

**WORD WALLS FOR INCREASING READING  
COMPREHENSION SKILL OF PRIMARY SCHOOL  
STUDENTS**  
**(Classroom Action Research in 3rd grade at Nagreg 04  
Elementary School Indonesia University of Education, Nagreg -  
Bandung)**

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**Abstract:** The low results students in reading comprehension caused in the learning activities teacher do not use appropriate media that can support students understanding. English learning always consider as a hard subject by students and students are not interested to read any English textbook because in majority students are lack of English vocabularies, so they get difficulties to understanding in learning English. In this research, the researchers use word walls media of reading comprehension learning. The purposes of this research are to get the image about (1) reading comprehension learning process in fourth grade of elementary school through word walls media and (2) the results of reading comprehension learning in fourth grade of elementary school through word walls media. The research method use in this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR) which developed by John Elliot and design in three cycles. The subject of this research the fourth grade of Nagrog Elementary School. The collection of data obtained through observation, interviews, field notes, tests and documentation. Data obtained from the implementation of research activities and then presented descriptive statistics. Based on the data obtained, it showed an increase of the reading comprehension skill through the use of word walls media. The students averages value in cycle I 55,30; 60,88 in cycle II and the averages value in cycle III 83,28. It can be concluded that reading comprehension learning in elementary school using word walls media can improve student learning results. Therefore, the researchers suggest that word walls as one an effective media to increase learning process and learning results of students in reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** *word walls, reading comprehension and learning results*

## **1. Introduction**

Education is one of the most important components in life and is the main key to the progress of a nation. In the Act, it is explained that everyone has the right to get education services. In the KTSP Curriculum (2006) English is a tool for communicating verbally and in writing. In learning English in elementary schools students are expected to have the ability to understand or produce oral or written texts that are realized in four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Therefore, learning English is directed to develop these skills so that graduates are able to communicate and discourse in English at a certain level of literacy.

Opinions expressed by Grosjean (2011, p. 22) "use to or more language in their everyday live". Explaining that many people use more than one language to communicate daily and more than half of the world's population speaks more than one language every day and more than two-thirds of the children in the world today are raised in a bilingual environment. If viewed from the side of the current language usage, it can be said that English is the second language (second language).

The statement above is in line with Crystal's (2008, p. 5) opinion which states that "English is now the more widely taught language as a foreign language-in over 100 countries, such as China, Russia, Germany, Egypt and Brazil". That English is used by more than 100 countries in the world.

Crystal (2008, p. 6) explains that "... about a quarter of the world 's population is already fluent or competent in English, and this figure is steadily growing - in the early 2000s that means around 1.5 billion people". English is spread and is used by almost a quarter of the world's population and will continue to grow to one and a half billion in the early 2000s.

English which is an international language which is also taught in Indonesia since elementary school needs special attention. The reason why English has been applied in elementary schools is because children are being prepared early on to be able to speak Internationally so that they can compete globally. Primary school-age children have a good ability to learn more than one language (multi lingual) and also by learning English can improve and enrich their language with the existing vocabulary.

Reading skills are very important to be taught in elementary school. Because through reading activities students can get information to increase their knowledge. But what is in fact the present reading activity is considered to be less noticed, especially in English subjects which should be taught seriously, because from this the initial capital of the foundation of understanding of English can be formed. Learning English taught in elementary schools should be designed in such a way as to develop children's language skills more optimally.

Based on the facts that exist in elementary schools English learning about reading comprehension does not get special attention, even though understanding of a material is very important so that students are able to understand what they are learning. Learning English which is a foreign language is felt to be less effective and only to meet the demands of the curriculum. Sometimes learning English becomes a burden for students because it is considered difficult and unattractive, the learning done tends to be monotonous and boring for students.

This is because the teacher does not use effective media that makes students interested in learning. The teacher only uses the source book to teach, does not use the media in delivering learning material so that only a few students understand. English in elementary school should only be taught for habituation and should be designed in such a way that learning can take place effectively and fun to nurture students' enjoyment and realize there is a foreign language as an alternative to communicate, so that it is not a burden for students.

Teaching English in elementary schools will greatly help students to be better prepared to learn broader knowledge at higher levels of education and have more achievements because students are trained to master more than one language (bilingual or multilingual). In essence, for the primary school level the teaching of English is to introduce language and invite students to enjoy learning English. By applying English learning in primary schools it is certainly beneficial for students to develop students' language skills in order to speak English which is a global language that is used by many countries, because primary school age children are easier to learn new languages.

English learning materials in elementary schools should be able to cover all basic aspects of English, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing that are tailored to the abilities and needs of elementary school students to improve the overall English language skills of students.

