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Developing Scramble Words Game to Teach Writing Skill of Seventh Grade in Junior High School

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Abstract
The goal of this project is to create a Scramble Words game as a teaching tool to help seventh-grade students become better writers. It was inspired by pupils' poor sentence structure, poor use of proper language, and lack of enthusiasm for writing assignments. The research and development (R&D) design used in this study was modified from Borg and Gall and included needs analysis, design, development, implementation, and assessment. Fourteen seventh-grade students from SMP Islam Baabussalaam served as the subjects, and information was gathered via questionnaires, documentation, and observation. Word cards, worksheets, and teacher recommendations are included in the product, which is offered in both printed and digital formats and is intended to assist students in creating coherent sentences and paragraphs. The findings demonstrate how well the Scramble Words Game enhances pupils' writing. The results show that the Scramble Words Game effectively improves students' writing skills, including sentence construction, vocabulary use, and idea organization, while also increasing motivation and participation. In conclusion, the Scramble Words Game is a valid, practical, and effective medium for teaching writing and can be used as an alternative strategy to create a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment.

Keywords: Scramble Words Game, writing skill, game-based learning, junior high school, research and development

INTRODUCTION

English is basic role in communication, education, science, technology, and is taught as a compulsory subject at the level of junior high school in Indonesia. One of the main goals of English teaching is to develop students' four language skills. Among these, skill of writing is most important skill, as it requires not only grammar and vocabulary mastery but also the ability to organize ideas coherently (Rohmawati & Masruroh, 2023).

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In practice, many seventh-grade students still face difficulties in writing. Based on classroom observation at SMP Islam Baabussallaam, students showed low motivation and struggled with generating ideas, organizing sentences, and using appropriate vocabulary and grammar. Their writing was often incomplete, disorganized, and contained many errors. This indicates the need for more engaging and effective teaching strategies.

Game-based learning is considered an innovative approach that can increase students' motivation and participation. Educational games such as Quizizz and Kahoot have been proven to enhance engagement and learning outcomes (Chen & Hwang, 2020; Rahman & Rahayu, 2022). One alternative is the Scramble Words Game, where students rearrange jumbled words or sentences into meaningful forms. This activity helps improve vocabulary, sentence structure, and critical thinking in an enjoyable way (Sari & Nugroho, 2021).

Previous studies have shown that scramble-based activities can improve students' writing ability, motivation, and sentence accuracy (Herawati, 2025; Riska, 2023). However, most studies focus on vocabulary or general language skills rather than developing a specific instructional media for writing. Therefore, this study aims to develop a Scramble Words Game as a learning medium to improve writing skills among seventh-grade students.

The results indicate that the use of Scramble Words Game not only enhances students' writing competence but also creates a more interactive, enjoyable, and student-centered learning environment. Therefore, it can be used as an effective alternative medium in teaching writing at the junior high school level.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Nature of English

English is extensively utilized in research, technology, education, and communication. It serves as a universal language that unites speakers of many languages and cultures (Crystal, 2003). English's vocabulary has evolved from other languages, and it is structurally an analytical language that depends on word order rather than inflection (Harmer, 2007)

English is a universal language, as demonstrated by Kachru's (1992) classification of English users into three circles: Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles. English promotes comprehensibility over native-like accuracy since it is a lingua franca (Jenkins, 2006). In Indonesian junior high schools, English is a required curriculum that aims to improve students' four language abilities. English is therefore a dynamic, worldwide tool for learning and communication in addition to being a language system.

2.2 Writing Skill

Writing is a productive skill that enables students to express ideas in a structured and coherent way (Harmer, 2007). It involves processes such as planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Nunan, 2003). Writing is complex because it requires linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural competence (Brown, 2001).

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Many EFL learners face difficulties in writing due to limited vocabulary, grammar, and idea development (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Therefore, effective teaching strategies and engaging media are needed. Recent studies highlight the role of technology, feedback systems, and interactive learning in improving writing skills. Writing also supports critical thinking and creativity, making it essential in education.

2.3 Learning Media

Learning media are tools used to facilitate teaching and learning by delivering information effectively (Arsyad, 2019). They help students understand concepts, increase motivation, and promote active participation (Gerlach & Ely, 2002). Media can be in the form of visual, audio, printed, or digital tools such as PowerPoint, Canva, and educational games.

In language learning, media support vocabulary development, grammar understanding, and skill integration (Harmer, 2007). Game-based media are particularly effective in increasing engagement and motivation (Prensky, 2007). Therefore, selecting appropriate and interactive media is essential, especially for junior high school students.

