

## EFL Learners' Perceptions on Wordwall Implementation in Learning Vocabulary

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### Abstract

*Vocabulary mastery plays a very important role in the ability to communicate in spoken dan written English skills. Effective vocabulary learning can improve students' language skills, allowing them to use foreign languages with greater confidence and fluency in a variety of communication situations. However, in English language learning, students often experience difficulties in remembering and memorizing vocabulary. Therefore, it is important to integrate technology and interactive learning media in the English learning process. This approach is expected to provide a more flexible, effective, and enjoyable experience for students. This study aims to find out how students perceive the use of Wordwall in learning English vocabulary. The study involved 15 grade 4 and 5 students from Ban Loei Wangsai School, Thailand. By using a qualitative approach and interview as the main instrument, this research was conducted. The interview results showed that the students feel that learning using Wordwall is fun and helps them remember vocabulary more easily. Wordwall also proved to be able to increase their motivation and interest in learning English. These findings provide a clear picture of the effectiveness of Wordwall in supporting English language learning, especially in terms of vocabulary acquisition, and encourage the use of interactive media in the primary school context. This study implies that English teachers need to be creative in their classroom instruction including giving variation in the learning through the implementation of digital application.*

**Keyword:** *interaction, media, perception, vocabulary, wordwall*

### INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in communication skills and has a significant impact on other abilities, such as reading and writing. Students with a rich vocabulary tend to understand complex texts more easily and can write more effectively. This is because a broad vocabulary enables students to grasp the nuances and context of reading materials, allowing them to derive deeper meanings from the texts they engage with (Anindya et al., 2024). In addition, effective vocabulary learning can enhance students' language skills, enabling them to use foreign languages more confidently and fluently in various communication situations. The use of interactive and creative learning media, such as Wordwall and other learning technologies, has been proven to improve students' motivation and vocabulary learning outcomes (Aziz & Devi, 2024; Rekha, 2023). However, in the process of learning English, students often face challenges that prevent them from learning vocabulary effectively. One of the main difficulties is remembering and memorizing vocabulary. This is due to the lack of meaningful context and insufficient exposure to authentic language use, crucial for long-term retention. Therefore, there is a

need to integrate technology and interactive applications in English learning to provide a flexible, effective, and engaging learning approach (Idayani & Sailun, 2024) (Kaphle, 2024).

In today's digital era, technology in education has advanced rapidly, offering a wide variety of tools and platforms that can enhance students' learning experiences. One such popular tool is Wordwall, a web-based platform that allows teachers and students to create and utilize various types of educational games (Saputra et al., 2024). Wordwall offers a variety of templates, including multiple-choice quizzes, matching games, anagrams, and crossword puzzles. It also supports multimedia integration like images, audio, and video, and offers easy customization, task management, and progress tracking for teachers and students (Fitria, 2023; Aqliyah et al., 2024). These features make Wordwall a flexible tool that can be used for various subjects and learning environments, both online and offline.

Wordwall has been widely recognized for its effectiveness in improving vocabulary acquisition among primary school students. Various studies have shown that this app significantly improves students' ability to understand and remember new words. For example, a study conducted in Indonesia showed that there was a significant improvement in the English vocabulary skills of grade 4 students. The percentage of scores increased by 65% after the use of Wordwall (Widyaningsih et al., 2023). Similarly with another study showed that Wordwall provided rapid progress in students' recall and comprehension. Quantitative data showed that comprehension of the meaning of the words increased by 79.96% in cycle 2, and spelling progress also increased significantly (Khartha et al., 2025). Another study by Widiyaningsih also concluded that Wordwall is an interesting and interactive learning media, involving learning outcomes, especially on vocabulary mastery at the elementary school level (Widyaningsih et al., 2023). One of Wordwall's key advantages is its versatility across different educational levels. Oviliani and Susanto also note that Wordwall-based learning media can be adapted for various subjects and contexts, both in online and offline settings (Yan et al., 2023). This flexibility allows teachers to create dynamic and interactive learning experiences tailored to students' needs.

