

The Effect Of Word Wall On Vocabulary Mastery Of The Eighth Graders Students At SMP Negeri 30 Sigi

Tresia Hartati Upe¹, Nadrun¹, Desrin Lebagi¹, Mashuri¹

¹Tadulako University, Indonesia

*Correspondence: tresiahupee@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Vocabulary mastery plays a fundamental role in English language learning because it supports students' ability to understand and use the language effectively. However, many junior high school students still experience difficulties in mastering vocabulary, particularly in spelling, meaning, and word use. This study aimed to investigate the effect of Word Wall on the vocabulary mastery of the eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 30 Sigi. This research employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group. The participants consisted of 37 eighth-grade student divided into an experimental group and a control group. Data were collected through vocabulary pre-tests and post-tests comprising multiple-choice and sentence-construction items that measured students' mastery of nouns and verbs. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and an independent sample t-test with SPSS. The findings revealed that the experimental group achieved a substantially higher mean post-test score ($M=28.56$) than the control group ($M=15.79$). The hypothesis testing also indicate a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($p < .001$), demonstrating that the use of Word Wall had a positive effect on students' vocabulary mastery. These findings suggest that Word Wall provides meaningful visual support and repeated exposure that facilitate vocabulary learning. Therefore, Word Wall can be considered an effective instructional medium for improving junior high school students' vocabulary mastery in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom.

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1. Introduction

Vocabulary is a crucial component of English language learning. In order to master the four skills, namely speaking, reading, writing, and listening, Indonesian students who learn English as a foreign language need to master one of the foundations of all of them, which is vocabulary. An adequate amount of vocabulary is needed so students will be able to understand oral and written forms of English texts, they will face difficulties when unable to do so (Ismiyati & Saputri, 2020). When students have not mastered vocabulary before learning English at the next level, it will prevent them from understanding the message delivered (Anggawirya et al., 2021; Prihandoko et al., 2021; Junaid et al., 2025). Vocabulary mastery is not just about mastering one component out of several other, students need to master all of the vocabulary components in order to achieve the true meaning of mastering vocabulary. These components include (1) students ability to master both of the forms whether it is spoken or written forms, (2) mastering the meaning also crucial in this matter, (3) how to pronounce the words to make the words understandable through spoken form, last but not least is (4) their ability to apply the words into sentences in order to reach the ultimate skill in learning and mastering vocabulary and to complete it into the whole experience of mastering the fourth of vocabulary components.

Vocabulary learnings in school are known by using memorizing methods or mirroring the teacher to enrich the students' vocabulary. However, some students find it difficult because they have different abilities to memorize the words after a single introduction in class (Weda et al., 2022; Andini et al., 2026; Karubaba & Rahman, 2025). To help the vocabulary stick better in students' minds, repetition is needed to ensure the new words remain longer in their memory. A study conducted by Zhang (2022) finds that to significantly improve students' vocabulary, at least seven repetitions are needed through explicit Focus-on-Form instruction. Teachers' conventional methods sometimes make students uninterested in learning more vocabulary.

Therefore, an engaging method needs to be applied in this fragment of learning. One engaging and innovative way to enhance students' vocabulary is using Word Wall media. A Word Wall is a series of new vocabulary which are printed in large size and put on a section of the classroom wall or on the whiteboard. This media is created to encourage students to repeat the new words given every needed time in classroom activities. The series of words provided was connected with the current unit or topic to maximize the use of the new words during the learning session.

The interview with the English teacher of SMP Negeri 30 Sigi reveals students' struggles in vocabulary learning that lie on the inability to pronounce words correctly and to understand the meaning of new words. To teach vocabulary, the teacher uses a mirroring method where students imitate the teacher to obtain the exact same pronunciation. However, even after the teacher's effort to get students to pronounce words correctly, some students still struggle. Mastering the meaning of new words also seems to be a problem because they are only introduced to new vocabulary in one out of two meetings per week. Students also struggle in spelling words they learnt, misspell common found in students' writing. Based on this problem, a medium that encourages students to regularly practice and memorize more words is needed.