The most important teaching in English in elementary schools is by habituating and communicative learning activities, because by getting used to achieving material that is tucked into English in every opportunity communicatively will encourage students to use English in real terms in the classroom. In addition, to encourage the teaching of English in primary schools there must be innovation in terms of learning media designed to influence the improvement of students' learning abilities in learning English.

Reading is an activity of acquiring messages that the writer wishes to convey through written language. Abidin (2017, p. 148) suggests that the reading process is all the activity that the reader does to obtain the information contained in a reading. The reading product is the result of the reading process, namely understanding the content of the reading. Thus the results of reading or the results of reading learning are basically an understanding of the content of the reading that is read through a series of reading processes. It can be concluded that reading is a complex series of activities (highly complex) that must be learned. This is in line with Bernhardt's opinion (in Ngwenya 2008, p. 12) which suggests that reading is a combination of various skill abilities and processes, "reading is not a single skill but the combination of skills and processes that a reader interacts with print to derive both meaning and pleasure from the written words.

Scott & Ytreberg (2014, p. 57) explained that "reading aloud is not the same as reading silently. It is a separate skill and not one that most people have for using the outside. But it can be useful, especially with beginner in a language. It means that reading aloud is not the same as reading in the heart. Loud reading is suitable to be taught to students who are beginners, because by reading aloud students are required to use the right words, understand punctuation and learn to use the right intonation. While reading in the heart (understanding) emphasizes more on understanding the contents of the reading.

Reading activities in elementary schools are very important to improve students' insight and knowledge, especially reading comprehension. Resmini & Djuanda (2017, p. 80) suggested that reading comprehension is a form of reading activity with the main purpose of understanding the content of the message contained in the content of the reading. Reading comprehension emphasizes on mastering the content of reading, not on how beautiful, fast or slow reading. As explained by Linse (2015, p. 71) the following "reading comprehension refers to reading for meaning, understanding, and entertainment". According to Linse, reading activities direct the reader to understand the meaning, understand the contents of the reading and can be used as entertainment. Reading comprehension involves higher and more complex thinking skills. In this reading activity students understand the contents of the reading as a whole.

The definition of reading comprehension according to Irwin (in Ngwenya 2008, p. 13) that "comprehension can be seen as the process of using one's own prior experiences and the writer's questions to infer the author's intended the meaning." It can be seen that understanding is the process of using the experience of one who has experienced it and various signs and instructions of the author to tell the meaning written by the author.

The same thing was stated by McNeil (in Ngwenya 2008, p. 13), defining reading comprehension as a "process of making sense out of the text. Reading comprehension is a process of using one's existing knowledge (schemata) to interpret text in order to construe meaning. That reading comprehension is a process that uses knowledge schemes to be able to interpret the meaning of reading content.

In the process of media learning is needed as a tool to facilitate students' understanding of the material presented because using the learning process media will take place more effectively.

By using the media the learning process will take place more effectively. Hernawan, A. H., Zaman, B. & Riyana, C. (2017, p. 13) suggests the main function of learning media is as a means of helping to realize a more effective learning situation. Learning media should be an integral part of the

entire learning process itself and in its use must be relevant to the objectives or competencies to be achieved

The number of media is very large and varied, but the teacher must be able to sort out any media that is suitable for use in the learning process. A good learning media is a medium that is able to facilitate the learning process and increase the level of understanding of participants in learning the information conveyed by the teacher.

To encourage the teaching of English in primary schools there must be innovation in terms of learning media. The use of word wall or word wall media was created to support and develop student activities on reading skills that are tailored to children's language needs. Word walls are also one way to make students interested in paying attention to words printed in uppercase letters and affixed to the classroom wall or blackboard.

Word walls are filled with words that students can often see when reading (reading) and using them when writing. This is reinforced by the opinions of Brabham & Villaume, Copper & Kiger, (in Jasmine & Schiesl 2009, p. 302), namely "A word wall is a collection of high-frequency words that are age appropriate, classified into groups or categories, and is located on the wall of a classroom for children to easily see and learn. That word wall learning media is a collection of vocabulary that is suitable for students to learn which are classified according to groups or categories that are affixed to the classroom wall to make it easier for students to read it.

In learning reading comprehension media word walls can be used as a tool to deliver learning material. Linse (2015, p. 114) suggests that "word wall are list of words that the children have encountered in their reading that can be used in their writing". Based on Linse's statement, word walls are a collection of students' words in the reading process, but the use of this medium the teacher should focus on words that are often encountered or used by students. Word walls can also be arranged alphabetically based on topics or other topics.

The use of word walls learning media in learning can improve students' understanding of English vocabulary, because this visual media is very interesting for students. Students' understanding of English vocabulary is also increasing because it continues to exist in their memory and is easily seen because it is made in a size that is large enough. When teaching material using media word walls the teacher must choose a word that matches the theme to be conveyed.

