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Effects of the word wall strategy on sight word reading in second-grade students: A single-group quasi-experimental study

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of word wall strategy on sight word recognition among second-grade students at a primary school in Bahir Dar City, Ethiopia. A single-group quasi-experimental design was employed, with a purposive sample of 50 second-grade students. The effectiveness of the strategy was evaluated through a pre-test-post-test design, supplemented by observations and teacher interviews. Quantitative findings revealed that the use of the word wall strategy significantly improved students' sight word reading performance. Qualitative results indicated that students with lower reading confidence were less likely to take risks, emphasizing the strategy's role in enhancing engagement and better reading. The results suggest that second-grade teachers should integrate sight word instruction into their plans and cultivate a literacy-rich environment to offer students ample opportunities to practice sight words. Future research could look into the strategy across various class sizes, grade levels, and educational settings.

Keywords: Effects, sight word, word wall

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Introduction

English is taught as a compulsory foreign language (EFL) and used as a medium of instruction in primary, secondary, and higher learning institutions in Ethiopia. Reading is one of the basic skills that play a pivotal role in an EFL context where students learn the language in the classroom and do not speak it outside of the classroom. (Ministry of Education, MoE, 2023). Children begin to learn by reading the alphabet, words, etc. For successful reading, mastery of words is essential as they stimulate students' experiences and background knowledge, enabling them to construct meaning from print. When students master basic sight words, they will read with less difficulty and achieve strong literacy in English as indicated in the national curriculum (MoE, 2023). Thus, reading takes priority in the EFL.

To support students in becoming proficient and effective readers, schools must ensure that students achieve mastery of sight words by the end of the second or third grade (MoE, 2022). Thus, in the process of reading, sight words play a significant role in primary school children's reading ability Falk et al. (2020) and Short et al (2018) indicated that sight words are essential for vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, spelling, and meaning. Research suggests that the mastery of sight words is vital for attaining reading skills, as it lays a foundation for literacy. For example, the recognition of sight words results in improved reading fluency and enhanced spelling, which ultimately improves overall reading ability promotes correct spelling, and fosters better literacy (Cunningham, 2017).

Statement of the problem

Short et al. (2018) noted that teaching second graders English word reading skills is beneficial, as this grade level is critical for developing basic reading skills such as phonics, phonemic awareness, and sight words. Doing this helps second-grade students be prepared to read phrases and sentences before promoting to third grade (Chanyalew; 2024; Falk et al., 2020; Johns & Lenski, 2019; Kupzyk et al., 2011).

However, American Institutes for Research, AIR's (2012) findings showed that 31% of Grade 2 students could not read a single word from the familiar word list, and 42% of students could not read a single word of the short reading passage. The number of zero scores is highest in reading comprehension with 89%. It also revealed that the national average of letters read by Grade 2 students was 42 letters per 2 minutes. The result further revealed that students read 21, 22, and 23 letters per minute (AIR, 2019).

During the test, students were given 50 familiar words to read in 2 minutes, and the results showed that they read 27, 30, and 34 words per 2 min from Grades 2 to 4. This equated to 13.5, 15, and 17 words per minute. The lack of significant improvement from Grade 2 to Grade 4 is noteworthy. The word per 2 min speed for the passage reading indicates that Grade 2 students read 53.3% of the 60 words in the passage (AIR, 2019). Findings (e.g., Tsehay, 2013) also revealed that

second-grade students read an average of only 17 words per minute, while 93% failed to comprehend the text. Moreover, the mean word reading was just 19 words per minute, and 13% scored zero, indicating a significant decline in expected reading abilities for this grade level.

