

**THE EFFECT OF USING WORDWALL APPLICATION IN  
IMPROVING STUDENT READING PROFICIENCY  
OF ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT  
SMA SWASTA KAMPUS NOMMENSEN  
PEMATANGSIANTAR**

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**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini dilakukan berdasarkan fenomena bahwa kemampuan membaca siswa, khususnya dalam memahami teks recount, masih relatif rendah. Banyak siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam memahami kosakata, mengidentifikasi ide pokok, dan memahami urutan peristiwa. Permasalahan ini dipengaruhi oleh penggunaan metode yang berpusat pada guru serta kurangnya media pembelajaran yang interaktif, sehingga membuat siswa kurang terlibat dalam proses pembelajaran. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah penggunaan aplikasi Wordwall memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan membaca siswa.

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain quasi-eksperimental yang melibatkan dua kelompok: kelas eksperimen dan kelas kontrol. Populasi penelitian terdiri dari siswa kelas XI di SMA Swasta Kampus Nommensen PematangSiantar, dengan jumlah sampel sebanyak 52 siswa yang dipilih melalui purposive sampling. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah tes membaca dalam bentuk soal isian (fill-in-the-blank) yang diberikan melalui pre-test dan post-test. Data dianalisis menggunakan rata-rata (mean), standar deviasi, dan uji t.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata kelas eksperimen meningkat secara signifikan dari 38,07 pada pre-test menjadi 86,73 pada post-test, sedangkan kelas kontrol hanya meningkat dari 44,23 menjadi 57,88. Hasil uji t (3,271) lebih tinggi daripada nilai t-tabel (2,009), yang menunjukkan bahwa hipotesis alternatif diterima.

Kesimpulannya, aplikasi Wordwall efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa. Disarankan agar guru menggunakan Wordwall sebagai media pembelajaran interaktif, dan peneliti selanjutnya dianjurkan untuk menerapkannya pada keterampilan berbahasa lainnya.

**Kata kunci: aplikasi Wordwall, kemampuan membaca, teks recount, desain quasi-eksperimental.**

**ABSTRACT**

This research was conducted based on the phenomenon that students' reading proficiency, especially in understanding recount texts, was still relatively low. Many students experienced difficulties in comprehending vocabulary, identifying main ideas, and

understanding the sequence of events. This problem was influenced by the use of teacher-centered methods and the lack of interactive learning media, which made students less engaged in the learning process. Therefore, this study aimed to determine whether the use of the Wordwall application had a significant effect on students' reading proficiency.

This research used a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design involving two groups: an experimental class and a control class. The population consisted of eleventh-grade students at SMA Swasta Kampus Nommensen Pematangsiantar, with a total sample of 52 students selected through purposive sampling. The instrument used was a reading test in the form of fill-in-the-blank questions administered through pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and t-test.

The results showed that the mean score of the experimental class increased significantly from 38.07 in the pre-test to 86.73 in the post-test, while the control class only improved from 44.23 to 57.88. The t-test result (3.271) was higher than the t-table value (2.009), indicating that the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

In conclusion, the Wordwall application is effective in improving students' reading proficiency. It is recommended that teachers use Wordwall as an interactive learning medium, and future researchers are encouraged to apply it to other language skills.

**Keywords: Wordwall application, reading proficiency, recount text, quasi-experimental design.**

## 1. PENDAHULUAN

### Research Background

Language is the primary means of communication used by humans to convey ideas, feelings, and information to one another. It is not only spoken but also includes written forms, gestures, and symbols that are collectively understood. Linguistically, language consists of a sound system, word formation, sentence structure, meaning, and social context usage. According to Yule (2022), language is a fundamental aspect of human life because almost all social activities involve the use of language, both spoken and written. Furthermore, language has a productive nature, enabling speakers to form new sentences that have never been heard before but can still be understood by others. This shows that language is not merely a

collection of words but a complex, flexible, and creative system.

English is a global communication tool that connects people from different cultures and countries around the world. As an international language, English has extended beyond its native speakers and is now used by millions of bilingual and multilingual speakers for various purposes such as education, business, media, and diplomacy. English, with its plural forms, is the language of international and intercultural communication (Marlina, 2014), which means that English is no longer limited to one standard form but exists in many variations to suit diverse cultural contexts. Therefore, in English teaching and learning today, it is important

to recognize and appreciate its dynamic nature as a tool for global interaction.