Throughout centuries of English vocabulary teaching and learning, countless numbers of media have been invented to help teachers to teach vocabulary to students. These media have been developed from time to time based on students' need and era of learning, from traditional media to digital media. One of the media that has been proven to help students' master vocabulary is Word Wall medium. A Word Wall is a collection of words students study that are visibly displayed in a classroom which are printed in large letters that are placed on a wall, bulletin board, or other surface. The word wall can be used during writing and reading activities because it is meant to be an interactive tool for students. Another definition of word wall, a word wall is a set of words displayed on a wall, bulletin board, chalk board, even a white board in a classroom which written in a bold colors and fonts to make it visible and easy to referred continuously by teacher and students in the classroom.

Word wall has several key characteristics that make it able to help students increase their vocabulary mastery, namely visual display, interactive, and repetition. Pairing words with pictures provides a visual cue that supports students' memory. A study conducted by Pickering et al. (2023) shows that students who observe objects, colors, and pictures have a high receptive towards vocabulary knowledge. The series of words in the word wall remain displayed in the classroom throughout this study, this action created incidental repeated exposure of meaning and spelling of the words especially outside the English study session, and made sure it is easy for students to always repeat the words anytime. A study by Uchihara et al. (2023) regarding the effectiveness of incidental vocabulary learning of L2 finds that incidental exposure is effective in enhancing students' vocabulary especially in meaning. This study not only finds the effectiveness of incidental exposure during post-test but also during delayed-post-test that demonstrate the long term effect on participants' memory. Students are always able to refer, use, or even point at the contents displayed in the word wall in their learning activity, which makes word wall an interactive tool to learn vocabulary. Yuliani et al. (2023) stated that learning vocabulary with interactive tools motivates students to learn vocabulary and help them understand the lesson easily.

Word wall has been proved effective in helping students' master vocabulary through countless previous studies. Word Wall medium has been found very helpful in students' vocabulary mastery across the world, a study by Veintimilla Duque & Vega (2025) report the findings of the results of students' post-test demonstrate the significant role of word wall as interactive and playful learning medium, where the average score of the pre-test is 6.69 while the average score of students' post-test is 8.15. A study conducted by Almufa & Alqurashi (2025) with title "The Impact of Using Wordwall Interactive Games on English Vocabulary Acquisition: Evidence From Saudi Arabia" finds that using Wordwall as interactive learning tools enhances vocabulary acquisition compared to conventional teaching methods. Studies conducted by Fathimatu Zahra (2024), Rahmah (2023), and also Nurammida et al. (2024) finds a noticeable increase in students' vocabulary mastery, proving the effectiveness of Word Wall media as a supporting teaching tool. Syamsidar et al. (2023) conducted a study titled "Wordwall on Mastery of Vocabulary in English Learning", the study finds that Wordwall media is feasible to apply in the learning process because it can increase students' motivation in learning, especially in vocabulary learning, and Wordwall media makes it easier for students to understand the subject matter through visual repetition because it makes students exposed to learning materials than when the Wordwall did not exist.

A study by Panjaitan & Siahaan (2024) also finds that word wall media is suitable for Indonesian students' vocabulary learning, they conducted a research in several different schools in different regions in Indonesia that shows the same results where word wall significantly improve students' vocabulary mastery. Agustin & Yanto (2024) find that the use of word wall in vocabulary learning leads to beneficial effects where not only students' scores increase in the post-test but also their enjoyment in learning new vocabulary increases and improves their speediness and efficiency when memorizing new words. Anggriani & Sumarsih (2013) find that the lack of adequate amount of students' vocabulary is

improved because of word wall medium, not only improved students reaction towards vocabulary learning but the word wall also improved students' pre-test mean score (48.48), post-test I mean score (63.68), and post-test II mean score (79.04).