AIR (2019) found that grades 1-4 school children could not read the alphabetic knowledge, pronunciation, spelling, phonemic awareness, and word recognition to their grade level appropriately before completing primary school although the existing teaching learning materials are appropriate to children for improving word reading instruction. Therefore, there is a need to support reading instruction with the necessary strategies

Endrias and Abebe (2024) investigated Ethiopian early-grade English teachers' preparedness to teach basic reading skills. They found that regardless of linguistic variation, Ethiopian children in early grades were found to be significantly nonreaders after 2 or 3 years of schooling. Their studies also showed that participant school English teachers were deficiently trained regarding phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, reading comprehension, oral fluency, vocabulary, and phonemic awareness. Teachers failed to practice the teaching of early reading in line with the purposes and principles. They used a traditional way of teaching approach in teaching reading and did not often employ appropriate reading instructional strategies.

Informal discussions with teachers and preliminary observations by the researcher in Bahir Dar primary schools also indicated that students have limitations such as difficulty recognizing words, and pronouncing new words. Early identification of reading deficiencies is critical for effective intervention. Therefore, the current study intended to fill in this gap through a word wall intervention strategy. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of the word wall strategy on sight word reading of second-grade students. The study endeavored to answer the following questions: **Q1:** What effect did the use of the word wall strategy have on familiar word recognition of second-grade students? **Q2:** How did the teacher and students implement the word wall strategy?

Theoretical Framework

In teaching words, there is confusion between sight words and high-frequency words although they are different. High-frequency words and sight words are used interchangeably. However, the brain science of word learning makes it clear the difference between these two labels as the terms high-frequency words and sight words are not synonyms, even though they get mixed up a lot. Sight words are words that readers can read automatically that students are instructed to recognize automatically (Blackwell & Laman, 2013).

Nurhamida (2012) and Rodgers (2017) identified that sight words cover seventy-five percent of the words used in beginning children's print materials. On the other hand, high-frequency words are as important as their names describe when it comes to turning words into sight words, simply because high-frequency

words repeatedly appear in a text. Thus, figuring out high-frequency words by the learners as they move through a text is not enough unless they are going to comprehend what they are reading. Children need to read all the high-frequency words quickly on sight (Burns, 2015). To know high-frequency words; children should get sufficient practice on sight words.

Schiesl and Jasmine (2009) pointed out that sight words account for a large percentage up to seventy-five of the words used in beginning children's reading texts. When children are exposed to sight words, they will be able to recognize sight words automatically and identify the majority of words in a beginning text before they even attempt to read them which leads to mastery of high-frequency words (Smith et al., 2012). Farrell et al. (2013) decided what percentage of all the running words in textbooks used in the primary grades were sight words. They identified a sampling of four basic reading series. They compared and picked out list of the running words for second-grade children.

Therefore, helping children read words on sight helps them to concentrate on meaning and comprehension as they read without having to stop and decode every single word. Advocates of whole-word instruction believe that being able to recognize a large number of sight words gives students a better start to learning to read (Erwin, 2016).

Johns and Lenski (2019) stressed that automatic sight word recognition is said to be advantageous for beginning readers because many of these words have unusual spelling patterns, cannot be sounded out using basic phonics knowledge, and cannot be represented using pictures. If we look at, the word "said" it breaks the phonetic rule that ai normally makes the long a sound, ay. In this word, it makes the short e sound of eh. Thus, the word "said" is pronounced as /s/ /e/ /d/. The word "has" also breaks the phonetic rule of s normally making the sss sound; in this word, d the s makes the z sound, /z/." One can see the word is then pronounced /h/ /a/ /z/ (Farrell et al., 2013; Nurhamida, 2012).

It is noted that when students begin formal reading instruction in second grade, they should comprehend the fundamentals of word reading and its mechanisms, which include common sight words like "again," "from," "have," "her," "his," "of," "then," "you," "I," "we," "they," "cat," and "under.". Teachers are expected to support students in practicing sight word reading strategies tailored to their developmental levels (Smith et al., 2012). Blackwell and Laman (2013) note that children who possess a strong understanding of sight word strategies demonstrate proficient reading abilities as they can swiftly and automatically decode letter sequences with minimal conscious effort. Once students gain confidence in their performance with sight words, they will be better positioned to become successful readers.

Therefore, early primary grade reading requires students to instantly recognize sight words, such as "the," "it," and "and," which aids in reading fluency by reducing the need to sound out each word (Blackwell & Laman, 2013). Besides, strong sight word recognition enhances text comprehension, allowing smoother reading without frequent pauses for blending or spelling.