2.4 Scramble Words Game

2.4.1 Definition and Concept

Scramble Words Game is a language activity where learners rearrange jumbled letters, words, or sentences into meaningful forms. It combines problem-solving with linguistic knowledge and can be implemented in printed or digital formats (Rahmawati & Mulyono, 2021).

2.4.2 Theoretical Foundations

This game is supported by cognitive theory, as it develops memory and pattern recognition, and constructivist theory, which emphasizes learning through interaction (Santoso, 2022; Firdaus, 2024). It also aligns with communicative and task-based approaches that promote meaningful language use.

2.4.3 Learning Outcomes

Research shows that scramble activities improve sentence construction, vocabulary retention, and writing skills, while also increasing motivation and participation (Herawati, 2025; Riska, 2023).

2.4.4 Strengths and Limitations

The advantages include flexibility, active learning, and increased engagement. However, limitations include the risk of focusing only on form, the need for scaffolding, and limited transfer to free writing if not properly integrated (Hyland, 2003).

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2.5 Teaching English in Junior High School

Teaching English in the level of junior high school level requires understanding students' developmental characteristics and learning needs (Widodo, 2024). The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes communicative competence and student-centered learning (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Students at this level are influenced by motivation, peer interaction, and emotional factors. Therefore, teachers need to apply interactive and engaging methods such as games and collaborative learning. Game-based learning has been proven to improve students' engagement, confidence, and language skills.

In conclusion, effective English teaching at the junior high school level requires innovative strategies and media. The use of Scramble Words Game can support students' writing development while creating a fun and meaningful learning process.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study is a Research and Development (R&D) design adapted from Borg and Gall (2007; 2020) to develop a Scramble Words Game as a learning medium for improving seventh-grade students' writing skills. The development process followed the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation) to ensure the product's effectiveness, practicality, and validity (Branch, 2022).

3.2 Research Procedure

The procedure consisted of five stages as follows: **Analysis:** Identifying students' writing difficulties and learning needs through observation, interviews, and questionnaires; **Design:** Planning the game structure, learning objectives, and activities (word and sentence arrangement); **Development:** Creating the prototype and validating it through experts (media, material, and teacher), followed by revision; **Implementation:** Conducting a small-scale try-out with seventh-grade students to evaluate usability and effectiveness; **Evaluation:** Analyzing results and revising the product based on validity, practicality, and effectiveness.

3.3 Data and Data Sources

Qualitative and quantitative data are both used in this study. Qualitative data were obtained from classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students, while quantitative data were collected through questionnaires and writing tests. The research was conducted at SMP Islam Baabussalaam, involving 14 seventh-grade students selected through purposive sampling.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Several data collection techniques and instruments used to obtain accurate and comprehensive information related to the development and effectiveness of the Scramble

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Words Game as a learning medium. These techniques will include: **observation** conducted to gather initial data regarding the English learning process, particularly students' writing skills, before the implementation of the product; **interview** carried out to obtain in-depth information from the English teacher regarding the need for learning media, challenges in teaching writing skills, and expectations toward the use of the Scramble Words Game; **questionnaire** administered to the students after the product try-out. The questionnaire will aim to collect students' responses regarding the practicality, attractiveness, and usefulness of the developed learning media.

3.5 Validity

Validity was ensured through expert validation, including a media expert, material expert, and English teacher. The instruments and product were revised based on expert feedback to ensure relevance and appropriateness.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this research is descriptive quantitative analysis data. Questionnaire use likert scale. Likert scale uses a few questions to measure individual behavior by responding 5-point choices on each first item question, strongly agree, agree, no decide, disagree, and strongly don't agree (Likert in (Budiaji, 2013). In this research, researcher uses Likert scale with 4 choices as follows Table 1.

Table 1. The Annotation Scale

No.	Scale type	Score
1	Strongly Agree	1
2	Agree	2
3	Disagree	3
4	Strongly don't agree	4

The result of questionnaire will be calculated using the following formula (Arikunto, 2023):

$$\frac{x}{n} \times 100\%$$

The product developed will be validated by media experts, and material experts. Product validity is stated in the following categories according to (In addition, the questionnaire is also used to measure students' responses to the product being developed. Validation responses by (Arikunto, 2023) by the category more than 70% with valid category. The product is called feasible if it is in percentage of more than 61% with feasible category.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Research Findings

4.1.1 Preliminary Study Results

The preliminary study aimed to identify students' writing problems in seventh grade. The findings showed that teaching was still dominated by conventional methods

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with limited use of interactive media. As a result, students were passive, less motivated, and lacked confidence in writing.

