"The Effect of Junior High School Vocabulary Mastery Using Word Wall Web"

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Abstrak


Kata kunci: Pentingnya kosakata, Penguasaan kosakata siswa, Pengajaran kosakata, web Wordwall

Abstract

Educators and academics are increasingly interested in using digital tools and applications to enhance online education. The recent growth of online education has attracted this interest. An English teacher will be observed in a junior high school to assess students’ vocabulary. The observation results showed that students had difficulty in responding to English. The researcher implemented the Word Wall web as a vocabulary learning tool with the authorization of the teacher. Treatment sessions, pre-tests, post-tests, and surveys will assess students’ progress and perception of Word Wall. Data analysis will determine students’ word comprehension improvement. This study examines how online learning is based on word wall applications improves junior high school vocabulary. This study used Classroom Action Research. Pretest and posttest are objective tests used in this study. Somebody can use Word Wall in various subjects, not only language. With extra practice on Word Wall, students can increase their daily vocabulary. Researchers should explore different focus areas of English skills for similar research.

Keywords: The importance of vocab, Student mastery vocab, Teaching vocab, Word wall web.

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INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is pivotal in English learning, influencing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Mastering English involves essential components, such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking, with fundamental vocabulary Anggraini, (2018). Linguistic aspects like pronunciation, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary contribute to skill development. Syafizzly & Haerudin (2018) emphasize the importance of vocabulary for language mastery. Sanjaya et al. (2022) highlight vocabulary as a crucial element supporting English proficiency in various skills. Harmon, Wood, and Keser (2009) stress the significance of learners’ vocabulary development in language growth. Ana (2018) notes the advantages of enhancing pupils' vocabulary, contributing to language mastery. Nation (2001) establishes a complementary relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language usage, emphasizing its role in facilitating clear expression and comprehension. The practical value of vocabulary is evident in classrooms, where students with extensive vocabulary often excel. Research indicates that vocabulary knowledge is critical for second-language readers, posing a significant barrier if lacking (Jacobs, 1998). Krashen (1995) highlights the importance of vocabulary over grammar when expressing meanings or concepts, especially during travel. Scholars, including Wilkins (1972), emphasize that vocabulary is paramount for effective language communication. Krashen (1989), cited in Rodrigues & Sadowki (2000), underscores the necessity of a vast vocabulary for language proficiency, with second language learners acknowledging its crucial role. In language learning, the curriculum should prioritize vocabulary, as stated by various experts. Wilkins (1972) emphasizes that while grammar is essential, vocabulary is indispensable for conveying meaning.

Vocabulary mastery is what determines a person's language skills. Vocabulary acquisition is not something that happens instantly. By the end of the first year, children make a special effort to imitate and say their first words; at that point, they say their first word (Brown, n.d.). Vocabulary mastery underpins the ability to speak every language in the world. Students with sufficient vocabulary will make it easier to use English. However, the mastery of vocabulary students in Indonesia could be better; they have difficulty learning English because of the lack of vocabulary, so their interest or motivation to learn decreases. It can be concluded from several previous studies Syarifudin et al., (2014) that the results of their research showed that seventh-grade students of Mount IKA-PGA Pontianak mastered vocabulary in the less to medium category. This shows students' ability to use vocabulary with an average score. Other research shows that the receptive vocabulary score of second-year university students in Indonesia is lower than 2000 words Novianti, (2016). Research findings are also corroborated (Quinn, 1968; Barnard, 1963, as cited in Read & Nation, 1986; Abdullah, 2012) that Asian students have poor vocabulary and extensive vocabulary acquisition. The study's results Nur et al., (2022) also stated that Abdi Negara Binjai Private Junior High School showed that most students faced difficulties in learning English. The two main reasons why students do not want to learn English are lack of vocabulary and lack of desire. Because they think English is not important and difficult, this causes students to be bored and not enjoy the learning process. Students' interest or motivation in learning English is the main factor that prevents students in Indonesia from mastering vocabulary. This can be caused by teachers who could be more adept at using media in teaching English to students. This can also be found in the research conducted by Munir, (2016). Students are only taught basic vocabulary, so they only master simple vocabulary such as animals, clothes, objects in the classroom, etc. Students need more vocabulary, which is the reason for the lack of vocabulary. Students need to gain their vocabulary, which is caused by students' lack of motivation to learn new vocabulary, and teachers rarely use appropriate media to teach vocabulary.