Second-grade students need to develop skills in oral language, letters, and sight words (MoE, 2021). Understanding print functions and their connection to oral language sounds is vital for reading development. Implementing sight word instruction strategy aids in word recognition (Johns & Lenski, 2019). Research shows that systematic sight word instruction enhances reading proficiency (Smith et al, 2012), highlighting its importance in improving students' reading abilities.

According to Kupzyk et al. (2011), effective sight word instruction involves extensive reading with success-promoting texts, as recognizing high-frequency words on sight forms a strong reading foundation. Direct teaching strategies, such as explicit instruction, repetition, and interactive methods like seeing, hearing, writing, and chanting, enhance this process (Gibbon et al., 2017).

Fatkhurrokhman et al. (2018) stated that learning is an effort to direct the students into the learning process so that they can get the learning objectives by that is expected of them. This is because learning objectives can be achieved if formulated with the right strategy. Hence, there is a need to integrate reading strategies. Reading strategies are the mental operations involved when students approach a text effectively to make sense of what they read (AIR, 2019).

There are a variety of strategies in teaching reading such as using graphic organizers, making predictions, asking questions, summarizing, and identifying the main ideas. However, for early beginning readers, a word wall is more helpful in word recognition, spelling, oral reading, and fluency (Rodgers, 2017). The current researcher chose this strategy over others because it is more appropriate and convenient in the teaching-learning process of sight words.

Word wall is an effective tool for reinforcing vocabulary, promoting word recognition, and assisting with spelling and writing. They are arranged alphabetically to aid the students in introducing words that are simple to learn. The words are reviewed weekly and used to improve vocabulary and students' written work (Filkins, 2018). Therefore, students can refer to the word wall to help them with spelling and basic sight words. By providing constant exposure to sight words, word walls facilitate a visual connection that aids in memory retention. It is a versatile strategy used before, during, and after reading activities, featuring organized displays of words on a wall or bulletin board that are updated throughout the year to reflect new learning (Nurhamida, 2012).

The concept of a word wall emerged in the late 20th century as part of the increasing recognition of the importance of visual aids in literacy. It is a tool that educators use to display words prominently in the classroom, providing students with visual support for their reading and writing. Word walls are often organized alphabetically or thematically and are intended to be dynamic resources that are updated as students learn new words (Erwin, 2016; Filkins, 2018). It serves as a resource for sight words, unit-specific vocabulary, and new terms, aiding in vocabulary recognition and enhancing students' reading ability. The Word Wall teaching strategy creates a space in the classroom for students to display key concepts through words (Cunningham et al., 2017).

Generally, in second-grade reading, word wall is an effective strategy. is necessary to integrate the strategy into reading lessons. Word walls are bulletin boards that contain a collection of high-frequency words and their activities include games that focus on using the word wall to learn sight words. It is more playful and game-like, offering a dynamic way to practice specific reading practice (Gibbon et al, 2017). This is why the researcher in this study used a word wall strategy intervention to help students recognize sight words that can be easily integrated into reading activities.

Methods

Research Method and Design

The current research used mixed methods by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to explain, or build on the results from the other approach, and broaden better understanding. Mixed methods mitigated ethical concerns while offering practical real-world solutions (Creswell, 2013). The design is One-Group Pretest-Posttest quasi-experimental Design which includes a pre-test measure followed by a treatment and a post-test for a single group. Group A- 01———X———02 (Creswell, 2013, p.149). This is because the one-group pretest-posttest design neither requires a large sample size nor a high cost to account for the follow-up of a control group. Besides, since the outcome is measured after the intervention, we can be certain that it occurred after it, which is important for inferring a causal relationship between the pretest and posttest.