Along with the growing awareness of the importance of English and the government's efforts to improve the quality of its teaching, attention to language skill acquisition has also increased. One of the main objectives of English language teaching is to develop communication skills. Brown (2004) emphasizes that English includes four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills are interrelated and must be mastered in a balanced manner for students to communicate effectively in English. In the research, the researcher chose to focus on reading skills, because many consider reading to be the most difficult and complex skill to master.

Reading is an activity that can serve as a means to develop problem-solving and critical thinking abilities. Based on the above opinions, reading ability can be regarded as a means of cognitive development and higher-order thinking. Reading comprehension is essential for language and literature, as well as for developing critical thinking, memory, focus, and problem-solving skills. According to Eastern Washington University (2022), reading is a thinking process through which we gain information from what we read. The more books a person reads, the more knowledge they gain. To achieve reading comprehension, the type of ability needed is reading comprehension itself. Thus, students' comprehension can be improved with the help of Wordwall learning media.

Reading proficiency is often a challenge for students because, in the reading process, they are expected to

recognize letters and words, understand the meaning of sentences, interpret the content of the text, and draw conclusions from the information presented. This is in line with Grabe and Stoller (2009), who state that reading is a complex cognitive process involving word recognition, sentence processing, text comprehension, and the use of reading strategies to construct meaning efficiently and simultaneously. Similarly, Brown (2004) asserts that reading is not only a visual and linguistic activity but also an interactive process that combines the reader's knowledge with the information in the text, thus allowing the reader to understand not only the explicit information but also the implied meaning.

## **2. KAJIAN TEORI**

### **Definition of Reading**

Reading is an important skill that every language learner needs to master as it helps students understand written information and gain new knowledge. In general, reading means the ability to read words and sentences correctly and capture the meaning behind them. However, reading is not just about reading words one by one—it is an active thinking process where students try to connect the words they see with ideas they already know so that they can fully understand what they read. In reading, students not only look at the words but also guess and predict the content of the text. They use what they know to help them find the main idea, understand new words from their context, and get the complete message. This means reading is not passive; it requires focus, background knowledge and sometimes imagination. For students learning English as a foreign language, reading is especially

useful because it makes their vocabulary richer, trains them to think more critically, and helps them become familiar with real examples of how English is used in writing. In The researcher, reading means students' skills to understand the meaning of words in a text, find the main points, and follow the sequence of events in a recount text clearly and correctly.

### **Definition of Reading Proficiency**

Reading proficiency is a person's level of competence in understanding and using information from written texts to achieve specific goals. It is not a single skill, but a combination of several sub-skills that support each other. Brown (2004) identifies several micro and macro skills in reading that are indicators of one's proficiency, which can be simplified into:

1. **Vocabulary Comprehension:** Recognizing and understanding the meaning of key words in the context of sentences and texts. Without adequate vocabulary mastery, text comprehension will be hindered.
2. **Identifying the Main Idea:** The ability to recognize the central idea or main message that the author wants to convey in a paragraph or the whole text.
3. **Understanding Specific/Explicit Information:** The ability to locate and understand details, facts, or information that are clearly stated in the text.
4. **Making Inferences:** The ability to infer or understand meaning that is not directly stated (implied) based on clues

in the text and the reader's own knowledge.

5. **Understanding Reference:** The ability to identify the relationship between pronouns (such as he, it, they, this) and the words or phrases they refer to in the text.

### **2.3 Teaching Reading in Student High School**

Teaching reading in senior high school plays a vital role in developing students' overall English proficiency, as it serves as the foundation for both academic achievement and lifelong learning. At this stage, students are expected not only to recognize words and sentences but also to comprehend more complex texts, infer implied meanings, and apply reading strategies to various genres such as narratives, recounts, expositions, and argumentative texts. The main goal of reading instruction at the high school level is to equip students with the ability to interpret texts critically, synthesize information, and use reading as a tool for communication and knowledge development.