Recognizing the importance of vocabulary instruction in language learning is crucial, as words are fundamental to communication ALQAHTANI, (2015). Recent research highlights challenges teachers face in effectively teaching vocabulary, necessitating guidance on optimal approaches and timing for focused word
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acquisition (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008; Walters, 2004). Teaching English vocabulary, especially in a foreign language context, is a debated aspect of language education, requiring consideration of effective strategies tailored to students' characteristics. Various contemporary tactics are employed by successful teachers, selecting methodologies based on factors like subject matter, time constraints, and perceived effectiveness. Several methods enrich the vocabulary learning experience, such as using real objects for novice learners, emphasizing concrete nouns, and enhancing memorization through visualization Gairns & Redman, (1986). Techniques like drilling, spelling, and active involvement aid pronunciation and structure familiarity, with personalization encouraging contextual usage (Thornbury, 2021; Reed, 2012). Drawing and pictures effectively connect prior knowledge to new words, aiding comprehension among young learners Takač & Singleton, (2008). Non-verbal tools like mime, expressions, and gestures are vital in conveying word meanings, especially in speaking activities Tellier, (2007). Enumeration and contrast prove helpful, with ordered listing aiding presentation and contrasting words effectively imparting meaning Alqahtani, (2015).

Incorporating various techniques caters to different learning styles, enhancing overall language acquisition for students A.Pinter, (2017).

In addition to allowing users to share their online-created media, word walls are particularly intriguing Sinaga & Soesanto, (2022). A free online tool for developing study tasks is Word Wall. Additionally, this word wall is uniquely entertaining for kids because it contains engaging learning activities, including quizzes, matching or pairing pairs, word searches, random words, and more. Since this program is accessible through the browser, educators can easily use it. Beginning users of word walls can use the examples provided on the word wall page and the outcomes of each creation Mujahidin et al., (2012). This application features an online learning evaluation tool, which is intended to help students comprehend the information presented by the teacher and to encourage learning. The browser-based Word Wall game is entertaining, engaging, and educational. This application is a fun learning resource, a media, and an evaluation tool for pupils. Word Wall showcases creative teaching techniques that make it simpler for newcomers to use and create media resources. A web program called Word Wall enables users to create educational games disguised as entertaining quizzes. Firdaus et al., (2021) This online application is perfect for developing a learning and evaluation tool.

To improve students' basic skills, various steps have been taken to integrate interactive methods and technology into learning. Educators utilize educational applications, online platforms, and game-based activities to create engaging and interactive learning experiences to improve students' understanding and basic skills. This approach also includes increasing students' exposure to various words and contexts by adding literature and varied reading materials to the curriculum. In line with research by Fauzia & Lolita (2018), educators and researchers explore methods to increase student understanding, focusing on the role of understanding in the learning process. Teachers apply explicit instruction, including clear explanations, examples, and practice exercises to introduce new vocabulary, as the first step in explicit comprehension education. A variety of strategies, such as the integration of comprehension-building activities, word games, comprehension exercises, and reading projects adapted to new words, are also used. Overall, this approach contributes to comprehensive and diverse understanding among students, with a primary focus on improving their vocabulary skills.

Another effective strategy is to use context clues, in which students learn to discern word meanings depending on the context. Furthermore, instructors have encouraged students to read extensively, exposing them to a wide range of languages in a variety of circumstances. Furthermore, the use of technology, such as educational apps and online resources, has provided students with interactive platforms for engaging in and expanding their vocabulary.

The existing educational research environment needs a focused investigation of the impact of the Word Wall Web on the vocabulary of junior high school students in the context of online learning. While previous studies explore the general efficacy of online learning, more in-depth research is needed into Word Wall
Web's unique contributions and potential limitations. This misunderstanding prevents educators and researchers from utilizing digital platforms to improve language skills in middle school settings. Further research is required to elucidate the Word Wall Web's distinct role and distinctive impacts on vocabulary acquisition and retention in online education for junior high school students. The researcher will conduct an observation in a junior high school to gather information from an English teacher regarding the vocabulary skills of junior high school students. Information obtained from an English teacher revealed that many students showed limitations in their vocabulary. For example, when engaging in conversations in English with their teachers, the students struggled to respond accurately. Their reactions ranged from smiles and handshakes to complete silence. Next, the researcher asked the teacher for permission to assess the classroom environment and introduce herself, and took the opportunity to inform the class about using the Word Wall web platform as a vocabulary learning tool.

After this introduction, the researcher gave one treatment session. The next step was to conduct a pre-test, done independently at home, and a post-test, done at school. In addition, a Google Form questionnaire was distributed to measure students' perception of the Word Wall web platform as a learning tool. The researcher will analyze the data, including the pre-test and post-test scores, to determine any student vocabulary comprehension improvement.

