THE USE OF WORDWALL TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY OF GRADE VIII-G AT NURUL JADID JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Acquiring a robust vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of English language acquisition, particularly for secondary school students in the initial stages of developing sophisticated linguistic abilities. A significant number of students commonly encounter difficulties in retaining, comprehending, and applying newly learned words, often due to a reliance on conventional pedagogical approaches. This Classroom Action Research (CAR) endeavor seeks to enhance vocabulary proficiency among students through the integration of Wordwall, an interactive digital tool that incorporates gamified learning experiences. The study encompassed 30 participants from class VIII-G at Nurul Jadid Junior High School. The research was executed over a one-month period across two distinct cycles, each comprising planning, execution, observation, and reflective assessment. Data acquisition involved pre-testing, post-testing, the utilization of observation forms, surveys, and discussions with two designated students, Atiqoh and Alfia. The research conducted indicated a substantial enhancement in students' proficiency with vocabulary. The average score increased from 60 in the initial assessment to 80 in the subsequent assessment, reflecting an improvement of 20 points. Furthermore, participants expressed positive reception to the implementation of Wordwall, describing the learning activities as more engaging, interactive, and comprehensible. The qualitative data indicated that Wordwall fostered a dynamic classroom environment, promoting constructive rivalry, elevating student involvement, and facilitating superior recall of vocabulary concepts. Despite encountering certain minor challenges, including unreliable internet access and constraints related to game-specific time limitations, Wordwall demonstrated its efficacy. The study's conclusions assert that Wordwall serves as a valuable instrument for augmenting vocabulary acquisition and stimulating student interest in English language learning.

Keywords : *Wordwall, Vocabulary Mastery, Game-Based Learning, Classroom Action Research.*

INTRODUCTION

A robust vocabulary serves as the essential groundwork for acquiring the English language, especially for junior high school pupils who are in the process of advancing their language proficiency. Insufficient command of vocabulary can impede a student's ability to comprehend written material, articulate thoughts verbally, or construct even basic sentences. Nevertheless, mastering vocabulary often presents a significant challenge for learners. A prevalent issue is that many students focus on rote memorization without sufficient engagement with varied and instructive learning environments.

The swift advancement of digital technologies has presented educators with novel avenues for arranging classroom exercises through the integration of interactive resources. Among these resources is Wordwall, a web-based application that empowers instructors to design a diverse range of game-formatted exercises. These options encompass activities such as matching exercises, quizzes, randomized selectors, and maze-based pursuits, all intended to enhance vocabulary acquisition by making it more captivating and participatory. Consequently, the visually stimulating and interactive characteristics of Wordwall are highly compatible with the learning inclinations of students in this digital age.

Initial assessments conducted in class VIII-G at Junior High School Nurul Jadid indicated that students exhibited subpar performance in their vocabulary acquisition. A common issue observed was the tendency for students to forget recently acquired vocabulary. Furthermore, their engagement during class sessions was often characterized by passivity, and they displayed a lack of enthusiasm when prompted to memorize or

retrieve specific vocabulary terms. Consequently, this scenario highlights a clear requirement for the development of novel teaching methodologies. Emphasis should be placed on strategies that foster active student involvement and promote more profound learning experiences.

Therefore, this research focuses on the effectiveness of Wordwall in improving the mastery of vocabulary. In the study, the following research questions guide the research: (1) Can Word wall improve class VIII-G students' mastery of vocabulary? (2) How do students respond to vocabulary learning through Word wall? (3) What obstacles arise during its implementation, and how do these affect learning?

This research aims to enhance vocabulary acquisition utilizing a word wall strategy, evaluate student engagement with this method, and document challenges in the learning process. The anticipated contributions of this study include fostering greater student motivation and comprehension, providing educators with a novel teaching resource, and assisting educational institutions in their pursuit of technologically integrated learning approaches. The focus of this investigation is restricted to vocabulary instruction for Class VIII-G students over a one-month duration.

