



## **ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

### **An Investigation into Teachers' Knowledge and Practice of EFL Vocabulary Instruction: The Case of Secondary School English Language Teachers in Addis Ababa**

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**Dissertation Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Philosophy in English Language Teaching**

**Addis Ababa**

**JUNE, 2023**

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**A Dissertation Submitted to Department of Foreign Languages and Literature  
College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communication  
Addis Ababa University**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of  
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I, the undersigned, declare that this dissertation is my work and that all sources of material used for the dissertation have been duly acknowledged.

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## ABSTRACT

*This dissertation was conducted to investigate secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. The study adopted an explanatory research design and employed a mixed-methods research approach. Data for the study was gathered through a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall. In doing so, data was collected in two sequential phases. In the first phase, a quantitative technique (i.e., a questionnaire) was employed in which a questionnaire survey of 106 teachers provided an overview of EFL teachers' knowledge and practices of vocabulary teaching. In the second phase, qualitative tools such as semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interview were used and an in-depth study was conducted on eight teachers selected from those who participated in the first phase of data collection. In this study, descriptive statistical analysis was used to find out the frequency and percentage of views among the participants regarding the various issues raised in the questionnaire. Similarly, analysis of qualitative data was displayed in the form of texts, and it involved various phases of data processing, from organizing and pre-analyzing data to transcribing and coding, categorizing codes, and then schematizing the findings. The research findings revealed that teachers held high perceptions toward vocabulary teaching. It is clear from the respondents' view that vocabulary is central to language and is regarded as an indispensable element in their instructional processes. This thought was affirmed by participants in both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study. The result also revealed that teachers develop their sources of knowledge from experience, their disciplinary background, and apparent-ships of observations. Another noteworthy finding in this study is that teachers' knowledge was generally consistent with their classroom practices; however, a few inconsistencies were also noticed. At the same time, a variety of contextual factors, such as students' lack of ability, their lack of motivation, a lack of resources, a large class size, and teachers' lack of vocabulary teaching training, impeded the implementation of teachers' knowledge in practice. It is hoped that the study would contribute to and extends previous research on language teachers' knowledge and practices. The implications of this research should benefit future EFL teachers of vocabulary and open doors to further research in the area.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This thesis would not have been possible without many people's support and help, including my supervisor, English teachers at representative secondary schools, colleagues, and my family members. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all of them.

Firstly, my deepest thanks and gratitude go to my PhD supervisor, Dr. Alemu Hailu, for his guidance, insights, patience, and encouragement throughout my doctoral program and my dissertation work. His invaluable feedback and constructive comments have enabled me to gain a thorough understanding of my study.

Secondly, I am indebted to the secondary school English teachers involved in the research process for their cooperation during data collection. In particular, I am very grateful to those teachers who spent considerable time and energy during the conduct of an in-depth study.

Thirdly, I owe my deepest gratitude to my wife, Zebenay Regassa, and my beloved daughters, Hawi Bekele and Nihal Bekele, for their patience and constant moral support, without which I could not have done it. Besides, I can't stop thanking my mother, sister, and brothers for their constant desire, enthusiasm, understanding, and encouragement.

Finally, yet vital, my appreciation goes to my dearest friends, Dr. Ermias Mulatu, Mitiku Garedew and Belihu Zenebe, for their support and assistance throughout my study, with whom I have had stimulating discussions and gained useful feedback.

# TABLE OF CONTENT

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	ix
LIST OF TABLE .....	x
LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS .....	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES .....	xii
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1. Background of the Study .....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.3. Objectives of the Study .....	7
1.3.1. General Objective .....	7
1.3.2. Specific Objectives .....	7
1.4. Significance of the Study .....	8
1.5. Scope of the Study .....	9
1.6. Limitations of the Study .....	10
1.7. Organization of the Thesis .....	10
1.8. Definitions of Key Terms .....	11
CHAPTER TWO .....	12
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....	12
2.1. Teachers' Cognition, Knowledge and Beliefs .....	12
2.2. Defining Teachers' Knowledge .....	14
2.3. Categories of Teachers' Knowledge .....	16
2.3.1. Content Knowledge .....	17

2.3.2. General Pedagogical Knowledge .....	19
2.3.3. Curriculum Knowledge .....	21
2.3.4. Pedagogical Content Knowledge .....	22
2.3.5. Knowledge of Students .....	23
2.3.6. Knowledge of Educational Context.....	25
2.4. Sources of Teachers' Knowledge .....	28
2.5. Contextual Factors.....	33
2.6. Teachers' Knowledge and Practice.....	35
2.7. Importance of Vocabulary Knowledge.....	40
2.8. Vocabulary Instruction.....	41
2.9. Strategies in Vocabulary Instruction.....	43
2.9.1. Communicative Strategy in Vocabulay Instruction.....	43
2.9.1.1. Teaching vocabulary through context.....	45
2.9.1.2. Task based vocabulary instruction strategy.....	48
2.9.1.3. Cooperative Strategy .....	49
2.9.2. Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy .....	431
2.9.3. Coolocation Strategy.....	52
2.10. Current Status of Vocabulary Teaching Practices .....	53
2.11. Researches on Language Teachers' Knowledge .....	56
2.12. Theoretical Framework of the Study .....	59
2.13. Conceptual Framework.....	61
CHAPTER THREE .....	64
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	64
3.1. Design of the Study .....	64
3.2. Setting.....	66

3.3. Participants of the Study .....	67
3.4. Sampling Technique .....	68
3.5. Sample Size .....	69
3.6. Data Collection Instruments .....	69
3.6.1. Questionnaire .....	69
3.6.2. Semi Structured Interview .....	72
3.6.3. Classroom Observation .....	74
3.6.4. Stimulated Recall Interview .....	77
3.7. Data Collection Procedures .....	78
3.8. Data Organization and Analysis Techniques .....	80
3.9. Ethical Considerations .....	81
CHAPTER FOUR .....	83
DATA DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS .....	83
4.1. Data from the Questionnaire .....	83
4.1.1. Analysis of the Close-ended Section .....	83
4.1.1.1. Teachers’ Perceptions of Their Knowledge in EFL Vocabulary Instruction.....	83
4.1.1.2. Teachers’ Perceptions of Their Practice in EFL Vocabulary Instruction.....	89
4.1.1.3. Factors affecting vocabulary teaching .....	94
4.1.2. Teachers’ Practice about Vocabulary Teaching .....	97
4.1.3. Teachers’ Sources of Knowledge Development .....	98
4.2. Data from an In-Depth Study .....	100
4.2.1. Teachers’ Perceptions about Vocabulary Teaching .....	101
4.2.2. Teachers’ Sources of Knowledge Development .....	107
4.2.3. Teachers’ Knowledge and Their Classroom Practices .....	112
4.2.4. Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching .....	122

4.2.5. Lesson Report of Teachers' Observation .....	127
CHAPTER FIVE .....	135
DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS .....	135
5.1. Summary of the Pilot Study .....	135
5.2. Teachers' Perceptions on Vocabulary Teaching .....	137
5.3. Teachers' Sources of Knowledge Development .....	145
5.4. Teachers' Knowledge and Their Classroom Practices .....	148
5.5. Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching .....	152
CHAPTER 6 .....	155
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS .....	155
6.1. SUMMARY .....	155
6.2. CONCLUSION .....	157
6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS .....	159
6.4. IMPLICATIONS .....	160
6.4.1. Methodological Implications .....	160
6.4.2. Pedagogical Implications .....	161
6.5. Suggestions for Further Research.....	161
REFERENCES .....	163

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 . A conceptual framework that informs bodies of research .....	63
Figure 2 . Quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis sequence .....	79

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 2.1 Categories of sources of EFL teachers' knowledge.....	32
Table 3.1. Details of participants of the study.....	67
Table 4.1. Frequency and percentages of responses on teachers' perceptions of their knowledge in EFL vocabulary instruction.....	84
Table 4.2 Frequency and percentages of responses on teachers' perceptions of their use of vocabulary instruction strategies.....	89
Table 4.3. Frequency and percentages of responses on factors affecting vocabulary teaching....	94
Table 4.4: Teachers' practices for vocabulary teaching in the classrooms .....	97
Table 4.5 Outlines the sources of knowledge about vocabulary .....	99

## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ACRONYMS

CLT.....	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL.....	English as a Foreign Language
ELT.....	English Language Teaching
ESL.....	English as a Second Language
GPK.....	General Pedagogical Knowledge
KAL.....	Knowledge About Language
L1.....	First Language
L2.....	Second Language
MFL.....	Mandarin foreign language MFL
MoE.....	Ministry of Education
PCK.....	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
Q.....	Questionnaire
SLA.....	Second Language Acquisition
SRI.....	.Stimulated recall interviews
SSI.....	Semi-structured interviews
TBLT.....	Task Based Language Teaching
TLA.....	Teachers Language Awareness
VSCS.....	Vocabulary Self - Collection Strategy
VTSS.....	Vocabulary teaching strategies

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix-A: Teachers' Questionnaire

Appendix-B: Teachers' Interview Protocol

Appendix-C: Teachers' Observation Checklist

Appendix-D: Teachers' Stimulated Recall Guide Questions

Appendix-E: Teachers' Interview Scripts

Appendix-F: Teachers' Stimulated Recall Scripts

Appendix-G: Vocabulary Lessons Taken from Students' Text Books

## **LIST OF PUBLICATIONS**

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

In contemporary societies, the need for increasing vocabulary knowledge is a fundamental part of the process of language teaching and learning, both as a means and as an end. It is a fact that vocabulary instruction has paramount importance in the English as a foreign language teaching context, where students have limited access to learn the language. This is because vocabulary instruction can enhance students' not only language proficiency but also other content-related learning, and it helps them gain an understanding of the world, enabling them to think about and react to what they read, speak, write, and listen (Nemati, 2009; and Siriwan, 2007).

In view of the existence of a variety of techniques, approaches, and strategies (e.g., Schmit 1997; Nation 2001; Alexander et al. 2008; Cummings 2008; Chazel 2012) regarding the issue of effective vocabulary instruction, language teachers often find it difficult to make the best choices. Indeed, the question of how best to transmit a teacher's knowledge of vocabulary to his students has been a consistent problem since the researcher started teaching at secondary schools and later transitioned to working at a university. Complex choices such as what to include in lessons concerning vocabulary instruction, the efficient teaching techniques to implement in classes, and how to select and teach vocabulary have been challenging. The researcher's personal experience also witnessed that learning vocabulary has been regarded by most teachers as the student's own work. These teachers claim that they have done enough work to teach other language skills (e.g., grammar, reading, and writing), so vocabulary learning should be the students' job. A good indicator of this practice is the expression that is commonly used by most English language teachers, which means 'refer to your dictionary'.

To this end, the country has set a national standard about what English language teachers in Ethiopia should know and be able to do at all grade levels of English language teaching. Accordingly, Ministry of Education has issued seven standards which are divided into two major domains of teaching, namely, professional English language skills and professional knowledge

(Ministry of Education, 2013). Professional English language skills emphasize that all English language teachers should have adequate skills and awareness that match the cycles and grade levels they teach in schools so that they can help learners achieve the intended proficiency in the English language. Professional knowledge, in the same way, includes purpose knowledge, content knowledge, knowledge about the English language, pedagogy knowledge, knowledge of tasks or activities, assessment knowledge, and students' background knowledge.

However, from his long-time teaching experience, the researcher realized that most English language teachers who are teaching at secondary schools seem to have little awareness about the set standards that guide them to achieve the intended proficiency level of their students in the English language in general and knowledge of vocabulary development in particular. This research, thus, in some ways, tries to see how EFL secondary school teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction are acquainted with the set standards for teaching English vocabulary at this level and how their teaching combines the major domains of knowledge to meet the set standards at the national level.

Teachers' knowledge and how they implement their knowledge is central to the process of teaching and learning. Teachers' knowledge refers to the total knowledge and insights underlying teachers' actions in practice. According to Borg (1999), teachers' knowledge implies "the beliefs, knowledge theories, assumptions, and attitudes that teachers hold about all aspects of their work" (p. 9). Research in teacher cognition also demonstrates that teachers' knowledge is an important element that has the potential to provide insights into teachers' innate ability to make images and interpretations about what they are teaching, who they are teaching and the context in which teaching takes place (Carter, 1990; Freeman, 2002).

The investigation into teachers' knowledge in terms of 'what' teachers know about what they do in the classroom has become a core interest in typical educational research since the mid-1970s. At this time, the significance of teacher cognition inquiry has increased and the center of attention in L2 research education has immensely changed from studying teachers' observable behaviors to teachers' knowledge and beliefs (Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard, 1999).

With the same intention, research on teacher cognition can also be considered as a reaction against process-product research, which assumes a causal or linear relationship between

teachers' behaviors and students' learning outcomes. This seems to underestimate the role of teachers' mental processes, experiences, and perspectives by reducing teaching to quantifiable, discrete behaviors (Freeman, 2002). However, teaching can no longer be viewed only in terms of conditioned behaviors but rather as thoughtful behavior; and teachers are not "mechanical implementers of external prescriptions, but [as] active decision-makers" (Borg, 2009:2). Consequently, researchers began to perceive teaching in a wider and richer mental context than merely portraying it as proactive or interactive behaviors to prop up their instructional practices, pedagogical decisions and reflections (Woods, 1996; Freeman & Johnson, 1998). It is also highlighted that the study of teachers' knowledge, which is one aspect of teachers' cognition, is a well-established domain of research activity and has increasingly become an international phenomenon (Borg, 2006).

In the early 1990s, research in language education also shifted to focus on the cognitive aspects of teaching and attention was seriously paid to the central role of teachers' knowledge in helping to improve language teaching (Prabhu, 1990). Within the EFL context as well, there has recently been an increasing interest in research on teachers' knowledge in the field of English language teaching. To this end, Shulman (1987) argued that teachers' knowledge is essential for effective language teaching. Here, what deserves special attention is "the influence of teachers' mental lives or the hidden side of teaching" on their instructional decisions (Freeman, 2002:1).

In the same way, researchers have viewed vocabulary as an important part of a language on which teachers' knowledge research is required to be made. To this angle, Borg (2003) points out that L2 teachers' knowledge needs more focused research on different curricular aspects of language teaching, particularly those unstudied areas such as the teaching of vocabulary, speaking, and listening. Thus, referring to the studies on L2 teachers' knowledge in various curricular areas, the researcher proposed doing research about teachers' knowledge by exploring EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction at the secondary school level.

Since the question "what teachers know" (Carter, 1990, p. 292) is considered as one of the main issues in teachers' knowledge research, this study seeks to see how EFL teachers' knowledge informs their classroom vocabulary teaching. Therefore, teachers' knowledge and practice in

vocabulary instruction was chosen for investigation in this study at the city administration of Addis Ababa government secondary school level.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Several studies have been conducted in order to find out why there is a problem in vocabulary teaching and learning and to meet the growing demand to solve this issue. To this end, Borg (2009) states that vocabulary as a curricular area in L2 teaching has been sidelined to date from a teacher's cognitive perspective, and little is known about this curricular area of language teaching. The researcher also agrees with Borg's idea that studies of vocabulary teaching, which aim to investigate teachers' knowledge of vocabulary teaching and learning and how these affect classroom practices, are rare in our context. Accordingly the researcher believes that more research needs to be done on teachers' role of linking knowledge and practice together in EFL classes. Hence, teachers' knowledge is a very important aspect in influencing classroom practice (Borg, 2003, 2006; Aroul, 2007), and understanding this relationship can assist teachers in finding solutions for their teaching of vocabulary so as to help students transfer their knowledge of vocabulary into language use.

With this in mind, it seems that the approach in which vocabulary may often be taught in classes and the manner in which teachers may tend to leave their students to learn vocabulary on their own without teachers' instruction or guidance are not considered beneficial by the researcher. This may possibly lead learners to rely on rote memorization of words rather than the active use of words. In effect, it makes communication difficult. Moreover, English teachers indicate that vocabulary is taught through some other language skills such as reading, listening, and writing. As a consequence, teaching vocabulary is considered by most teachers as a secondary activity in secondary schools, and students also prefer to learn grammar and other language skills rather than vocabulary in EFL classes.

As a result, the researcher believes that the way the students at secondary school have been taught English vocabulary needs to be investigated. Hence, he thinks the growth of vocabulary knowledge is one of the essential elements of language learning, and this growth of vocabulary knowledge can be possible when teachers employ their knowledge for effective vocabulary teaching. As Connelly, Clandinin, and He (1997) emphasize, what teachers know and how they

express their knowledge are critical to students' learning and, to a large extent, determine their performance. Hence, research that informs how teachers' employ their knowledge for effective vocabulary instruction is crucial in an EFL classroom context. Accordingly, Borg (2006: 133) underlined that "further studies into the full range of teachers' knowledge that informs vocabulary teaching practices are thus also required."

Numerous studies have shown that teaching is a cognitive process and should be viewed as a complex cognitive activity (Borg, 2003) performed by individual teachers. Consequently, it is vital to recognize the role played by teachers' knowledge in providing a foundation for these cognitive activities, especially as this knowledge forms the basis for the teachers' own teaching and learning strategies (Pajares, 1992).

In light of this, a major contribution to research on teachers' knowledge of vocabulary teaching comes from the study conducted by Zhang (2008). Using a qualitative research design, Zhang investigated Chinese EFL university teachers' knowledge of vocabulary instruction and their classroom practices in his doctoral research. The finding revealed teachers have well-developed content knowledge of EFL vocabulary. They also have well-established belief systems about how to learn and teach English vocabulary. Moreover, their beliefs about vocabulary teaching tend to be consistent with their vocabulary teaching practices, though some inconsistencies have been identified as well.

In the same way, this research work also studied teachers' knowledge and their classroom practices in EFL classes. However, it considered teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction from different views. Thus, using exploratory research design and a mixed method approach, the study explored the perceptions EFL government secondary school teachers have about their knowledge in vocabulary instruction, investigated teachers' sources of knowledge development in vocabulary instruction, discovered the relationship between EFL teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction, and identified contextual factors that impinge on the actualization of teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. Generally, the level, the specific objectives set, the methodology used, and the context of the study made this research different from that of Zhang (2008).

Although worldwide there is a large body of literature documenting research findings about teachers' knowledge and their classroom practices with regard to different curricular areas, it seems that less attention has been paid to such kinds of research in our context. Little is known about how teachers conceptualize teaching and how their thinking is related to their classroom practices in vocabulary instruction. Hence, to the researcher's knowledge, most available local M.A. and Ph.D. research works are mainly dealt with EFL teachers' vocabulary teaching techniques (e.g., Tesfaye, 1990; Miressa, 2014; Dessalegne, 2015); teachers' approaches to teaching English vocabulary (e.g., Alemu, 1994); students' preferences in vocabulary learning strategies (e.g., Abebe, 1997; Getenet, 2008; Lemlem, 2013; Demissew, 2015); and on the design of vocabulary tasks and their implementation (Gebreegzabher, 2016). This demonstrates that most local research on vocabulary teaching focuses on interactive or observable behaviors of EFL teachers rather than their cognitive behaviors (teachers' knowledge and beliefs).

Consequently, the researcher would agree that more research needs to be conducted on English language teachers' knowledge of vocabulary instruction, and he believed that this is important in the manner of increasing recognition of the role of the teachers in vocabulary instruction, which is viewed as an important issue in language teaching research. In relation to this, Prabhu (1990) also argues that enhancing teachers' knowledge should improve students' learning as teachers are central mediators of what and how students learn in the classes.

Thus, exploring teachers' knowledge and practice in teaching English vocabulary was highlighted in this study. As the researcher believes, no changes in teachers' practice can take place without being preceded by changes in the teachers' knowledge. This was also evidenced by Zhang (2008: 25), who stated that "to better understand L2 teacher knowledge, more work will be needed focusing on under-examined curricular aspects of language teaching, including vocabulary instruction". In view of Zhang, EFL teachers' knowledge of vocabulary instruction can be considered a critical area to be investigated as it has the potential to demonstrate how such knowledge informs the teachers' practice in EFL classes. Accordingly, secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction remain unexplored, and it seems there is little study of what teachers know in reference to teachers' knowledge in EFL teaching in general and vocabulary instruction in particular in our context. Therefore, this study filled the

gap by exploring teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction in an EFL secondary school context in Addis Ababa.

Based on the preceding analysis, this study thus attempted to answer the following basic research questions:

1. What perceptions do secondary school EFL teachers have about their knowledge of vocabulary instruction?
2. How do secondary school EFL teachers develop their sources of knowledge in vocabulary instruction?
3. What is the relationship between secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction?
4. What factors appear to affect the implementation of teachers' knowledge of vocabulary instruction in practice?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1. General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to investigate secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

Based on the above general objective, the specific objectives set for the study are:

1. To investigate secondary school EFL teachers' perceptions of their knowledge of vocabulary instruction.
2. To find out secondary school EFL teachers' sources of knowledge in vocabulary instruction.
3. To examine the relationship between secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and their vocabulary teaching practices in the classroom.
4. To identify factors that may affect teachers' implementation of their knowledge of vocabulary instruction in practice.

## **1.4. Significance of the Study**

Research on teachers' knowledge plays a significant role in providing insights into the role of teachers in classroom practices. The significance of the present study is that it is intended to contribute to the existing research in the area. Thus, this study would be important for the following reasons.

First, it will help to explore the perceptions that EFL secondary school teachers have about their knowledge in vocabulary instruction. Here, teachers are given room to think about their insights, views, or opinions concerning their knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction. This might help to increase teachers' awareness of the gap between their knowledge and actual classroom practices and to realize concepts that may not be obvious to others in their vocabulary instruction. Besides, individuals outside school contexts have a chance to get feedback on secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practices of vocabulary instruction. This creates more collaboration and involvement in improving vocabulary teaching at this level.

Second, it could help to develop secondary school EFL teachers' sources of knowledge in vocabulary instruction. This provided an opportunity to examine the types of vocabulary teaching knowledge teachers possess and how such knowledge is developed.