Interviews with the teacher revealed that students had limited vocabulary, frequently made grammatical errors, and struggled to construct sentences. Analysis of students' work also indicated difficulties in arranging words into correct sentence structures. These findings indicate a gap between expected and actual writing ability, highlighting the need for an engaging learning medium. Therefore, the development of the Scramble Words Game was considered necessary to support students' writing skills.

4.1.2 Validation Results

The product was validated by experts covering Winda Khoirun Nisak, M.Pd. as instrument validator, Ismi Nur Azizah as materials, and Siti Rofi'ah, M.Pd. as media validator and using validity category (Arikunto,2023) as follows Table 2.

Table 2. Validation Category

Number	Percentage	Validity Category
1	85%-100%	Very valid
2	70%-84%	Valid
3	55%-69%	Less valid
4	40%-54%	Invalid

The result of validations shows in the following Table 3.

Table 3. Instrument Validation Result

No.	Assessment Point	Score	Percent	Validity Criteria
1.	Clarity of the questionnaire title	3	75%	Valid
2.	Clarity of question items	3	75%	Valid
3.	Clarity of instructions for filling out the questionnaire	3	75%	Valid
4.	The accuracy of the question with the expected answer	3	75%	Valid
5.	Statement regarding the research objectives	4	100%	Very Valid
6.	Statement reveals true information	3	75%	Valid
7.	The language used is easy to understand	3	75%	Valid
8.	The language used is effective	3	75%	Valid
9.	Writing according to enhanced spelling	3	75%	Very Valid
	Total	**28**	**77,7%**	**Valid**

The validation score is 28, as shown. Therefore, the calculation can be done using the formula below: $\frac{x}{n} \times 100\%$

Total Score (%) = $\frac{28}{36} \times 100\%$

Total Score (%) = 77,7 %

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Table 4. Material Validation Result

No.	Assessment Point	Score	Percent	Validity Criteria
1.	Writing material with descriptive text is relevant to learning objectives and delivers the Scramble words Game as an Interactive Tool	4	100%	Very Valid
2.	Materials and media are designed with visual or interactive elements that attract the user's attention.	4	100%	Very Valid
3.	The material supports writing skills	4	100%	Very Valid
4.	Scramble words Game provides various descriptive categories or topics to choose from to provide variety in writing practice.	4	100%	Very Valid
5.	The presentation of the material follows a logical and structured flow.	4	100%	Very Valid
6.	The material supports spontaneous and structured writing practice through the use of various choices in the scramble words game.	4	100%	Very Valid
7.	The game is made with interesting pictures to practice students' writing.	4	100%	Very Valid
8.	The content of the game is in accordance with the existing material.	4	100%	Very Valid
9.	The use of Scramble words game as a medium makes writing learning activities more fun and dynamic.	4	100%	Very Valid
	Total	**36**	**90%**	**Very Valid**

The validation score is 36, as shown. Therefore, the calculation can be done using the formula below: $\frac{x}{n} \times 100\%$

Total Score (%) = $\frac{36}{36} \times 100\%$

Total Score (%) = 100 %

Table 5. Media Validation Result

No.	Assessment Point	Score	Percent	Validity Criteria
1.	The media has design elements that attract attention.	4	100%	Very Valid
2.	The use of color in media is contrasting, appropriate and attracts attention.	3	75%	Valid
3.	The media uses clear letters, appropriate font size, and is easy to read.	4	100%	Very Valid
4.	Media shapes and sizes are easy to use.	4	100%	Very Valid
5.	The information displayed in the media is clear and easy to understand.	3	75%	Valid
6.	The media usage manual is clear.	3	75%	Valid
7.	Products adhere to good standards of accessibility, clarity, and technical functionality.	3	75%	Valid
8.	The media material is strong, durable, and not easily damaged.	3	75%	Valid
9.	The content of the media has good print quality.	3	75%	Valid
10.	Media can be operated inside or outside the classroom.	4	100%	Very Valid
	Total	**34**	**85%**	**Very Valid**

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The validation score is 34, as shown. Therefore, the calculation can be done using the formula below: $\frac{x}{n} \times 100\%$

Total Score (%) = $\frac{34}{40} \times 100\%$

Total Score (%) = 85%

After revisions (improving instructions, visuals, and material alignment), the Scramble Words Game became more systematic, user-friendly, and suitable for classroom use.

4.1.3 Students' Satisfaction Results

This media is assessed by students to find out students' perspectives after using this media by using eligibility category (Arikunto,2023) as follows Table 6.