Recent studies indicate that Wordwall-based media can significantly improve students' vocabulary acquisition. (Almuafa & Alqurashi, 2025) demonstrated that interactive Wordwall games have a positive impact on students' vocabulary acquisition through enjoyable and motivating learning experiences. These findings are reinforced by research conducted by (Aqzhariady Khartha et al., 2025), which shows that the Wordwall platform can gradually improve vocabulary comprehension through repeated practice and immediate feedback. In addition, research conducted by (Faqiah & Ungu, 2023) states that Wordwall effectively helps junior high school students recognise, remember, and use vocabulary through a variety of games.

From the perspective of teachers and prospective teachers, the study Assessing the Effectiveness of Wordwall.net as a Vocabulary Learning Tool (2023) confirms that Wordwall is considered practical, easy to use, and capable of increasing interest in learning. In line with this, a meta-analysis by (Balisar Panjaitan & Yoseva Br Siahaan, 2024) shows that Wordwall and the digital 'word wall' technique consistently produce improvements in learning outcomes among secondary school students. The results of these previous studies reinforce the rationale for this research, which is to re-analyse the effectiveness of Wordwall in the context of secondary school students in vocabulary learning through the CAR (Classroom Action Research) approach.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research on the application of Wordwall in vocabulary learning generally uses Classroom Action Research (CAR) or repeated experiments to observe gradual changes in students' abilities. (Faradila et al., 2023) used a two-cycle CAR to improve junior high school students' vocabulary through Wordwall and showed that the action cycle helped teachers adjust their strategies based on reflections on learning outcomes. Similarly, (Ilahiyati et al., 2023) applied Wordwall in two action cycles and found that the use of assessment rubrics, observations, and tests per cycle provided a clear picture of progress over time.

In this study, the CAR design was adapted from the Kemmis & McTaggart model, which consists of four stages in a cycle: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. This research was conducted in two cycles within one month.

The subjects were 30 students of class VIII-G at Nurul Jadid Junior High School. The

research instruments used were:
1. Pre-test and post-test vocabulary assessments taken from the Wordwall-based materials;
2. Observation sheets assessing students' participation, enthusiasm, and focus;
3. Student questionnaires measuring perception of Wordwall;
4. Interview guides used in interviewing students Atiqoh and Alfia.

Wordwall was integrated into the English language instruction during the weekly sessions as part of the intervention strategy. Participants engaged with vocabulary through various game-based activities, including quizzes, a matching exercise, and time-limited tasks. At the end of each learning segment, a comprehensive assessment comprising a test and a reflective component was administered to evaluate advancement. Descriptive statistical methods were employed to summarize the quantitative assessment scores, while the qualitative information gathered from observations, surveys, and interviews underwent thematic analysis.

Meanwhile, (Pradini & Adnyayanti, 2022) used an experimental design to measure the effectiveness of Wordwall on primary school students and emphasised the importance of reliable testing instruments to measure vocabulary improvement. (Pratiwi et al., 2025) their research on reading learning added that the use of student activity observation is highly relevant for measuring the affective impact of interactive digital media. Thus, the use of the CAR method in this study is in line with previous findings and is relevant for observing students' vocabulary improvement from cycle I to cycle II through repeated and structured actions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study, which show an increase in vocabulary scores from cycle I to cycle II, are in line with the patterns reported in various previous studies. (Almuafa & Alqurashi, 2025) found a significant increase in vocabulary acquisition after students routinely used the Wordwall game in their learning. Similarly, research by (Aqzhariady Khartha et al., 2025) showed a gradual increase in scores influenced by interactive game-based exercises that made students more focused and motivated.

The study by (Faradila et al., 2023) also found a consistent improvement from pre-test to post-test when Wordwall was applied in two learning cycles. Furthermore, the study by (Faqiah & Ungu, 2023) proved that Wordwall was able to improve students' ability to recognise and use vocabulary contextually. By looking at the similarity of the pattern of score improvement in this study with previous findings, it can be stated that Wordwall has a positive effect on students' vocabulary learning outcomes.

A. Pre-Action Findings (Pre-Test)

Prior to the instructional intervention, a preliminary assessment was administered. The average score achieved by the participants was 60, indicating a rudimentary grasp of vocabulary. The students exhibited a propensity for distraction, displayed diminished self-assurance, and encountered challenges in retrieving previously acquired vocabulary. A significant proportion of their responses were arbitrary, underscoring a notably deficient level of retention and comprehension.