The third significant aspect of the present study is that it helps to examine the relationship between teachers' knowledge and their actual classroom practices in vocabulary instruction. The study illustrated the relationship between what teachers actually did and what they stated they knew about the teaching and learning of vocabulary. The relationships were consistent or inconsistent, and they led to constructive changes both for teachers and students in EFL vocabulary instruction classes.

Fourth, the findings of this study identified factors that affect the implementation of teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction. Identifying those contextual factors assisted teachers in finding solutions for their vocabulary instruction problems so as to help students transfer their knowledge of vocabulary into language use.

In the same way, understanding the professional knowledge of teachers' vocabulary instruction and how it is applied would result in a generation of capable teachers. Furthermore, the present

study is timely given that the topic is of contemporary interest to practicing teachers, applied linguists, and materials writers and that there has been an increase in publications (Meara, 2005; Nation, 2005; Zimmerman, 2008). As a consequence, it is used as a basis for doing research regarding teachers' knowledge and practices at different grade levels in various curricular areas in our context.

Generally, the findings of this study have contributed to the body of knowledge in English language teaching in general and to the teaching of vocabulary in secondary schools in particular. Thus, the study is significant methodologically and pedagogically in the field of teachers' knowledge and classroom practices in the EFL classroom.

### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

This study was conducted in order to investigate secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction. Regarding the setting of the study, out of 57 secondary schools in the city administration of Addis Ababa in the 2019/2020 academic year, the study is limited to 12 schools for the main study and 3 schools for the pilot study (more about this part of the methodology will be given in chapter 3). All secondary school grade levels (9–12) were incorporated into the study.

Since the study focuses on investigating government secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction, except for those teachers, no other kind of subject took part as a participant in the study. This study thus concentrated only on English teachers, while there could be interaction with other members of the school (like directors and supervisors). Besides, the study was restricted to investigating teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction with reference to teachers' perceptions, teachers' sources of knowledge development, knowledge and practice relationships, and challenges that affect vocabulary teaching.

## **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

This study has the following limitations: The first was related to teachers' vocabulary teaching observation. I found some of the teachers reluctant to allow me to observe and video record their vocabulary teaching classes and to conduct stimulated recall interviews after classroom observation was completed.

Another limitation of this study is that it has not been done with large groups of participants. Its results only represent secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practices of vocabulary instruction in the city administration of Addis Ababa; therefore, replication of the study in different teaching contexts and with different participants is suggested.

In addition, due to financial and time constraints, participating students were abandoned. Had student participants been included in the study to compare and contrast with the selected teacher participants, the study would have produced a better picture of teachers' knowledge and practices of vocabulary teaching in EFL classes.

## **1.7. Organization of the Thesis**

This section provides a bird's-eye view of the whole thesis. The thesis consists of six chapters: introduction, review of related literature, research design and methodology, analysis of data, discussion of the findings, summary, conclusion, recommendations and implications. These chapters are briefly outlined below.

Chapter one mainly describes the background, the statement of the problem, and the objectives of the study, but with some additional elements, such as the significance, scope, limitations, and conceptual framework of the study. Chapter two intends to review the relevant literature based on the objectives of the study. The main topics here are teachers' knowledge, categories of teachers' knowledge, sources of teachers' knowledge, contextual factors, teachers' knowledge and practice, the importance of vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary instruction, vocabulary instruction strategies, and the current status of vocabulary teaching practices. It also discusses previous studies on teachers' knowledge and provides an outline of the theoretical framework of the study. Chapter three gives a detailed description of the research design and the methods that

were used and provides an outline of the processes of data collection and analysis. Chapter four displays the results of the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire, semi-structured interview, observation, and stimulated recall interview. Chapter five discusses the findings and compares them to those of other studies in order to expand on the contribution made by this study. Lastly, chapter six delivers the summary, conclusion, recommendations and implications of the study.

## **1.8. Definitions of Key Terms**

**Contextual factors** are factors that prevent the teaching of vocabulary from being entirely successful. These factors could also have a negative effect on the actualization of the various areas of teachers' knowledge in vocabulary instruction.

**Knowledge** in the current study is viewed broadly in order to incorporate aspects of beliefs, insights, awareness, attitudes, views, and others.

**Practice** is what teachers are doing in the classroom when they are teaching English vocabulary.

**Sources of teachers' knowledge** are concepts of influence that shape or develop teachers' formation of knowledge and practice in teaching English vocabulary.

**Teachers' knowledge** is a concept that represents the knowledge that teachers draw upon for their professional practices as teachers to teach English vocabulary. This knowledge includes beliefs, thoughts, understanding, awareness, insights, and views about their vocabulary teaching.

**Vocabulary instruction** is a way in which teachers introduce and present the meaning and form of new vocabulary items to their students.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1. Teachers' Cognition, Knowledge and Beliefs**

Teachers' cognition is a broad concept. Borg (2003: 81) stated that it is "the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching what teachers know, believe, and think". Technically, it refers to how information is stored in the mind as knowledge, what knowledge is, and how that knowledge is used. Moreover, cognition includes mental information processing, which impacts behavior. The concept is considered an umbrella term that includes "the store of beliefs, knowledge, assumptions, theories, and attitudes about all aspects of their work that teachers hold and which have a powerful impact on teachers' classroom practices" (Borg, 1998:19).

Even though there is no clear-cut distinction between abstract concepts of knowledge and beliefs because of their intertwined similarity of features and overlapping natures (Verloop, Van Driel, & Meijer, 2001), an attempt has been made to provide a unified shelter for both concepts under the term "teacher cognition. Consequently, Borg (2003) uses the term "teacher cognition" to refer to the "unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching what teachers know, believe, and think" (p. 81). In a clearer definition, Borg (2006) defines a language teacher's cognition as "an often tacit, personally held practical system of mental constructs held by teachers and which are dynamic, i.e., defined and refined on the basis of educational and professional experiences throughout teachers' lives" (p. 35). In other words, the major concern of teacher cognition therefore lies with teachers' mental lives. The perception of teacher cognition includes a variety of notions like teachers' knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, theories, assumptions, conceptions, thinking, and decision-making toward their actual performances and practices in a specific context (Borg, 2006).

Research on teacher cognition places an emphasis on the interaction between teachers' personal experience and pedagogical knowledge rather than seeking to produce knowledge for teachers to use (Andon and Eckerth, 2009). This resonates with the distinction made between knowledge for teachers and knowledge of teachers (Fenstermacher, 1994). The latter refers to teachers' own repertoire of knowledge that they build up over years, whereas the former corresponds to

knowledge produced by professionals and academics. "The practice of language teacher education has focused more on what teachers needed to know... than on what they actually knew and how this knowledge shaped what they did" (Freeman and Johnson, 1998:398). Thus, the present research attempts to explore teachers' respective knowledge and beliefs with respect to a curricular domain, the teaching of English vocabulary.

A diverse range of concepts (e.g., knowledge and belief) have been used in the area of teacher cognition. Borg (2006) points out those identical terms have been defined in different ways and different terms have been used to describe similar concepts. All of these psychological phenomena and their relationships to teachers' classroom practice in teaching English have been investigated in many studies.

Researchers such as Grossman et al. (1989) and Richardson (2002) have different views about how to distinguish between knowledge and beliefs as aspects of teacher cognition and see both mental constructs as having different meanings. Possible similarities and distinctions between the meanings of knowledge and beliefs are discussed below.

Knowledge and beliefs have similar meanings, and it is difficult to separate them. Grossman et al. (1989: 31) reported that "while we are trying to separate teachers' knowledge and beliefs about subject matter for the purposes of clarity, we recognize that the distinction is unclear at best". This was also recognized by Borg (2003: 86), who stated that distinguishing between "beliefs and knowledge is problematic". Woods (1996: 195) also found that "it was difficult in the data to distinguish between teachers referring to beliefs and knowledge as they discussed their decisions in the interviews." One solution to this problem is to ask the interviewees what they know rather than what they believe about the phenomena, and this strategy will be used in the present study.

On the other hand, some researchers make clear distinctions between knowledge and beliefs. For instance, Richardson (2002) reported that knowledge concerns what is true; beliefs do not. Beliefs cannot be understood or analyzed by rational systems such as a knowledge system. Hence, beliefs involve affective factors, while knowledge can be understood through rational analysis. Besides, beliefs are highly open with no clear limits (Abelson, 1979). In other words, knowledge focuses on 'what is' and beliefs focus on 'what should be' (Borg, 2001). Beliefs as

propositions that do not have to be proven, where people can have different views (e.g., I believe Mr. X to be one of today's best actors; I'm sure flashcard practice can help most students learn vocabulary); and knowledge as propositions referring to conventionally accepted facts (e.g., the universe revolves around the earth). Moreover, beliefs are seen roughly as referring to personal values, attitudes, and ideologies, and knowledge to a teacher's more factual propositions (Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard, 2001). Therefore, beliefs can be thought of as part of knowledge, and so in this research, teachers' knowledge is considered in broader terms. Those who consider beliefs to be part of knowledge think that "knowledge encompasses all that a person knows or believes to be true, whether or not it is verified as true in some sort of objective or external way" (Alexander et al., 1991: 317). It is assumed that knowledge is everything in our minds, some of which is true and some not, but all of which exists as knowledge. As Woods (1996) puts it, "beliefs refer to an acceptance of a proposition for which there is no conventional knowledge, one that is not demonstrable, and for which there is accepted disagreement. Knowledge refers to conventionally accepted facts". Generally speaking, knowledge systems are open to evaluation or deliberate scrutiny, while beliefs are not (Pajares, 1992). Thus, in this research, knowledge includes beliefs.

For the purposes of the present study, therefore, the term "teachers' knowledge" is extended to cover teachers' beliefs, theories, assumptions, preferences, and priorities that play a role to varying degrees in planning, managing, and implementing their instructional practices, with a specific focus on vocabulary instruction. The knowledge and beliefs of teachers are considered to be the key dimensions of teacher cognition. As in Verloop, Driel, and Meijer's (2001:446) words, "in the mind of the teacher, components of knowledge, beliefs, concepts, and intuitions are inextricably intertwined."

In the following section, various definitions of "teachers' knowledge" will be presented in order to understand what it is and how important it is from an educational perspective in general and English language teaching in particular.

## **2.2. Defining Teachers' Knowledge**

When the researcher is talking about teachers' knowledge in the present study, it is mostly about the teachers' knowledge of their own professional identity, i.e., how they perceive themselves as teachers. In this view, teachers are described in terms of either subject matter experts or

pedagogical experts (Beijarrrd, Verloop, and Vermunt, 2000). Similarly, in the literature about teacher knowledge, various labels have been used, each indicating a relevant aspect of teacher knowledge. The labels illustrate mainly which aspect is considered most important by the respective authors. Together, these labels give an overview of the way in which teacher knowledge has been studied to date. The most commonly used labels are “personal knowledge” (Elbaz, 1991), indicating that this knowledge is unique; “professional craft knowledge” (e.g., Brown & McIntyre, 1993), referring to a specific component of knowledge that is mainly the product of the teacher’s practical experience; and “action-oriented knowledge”, indicating that this knowledge is for immediate use in teaching practice (Carter, 1990). In this research, “teacher knowledge” is used to indicate the knowledge and insights that underlie teachers’ actions in practice.

Besides, Fradd and Lee (1998) present a similar definition of teacher knowledge as “the repertoire of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that teachers require to effectively carry out classroom practices” (pp. 761–762). Carter (1990) also defines teacher knowledge as the total knowledge that a teacher has at his or her disposal at a particular moment, which, by definition, underlies his or her actions. These definitions indicate that teacher knowledge is an inclusive concept, covering various cognitions and understandings, from conscious viewpoints to unconscious intuitions. Despite the various terms and definitions in the literature on teacher knowledge research, such diversity does not mask the considerable overlap among popular terms and definitions. For example, they highlight the personal nature of teacher knowledge and the significance of experience in the development of this knowledge.

In their study of teacher knowledge, Verloop, Dariel, and Meijer (2001) point out that the label “teacher knowledge” needs to be used as an ‘overarching, inclusive concept, summarizing a large variety of cognitions’ and that “components of knowledge, beliefs, conceptions, and intuition are inextricably intertwined’ in the mind of the teachers (p. 446). Besides, Verloop et al.’s definition of teacher knowledge reflects the importance of conceptualizing knowledge as a monitor that guides teachers’ actions in the teaching process. Their perspective echoed Elbaz’s (1983) conceptualization of teacher knowledge, which highlights the importance of considering teacher knowledge. For Elbaz (ibid. ), ‘the single factor that seems to have the greatest power to carry forward our understanding of the teachers’ role is the idea of teachers’ knowledge’ (p. 11). This

indicates that teachers' knowledge, as a cognitive concept, is viewed as an essential aspect in the examination of what teachers know and whether it is reflected in their teaching practices. Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) also define it in terms of what teachers know as it is expressed or embedded in the creativity of practice, in teachers' reflections on practice, in teachers' practical inquiries, and/or in teachers' narrative accounts of practice.

EFL teachers' knowledge is considered to be of great importance in the field of English language teaching. To this end, Carter (1990) defined it as the total knowledge that the teacher has at his or her disposal at a particular moment, which, by definition, underlies his or her actions. However, this does not mean that all the knowledge a teacher holds will actually play a role in his or her actions. Connelly et al. (1997) understand teacher knowledge as knowledge derived from personal experience that is found in the teachers' practice. It is not something objective or independent but is the sum total of teachers' experiences. Besides, Johnson (1999) uses the term teacher knowledge to include experiential and professional knowledge that shapes teacher reasoning and is embedded in classroom practice. Likewise, Carter (1990) views teachers' knowledge as practice-based and non-propositional. "Teachers' knowledge is not highly abstract and propositional. Nor can it be formulated into a set of specific skills or preset answers to specific problems. Rather, it is experiential, procedural, situational, and particularistic (p. 307)".

### **2.3. Categories of Teachers' Knowledge**

According to Shulman (1987), teachers' knowledge is a collection of knowledge, skill, understanding, technology, ethics, disposition, and responsibility. The knowledge base required to effectively teach any subject matter has been widely debated. Teacher educators have endeavored to formulate the knowledge required by teachers based on research evidence. For general subject matter teachers, Shulman's (1987) proposal has become the most quoted source for educational researchers and teacher educators. Shulman's conceptual framework for the knowledge base for teaching has also impacted the development of the EFL teaching knowledge. In this part, the main components of the knowledge base required by teachers, which becomes the basis for the formulation of EFL teaching knowledge, are discussed. To this end, Shulman (1987) proposed a set of knowledge for teaching comprising six areas of knowledge, including

content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, knowledge of the learners, and knowledge of the educational context.

### **2.3.1. Content Knowledge**

Content knowledge refers to “the stuff of a discipline: factual information, organizing principles central concepts and others” (Grossman et al., 1989: 27). Content here could be defined as the knowledge on “the topic or task that is the focus of instruction” (Mullock, 2006, 56). Content is the basic source provided to students to learn and understand about the discipline, therefore teachers have significant duty to decide and prepare what to teach, what to offer to the students in the lesson (Shulman, 1987). The knowledge of subject matter is recognized as one of the most basic knowledge content for teachers’ teaching (Ben-Peretz, 2011). This category gives particular concern on what teachers teach and what students learn.

Content or subject matter knowledge is important for EFL teachers in many ways. Borg (2001: 21) stated that “in recent years educational research has stressed the role which the teachers’ subject-matter knowledge plays in shaping what they do in the classroom”. This knowledge is also an important requirement of the teacher. Norrish (1997) highlights that; teachers need to be linguistically aware of elements of knowledge about language and aspects of language use. This is because it is difficult for the teacher to teach content which has not been fully mastered (Hegarty, 2000). Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) also argue that content knowledge is essential to the work of teachers. They state: “The assumption is that it is impossible for teachers at any level to teach students effectively and/or to meet the standards of the various subject matter professions without fundamental knowledge of the disciplines they teach” (p.258).

In addition, content knowledge informs teachers about how to “identify relationships among concepts in a field as well as relationships to concepts external to the discipline” (Grossman, et al., 1989: 27). Kennedy (1998) as well stated that teachers should be aware of the importance of content knowledge, reasoning that this knowledge is exactly what the teachers will be teaching. Here, it provides teachers with a wide view of the curriculum in order to know how to answer students’ questions. It informs the teacher about how to manage and structure the content of the subject they teach in order to smooth the progress of their students in gaining understanding.

Consequently, high value is placed on content knowledge since its lack would affect the performance and ability to teach of a teacher (ibid).

What areas of content knowledge are needed for EFL teachers is debated. Lafayette (1993) contended that content knowledge for EFL teachers should include “language analysis”, “language proficiency”, and “an understanding of the culture” (p. 151). Johnston and Goettsch (2000) also proposed two broad areas of content knowledge for EFL teachers including knowledge about language and language proficiency. To serve the content knowledge in EFL teaching Richards (2010) includes “subject matter knowledge”, “communication skills” and “language proficiency” (p. 5). Further, Richards (2010) elaborated such areas into understanding of “the nature of L2 and L2 use, the nature of L2 learning, approaches to L2 teaching, curriculum development, testing and evaluation and materials development” (p. 15).

Moreover, Borg (2006) found that the content of language teaching is more complex and varied than that of other subjects, adding that the subject matter of language teaching is harder to define. Johnston & Goettsch (2000) support this point, arguing that the nature of the subject matter of language teaching is an open question. They state:

*In a skill-focused field such as language learning, it is even harder to picture the 'body of knowledge' that might constitute the field. Do we mean procedural knowledge—the teacher's ability to speak the language—or declarative knowledge—the teacher's knowledge about the language, for example, the ability to articulate the rules of the language? (p. 446).*

Likewise, Andrews (2001) uses the term "language awareness" to refer to knowledge about language (subject matter knowledge) and knowledge of language (language proficiency). He argues that teachers' language awareness is meta-cognitive in nature as it involves an extra cognitive dimension of reflections upon knowledge of subject matter and knowledge of language proficiency, which provides a basis for the tasks of planning and teaching.

It is not enough for the teacher to know what subject matter or content knowledge includes. What is more important is to know how to convey the language input according to the purposes of pedagogy. The teacher has a role to play in conveying knowledge of the subject matter.

Shulman (1987) identifies the role of the teacher with regard to subject matter knowledge as follows:

*The teacher has special responsibilities in relation to content knowledge, serving as the primary source of student understanding of subject matter. The manner in which that understanding is communicated conveys to students what is essential about a subject and what is peripheral (p. 9).*

It is also highlighted that, for this role to be carried out successfully, a deep understanding of the subject matter and a positive attitude are required from the teacher. Shulman (1987) adds that this responsibility places special demands on the teacher's own depth of understanding of the structures of the subject matter, as well as on the teacher's attitudes toward and enthusiasms for what is being taught and learned.

Thus, these many aspects of content knowledge are properly understood as a central feature of the knowledge base for teaching English vocabulary.

### **2.3.2. General Pedagogical Knowledge**

The other domain of knowledge that is needed by the teacher is general pedagogical knowledge. General pedagogical knowledge is "the knowledge of generic principles of classroom organization and management" (Shulman, 1986, 17). It often includes knowledge of general pedagogy and knowledge related to certain teaching content (ibid.). This important type of knowledge focuses on the understanding of the broad principles of teaching and learning, including classroom management (McMeniman et al., 2003). It also considers the understanding of organization and planning, teaching strategies, and research methods. All of which contribute to effective teaching. This knowledge can also be general as well as specific, as expressed in particular teaching contexts and students. It includes knowledge of the roles of teachers and students, the role of the classroom and naturalistic settings in language learning, the role of lesson plans, the objectives of tasks, the evaluation of students and tasks, interaction with students, and the assessment of students (Golombek, 1998, 451-452).

Besides, general pedagogical knowledge can be subsumed into two categories: management of learning and management of resources (Tsui, 2003). The term 'management of learning' is employed in a wider sense than the term 'classroom management' (Tsui, 2003). Although the

management of learning primarily involves classroom management, it is also concerned with out-of-classroom management. Classroom management refers to aspects of classroom organization, for example, using pair or group work, maintaining discipline, and dealing with daily business (e.g., collecting assignments). Out-of-class management refers to what teachers do before or after class to facilitate students' learning.

Moreover, general pedagogical knowledge is a well-known concept for teachers' knowledge research and is much more widely mentioned than other types of knowledge (Shulman, 1987; Gatbonton, 2008; Mullock, 2006). Within the concept of practical knowledge, pedagogical knowledge has been studied by researchers (Chou, 2008; Gholami & Husu, 2010). For example, for the specific purpose of the research, practical knowledge about general pedagogy is particularly focused on by Gholami & Husu (2010), including "teachers' knowledge and beliefs about 'classroom management', 'instructional strategies,' and 'learners, learning, and teaching' " McMeniman et al. (2003) also indicated that general pedagogical knowledge contains three components. These are learners and learning, classroom management, and curriculum and instruction.

Teachers already have knowledge of learners and learning because they themselves were once students. Meanwhile, they should know about different learning theories and the processes involved in them. Freeman (2001) stated that this type of knowledge is neglected in L2 teacher education but that it should be considered because it promotes understanding among teachers of how students learn a topic related to certain language skills.

With respect to different learning theories, it is commonplace that learners may have learning styles and ways of learning. Researchers such as Sarasin (1998: 3) define learning style as "the preference or predisposition of an individual to perceive and process information in a particular way or combination of ways". One important issue here is what kinds of styles, strategies, techniques, and methods of learning teachers know about or they used to learn English, because their knowledge of learning will affect their knowledge of teaching. Generally speaking, it can be argued that we learn from our mistakes, our experiences, and things that happen to other people around us.

The other component of general pedagogical knowledge is classroom management, which, according to Siedentop and Tannehill (2000), includes organizing for instruction, obeying rules of behavior, and getting equipment out and putting it away. Siedentop and Tannehill (2000) also argued that teachers must draw up their management systems before effective instruction takes place.

Knowledge of instruction and the curriculum are also components of general pedagogical knowledge. They include general principles of teaching and learning and indicate the behaviors that teachers engage in to fulfill the curriculum and teach according to their aims and the lesson plans they use. Siedentop and Tannehill (2000) stated that instruction and the curriculum complement each other and therefore must be integrated appropriately.