Similar to previous studies above, this research will discover the effectiveness of word wall in enhancing students' vocabulary mastery. However, this study differs in several aspects from the previous study. In regards of the participants, it will focus on eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 30 Sigi in Palolo district, Sigi regency, Central Sulawesi that have not been explored in earlier researches, specifically in class Teratai and class Tulip. Moreover, this study employs both pre and post-tests in the form of multiple choices and making simple sentence items to measure students' mastery of nouns and verbs. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on these two particular word categories and word wall implementation within Indonesian EFL classroom context in SMP Negeri 30 Sigi. Therefore, this research is trying to propose word wall as a medium in teaching vocabulary. This research is aimed to find out whether or not this medium significantly increases students' vocabulary mastery.

2. Methodology

In order to make teaching and learning sessions using word walls effective, a procedure must be made to control what the teacher should do to apply the word wall in each learning session. The researcher used a certain degree of similarity techniques to apply word wall in the classroom which was suggested by Utami (2015). Here are the steps of teaching vocabulary:

1. The researcher prepared a list of target vocabulary consisting of nouns and verbs that are aligned with the topics in the English lesson book that is provided from school. The lists contain 50 words in total, which introduced in a small amount each session in 6 sessions of treatment.

2. The researcher put the word walls on a section of the classroom wall to make sure they are visible and accessible to all of the students during the lesson, even outside the English class. The series of word wall printed in large black letters and different color accents to help students easily recognize which are nouns and which are verbs (blue for nouns, red for verbs).

3. The researcher added around 7-12 new words every meeting until the word wall form a complete set in the final meeting. This gradual addition allowed repeated exposure and better memory retention to happen.

4. The students must be actively involved during lessons. Each session includes mini spelling bees, mini dictation to measure their spelling from what they heard, making simple sentences, and matching meaning games to reinforce recognition of meaning, spelling accuracy, and ability to produce simple sentences in context.

5. The researcher ensured previously learned words are repeated and reviewed continuously during treatments. The class reviewed the existing word wall through quick recall activities before introducing more words. These repetitions automatically strengthen students' long term memory and help them recall word meanings easily.

6. The word walls remain displayed in the classroom throughout the treatment period, so the researcher and students will be able to refer to the word wall occasionally when discussing related topics. Students not only can see the word wall during English class but also during other lessons because it always on sight, allowing incidental learning and continuous visual exposure.

This research used a quasi-experimental (Nonequivalent control group design) approach with a quantitative research method. This design is employed to assess the effectiveness of Word Wall medium in vocabulary learning at SMP Negeri 30 Sigi. The population of this research was the students of SMP Negeri 30 Sigi, eighth-graders of SMP Negeri 30 Sigi are divided into two classes namely Teratai class and Tulip class with a total of 37 students. The sample of this study was the Tulip class. The Tulip class was chosen based on the English teacher's recommendation, considering their lower proficiency in vocabulary mastery compared to Teratai class.

The data collection technique of this study used a pre and post-test containing 50 questions that measured students' vocabulary mastery and the significant increase of their vocabulary mastery after the treatment using Word Wall given. The pre-test was to measure students' prior knowledge as information to the researcher about their vocabulary mastery ability. The post-test was the final information and data to researcher regardless of whether the students experienced significant improvement in their vocabulary mastery or not. The 50 questions in the tests were divided into spelling test (20 questions), meaning test (20 questions), and the use of targeted words (10 questions). Multiple choice questions used in

meaning and spelling sections to measure students' ability to recognize the correct spellings and meanings of words, and students must apply words given and produce simple sentences in the use section .

This research applied quantitative data analysis because the data was collected in the form of numerical scores obtained from the students' pre-test and post-test results. All statistical analyses in this research were conducted using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). SPSS was used to compute descriptive statistics, normality test, homogeneity test, and t-tests. The analysis consists of two main parts namely descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to describe and summarize the students' vocabulary scores, while inferential statistics used to test the hypothesis and determine whether the use of the Word Wall has a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery. The detailed analysis steps are described below as formulated by Soesana et al. (2023).

1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics used to describe the students' scores before and after the treatment. It provided information about the students' general performance, including the average score, the highest and lowest scores, and the distribution of scores. The standard deviation (SD) was also calculated to determine the spread of the scores. These descriptive results helped to give a general overview of students' vocabulary mastery both before and after the use of the Word Wall.

