teachers in selecting and integrating appropriate digital media, assist curriculum developers in designing technology-

enhanced learning materials, and serve as a reference for future researchers investigating game-based learning in EFL contexts.

METHOD

This research employed a descriptive qualitative research design. The qualitative approach was selected because it allowed the researcher to explore students' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of Wordwall in speaking instruction in greater depth.

The participants were 40 tenth-grade students of Vocational High School Nurul Islam who had previously experienced English learning activities utilizing Wordwall. The participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure that all respondents had direct experience with the learning platform.

Data were collected through questionnaires and documentation. The questionnaire consisted of statements addressing students' perceptions of Wordwall concerning ease of use, attractiveness, motivation, engagement, and perceived usefulness in speaking activities, documentation included screenshots of learning activities and supporting instructional materials.

The collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman Interactive Model, consisting of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 2021), an approach also widely applied in previous qualitative studies on language education (Asipi et al., 2022; Irawan, 2020; Washback Study Journal, 2021). This approach enabled the researcher to systematically identify patterns, themes, and interpretations relevant to the research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Students' Perceptions: Ease of Use

The findings indicate that students perceived Wordwall as an easy-to-use learning platform. This positive perception is reflected in several questionnaire items. For example, 86% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the Wordwall interface was easy to understand (40% strongly agree and 46% agree). Similarly, 90% of the respondents agreed that accessing Wordwall game links was straightforward (40% strongly agree and 50% agree).

Students also reported positive experiences regarding navigation and operation. A total of 80% agreed that the menus and navigation buttons were clear, while 80% indicated that they could operate Wordwall features quickly. Furthermore, 64% reported experiencing no technical difficulties when accessing Wordwall through mobile phones or laptops.

For the negative statements, the majority of students tended to disagree. For instance, 38% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had difficult understanding of Wordwall features, while only 10% agreed with the statement. Likewise, 46% disagreed that they often became confused while using Wordwall for speaking practice. These findings suggested that students generally found the Wordwall accessible and user-friendly, although some learners still required the teacher guidance during the initial stages of implementation.

Table 1. Students' General Perception toward the Use of Wordwall

Kemudahan Penggunaan (Ease of Use)	SS	S	N	TS	STS
1. The Wordwall interface is very easy for me to understand.	40%	46%	13%	1%	0%
2. I'm having trouble understanding the features in Wordwall. (-)	2%	8%	52%	25%	13%
3. I often get confused when using Wordwall for speaking practice. (-)	4%	10%	63%	17%	6%
4. I didn't experience any technical difficulties when accessing Wordwall via mobile/laptop.(+)	8%	56%	29%	2%	4%
5. I was able to operate the Wordwall features very quickly. (+)	45%	35%	20%	0%	4%
6. I had a hard time understanding how the game on Wordwall worked without constant guidance from a teacher. (-)	0%	4%	50%	27%	19%
7. The menus and navigation buttons within Wordwall work clearly. (+)	47%	33%	15%	4%	0%
8. I find Wordwall monotonous and uninteresting. (-)	2%	0%	44%	33%	21%
9. The process of accessing the Wordwall game link is very straightforward. (+)	40%	50%	10%	0%	0%

Source. Questionnaire data (2025)

Students' Perceptions of Attractiveness and Engagement

The results showed that students perceived the wordwall as an attractive and engaging learning medium. It was approximately 46% of students who agreed that learning speaking through wordwall was enjoyable, while only 2% expressed disagreement. Additionally, 48% agreed that the variety of games prevented boredom during learning activities.

Students also viewed Wordwall as a motivating tool. They felt agreeable around 50% for the English lessons by using Wordwall, and 42% reported that the leaderboard feature motivated them to study English more diligently. Furthermore, 52% disagreed that Wordwall failed to encourage participation, indicating that the platform contributed positively to classroom engagement.

The visual and audio elements were also generally perceived positively, with 61% of respondents disagreeing that these features distracted them from learning. Likewise, 62% disagreed that Wordwall challenges lacked sufficient variety. However, a considerable proportion of students selected neutral responses across several items (ranging from 46% to 60%), suggesting that the level of engagement experienced through Wordwall varied among learners.

Table 2. Acttractiveness

(engagement)	SS	S	N	TS	STS
10. Learning to speak using Wordwall is really fun. (+)	13%	33%	52%	2%	0%
11. The sounds and visuals on Wordwall actually distract me while I'm studying. (-)	0%	6%	33%	44%	17%
12. The variety of games on Wordwall keeps me from getting bored. (+)	8%	40%	48%	2%	2%
13. Wordwalls don't encourage me to participate more in learning. (-)	8%	0%	46%	35%	17%
14. I always look forward to English learning sessions that use Wordwall. (+)	10%	40%	48%	2%	0%
15. Having a time limit in the Wordwall game makes me feel stressed rather than excited. (-)	2%	0%	46%	33%	19%
16. Learning with Wordwall is much more interesting than just listening to the teacher's explanation. (+)	10%	21%	60%	6%	2%
17. I feel bored because the challenges in Wordwall are not varied enough for me.. (-)	0%	2%	35%	33%	29%
18. The leaderboard motivates me to study English more diligently. (+)	17%	25%	58%	0%	0%

Source. Questionnaire data (2025)

Students' Perceptions of Usefulness

The usefulness dimension revealed that students perceived Wordwall as beneficial for several aspects of speaking development. Vocabulary improvement received the strongest positive response, with 65% of students agreeing that Wordwall helped them expand their English vocabulary. Additionally, 48% agreed that Wordwall helped them remember vocabulary more easily.