### **2.3.3. Curriculum Knowledge**

Curriculum knowledge is the knowledge possessed by the teacher of how the almost infinite range of possible topics and skills that might be taught to students have been organized and arranged. It is a systematic program of instruction made available to teachers in the form of sets of instructional materials of various sorts, such as textbooks, films, syllabi, software, and others (Tamir, 1991). Shulman (1987) argued that ‘curriculum knowledge’ is a category of knowledge essential for teaching.

The focus of curriculum knowledge is on the specifics of teaching particular content, and it is required by teachers because it provides them with materials used for teaching the course. Therefore, a lack of such knowledge will affect teachers’ plans for suitable and coherent lessons. The curriculum knowledge has a close association with the content representation and has been considered an essential element for leading teachers’ applications of curriculum material as well as for further practical instruction (Shulman, 1986; Charalambous & Hill, 2012).

Richards (2013) also indicated that curriculum knowledge enables EFL teachers to organize the content knowledge and skills they teach in light of the desired goals. Such understanding helps them decide what to teach and why. This concept implies that EFL teachers should be able to construct a syllabus for students that address general goals and competency standards, special needs, relevant experiences of learners, resources, and demands of society. Thus, EFL teachers

should be able to define curriculum implementation ranging from selecting appropriate teaching strategies, language materials, designing and sequencing tasks, assignments and activities, and evaluation methods for students, taking into account their specific characteristics and needs.

Therefore, teachers of English should have knowledge of the curriculum in order to organize and arrange programs of instruction systematically for proper presentation of a subject such as English vocabulary.

#### **2.3.4. Pedagogical Content Knowledge**

Shulman (1987:8) defined pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) as "the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners and presented for instruction." Shulman added that PCK is a crucial part of his conceptualization of the professional knowledge base needed for teaching. In other words, it aims to achieve effective teaching practice in any subject.

Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) puts more emphasis on the practical application of teaching content. Shulman (1986) described this knowledge as consisting of teachers' knowledge of how to present and formulate the teaching content; how to make the teaching content learnable and comprehensible of students' conceptions and misconceptions about the learning content. Here, the "teachability" for teachers and the "learnability" of the content for students were addressed (Shulman, 1986, 9). The term PCK has been highly recognized by other researchers and has developed into a conceptualization of teachers' knowledge generally rather than a sub-category of content knowledge when put forward by Shulman (1986) (cited in Reeves, 2009; Alonzo, Kobarg, & Seidel, 2012). Pedagogical content knowledge is important for teachers because it enables them to transform difficult ideas into concepts that students, as novices, can grasp (Kennedy, 1998). It "includes knowledge of students' understanding, conceptions, and misconceptions of particular topics in a subject matter" (Grossman, 1990: 8).

Pedagogical content knowledge or conceptions of purposes for teaching subject matter include knowledge of students' understanding and knowledge of instructional strategies (Grossman, 1990). Knowledge of students' understanding has attracted the attention of researchers such as

Shulman (1987) and Marks (1990) as the basic component of pedagogical content knowledge. It refers to the teacher's knowledge of what the students already know about the subject matter, their skills and abilities, and what they still find puzzling about the content (Grossman, 1990). Furthermore, this type of knowledge enables teachers to supply students with suitable representations and explanations and helps them with "both curricular planning and expectations and evaluations of students" (Grossman, 1990: 105). Thus, when teachers have knowledge about their students' level of understanding, they will understand the difficulties and problems the students face and can develop suitable strategies to overcome them.

Knowledge of 'instructional strategies' is another component of pedagogical content knowledge. It helps teachers manage the subject matter so that it is easier for students to understand. Teachers must be able to adapt these general strategies to specific content; otherwise, they would not know how to break down the specific content they are teaching. Knowledge of instructional strategies is assumed to include activities that promote teachers doing their best when they represent and teach particular topics.

What has been stated above suggests that EFL teachers are required to understand the relationship between pedagogy and the specific content they are teaching. However, it is difficult to confirm that pedagogical content knowledge always impacts teaching practices because not all changes in pedagogical content knowledge accompany changes in practice.

### **2.3.5. Knowledge of Students**

Teachers' knowledge about learners is an essential component of the knowledge they require (Mullock, 2006). Mullock's (2006) study found that understanding students' strengths, weaknesses, and needs is an essential aspect of TEFL teachers' work. Knowledge of students is considered part of the pedagogical knowledge held by teachers (ibid.).

Having a good knowledge of students is regarded as indispensable in interactive classroom teaching and considered a vital element for a good teacher (Harmer, 2007; Woodgate-Jones & Grenfell, 2012). Besides, teachers' knowledge of students is regarded as an essential component of their knowledge base (Mullock, 2006; Chou, 2008). It includes the knowledge of "prior understandings that students of given ages and backgrounds bring with them to the study of

particular topics, developmental differences among students, cultural and social characteristics, and students' motivations, aspirations, learning modes, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds" (Tamir, 1988, 106).

Teachers' knowledge of students is frequently explored as a component of a wider knowledge concept in the area. Mullock (2006) found that knowledge of students is the first or second most frequent reasoned knowledge item for all the teachers under study. To this end, Gholami and Husu (2010) noted that knowing the characteristics of learners is one of the major elements of teachers' application of practical knowledge. Researchers address the fact that knowing students characteristics enables the teachers to engage all students in classroom learning by adapting the teaching approach to students' capacities, interests, needs, backgrounds, and all other factors (Mullock, 2006; Gholami & Husu, 2010).

Many empirical studies relating to the knowledge of students also illustrate the importance of integrating itself with other knowledge components, especially the knowledge of subject matter (Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard, 1999; Mullock, 2006; Park & Olive, 2008; Kılıç, 2010). In Meijer, Verloop, and Beijaard's (1999) study, students' knowledge was specified to make a connection with the subject matter of reading. It is divided into "student knowledge" and "knowledge of student learning and understanding" (64). Student knowledge refers to the general knowledge of students, while knowledge of student learning and understanding is described in relation to reading comprehension. In the field of foreign language teaching, students' prior linguistic knowledge is found to be of great importance for their L2 learning (Cook, 2010).

Knowledge of students was also found by Meijer et al.'s (1999) study to be a core area of the practical knowledge of 13 language teachers in the Netherlands. They distinguished it in terms of three categories: knowledge about students' characteristics, knowledge about their environment, and knowledge of their motivation. They found that the teachers held different views about students in general. Their opinions ranged from very negative (they are not motivated to go to school; they are passive, irresponsible, and chaotic) to very positive (they are kind, smart, discerning, and take initiative). The opinions of the teachers were associated with the ideas they had about the students' environment. They were also related to their knowledge of how to motivate students. Teachers who generally had negative opinions about students tended to use

external motivation strategies such as incentives tied to grading, whereas teachers who generally thought positively about students tended to use motivational strategies intrinsic to the instructional task or materials, such as linking the text to the students' interests, to achieve a high level of student motivation and satisfaction.

The above points indicate that this area of knowledge could be an important focus when investigating the constituting domains of teacher knowledge. Knowledge of students' ability levels, learning habits, and particular groups of students could help the teacher tailor teaching accordingly, prepare material that caters to the individual differences among the students, vary teaching to meet the individual learning style preferences of the students, and make use of the students' characteristics to help them learn better.

### **2.3.6. Knowledge of Educational Context**

Knowledge of educational context is described as "the institutional and sociopolitical setting along with the time, place, and actors within the setting" (Golombek, 1998, 452). While Shulman (1987) named it "knowledge of educational contexts" to specify the field of education, which was illustrated as "ranging from the workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures" (8).

Knowledge of the educational context is very important for all teachers and particularly important for teachers of English because the linguistic context is an additional factor that impacts classroom practice. "The teachers used their knowledge of context to define and articulate their needs and concerns regarding the curriculum" (Sharkey, 2004: 291). Tudor (2003) found that the educational process is not only an exchange of information between teachers and students but also a set of conventions that decide what happens between these parties. Jaworski (2003: 4–5) argued that "no classroom environment is an isolated box. It is part of a wider community (at school and beyond) that has cultural practices and social norms. There are therefore acts, actions, or activities that happen because they are part of this sociocultural setting".

Teachers' choices of teaching content, instructional strategies, and even the understanding of students can be distinguished in distinct contexts relating to groups of students, the culture of the

classroom, schools, and the holistic national or even world background. For example, Wang (2011) addressed her study of Mandarin Foreign Language (MFL) teachers in the context of British schools. The great tension between the increasing interest in MFL in Britain and the lack of qualified teachers calls for great attention to understanding the teacher participants' narratives of their ideas on teaching and teachers themselves. Gholami and Husu's (2010) conclusion is that teachers' claims about their practice as well as the underlying practical knowledge are contextual. Such contextual grounds are mainly represented in three aspects: differences in pedagogical variables, particularity in teachers' understanding, and pedagogical obligations. Here, pedagogical variables refer to "variables that had an effect on pedagogical decisions and actions" (23), including contextual elements such as time, class size, the nature of specific curricula, and learners. She claimed that the reason she would change the setting in the class was to decrease students' tiredness due to the last period of the day and maintain their freshness. She suggested the great importance of a deep knowledge of context in this case (ibid.).

Nunan and Lamb (2001:33) as well found that "classroom decision-making and the effective management of the learning process cannot be made without reference to the larger context within which instruction takes place." Xue-wei and Ying-jun (2006:74) asserted that "people need to read a lot to understand the cultural background knowledge of the target language; only in this way can they communicate successfully with others".

Knowledge of context acknowledges the root of specific context for teachers' teaching practice. However, such awareness of context still needs to be improved among the researchers in relation to teachers' knowledge. As a duplicate study based on Gatbonton (1999), Mullock (2006) identified the "institutional factor" as an important knowledge base for their practice through teachers' reasoning on their videotaped classroom teaching. But this item is absent from the research outcome in Gatbonton (1999). Mullock (2006) explained this difference from the perspective of methodology, saying that in Gatbonton's (1999), the lessons were organized purposefully for the research. The lack of a real setting in the research plan is also found in other studies. For example, although Friedrichsen et al. (2009) acknowledged the importance of knowledge of context as a great influence on teachers' practice, they did not apply real classroom context to collect data but instead employed lesson preparation for a hypothetical situation and interviews. This context-free method leads to an absence of teachers' knowledge of context in

the research results. Due to the influence of context knowledge, its conflict with other knowledge domains is also mentioned by previous researchers (Glombek, 1998; Wang, 2011). Researchers also suggest teachers reflect on their practice by reasoning that those actions will promote their teaching, and future studies on practical knowledge in different teaching contexts need to be done. This is echoed in Woods and Akus (2011) research result that the conflict between theoretical knowledge and practical teaching leads teachers to reconstruct and develop their knowledge when they are in real practical teaching settings.

It is clear that classroom teaching practices are guided not only by in-class aspects but also by extra-classroom matters such as issues in the teacher's everyday life. Locastro (2001:495) found that "classrooms are social constructions where teachers, learners, dimensions of the local educational philosophy, and more general socio-cultural values, beliefs, and expectations all meet". Therefore, teachers of a second language should know more about the culture of the target language they are teaching because, in some circumstances, misunderstandings may arise.

Consequently, the teachers' knowledge of context is important to classroom practice. Indeed, "the classroom provides traditions and recipes for both teachers and students in the sense that there are implicit understandings about what sort of behavior is acceptable" (Holliday, 1994: 24). This was confirmed by Genc and Bada (2005:45), who suggested that a culture "is significantly beneficial in terms of language skills, raising cultural awareness, changing attitudes towards native and target societies, and contribution to the teaching profession". Genc and Bada also added that contextual knowledge "has a great deal to offer to the development of communicative competence as well as other skills in the instruction of any language" (ibid. 2005:45).

Likewise, there are many hidden aspects that hinder teachers' efforts to convey knowledge and might cause mismatches between what they mean and what the students understand. Therefore, in this study, teachers' knowledge is explored in the situation of teaching English vocabulary in the context researched.

Shulman (1987) states that teachers draw upon these six categories of knowledge when they make decisions about their content teaching. The central questions in teaching involve how teachers' understanding of the subject matter affects the quality of their teaching, how teachers

transform their subject knowledge into a form that is comprehensible to students, how teachers handle curriculum materials, how teachers use their subject knowledge to generate explanations and representations, and how teachers employ their knowledge in the larger context within which instruction takes place. By regarding these six categories as discursive practices and structures, we can conclude that teachers' knowledge can be positioned as terms in educational discourse. Thus, investigating different components of teachers' knowledge helps us know how aspects of these different types of knowledge may impact teachers' performance as well as students' achievements in teaching and learning English vocabulary.

## **2.4. Sources of Teachers' Knowledge**

In order to understand teachers' classroom practices and the knowledge embodied in these practices, it is important to understand the sources of influence that shape teachers' conceptions of knowledge and practice (Tsui, 2003).

Teachers' knowledge is generated based on reflection on experiences and is therefore experiential. Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard (1999) see that teachers' knowledge is generated by the teachers themselves as a result of their experiences as teachers and their reflections on these experiences. Verloop et al. (2001) maintain that input for the knowledge base of teaching can originate from teaching practice. Likewise, Hegarty (2000) suggests that experience and interaction with pupils contribute to developing the knowledge base of teaching.

In the field of practical knowledge, teachers' experiences, especially practical teaching experiences, are considered the basic source for the development of their practical knowledge (Meijer, Verloop & Beijaard, 1999; Van Driel, Beijaard, and Verloop, 2001; Aroul, 2007). In Elbaz's (1983) study, practical knowledge "encompasses firsthand experience of students' learning styles, interests, needs, strengths, and difficulties and a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom management skills" (Elbaz, 1983, cited in Aroul, 2007, 170). Fenstermacher (1994) also highlighted the role of experience and defined this concept as "the knowledge teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers and their reflections on these experiences". Van Driel, Beijaard, and Verloop (2001) further clarified

practical knowledge as an integrated construction that was developed from teachers' teaching experiences.

The second source of knowledge for EFL teaching is apprenticeship through observation (prior experience of teachers as learners). This source of knowledge refers to teachers' previous experience of being learners (Borg, 2004). The apprenticeship of observation contributes to teachers' knowledge in various ways. For example, it provides teachers with memories of strategies for teaching specific content. It can also influence teachers' knowledge of student understanding.

Literature also shows that prior experience of teachers as learners is one of the main factors that influence their knowledge (Aroul, 2007). Researchers such as Freeman (1991; Meijer et al., 2001; Breen et al., 2001; and Borg, 2003) have all confirmed that prior experience and knowledge of learning are important for teachers' classroom practices. Meijer et al. (1999) also considered that this prior experience is one of the background variables that may influence teachers' knowledge. Borg (2003) argued that the general picture to emerge here is that teachers' prior language learning experience establishes cognitions about language learning that form the basis of their initial conceptualizations of L2 teaching during teacher education.

Breen et al. (2001) also found that teachers' classroom work is highly influenced by their prior experiences as learners during their early years. Teachers are likely to utilize the same modes of learning if they think they will work well with their students. However, this may not always be the case, as different students might have different needs. Various studies in second language education and applied linguistics also show that language teachers' knowledge of teaching is influenced by their own prior experiences of teaching and learning (Carter, 1990, 1991; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Meijer et al., 2001; Borg, 2003).

Borg (2003: 81) found that "there is ample evidence that teachers' experiences as learners can inform cognitions about teaching and learning that continue to exert an influence on teachers throughout their careers". This means that teachers' experience of learning is considered one of the main factors that influences their knowledge when they teach English vocabulary or any other language skills. Moreover, Nespor (1987:320) found that "a number of teachers suggested

that critical episodes or experiences gained earlier in their teaching careers were important for their present practices". Tsui (2003), in her research about teachers' knowledge, explored the experiences of four teachers. She found that those who lacked disciplinary knowledge were influenced by their own learning experiences. Westerman (1991) compared less experienced and more experienced teachers using a variety of data collection tools. The findings showed that the knowledge of the more experienced teachers was more integrated than that of the less experienced teachers. It is very clear that teachers' prior experience and knowledge of learning and teaching English is an essential factor affecting their classroom practice in teaching. This is because "background knowledge shapes the teachers' new learning; it eventually influences the teachers' practical knowledge" (Aroul, 2007: 170).

Other empirical studies also showed that teachers' prior experiences seem to be given more attention as a source for their knowledge development (Borg, 2003; Aroul, 2007; Reeves, 2009). To this end, Aroul (2007) explored three experienced English as a foreign language teachers' practical knowledge in Turkey and concluded that there were three key sources of knowledge, namely "language teachers' prior experiences as language learners, their prior experiences as language teachers, and their professional coursework" (171). These three sources emphasize the significance of language teachers' experiences both as learners and as teachers in their development of practical knowledge. Aroul (2007) found that the practical knowledge of all three teachers under study was developed from their early English learning. Especially those negative experiences guide them to make changes in their teaching. One participant felt limited by speaking practice during her own learning; thus, she encouraged her students to practice oral English greatly. The other teacher preferred not to correct students' mistakes instantly and directly because she found it would discourage herself when she was a learner. This experience as a language learner provides them with a better understanding of their students and more effective teaching practices. This is also agreed upon by Woods and Çakır (2011), who say that beginning teachers' knowledge of language teaching was greatly influenced by their prior personal experiences.

Another source that shapes teachers formation of knowledge is the disciplinary background teachers possess at a college or university in their teacher education program. Teachers rely on their disciplinary knowledge to shape their knowledge and beliefs about teaching subject matter.

Disciplinary knowledge may contribute to teachers' selection of particular curricula and to their critiques of specific curriculum materials. To this end, studies by Johnston and Goettsch (2000) looked at the sources of experienced EFL teachers' knowledge of English grammar. The teachers in their study mentioned that their training at a higher education level and their experience as teachers were the two factors that played the biggest role in contributing to their content knowledge.

Similarly, Grossman (1990) and Tsui (2003) studies indicated that teachers who have more confidence in disciplinary knowledge are more inclined to depart from the organization of content in textbooks. In the same way, studies of the relationship between teacher education and teachers' beliefs and classroom practices have revealed that teacher education courses have a powerful impact on teachers' future teaching and help as potential sources of teacher knowledge development (Attardo & Brown, 2005).

Teachers' engagement in research is also an additional means of teachers' knowledge acquisition. Shulman (1987) asserts that the research that teachers can benefit from is both generic and content-specific. Generic research is carried out in a different area but has direct implications for teaching, whereas content-specific research is done in aspects related to teaching, such as classroom management and patterns of interaction. To this angle, doing content-specific research is more likely to help teachers generate new knowledge and new theories to be tested in their own classrooms. In this respect, research can become a means for teachers "to become active users and producers of theory in their own right... and as appropriate for their own instructional contexts" (Johnson, 2006, p. 240). Teacher educators seemed to be aware that research is a relevant source of pedagogical knowledge. In fact, most of them claimed that the research they had been engaged in was clearly connected with their own teaching situations. This might lend some weight to Johnson's (2006) views on teachers as investigators of their own teaching practice. In short, research could help teachers generate new knowledge and therefore provide solutions to their own teaching problems.

Similar to what is mentioned above, Shulman (1987) suggested that there were four main sources for teachers' knowledge base. The first source is scholarship in content disciplines, which is teachers' own understanding, attitude, and professional education in subject matter knowledge.

The second is educational materials and structures. Shulman (1987) contended that educational contexts as well as curriculum, institutions, school systems and rules, government policies, and finance provided important sources for teachers' knowledge base. The third source is formal educational scholarship, which includes all the literature that enhances teachers' knowledge and understanding of school, students, and teachers themselves. The last source is the wisdom of practice. Such wisdom forms rules and conceptions of teaching and will be represented in the practice.

In view of that, classifying the sources of teachers' knowledge according to their areas of expertise could be insightful to this study. They serve as a useful tool to investigate not only the sources of influence but also to shape the knowledge domains that teachers acquire. Besides, these different sources of knowledge interact with each other in the process of teachers' English language teaching in general and vocabulary teaching in particular.

Table 2.1 Categories of sources of EFL teachers' knowledge

<b>Categories of Sources of Teachers' Knowledge</b> (Adapted from Grossman (1990), Richards (1998), and Tsui (2003))
<p><b>Teaching experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own learning – associated with personal learning based on classroom teaching</li> <li>• Textbooks</li> <li>• Students' feedback</li> <li>• Impact of teaching other courses</li> <li>• Peer communication – e.g., interaction with fellow teachers</li> </ul> <p><b>Formal education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school EFL education</li> <li>• Undergraduate EFL education</li> <li>• Graduate education – mainly involving EFL teacher education: e.g., courses about linguistic knowledge</li> </ul> <p><b>Research on teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development: gained through workshops and conferences</li> <li>• Professional reading: e.g., associated with journals and books</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal life experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intuition – explanations in terms of 'feeling natural to do'</li> <li>• Experience of studying abroad</li> </ul>

## 2.5. Contextual Factors

Contextual factors reveal the teaching contexts under which teachers are working, and they exert an impact on classroom instructions. These factors include society, school policies and programs, classroom and school layout, teaching materials, important resources, and other related issues. As Borg (2003) indicates, contextual factors are "the social, psychological, and environmental realities of the school".

EFL teachers face a variety of constraints in their work, such as large class sizes, a lack of and difficulty getting enough and relevant resources, students' lack of background knowledge, examinations that focus on assessing some skills only (e.g., grammar, reading, and writing), inadequate teacher training at the college or university level, the EFL exam policy, and the like. These constraints could prevent the teaching of EFL from being entirely successful. Besides, contextual factors such as cultural norms, schools, the role of the teacher, who the students are, and what the content is affect the teacher's classroom decision-making (Prabhu, 1990). In the same way, contextual factors such as social, physical, institutional, and instructional settings that shape teachers' learning influence teachers' cognitions and their practices (Freeman, 2002). These contextual factors include not only the physical settings of the classroom or the structure of the school but the resources available in the community and the social context, such as the political atmosphere, which teachers often have no control over (ibid.).