Although some previous studies have proven the effectiveness of Wordwall in improving students' vocabulary acquisition (Safitri et al., 2024), most of these studies used quantitative approaches and focused more on learning outcomes rather than direct student experiences. Researching perception is crucial as part of the learner experience because students' perceptions of their educational environment and processes profoundly shape their motivation, engagement, and overall academic outcomes. Perceptions act as interpretive filters that influence how learners approach tasks, select strategies, and persist through challenges, often more reliably than objective measures of ability or resources. For instance, positive perceptions of instructional quality and relevance can enhance self-efficacy and deep learning approaches, leading to improved performance and retention, while negative perceptions may foster disengagement or superficial strategies. Critically, neglecting perceptions risks overlooking equity issues, such as how underrepresented students' views of classroom dynamics affect achievement gaps. By examining perceptions, educators and researchers can design interventions that align teaching practices with learners' subjective experiences, ultimately fostering more inclusive and effective educational environments. This is particularly relevant in our study, where perceptions of self-efficacy in academic tasks, as explored by Pajares, underscore the need for targeted research to bridge theoretical gaps and practical applications in learner-centered pedagogy (Pajares, 2006).

In addition, there is a lack of research that explores students' perception of Wordwall use through a qualitative approach, especially in the context of primary schools in rural areas. Schools in this area often have limited utilization of learning technology, so it is important to know how students respond to interactive learning media such as Wordwall. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining in depth students'

perceptions of using Wordwall in English vocabulary learning.

In the context of this study, the researchers were directly involved in teaching English vocabulary to primary school students during an internship program at one of elementary schools in Thailand. The research was conducted in collaboration with local teachers at the school and under the supervision of university lecturers. The researcher's direct involvement in the classroom provided an opportunity to observe the use of Wordwall in real life, thus obtaining authentic data about the students' learning experience. Before the implementation of Wordwall, initial observations revealed that English instruction relied heavily on traditional learning methods. In this technique, the teacher took the lead in presenting the material, while students acted as passive recipients. Vocabulary acquisition was generally done by rote memorization, word lists, and direct explanations from the teacher using the blackboard or printed materials. Students were seldom encouraged to use the language in meaningful ways or to participate in collaborative learning activities. The observation showed that this method made students less motivated to learn English, and their involvement in the learning process was very low. Based on these findings, the researchers decided to implement Wordwall-based interactive learning media to increase students' motivation and participation in learning English vocabulary. This study aims to investigate students' perspectives on the use of Wordwall in English vocabulary learning. By understanding students' perceptions, it is hoped that an overview of the effectiveness of using Wordwall in supporting the learning process can be obtained, as well as identifying the benefits and challenges they experience during the learning process. Based on these objectives, the research question in this study is: "What are EFL young learners' perceptions on the implementation of Wordwall in learning English vocabulary?"

## **METHOD**

To explore students' perceptions of the use of Wordwall in English language learning, this study utilized a qualitative research design. The method was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of students' views and experiences. Since the objective of this research is to explore students' perceptions, it is important to understand how they perceive the use of Wordwall in English learning (Saputra et al., 2024). The participants of this study were 15 students, 8 students from grades 4 and 7 students from grade 5 from Ban Loei Wangsai School, Thailand. The 15 students have covered all the students in both classes because there are only a few students. Students at these grade levels were selected because they are at the stage of cognitive development that enables them to think more abstractly and critically, making them capable of engaging with interactive learning media such as Wordwall (Magdalena et al., 2023).

The implementation of Wordwall was carried out over three months by a student intern, with two meetings per week, totaling 24 sessions. The teaching procedure involved introducing English vocabulary in the first meeting and reinforcing it through a quiz game using Wordwall in the second meeting. In this activity, students lined up and answered questions individually via Wordwall-based games. This interactive approach was expected to make the learning process more engaging and help students better retain the vocabulary learned. The details of the weekly material are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1. Weekly Material**

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Material</b>       | <b>Activity Description</b>  |
|-------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1           | Introduction          | Students learn basic greetings, self-introductions, and simple sentences through interactive games on Wordwall |
| 2           | Daily Activities      | Vocabulary introduction about daily activities using Wordwall and simple sentence practice                     |
| 3           | Introduce Your Family | Students learn about family members and use possessive pronouns (my, his, her, etc.)                           |
| 4           | Classroom Objects     | Introduce vocabulary of objects in the classroom through the guess   |