Table 6. Students Satisfaction Result

Number	Percentage %	Eligibility Category
1	81% - 100%	Very feasible
2	61% - 80%	Feasible
3	41% - 60%	Feasible enough
4	21% - 40%	Less feasible
5	<21%	Very unfeasible

Students' responses showed a positive perception of the Scramble Words Game, with a total score of **89.6% (Very Feasible)**. Students reported that the game made learning more enjoyable, increased motivation, and helped them understand sentence structure and vocabulary more easily. Additionally, students' writing performance improved, particularly in sentence construction, word order, and grammatical accuracy.

4.2 Discussion

This section discusses the research findings by answering the research questions, explaining the ADDIE development process and its results, and relating each finding to relevant theories published within the last five years. Each finding is analyzed to show how the Scramble Words Game contributed to improving students' writing skills. The discussion also compares the research results with previous studies related to game-based learning in English education. In addition, the findings are interpreted to explain their significance for teaching and learning practices in the classroom.

The development of the Scramble Words Game was conducted using the ADDIE model, which consists of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The steps of ADDIE models as follow Figure 1.

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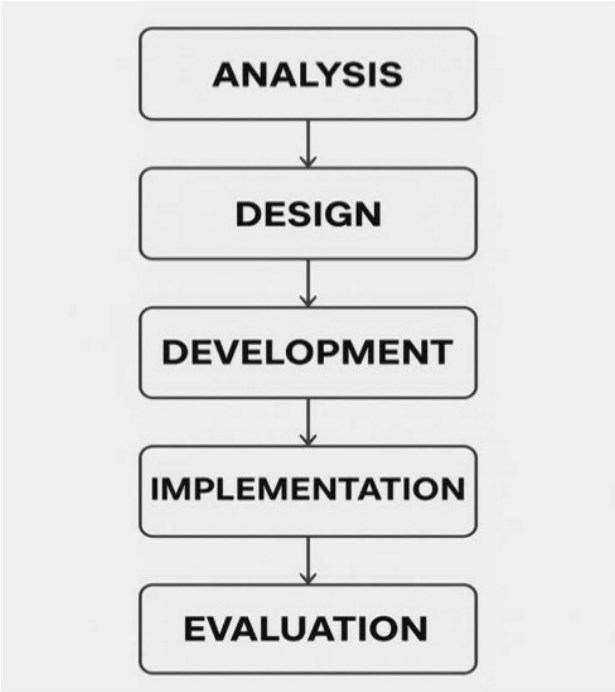

Figure 1. ADDIE model (Branch, 2018)

The ADDIE model remains widely used in recent instructional design research because of its systematic and flexible framework for developing effective learning media (Branch & Dousay, 2020). This model helps researchers organize the process of creating instructional materials in a clear and structured way. By applying the ADDIE model, the researcher was able to design and develop the Scramble Words Game systematically. Therefore, the model was considered appropriate for developing an effective learning medium to support students' English learning process.

In the analysis stage, the preliminary study revealed that seventh grade students experienced difficulties in writing English, particularly in sentence construction, vocabulary mastery, and grammatical accuracy. Recent studies confirm that writing is a complex skill that requires the integration of linguistic knowledge, cognitive processes, and practice (Hyland, 2021). Therefore, students need supportive and interactive learning media to help them develop writing skills gradually. In addition, engaging learning activities can motivate students to participate more actively in the writing process. For this reason, the development of appropriate learning media is important to support students in improving their writing ability.

In the design stage, learning objectives, materials, and game activities were designed to focus on arranging words into correct sentences. This stage aligns with recent instructional design principles emphasizing learner-centered and activity-based learning to improve language outcomes (Molenda, 2022). The Scramble Words Game was designed to provide structured practice while maintaining student engagement. In this stage, the researcher also determined the rules, instructions, and learning tasks included in the game. As a result, the design stage ensured that the game activities were appropriate for students' learning needs and objectives.

In the development stage, the product was developed and validated by experts. The validation process ensured the appropriateness of the instruments, materials, and

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media. This step is consistent with recent educational R&D studies, which emphasize expert validation to ensure product quality and instructional relevance (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2020). The experts provided suggestions and feedback to improve the quality of the product. Based on the validation results, revisions were made to ensure that the learning media was appropriate and effective for classroom use. The product development before and after as follow Figure 2 and Figure 3.

Figure 2. Draft of product

Figure 3. Final product

In the implementation stage, the revised Scramble Words Game was applied in the classroom. Students actively participated and showed enthusiasm during the learning activities. This finding supports recent research on game-based learning, which highlights that educational games can increase students' engagement and participation in language learning (Sailer & Homner, 2020). The students worked together to arrange the scrambled words into meaningful sentences. As a result, the learning process became more interactive and helped students practice their writing skills in an enjoyable way.