In the Indonesian context, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes the importance of literacy skills. Reading is considered an essential competence that supports students in achieving higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), including analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Therefore, reading instruction in senior high schools should move beyond traditional teacher-centered approaches and adopt student-centered methods that encourage active participation,

collaboration, and critical engagement with texts.

Nevertheless, teaching reading at this level is still challenging. Many students face difficulties in mastering vocabulary, recognizing text structures, and achieving reading fluency. Limited exposure to authentic English materials often leads to problems in understanding implicit meanings and making inferences. Moreover, students' low interest in reading is frequently worsened by monotonous instructional methods that fail to capture their attention. As a result, teachers are required to innovate by combining conventional reading strategies with interactive and engaging learning tools.

Several strategies can be applied to improve reading instruction. Skimming can help students grasp the general idea, while scanning enables them to locate specific details quickly. Predicting content from context and summarizing key points are also effective techniques that support comprehension. Intensive reading activities provide opportunities to focus on language features and deep understanding, while extensive reading encourages fluency and fosters reading enjoyment. By integrating these strategies, teachers can enhance both the cognitive and affective aspects of students' reading abilities.

The integration of digital media has also become increasingly important in modern reading instruction. Tools such as e-books, online articles, and interactive platforms like Wordwall allow students to engage with texts in more dynamic and meaningful ways. Digital platforms provide immediate feedback, gamified tasks, and interactive exercises that support vocabulary learning and text

comprehension. Such tools not only improve reading proficiency but also increase students' motivation, which is often a key factor in sustaining regular reading practice.

In this context, the teacher's role extends beyond being a source of knowledge. Teachers are facilitators and motivators who must select appropriate reading materials, design meaningful learning activities, and guide students in applying effective reading strategies. At the same time, they should encourage independent reading habits that extend beyond the classroom to foster lifelong learning. By balancing traditional methods with innovative digital tools, reading instruction in senior high school can become more effective, engaging, and aligned with the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum.

#### **2.4 Recount Text**

Recount text is a type of text that retells past events in chronological order. Its purpose is to inform or entertain the reader. The generic structure of recount text includes orientation, events, and re-orientation.

Knapp and Watkins (2005) stated that "the recount genre involves the retelling of events in sequence, usually in the past tense. It is one of the simplest types of text structures used to recount experiences or events." Therefore, recount text serves as an effective tool in English reading classes, especially to train students' ability to understand text structure, identify the main idea, and recognize time-related

language features such as time connectors and past tense verbs.

In the researcher, recount text is used as the main material to measure students' reading skills, especially in terms of vocabulary comprehension, identifying the main idea, and understanding the sequence and meaning of the story. Through the use of wordwall app, it is expected that students will be more engaged in reading recount texts and show improvement in their comprehension ability by interacting through game-based activities that reinforce the structure and content of the text. By engaging students in game-based digital reading activities.

### **3. METODOLOGI PENELITIAN**

#### **Research Design**

The researcher was quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design. According to Ary et al. (2010:29), qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon by focusing on the total picture rather than breaking it down into variables. It is more concerned with understanding the meaning people have constructed. This approach aligns with the principles of quantitative research, which emphasizes the collection of numerical data for statistical analysis. It involves a specific samples and focuses on measurable data. Futhermore, Ary et al. (2010:429) In qualitative research, the researcher selects participants purposefully, based on who can provide the most information relevant to the research questions. This design uses samples with experimental classes and control classes which are carried out using purposive cluster sampling, namely the selection of student groups that are

considered to represent the population based on conditions and characteristics that are in accordance with the research objectives. The researcher was experimental design to identify threats to internal and external validity, and consider these factors during the research. A pre-test and post-test was are conducted to determine whether the use of the wordwall application has an effect on students' reading ability. This research design is used to test the effect of using the wordwall application on the reading ability of eleventh-grade students at SMA Swasta Kampus Nommensen Pematangsiantar.

This research was a quasi-experimental design involving two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The design was a pre-test and post-test to measure students' reading proficiency before and after the treatment. The experimental group was receive learning using wordwall media, while the control

group were taught using methods without the help of digital applications.