2. Normality Test

Before testing the hypothesis, a normality test was conducted to check whether the data are normally distributed. A normal distribution means that the scores are spread evenly, allowing the use of parametric statistical tests such as the t-test. In practice, this test can be calculated using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov or Shapiro–Wilk test. If the significance value (p-value) is higher than 0.05, it means the data are normally distributed.

3. Homogeneity Test

The homogeneity test was conducted to determine whether the variance of the two groups (experimental and control) are equal. This test ensures that both groups started with a similar condition before the treatment, so the comparison would be fair. If the obtained F value is smaller than the value of F-table at a 0.05 significance level, the data are considered homogeneous.

4. Hypotheses Testing (t-Test)

After confirming that the data are normal and homogeneous, the next step is to test the research hypothesis using a t-test. The t-test was used to determine whether there is a significant difference in students' vocabulary mastery between those taught using the Word Wall and those taught using the conventional method. Independent Sample t-Test used for hypothesis testing, this test used to compare the post-test scores of the experimental group and the control group to determine whether there is a significant difference between them. If the calculated t-value is greater than t-table it means that the use of the Word Wall has a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery.

5. Decision Rules

The decision was made by comparing the obtained t-calculated with t-table at the 0.05 significance level. The criteria for decision-making in hypothesis testing are if t-counted < t-table at the 0.05 significance level, then H_0 is accepted and H_1 is rejected, it means the Word Wall does not effectively increase students' vocabulary mastery. But if t-counted > t-table at the 0.05 significance level, then H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted, it means the Word Wall effectively increases students' vocabulary mastery.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Result

The data were obtained from the pre-test and post-test administered to both the experimental and control groups. The findings are presented through descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize students' vocabulary achievement before and after the treatment, while inferential statistics are employed to determine whether the use of the word wall significantly affects students' vocabulary mastery. The results of the analyses are presented in the following sections.

3.1.1 Pre-test Results

Table 1. Pre-test Results of Experimental and Control Groups

		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	Experimental group	18	9.00	24.00	16.5556	5.27170
Pre-test	Control group	19	10.00	29.00	16.5263	5.61118
Valid N (listwise)		18				

The result of the test was obtained after conducting pre-test to both Experimental and Control groups, which showed a significant difference in their average scores. The experimental group consisted of 18 students that obtained a minimum score of 9 out of 60 scores and a maximum score of 24 out of 60 score, with an average of 16.5556 and a standard deviation of 5.27170. Meanwhile, the control group consisted of 19 students that obtained a minimum score of 10 of 60 and a maximum score of 29 out of 60, with an average score of 16.5263 and a standard deviation of 5.61118. These results suggest that, before the treatment applied, the control group had a higher mean score than the experimental group. This showed that the initial conditions of the two groups were not completely similar. However, the nearly identical standard deviations indicate that score variation within both groups were fairly consistent.

In summary, the pre-test data offer an overview of students' initial ability in vocabulary mastery before the use of the treatment to experimental class and the traditional ways of learning applied to the control group. The difference in mean scores between the two groups should be taken into consideration when interpreting the post-test results in order to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment using word wall media to learn vocabulary. Thus, further analysis is necessary to determine whether the treatment had a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery.

3.1.2 Post-test Results

Table 2. Post-test Results of Experimental and Control Groups

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Post-test Experimental group	18	18.00	48.00	28.5556	9.03732
Post-test Control group	19	6.00	26.00	15.7895	5.38082
Valid N (listwise)		18			

The result of the test was obtained after applying treatment using wordwall to the experimental group and using traditional methods to the control group. The test once again showed a significant difference on their average scores. The experimental group consisted of 18 students that obtained a minimum score of 18 out of 60 scores and obtained the maximum score of 48 out of 60 score, with an average of 28.5556 and a standard deviation of 9.03732. Meanwhile, the control group consisted of 19 students that obtained a minimum score of 6 of 60 and obtained a maximum score of 26 out of 60, with an average score of 15.7895 and a standard deviation of 5.38082.

