

Exploring English Language Teachers' Perceptions of Vocabulary Teaching Strategies in Grade 10: A Study of Three Secondary Schools in Fagita Lekoma Woreda.

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the perceptions of Grade 10 English language teachers regarding vocabulary teaching in selected Ethiopian secondary schools. Teachers' perceptions are critical, as they shape instructional choices, classroom practices, and students' overall language development in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. A mixed-methods research design was employed to gather comprehensive data, utilizing both quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) tools. The participants included a sample of Grade 10 English teachers from various secondary schools. The findings revealed that the majority of teachers hold positive perceptions, recognizing vocabulary's essential role in improving students' reading comprehension, writing ability, and communicative competence. Teachers generally view strong vocabulary as foundational for academic success. However, a significant finding indicated that many teachers reported limited confidence in implementing diverse, effective teaching strategies, which they attributed to a lack of adequate training and professional support. The study concludes that professional development programs must be designed to address these expressed needs. Tailored training focused on practical, research-based vocabulary methods is crucial for enhancing teacher confidence and expanding their strategic repertoire, thereby improving the quality of vocabulary instruction and student learning outcomes in Ethiopian EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Teachers' perceptions, vocabulary instruction, teacher training, professional development, language proficiency.

Background of the Study

The role of language in all aspects of life is undeniably essential. Without language, the world might not have evolved into its current form. Simply put, communication and global development are made possible through language (Rees, 2008). Hence, learning an international language benefits people broadly, and this explains why many individuals choose to learn English. However, learning a language is not as easy as it may appear. This is because language learning involves more than just knowing the language system (such as grammar and vocabulary); it also requires mastery of the skills to use the language system effectively (ABAX, 2004 online). The difficulty increases further when these skills are learned in a second or foreign language context (Rees, 2008 BBC online; Rixon, 1986, as cited in Abera, 2008).

English as a foreign language should be taught and learned using selected vocabulary. As McCarthy (1990) cited in Gashaw (2008) stated, effective communication in a second or foreign language is not possible without a rich vocabulary. Harmer (1991:153) also emphasized, “If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh.” This implies that no matter how well one understands English grammar, the lack of vocabulary knowledge renders communication ineffective since words form the basis of speech. In the past, vocabulary was underestimated and considered merely a tool to support grammar teaching. However, in recent years, vocabulary has gained more recognition among methodologists (Ibid). Knowing a word encompasses various elements, such as its form, grammar, collocation, meaning, word formation, and word class.

Schmitt (2000) asserts that vocabulary lies at the heart of learning and communication. Lewis (2000:111) adds, “Without grammar little can be conveyed, but without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” Vocabulary is a crucial tool for expressing thoughts and feelings, whether spoken or written. Indeed, neither language nor literature can exist without vocabulary. A rich vocabulary enhances a person's ability to speak and write effectively in English. Thus, vocabulary teaching strategies must be central in EFL instruction.

Statement of the Problem

Learners' vocabulary development is a critical aspect of their overall language proficiency. According to Harmon et al. (2009), learners' vocabulary development is an important aspect of their language development. Although it has been neglected for a long time, researchers have increasingly turned their attention to vocabulary and vocabulary teaching strategies (Schmitt, 2000). As Coady and Huckins (1997) state,

teaching vocabulary is a significant factor in language teaching, since words play an important role in expressing our feelings, emotions, and ideas to others during the act of communication. In many EFL (English as a foreign language) classes, even where teachers have devoted much time to vocabulary teaching, the results have been disappointing. Concerning this, McCarthy (1990:151) also states:

“No matter how well the students learn grammar, no matter how successful the sounds of the target language are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in the target language just cannot happen in any meaningful way.”

Moreover, Wallace (1982) points out that not being able to find words you need to express yourself is the most frustrating experience in speaking another language. Generally speaking, for both receptive and productive purposes foreign language learners must develop a great deal of vocabulary knowledge to make sense of what they hear, read, and express themselves (Harmer, 1991). As Woodard (1998) notes, teaching vocabulary is a significant factor in language teaching, since words play an important role in expressing our feelings, emotions, and ideas to others during communication. In the absence of vocabulary, communication will not occur. Indeed, neither literature nor language exists without vocabulary. That means, without the mediation of vocabulary, no amount of grammatical or other types of linguistic knowledge can be employed in second language communication or discourse (Nation, 2001).