**Research Design**

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
a. Experimental Class	XI <sub>2</sub>	Y	XI <sub>2</sub>
b. Control Class	XI <sub>1</sub>	0	XI <sub>1</sub>

Where :

- Y1 = A pre-test given to both groups to measure their initial reading ability.
- X = The experimental group's use of the wordwall application to teach reading.
- Y2 = Post-test for both groups after treatment.
- 0 = The teacher taught the class herself.

**Location and Time of Research**

The research was conducted at SMA Swasta Kampus Nommensen Pematangsiantar, located at Jalan Sangnawaluh No. 04, Siantar Timur District, Pematangsiantar City, North Sumatra Province. This school was are selected as the research site because the researcher was have previously conducted observations at SMA Swasta campus Nommensen Pematangsantar. The school was chosen since students still demonstrate limited reading skills in English learning, particularly in the use of technology-based approaches, which remain insufficient. The focus of this research was are on grade XI

students. In addition, this school is in accordance with the research objectives regarding the use of the Wordwall application in reading learning. The time of research implementation is planned for the odd semester of the 2026/2026 academic year.

**Population and Sample**

**Population**

The population refers to the entire group of individuals who share common characteristics that the researcher intends to research and whose results are to be generalized. In the researcher, the population consisted of all eleventh-grade students of SMA Swasta Kampus Nommensen Pematangsiantar. The researcher was a chosen because they are at a crucial stage in developing the use of the Wordwall application to improve english reading skills for future academic

**Sample**

A sample is a portion of a population selected for research. Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen (2010, p. 148) define a sample as "a subgroup of a population considered representative of the entire population." The process of selecting this subgroup is known as sampling. In the researcher, the sampling technique used will be purposive sampling. Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen (2010, p. 156) define purposive sampling as a technique in which "sample elements judged to be typical, or representative, are selected from the population." This non-probability sampling method was chosen because the researcher needed to select the sample based on

specific criteria aligned with the research objectives.

In the researcher, a purposive sampling technique was selected an equal number of students from two classes. One class was designated as the experimental group and the other as the control group. In this case, the control group received no special treatment; they were taught to read recount texts using conventional methods or the wordwall application. Meanwhile, the experimental group received instruction using the Wordwall application to improve their reading skills in recount texts.

The sample was a taken from eleventh-grade students at SMA Swasta Kampus Nommensen Pematangsiantar. The researchers selected two classes: Grade XI-2, consisting of 26 students, as the experimental class, and Grade XI-1, consisting of 26 students, as the control class.

These classes were selected based on the consideration that students in these classes have heterogeneous reading abilities, and the english teacher confirmed that these classes were suitable for implementing the wordwall application. This ensured that the sample was

sufficiently representative for the purposes of this experimental research.

**Table 3.1 Sample of Students**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Students</b>
1	XI-2	Experimental Class	26
2	XI-1	Control Class	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>Two Classes</b>		<b>52</b>

#### **4. HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN**

##### **Discussion**

The results of this research indicate that the use of a wordwall application significantly impacted the recount text reading ability of eleventh-grade students at SMA Swasta Kampus Nommensen Pematangsiantar. The experimental class, taught using the wordwall application, achieved a mean post-test score of 86.73, while the control class, taught using conventional teaching methods, achieved a lower mean score of 57.88. This clear difference indicates that the use of the wordwall application was more effective in influencing students' reading ability than traditional teaching methods.

The improvement in student achievement in the experimental class was also reflected in the total score and standard deviation. The total post-test score in the experimental class reached 2255, which was significantly higher than the total score of 1505 in the control class. Although the standard deviation of the experimental class (3178) was greater than that of the control class (1178), this indicates that students in

the experimental class showed varying but overall higher achievement, indicating that the application allows students of different ability levels to still benefit from the learning activities. Furthermore, the results of the t-test analysis (3.271) which is higher than the t-table value (2.009) at a significance level of 0.05 confirms that the difference between the two groups is statistically significant. This means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected.

These findings can be explained by linking them to relevant theories. According to Brown (2004), reading is an interactive process that requires active engagement between the reader and the text. In this research, the use of the Wordwall application facilitated this interaction by providing engaging activities such as quizzes, matching tasks, and word games, which encouraged students to actively process the text. Similarly, Grabe & Stoller (2009) stated that reading comprehension involves various processes, including vocabulary recognition, identifying main ideas, and understanding text structure. Wordwall's features support these processes by allowing students to practice reading skills in a structured and interactive manner.