In addition, the influence of the contextual factors stretches beyond the physical setting of the classroom and the institutional setting that affects the teacher. They could also have a negative effect on the actualization of the various areas of teacher knowledge for teaching English. For example, Borg (1998) examined the role of factors that mitigate the implementation of an EFL-experienced teacher's pedagogical system while teaching EFL grammar. The teacher was sensitive to factors such as evidence of student understanding and seemed to have built into his personal pedagogical system ways of responding to these factors and even preempting potential complications they could cause. Borg (1998) highlighted the need to consider teachers' decisions in light of contextual factors, which surface during the course of instruction.

Similarly, Angrist and Lavy (1999) found crucial effects related to class size. This was because teachers with small classes could apply their knowledge of teaching better than when dealing with larger classes. Likewise, Grossman (1990) identified that many EFL teachers stress only one aspect of teacher knowledge—subject matter knowledge—and ignore other aspects of teacher knowledge like general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of context, and pedagogical content knowledge. Xu (2001) also echoes that this misconception of teaching pays no attention to the role of teaching methodology, and it seems that EFL teachers' overemphasis on subject matter knowledge may contribute to their employment of traditional teaching approaches.

In the study by Gerami and Noordin (2013) on teacher cognition in foreign language vocabulary teaching, four major challenges L2 teachers' face within vocabulary teaching were identified. These are challenges related to EFL teachers (e.g., methods, approaches, competencies, skills, etc.); challenges related to students (e.g., motivation, background knowledge, learning strategies, expectations, etc.); challenges related to the educational system (e.g., educational materials, resources, policy, training, etc.); and challenges related to contextual factors (e.g., politics, society's expectations, university entrance exams, etc.). Such findings are also in alignment with what Borg (1997) has referred to as contextual factors.

A study by Borg (2003) also indicated that teaching contexts forced fresh graduates from institutes of language teacher education to shift their CLT driven pedagogy into the longstanding teacher-centered tradition. That is, novice teachers who had training to apply communicative language teaching and developed a sense of ownership and conviction in the CLT version could not employ CLT in their classroom instructions. This was because of contextual factors including large classes, unmotivated students, examination pressure, a set syllabus, pressure to conform from more experienced teachers, students limited proficiency in English, students' resistance to new ways of learning, and heavy workloads (Richards & Pennington, 1998). Borg (2003: 94) quoted the author's conclusion on the impact of teaching contexts as follows:

*Such factors discourage experimentation and innovation and encourage a 'safe' strategy of sticking close to prescribed materials and familiar teaching approaches.*

Without any relief from these factors and without any reward for innovating in the face of them, the teachers would naturally be led back toward a conservative teaching approach to align themselves with the characteristics of the existing teaching context (Richards, 1998).

Another study in China, by Hu (2003), investigated the impact of contextual factors in implementing CLT. The study identified a variety of factors imposing strong pressure on teachers' instructional practices. Contextual factors include a lack of authentic language materials, strong influences from traditional Chinese learning culture, a lack of students' motivation to learn English, and examination pressures on classroom instruction.

Generally, these findings are insightful to the present study as they not only reveal potential challenges an EFL teacher will face to actualize knowledge of vocabulary instruction in action but also show how these challenges affect the teacher's classroom decisions. Therefore, when studying teachers' knowledge and practice, it is necessary to examine the contextual factors that interrupt the application of teachers' knowledge in vocabulary instruction.

## **2.6. Teachers' Knowledge and Practice**

The relationship between teachers' cognition (knowledge and beliefs) and practices has received substantial attention in the field of teacher education. It is generally believed that teachers' cognitions play a crucial role in classroom teaching and that what teachers know, believe, and think has a powerful influence on their classroom practices. The relationship between teacher knowledge and practice is also understood when looking at teaching as a knowledge-based activity. What teachers do in the classroom is informed, and consequently justified, by what they know. Hegarty (2000) offers an explicit account of how teachers' classroom behavior can be informed by their underlying knowledge. His account is focused on the teaching moment when a teacher is interacting with one or more learners so as to stimulate and direct their learning. Such moments happen within the context of prior contact, syllabus expectations, lesson planning, and so on.

Pajares (1992) stated that knowledge and beliefs are instrumental in defining tasks and selecting the cognitive tools with which to interpret, plan, and make decisions regarding such tasks; hence, they play a critical role in defining behavior and organizing knowledge and information. This

suggests that teachers' cognitions exert a powerful influence on their practices, guiding teachers to work in particular ways in their classroom instruction. Dobson and Dobson (1983) also indicate that any real improvement in schooling will occur only when teachers are experiencing teacher cognition (knowledge and beliefs) and practicing congruency. For example, Shavelson and Stern (1981), referring to the relationship between human thought and action, postulate that teachers' pedagogical behavior is guided by their thoughts, judgments, and decisions. Thus, an understanding of the teaching process depends on both a description of teachers' thoughts, judgments, and decisions and an understanding of how these cognitions are put into practice.

Teachers' knowledge could also serve as a frame of reference through which teachers make sense of their classroom practice (Golombek 1998). It is insightful in showing that teacher action needs to be understood in relation to what is known because the knowledge held by the teacher justifies the courses of action taken. This corresponds with the two notions of teaching as an action of common sense and teaching as a knowledge-based activity. The relationship between teacher knowledge and classroom behavior could also be identified in terms of the consistency between what is known and what is done. This harmony makes knowledge a physical form of classroom action (*ibid.*).

Another way of understanding the relationship between knowledge and practice is through classroom decision-making. Classroom decisions could be informed by underlying knowledge that directs the teacher to act in certain ways. To this end, Tsang (2004) investigated how ESL teachers' personal practical knowledge informed their interactive and post-active decisions. The study was conducted with three non-native ESL teachers in training in Hong Kong, where English is a non-native language. He found that the teachers' personal practical knowledge informed their interactive decisions. The participants in his study had access to their personal practical knowledge, which guided about half of their interactive decisions (decisions made during teaching). Moreover, Tsang found that the teachers' personal practical knowledge played a part in informing post-active decisions (decisions made after teaching) and that delayed accessibility to such knowledge nonetheless helped evaluate new maxims of teaching. All these insights reflect the role of knowledge in practice.

The correspondence between teachers' cognitions and practices is, however, not always straightforward. It is not realistic to expect teachers' knowledge and practices to always be congruent with one another due to possible reasons and constraints such as curriculum and syllabus requirements, course books, examinations, students, colleagues, or other social expectations (Richards and Lockhart, 1994). Since these factors are mostly outside the control of teachers, they may not put their knowledge into practice. Other factors cited in the literature that make the relationship between teachers' cognitions and practices incongruent include teachers' own experiences as language learners and teachers, personality factors, and principles derived from a particular methodological approach (ibid.). As Richards (2010) puts it:

*From the perspective of teacher cognition, teaching is not simply the application of knowledge and learned skills. It is viewed as a much more complex cognitively-driven process affected by the classroom context, the teacher's general and specific instructional goals, the teacher's beliefs and values, the learners' motivations and reactions to the lesson, and the teacher's management of critical moments during a lesson (Richards, 2010:108).*

Several factors shape the transfer of EFL teachers' knowledge into practice. As Grant et al. (1998) described, the following ideas assist in the successful transfer of knowledge to practice: These are awareness, association, assimilation, and application. In addition, Bender and Fish (2000) have confirmed that the transfer of knowledge should lead to changes in practice, behavior, policies, and the development of new ideas.

There are factors that may have facilitated or hindered the transfer of knowledge into practice. As Borg (2003: 98) indicates, constraints may occur related to "the contextual factors that may have facilitated or hindered the kinds of decisions teachers were able to make." These factors include knowledge about languages, teachers' language awareness, teacher training and development, and classroom size.

Knowledge about language (KAL) promotes the transfer of teachers' knowledge to students. However, the ways in which teachers present and transfer their knowledge to students are often difficult for them to understand. Various studies show that knowledge about language is very important for EFL teachers, although some have confirmed that teachers may not be able to use

this type of knowledge in their teaching. Snow et al. (1998) argued that teachers should know as much as possible about language because this is crucial to helping them do a better job. Teaching is based on a large pool of specialized knowledge, and teachers should have that specific knowledge if they are able to teach successfully. The link between subject knowledge and effective teaching may be less direct where L2 instruction is concerned (Borg, 2006).

The other factor that may have facilitated or hindered teachers' transfer of knowledge to practice is their language awareness of teaching (TLA). Teachers' language awareness of teaching is required by the teacher, who needs to reflect on their knowledge and ability. These reflections bring an extra cognitive dimension to the teachers' language awareness, which informs the tasks of planning and teaching (Andrews, 1999).

To this end, Andrews (2001) conducted a study to examine the impact of TLA on classroom practice. He found that teachers' language awareness in teaching plays a fundamental role in structuring the input for learners. He also stated that filtering the input to which the learners are exposed could be influenced by a number of factors, such as the teacher's confidence, explicit knowledge, and time constraints. Furthermore, Wright and Bolitho (1993) explored the effect of TLA on lesson planning and other teaching tasks across the curriculum. They also claimed that any lack of TLA would impact teacher performance. This happens especially "when a teacher is unable to identify and compensate for shortcomings in a course book or is 'caught out' by a learner's question on the language," and they added that "in these situations, teachers need to draw upon their linguistic knowledge, not to provide 'right answers', but to provide the necessary expertise to help the learner overcome difficulties" (ibid., p. 292). This means that TLA is important for EFL teachers because it helps students transfer their knowledge into language use. In summary, it is argued that TLA is fundamental and is considered in this study as a tool that allows teachers to put their knowledge into practice in teaching English vocabulary.

The development of teachers' careers is another important aspect of changing knowledge into practice. This development is essential for a successful teaching practice. Short training sessions will be insufficient to equip EFL teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge. As Adey and Hewitt (2004:156) pointed out, "real change in practice will not arise from short programs of instruction, especially when those programs take place in a center removed from the teacher's

own classroom". EFL teachers need to know about new methods and techniques in order to manage their activities. This is also supported by Carless (1999:23), who stated that:

*If teachers are not equipped to deal with the implications of a new approach, they are likely to revert to the security of their previous behavior, and the desired change may not take place. Without sufficient retraining, even teachers who are initially enthusiastic about an innovation can become frustrated by its problems and eventually turn against it.*

Therefore, regular teacher training sessions are needed in the context researched because, when teachers' knowledge is continually updated, they become more confident. The literature shows that development programs may include either short or long sessions. There is consensus in the literature about the value of long training sessions but less agreement concerning short sessions (Miller, 1998). This might, according to Lamie (2004), be related to a lack of self-confidence that prevents teachers from changing their behavior. Shamim (1996) also stated that:

*It is important for teacher trainers to encourage participants in teacher training programs to discuss both overt and 'hidden' barriers to the successful implementation of change in their own teaching and learning contexts. It will not only make trainees aware of potential sources of conflict, but it will also enable them to develop strategies and tactics to deal with anticipated problems in initiating and managing change in their own classroom (1996:120).*

The last factor that influences the change from knowledge to practice is class size. Achilles (1999) underscored that class size has a crucial effect on L2 teaching and learning. He examined classroom interactions between teachers and learners and found that bigger classes decreased the amount of time teachers spent on instruction when dealing with individual students. In this case, the process of teaching and learning will be negatively affected. Adeyemi (2008:7) found that "schools having an average class size of 35 and below obtained better results in the Senior Secondary Certificate (SSC) examinations than schools having more than 35 students per class" Angrist and Lavy (1999) also found significant effects related to class size. This was because teachers with small classes could apply their knowledge of teaching better than when dealing with larger classes. Adeyemi (2008:7) besides found that "students in schools having small class sizes had better quality output than students in schools having large class sizes".

In contrast, some other researchers, such as Shapson et al. (1980), found no significant differences related to class size, and they stated that most of the teachers' behavior was related to their own plans and views. Ehrenberg et al. (2001) supported this view, arguing that the effects of decreasing class size on teaching are minimal. Therefore, this study also considers this issue in teaching English vocabulary.

## **2.7. Importance of Vocabulary Knowledge**

It is believed that having a large and varied vocabulary is an indicator of communicative competence, and it is one of the important aspects of language learning. The most important tool we can give students for success, not only in school but also in life, is a large, diverse vocabulary and the ability to use it. Our ability to function in today's complex social and economic world is greatly affected by our language skills and word knowledge. Thus, vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication. Underscoring the importance of vocabulary acquisition, Schmitt (2000) emphasizes that "lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of a second language" (p. 55). Nation (2001) further describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary: knowledge of vocabulary enables language use, and conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge. The importance of vocabulary is demonstrated daily, in and out of school. In the classroom, the highest-achieving students possess the most sufficient vocabulary.

Moreover, knowledge of the vocabulary of a language is important in order to understand or convey a message in communication and to pursue and succeed in one's learning. Zhihong (2000) states that vocabulary knowledge is vital to guarantee communication between and among people and is the basic unit of language form. Without a sufficient vocabulary, one cannot communicate effectively or express ideas. Having a limited vocabulary is also a barrier that prevents students from learning a foreign language. Cameron (2001:92) says that "vocabulary is fundamental for using the foreign language as discourse. Since vocabulary is both learned from participating in discourse and essential to participating in it".

According to Richards (2006), vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. In relation to this,

vocabulary is the glue that holds stories, ideas, and content together, making comprehension accessible for students (Rupley, Logan, & Nichols, 1999). Therefore, word knowledge is an essential component of communication, and it is important for the typical L2 learner both for production and comprehension in a foreign language. Harmer (1991) also indicates that "if language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh" (p. 153). Wilkins (1972) further puts it: "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (p. 111). McCarthy (1990) as well adds that "no matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way" (p. viii).

Therefore, vocabulary "may be the most important component for learners" (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p.270). Some empirical studies also indicate that L2 learners and teachers perceive vocabulary as the number one priority in L2 learning and teaching (Knight, 1994; Marcaro, 2003).

## **2.8. Vocabulary Instruction**

Vocabulary instruction is a crucial aspect of learning a language, as languages are based on words (Thornbury, 2002). It is almost impossible to learn a language without words; even communication between human beings is based on words. Both teachers and students agree that the acquisition of vocabulary is a central factor in teaching a language (Walters, 2004).

Teaching vocabulary is one of the most discussed parts of teaching English as a foreign language. When the teaching and learning process takes place, problems will appear for the teachers. They have problems with how to teach students in order to gain satisfying results. The teacher should prepare and find out the appropriate techniques that will be implemented for the students. A good teacher should prepare himself or herself with various up-to-date techniques. Teachers need to be able to master the material in order to be understood by students and make them interested and happy in the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

Recent research indicates that teaching vocabulary may be problematic because many teachers are not confident about best practices in vocabulary teaching and, at times, do not know where to

begin to form an instructional emphasis on word learning (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008). The teachers should be concerned that teaching vocabulary is something new and different from the student's native language. They also have to take into account that teaching English to young learners is different from teaching English to adults. The teacher has to know the characteristics of his or her learners. They also need to prepare good techniques and suitable material in order to achieve the target of language teaching. When words are being taught to students, teachers need to consider how to teach them.

There are a variety of teaching techniques that teachers can use to improve student vocabulary knowledge (Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997). It is important to recognize that students at all levels do not simply see or hear a new word, look it up in the dictionary, and then know it. For this reason, much has been written about the techniques teachers can use to help learners develop their knowledge of vocabulary and guide them through how the words work together with other words to produce meaningful communication (*ibid.*).

Teaching vocabulary is not just about conveying the meaning to the students and asking them to learn those words by heart. If teachers believe that the words are worth explaining and learning, then it is important that they do so efficiently. Teachers should use different strategies in teaching English vocabulary to motivate the learners, enrich their vocabulary, and enable them to speak English properly. Thus, teachers should keep four factors in mind when they consider techniques and strategies to teach vocabulary: (1) the students they are teaching; (2) the nature of the words they decide to teach; (3) their instructional purposes in teaching each of those words; and (4) the strategies they employ to teach the words (Flanigan & Greenwood, 2007). Similarly, Graves (2006) clearly explains the role of the teacher with respect to effective vocabulary instruction. Teachers should (1) provide students with information that includes both the context and meaning of the word; (2) design instruction that engages students and provides adequate time for word learning; (3) ensure students have multiple exposures to the words through review and practice; and (4) create a dialogue around the words.

Thus, in teaching vocabulary, teachers of English mainly focus on employing different strategies that better serve learners' vocabulary knowledge.

## **2.9. Strategies in Vocabulary Instruction**

One can define vocabulary teaching strategies (VTSs) as follows:

*Ways in which teachers introduce and present the meaning and the form of new lexical items, encourage learners to review and practice, i.e., recycle what is known, and monitor and evaluate the level of acquisition of various components of lexical knowledge (Pavičić Takač, 2008:19).*

It is important to recognize that students at all levels do not simply see or hear a new word; they look it up in the dictionary, and then know it. For this reason, much has been written about the strategies teachers can use to help learners develop their knowledge of vocabulary and guide them through how words work together with other words to produce meaningful communication (Gaims and Redman, 1986; Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997). Nation (2005) suggested different strategies that teachers of English can implement in their teaching practice. Among them, some strategies relevant to the teaching of English vocabulary are listed below:

### **2.9.1. Communicative Strategy in Vocabulary Instruction**

The method of teaching languages has changed from grammar-translation to the direct method and then to the communicative approach. However, it was only through the communicative approach that researchers in the field recognized the importance of vocabulary knowledge in second or foreign language learning. The current popular communicative approach to language teaching emphasizes meaningful interactive activities over form (Hatch and Brown, 1995).

This is because knowledge of vocabulary is basic for a better understanding of messages, whether in written or spoken form.

Vocabulary teaching in CLT focuses on meaning rather than form, as it aims to achieve effective communication. Teachers are expected to create a suitable language environment so that learners use the language for problem solving. This motivates learners to pick up the language since they practice by considering actual situations and introducing their background experiences.

Therefore, in the CLT classroom, much vocabulary is not taught in the form of a word list of isolated words any more but is taught in authentic contexts. Vocabulary teaching focuses on developing communicative proficiency rather than mastering the forms of the target language.

Communicative language teaching, based on many modern humanistic and communicative theories, is effective in English vocabulary teaching and learning in many aspects:

1. CLT makes learners acquire vocabulary knowledge naturally rather than learning it intentionally. Apart from that, the modified target language input, which is gotten from conversational interactions between the teacher and learners, enables them to get a better understanding of their vocabulary knowledge.
2. CLT promotes learners' communicative competence and stimulates their inner motivation since the communicative activities are close to and relevant to their daily lives.
3. CLT prompts the development of learners' spirit of team cooperation by means of communicative activities and cultivates learners' individuality by allowing them to express their different views and ideas freely in the conversational interactions between them.
4. CLT makes learners adopt responsibility for their own learning and encourages them to discover the forms and structures of the target language for themselves.

As Richards (2006) states in the principles of CLT, students learn to communicate by negotiating meaning in a real context. Teachers' role in Communicative Language Teaching, especially vocabulary, is mainly about acting as a facilitator for classroom activities as well as home-take assignments to make learners engage in groups or pair work. Instruction plays an essential role in passing messages and thoughts to learners. The way in which CLT treats vocabulary is such that learners can easily grasp the meaning of new words from the context. To do this, a communicative practice that lets learners use the language should be employed in the classroom.

Thus, what teachers should do most importantly is arouse the students' communicative consciousness, activate their communicative motivation, and comprehend a word's real communicative meaning and use if there is a great deal of situational knowledge in the learners' minds. Thus, what the teachers should do is to enlarge the readers' situation knowledge and

arouse their communicative desire to attain the communicative aim (Yiwei WU, 2009). CLT involves equipping students with vocabulary, structures, and functions, as well as strategies to enable them to interact successfully (Pororellana, 2011).

To be effective, a program of vocabulary instruction should provide students with opportunities for word learning by:

1. Encountering them in text, either through their own reading or by being read to. Increasing the opportunities for such encounters improves students' vocabulary knowledge, which, in turn, improves their ability to read more and more complex text. In short, the single most important thing you can do to improve students' vocabulary is to get them to read more.
2. Exposing students to high-quality oral language: Increase the quality of the oral language to which students are exposed by letting them hear English that incorporates more of the vocabulary and syntax typical of written and particularly literate English.
3. Promoting word consciousness: word-conscious students enjoy learning new words and engaging in wordplay. They know and use many words and are aware of the subtleties of a word's meaning and of the power words can have (Texas Reading Initiative, 2002, p. 11).

The following are some of the strategies that are common in teaching vocabulary using the communicative method.

#### **2.9.1.1. Teaching vocabulary through context**

Research indicates that contextual word teaching is more effective than non-contextual word teaching (Biemiller & Boote, 2006). Therefore, in teaching vocabulary, it is important to provide meaningful learning experiences for students. One way of nurturing vocabulary development and retention is to teach words in context. Divorcing words from their surroundings decreases the likelihood of comprehension and retention, and it was emphasized that new vocabulary should only be used in meaningful contexts (Richards and Rodgers 2001). Setting a good context that is interesting, plausible, vivid, and has relevance to the lives of the learners is an essential prerequisite for vocabulary teaching, as it helps in both engaging the learners' attention and naturally generating the target vocabulary.

Presenting vocabulary in context enables students to improve their vocabulary. Memorizing may be good and useful as a temporary technique for tests, but not for learning a foreign language because students who simply memorize word meanings frequently have trouble applying the information in definitions and often make mistakes about the meanings (Texas Reading Initiative, 2000). If we really wish to teach students the meanings of the words and how they are used, it is useful to present them in context, and students are more likely to deduce meaning from a context. Edwards (2009) states that students will see how the new item (a new word) works grammatically, and the context will help make the item more memorable and aid retention. Words in context increase the chances of learners appreciating not only their meaning but their typical environments, such as their associated collocations or grammatical structures (Thornbury, 2002).

Most of the words acquired through incidental reading are learned through context. Students learn from context by making connections between the new word and the text in which it appears. They also learn new words through repeated exposures, gaining more comprehension of a word's meanings and functions by seeing it several times in different ways. To develop reading efficiency, guessing from context is useful. Therefore, the ability to guess the meaning of a word without referring to a dictionary saves time and allows the reader to continue reading without interruption.