The data show that after the treatment was given, the scores that obtained by the experimental group appear noticeably increased compared to the control group. The average post-test score of the experimental group was 28.5556, while the control group was only 15.7895. In addition, the greater standard deviation in the experimental group indicates the wider variation of scores among the participants in that group.

In summary, these post-test results show the positive effect of the use of word wall in increasing students' vocabulary mastery. The great difference in the average scores between the two groups also supports the hypothesis that the use of the word wall media is effective to help students learn vocabulary compared to the group that did not receive the same treatment. However, further statistical analysis is still needed to formally test the significance of these differences.

3.1.3 Normality Test Results

The normality test showed whether the data were normally distributed. This fragment is important because it is required before using parametric tests such as the t-test. The details of the normality test are presented below.

Table 3. Normality Test Results

Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Post-test Experimental	.155	18	.200	.905	18	.072
Post-test Control	.157	19	.200	.961	19	.593

Based on the table above, the results of the normality test show that the distribution in this study varied between the post-test in the experimental and control groups. After computing the scores, the experimental class value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is 0.200, and the Saphiro-Wilk test is 0.072. Because both values are greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data in the post-test of the experimental group are normally distributed. That means the data in the post-test are normally distributed.

3.1.4 Homogeneity test Result

A homogeneity test was conducted to determine whether the variance of the data from both groups was at the same level. This test is important to ensure that the differences in students' learning outcomes were truly due to the treatment given, rather than differences in data distribution. In this study, the Levene test was used with a significance level of 0.05. Details of the results will be shown in the following table.

Table 4. Test of Homogeneity of Variance

			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
			F	Sig.
Post-test Score	Equal variances assumed		5.030	.031

Based on the results of the homogeneity of variance test using Levene's test on the post-test data, the significance values obtained were 0.031. Because the value of the significance is bigger than 0.05, it can be concluded that the variance of the data is homogeneous. In other words, the assumption of the homogeneity of variance is met, which means that further statistical analyses requiring equal variances can be carried out validly.

3.1.4 Hypothesis Testing

In this study, an independent t-test was conducted to determine whether there was a significant between the two groups in the effectiveness of wordwall in students' vocabulary mastery. The criteria for decision-making in hypothesis testing are if $t_{\text{counted}} < t_{\text{table}}$ at the 0.05 significance level, then H_0 is accepted and H_1 is rejected, it means the Word Wall does not effectively increase students' vocabulary mastery. But if $t_{\text{counted}} > t_{\text{table}}$ at the 0.05 significance level, then H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted, it means the Word Wall effectively increases students' vocabulary mastery.

Table 5. Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test						
t-test for Equality of Means						
t	df	Significance	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p		Lower	Upper

Post-test Score	Equal variances assumed	5.255	35	<.001	<.001	12.76608	2.42955	7.83384	17.69832
	Equal variances not assumed	5.185	27.416	<.001	<.001	12.76608	2.46196	7.71814	17.81403

Based on the results of the independent test above, the sig. 2-tailed value is <0.001 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected, and H_1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted. This result proves the effectiveness of the word wall medium in increasing students' vocabulary mastery of eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 30 Sigi.

3.2 Discussion

The findings showed that the students who were taught using word walls achieved better vocabulary scores after treatment. The improvement in students' vocabulary mastery may have occurred because of the characteristics of word wall itself, which are visual displayed learning tool, interactive, and repeated exposure. The word walls were constantly visible in the classroom, allowing students to recall vocabulary whenever they encountered it that amplify the advantage of the visual learning tool. Titin Kartiasih et al. (2023) claimed that visible and accessible learning tool help students to actively learn the target vocabulary which later on improves vocabulary mastery and language skills of the students. Students considered meaningful classroom activities as games in-between learning activities. The educational games that have been implemented in this study through word wall include Meaning Hunt, Mini Spelling Bee, Making Short Dialogue, etc. that encouraged students' deeper processing of vocabulary rather than through memorization alone. A study conducted by Ochi et al. (2026) shows that the implementation of educational games in learning process encourage students to become active learners that directly involve in learning process rather than just passively listen to the teacher the entire time. Repeated exposure of the word wall which the result of the repeated of occurrences and references during learning sessions has strengthen vocabulary retention and facilitate long-term memory of students who taught using word wall. A study conducted by Vural (2016) shows that four encounters of unfamiliar words was enough for students to understood the meaning of the target words, the result of Vural's study support the finding of this current study that applying repeated exposure to strengthening students' memory of the unfamiliar words.