Furthermore, the role of digital media in improving learning outcomes is also clearly evident in this research. Jannah & Syafryadin (2022) emphasized that wordwall is an interactive learning medium that can increase student motivation and engagement. In the experimental class, students showed greater enthusiasm and participation during the learning process because the activities were presented in a game format. This aligns with the theory

that a gamified learning environment can reduce boredom and increase student interest in learning. As a result, students are more focused and better able to comprehend the content of the recount text.

Furthermore, Nation (2001) highlighted that vocabulary mastery is a key factor in reading comprehension. Through wordwall activities such as "missing words" and "word searches," students were able to improve their vocabulary in context, which helped them understand the text more easily. Interactive exercises also helped students identify main ideas and sequence events in recount texts, which are essential components of reading skills. This finding supports previous research showing that digital learning media can significantly improve student comprehension and participation.

On the other hand, the control class, taught using conventional methods, showed lower improvements. This supports Wahyuni (2020), who stated that traditional teaching methods tend to limit student participation and interaction during the learning process. In the control class, students were more passive and less engaged, which affected their ability to fully comprehend the reading material. As a result, their reading ability improvement was not as significant as in the experimental class.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the use of the wordwall application has a positive and significant impact on students' reading ability. The combination of interactive digital activities and reading materials allows students to improve vocabulary, identify main ideas, and understand the sequence of events in narrative texts more

effectively. Therefore, wordwall can be considered an effective and innovative teaching medium to support reading learning in high school.

## **5. KESIMPULAN DAN SARAN**

This chapter presented the conclusion and the suggestion of the research that consist for teacher and other next researcher.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research results and data analysis presented in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the use of the Wordwall application has a significant effect on the reading ability of eleventh-grade students at SMA Swasta Kampus Nommensen Pematangsiantar.

The findings indicate that students in the experimental class, taught using the Wordwall application, achieved greater improvement than students in the control class taught using conventional methods. The average score of the experimental class increased from 38.07 in the pre-test to 86.73 in the post-test. Meanwhile, the control class showed a smaller increase, from 44.23 in the pre-test to 57.88 in the post-test. This indicates that the use of interactive digital media such as Wordwall is more effective in improving students' reading ability.

Furthermore, the t-test results show that the t-test value (3.271) is higher than the t-table value (2.009) at a significance level of 0.05 with 50 degrees of freedom (df). This means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a statistically

significant effect of using the Wordwall application on students' reading skills.

The use of digital learning media also provides benefits for both teachers and students. For teachers, the Wordwall application serves as an interactive teaching tool that facilitates the delivery of material and creates a more engaging learning environment. For students, the application helps them understand vocabulary, identify main ideas, and comprehend the sequence of events in recount texts more effectively. The integration of the Wordwall application into reading instruction has proven to be more efficient and engaging than conventional teaching methods, not only improving students' reading scores but also increasing their motivation and participation in the learning process.

### **Suggestion**

The researchers have completed this research and provided the conclusions above, and some suggestions can be offered to teachers, students, and other researchers. English teachers can use the wordwall application to support students' comprehension when reading recount texts. Because wordwall is effective in capturing students' attention and increasing their engagement through interactive, game-based activities, it is highly recommended that teachers use this media in their teaching and learning processes. Wordwall should be considered as an alternative media in english reading classes because it is effective in improving students' reading skills. Although this research focused on recount texts, it does not mean that wordwall can only be applied to this material; wordwall can also be used to teach other language skills and topics. Therefore,

english teachers are advised to integrate interactive digital media in various areas of english teaching.

Students are expected to learn to read texts actively by independently exploring wordwall activities or other digital learning resources, especially in this digital era where such media is readily accessible. Students are also encouraged to actively participate in learning activities, as active engagement will help them improve their vocabulary, grasp main ideas, and comprehend the text more effectively.

For other researchers, this research is expected to serve as a reference or even a basis for conducting similar research. It is recommended that future studies expand the scope by using different grade levels, schools, learning environments, materials or subjects, or even different research designs to provide greater insight into the effectiveness of using wordwall or other digital learning media in improving students' english language skills.

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