The study took place at Qulqual Meda Primary School in Bahir Dar which was purposely selected based on convenience. Following permission from the school's vice-academic director, teacher, and students, a total of 50 second-grade students and the regular English teacher participated. Second grade was selected for intervention due to its importance in sight word instruction in early reading development. Having administered a pre-test, the researcher introduced and trained a second-grade English language classroom teacher on how word wall strategy can be used in teaching sight words.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments were pre-posttest, classroom observation notes, and teacher interviews. Utilizing different instruments strengthened data reliability and cross-validation of results, thereby reducing the probability of unsound conclusions (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Procedure of the Study

Pre-intervention

Preparing and Conducting the Pretest

The researcher adopted the tests from The American Institutes for Research [AIR] (2012) on the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) for the Ethiopian context within the Ethiopia Teaches English for Life Learning (TELL) Program designed following a detailed review of the English curriculum for Grades 2 to 4 and the Mother Tongue Curricula (MTCs). The researcher and four English teachers assessed students to measure the pre-test on sight word reading consisting of a list of high-frequency words that pupils should be able to recognize on sight.

On October 6, 2023, a pretest was administered on sight word reading and fluency to 50 Grade 2 students ($n = 50$) by the researcher and 3 trained English teachers, graded the pretest as a baseline data who later compared it with the posttest. The sight word reading is determined through a word count analysis of the most commonly used words in textbooks of appropriate level. The list of words is derived from the fifty most frequently used words in the grade 2 textbooks. The researcher together with 3 assessors presented a list of unrelated words that are not presented as a story or complete text. Fifty words are randomly arranged in the student booklet. The familiar words reading test was scored on a words per-minute calculation. The score was calculated by counting the number of words each student read aloud correctly in 1 minute.

Training of the English Language Teachers

Before the intervention, the researcher prepared the training manual based on the word wall strategy. Having read the manual, one regular English teacher along with three colleague English teachers and the researcher discussed the concept of word wall in detail to help the regular teacher implement the strategy. Then, the researcher trained the regular teacher and the three English language teachers. The three teachers were trained to substitute for the regular class teacher in case of emergency. Training four teachers made the training interactive which covered a total of 10:20 hours which were given in 5 sessions.

The researcher facilitated discussions on integrating the strategies into different units from the student's textbook and teacher's guide. The training fostered a collaborative environment based on reflection and constructive feedback. Following this, the teacher gave orientations to students on the word wall strategy and incorporated it into daily reading lessons for four months.

While Intervention

Teacher-self-reflection and Conference with Researcher

First, the checklist was collaboratively developed by the researcher and second-grade teacher to evaluate the effectiveness of the word wall strategy in the classroom. To improve the content and face validity of the checklist, the teacher and researcher reviewed and revised the items. The checklist enabled the teacher to self-reflect on word wall strategy during the intervention, and adjust for the next class. This included discussions that promoted reliable strategy implementation in subsequent reports. The self-reflection checklist required the teacher to document the use of reading activities in the word wall in the intervention, the challenges, and their benefits. Before the next reflection session, the identified teacher's challenges motivated him for more use of strategy.

Conducting Classroom Observation

In intervention, they employed unstructured classroom observation and took field notes based on the theoretical suggestions of the word wall strategy while the teacher and students engaged in the reading instruction process. The word wall is a literacy tool composed of an organized collection of vocabulary words that are displayed in large visible letters on a wall, bulletin board, or another display surface in a classroom. The English teacher prepared words written on a piece of paper, taped the word wallpaper to students' desk and writing folder for easy reference.

The wall included high-frequency sight words that are relevant to the second-grade English curriculum level to be used as a reference tool to support students' reading, and spelling. It provides a visual reminder of words they have learned or are currently studying.

The teacher-guided students in identifying word families on chart paper, which served as a visual aid for practice. The chart paper included exemplars of various word families, such as (a) the "t" family (e.g., ten, the, this, tree), (b) the "at" family (e.g., cat, sat, mat, bat, rat, that), (c) the "ad" family (e.g., add, bad, dad, had), (d) the "an" family (e.g., man, can, tan, ran, fan), (e) the "and" family (e.g., hand, band, sand, land), and (f) the "ee" family (e.g., three, bee, knee, tree, see). The activities made reading lessons interactive and engaging.