In a prior study conducted by Zain et al., (2022), the researchers examined the impact of incorporating educational technology, specifically a word wall, on enhancing students' vocabulary skills. The results of this study elucidate that students readily embrace the utilization of this technology due to the experience of fun and passion it engenders in the learning process. Furthermore, a study by Mazelin et al., (2022) examined the impact of implementing word walls on students' engagement in the learning process. The results of this study demonstrated a favorable influence on students' engagement subsequent to the implementation of word wall learning. However, the aforementioned studies did not address the efficacy of word wall implementation in the learning process. Consequently, additional study is warranted to explore the potential benefits and limitations of utilizing word wall technology. The primary focus of this study will be to assess the efficacy of word wall learning technology in facilitating vocabulary enhancement among junior high school students. The purpose of this research is to find out how effective online learning through word wall applications is in improving vocabulary skills for junior high school students.

The purpose of this research is to find out how effective online learning through word wall applications is in improving vocabulary skills for junior high school students. This research focuses on online learning, specifically investigating the effectiveness of the Word Wall application in enhancing students' vocabulary skills compared to traditional methods. Given the increasing use of online learning in today's digital era, the study aims to determine the impact of this novel technology on vocabulary acquisition, mainly targeting secondary school students. The significance lies in understanding how online learning through the Word Wall application can positively influence language learning outcomes at the crucial secondary school level. The study's findings hold importance for educators and policymakers, offering insights that can guide the adoption or improvement of technology-based learning strategies to enhance students' language abilities. Considering the information provided in the study's background, the research has framed the following question: Can the use of the Word Wall web in online learning improve the vocabulary skills of junior high school students?

METHOD

The study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR), a systematic inquiry process by teachers to enhance teaching and learning. The aim was to assess the effectiveness of the Word Wall web platform in improving 9th-grade students' English vocabulary mastery. Following Kumar's definition of action research, this study aligns with the scope of CAR, focusing on problem-solving and improving the teaching and
learning process. The researcher initiated the study by interviewing the English teacher and observing the 9th-grade students' vocabulary. Subsequently, a tutorial on the Word Wall web platform was conducted, along with a trial quiz. The second action involved administering a pretest and posttest using the Word Wall web platform to measure students' vocabulary retention and comprehension.

Participants included 33 students from class IX MTsN 40 West Jakarta, selected to address the need for improved English proficiency in preparation for exams. Assessment instruments, namely pretests, and posttests, were facilitated through the Word Wall web platform, employing multiple-choice and matching tests. These tests aimed to measure students' vocabulary growth and comprehension. The study utilized these assessment tools to quantify students' vocabulary improvement before and after using the Word Wall online platform. The integration of multimedia technology like Word Wall created a dynamic and engaging testing environment, enhancing the overall learning experience.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The author administered a Pre-test and Post-test, an extensive evaluation using several adjectives and their antonyms, before starting the study. The researcher, an English instructor, wanted to find out how well the ninth graders understood vocabulary related to the current subject. The Pre-test consisted of ten different types of questions covering antonym vocabulary, procedural vocabulary, and environmental vocabulary, as well as the Post-test.

Table 1. The Antonym of Vocabulary Pre-test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result Pre Test Antonym of Vocabulary</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Score 1-5</th>
<th>Score 6-7</th>
<th>Score 8-9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.85</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 displays the results of the Pre-test. Six students received a score of 1–5, sixteen had a score of 6-7, nine received an 8–9, and two received a perfect 10. The mean score for all individuals involved was 6.85.

Table 2. The Antonym of Vocabulary Post-test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result Post Test Antonym of Vocabulary</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Score 1-5</th>
<th>Score 6-7</th>
<th>Score 8-9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 displays the results of the Post-test. Three students received a score of 1–5, thirteen had a score of 6–7, twelve received an 8–9, and five received a perfect 10. The mean score for all individuals involved was 7.60.

Table 3. Test of Procedure Text pre-test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result Pre-Test Procedure Text</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Score 1-5</th>
<th>Score 6-7</th>
<th>Score 8-9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 displays the results of the Pre-test. Seven students received a score of 1–5, eleven had a score of 6-7, twelve received an 8–9, and three received a perfect 10. The mean score for all individuals involved was 7.70.

Table 4. Test of Procedure Text Post-test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result Post-Test Procedure Text</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Score 1-5</th>
<th>Score 6-7</th>
<th>Score 8-9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 displays the results of the Post-test. Three students received a score of 1–5, seven had a score of 6–7, eight received an 8–9, and fifteen received a perfect 10. The mean score for all individuals involved was 8.30.

Table 5. Test of Environment Vocabulary Pre-test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result Pre-Test Environment Vocabulary</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Score 1-5</th>
<th>Score 6-7</th>
<th>Score 8-9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.70</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 displays the results of the Pre-test. One student received a score of 1–5, twelve had a score of 6–7, seventeen received an 8–9, and three received a perfect 10. The mean score for all individuals involved was 7.70.