Thornbury (2002) stated that vocabulary is difficult to teach because of the complexity of its linguistic, semantic, and psycho-cognitive aspects. Therefore, teachers should keep looking for better strategies to change teacher-centered approaches that isolate word lists of teaching with more effective vocabulary teaching techniques for their students.

In relation to vocabulary teaching, international and local studies were conducted. From the different international studies, for example, a study conducted by Chich (2004) on “an investigation in VLS used by students” showed that cognitive strategies were dominantly used, but the least used strategies were social strategies. The dominant strategies were related to “rate repetition” or the form of a word. The minimum used strategies were concerned with the use of study aids, social learning, and dictionaries with L2. Similarly, Sana (2013) conducted a study on “an investigation of the effect of developing learners’ VLS lexical competence.” The findings showed that students developed the strategies used in acquiring vocabulary

items, and then they developed their lexical competence. The result indicated that EFL students use VLS to a medium extent.

Hoang (2011) explored EFL teachers' perceptions of vocabulary acquisition and instruction and identified their use of vocabulary teaching strategies. The findings revealed that most participants used guessing unknown words from context and monolingual dictionaries in their learning. The results also showed that participants reported using all the vocabulary teaching techniques surveyed with varying degrees of frequency. Similarly, Ta'amneh (2014) investigated strategies used in teaching English vocabulary by the first-year students at Taibah University. Results revealed that teachers prefer to use rote learning and ignore other strategies (guessing, applying images and sounds, and dictionary) in teaching English vocabulary.

There are certain local studies on vocabulary teaching, but little attention has been given to the extent language teachers perceive and practice different vocabulary teaching strategies in general. In line with this, Wassihune (2016) carried out research assessing the use of vocabulary teaching strategies in EFL classes in three primary schools. It was found that the only frequently used strategy was contextual clue strategies, and moreover, the teachers were not aware of the theoretical knowledge of other vocabulary teaching strategies in EFL classes.

Similarly, Gashaw (2008) conducted a study on the effectiveness of teaching-learning vocabulary in three second cycle elementary schools in Addis Ababa, with grade eight in focus. Data was collected from 90 systematically chosen students and 6 teachers through questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The textbook was also analyzed to see the extent it encourages implementing a range of vocabulary teaching techniques and learning strategies. The findings revealed that teachers, unlike students, believed vocabulary is not such a prominent component of language learning to be given more considerable emphasis during teaching English compared to other aspects. Getnet (2008) conducted a study that dealt with the relationship between language achievement and vocabulary learning strategies: the case of high and low achiever students in Gondar College of Teachers' Education. His finding shows that there was a relationship between vocabulary learning strategy and language learning achievement.

Teachers' perceptions which influence language teachers' practices are not given due attention by language researchers. As to the knowledge of the researchers of this study, little attention is paid to these issues in studies conducted locally at secondary schools.

Assessing the daily perceptions/beliefs of English language teachers is important since perceptions of English language teachers affect their classroom practice either positively or negatively. In addition, assessing the classroom perceptions of EFL teachers is useful to generate information about the teaching and learning process so that necessary feedback could be provided for stakeholders.

Thus, although researchers have attempted to assess vocabulary learning and teaching in EFL classrooms, no past research has explored vocabulary learning strategies and general teaching practices, there is a significant gap concerning the specific perceptions and underlying beliefs of English language teachers regarding vocabulary teaching strategies, particularly at the secondary school level in the local context. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to assess perceptions and practices of English teachers towards vocabulary teaching strategies in grade 10 classes: Fagita Lekoma Woreda three secondary schools (Addis Kidam, Ajis, and Chiguali general secondary and preparatory schools) in focus.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The main objective of this study is to explore the perceptions of Grade 10 English language teachers towards vocabulary teaching strategies at the three secondary schools in Fagita Lekoma Woreda.

Specific Objectives

Based on the general objective of the study, the following specific objectives were formulated:

- To explore English teachers' perceptions towards practicing different vocabulary teaching strategies.
- To assess how English teachers perceive different vocabulary teaching strategies in EFL classrooms at selected secondary schools.
- To identify the challenges of EFL teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies.