Research indicates that contextual word teaching is more effective than non-contextual word teaching (Biemiller & Boote, 2006). Therefore, in teaching vocabulary, it is important to provide meaningful learning experiences for students. One way of nurturing vocabulary development and retention is to teach words in context. After maintaining the context and making sure the language surrounding the context is easy to comprehend, the teacher should start eliciting the target vocabulary. Elicitation ensures that the learners work towards understanding the meaning, as this is more likely to help them remember and recall the vocabulary taught. Moreover, elicitation also makes the classroom more learner-centered and helps the learners make connections between the old and the new. One must remember here that our learners are, as Tudor (2001, p. 15) puts it, "not... blank sheets of paper onto which a pre-ordained body of knowledge can be transferred in a neat, predictable manner."

Guessing from context is not always possible, due to the learner's limited ability and varied text construction. Texts range drastically in contextual quality. Due to the reality that students will encounter texts that are not context-rich, teachers must offer both contextualized and decontextualized vocabulary learning activities. In other words, teaching vocabulary to guess the meaning of the unknown vocabulary does not mean that the word has been inferred correctly. Yet, guessing is still practical and beneficial, as it provides learners with words in a meaningful context rather than in complete isolation. When students are taught to guess the meaning of new words from context, the reading text should be appropriate for their ability level. If the text is too difficult, it will not be helpful. Rather, it may even bore them out.

Therefore, setting a good context that is interesting, plausible, and vivid has relevance to the lives of the learners, and it is an essential prerequisite for vocabulary teaching as it helps in both engaging the attention of the learners and naturally generating the target vocabulary. According to Kaivanpanah and Alavi (2008), following the principles below will enhance the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary through the use of context clues:

1. Highlight textual clues that lead to the meaning of the target word. This will enhance students' capability to recognize textual clues. Clues include synonyms, definitions, antonyms, contrasts, and examples.
2. Select texts in which the target words occur a few times.
3. Enhance the accuracy of students' inferences about target words.
4. Teach them background knowledge of the text.
5. Occasionally look up the words' meanings in a dictionary to validate the accuracy of their inferences. This helps them develop metacognitive awareness of the level of accuracy of their inferences.

### **Types of Contextual Strategy**

Context clues are indicators of the meaning of a word. Such clues may be in the sentence that contains the word or somewhere else in the text within close proximity (Stahl, 1999). Context clues include definitions, examples, comparison and contrast, summaries, synonyms, and antonyms.

1. **Definition.** Often the writer defines the meaning of the word right in the sentence or gives enough explanation for the meaning to be clear.
2. **Example.** Many times an author helps the reader get the meaning of a word by providing examples that illustrate the use of the word, e.g., the lantern illuminated the cave so well that we were able to see the crystal formations on the rocks.
3. **Comparison and Contrast** Comparison and contrast usually show the similarities and differences between persons, ideas, and things.
4. **Summary.** A summary clue sums up a situation or an idea with a word or a phrase.
5. **Synonyms.** Very often, the reader can find in the same passage a familiar word that relates to a subject in a manner similar to the way that the unfamiliar term does.
6. **Antonyms.** Words with opposite meanings may be found in the same context.

#### **2.9.1.2. Task based vocabulary instruction strategy**

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) can make language learning in classrooms closer to the natural route and may reach a higher rate of language acquisition because it provides learners with a clear communicative goal (Wang, 2006). Interaction is needed to reach the goal, and comprehensive input can occur before language acquisition is facilitated. So, task-based teaching and learning is an area that has grown in importance greatly during the last ten years and can be discussed from a number of perspectives (ibid.).

Language teachers and researchers have realized the significance of different pedagogical tasks in second language (L2) vocabulary learning that involve learning a great deal of the lexicon. That is why a considerable number of researchers, syllabus designers, and educational innovators have long stressed the need for a move in language teaching towards task-based approaches to instruction (Nunan, 1989; Gass & Crookes, 1993).

In each particular vocabulary learning situation, it is initially necessary to identify the learner, the task, and the context configuration; otherwise, the learning strategy will not be fully analyzed. That is because some strategies are more learner-dependent, some are more task-dependent, and others are more context-based (Mohseni-Far, 2008).

Through tasks, teachers have a number of options for enhancing attention while students learn vocabulary. One of such options is to allow learners to work cooperatively to make sense of unfamiliar vocabulary using tasks.

### **2.9.1.3. Cooperative strategy**

Cooperative learning is the key to dealing with students with various abilities and diverse areas of intelligence. This learning method lets the students search for and find the best path to learning given subjects by themselves. Students are free to express what they have in mind to complete the tasks given during the lesson. Cooperative learning strategies share the idea that students work in groups to accomplish a group goal.

Group work is part of the cooperative strategies of teaching and learning. It is one of the best ways of encouraging active learning by arranging the learners' work together in a group. It can take many forms, involving pairs of students working together or up to ten learners together, or it can involve students who work individually and come together in groups to compare and discuss the results of their group. If necessary, random gender, interest, and ability groups can be formed (Kyriacou, 1998). Activities done in cooperative learning are done in group form and are used to grow students' abilities to collaborate and cooperate with others. They are also used to knowing how much students can learn when they are together; the teacher only has to monitor and control their activity so that students have the freedom to express themselves by sharing with others in their groups. Thus, to teach vocabulary in a meaningful and enjoyable way, it is important to use cooperative learning strategies through group work.

Other than what is mentioned above, there are two general approaches to vocabulary teaching: implicit and explicit. The implicit instruction approach is featured in teaching the importance of directing L2 students to recognize clues in context and using monolingual rather than bilingual dictionaries to define words or gloss texts (Sokmen, 1997). This approach promotes incidental vocabulary learning, i.e., inferring word meaning from context.

Implicit instruction discourages learners from accessing rules directly (Hulstijn, 2005). This type of instruction enables students to be exposed to several examples containing the desired topic. However, they will never be asked to learn any specific rules. For example, if teachers

give students several sentences in the simple past tense without explaining the rules for forming or using the English past tense, the students must find their own mode for understanding the simple past tense. Furthermore, the teachers would not make them memorize specific rules because the students have not been taught any specific rules. The students, though, are expected to produce their own original simple past-tense sentences. Accordingly, implicit instruction helps students unconsciously acquire rules in an implied manner instead (Wiki Spaces, 2006). That is to say, students acquire new vocabulary and grammar structures through contextualized materials and communicative activities.

In contrast to implicit vocabulary instruction, explicit vocabulary teaching is characterized by building a large sight vocabulary, integrating new words with old, providing multiple encounters with the word, promoting a deep level of semantic processing, facilitating imaging and concreteness, using a variety of techniques, and encouraging independent learning strategies (Sokmen, 1997).

Explicit instruction is teacher-centered and directs students to identify rules from input in a structured teaching environment (Hulstijn, 2005). Simmons (1995) believes that "explicit teaching involves the direct, systematic presentation of critical information by the teacher to students" (p. 388). Knowledge would be taught by demonstration, explanation, and practice (Wiki Spaces, 2006). According to Ellis (2005), "this clear and guided instruction enables students to accelerate language acquisition" (p. 329). Since vocabulary teaching entails the complicated acquisition of many aspects, as proposed by Nation (2013), it might be more suitable for teachers to give explicit vocabulary instruction.

Although it seems that implicit instruction contradicts explicit instruction, they interact with each other to some degree (Ellis, 2005). Thus, it is important to determine which type of vocabulary learning strategy can benefit an individual student's vocabulary acquisition and provide the appropriate instruction.

Therefore, these different strategies for teaching EFL vocabulary are included in the study as part of the teacher's pedagogical knowledge. This is because vocabulary is involved in all language skills and aspects, and the kind of instructional support provided by the teacher could facilitate or

hinder the students' learning and retention of new vocabulary. Moreover, it is a basic premise of this study to explore and provide insights into teachers' knowledge and their actual classroom practices in vocabulary instruction.

### **2.9.2. Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy**

Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSCS) is a strategy to teach vocabulary by using the student's ability in collecting and generating word lists, and it emphasizes the students' personal experiences and general knowledge. The students are allowed to find out the words based on their daily experiences, the words that they find in their own environment that are related to the topic given by the teacher. So the students should figure out the kinds of communication that they and other people know and use every day and the list of words that deal with communication. Then, the students try to determine the meaning of the words as best they can base on the context.

As Haggard (1986) mentions some steps in implementing self-collection strategies (VSCS), teachers introduce the purpose of VSCS to students, and they tell students that they will be expected to find new and interesting words from their readings that they will learn through a group nomination process. Then, teachers model how to select and nominate important words from the readings. Teachers show why the word they selected is important by providing a strong rationale. For example, they may show students that without knowing the word, they may not understand the sentence or surrounding sentences.

These steps help students engage in the process of vocabulary self-selection. Students work in small groups of three to five, and they read a short passage from the book with the teacher. They are guided by the teacher to identify a word they wish to select. The teacher demonstrates how to use context and other resources to figure out the meaning of the word. Together, the students and the teacher engage in a discussion on developing a reason for nominating their word, and each small group moves to nominate one word for learning. Students use their own charts to write the word, the sentence from the text in which the word was found, the meaning, and the reason for selecting the word.

### 2.9.3. Collocation Strategy

The word collocations can be defined in many ways by different scholars. McCarten (2007) states that the way in which two or more words are typically used is generally called collocations. According to Moon (1997), collocations are words that occur together with high frequency and refer to the combination of words that have a certain mutual expectation. "The combination is not a fixed expression, but there is a greater than chance likelihood that the words will co-occur" (Jackson, 1988, p. 96). Stubbs (2002) defines collocation as the habitual co-occurrence of two unordered content words or of a content word and a lexical set. Collocations consist of two parts: a pivot word, which is the focal word in the collocation, and its collocates(s), the word or words accompanying the pivot word (Shin & Nation, 2008).

There are two types of collocations: lexical collocations and grammatical collocations (Bahns, 1993; Carter, 1998). Lexical collocations are combinations of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs, such as Verb + Noun (e.g., break a code, lift a blockade), Adjective + Noun (e.g., strong tea, best wishes), Noun + Noun (language school, school children), Verb + Adverb (e.g., affect deeply, appreciate sincerely), and Adverb + Adjective (e.g., deeply absorbed, closely related). Grammatical collocations are combinations of content words (nouns, adjectives, or verbs) and a grammatical word such as a preposition (e.g., good at) or certain structural patterns.

In collocation, two or more words are typically used together. For example, we talk about *heavy rain* but not *heavy sun*, or we say that we *make* or *come to a decision* but we don't *make one*. So, *heavy rain* and *making a decision* are often referred to as collocations, and we say that *heavy* collocates with *rain*. Skrzypek (2009) indicates the importance of collocation by stating that one of the criteria for knowing a word is being aware of other words with which it keeps company. Jaén (2007) underscores that collocations are a very important part of the knowledge of second language acquisition, and they are essential to non-native speakers of English in order to speak or write fluently and accurately.

Chan & Liou (2005) indicated that teaching collocations in English classes did not get enough attention; as a result, students learning English as a foreign language are weak in collocation use. Thus, rather than teaching vocabulary as a single lexical item, which causes lexical

incompetence on the part of learners, students must be made aware of the necessity of acquiring collocations (Fan, 2009).

## **2.10. Current Status of Vocabulary Teaching Practices**

The prominent role of vocabulary knowledge in foreign or second language learning has been recognized by theorists and researchers in the field. Accordingly, numerous types of approaches, strategies, exercises, and practices have been introduced into the field to teach vocabulary. It has been suggested that teaching vocabulary should not only consist of teaching specific words but also aim at equipping learners with the strategies necessary to expand their vocabulary knowledge (Nation, 2001). Conversely, a few decades ago, the outlook on vocabulary had radically changed, and researchers have shown an outpouring of interest in this area. Therefore, the movement toward effective methodologies for teaching vocabulary has emerged, and researchers and language teachers have also suggested many strategies and techniques for vocabulary learning, which are dependent on the efforts of each learner (Cohen & Macaro, 2007; Mizumoto & Takeuchi, 2009).

Folse (2004) pointed out eight categories for recent trends in vocabulary teaching and research: (1) How many and which words should students know? (2) How does a second language learner's vocabulary develop? (3) Why are some words more difficult to learn than others? (4) Is second language vocabulary learned more easily through natural context or through direct instruction? Which vocabulary learning strategies do students employ? Which types of practice activities promote vocabulary learning? (7) What effect do certain types of marginal glosses and internet annotations have on incidental vocabulary learning? (8) How does using a dictionary impact vocabulary acquisition? All the questions deal with vocabulary instruction from various perspectives, which reveal the characteristics of current vocabulary instruction and research in the area.

Nowadays, it is generally accepted that vocabulary teaching should be part of the syllabus and taught on a well-planned and regular basis. Some authors, led by Lewi (1993), argue that vocabulary should be at the center of language teaching because "language consists of grammatical lexis, not lexicalized grammar. Therefore, the incorporation of vocabulary into the

curriculum is essential for increasing students' literacy skills, not only in the EFL classroom but in all areas.

At the same time, locally different studies have been done on areas of vocabulary teaching in an EFL context. To this end, Alemu (1994) conducted a study on teachers' attitudes towards an awareness-raising approach to vocabulary teaching. His findings show that teachers could modify their attitudes in a fairly short period of time. Similarly, Abebe (1997) investigated vocabulary learning strategies of AAU freshmen students learning English as a second or foreign language. 43 students participated in the study, and the results showed that a wide range of vocabulary acquisition strategies were reported to be employed by the students, but only a few strategies were reported to be implemented.

Likewise, Berhane (1998) conducted "an exploration of vocabulary teaching in primary schools." His findings show that pictures, picture cards, blackboard drawings, and real objects are more frequent and effective techniques of vocabulary teaching in grades one and two. Jeylan (1999), in his study, investigated the vocabulary learning strategies of students of English with particular reference to grade 11. His findings showed that the subjects did not seem to use many of the strategies investigated.

Mulugeta (2006) also conducted a study that dealt with vocabulary learning strategies employed by grade 10 students on the plasma television. His findings revealed that most of the strategies were not employed by the students. The study also revealed, the strategies employed by the students are metacognitive, cognitive, compensatory, memory, affective, and social strategies in descending order.

Dinku (2008) as well conducted a study on vocabulary learning strategies used by good and poor achievers at New Era Public School. 30 grade 10 students participated in the study: 15 poor achievers and 15 good achievers. As the result disclosed, good achievers consider themselves students who can successfully learn new words; they listen to their teachers and English radio or TV programs to improve their English vocabulary, while poor achievers set time, place, goals, and objectives for learning vocabulary. In general, the study indicated that good achievers implement vocabulary learning strategies much better than poor achievers to develop their word power.

Lemlem (2013) investigated students' preferences and use of vocabulary learning strategies of Awash Military College students (CAA). She tried to answer the following four questions in her research. These are: to what extent students preferred the strategies; how frequently these strategies were used; were there any significant differences between extent of preference and frequency of use; and what were some of the factors that hindered students' use the strategies as frequently as possible. As the result indicated majority of the students have high preference towards most of vocabulary learning strategies. To put the preference rate of such strategies in descending order: social, memory, compensation, affective, cognitive and Meta cognitive strategies. On the contrary, these highly preferred strategies were not employed highly. In other words, the implementations of these strategies are not equivalent to their preference rate. Even the result showed there is a great difference between students' extent of preferences and frequency of use except for social strategies.

Mirresa (2014) also studied the extent to which English language teachers practice vocabulary teaching strategies at Kellelem Secondary School and identified the major factors that might hamper the implementation of vocabulary teaching strategies in EFL classes. The results of the study revealed that the teachers were not competent enough in terms of knowledge and theoretical orientations of vocabulary teaching strategies in EFL classes. In addition, it was found that the teachers lacked practical skills in the implementation of different types of vocabulary teaching strategies.

Similarly, Gebreegziabher (2016) conducted a research to evaluate the design of vocabulary tasks and their implementation. A total of 130 randomly selected grade nine students and four English teachers in Kokebe Tsibah Preparatory School were involved. The results from document analysis revealed that an attempt was made to include various vocabulary learning tasks. However, there were vocabulary learning tasks that were not included.. Besides, the finding show that the vocabulary tasks lack authentic material and doesn't encourage meaningful language use. In addition, vocabulary learning objectives are not clearly indicated. Classroom observation also revealed that teachers hardly implement various vocabulary learning tasks in classroom.

The revision of the studies indicated that most local research works dealt with teachers' and students' interactive behaviors in vocabulary teaching and learning, The studies mainly centered

on teachers' approaches to vocabulary teaching, teachers' vocabulary teaching strategies, students' preferences for vocabulary learning strategies, and on the implementation of vocabulary tasks in EFL classes. Accordingly, the current study is basically different from the above studies in the aspects of investigating teachers' knowledge and practice of vocabulary teaching; it focuses mainly on teachers' perceptions of their knowledge in vocabulary teaching, on their sources of knowledge development, on teachers' knowledge and practice relationships, and on factors affecting the implementation of teachers' knowledge in vocabulary teaching. Moreover, recent empirical evidence suggests that it is the teachers who seem to play a major role in making decisions with regard to language teaching. Therefore, the study of teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction entails a comprehensive account of how vocabulary teaching is perceived and implemented by teachers in an actual classroom setting.

## **2.11. Researches on Language Teachers' Knowledge**

The pioneering work of Shulman (1987) and his associates inspired several researchers to investigate teachers' knowledge in various educational research types. In order to gain a thorough understanding of language teachers' knowledge, the researcher reviewed research studies that address language teachers' knowledge, especially those conducted in EFL contexts. Besides, these studies address EFL teachers' knowledge in various curricular areas. Thus, the researcher believes they will help him see what areas of teacher knowledge have been examined and how they are conceptualized in contexts that are similar to the present study.

From this angle, Stanford (1991), for example, conducted a qualitative comparative study that aimed to provide a description of prospective teachers' knowledge of teaching English and the sources of their knowledge. His finding revealed that student teachers view teaching as a complicated endeavor requiring specific knowledge and skills that can be subsumed under the categories of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of the learners. As well, the source of their knowledge varied, with family influences and experiences playing a prominent role.

Language teachers' knowledge of subject matter and its impact on their instructional decisions has been one of the main issues addressed in language teacher knowledge research. To this end, Andrews (1994) conducted a study on 82-second language teacher educators' perspectives on

prospective teachers' knowledge of grammar. The study revealed that 50 percent of the teacher candidates encountered did not have adequate content and pedagogical knowledge of grammar instruction.

A study focusing on teachers' knowledge of writing instruction was conducted by Tsui (1996). She conducted a longitudinal case study of how an EFL teacher in Hong Kong tried to introduce a process-based approach to her teaching of writing. This study traced and made sense of changes in teacher knowledge and practices in writing instruction and highlighted how instructional and curricular factors impact teacher knowledge development in the teaching of writing.

Similarly, Gatbonton (1999) examined seven experienced teachers' pedagogical knowledge in the Canadian context. Through the use of observation and stimulated recall interviews, the study aimed to investigate whether it is possible to access the patterns of knowledge about teaching and learning that teachers use in their teaching practices. The findings revealed that teachers have domains of knowledge such as knowledge of students, knowledge of the curriculum, and knowledge of assessment in their minds during the teaching process.

Research on teachers' knowledge of reading instruction also comes from the study conducted by Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard (2001). In the study, six categories of teacher knowledge were identified: subject matter knowledge, student knowledge, knowledge of student learning, knowledge of purposes, knowledge of curriculum, and knowledge of instructional techniques. Their study examined the categories of teacher knowledge in Shulman's (1987) framework. In addition to these, Meijer et al.'s (2001) study sought to understand teachers' practical knowledge in relation to the teaching of reading comprehension. Their study attempted to define teachers' practical knowledge by means of shared knowledge. The findings of the study showed that teachers' practical knowledge is complex and diverse, and that three categories of knowledge were found to be related to teachers' practical knowledge of reading comprehension instruction, namely subject matter knowledge, knowledge of students, and knowledge of students' learning and understanding.

Besides, Luo (2004) examined the nature of knowledge for teaching EFL at the elementary level. This study attempted to gain insights into teachers' experiences and thoughts about learning to teach EFL in Taiwanese elementary school classrooms. The results from the data analysis indicate that teachers emphasized the role of experiential knowledge and learning on the job, while pre-service teachers looked for the applications of theoretical knowledge to teaching practice.

Similar to what is mentioned above, Adediwura and Tayo (2007) investigate the relationship or effect of students' perceptions of teachers' knowledge of the subject matter, attitude toward work, and teaching skills on students' academic performance. Their study showed that students' perceptions of teachers' knowledge of subject matter, attitude toward work, and teaching skills have a significant effect on their academic performance. Therefore, they claim that their study will provide useful guidance on teachers' evaluation, promotion, and appointment as well as teaching output as perceived by the students who are the direct recipients of the teachers' professional competence or incompetence. Ohi (2007) also investigated teachers' sources of knowledge for teaching reading in a study that relied on individual semi-structured interviews. This study found that the sources of professional knowledge in the early years of the participating reading teachers were based on their own professional experiences, their own learning from other teachers, and networking with other professionals in the field of language teaching.

Chen and Goh (2014), for their part, examined EFL teachers' knowledge of oral English teaching in the Chinese context. Two factors were used to assess teachers' self-perceived knowledge, namely pedagogical content knowledge and knowledge of students' oral English characteristics (KOS). The findings of the survey revealed that there are no significant differences between such relationships. That is, different years of teaching did not seem to shape teachers' self-perceived pedagogical content knowledge of oral English teaching and their knowledge of students' oral English characteristics.