The observation focused on examining the application of read-aloud, pictures, game cards, and visual aids. The activities helped students see patterns and relationships in words; and learn how to read sight words during activities. The strategy was used to narrate the observational data from field notes. Within the strategy, the number of instructional activities for teachers was to see how the reading contents incorporated the word wall activities.

Field notes were conducted on six rounds of full periods (36 minutes long) during targeted reading lessons. The researcher and three teachers observed to ensure reliability. Audio-video recordings were not used to prevent the artificiality and frustration of the participants.

After class had ended, instructional observation data were analyzed and evaluated with feedback to strengthen the intervention. The English language teacher employed a word wall strategy and word wall activities to boost word recognition among students (Teacher, personal communication, October 15, 2023).

The English teacher continued practicing the word wall strategy with students. For example, on days fifteen and sixteen, students continued to do self-reading using the word wall strategy. The teacher-guided them in recognizing some of the word lists including a, on, I, too, it, says, with, his, her, time, off, friend, please, pretty, when, your, but, away, its, went, that, they, our, old, ready, more, each and ate listed on the game card. He stressed that these sight words are the first set of words that establish a foundation for reading. The teacher also directed students to work on the sounds of words, word boundaries, and new word mastery. The teacher intended to help students apply the word wall strategy to promote their sight word reading performance.

Generally, the implementation of the word wall strategy was effective during the intervention designed to teach sight words, integrating these resources into daily instruction. The lesson culminated in a practice session where students rapidly identified words from the wall, which fostered independent practice and improved word recognition. This was how the intervention looked like.

Post Intervention

Interview

After the intervention and the post-test, the researcher prepared three unstructured interview questions for the interviewee teacher on the following themes: how the training on the word wall strategy helped the teacher implement strategy, in what ways students and teacher used the word wall, how it improved students' sight word reading development and teacher's view on the intervention. On the appointment date (19th January 2024), the interviewed teacher in a convenient, quiet setting (in the department's office) for one hour.

Data analysis Approaches

Having collected the data from participants, the data were coded and entered into SPSS for analysis. Statistical tests of significance were run at the alpha level of .05 or 95% confidence interval level. The pre-posttest results were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean and standard deviation of the scores from the pretest and posttest were compared. Then a paired samples t-test was used to analyze the effects of go fish and word wall strategies. The main themes of the study focused on: (1) examining the effects of word walls on students' sight word reading (pretest and posttest), (2) analyzing the classroom observation, and (3) descriptions of teacher's interview. Eventually, results were presented systematically and discussed thoroughly.

Ethical Clearance

Ethical clearance in research ensures adherence to integrity, honesty, and fairness throughout the research process. By securing ethical approval, the researcher demonstrated compliance with established ethical standards. according to (Creswell, 2013).Participants have the right to know who accesses their data and its intended use. Before the intervention, verbal informed consent was secured from the school's vice-academic director, parents, and classroom English teacher, because written consent was found to compromise participant anonymity. Then, an oral assent was obtained to inform second-grade children of the intervention as it is most often used for those of a lower maturity, and age. Following this, a total of 50 second-grade students and the teacher participated in the intervention.

Administering the Post-Test

In post-intervention, the researcher and three English teachers collaboratively administered a post-test, identical (similar tests) to the pre-test, to evaluate students' sight word recognition. The assessors followed the same procedures as during the pre-test.

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of the word wall strategy on second-grade students' sight word reading. A single-group quasi-experimental design was employed. Pretest and posttest, observation, and teacher interviews were used for data collection. The main themes of the study focused on (1) examining the effects of word walls on students' sight word reading (pretest and posttest), (2) analyzing the classroom observation, and (3) descriptions of teacher's interviews.

Results of word wall strategy on sight word reading

Table 1 below presents the results of student sight word reading which attempted to answer the first research question. The quantitative data obtained from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using a paired-sample t-test to determine whether sight word instruction significantly improved students' sight word reading.