Research Questions

- What are English teachers' perceptions towards practicing different vocabulary teaching strategies?
- How do English teachers perceive the use of various vocabulary teaching strategies in EFL classrooms at selected secondary schools?

- What challenges influence EFL teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may be significant for English teachers, high school students, syllabus designers, teacher educators, and school administrators by enhancing their understanding and awareness of teachers' perceptions regarding vocabulary teaching strategies. The study aims to help EFL teachers reflect on their own perceptions about the role and effectiveness of various vocabulary teaching strategies in promoting learners' English language proficiency. It may also inform syllabus designers and teacher educators about the perceived value and relevance of different vocabulary teaching approaches, which can guide the development of more perception-aligned teaching materials and training programs. Additionally, the insights gained could encourage teacher trainers and future researchers to further explore the beliefs and attitudes that influence vocabulary instruction in EFL classrooms.

Scope of the Study

The geographical scope of this study was limited to Grade 10 English teachers at three secondary schools—Addis Kidam, Chiguali, and Ajis General Secondary and Preparatory Schools—located in Fagita Lekoma Woreda, Awi Administrative Zone, Amhara Region. Conceptually, the study was delimited to assessing English teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies in the EFL classroom. The focus on perceptions was based on the researcher's interest in understanding teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and viewpoints regarding the use and importance of various vocabulary teaching strategies. The study was also confined to these specific schools due to the researcher's familiarity with the setting, accessibility of data, and the absence of previous studies on this topic in the selected area.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to examining Grade 10 English teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies in three secondary schools within Fagita Lekoma Woreda, Awi Zone. Since there are many other secondary schools in the zone and beyond, the findings may not be generalizable to all contexts. The study also focused only on teachers' subjective views and beliefs, without including students' or administrators' perspectives. Time constraints posed another limitation, as the research was conducted within a single academic semester, alongside the researcher's classroom responsibilities. A longer timeframe might have allowed for a deeper

exploration of perception-related factors. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insight into the perception-related aspects of vocabulary instruction in the selected schools.

Research Methodology

Research Design

To answer the research questions and gain detailed insights into EFL teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies, this study employed mixed-methods research design. According to Burns and Grove (2003), descriptive survey research is intended to provide an accurate picture of a phenomenon as it naturally occurs. As Calderon and Gonzales (1993) explain, it focuses on fact-finding with appropriate interpretation. This design was selected because it enables the researcher to explore and describe the current beliefs, attitudes, and viewpoints of Grade 10 English teachers regarding vocabulary teaching strategies in the context of three secondary schools in Fagita Lekoma Woreda. The approach allowed the collection of data that reflects the teachers' subjective understandings and perceived effectiveness of various vocabulary instruction methods in EFL classrooms.

Participants of the Study

The target populations of the study were English language teachers at Fagita Lekoma woreda three secondary schools; those were (Addis kidam, chiguali and Ajis general secondary and preparatory schools). According to the information gained from the schools, in 2020/2021 academic year, there were 30 English language teachers who were teaching English in grade 10. So, they were taken as the population of the study. Among the teachers 20 of them were males and 10 were females. Since their number is small and reasonably manageable, all of those teachers were included in the study to collect data using questionnaire.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The populations of this study were grade 10 EFL teachers in Awi Zone Fagita Lekoma Woreda, three secondary schools. In those schools, there were thirty English language teachers as of the 2020/2021 G.C academic year who have been teaching grade 10 students. From the total population of the study, all 30 (100%) English teachers were taken as a sample of study based on comprehensive sampling technique to collect data using questionnaire since their number is manageable. This sampling was mainly practical for small number of units; it is because of the inclusion of every unit of the population in the study (Abebayehu et.al. 2003).

In a qualitative data, the sample size is small (Dornyei, 2007) because it is difficult to organize and interpret the data if the sample is very large. Thus, the researcher selected 8 (26.7%) teachers for interview and observation using quota sampling technique. This means, these EFL teachers who were observed were also interviewed to triangulate the data.

Data Collection Instruments

In this study, three data gathering instruments were employed, namely classroom observation, questionnaire and semi structured interview to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Each of the instruments are discussed in detail later on.

Observation

Observation allows the researcher to record what is seen as it naturally occurs, providing a firsthand account of the situation (Dornyei, 2007). In this study, overt observation was employed, meaning that teachers were aware they were being observed.