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Material</b>        | <b>Activity Description</b>   |
|-------------|------------------------|---|
| 5           | Vocabulary of Fruits   | the picture game and word matching on Wordwall<br>Students recognize various fruit names in English through pictures on Wordwall games  |
| 6           | Canteen Activity       | Students learn vocabulary and conversation in the canteen   |
| 7           | Vocabulary of Animals  | Students recognize various animal names, their habitats, and characteristics through the Wordwall game  |
| 8           | Vocabulary of Verb     | Students learn various common verbs such as eat, run, jump, write, and read   |
| 9           | Preposition            | Introduction of prepositions of place (in, on, under, beside, between, behind)<br>Through a game on Wordwall  |
| 10          | Opposite Word          | Introduce opposite word pairs (big-small, hot-cold, happy-sad, fast-slow) using pictures and examples in simple sentences. The students play a matching game on Wordwall, matching words with their opposites |
| 11          | Singular and Plural    | Introduction to singular and plural forms (s, -es, -ies) with interactive exercises on Wordwall   |
| 12          | What do you want to be | Students learn about different professions and express their aspirations using Wordwall   |

The interview method was chosen because it allows the researchers to dive deeper into the students' understanding of English learning, as well as to explore their responses to the possibility of using Wordwall in the classroom. The interviews were conducted individually, allowing each student to express their opinions without any influence from classmates. All interview sessions were recorded and then transcribed for further analysis. This process aims to ensure that each student's voice is heard clearly and can be considered in this research. With this approach, the researcher will be able to obtain rich and diverse data regarding students' experiences and perceptions of English language learning and the use of technology in that context. The analysis of the interview transcript is expected to provide deeper insights into students' perceptions of the implementation of Wordwall (Rachmawati, 2007). The questions were designed using relevant theories in educational technology and motivation, especially the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Engagement Theory. The principals cover Perceived usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Attitude Toward Using (ATU), and Behavioral Intention (BI).

TAM is adopted due to its strengths in validity. Numerous studies have tested its use and result a trusted model. The blueprint of the interview items is elaborated as follows: 1. Can you describe your experience using Wordwall in your classes?" (PEOU), 2. What specific features of Wordwall do you find most helpful for learning vocabulary?" (PU), 3. How does using Wordwall compare to traditional methods of learning vocabulary of you?" (PU&PEOU), 4. Can you share a memorable moment or activity you enjoyed while using Wordwall?" (ATU).

This study applies thematic analysis with inductive analysis to the transcripts of interviews conducted with students. The use of thematic analysis provides high flexibility, which allows the researcher to identify and explore themes that emerge from the data in a systematic and structured way (Rozali, 2022). The analysis begins with a thorough reading of the interview transcripts to gain an initial understanding, followed by coding the data to identify emerging themes. Themes were determined through the initial coding process, then analyzed using manual coding to identify emerging patterns in the data. These themes are grouped and further analyzed to discover the relationship between students' perception and their experiences while using Wordwall. The analysis followed the six-phase framework by Braun and Clarke. First, the researchers read and reread the translated transcript to gain a deep understanding of students' responses. Second, generating initial codes. Third, similar codes were grouped into potential themes. Fourth, Themes were reviewed to ensure they accurately represented the data. Fifth, each theme was clearly defined, and sub-themes were identified to show nuances within broader categories. And the last, extracts from the

data were selected to support each theme, and interpretations were made based on the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Through thematic analysis, the researcher was able to uncover the nuances and complexities of students' perceptions, as well as provide deeper insights into how Wordwall influenced their learning experiences. The researchers do member checking to ensure the data trustworthiness by sharing the findings with the students and their agreement with the interpretation of the interview results.