B. Cycle I Implementation

1. Planning

The educator developed instructional strategies that integrated pertinent Wordwall vocabulary exercises to complement the weekly curriculum. The activities encompassed exercises such as matching, multiple-choice assessments, and word categorization assignments.

2. Implementation

Learners commenced utilizing Wordwall. Although a small number required initial guidance, the majority of students quickly adapted and demonstrated eagerness. Engagement was evident through active involvement, collaborative discussions regarding responses, and a palpable appreciation for the competitive environment.

3. Results of Post-Test I

The mean score for the first assessment cycle's repeat examination was 70, indicating a substantial enhancement in performance. Nevertheless, a number of learners continued to experience difficulties due to time constraints and unfamiliar terminology.

4. Reflection

It was determined that while progress was observable, additional support was required. For the second assessment cycle, vocabulary compilations, increased practice duration, and supplementary review periods were integrated.

C. Cycle II Implementation

1. Planning

Instructional planning involved the development of more organized vocabulary exercises, specifically targeting thematic units such as fauna, natural environments, and the lexicon employed in narrative and descriptive composition.

2. Implementation

Learners engaged in several rounds of interactive Wordwall activities. Their involvement was enthusiastic, and progress in comprehension was evident. This approach fostered a dynamic and healthily competitive classroom atmosphere.

3. Post-Test II Results

The average score achieved on the second post-assessment was 80, representing a 20-point enhancement compared to the initial pre-test results. Participants demonstrated increased proficiency in discerning word definitions, selecting appropriate action words, and retaining previously acquired vocabulary.

4. Student Responses

Results from questionnaires showed great positive responses:
- Wordwall made learning more fun.
- Students remember vocabulary more easily (Agree–Strongly Agree)
- They wanted to use Wordwall again (Strongly Agree).

5. Interview Findings

Atiqoh said: "Wordwall was fun and made words more memorable, though the time limit felt too fast.

Alfia said the class felt more alive, the competition was exciting, and Wordwall helped teamwork.

6. Discussion

The results align with existing research, which confirms that the incorporation of game-like elements into educational approaches leads to improved student involvement, better recall of information, and an expansion of vocabulary. Furthermore, the highly interactive nature of Wordwall is conducive to cognitive engagement and serves as a motivational tool for learners.

Theoretically, the effectiveness of Wordwall in improving vocabulary can be explained through a gamification-based learning approach that provides rapid feedback, structured repetition, and an enjoyable learning experience. This is in line with the findings of (Coryunitha Panis et al., 2025) , which confirm that gamification-based learning design with Wordwall can significantly improve student learning activities and outcomes. A meta-

analysis by (Balisar Panjaitan & Yoseva Br Siahaan, 2024) also indicates that Wordwall and similar techniques are effective in strengthening vocabulary memory through word visualisation and interactive exercises.

In an affective context, (Rattri & Rachman, 2024) found that Wordwall can reduce students' learning anxiety because game activities create a more relaxed and friendly learning atmosphere. (Ilahiyati et al., 2023) added that Wordwall can increase class participation because students are encouraged to engage directly in quiz exercises. The results of this study, which show an increase in student motivation, participation, and self-confidence, are highly consistent with the findings of previous studies, thereby strengthening the argument that Wordwall is an effective medium for vocabulary learning among secondary school students.

CONCLUSION

This Classroom Action Research concludes that Wordwall effectively improves vocabulary mastery among class VIII-G students at Nurul Jadid Junior High School. Vocabulary scores significantly increased from 60 (pre-test) to 80 (post-test). Students showed higher motivation, active participation, and confidence in learning vocabulary. Though minor obstacles included internet instability and time constraints, these did not get in the way of the overall effectiveness of Wordwall.

It is recommended that English teachers try out innovative digital learning tools like Wordwall. Students are advised to continue practicing the vocabulary using interactive platforms. Future researchers may explore comparative studies using other gamification platforms, such as Quizizz or Kahoot.

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