In a recent study, Abdelhafez (2014) investigated the areas that comprised the professional practical knowledge of experienced Egyptian EFL teachers and how their knowledge informed their actual classroom practice. The findings of the quantitative data revealed the participants'

views on six areas of teacher knowledge: subject matter knowledge, pedagogy, students, classroom learning environment, curriculum, and self. The findings of the semi-structured interviews showed that the participants provided various reasons for justifying the need to be proficient in the English language in terms of culture and origin. The findings of the stimulated recall interview indicated that teachers' knowledge of subject matter influenced their teaching practice. Based on these findings, he (ibid.) argues that the views expressed by the participants are the product of their individual consciousness that is shaped by their various experiences. That is, what teachers know about the subject matter, curriculum, and other elements is shaped by their personal, professional, and institutional understanding.

The following main points are found in the research works reviewed: Most EFL teachers' knowledge research highlights three curricular areas, such as the teaching of grammar, reading, and writing. However, studies that center on vocabulary, listening, and speaking skills have received little attention in examining what teachers know and do in EFL teacher knowledge research contexts. In the studies reviewed, the most common research method used was qualitative research, with interviews and classroom observation as research instruments. To this end, the researcher believes it is important to do research and investigate what teachers know and how they use their knowledge in actual classroom practices using mixed methods designs with various data gathering instruments. Thus, this study attempts to address the gap in the literature by investigating teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction from different perspectives.

## **2.12. Theoretical Framework of the Study**

As Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggested, knowledge is constructed intersubjectively through people's lived experiences and their interactions with the social reality surrounding them. Knowledge is, therefore, not discovered but rather socially constructed. Constructivism is related to socio-cultural theory in the sense that both conceive knowledge as being constructed through interaction (Johnson, 2006).

Three central premises within constructivism or socio-cultural theory will afford an explanatory assumption of the mind that helps us understand the flexibility and complexity of teachers'

knowledge or belief construction. First, socio-cultural theory defines learning as a dynamic social activity that is formed by and embedded in social contexts. Secondly, seen through the lens of socio-cultural theory, language itself is described both as being constructed in social practice and as being a means to construct social reality (Johnson, 2006). To conclude, this theoretical framework allows the researcher to contextualize teachers in their function as culturally constructed mediators of knowledge. It acknowledges how teachers' actions, self-perceptions, identity constructions, and cognitions will have been shaped by their historical and cultural communities of practice, as well as how teachers will have tended to internalize the very conditions, values, and beliefs that will shape them.

Thus, for this study, constructivism is considered an appropriate theoretical framework to guide this research. As Crotty (2003:42) noted,

*... all knowledge is reliant upon human practices as being constructed in and out of interactions between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context. Relationships between human beings and their world were developed and transmitted within an essentially social context.*

Accordingly, the researcher aims to develop a fuller understanding of teachers' knowledge and practice of vocabulary instruction through interaction with participants' perspectives and the multiple realities they hold about vocabulary teaching. This necessitates the researcher's role as an interpretive researcher to investigate the phenomenon under study in its natural context. Consequently, the researcher creates direct contact and establishes a close relationship with the participants and the context in which the teachers work.

Besides, the researcher's interaction with the participants through interview, observation, and stimulated recall, as well as his contact with them during the administration of the questionnaire, allowed him to investigate the social embeddedness of knowledge in terms of the experiences teachers hold about vocabulary instruction in light of the social context. To this end, the researcher believes that constructivism is a suitable theory to explore EFL teachers' knowledge and practice of vocabulary instruction. In that way, it allows the researcher to discover realities

that are found in teachers' different interpretations and views regarding how the knowledge they hold about vocabulary instruction is constructed.

### **2.13. Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Teachers' knowledge of instruction has been widely understood as a concept representing the knowledge that teachers draw upon for their professional practices as teachers. Teachers' knowledge in the study was conceived in relation to teachers' beliefs. It works on the assumption that teachers' knowledge is truly justified by reasons or points of view (Fenstermacher, 1994).

Johnson and Goettsch (2000) also acknowledge that components of teachers' knowledge of instruction "are melded together in complex and indeed inextricable ways to produce multifaceted, holistic accounts of, and actions in, language teaching" (p. 461). In studying teacher knowledge, therefore, the major focus should be on the totality of cognitions, including how they develop and how they interact with teacher behavior in practice. In his view, Borg (1999) as well indicates that teacher knowledge involves implicit personal understandings of teaching and learning that teachers develop through educational and professional experiences in their lives. This, however, does not mean that all the knowledge teachers possess is realized in classroom settings. The fundamental idea is that there exists relation between the whole of teachers' knowledge and their classroom actions, activities, and behaviors. These reasons or points of view are expressed by EFL-practicing teachers and are visible in the practice of teaching one curricular area, English vocabulary.

Besides, teachers' knowledge in the current study is conceived of as practical and contextual. It is practical because it influences the practice of teaching vocabulary in EFL classrooms. It could shape what the teacher does in the classroom, and it could be modified as a result of the interaction with the different domains of the teaching process. It has meaning for the teacher as a person who cannot be separated from being a professional. It is contextual because it is shaped by and applied in a particular context. This conceptualization echoes the definition provided by Munby et al. (2001) that teachers' knowledge is based on the personal understandings that teachers have of the practical circumstances in which they work and classroom knowledge that is situated in classroom events.

As a result, the researcher in this study adopted a conceptual framework so as to show a deep understanding of the research questions. The established conceptual framework has been essentially based on the assumption that if we want to have effective instruction with respect to one curricular area (e.g., vocabulary), this would be best shown through the study of teachers' knowledge. This is because teachers' knowledge is a lens through which to conceptualize good teaching; otherwise, no change in teachers' practice can take place without being preceded by changes in teachers' knowledge (Borg, 2006).

In this study, teachers' knowledge is context-dependent and situated in the teachers' world of vocabulary teaching. It is influenced by teachers' perceptions, their sources of knowledge development, and contextual factors impeding the practice. These interconnected constructs are important for performing vocabulary instruction in teachers' vocabulary teaching contexts, and the researcher relies on them as a useful means of investigating teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction.

Thus, if teachers are able to establish the reasonableness of what they are doing in classroom practice in relation to other, competing claims, they are capable of providing knowledge about teaching.

In figure 1 below, the concept of teachers' vocabulary instruction knowledge is depicted as an interrelated construct of teachers' perceptions of their vocabulary instruction knowledge, sources of knowledge, and contextual factors that affect teachers' vocabulary instruction during their actual classroom practices, and it is situated in teachers' vocabulary teaching context.

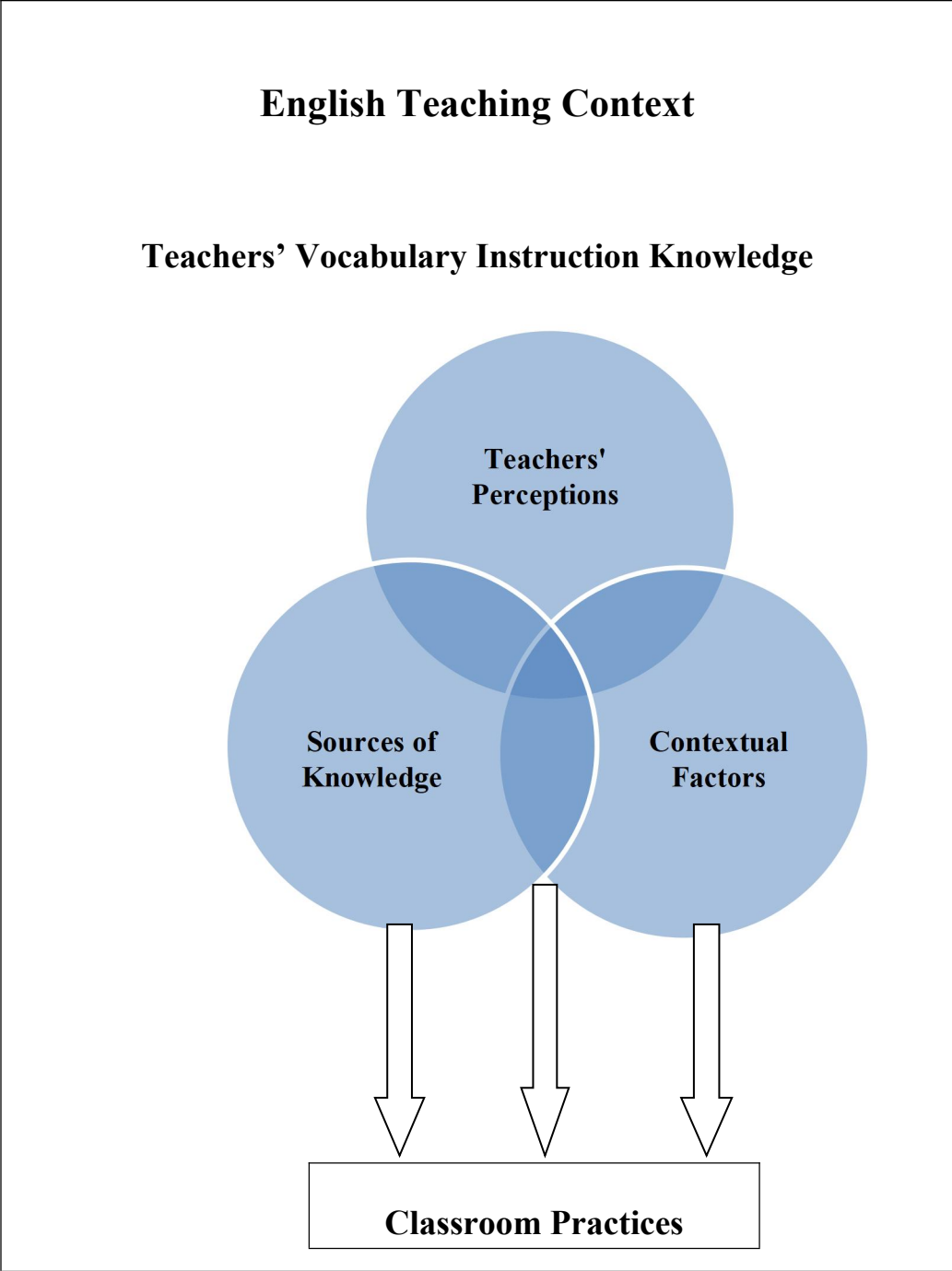


Figure 1 . A conceptual framework that informs bodies of research is adapted from Lianna Pizzo (2013).

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Design of the Study

The study adopted an explanatory mixed-method design by combining quantitative and qualitative methods as complementary strategies appropriate to the research questions. Explanatory design (also known as explanatory sequential design) sets out to explain information and seeks to ask "why" and "how" questions that go on to identify the actual reasons a phenomenon occurs (Creswell et al., 2003). Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick (2006) also defined this research design as "a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and mixing or integrating both quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research process within a single study for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the research problem" (p. 3). Explanatory research explains why certain phenomena work in the way that they do, whereas exploratory research explores and investigates a problem that is not clearly defined (*ibid.*). Thus, the researcher employed explanatory research to explain why a certain phenomenon happens in the process of teaching English vocabulary in an EFL context.

This design starts with the collection and analysis of quantitative data. The second, qualitative phase of the study is designed so that it follows from (or connects to) the results of the first quantitative phase.

The reason behind the sequence of the explanatory design is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem. The qualitative data and their analysis refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth (*ibid.*). Consequently, in the first phase of data collection, the researcher conducted a questionnaire, followed by semi-structured interviews, observation, and stimulated recall in the second phase. Based on some of the findings from the first phase, integration of the two phases was carried out, and further exploration of teachers' knowledge and practice of vocabulary instruction in an EFL secondary school context was made. Mertens (2010) for example described a sequential mixed methods design as one that:

*(...) answers one type of question by collecting and analyzing two types of data. Inferences are based on the analysis of both types of data. A sequential design is one in which the conclusions that are drawn on the basis of the first strand lead to the formulation of questions, data collection, and data analysis for the next strand. The final inferences are based on the results of both strands of the study. In some cases, the second strand/phase of the study is used to...provide further explanation for unexpected findings in the first strand (p. 300).*

The following assumptions were also made by the researcher to employ an explanatory sequential mixed method design: First, studying teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction is a complex and versatile process that involves the perspectives of individual participants, so it needs to collect data using different sources. Second, employing a single method throughout the study limits the comprehensiveness of the data and the accuracy of the findings. Thus, the researcher decided to use an explanatory sequential mixed method through which information of both quantitative and qualitative nature was collected using different instruments for a more dependable result. As Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007) note, the design has a number of advantages: it can lead to richer data, it allows researchers to be more confident in their findings, and it stimulates creative ways of collecting data. Thus, an explanatory mixed-method design was chosen to generate a greater understanding of the issue under study.

Based on the above design, a quantitative survey helped to know the range of views related to perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their knowledge and practice of vocabulary instruction, find out teachers' sources of knowledge in vocabulary instruction, and identify contextual factors that influence the realization of teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction; whereas qualitative tools such as the semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall were used to understand the nature of these views and examine the relationship between teachers' knowledge and classroom practices in actual classroom situations. Actually, in this study, the qualitative data plays a primary role, with the quantitative phase acting largely as a way of adding to and enhancing the qualitative methods.

Besides, combining quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study develops a way of triangulating. Triangulation refers to the application and combination of several research

methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Denzin (1970) identified four basic types of triangulation, one of which is methodological triangulation involving more than one method to gather data, such as questionnaires, interviews, observations, and others. Triangulation is a powerful technique that improves the validity and reliability of research (L. Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

### **3.2. Setting**

This study was conducted in Addis Ababa city administration government secondary schools. The researcher became interested in working in government secondary schools because government secondary schools accommodate a large number of students when compared to their private counterparts (MoE, 2008), and the problem related to vocabulary knowledge and practice is mainly seen in government secondary schools. As interest in EFL instruction continues, it seems right to conduct research on the efficacy of the government's lead EFL program so that the majority of citizens can profit from its EFL teaching. Besides, the resources allocated to these numbers of students seem to be higher, which further justifies a focus on these schools. As well, secondary schools in the city administration of Addis Ababa include a large number of teachers who come from different parts of the country and, more importantly, have a variety of years of teaching experience, educational backgrounds, and various professional training. This diversity helped the researcher find experienced and educated teachers whose knowledge of teaching English vocabulary was important for the research undertaken.

Moreover, considering all grades in secondary schools (Grades 9–12) could also make the study more inclusive. That is, it could generate data that shows a more comprehensive picture of English language teaching and learning in general and vocabulary instruction undertaken in secondary schools in particular. In addition, this region was purposefully selected because the researcher lives there, so that follow-up plans and participation in the future intervention can be made possible. Likewise, selecting this region can also represent the other regions, as all regions follow similar English curricula, textbooks, and teacher training policies for all secondary school students in the country.

### 3.3. Participants of the Study

Participants in this study were EFL teachers who were teaching English at randomly selected secondary schools. At the time of data collection, about one hundred and thirty-nine English teachers were teaching in twelve randomly selected representative secondary schools. Of these teachers, one hundred and six took part in filling out the questionnaire for the study. As well, for a semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interview, eight purposefully selected teachers from these representative secondary schools were engaged.

Table 3.1. Details of participants of the study

Category	Details	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	85	80.2
	Female	21	19.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Education</b>	BA Degree	79	74.5
	MA Degree	27	25.5
	Any Other	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Experience</b>	1-5 years	17	16
	6-10 years	28	26.4
	11-15 years	39	36.8
	16-20 years	15	14.2
	21 and above	7	6.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3.2 showed that of the 106 teachers who participated in the study, except for 21 teachers, all participants were males. Besides, the majority (80.2%) of the respondents have a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching, whereas the rest (25.5%) have a Masters of Arts (M.A.) degree in EFL teaching. Furthermore, the table revealed that 36.8% of respondents (39 teachers) have 11–15 years of teaching experience, 28 teachers have

6–10 years of experience in teaching English, and 14.2% have 16–20 years of teaching experience. Less than six years of teaching experience in teaching English was registered by 17 teachers who participated in the study, and only seven (6.6%) participants had 21 or more years of teaching experience in teaching English. Generally, this study involved 106 secondary school English teachers for the survey, and 8 teachers were selected from those teachers for further exploration in a semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interview.

### **3.4. Sampling Technique**

This thesis was conducted to study EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. Simple random, purposive, and available sampling techniques were employed for the study undertaken. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select the government secondary schools where the study was conducted. The reason why the researcher needs to use this technique is that it would give each government secondary school in the city administration of Addis Ababa an equal chance of selection. As Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005) put it, in simple random sampling, every case in the population has an equal probability of inclusion in the sample. Besides, a purposive sampling technique was used to select participant teachers who engaged in qualitative data collection such as semi-structured interviews, classroom observation, and stimulated recall at representative secondary schools for the study. Participants in the purposive sampling were selected according to a few criteria, particularly the teachers' willingness to participate in a face-to-face, semi-structured interview, their availability for classroom observation or stimulated recall discussion sessions, and the manageability of the study. In purposive sampling, members of a sample are chosen with the purpose of representing a type in relation to a key criterion (Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam, 2003). Care was taken while making the purposive selection to avoid any bias in the nature of the choices made. Ritchie et al. (2003) highlight the necessity of the process of purposive sampling being clearly objective so that the sample stands up to independent scrutiny. The other sampling technique employed in the study was the available sampling technique. This technique was used to gather quantitative data through a questionnaire from all available EFL teachers who were teaching English at representative secondary schools.

### **3.5. Sample Size**

As the information obtained from the Addis Ababa city administration education bureau shows, there are fifty-seven government comprehensive secondary schools in the 2019/2020 academic years. From these schools, the study was conducted in twelve government comprehensive secondary schools with a total of one hundred and thirty-nine teachers (one hundred and twelve male and twenty-seven female teachers). The size of an adequate sample is determined by how similar or dissimilar the populations are. If the population is homogeneous, a small number can fairly represent it (20% of the total population) (Dörnyei, 2010). Even though the information obtained from these sampled schools may not give the overall picture of the city, they, together with other data, can be indicative of aspects to be considered vital in identifying teachers' knowledge in teaching English in general and their classroom practices of vocabulary instruction in particular.

### **3.6. Data Collection Instruments**

For answering the research questions, four instruments were employed in order to gather the necessary data for the study undertaken. These instruments are questionnaire, interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall. The aim and justification of each of them are presented below.

#### **3.6.1. Questionnaire**

Using a questionnaire has several advantages in research. It is possible to measure a large number of inquiries effectively within a short time and at a low cost. It is supposed to be the least threatening tool when applied under conditions of confidentiality, and therefore, more participants are engaged to participate in the research (Brown, 2001). In addition, the questionnaire aids in gaining a preliminary understanding of the phenomenon under study. This is supported by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), who first demonstrate that a questionnaire helps to obtain a general overview of the research. Secondly, if the strategy of data collection is sequential, findings from the questionnaire pave the way for the development of other qualitative data-gathering tools such as interviews, observations, stimulated recall interviews, and others. In this way, certain aspects of teachers' knowledge and practice of vocabulary teaching arising from

the findings of the questionnaire were further investigated, and certain issues generated by the first investigation were addressed through the participants' views and understandings. As Morse (2003) maintained, by employing more than one method within a research design, the researcher is able to obtain a thorough understanding of human behavior and experience.

On the other hand, a questionnaire is not a perfect tool for collecting data and has a number of disadvantages (Dörnyei, 2010). One is that respondents are not able to clarify and expand on the issues, which possibly results in inaccurate responses. Another is that most questionnaire items are pre-set and restrict respondents from giving further explanations or replying to the issues, which possibly lowers respondents' motivation. In spite of the limitations noted, a questionnaire has been a useful tool to explore language teachers' knowledge and possibly continues to be a valuable one to elicit teachers' knowledge. Borg (2015) stated that questionnaires had been extensively used in investigating teachers' and students' knowledge in a series of studies and would continue to be involved in the research of language teacher cognition. In the case of this study, a questionnaire was administered to investigate English teachers' knowledge and practice of vocabulary teaching in our context.

Studies conducted through questionnaires are familiar in many educational research contexts. In view of this, Meijer et al. (2001), for example, used a five-item Likert scale closed format questionnaire to explore EFL teachers' knowledge about teaching reading comprehension to high school students. This example suggests the possibility of using quantitative surveys when studying teachers' knowledge. Thus, this study also used a five-item Likert scale questionnaire to acquire respondents' degrees of view about teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. The Likert-type scale is a widely used method of scale construction due to its simplicity, versatility, and reliability (Dörnyei, 2010).

Participants were not required to judge the items but indicated to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the items in the questionnaire. In part two of the questionnaire, teachers were asked to tick the category that best reflects the degree of agreement or disagreement. A five-point Likert scale consists of: strongly agree = SA, agree = A; can't decide = CD, disagree = D, and strongly disagree = SD. The aim of using this type of Likert scale is to go beyond a simple yes-or-no format in order to give participants more opportunities to express their opinion.

The questionnaire for this study was prepared using sources such as a review of related literature, the advice of the researcher's supervisor, and the researcher's personal experience working as a secondary school English language teacher before he became a university lecturer. The principal aim of this questionnaire was to obtain an overview of the beliefs and attitudes that secondary school English teachers have about their vocabulary teaching. Consequently, excluding questions in Part II (which is about the teacher's practical activity and their sources of knowledge in choice forms) and Part III (the open-ended questions); the questionnaire contains 34 questions divided into three main areas of focus. These are teachers' perceptions (Questions 1–12), teachers' strategy use (Questions 13–26), and factors affecting vocabulary teaching (Questions 27–34).

The questionnaire generally has the following parts: The first section requests demographic information about the teachers' qualifications, years of experience, school, and stage of teaching for inferential statistics. The main constructs of the questionnaire hold the research questions of the study, including the perceptions EFL teachers have about their knowledge and practice of vocabulary instruction, teachers' strategy use of vocabulary instruction, and contextual factors that affect the teaching of English vocabulary. These items were followed by multiple-choice questions to understand the teachers' practical activities and their sources of knowledge. The last section of the questionnaire comprised open-ended questions for respondents' additional comments. As noted by Patton (2002), the rationale behind gathering responses to open-ended questions was to enable the researcher to understand and capture the points of view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories (p. 21). As an interpretive researcher, this enabled the researcher to gather a greater variety of responses from participants.