## RESULTS

Based on the analysis of interview data conducted with 15 students, grades 4 and 5 at Ban Loei Wangsai School, several significant findings were obtained regarding students' perceptions of using Wordwall in English language learning. The analysis was conducted using a thematic approach, which identified significant patterns of students' responses to be grouped into major themes. In the first stage, all interview data were transcribed verbatim. An open coding process was then conducted, and each meaningful piece of data was grouped into categories, and key themes were identified from the categories. This process was done to ensure that the interpretation of the data matched the students' original responses and to avoid the researchers' bias. Details of the coding results and themes identified can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' Response

| Interview Question   | Codes/ Keywords                      | Theme                   | Students response   | Students |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|----------|
| Can you describe your experience using Wordwall in your classes? | Fun, exciting, enjoyable, not boring | Fun learning experience | I enjoy learning English while using Wordwall                                 | S4       |
|  |                                      |                         | Playing a quiz game on Wordwall is fun  | S5       |
|  |                                      |                         | I played a quiz game show, and it was fun                                     | S7       |
|  |                                      |                         | I am having fun with my friends playing a quiz game on Wordwall               | S8       |
|  |                                      |                         | I can get more knowledge about English vocabulary, and I had so much fun      | S9       |
|  |                                      |                         | Playing game in the class is fun I can remember more about English vocabulary | S10      |
|  |                                      |                         | Playing games gives me knowledge, and it is fun.                              | S13      |
| What specific features of Wordwall do you                        | Interactive, like games              | Effective Wordwall      | I like it, I learn a lot, and it was fun.                                     | S15      |
|  | Happy, fun, and not boring           |                         | It was fun.   | S12      |
|  | Quiz enjoyable                       |                         | Playing a quiz game is fun.   | S5       |
|  | Quiz, game show, correct/ incorrect  |                         | Quizzes because it help me to   | S12      |

| <b>Interview Question</b>  | <b>Codes/ Keywords</b>                  | <b>Theme</b>                          | <b>Students response</b>   | <b>Students</b> |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| find most helpful for learning vocabulary?   | Quiz makes remember word                | features for vocabulary               | remember the vocabulary.   | S11             |
|  |   |                                       | The quiz game show makes me remember a lot of vocabulary.                        |                 |
|  | Correction features help recall         |                                       | Correct & Incorrect vocabulary features help me remember.                        | S5              |
| How does using Wordwall compare to traditional methods of learning vocabulary for you? | Likes quiz format                       | Assistance for Better Teaching Method | I like quizzes.  | S7              |
|  | Prefer game to book                     |                                       | Wordwall is more fun than writing in a book.                                     | S11             |
|  | Dislike traditional writing             |                                       | I feel bored when we do not play a game.   | S15             |
|  | Easier understanding with games         |                                       | It is easier to understand than the traditional method.                          | S2              |
| Can you share a memorable moment or activity you enjoyed while using Wordwall?         | Less motivated by traditional methods   | Fun collaborative learning            | I like it more than writing in a book.   | S14             |
|  | Playing with friends, classroom games   |                                       | Having fun with my friends when playing a quiz game.                             | S4              |
|  | Playing with the teacher and friends    |                                       | Play a game in the class with my friend and teacher Rishma.                      | S14             |
|  | Shared fun experience                   |                                       | I like playing games with my friend, it is very fun, and I want to play forever. | S5              |
| Do you feel more motivated to learn vocabulary when using Wordwall? Why or why not?    | Classroom fun atmosphere                | Learning Motivation Booster           | I am having fun with my friends playing a quiz game.                             | S8              |
|  | Motivation, want to learn more, excited |                                       | Yes, I want to learn more and more.  | S14             |
|  | happy, want more English learning       |                                       | Yes, I feel happy when I play.   | S5              |
|  | Encouraged to learn English             |                                       | Learning English vocabulary using Wordwall makes me want to learn English more.  | S3              |
|  | Exited to learn vocabulary              |                                       | I am so excited to learn English vocabulary with Wordwall; it was so much fun    | S1              |

### **A Fun Learning Experience**

As the first theme, the students agree that Wordwall give them good atmosphere in English class. They identified the use of Wordwall provides a fun learning experience. A majority of students expressed that they felt cheerful and not bored during lessons involving Wordwall. Activities such as quizzes and games make the learning atmosphere more interesting. The students perceived the process as playing rather than traditional learning, which made the lessons feel more enjoyable and less burdensome. This perception is reflected in responses such as, “ Playing games gives me more knowledge and it is fun” (S13) and “I really like it, I learn a lot and it was really fun” (S15).