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In the evaluation stage, the effectiveness of the product was measured using students' questionnaires and writing tests. The results indicated that the Scramble Words Game was effective in improving students' writing skills and was positively received by students. This shows that the ADDIE model successfully guided the development of an effective instructional product. The evaluation results also provided important feedback for further improvement of the learning media. Therefore, the Scramble Words Game can be considered a useful learning tool to support students in developing their English writing skills.

Students demonstrated better word order, clearer sentence structure, and reduced grammatical errors. This improvement can be explained by recent experiential learning theory, which emphasizes that students learn more effectively through active involvement and meaningful tasks (Kolb, 2021). By arranging scrambled words, students actively practiced sentence construction, which enhanced their understanding of sentence patterns. From a grammatical perspective, the improvement aligns with recent form-focused instruction theory, which suggests that grammar learning is more effective when embedded in communicative and task-based activities (Ellis, 2021). The Scramble Words Game allowed students to focus on sentence structure while engaging in meaningful language use. The results of the students' questionnaire indicated that students responded positively to the use of the Scramble Words Game. Students reported higher motivation and interest in learning writing through game-based activities.

In terms of vocabulary mastery, the findings that repeated exposure to vocabulary in meaningful contexts significantly improves learners' vocabulary acquisition Nation and Webb's (2022). The Scramble Words Game provided repeated and contextualized practice that helped students retain and apply new vocabulary. Through the game activities, students were encouraged to recognize and arrange words into meaningful sentences. This process helped students understand how vocabulary is used in correct sentence structures. As a result, students were able to expand their vocabulary while simultaneously improving their writing skills.

This finding is consistent with recent motivation theory in language learning, which emphasizes that enjoyable and interactive learning environments increase learners' intrinsic motivation (Al-Hoorie & MacIntyre, 2020). When students enjoy the learning process, they are more willing to participate and practice language skills. Furthermore, the positive responses can be explained by recent social constructivist perspectives, which highlight the importance of interaction and collaboration in learning (Lantolf, Poehner, & Swain, 2021). The Scramble Words Game encouraged peer interaction, discussion, and collaboration, creating a supportive learning environment. As a result, students were able to learn from each other while actively engaging in the learning activities.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn. This research aimed to develop a Scramble Words Game as a learning medium to improve the writing skills of seventh grade students using the ADDIE development model. The development process of the Scramble Words Game followed the five stages of the ADDIE model, namely Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The analysis stage revealed that students experienced difficulties in writing English, particularly in sentence construction, vocabulary mastery, and grammatical

accuracy. Based on these needs, the Scramble Words Game was designed and developed as an interactive learning medium to support students' writing practice.

The results of validation showed that the developed product was categorized as valid and feasible to be used in teaching writing skills. The instruments, materials, and media were positively evaluated by experts with minor revisions. After revision, the Scramble Words Game met the criteria of a good instructional medium. The implementation results indicated that students responded positively to the use of the Scramble Words Game. Students were more motivated and actively involved in the learning process. Furthermore, the results of the students' writing tests showed improvement in students' ability to construct correct sentences, use appropriate vocabulary, and apply basic grammar rules. Based on these findings, the Scramble Words Game is an effective learning medium for improving the writing skills of seventh grade students, especially in sentence construction.

6. SUGGESTION

The researchers proposses several suggestions for teachers, students, and other researchers.

5.2.1 Suggestions for Teachers

English teachers are encouraged to use the Scramble Words Game as an alternative learning medium in teaching writing skills, particularly for junior high school students. The game can be used to create a more engaging and interactive learning environment. Teachers are also advised to adapt the level of difficulty of the game according to students' abilities and learning objectives. Additionally, teachers may combine the Scramble Words Game with other teaching strategies to maximize students' writing development.

5.2.2 Suggestions for Students

Students are expected to actively participate in learning activities using the Scramble Words Game. By engaging in game-based learning, students can improve their understanding of sentence structure, vocabulary, and grammar in a fun and meaningful way. Students are also encouraged to practice writing regularly and apply the knowledge gained from the game in other writing activities.

5.2.3 Suggestions for Other Researchers

Other researchers are suggested to conduct further studies related to the development and implementation of game-based learning media in teaching writing skills. Future research may involve a larger number of participants, different grade levels, or other language skills such as reading or speaking. In addition, other researchers may integrate digital or online versions of the Scramble Words Game to explore its effectiveness in different learning contexts.

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