The implementation of the use of media word walls in learning is by choosing familiar and familiar words heard by students, in making this medium must be of a large size so that students can read clearly. In each meeting, the teacher only gives about 10 vocabulary words in each lesson, even though only a little, but if it is often done, it will increase students' vocabulary.

Reading comprehension activities using visual word walls can make students interested and learn more actively because this visual media is quite innovative to be used in elementary schools. Students will be more challenged to read the writing on the wall and students are motivated to continue reading. The use of media word walls in learning reading comprehension is expected to improve student learning outcomes. By increasing the ability to read it will also increase the ability of other languages, such as listening, speaking and writing.

## **2. Method**

Sugiyono (2012, p. 6) suggests that educational research methods can be interpreted as a scientific way to obtain valid data with the aim of being found, and proven, a certain knowledge so that in turn it can be used to understand, solve, and anticipate problems in the field of education.

In a study, appropriate methods are needed and can be used as a tool to carry out a study. The research method used is Classroom Action Research (CAR) method. CAR is a research conducted by the teacher in a class that aims to solve problems that occur in class and improve learning outcomes. Rochiati (in Kunandar, 2008, p. 46) explains that Class Action Research includes qualitative research in which the description is descriptive in the form of words.

The study was conducted at Nagreg 04 Elementary School, Nagreg – Indonesia in the 2017/2018 school year. As for what is being studied in this school are 3rd grade students.

The research design used in this study is a design developed by Elliot. The research design developed by John Elliot is more detailed when compared to the model of Kurt Lewin and the Kemmis-Mc Taggart model. The PTK model developed by John Elliot, in its implementation consists of III cycles with each cycle consisting of three actions.

Operational definitions in this study include:

1). Reading comprehension ability

Reading comprehension is a form of reading activity that aims to understand the content of a message from a reading.

2). Word Walls

Is a collection of vocabulary displayed in large letters and affixed to the classroom wall. Learning using media word walls can improve understanding in learning reading comprehension.

3). The process of learning reading comprehension

Learning activities are carried out using media word walls to gain understanding. Learning activities carried out are reading words and sentences contained in word walls.

4). Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are abilities acquired by students after learning activities. The learning outcomes of students 'reading comprehension is done by measuring students' understanding through evaluation questions.

In order to obtain valid research data, the researchers made research instruments. The instrument is a tool used to obtain data or information needed at the time of research. The instruments used in this study are field notes, interviews, test observations and documentation.

Sugiyono (2012, p. 308) suggests that the data collection process is a very important component in conducting research, because the purpose of conducting research is to obtain data. Without knowing data collection techniques, the researcher will not get data that meets the standards set. Data collection techniques used in this study, including field notes, interviews, observation, tests and documentation.

Data analysis technique is the process of organizing or sorting data that has been obtained. From the data that has been obtained from data from research techniques and research instruments, the working hypothesis is then formulated what will be done for problem solving.

The data technique used in this study is qualitative data analysis techniques and quantitative data analysis techniques. Qualitative data analysis is how to obtain descriptive research results and data that can be obtained through teacher and student observation sheets, field notes and tests. The data obtained can be used as a reference in learning as well as aiming for learning to take place better. Analysis of data collected through test sheets can be presented in quantitative form through questions given to students. Mulyasa (2011grosjean, p. 218) explained that learning is said to be successful if at least 75% of students get grades that achieve KKM.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

The research conducted on this CAR, consists of three cycles and each cycle consists of three actions. The implementation of this study uses media word walls as a medium that supports success in learning

In the implementation of the research, in each cycle the teacher made a theme of learning in which in this cycle I carried out using the same theme but different activities in each action. In the first cycle the theme taught to students is about "foods and drinks", in the second cycle the themes taught are "my house" and cycle III with the theme "things in the classroom".

For the implementation of the first action the teacher introduces vocab to students, for the second act the student learns about simple sentences regarding the identification of the characteristics of vocab learned in the first action. The implementation of learning in action three is the development of

one and two action learning that is about the story. The following are the results of learning reading comprehension using media word walls.

### **1). Cycle I**

In this first cycle there are three actions with material with the theme "foods and drinks". When the learning activities take place students look passive, but when the teacher displays word walls students are enthusiastic to pay attention. In each lesson the teacher who acts as a teacher should use suitable learning media so that students are easy to understand what is being taught. Hernawan et al. (2017, p. 13) suggests the main function of learning media is as a means of helping to realize a more effective learning situation. The presence of learning media is very important to facilitate the delivery of messages in learning. A good learning media is a medium that can facilitate and enhance students' understanding of the information conveyed by the teacher.

Reading comprehension skills are important for students who learn English as a foreign language, because the ability to read comprehension, students can remember the content and information of what is read and help students to succeed reading activities in the classroom context. Reading comprehension activities involve higher and complex abilities, students are not only required to interpret a few words. Understanding the meaning of a reading is very important from the process of reading comprehension.