### **Effective features for Vocabulary**

In the second part, students emphasized that the features in Wordwall helped support

vocabulary retention. Several participants expressed that the quizzes and games made it easier for them to recall and understand the new vocabulary. In response to the question regarding which features they found most useful, students 12 remarked, "Quiz, because it helps me to remember the vocabulary." This indicates that Wordwall is not only fun but also provides direct benefits in cognitive aspects, especially in vocabulary learning.

### **Assistance for Better Teaching Method**

The third theme finds Wordwall was more engaging than traditional learning methods. Students stated that they often felt bored if they only learned through books or copying words into notes. In contrast, the use of interactive games or Wordwall made them more engaged in learning. Statements such as "Wordwall is more fun than writing in the books" (S11) and "I feel bored when we do not play games" (S15) confirmed that learning approaches that are too conventional are less effective in capturing their attention. In addition, it was also found that the use of Wordwall was able to increase students' motivation and interest in learning. Some students reported that they felt more enthusiastic and wanted to continue learning English after using Wordwall. This is in line with students' statements such as "Yes, I want to learn more and more" (S14) and "Learning vocabulary using Wordwall makes me want to learn English more" (S3). This indicates a positive change in attitude towards the subject.

### **Fun Collaborative Learning**

Regarding the cooperative activities, students expressed that the collaborative aspect of using Wordwall significantly enhances their learning experience. The reported feeling more joyful and at ease when participating in quiz-based activities alongside their classmate and teacher. This collaborative engagement not only reinforced their understanding of the lesson content but also fostered a more positive and supportive classroom environment. When asked to share memorable moments from their learning experience, several students highlighted the social enjoyment they experienced, such as "I am having fun with friends when playing quiz games" (S4) and "Playing games in class with my friends" (S14). These responses illustrate how interactive learning tools like Wordwall can promote both academic engagement and interpersonal connection among students.

### **Learning Motivation Booster**

The fifth result reveals that Wordwall gives excitement to learn English Vocabulary. The students find happiness during the class, and playing gamified activities can raise their motivation. They loved to answer the questions provided in the teacher's laptop and can compete with other friends to show their best. One of the students (S3) expressed the idea through the statement "Learning English vocabulary using Wordwall makes me want to learn English more." Another stated "Yes, I feel happy when I play" (S5). The responses learning more and happy indicate their intrinsic motivation related to cognition and emotional.

Based on the results of this study, Wordwall creates more interesting and supportive learning atmosphere in learning English among Grade 4 and 5 students at one of schools in Thailand during the international internship program. Students showed high interest and enthusiasm in using Wordwall during the learning process, and this media not only helped students to understand and remember vocabulary more easily, but also created an interactive and fun learning atmosphere. Wordwall provides a more engaging learning experience with games, quizzes, and challenges aligned with the characteristics of elementary school students. The results of this study show that integration of educational technology, such as Wordwall, has great potential to improve foreign language learning, especially vocabulary development. Moreover, the use of Wordwall not only helps students

to actively participate in learning activities but also increases their confidence in using new vocabulary.

## **DISCUSSION**

The result of this study reveals positive perceptions of students toward the use of Wordwall in learning English vocabulary. The dominant theme of fun learning reflects the importance of game-based learning in increasing students' attention and participation. Many students mentioned that they felt happy and not bored when learning using Wordwall (e.g. statement from S15). The effectiveness of Wordwall in learning can be explained through several learning theories. Firstly, based on constructivism theory, particularly about game-based method by Kapp (2012). Students construct their knowledge and interaction with the learning environment (Julia et al., 2024). In this context, Wordwall provides a platform that allows students to engage directly in the learning process through activities such as quizzes and games. Students not only passively receive information, but are also active in building their understanding. This reflected in student 12's (S12) statement, who said that the quiz feature helped him remember vocabulary. The statement shows that the interactive activities in Wordwall encourage students to better understand and remember the material taught.