The questionnaire was distributed and data was gathered before the administration of qualitative tools such as interviews, observation, and stimulated recall interviews. The researcher believes administering and collecting questionnaire data before qualitative analysis might help the researcher obtain teachers' preliminary views regarding the research. Thus, it was administered to all available participants among the representative government secondary school English teachers. Though the study is mainly qualitative in nature, the data, which was collected using a questionnaire, was used as a springboard and starting point for other qualitative data collection tools such as interview, classroom observation and stimulated recall.

Content validity for this survey was established through several discussions with the supervisor as well as with four doctoral students who had previously experienced the development of a questionnaire in their field of English language teaching in EFL contexts. The content of the questionnaire underwent several changes in response to these experts' suggestions, in that the researcher made modifications to some of the items, including the structure, wording, and terms employed. Besides, during the pilot defense, the questionnaire was also sought by the examiners of the pilot study, and they offered valuable comments on the questionnaire in terms of content, language, and the structure of the items. The researcher subsequently revised the questionnaire before it was administered to the main study to ensure its fairness, clarity, and suitability in content and structure for the participants. Thus, the researcher thought that the final section represented a broad range of views and provided a valid instrument with which to explore participants' views.

To check its reliability, the questionnaire was piloted with 36 EFL secondary school teachers, similar to those participating in the actual questionnaire data collection. In order to measure internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. Ideally, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of a scale should be above 0.7 (DeVellis, 2012). In calculating the Cronbach alpha of the questionnaire items, the value of this questionnaire was fairly high, at 0.81.

### **3.6.2. Semi Structured Interview**

An interview is a widely used research instrument when exploring teachers' knowledge and practice, either in education in general or in TEFL in particular (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Meijer et al., 2001). Employing an interview in this study helped the researcher better explore the research problem from the teachers' perspectives. Thus, this study employed a face-to-face, semi-structured interview that was guided by a list of interview questions and was designed to put interviewees at ease and allow them to express themselves.

Interviews include three forms: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews (Borg, 2015). In a structured interview, interviewees are asked similar questions in a predetermined format. The emphasis tends to be on how interviewees respond to the questions that researchers are concerned with. Typically, the interviewer records the interviewees' answers, which are transcribed and coded according to the researchers' purposes.

A semi-structured interview is a kind of interview directed by some general themes rather than specific questions, in which interviewees can freely talk about their ideas toward the pre-set themes by researchers.

A benefit of a semi-structured interview is that interviewers are able to control the procedure flexibly, and interviewees are encouraged to talk about these themes without diverting. A semi-structured interview is suitable for a study where a small number of respondents are interviewed in depth and where a researcher aims to capture some elements of natural conversation. An unstructured interview, as opposed to a structured interview, refers to an interview in which questions are not prearranged, advocating a free flow in a natural conversation.

An interviewer can discover important information that did not seem relevant prior to the interview and ask the interviewee to delve deeper into the new topic during an unstructured interview. It allows the interviewer to build a better rapport with the interviewee due to its similarity to a normal conversation. Semi-structured interviews, as opposed to structured and unstructured interviews, can better serve research purposes by encouraging respondents to discuss the research topics (Borg, 2015). The tacit and unobservable aspects of participants' mental lives can be explored through semi-structured interviews (Kagan, 1992).

Based on the advantages of semi-structured interviews and the purpose of this study, a semi-structured interview was adopted in this study. For the manageability of the study, eight teachers were selected from volunteers who expressed their willingness to continue participating in this study. However, the majority of the teachers participated only in the quantitative aspects of the study. The time and place of interviews were chosen by the teachers at their convenience. These places were usually their offices or teachers' lounges, and interviews were scheduled on working days.

The semi-structured interview in this study served a number of purposes. First, it dug deep into the minds of the interviewees to explore EFL government secondary school teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. Second, it provided further insight into justifying the claims made by the respondents to the questionnaire. Third, it allowed the researcher to ask questions that were not in the guide, and the researcher could use prompts to encourage the

participants to elaborate on their original response. Such a distinctive feature helped the researcher gain a thorough understanding of teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction.

Snape & Spencer (2003) highlight that qualitative research tools, such as interviews, provide a holistic understanding of research participants' views and actions in the context of their lives overall. Most of the issues raised in the questionnaire and classroom observation were highlighted in the interviews as well. Thus, the interview served as a triangular technique through which constant comparisons were made while presenting the data yielded by the various methods. The teachers' accounts of views and practice were verbalized and elaborated by the interviewed teachers. Thus, the interview was a golden opportunity to explore in depth the issues raised by other methods.

In the interview, the researcher raised questions about the participants' knowledge and practices of vocabulary teaching, using probes that enabled participants to tell him more about their views on the questions. In light of the research questions and aims, the semi-structured interview questions of this study were formulated with the help of the relevant literature in the area and based on the findings from the questionnaire.

With the permission of the teachers, interviews were audio-recorded for further transcription and analysis. The researcher also made notes in each interview in case some of the teachers' remarks were missing from the audio recordings. For ethical reasons, teachers were informed about the purpose of the interview, that their identities would not be disclosed to a third party and that although their exact words would be used, the identity of the speaker would not be revealed. In doing so, participants in the study were encouraged to reveal their true thoughts and ideas without anxiety or nervousness.

### **3.6.3. Classroom Observation**

The main purpose of employing classroom observation in the study was to assess the teacher's practices, e.g., their actions, decisions made, vocabulary learning tasks given to students in class, etc. In addition, classroom observation is a good tool for investigating the teachers' level of proficiency and English teaching skills, as well as the kind of English environment to which

students are exposed in order to practice the language. Kuzborska (2011) attempted to use classroom observation as an instrument to explore what teachers practice in their classrooms. Moreover, in terms of the aim of assessing teachers' language skills, according to Nunan (1992), "there is no substitute for direct observation as a way of finding out about language in classrooms" (p. 76). One additional advantage of the classroom observation tool is that it enabled the researcher to assess the students' ways of learning English vocabulary in EFL classes.

In this study, observation assisted the researcher in further exploring teachers' knowledge and practice in actual classroom situations. As McNamara (2001) suggested, research on teachers' knowledge needs to be carried out in the classroom context in order to understand the lived experience of teachers. Thus, classroom observation was used in this study to collect data related to teachers' classroom practices and their underpinning knowledge in vocabulary instruction. Vasey (1996) further explained that classroom observation provides a benchmark when investigating the teacher's knowledge as it reflects what a teacher knows and how he or she realizes that knowledge in actual classroom practice; this type of observation was also used in previous studies on teachers' knowledge and classroom practices (Golombek, 1998; Gatbonton, 1999).

In order to obtain a comprehensive picture of each participant's knowledge and practice of vocabulary instruction, the researcher used observation as a tool to observe each participant's actual classroom teaching during the observation periods, each lasting forty-five minutes. For this study, observations took place in four representative government secondary schools with eight purposely selected teachers for a total of eight observations. Observation data was used to help triangulate emerging findings from questionnaire, interview, and stimulated recall data.

In this study, the researcher acted as a non-participant observer who sat at the back of the class taking observational notes for fear that his presence as a participant observer altered the event being observed and affected the natural flow of the classroom activity. Consequently, non-participant observation, in which "the researcher is not an "active" part of the setting in which the behaviors and/or interactions are being observed" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 106), is seen as a suitable data collection tool for this study. The choice of this observation strategy was based on the premise that it is used as a means of gaining more understanding about teachers' practices

of vocabulary teaching in a naturalistic setting and how teachers' knowledge of vocabulary teaching is represented in classroom practices. Thus, the researcher employed a non-participatory observer position in the research undertaken.

In order to avoid confusion among the students, the researcher clearly introduced the aim of his classroom observation on the first day. Then, he usually sat at the back of the class to observe the entire scenario of the class. Although the researcher was not allowed to interfere in non-participatory observation, he would ask some questions in a stimulated recall interview after the end of the class. The assistant researcher also attempted not to disturb the teaching process while videotaping and taking pictures.

During classroom observation, the researcher employed videotape, field notes, and a checklist to collect data. The researcher believed that videotaping would offer a clearer activity for participant teachers compared to audiotaping. The videotaping of the classroom event was done by the researcher's assistant, who took part in doing this research work.

Writing field notes was an essential part of the observation process in this study. It helped the researcher to record important events about the participants' actions in the classroom and the context in which the observation took place. Furthermore, the observation checklist assisted the researcher in identifying major activities that occurred while the teacher was teaching vocabulary. The videotaped materials, the observation checklist, and the researcher's notes of interpretation of the observed classroom events were used for analysis purposes. One of the aims of this study was to establish a relationship between what an EFL teacher knows and what he or she does in classroom practice, and part of the methodology of the study was to observe the teachers in the workplace.

The observation checklist employed in this study was a cluster of vocabulary teaching practice items adopted from a source, Sana K. (2015) observation checklist used for classroom observation purposes. Although the questionnaire, interview, and stimulated recall interview were important, the main data collection tool used in this study was classroom observation.

#### **3.6.4. Stimulated Recall Interview**

The stimulated recall interview is conducted widely in studies on teachers' knowledge and practices (e.g., Almarza, 1996; Meijer, Verloop & Beijaard, 2002). In Meijer et al.'s (2002) study, it is used as an instrument in which 'teachers explicate what they are thinking in response to a videotape of the lesson they have just given' (p.408). A videotape is a useful tool in that it helps the teachers to recall their interactive thinking at the time of teaching practice and to stimulate the teachers to "relive" their teaching practice (ibid, p.410).

As such, a stimulated recall interview is an effective tool in the study of teachers' knowledge research for it can be conducted to "make much of teachers' tacit thinking clear and elicit cognitions underlying their observable action" (ibid, p. 410). Besides, in a stimulated recall, participants were offered opportunities to re-visit actions that they performed while engaged in completing a task and were asked to discuss in retrospect what they were doing or thinking at that moment of the original event. Gass and Mackey (2000) described stimulated recall as a means of attempting to explore subjects' thought processes and strategies by providing them with some sort of support, such as a video or audiotape to talk about their thought processes at the time of actual activity.

The use of stimulated recall in this study was aimed at accessing each participant's thoughts about key vocabulary instruction issues in teaching practices. During the stimulated recall, the stimuli video recording and transcript of the observed lessons were used to give the teachers the opportunity to articulate their thoughts in relation to the immediate context of their own classroom teaching.

The stimulated recall was conducted immediately after each lesson observation was completed, and the researcher used a half-hour interval between classroom observations for the stimulated recall sessions. To reduce the practical constraints, the researcher replayed only selected portions of the video recording. The replayed portions were selected according to the significant classroom activities that the researcher noted down during observation in vocabulary instruction. Soon after the selection of significant portions was completed, stimulated recall sessions lasting approximately 15 to 20 minutes were conducted with each participant for every observation.

The teachers' articulation during the stimulated recall sessions after observation revealed the underpinning knowledge bases of their practices and the challenges they faced while teaching English vocabulary. In this study, the participant teachers responded to questions such as how they thought the lesson went, what vocabulary items they taught, why they taught the way they did, what they would do differently if they were to deal with the same vocabulary item, and other related questions. The stimulated recalls were fully recorded with a voice recorder, and they were transcribed for the purpose of analysis. Teachers' stimulated recall guide question for this study was adapted from a source by Nelms (2001) used for teachers' stimulated recall inquiry purposes. Stimulated recall was also used for the purpose of triangulation

### **3.7. Data Collection Procedures**

In the study, data was collected sequentially in two phases. The first phase of data collection was the administration of the questionnaire. The researcher primarily obtained a letter from Addis Ababa University to have access to randomly selected representative government secondary school English language teachers and to provide them with information about the purpose of the study.

On the other day, the researcher asked some of the teachers to cooperate with him in distributing the questionnaire to other teachers of English and collecting it back after it was filled in by each of the teachers. Then, a six-page questionnaire with three different parts was distributed to each of the one hundred and thirty-nine teachers in twelve representative secondary schools. Out of the one hundred and thirty-nine teachers, one hundred and six teachers from twelve representative secondary schools (85 males and 21 females) returned the filled-in questionnaire. Finally, the researcher collected copies of the questionnaires and made them ready for analysis purposes.

In terms of having access to qualitative data collection, the process of data collection in the first phase facilitated the process for the second phase of data collection. The distribution of the questionnaires in person provided the researcher with an opportunity to create a sense of contact with the participants. In the second phase of data collection, the researcher used his time to collect qualitative data such as a semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and

stimulated recall. Firstly, the researcher made arrangements with the participants regarding an agreed time for the interview, observation, and stimulated recall interview. The participants who agreed to be interviewed provided the researcher with their timetable, and he then arranged his own schedule for the session. The researcher followed the same procedure for arranging appointments for classroom observation and later stimulated recall interview by contacting the participants by mobile phone.

The first qualitative data collection begins with conducting an interview. All the interviews were recorded using a voice digital recorder, and the duration of the interviews ranged between fifteen and twenty-five minutes. All the interviews took place at the participants' workplaces before the classroom observation sessions. With regard to observation, the researcher observed eight sessions, and each session took a forty-five minute class hour. The classroom observations were made twice at four different grades (Grade 9–12) with eight different teachers, each lasting a 45-minute class hour. During the observation, the researcher took notes in all observed sessions in order to capture other important incidents that might not have been captured by videotaping. Besides, the researcher used the observation checklist as a guide to help him focus more on issues related to vocabulary teaching. Stimulated recall interviews were conducted shortly following each classroom observation. Because of personal problems, one of the eight participants didn't take part in the post-observation (stimulated recall) interview. Stimulated-recall interviews gave teachers opportunities to recall the hidden and implicit mental activities that accompanied their explicit behavior (Gass & Mackey, 2013). All the stimulated recall interviews were audio-recorded and analyzed in the study.

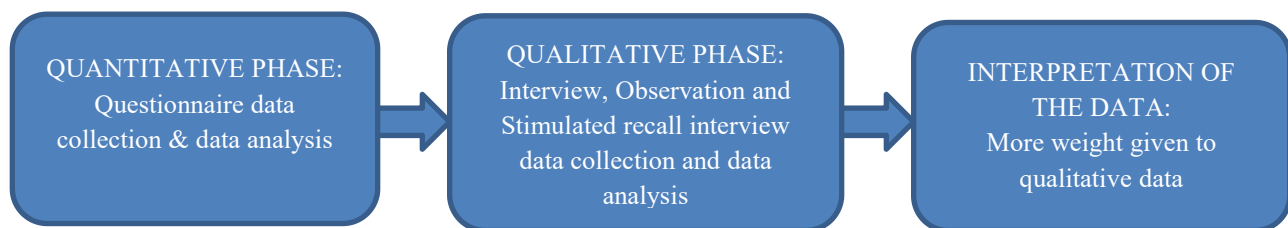


Figure 2 . Quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis sequence

### **3.8. Data Organization and Analysis Techniques**

The purpose of this study is to investigate government secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. The themes for the organization and analysis of the data were derived from the conceptual framework of the study, which was grounded in the basic research questions.

The data was thematically categorized and sequentially analyzed into a number of areas, such as perceptions EFL government secondary school teachers have about their knowledge, sources of vocabulary instruction knowledge, teachers' knowledge and their classroom practices, and contextual factors that impede vocabulary instruction.

In this study, descriptive statistical analysis was used to find out the frequency and percentage of views among the participants regarding the various issues raised in the questionnaire. Thus, the close-ended parts of the quantitative data, which were collected through a questionnaire, were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The responses fed into and were integrated with the qualitative analysis.

Similarly, analysis of qualitative data such as the interviews, observations, and stimulated recalls, as well as responses to the open-ended section of the questionnaire, was displayed in the form of texts, and it involved various phases of data processing, from organizing and pre-analyzing data to transcribing and coding, categorizing codes, and then schematizing the findings.

The analysis of the qualitative data was done manually, which was more convenient for the researcher's study habits. It proved helpful because, while doing the transcripts, the researcher gained familiarity with and a feel for that data and what it involved. It helped him engage well with the data. In addition, it gave him the chance to write memos while transcribing the data. Although there is no simple formula to ensure the analytic quality of the data, a careful and comprehensive analysis could help in achieving this goal (Gibbs, 2007). This was always sought by repeated reading of the data scripts and refining the analysis more than once based on the discussion with colleagues regarding the suitability of certain ideas under certain categories and the feedback from the researcher's supervisor about the quality of the analysis.

### **3.9. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues in educational research are viewed as one of the significant issues that researchers should take into account from the outset of the research because their studies entail contact with people as research participants (Creswell, 2009). Researchers need to respect participants by ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality and protecting them from any potential harm while they are involved in the study (Creswell, *ibid.*). Thus, this study carefully considered the ethical issues prior to and during data collection.

The researcher followed the guidelines on ethics proposed by Lichtman (2013) in the course of the research. Lichtman (2013:51) suggests that "ethical behavior represents a set of moral principles, rules, or standards governing a person or a profession, which become a driving force."

She (*ibid.*) also discusses the major principles as being: do no harm; privacy and anonymity; confidentiality; informed consent; and rapport and friendship, which the researcher used in more detail related to his research work. For this reason, the researcher took participants' "voluntary informed consent" to be the condition in which they understood and agreed to their participation with no pressure before data collection.

The researcher explained clearly to the participants the goal of the study, the necessity of their participation, the procedure of their involvement, and the use and security of their data. He told them to withdraw from the research at any time. Moreover, he assured participants of the privacy and confidentiality of their records. All their personal data was secured, and it will be made public under a shield of anonymity. Finally, throughout the study, the researcher tried to avoid dishonesty in data collection. Attempts were made to ensure participants' freedom of speech and frankness. For example, the purpose or aim of the study was revealed to participants prior to their participation. When collecting data, the participants were treated as "people" who have feelings, values, and needs rather than merely "subjects" (Elbaz, 1983; Tsui, 2003). Generally, all these guidelines were followed throughout this study.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter described and justified the research approach used in this study to investigate teachers' knowledge and practices about vocabulary teaching in EFL classes. A mixed-method approach was adopted. A triangulation of methods, including a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall, were utilized to gather data. Information and justification of these approaches, including the participants, data collection, data analysis, and ethical consideration, were also presented. In the next chapter, a description and analysis of the research on both the quantitative study and the in-depth study will be presented.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS**

This chapter provided a description and analysis of the data obtained sequentially in two phases. In the quantitative phase, a questionnaire was administered to one hundred and six teachers who were teaching English at twelve randomly selected secondary schools for the study. Within the qualitative part, semi-structured interview, classroom observation and stimulated recall interview were conducted. In addition, the findings obtained by open-ended questions in the questionnaire were also presented in this section.

#### **4.1. Data from the Questionnaire**

This section provides a description and analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire. A descriptive statistical analysis was applied to the data collected from the questionnaire. Raw data was tallied manually in order to obtain frequency and percentage. The analysis of the questionnaire items was briefly presented in four sections. This includes teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching, strategies used by teachers, and factors influencing vocabulary teaching. Following, there are sections that indicate how teachers practically teach English vocabulary and teachers' sources of knowledge development in multiple choice forms.

For the study, out of one hundred and thirty-nine English teachers at the representative secondary schools, one hundred and six returned the filled-in questionnaire. Eight other teachers were also selected among the one hundred and six based on their willingness to engage in further investigations through interview, classroom observation and stimulated recall interview.

##### **4.1.1. Analysis of the Close-ended Section**

###### **4.1.1.1. Teachers' perceptions of their knowledge in EFL vocabulary instruction**

This section analyzed how EFL teachers perceived vocabulary teaching in terms of a number of principles that they may take into account (see part two of the questionnaire). This section of the questionnaire contains 12 items designed to elicit teachers' perceptions about teaching English

vocabulary. Table 4.1 below shows the frequency and percentages of the responses with reference to each item.

Table 4.1. Frequency and percentages of responses on teachers' perceptions of their knowledge in EFL vocabulary instruction.

No	TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS	SA		A		CD		D		SD		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning new vocabularies.	27	25.5	31	29.2	11	10.4	23	21.7	14	13.2	106	100
2	Teaching vocabulary learning strategies to students should be the primary role of an EFL teacher.	19	17.9	37	34.9	15	14.2	24	22.6	11	10.4	106	100
3	Teachers should use students L1 when they teach new words.	18	17	36	34	9	8.5	24	22.6	19	17.9	106	100
4	Vocabulary is best learned naturally through meaningful communication.	26	24.5	41	38.7	5	4.7	22	20.8	12	11.3	106	100
5	Vocabulary teaching has to be given prime consideration in EFL classes.	22	20.8	41	38.7	11	10.4	19	17.9	13	12.3	106	100
6	Teaching vocabulary is the difficult part of an EFL teaching.	30	28.3	29	27.4	16	15.1	22	20.8	9	8.5	106	100
7	Teaching vocabulary is more important than teaching grammar.	22	20.8	33	30.6	10	9.4	23	21.7	18	17	106	100
8	Teachers should correct students' word problems in written form rather than in oral way.	17	16	39	36.8	16	15.1	22	20.8	12	11.3	106	100
9	Students have to find out vocabulary learning strategies that work best for them on their own.	10	9.4	29	27.4	14	13.2	34	32	19	17.9	106	100
10	Teachers shouldn't let students say anything in English until students know the words correctly.	7	6.6	16	15	9	8.5	31	29.2	43	40.6	106	100
11	Teachers should use students' textbook as the primary source of activities for vocabulary teaching.	24	22.6	31	29.2	12	11.3	24	22.6	15	14.2	100	106
12	Language courses teachers have taken at college level were sufficient to teach vocabulary well.	21	19.8	33	31.1	6	5.7	32	30.2	14	13.2	106	100

**KEY: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, CD = Can't Decide, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree**

Based on their perceptions, teachers involved in the survey reported a variety of responses they considered helpful to their vocabulary teaching.

In order to gain an understanding of teachers' perceptions, the first item in the questionnaire states that "learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning new vocabulary." According to table 4.1, 54.7% of respondents strongly agreed (25.5%) and agreed (29.2%) with the item. However, 34.9% of the respondents disagreed (23 teachers) and strongly disagreed (14 teachers) with the item. More than half of the respondents (58 teachers) thought that to learn a foreign language, teachers had to acquire adequate knowledge of vocabulary. This supports the idea that 'learning a foreign language is the same as learning the vocabulary of that language'.