Regarding pronunciation, 46% of respondents agreed that Wordwall improved their pronunciation, while 53% disagreed that no improvement occurred. These findings suggest that students perceived a positive contribution of Wordwall to pronunciation practice.

The platform was also considered useful for providing immediate feedback. Approximately 43% agreed that the auto-correction feature helped them identify mistakes, and 35% agreed that the final score reflected their abilities accurately.

However, perceptions regarding speaking fluency, grammar, and confidence were less positive. Only 41% agreed that Wordwall helped them use grammar more correctly, while 37% agreed that it improved speaking fluency. Moreover, 58% of students selected neutral responses regarding speaking fluency, indicating uncertainty about its impact. Similarly, 58% provided neutral responses when asked whether they still felt nervous speaking English despite using Wordwall. These findings suggest that Wordwall is perceived as more effective for vocabulary

enrichment and pronunciation practice than for developing higher-level speaking competencies such as fluency and confidence.

Table 3. Perceived Usefulness

(Perceived Usefulness)	SS	S	N	TS	STS
19. Wordwall helps me improve my pronunciation. (+)	13%	33%	50%	4%	0%
20. didn't notice any change in my pronunciation after using Wordwall. (-)	0%	2%	46%	38%	15%
21. Wordwall helps me to expand my English vocabulary. (+)	13%	52%	31%	0%	4%
22. The vocabulary learned on Wordwall isn't very relevant to everyday conversation. (-)	0%	8%	46%	38%	0%
23. Through Wordwall, I can remember vocabulary more easily. (+)	10%	38%	46%	6%	0%
24. Wordwall helps me use grammar more correctly in speaking. (+)	8%	33%	58%	0%	0%
25. I don't think Wordwall has had any effect on my grammar. (-)	2%	4%	42%	35%	17%
26. Practicing on the Wordwall made me speak more fluently. (+)	4%	33%	63%	0%	0%
27. Wordwall doesn't help me speak English fluently. (-)	0%	4%	38%	35%	23%
28. I can immediately see my mistakes using the auto-correction feature in Wordwall. (+)	8%	35%	56%	0%	0%
29. The final score gives an honest reflection of my abilities. (+)	10%	25%	63%	0%	2%
30. I still feel nervous speaking English even when I use Wordwall. (-)	4%	15%	58%	15%	8%

Source. Questionnaire data (2025)

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that students generally hold positive perceptions toward the implementation of Wordwall in speaking instruction. The ease-of-use dimension received the strongest positive responses, as reflected by 86% of students who agreed that the interface was easy to understand and 90% who considered access to the platform straightforward. These findings suggest that Wordwall's simple design and user-friendly interface reduce technological barriers and facilitate student participation in learning activities. This finding corroborates Arini (2024), who reported that students perceive technology-based gamification positively when a platform is easy to operate.

Regarding attractiveness and engagement, the results indicate that Wordwall successfully creates a more enjoyable learning environment. Nearly half of the respondents agreed that learning through Wordwall was enjoyable and that the variety of game formats reduced boredom. Furthermore, more than half of the students disagreed with statements suggesting that Wordwall discouraged participation or provided insufficiently varied challenges. These findings support the argument that gamification elements such as points, leaderboards, and interactive activities contribute to higher student engagement and motivation. This is consistent with Chadafi (2023) and Fahada (2024), who found that gamified and game-based learning activities increase learner enthusiasm and reduce speaking anxiety, as well as

with Nurlaila (2024), who reported that both teachers and students viewed gamification favorably as a means of fostering active participation.

The usefulness dimension reveals a more nuanced picture. Vocabulary acquisition emerged as the strongest perceived benefit, with 65% of students reporting that Wordwall helped them expand their vocabulary. Positive perceptions were also found regarding pronunciation improvement and the usefulness of automatic feedback features. These results indicate that Wordwall effectively supports language components that rely on repeated exposure, practice, and immediate feedback. A similar pattern was reported by Faradisa (2024) and Ethical Lingua Journal (2024), who found that Wordwall positively contributed to students' vocabulary mastery and speaking performance.