The students who taught with word wall encountered a significant improvement on the spelling, meaning, and the use of the targeted words which were the focused fragment of word class that studied in this study. The improvement of students' spelling happened because of the visual form of the word wall itself. In the previous paragraph, a study conducted by Kartiasih et al. (2023) talked about the visibility and accessibility of the vocabulary learning tools helped students to improve their vocabulary mastery. The word wall that used in the classroom during treatment was placed in front of the class, near the whiteboard which easily seen by students even outside the English lessons that increase the chance of incidental vocabulary learning of spelling and meaning (Uchihara et al., 2023). The students also became more familiar with how to use the words in simple sentences because not only students use word wall as a reading tools but also practice making simple sentences for each targeted words as classroom activities. Yuliani et al. (2023) stated that interactive tools such as word wall help students understand the lesson easily and increase their motivation to learn vocabulary.

The researcher found that implementation of word wall in this study faced several obstacles even after it proved to be effective in increasing students' vocabulary mastery. The unfamiliarity of the word wall medium has been affecting students' motivation on learning at the beginning of the treatment. To overcome this issue, the researcher frequently encouraged students to use, refer, and look back to the displayed words during exercises and discussions because word wall supposed to be an interactive tools that help them to improve their vocabulary mastery. As stated by Harmon et al. (2009) words wall encouraging the use of targeted word in meaningful context because the word wall itself did not teach vocabulary rather is a learning tool that enhance students' vocabulary mastery. The next problem was students occasionally struggled to remember the meaning of new words that were just displayed. To cope with students' difficulties, the researcher regularly reviewed and repeated previously learned vocabulary at each meeting and used the existing vocabulary in the short sentence inside the next word walls that was going to be introduced. As stated by Vural (2016) that

in order to understand the meaning of targeted words, several repeated encounters must be done. The limitation of class duration also made the implementation of the word wall imperfect. The researcher had not found the right solution to this limitation, but the researcher tried to keep the class flow as calm as possible within the pressure of the class limited duration.

The findings of this study have practical implications for English language teaching. The use of Word Wall can be considered an effective instructional medium for teaching vocabulary, particularly at the junior high school level. Through repeated exposure and visual presentation of vocabulary items, students become more familiar with the spelling, meaning, and use of words. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to integrate Word Wall into vocabulary instruction to create a more engaging and supportive learning environment. The theoretical implications for vocabulary learning in this study are the improvement in students' vocabulary mastery supports theories emphasizing the importance of repeated exposure in vocabulary acquisition. The findings also reinforce the view that visual learning aids can facilitate vocabulary retention by making lexical items more noticeable and memorable. Therefore, this study contributes to the growing body of literature highlighting the role of visual and repetitive vocabulary instruction in enhancing learners' vocabulary mastery.

4. Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of the word wall in improving the vocabulary mastery of the eighth grade students at SMPN 30 Sigi. The study focused on three aspects of vocabulary mastery, namely spelling, meaning, and use. This study also exclusively studied the use of word wall in noun and verb word classes only.

Based on the findings of the study, the use of word wall was found to be effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery. The students demonstrated better achievement after receiving the treatment through word wall media. The improvement was reflected in their ability to recognize the correct spelling of words, understand word meanings, and use vocabulary appropriately in simple sentences. Furthermore, the statistical analysis revealed a significant difference between students' vocabulary achievement before and after the implementation of the word wall. Therefore, the researcher hypothesis was accepted, indicating that the use of the word wall has a positive effect on the vocabulary mastery of the eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 30 Sigi. In conclusion, the word wall can be considered an effective instructional medium for vocabulary learning because it provides repeated exposure to vocabulary items, supports visual learning, and encourages students to actively engage with new words during the learning process.

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