The observation aimed to explore and better understand teachers' perceptions as reflected in their classroom behavior and strategy use during vocabulary teaching. Specifically, it focused on identifying how teachers perceived vocabulary teaching strategies translate into their actual classroom practices, by noting the types of strategies used and the frequency of their use.

Two classroom observations were conducted for each of the eight teachers, resulting in a total of sixteen observations. A checklist adapted from Gashaw (2008) and Chadli (2015), containing 15 yes/no items, was used to document the presence or absence of specific vocabulary teaching strategies, which helped infer teachers' perceptions through their instructional choices.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a device consisting of series of questions dealing with issues to be improved or problems which require solution (koul, 1997). It enables a researcher to collect data from large groups of individuals within a short period of time and it is also easy to administer large number of subjects in one place at a time (Sharma, 2000). Thus, in the current study, questionnaire was developed as main instrument of data collection from the respondents because it has the benefits of obtaining data on respondents' perceptions, comments and preferences, among others. Thus, for the study, the researcher prepared 24 close-ended item questions.

The survey instruments were used to identify whether or not teachers were applying different Strategies in teaching vocabulary and to identify teachers' perception of vocabulary teaching strategies. The close-ended items of the questionnaire set to have 5-point Likert Scale in which the respondents specify their level of agreement/disagreement to statements given on the uses of vocabulary teaching strategies, about their perception of vocabulary teaching strategies

Interview

An interview is a face-to-face interpersonal situation in which an interviewer asks respondents questions designed to elicit answers relevant to the research questions. According to Negesu and Teshome (2009), with a skillful interviewer, interviews often yield richer data than other tools, as participants have more freedom to express their thoughts verbally.

For this study, the researcher employed a semi-structured interview to collect qualitative data specifically on EFL teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies. This method was chosen because it allows for deeper exploration of participants' beliefs, attitudes, and viewpoints, and helps to make data collection more systematic (Lynch, 1996). Eight Grade 10 English teachers were selected for the interview, allowing them to freely express their ideas and insights through interaction with the researcher.

Data Collection Procedures

To collect data on English language teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies, the following procedures were followed: First, permission was obtained from school authorities, and the teachers were informed about the study's purpose and data collection processes.

The data collection began with classroom observations to capture teachers enacted perceptions in natural settings before administering the questionnaire. Next, adapted questionnaires focusing on teachers' beliefs and attitudes were distributed. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected teachers to gain deeper qualitative insights into their perceptions, allowing for triangulation of data sources.

Methods of Data Analysis

This study employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods to examine data related exclusively to EFL teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies gathered from questionnaire and interviews.

Quantitative data collected through the close-ended questionnaire items focused on teachers' perceptions were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage. These techniques helped summarize the extent and patterns of teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward different vocabulary teaching strategies. Likert-scale responses were quantified to reveal trends in how teachers perceive the usefulness, effectiveness, and relevance of various strategies.

In addition, qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed thematically. This process involved identifying recurring ideas, categories, and themes emerging from teachers' verbal responses about their perceptions. The researcher carefully reviewed interview transcripts multiple times to extract meaningful patterns that highlight teachers' viewpoints, beliefs, and attitudes towards vocabulary teaching strategies. Thematic analysis supported triangulation and deepened understanding of the quantitative results related to perceptions.

By integrating both quantitative and qualitative data focused on perceptions, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of Grade 10 EFL teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding vocabulary teaching strategies in the selected secondary schools.

Results and Discussions

Analysis of Classroom Observation Data

Classroom observation was conducted to assess teachers' actual use of various vocabulary teaching strategies (VTSs). Eight selected English teachers were each observed twice during vocabulary instruction, resulting in a total of sixteen observations. Data were gathered using a prepared checklist (see Appendix I) and analyzed based on the percentage frequency of observed VTSs, as presented in the following table.