Table1

Paired Samples T-test Results of Word Wall strategy on Sight Word Reading

	N	Mean	Df	Std	T	Sig. (2tailed)
Pre-test	50	1.60	49	2.71	6.32	0.000
Posttest		6.98	49	0.32		

Note. p= 0.05

As can be seen from Table 1 above, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of familiar word pretest and posttest results of students. Before students learn fluency through the "word wall", they scored 1.60 in the pretest, whereas, after the intervention, their mean score was 6.98. Based on the mean-variance t (49) t=6.32, p=0.000) pre-post Std. D= (2.71 and 0.32), statistics results were observed. This indicates a statistically significant difference at (≤ 0.05) between the pretest and posttest scores on sight word recognition of students. The significant differences observed in post-test scores on sight word recognition might support the claim that the word wall strategy can enhance students' reading, highlighting the intervention's positive effect on sight word reading performance

Discussion

Early reading in Ethiopia has been a matter of concern as persistent underachievement in students’ reading is a pressing problem (AIR, 2019; Endrias & Abebe, 2024). This study investigated the effects of word wall strategy on sight word recognition of second-grade students in one primary school. Investigating the implementation of second-grade sight word reading instruction can give some insight into how the teacher and the students use the strategy to improve reading.

The below section discusses the results of the pre-posttest (quantitative data) and results of observation and interview (qualitative data) for triangulation. In the intervention, the assistant teachers conducted observations focusing on the implementation of word walls in reading. After intervention and posttest, the researcher conducted interviews with the English teacher.

Next, research question one (quantitative data) results were discussed accompanied by research question two of classroom observation and teacher interview (qualitative data) for triangulation. As shown in Table 1 (quantitative data), there was a statistically significant difference in students’ sight word recognition. The results have been achieved due to the intervention conducted by the classroom English teacher, changing his instructional strategy from traditional ways of teaching to a word wall strategy. The observed mean difference in students’ sight word reading in the pre-posttest may imply that the practice of word wall strategy can enhance students’ reading performance.

The results of this study are consistent with (Cunningham's, 2017; Short et al., 2018) results that indicated a significant difference in sight word reading skills improvement among students who received word wall instruction. It enhances not only students' sight word improvement, but also their self-reading, cooperation, and motivation. The result is also in agreement with (Gibbon et al., 2017). The current study found that employing a word wall strategy improved second-grade students' sight words, such as spelling, letter-sound correspondence, and word recognition. It could be inferred that employing a word wall strategy in sight word instruction can improve students' performance.

Recent studies investigated the effects of word wall strategy on students' sight words which revealed significant positive effects. Participants in the intervention showed improved sight word recognition, reading fluency, and a reduced risk of reading failure (AIR, 2019; Chanyalew, 2024; Falk et al, 2020). These results support previous studies highlighting the effectiveness of word walls in enhancing sight word reading (Ehir, 2014; January et al., 2017; Kupzak et al, 2011). Activities involving visual word walls showed increased student engagement, and improved scores (Erwin, 2016).

Other studies have found that students who have been taught sight words through the word wall strategy showed significant improvement in sight word reading scores compared to traditional methods (Burns, 2015; Gibbon et al, 2017). The findings mentioned above align with the findings of (Filkins, 2018; January et al., 2017) who identified sight word recognition scores as a strong predictor of better reading performance.

To support the quantitative results, data gathered through observation and teacher interviews are discussed below.

Classroom observations indicated that the teacher effectively introduced and modeled word wall strategies and activities. Thus, students actively referred to the word wall for assistance with spelling, sound, and meaning during reading activities involving sight words.

The observations noted noticeable progress in their reading abilities by the eighth and twelve days of the intervention, suggesting these students are likely to develop better word recognition and fluency in the next grades. Instead of recognizing a word in two minutes, 4 students were promoted to recognizing four words in two minutes (Observations, November 10, 2023).

The subsequent researchers' observations revealed that sight words were taught appropriately using a word wall strategy and students showed improvements in word recognition. For instance, six struggling readers doubled their reading speed from three to six words per minute, demonstrating increased fluency (Observations, December 15, 2023).