Secondly, Wordwall integrates these elements through engaging quiz design, use of relevant images, and immediate feedback to help students better understand and retain information. For example, features "True/False" and "Guess the word" help students connect new vocabulary to the right context so that they can better remember what they have learned. Third, the gamification approach in education emphasizes the use of game elements to increase students' motivation and engagement (Ahmad & Khan, 2024). Wordwall adopts this approach by providing different types of educational games that appeal to students. In this study, students showed an increase in motivation and interest in learning after using Wordwall, as stated by student 14 (S14), "Yes, I want to learn more and more." This statement shows that the gamification element in Wordwall successfully motivates students to continue learning.

The use of games such as quizzes creates an interactive and fun atmosphere. As student 15 said, "Playing games gives me more knowledge and it is fun". And "I really like it, I learn a lot and it was really fun." This confirms that learning becomes fun by utilizing the element of entertainment as a bridge to deeper learning. The statement also shows that students enjoy the learning process that is packaged in the form of a game. This is in line with the previous research, which shows that interactive media such as Wordwall can increase students' engagement and make learning more fun (Swari, 2023). In addition, features contained in Wordwall, such as quizzes, word matching, and interactive games, are considered very helpful for students in remembering new vocabulary. Students find it easier to understand English words because learning is done in a fun and non-monotonous way. Research conducted by Richo & Vareza supports this finding, where it is mentioned that the effectiveness of Wordwall is supported by its repetitive, structured, and visually appealing design, which reinforces vocabulary acquisition (Vareza et al., 2024). Furthermore, students also revealed that they prefer using Wordwall over traditional methods such as reading and writing in books. For example, students 11 (S11) stated that "Wordwall is more fun than writing in the book." This is reinforced by research, which states that Wordwall can increase students' learning motivation because it is competitive and provides immediate feedback, which is not found in conventional methods (Anindya et al., 2024). When students feel engaged and challenged in learning, they become more active and driven to continue learning. Moreover, from a psychological perspective, positive emotional engagement such as excitement, passion, and enthusiasm is an important factor that promotes students' cognitive engagement in learning. Wordwall indirectly creates a pleasant emotional condition, which then supports learning achievement. Positive

emotions during the learning process can increase the brain's capacity to absorb and remember information (Habsy et al., 2022). Therefore, the implementation of interactive media such as Wordwall not only has an impact on motivation but also scientifically affects the cognitive effectiveness of students in mastering vocabulary.

In addition, the results of this study are also relevant to the local context in Thailand, especially in primary schools in rural areas. This school already has access to digital technology, but its utilization in the learning process has not been fully maximized. The use of interactive media such as Wordwall is one of the innovations that answers the challenges of conventional learning, which is still dominant in local schools. Students in this school show high enthusiasm when engaging in digital game-based learning, which they rarely experience in their daily learning activities. Therefore, the results of this study not only demonstrate the effectiveness of Wordwall in general but also underline the importance of integrating educational technology that is adaptive to the conditions and characteristics of learners in the region of Thailand, especially in the Loei region, to make learning more interesting, inclusive, and meaningful. This is by research that emphasizes that the success of technology integration is highly dependent on teachers' and students' readiness and the application of appropriate pedagogy to maximize the benefits of technology in the learning process (Habsy et al., 2022).

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings answer the research question, indicating that students view Wordwall as a useful and enjoyable tool for improving their learning and recall of new vocabulary. Furthermore, the positive emotional responses students reported, such as enthusiasm and motivation, are consistent with constructivism, multimedia learning, and gamification theory. Wordwall enables students to build knowledge through interactive tasks, and use multimedia resources to improve memory, and stay motivated by the game-based aspect. These findings demonstrate the ability of educational technology to turn standard vocabulary instruction into a more dynamic, student-centered experience.

Teachers, schools, and media are urged to use and build platforms such as Wordwall to improve the quality of language vocabulary. Particularly in primary schools. This study contributes to the growing body of literature that underscores the significance of incorporating digital game-based learning platforms within primary language education, particularly in underutilized school settings. A critical constraint of the study is the implementation in a single school with a limited number of participants, which may restrict the extent to which the findings can be generalized. Consequently, future research is recommended to explore the broader implementation of Wordwall across different educational levels and regions and examine how it can be adapted to various learning needs and environments.

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