Table 1. Analysis of Classroom Observation Data

Items	Responses						Rem.
	Yes		No		Total		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Does the teacher teach vocabulary through Demonstrations (mime, expressions, and gestures)	5	31.25	11	68.75	16	100	
Explanation (writing new words on the board and explaining with examples)	8	50	8	50	16	100	
Word parts (prefix, suffix, root) with their meaning	6	37.5	10	62.5	16	100	
Semantic relationships (synonyms, hyponyms, antonyms)	8	50	8	50	16	100	
Definition of words	11	68.75	5	31.25	16	100	
Translation into mother tongue	10	62.5	6	37.5	16	100	
Cooperative vocabulary teaching strategy (students work in groups)	4	25	12	75	16	100	1
Using contextual clues (guessing meanings from context)	6	37.5	10	62.5	16	100	12
Using dictionary meaning	5	31.25	11	68.75	16	100	13
Pronouncing and reading aloud the word	10	62.5	6	37.5	16	100	14

According to Table 1, the classroom observation data reveal varied use of vocabulary teaching strategies that reflect teachers' perceptions towards these methods. Among the observed strategies, the definition of words was the most frequently used, with 68.75% of teachers implementing this approach during vocabulary instruction. Similarly, strategies such as translation into the mother tongue and pronouncing and reading aloud new words were practiced by 62.5% of the teachers, indicating a relatively positive perception of their effectiveness in supporting vocabulary learning. Conversely, cooperative vocabulary teaching strategies, where students work in groups to learn new words, were the least observed, with only 25% of teachers using this method. This suggests a lower perception or acceptance of collaborative learning techniques in vocabulary instruction. Other strategies such as demonstrations, using dictionary meanings, and teaching word parts (prefixes, suffixes, roots) were less commonly practiced, ranging between 31.25% and 37.5%, which may indicate hesitation or less confidence among teachers about these strategies' usefulness.

The data also show that half of the teachers frequently used explanation and semantic relationship strategies (such as synonyms and antonyms), reflecting moderate perception of their importance in vocabulary teaching. Using contextual clues to guess meanings was also observed in about 37.5% of the cases, suggesting room for improvement in encouraging inferencing skills among learners.

Overall, the observation results highlight that while some vocabulary teaching strategies are well perceived and commonly applied, others remain underutilized, possibly due to teachers' perceptions of their practicality or effectiveness in the classroom. This points to the need for targeted professional development to enhance teachers' awareness and positive perceptions of diverse vocabulary teaching methods.

Table 2: Responses of Teachers on their perception of vocabulary teaching strategies

Item	Scales						Total	Mean
	5	4	3	2	1			
In teaching vocabulary, using different Strategies help students to understand the meaning of words.	F	11	12	5	2	-	30	4.1
	%	36.7	40	16.7	6.7	-	100	
Foreign language teaching is basically a matter of teaching its vocabulary.	F	15	15		-	-	30	4.5
	%	50	50		--	-	100	
Vocabulary teaching strategies enable learners to remember words.	F	10	10			-	30	3.8
	%	33.3	33.3	5	5	-	100	
Practicing different vocabulary teaching strategies is the most important aspect in Language teaching.	F	11	12				30	4.0
	%	36.7	40	4	3		100	
In foreign language teaching, vocabulary teaching strategies have to be given high consideration in the class.	F	9	10			-	30	3.9
	%	30	33.3	10	1	-	100	
It is useful to use word-frequency lists to teach vocabulary	F	10	10			2	30	3.9
	%	33.3	33.3	5	3	6.7	100	
It is necessary to translate vocabulary meaning to students' native language/mother tongue.	F	7	9			5	30	3.5
	%	23.3	30	6	5	16.7	100	

It is necessary to help students understand vocabulary through active interaction like role play, information gap etc.	F	15	15	-	-	-	30	4.5
	%	50	50	-	-	-	100	
It is important to offer students clear, unambiguous vocabulary Instruction	F	15	10	5	-	-	30	4
	%	50	33.3	16.7	-	-	100	
It is positive for teachers to teach vocabulary by using bilingual vocabulary lists in class.	F	12	10	4	4	-	30	3.8
	%	40	33.3	13.3	13.3	-	100	
Vocabulary should be taught through pantomiming, real-life objects and other visual materials	F	13	12	2	3	-	30	4.2
	%	43.3	40	6.7	10	-	100	
It is advisable for teachers to teach vocabulary by using dictionary.	F	3	10	4	4	9	30	2.9
	%	10	33.3	13.3	13.3	30	100	
Grand Mean								3.9

Based on the analysis of Table 2, teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching strategies reveal an overall positive attitude, as indicated by a grand mean of 3.9. This suggests that most teachers agree with the importance and effectiveness of various vocabulary teaching strategies.