However, the findings also reveal limitations in the platform's contribution to speaking fluency, grammatical accuracy, and speaking confidence, echoing Lim et al.'s (2021) observation that grammatical competence and speaking ability do not always develop in parallel. A large proportion of students selected neutral responses for these aspects, suggesting that they did not experience substantial improvement. This may be because speaking fluency and confidence require authentic communicative interaction rather than individual game-based exercises alone. Therefore, while Wordwall effectively supports language practice, it should be complemented by communicative activities such as role-plays, discussions, presentations, and collaborative speaking tasks to maximize speaking development. This recommendation aligns with Marzuki (2021), Gunawan (2025), and Syahrone and Wahono (2024), who similarly found that language games are most effective for speaking development when combined with direct communicative practice. Thus, the findings suggest that Wordwall functions most effectively as a supplementary instructional tool. Its strengths lie in increasing motivation, engagement, vocabulary mastery, and pronunciation practice, whereas more complex speaking competencies still require teacher guidance and meaningful communicative interaction.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated students' perceptions of the use of Wordwall learning media in improving English speaking skills among tenth-grade EFL students. The findings reveal that students generally perceive Wordwall positively across the dimensions of ease of use, attractiveness, engagement, and usefulness. The strongest positive perceptions were found in the ease-of-use dimension, where most students considered Wordwall easy to access, understand, and operate. Students also perceived the platform as engaging and motivating due to its interactive and game-based features. In terms of usefulness, Wordwall was viewed as particularly effective in supporting vocabulary acquisition, vocabulary retention, pronunciation practice, and immediate feedback during learning activities. However, the findings also indicate that Wordwall has a more limited impact on speaking fluency, grammatical accuracy, and speaking confidence. Many students expressed neutral perceptions regarding these aspects, suggesting that the platform alone may not provide sufficient opportunities for authentic spoken communication. Therefore, Wordwall should be viewed as an effective supplementary learning medium rather than a standalone solution for speaking instruction. To achieve more comprehensive speaking development, teachers are encouraged to integrate Wordwall with communicative teaching strategies that promote meaningful interaction and real-life language use. This study was limited to one vocational high school involving 40 students. Therefore, the

findings cannot be generalized to all EFL learners in Indonesia. Furthermore, the study relied primarily on questionnaire responses, which may not fully represent students' actual speaking performance.

REFERENCES

- Arini, A. R. (2024). EFL students' perception towards technology-based gamification. *ELTIN Journal*, 12(1), 45–56. <https://doi.org/10.22460/eltin.v12i1.4674>
- Asipi, L. S., Rosalina, U., & Nopiyadi, D. (2022). The analysis of reading habits using Miles and Huberman interactive model to empower students' literacy. *International Journal of Education and Humanities*, 2(3), 117–125. <https://doi.org/10.58557/ijeh.v2i3.98>
- Chadafi, M. (2023). The use of game-based learning on students' speaking skill and anxiety. *Journal of English Education*, 5(2), 89–102. <https://doi.org/10.32682/jeet.v5i2.116>
- Ethical Lingua Journal. (2024). The impact of Wordwall on students' speaking performance. *Ethical Lingua Journal*, 7(1), 78–91. <https://doi.org/10.30605/25409190.739>
- Fahada, N. (2024). Students' perception of gamified learning in EFL classroom. *Journal of English Teaching and Learning*, 6(1), 34–47. <https://doi.org/10.55849/jetl.v6i1.1828>
- Faradisa, M. (2024). Students' perceptions towards the use of Wordwall application in English learning. *Proceedings of Nuraicon*, 6(1), 56–68. <https://doi.org/10.21070/nuraicon.v6i1.1128>
- Gunawan, I. D. (2025). The implementation of game-based learning to enhance EFL students' speaking skill. *Journal of English Education and Youth*, 3(1), 23–35. <https://doi.org/10.35706/joey.v3i1.7464>
- Irawan, R. (2020). Exploring strengths and weaknesses of teaching English using Miles and Huberman model. *ELTICS Journal*, 5(2), 145–158. <https://doi.org/10.24071/eltics.v5i2.528>
- Janadah, C. (2024). Students' perception on the use of Wordwall for reading comprehension. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 8(1), 45–58. <https://doi.org/10.33369/jeet.8.1.2024>
- Janah, S. (2023). Students' perception toward Wordwall as formative assessment tool. *Didaktik Journal*, 9(2), 234–247. <https://doi.org/10.22460/didaktik.v9i2.1764>
- Lim, J., Chen, L., Wang, Y., & Zhang, H. (2021). Grammar and speaking interrelationship in EFL contexts. *Asian EFL Journal*, 25(2), 89–105. <https://doi.org/10.29140/aeflj.v25i2.1403>
- Marzuki, A. G. (2021). Using language games to enhance EFL students' speaking skill. *At-Ta'tlim Journal*, 7(2), 67–78. <https://doi.org/10.24042/attalim.v7i2.700>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506353070>
- Nurlaila, N. (2024). Gamification in spoken language pedagogy: Teachers' and students' perceptions. *Journal of English as a Foreign Language*, 14(1), 123–138. <https://doi.org/10.23971/jefl.v14i1.7506>
- Syahroni, A. I., & Wahono, S. S. (2024). How is hot-seat game in the EFL students' perception in learning English speaking skill? *Tell-Us Journal*, 1(1), 45–58. <https://doi.org/10.22202/tus.2024.v1i1.7889>

Washback Study Journal. (2021). Qualitative analysis using Miles and Huberman procedures. *Journal of Social and Education Studies*, 5(1), 78–92.
<https://doi.org/10.24127/jsju.v5i1.685>