Table 6. Test of Environment Vocabulary Post-test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result Post Test Environment Vocabulary</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Score 1-5</th>
<th>Score 6-7</th>
<th>Score 8-9</th>
<th>Score 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 displays the results of the Post-test. One student received a score of 1–5, seven had a score of 6–7, five received an 8–9, and twenty received a perfect 10. The mean score for all individuals involved was 8.80.

**Discussion**

The researcher asked the teacher for permission to observe a class of ninth graders, and the teacher enthusiastically agreed. A meeting was soon held in the office to discuss the conduct of the research. The researcher immediately communicated the procedure to the teacher, who then relayed the information to the students. After introducing the Word Wall web platform for vocabulary learning, the students showed a positive response. Before using this web media, the student's mastery of English vocabulary was considered lacking, falling below the standard set by the teacher. They struggled to remember the meaning of the vocabulary when prompted by the teacher. The English teacher in the classroom noted that students often smiled or grinned when asked to speak in English but found it difficult to respond properly. In addition, the students showed a lack of interest in English lessons and often showed boredom and sleepiness. Nur et al., (2022) also stated that Abdi Negara Binjai Private Junior High School showed that most students faced difficulties in learning English. The two main reasons why students do not want to learn English are lack of vocabulary and lack of desire. Because they consider English unimportant and difficult, this causes students to be bored and not enjoy the learning process.

To overcome these challenges, researchers suggest a potential solution: the integration of the Word Wall web platform. This approach aims to diversify and liven up the learning experience, attract students' attention, and facilitate better comprehension. The aim is to increase students' enthusiasm for improving vocabulary through interesting and varied learning media. Novice use of word walls can use the examples provided on the word wall page and the results of each creation Mujahidin et al., (2012).

According to researchers' evaluation of student feedback, those who used the Word Wall web platform reported significant improvements in vocabulary and memory. They found the Word Wall web experience fun, easy to understand, and not monotonous. A web program called Word Wall allows users to create educational games disguised as entertaining quizzes. Firdaus et al., (2021) This online application is perfect for developing learning and evaluation tools, resulting in better vocabulary retention. In addition, these students expressed a preference for the Word Wall game, actively sought clarification when needed, and showed increased engagement. On the other hand, those who perceived minimal contribution to vocabulary improvement struggled with the game questions and hesitated to seek clarification, largely due to their unfamiliarity with the vocabulary words in Word Wall and perceived time constraints. It is imperative to note
that despite providing wrong answers, the main focus of the Word Wall website is educational, designed for use in school and home environments, which can be accessed through various devices such as mobile phones, laptops and PCs.

This study shows the widespread belief among students that online word walls significantly improve their vocabulary. According to Jannah & Syafryadin, (2022) Word wall serves as an ideal complementary tool for educating young learners, overcoming their tendency to be bored and limited attention span during learning. Amelia et al., (2022) Research supports the idea that Word Wall online platform has a great impact on students’ vocabulary acquisition.

Wordwall.net, a comprehensive educational website, offers a variety of interactive activities to improve vocabulary skills, including information and picture matching, wheel of fortune, quizzes, and puzzles. Çil, (2021) and Firmansyah, (2016) emphasized the usefulness of word walls in expanding vocabulary, especially in helping with memorization. Fakhruddin et al., (2021) also found evidence of vocabulary growth among students who used Word Wall.

This study's findings align with research Bueno et al., (2022), which showed that students responded positively to Wordwall.net, navigating the platform with ease. Misrawati et al., (2020) and (Fatimah, 2020) emphasized the positive impact of Word wall on students' motivation and vocabulary acquisition, making the learning process fun and avoiding boredom. In short, Word wall not only improves vocabulary but also promotes a positive and engaging learning experience for students.

CONCLUSION

The research findings lead to the following conclusions: (1) The use of Word Wall has a beneficial effect in improving students' English vocabulary ability and fostering their engagement. (2) Based on the findings from the observations, pre-test, post-test, and interviews, the researcher concluded that a large number of students have effectively improved their vocabulary. The application of Word Wall in the pre-test and post-test of vocabulary antonyms, procedure texts, and environmental tests resulted in significant improvement.

Given the conclusion, it is proposed that English teachers who focus on vocabulary instruction consider applying the Word Wall Strategy. This method has the ability to boost students' comprehension of the text and keep them focused during the learning process. Students are highly passionate about utilizing Word Wall media in vocabulary acquisition because they feel very pleased, enjoy, and are not bored because of Word Wall media with colorful writing and many versions of game templates. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that Word Walls can be employed in a variety of subjects of study, not just vocabulary learning. Students can improve their vocabulary in every day activities by using the Word Wall for extra practice. Other researchers are encouraged to conduct similar research by exploring different focus areas of English language skills.

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