Strong agreement was evident in several key areas. Teachers highly endorsed the idea that using different strategies helps students understand word meanings, with a mean score of 4.1. They also strongly agreed that foreign language teaching is fundamentally about teaching vocabulary, which received the highest mean of 4.5. The importance of practicing vocabulary strategies in language teaching was similarly valued, with a mean of 4.0. Furthermore, teachers emphasized the necessity of active interaction methods such as role play, scoring a mean of 4.5, and they recognized the significance of providing clear and unambiguous vocabulary instruction (mean = 4.0). Teaching vocabulary through pantomiming and the use of visual aids was also well regarded, with a mean score of 4.2.

Moderate agreement was observed for several other perceptions. Teachers acknowledged that vocabulary strategies aid learners in remembering words (mean = 3.8) and believed these strategies should be given high consideration in the classroom (mean = 3.9). The usefulness of word-frequency lists was moderately supported (mean

= 3.9), as was the use of bilingual vocabulary lists in teaching (mean = 3.8). Translating vocabulary into students' mother tongue was seen as somewhat necessary, reflected by a slightly lower mean of 3.5.

The lowest level of agreement was related to the use of dictionaries for vocabulary teaching, which had a mean score of 2.9, indicating that teachers were less favorable toward this method compared to others.

In summary, teachers generally perceive vocabulary teaching strategies as both effective and important, especially favoring interactive and varied approaches, while showing comparatively less support for dictionary use in vocabulary instruction

Analysis of Interview Data on the Teachers' Perception

The interview data on teachers' perception of vocabulary teaching strategies showed that all interviewed teachers agreed that practicing different vocabulary teaching strategies is important to enhance students' vocabulary knowledge. They emphasized that varied strategies make lessons more engaging and effective. Most teachers (5 out of 8) agreed that vocabulary teaching is fundamental in foreign language learning, aligning with scholars who view vocabulary as a core resource for language use. However, a few teachers saw language teaching as involving all aspects equally. Concerning vocabulary vs. other language aspects: Teachers generally perceive vocabulary as a very important or the most important aspect of language learning, although some acknowledge it should not overshadow other skills like grammar and speaking. Besides, all teachers disagreed that vocabulary should be given prime or more consideration than other language aspects, believing it deserves equal attention. This suggests limited awareness of vocabulary's foundational role emphasized by language scholars.

As far as focus on meaning, teachers mostly focus on teaching vocabulary meaning over other aspects like pronunciation, spelling, or usage. This indicates a narrower perception of vocabulary teaching concentrated on word meanings. Teaching vocabulary in context depicted that the majority agreed that teaching vocabulary through related word groups (sense relationships) is more effective than teaching isolated word lists, though some noted this can be time-consuming and not always practical for all grade levels. In general, teachers have a positive perception of vocabulary teaching strategies and recognize their importance for effective language learning. vocabulary learning strategies.

Discussions and Findings

Teachers' Perceptions of Vocabulary Teaching Strategies

The study aimed to assess Grade 10 EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the purposes and principles of vocabulary teaching strategies in three secondary schools in Fagita Lekoma Woreda. The data collected from questionnaires and interviews revealed that most teachers held positive perceptions about the importance and purpose of vocabulary teaching strategies.

Specifically, the questionnaire results showed that the majority of participants agreed with statements related to the effectiveness and necessity of using diverse vocabulary teaching strategies. Interviews supported this finding, as many teachers expressed clear understanding and agreement with the fundamental principles of vocabulary instruction.

This positive perception aligns with previous research by Birhane (1998), who found that teachers generally had good awareness of the purposes and principles of vocabulary teaching strategies. Similarly, Takeuchi (2009) reported that EFL teachers in Niger had an adequate understanding of these core concepts.

Therefore, the findings indicate that Grade 10 EFL teachers possess a sufficient and favorable understanding of the purposes and principles underlying vocabulary teaching strategies, which forms a solid foundation for effective vocabulary instruction.

Conclusions

The study concluded that Grade 10 EFL teachers have a positive perception toward vocabulary teaching strategies and understand their purposes and principles well. However, despite this positive perception, the teachers did not fully translate these beliefs into diverse classroom practices. This suggests that while teachers value vocabulary teaching strategies conceptually, there is a gap between their positive attitudes and the actual use of varied strategies in teaching.

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