Based on the results of learning reading comprehension using media word walls shows results that have not been satisfactory. This can be seen based on the results of student scores in this cycle I, showing the average value obtained by students at 55.30.

### **2). Cycle II**

In the second cycle learning activities, the teacher made improvements that referred to the shortcomings that occurred in the implementation of research in the first cycle, but there were still various shortcomings faced by the teacher during the learning process. The implementation of learning cycle II consists of three learning actions which discuss the theme "my house".

The learning activities in cycle II as a whole take place quite well. Students understand enough about what they have to do because students do the same activities as in cycle I. Students seem to like reading activities using the learning media of word walls.

In the implementation of learning activities, media word walls which are used as learning media have proven to be able to improve students' reading skills. As expressed by Jasmine & Schiesl (2009, p. 302) "is located on the wall of a classroom for children to easily see and learn". That word walls are a collection of vocabulary that is pasted on the classroom wall to make it easier for students to read it.

By reading the words or sentences contained in the word walls, students feel interested because these word walls are printed in large letters and printed in a variety of colors to motivate students to read them.

Understanding of the reading in the second cycle increased compared to the first cycle. Even though the average score of the students had not reached the KKM, the average score of students was 60.88 and almost reached the KKM score of 70. Based on the results above, the teacher needed to make improvements for the next cycle to achieve improved student learning outcomes.

### **3). Cycle III**

Cycle III consists of three learning actions that discuss material with the theme of things in the classroom. In the learning process using learning media word walls. In the implementation of the third cycle learning the teacher tries to optimize learning by making improvements to the deficiencies that arise in cycle I and cycle II.

In the action one student learns about vocab according to the theme being taught. In action learning two students learn about simple sentences about material learned in action one and in action three is a combination and development of actions that have been carried out in actions one and two. By implementing learning using stages like this allows learning to be more meaningful.

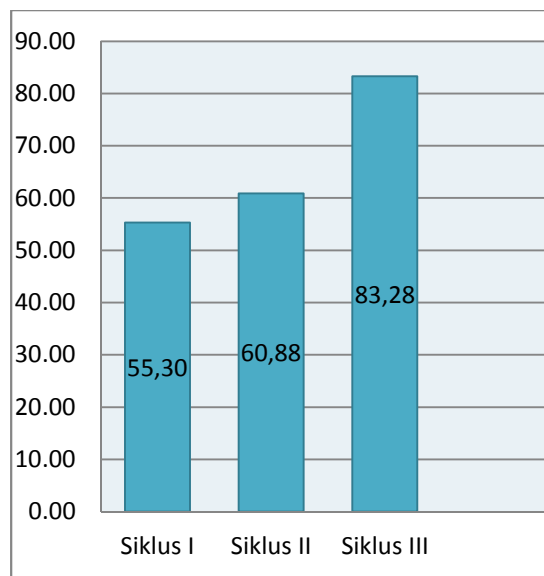
Resmini & Djuanda (2017, p. 80) suggested that reading comprehension is one form of reading activity with the main objective to understand the content of messages contained in the content of the reading that takes place using word walls learning media is very helpful in students' understanding of a material learning delivered.

Learning in cycle III as a whole is better than cycle I and II. Students seemed to enjoy learning activities using the learning media of word walls. In this third cycle students have experienced an increase, both in the learning process and in learning outcomes. Improving the learning process by using media word walls can be seen from students' enthusiasm for learning activities, this is evident when students answer questions about the content of the given text.

Understanding of reading in cycle III is increased compared to cycles I and II. This can be seen from the evaluation results obtained by students. The average score obtained by students in this third cycle is 83.28 and the value is above the KKM.

The results of the research and discussion described above show that learning to use media word walls in learning reading comprehension can facilitate students in understanding the content of reading and can make students more eager to learn so that learning becomes more meaningful and enjoyable. Students' understanding of reading has a significant increase in the direction that is better.

The mean value of learning outcomes in reading comprehension of students using the learning media word walls is as follows: cycle I is 55.30, 60.88 in cycle II and 83.28 cycle III. The acquisition of the average student's score can be seen from the picture of an increase in student learning outcomes conducted in each of the following cycles.



Increasing the Average Results of Students Each Cycle

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on research that has been done regarding the use of media word walls in learning reading comprehension in 3rd grade in elementary school, it can be concluded that the media word walls in learning proved to be able to make students understand what was conveyed and students were very interested when reading words and sentences in words. Learning outcomes

reading comprehension in 3rd grade elementary school using word walls learning media has increased in each cycle. Improvement in student learning outcomes can be seen from the acquisition of the average scores obtained by students and the increase in student scores above the KKM. The mean value of student learning outcomes in cycle I is 55.30; cycle II 60.88 and cycle III is 83.28.

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