From the observation, it is possible to suggest that employing word wall activities facilitates students' sight word reading. When sight words are paired with effective strategies, students can differentiate between letters and words, and their reading confidence increases as they encounter these words in texts. The

observation results supported quantitative results which revealed significant sight word recognition among students.

In a post-intervention assessment, on 19th January 2024, the teacher was interviewed using a guide containing three questions. The interviews, lasting 35 minutes each, took place in convenient, quiet settings. The primary focus was to evaluate the implementation of the word wall strategy and its effectiveness in helping students acquire sight words.

In interviews regarding the implementation of the word wall strategy in improving students' sight words, the teacher noted progress, especially among struggling readers. He explained that a few students were able to read sight words correctly at the beginning of the intervention, while many struggled and displayed confusion. However, the teacher said that with continuing effort, he has seen significant improvements within a few weeks, specifically in students' engagement and participation related to word wall activities. He said that students actively referred to the word wall activities involving sight words, spelling, pronunciation, and meaning.

In regards to student performance, the interviewee teacher emphasized that the use of a word wall strategy for sight word reading greatly enhanced students' word spelling, identification, and pronunciation following the intervention. He noted significant progress in sight word recognition for students A, D, G, M, S, X, and Y (pseudonyms). He indicated that within two months, students showed steady progress in sight word mastery. He thought that students would be ready for fluency and comprehension in the next grades. Overall, the interview findings indicate that students developed positive attitudes and motivation toward the word wall strategy, which enhanced their sight word reading. regards student performance, the interviewee teacher emphasized that use of word wall strategy for sight word reading greatly enhanced students' word spelling, identification, and pronunciation following the intervention. He noted significant progress in sight word recognition for students A, D, G, M, S, X, and Y (pseudonyms). He indicated that within two months, students showed a steadily progress in sight word mastery. He thought that students will be ready for fluency and comprehension in the next grades. Overall, the interview findings indicate that students developed positive attitudes and motivation toward the word wall strategy, which enhanced their sight word reading.

When the teacher asked about the benefits of sight word instruction, he noted, "I found that word wall sight word strategy is important because it helps students remember the words better, and also helps them to improve their fluency". He noted that once they learned their sight words, it will be easier to focus on comprehension strategies in order to figure out the words and develop their understanding of the text. The interview indicated that the intervention positively impacted students' utilization of the word wall strategy.

In interviews regarding students' sight word reading, the teacher expressed concern that untreated low performance in sight word identification could hinder vocabulary development, oral reading fluency, and comprehension.

From the discussions of the teacher's interview, one can conclude that employing a word wall strategy resulted in improvements in students' sight word performance.

However, the current research is inconsistent with Hirsch's (2003) and Rodger's (2017) findings indicating that sight word drills alone do not promote skilled reading; words become sight words when readers can efficiently process their sound-symbol correspondences. There is significant evidence that over-reliance on sight-word vocabulary often leads to regression in reading development by age nine or ten. To achieve fluency in reading, students need to acquire both sight-reading and decoding skills.

The observation and interview data reinforced the view that the problem of students when they read, arises from poor reading in sight word recognition. The role of sight word ability in students' reading development should thus not be overlooked. Moreover, interviews and observations attested that, if students are good at recognizing letters-sound correspondence in English, they can easily read sight words.

Conclusion and Implications

This study examined the effects of word wall strategy on second-grade students' English sight word reading. The quantitative results indicated that the use of the word wall strategy significantly improved students' sight word reading performance. The qualitative results showed that students with low reading confidence are less likely to take risks, highlighting the importance of a word wall strategy for enhancing engagement and better reading performance. The results suggest that second-grade teachers should integrate sight word instruction into their curricula and cultivate a literacy-rich environment to offer students ample opportunities to practice sight words. Future research could look into the strategies across various class sizes, grade levels, and educational settings.

Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted in a single school using a single-group quasi-experimental design, which may not be generalized. Moreover, it was implemented for a semester.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no competing interests.

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