In response to the second item, more than half of the respondents (52.8%) confirmed that teaching vocabulary learning strategies to students should be the primary role of an EFL teacher. This entails that the teacher's role in an EFL class is to provide students with a variety of strategies and let the students choose these strategies on their own, making them independent learners. However, 33% of the respondents opted to disagree (22.6%) and strongly disagree (10.4%) with the statement, respectively, thinking teaching vocabulary learning strategies to students should not be the primary role of an EFL teacher. The remaining respondents (14.2%) were undecided on the item.

Item number 3 was designed to illicit perceptions teachers have about students' L1. The statement says, "Teachers should use students' L1 when they teach new words." As Table 4.1 above shows, 51% of the respondents chose to strongly agree (17 teachers) and agree (36 teachers) with the statement, respectively. This confirms that more than half of the participating teachers have a strong belief in the use of students' first language when they find it hard to teach key concepts and notions in English. In short, these teachers held the view that L1 could be used as a "scaffolding tool" in teaching English words. In contrast, 40.5% of respondents disagreed (24 teachers) and strongly disagreed (19 teachers) with the item, believing that students' L1 should not be used in teaching vocabulary because students may develop the habit of repeatedly waiting for translation in class, which is not a good experience for learning a foreign language

and is not required in vocabulary instruction. The rest, or 8.5% of the respondents, could not decide about the teachers' use of students' L1 when they teach new words in English.

As far as the statement "Vocabulary is best learned naturally through meaningful communication" is concerned, as per the data in Table 4.1, 32.1% of respondents disagree (20.8%) and strongly disagree (11.3%). However, 63.2% of respondents chose to strongly agree (24.5%) and agree (38.7%) with the statement. This indicates that teachers have a positive attitude toward developing vocabulary knowledge through meaningful communication. Thus, respondents believed vocabulary exercises should expose students to interactive activities rather than learning only the forms of new words.

Regarding 'Vocabulary teaching has to be given prime consideration in EFL classes', 59.5% of the respondents strongly agreed (20.8%) and agreed (38.7%) with the item. The data in the table shows that participant teachers have positive attitudes towards giving prime consideration to vocabulary teaching. However, 30.2% of the respondents held negative feelings toward the statement, and the remaining respondents (11 teachers) chose to remain undecided about the item.

In reply to the statement "Teaching vocabulary is the difficult part of an EFL teaching", 55.7 % of the participating teachers replied, "strongly agree (28.3%) and agree (27.4%) to the statement, respectively. The responses teachers gave to the item may possibly reflect that the open-ended nature of a vocabulary system is perceived to be a cause of difficulty by participant teachers. Besides, 20.8% and 8.5% of respondents chose to disagree and strongly disagree with the statement, respectively. The remaining 15.1% of respondents were unsure whether to choose or reject the item.

When teachers were asked to respond to the statement "Teaching vocabulary is more important than teaching grammar," 51.4% of the respondents strongly agreed (20.8%) and agreed (30.6%) to the statement respectively. The responses of these teachers actually revealed that teaching vocabulary is more important than teaching grammar. Compared to grammar, vocabulary plays an important role in expressing ideas and thoughts. However, 38.7% of respondents chose to disagree (21.7%) or strongly disagree (17%) with the claim that teaching vocabulary is more important than teaching grammar. The remaining ten (9.4%) respondents were unable to

determine which language element was important. The fact that these teachers preferred not to decide might show that some teachers found it hard to rank vocabulary and grammar according to their importance.

The other item found in the teachers' questionnaire states that "Teachers should correct students' word problems in written form rather than in oral form." The responses to this item show that 34 (32.1%) participants (both disagree and strongly disagree) decided that 'Teachers should correct students' word problems orally'. On the contrary, more than half of the teachers (56 teachers) support the idea that "teachers should correct students' word problems in written form". This demonstrates that teachers strongly believe in the written form of word error correction, believing that students learn more if they receive written feedback from their English teachers. The remaining 16 (15.1%) respondents replied "undecided" to the item.

One item in the questionnaire states that "Students have to find vocabulary learning strategies that work best for them on their own." As shown in the figure in Table 4.1, half of the participants (53 teachers) preferred to choose the options to disagree (32%) and strongly disagree (17.9%) with the statement, respectively. The teachers held the view that students are not that much responsible for finding their own vocabulary learning strategies since they lack the capacity and motivation to do that and need support from their teachers. On the other hand, 36.8% of the teachers (39 of them) agreed with the view that students are responsible for their own learning and should find strategies that work best for them on their own. The remaining 13.2% of the participants chose to not decide on the statement.

Regarding the statement, "Teachers shouldn't let students say anything in English until they know the words correctly," The majority of the participants (76 teachers) contradicted the view, thinking it discourages students from participating in learning the language and developing their own vocabulary knowledge. However, 21.6% of the respondents support the view, and the remaining 8.5% of the participants chose to not decide.

To the statement, "Teachers should use students' textbooks as the primary source of activities for vocabulary teaching." 51.8% of respondents chose strongly agree (22.6%) and agree (29.2%) with the item, respectively. Thinking about students' textbooks is important for learning the

language and developing their vocabulary knowledge. This implies that the material (the textbook) is prepared by experts in the area, considering the learners' grade level and capacity for learning. Yet, 36.8 % of the respondents chose to disagree (22.6 %) and strongly disagree (14.2 %) with the statement, respectively, and believed that vocabulary should be taught using different teaching materials instead of limiting students only to their textbooks. The rest, 11.3% of the respondents, opted to not decide on the item.

The last item in Part II, section one of the teachers' questionnaire, states that "language courses teachers have taken at the college level were sufficient to teach vocabulary well." As indicated in table 4.1 above, about 51% of the respondents agreed with the view that 'language courses teachers have taken at the college level have importance to vocabulary teaching'. However, 43.4% of the respondents disagreed, thinking the courses have limitations in teaching vocabulary since they are mainly centered on general pedagogy and linguistic elements. Yet, a few percent (5.7%) of the respondents couldn't decide on the statement.

#### **4.1.1.2. Teachers' perceptions of their practice in EFL vocabulary instruction**

The items presented below are taken from the close-ended section of the questionnaire in Part II. This part of the questionnaire consists of 14 items designed to elicit perceptions about the strategies teachers use while teaching English vocabulary. Table 4.2 below shows the frequency and percentages of the responses with reference to each item.

Table 4.2 Frequency and percentages of responses on teachers' perceptions of their use of vocabulary instruction strategies

NO	TEACHERS' STRATEGIES USE	SA		A		CD		D		SD		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
13	Using EFL vocabulary teaching strategies such as examples is better for students' learning than translating the meaning.	14	13.2	44	41.5	9	8.5	24	22.6	15	14.2	106	100
14	Teachers should make an effort to introduce vocabulary in a way that helps students to memorize new words.	9	8.5	20	18.9	16	15.1	33	31.2	28	26.4	106	100
15	Teachers should focus on function based and meaning based vocabulary teaching techniques than memory based.	27	25.5	33	31.3	10	9.4	22	20.8	14	13.2	106	100
16	Teachers should use an explicit instruction technique when they teach English vocabulary.	30	28.3	39	36.8	4	3.4	20	18.9	13	12.3	106	100
17	Teachers should practice task-based vocabulary teaching strategies to enhance their students' vocabulary knowledge through different tasks.	26	24.5	37	34.9	9	8.5	24	22.6	10	9.4	106	100
18	Teachers should provide contextual clues to familiarize students with unfamiliar words.	31	29.2	40	37.7	6	5.7	21	19.8	8	7.5	106	100
19	Teachers should teach vocabulary in context than providing a translation.	21	19.8	35	33	12	11.3	23	21.7	15	14.2	106	100
20	Teachers should tell students to work in pairs/groups to complete vocabulary activities.	24	22.6	39	36.8	7	6.6	30	28.3	6	5.7	106	100
21	Teachers should tell students to learn words by consulting a dictionary.	8	7.5	19	17.9	14	13.2	41	38.7	24	22.6	106	100
22	Teachers should teach association, for example, by identifying synonyms and antonyms or by letting students to infer.	29	27.4	45	42.5	6	5.7	18	17	8	7.5	106	100
23	Teachers should use communicative activities (information-gap, games, role-plays, etc.) for helping students learn vocabulary better.	19	17.9	35	33	11	10.4	28	26.4	13	12.3	106	100
24	Teachers should teach vocabulary with collocations or lexical chunks.	12	11.3	50	47.2	14	13.2	19	17.9	11	10.4	106	100
25	Teachers should give reading, writing speaking and listening activities using new words.	35	33	44	41.5	2	1.9	18	17	7	6.6	106	100
26	Teachers should use follow-up activities to review new vocabulary items.	29	27.4	37	34.9	8	7.5	23	21.7	9	8.5	106	100

Based on their perceptions, teachers involved in the survey reported a variety of strategies they considered useful to their vocabulary teaching.

In response to the first item, 'using examples instead of translating the meaning of new words to students,' 54.7% of respondents responded strongly agree (13.2%) and agree (41.5%) to the statement, respectively. This confirms that more than half of the respondents agreed on the use of examples instead of translating the meaning of the new words in EFL class. However, 36.8% of the respondents chose to disagree (22.6%) and strongly disagree (14.2%) with the item, respectively. This entails translating the meaning of the new words into the students' mother tongue, which could be one of the strategies used by these respondents. Yet, 8.5% of the respondents didn't decide to use examples or translation as a vocabulary teaching strategy in their EFL classes.

As the figure in Table 4.2 illustrates, 27.4 % of the participants preferred to choose strongly agree (8.5 %) and agree (18.9 %) with the statement "Teachers should make an effort to introduce vocabulary in a way that helps students memorize new words". Whereas, 57.6 % of the respondents disagree (31.2 %) and strongly disagree (26.4 %) with the statement that students should memorize new words. This implies there is no need to take time to memorize words because students can acquire vocabulary using different ways of learning vocabulary. The remaining 11.1% of respondents chose the statement as undecided.

In the same table, item 15 states, "Teachers should focus on function-based and meaning-based vocabulary teaching techniques rather than memory-based." Accordingly, a majority of the respondents (60 teachers) were determined to choose to strongly agree (25.5%) and agree (31.3%) with the statement, respectively. This indicates that respondents have a belief in making a negotiation between meaning and the word through objects and applying them in sentences or texts. Furthermore, these respondents believed that memorization was a temporary but not long-lasting technique for learning English vocabulary. However, some respondents chose to disagree (20.8%) and strongly disagree (13.2%) with the statement, respectively, thinking that memorizing the words (without much attention to meaning) is an effective approach to vocabulary learning. Yet, 10 respondents didn't decide to accept the statement.

As seen in Table 4.2, a large number of respondents (69 teachers) perceived that vocabulary should be taught explicitly in EFL class situations. This implies that the explicit method of vocabulary learning in an EFL class provides the greatest opportunity for vocabulary acquisition due to the direct attention it receives compared to other techniques (e.g., the implicit method). Nonetheless, 31.2% of respondents chose to disagree (18.9%) or strongly disagree (12.3%) with the item, despite the fact that teachers should use other techniques when teaching English vocabulary. However, only four respondents preferred to choose "undecided," arguing against the use of explicit instruction techniques in EFL classes.

According to the data from the respondents' views about task-based vocabulary teaching, 59.4% of the respondents chose to strongly agree (24.5%) and agree (34.9%) with the statement, respectively. This shows that through tasks, teachers can have a number of options for teaching vocabulary and allow learners to work cooperatively and develop new words using different tasks. However, a small number of the respondents opted to disagree (22.6%) and strongly disagree (9.4%) with the statement. Only nine respondents' preferred to choose undecided on the statement.

Concerning "providing contextual clues to familiarize students with unfamiliar words", the majority of the respondents (66.9 %) preferred to choose strongly agree and agree to the item, respectively. This implies that one way of nurturing vocabulary development and retention is by teaching words in context, where students can use context clues to apply word meaning to unknown words. Conversely, a small number of the respondents chose to disagree (19.8 %) and strongly disagree (7.5 %) with the statement, respectively, and thought of other strategies to familiarize students with unknown words.

Item number 19 states, "Teachers should teach vocabulary in context rather than provide a translation." As seen in Table 4.2, 58.8% of the respondents chose to strongly agree (19.8 %) and agree (33 %) with the statement. This indicates that the majority of the respondents believe contextual teaching is more effective than providing translation for the reason that students learn from context by making connections between the new word and the context in which it appears. However, 23 respondents decided to disagree and strongly disagree with the item, thinking that

providing translation is more important than teaching vocabulary in context. Yet 11.30% of the respondents chose not to decide about the statement.

In the same table, item 20 states, "Teachers should tell students to work in pairs or groups to complete vocabulary activities." Table 4.2 shows that 59.4% of teachers chose to strongly agree or agree with the item, recognizing group learning as the key to dealing with students of varying abilities and intelligence levels. At the same time, 34 % of the respondents replied disagree and strongly disagree with the statement, respectively, showing their reaction toward individual work for completing vocabulary activities, and the remaining participants (seven teachers) chose "undecided" to the statement.

In reply to item 21, a large number (61.3 %) of the respondents decided to choose to disagree and strongly disagree with the statement, "Teachers should tell students to learn new words by consulting a dictionary." This implies students might not be able to find the right meaning quickly in class, as a word usually has several meaning entries in a dictionary. Besides, they thought checking dictionaries might prevent students from keeping up with class instruction. On the other hand, 25.5 % of the respondents who chose strongly agree and agree thought students should be encouraged to use a dictionary, especially after class if their word guessing was far from accurate. The rest, 13.2 percent, of the responding teachers chose not to decide on the statement.

As far as item 22 of table 4.2 is concerned, a large number of the respondents (74 teachers) replied strongly agree (27.4 %) and agree (42.5%), respectively, to the statement "Teachers should teach vocabulary through association, by identifying synonyms and antonyms, or by letting students infer". It is clear from the respondents' choice that if one topic consists of a number of words, it is easy to teach these words through association or inference, as it provides learners with words in a meaningful context rather than in isolation. However, 24.5 % of the respondents decided to choose to disagree and strongly disagree with other strategies for teaching vocabulary, and 6.5 % of the respondents opted to be undecided.

In reply to the item, "Teachers should use communicative activities (information gaps, games, role-plays, etc.) to help students learn vocabulary better." More than half the respondents

(50.9 %) confirmed that using communicative activities such as information gaps, games, role-play, etc. while teaching vocabulary is important for students' vocabulary development. This entails letting the students participate enthusiastically on their own and making them independent learners in vocabulary learning classes. However, 40.3 % of the respondents opted to disagree (26.4 %) and strongly disagree (12.3 %) with the statement, respectively, preferring other vocabulary learning activities in EFL classes. The remaining respondents (10.4 %) chose not to decide on the item.

Regarding the statement 'Teachers should teach vocabulary with collocations or lexical chunks', 58.5 % of the respondents chose to strongly agree (11.3 %) and agree (47.2 %) with the statement, confirming that the meaning of a word mostly depends on the other words with which it keeps company. However, a very small number of the respondents chose to disagree (17.9%) and strongly disagree (10.4 %) with the item, respectively. The rest, 13.2 %, chose not to decide on the statement.

Concerning the statement, "Teachers should give reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities using new words," 74.5 % of the respondents decided to choose strongly agree (33 %) and agree (41.5%), respectively. This implies that almost all teachers accept the integration of the four language skills while teaching the new words. However, a small percentage (23.6 %) of the respondents preferred to disagree and strongly disagree.

In reply to the last item of the close-ended section in Part II, 62.3 % of the respondents claimed to strongly agree (27.4%) and agree (34.9 %) to the statement "Teachers should use follow-up activities to review new vocabulary items". This reveals that most respondents have a strong belief in the use of follow-up activities to review new vocabulary items. Thus, it is worth examining employing an effective method of vocabulary teaching and focusing on follow-up activities to improve learners' vocabulary acquisition. Conversely, some participants chose to disagree (21.7 %) and strongly disagree (8.5%) with the statement. Yet, 8 participants replied that they were undecided about the item.

#### 4.1.1.3. Factors affecting vocabulary teaching

This section analyzes factors affecting vocabulary teaching. The questionnaire in this part consists of 8 items designed to identify these factors. Table 4.4 below shows the frequency and percentages of the responses with reference to each item.

Table 4.3. Frequency and percentages of responses on factors affecting vocabulary teaching

No	FACTORS AFFECTING VOCABULARY TEACHING	SA		A		CD		D		SD		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
27	Vocabulary instruction time is too limited to teach vocabulary well.	15	14.2	41	38.7	7	6.6	32	30.2	11	10.4	106	100
28	The class size is too big to manage teachers' vocabulary teaching practices.	22	20.8	39	36.8	11	10.4	25	23.6	9	8.5	106	100
29	Students' English proficiency level is too low to apply teachers intended vocabulary instruction techniques.	19	17.9	45	42.5	7	6.6	25	23.6	10	9.4	106	100
30	Students' lack of interest (motivation) to learn about new words affects their vocabulary knowledge.	12	11.3	49	46.2	8	7.5	30	28.3	7	6.6	106	100
31	The exams are focused more on assessing grammar, reading and writing skills than vocabulary.	25	23.6	38	35.8	6	5.7	30	28.3	7	6.6	106	100
32	Teachers shouldn't get training related to vocabulary teaching through which they develop practical guidelines.	25	23.6	30	28.3	11	10.4	27	25.5	13	12.3	106	100
33	Teachers should not use emerging technologies (such as computers, mobiles and others) to teach vocabulary.	13	12.3	43	40.6	15	14.2	23	21.7	12	11.3	106	100
34	The existing English language materials and resources do not encourage teachers to apply their vocabulary teaching purpose.	9	8.5	22	20.8	13	12.3	42	39.6	20	18.9	106	100

The first item about factors affecting teachers' vocabulary teaching states that "Vocabulary instruction time is too limited to teach vocabulary well." As the responses by the participants indicate, more than half of the respondents (52.8 %) chose to strongly agree (14.2 %) and agree (33.8%) with the statement that the time given for vocabulary teaching is inadequate to practice different vocabulary activities compared to the time given for teaching other language skills.

However, a significant number of the respondents (43 teachers) argue against the statement, thinking the time given for vocabulary teaching is relatively sufficient, and decided to choose to disagree (30.2%) and strongly disagree (10.4%) with the item, respectively. The rest, 6.6 % of the respondents, were determined to be undecided on the statement.

More than half of the respondents (57.6%) strongly agree and agree with the statement, "The class size is too large to manage teachers' vocabulary teaching practice." This implies class size is one of the factors that critically affect teachers' vocabulary teaching, and teachers with large classes have problems in teaching vocabulary compared to teachers dealing with small classes. On the other hand, 32.1% of the respondents chose to disagree (23.6%) and strongly disagree (8.5%), contradicting the statement about class size. However, 10.4% of respondents preferred to choose undecided on the statement.

As far as the statement that students' English proficiency level is too low to apply teachers' intended vocabulary instruction techniques is concerned, 60.4 % of the respondents affirmed that they strongly agree (17.9 %) and agree (42.5%) with the statement, respectively. This indicates students' low level of language ability affected teachers' implementation of vocabulary instruction techniques. Here, teachers may lack interest in presenting what they prepared for the day's lesson due to their students' low level of ability. However, 33 % of the respondents (35 teachers) chose to disagree and strongly disagree with the statement. The remaining 6.6 % of the respondents opted not to decide on the item.

Concerning the item "lack of interest (motivation) affects students' vocabulary knowledge". The responses by the participants indicated that 56.5% of the respondents chose to strongly agree and agree with the statement, respectively. This shows the limitation of the vocabulary items on the exam, discouraging students from practicing them and focusing on other language skills that better serve them to pass an exam. However, more than one-fourth of the respondents (37 teachers) preferred to choose to disagree (28.3%) and strongly disagree (6.6%) with the statement. Yet, the remaining 8 respondents chose to not decide on the item.

The other item about factors affecting vocabulary teaching states: "The exams are focused more on assessing grammar, reading, and writing skills than vocabulary." Concerning this statement,

59.4 % of the respondents prefer to choose strongly agree (23.6 %) and agree (35.8 %) with the item, respectively. The secondary school leaving exam is mainly focused on assessing grammar and reading skills rather than vocabulary for students' university entrances. However, 34.9 % of the respondents chose to disagree and strongly disagree with the item, respectively, and the remaining 5.7 % of the respondents chose to not decide on the statement.

Item 32 in Table 4.3 states: "Teachers shouldn't get training related to vocabulary teaching through which they develop practical guidelines." More than half of the respondents (55 teachers) preferred to choose strongly agree (23.6 %) and agree (22.2%), respectively, to the statement about the absence of training given to them concerning vocabulary teaching. In contrast, 37.8% of respondents chose to disagree and strongly disagree with the statement, while 10.4% chose to remain undecided.

Regarding the statement, 'Teachers should not use emerging technologies (such as computers, mobiles, and others) to teach English vocabulary.' More than half of the respondents admitted and decided to choose strongly agree (12.3%) and agree (40.6%) with the statement, respectively, thinking lack of resources and finances make teachers in most government secondary schools not use these gadgets in teaching English in general and vocabulary instruction in particular. Conversely, some of the respondents (33 %) claimed to disagree and strongly disagree with the use of emerging technologies for vocabulary teaching. Only 14.2 percent of the respondents chose to remain undecided concerning the use of emerging technologies for vocabulary teaching.

The last item about factors affecting vocabulary teaching states, 'The existing English language materials and resources do not encourage teachers to apply their vocabulary teaching purpose.' 58.5 % of the respondents decided to choose to disagree (39.6 %) and strongly disagree (18.9 %) with the statement. This shows that the majority of the respondents didn't doubt the appropriateness of the existing materials for teaching English vocabulary. However, 29.3% of respondents chose to strongly agree (8.5%) and agree (20.8%) with the statement, believing that the existing materials have drawbacks in terms of vocabulary teaching. The remaining 12.3% of respondents chose not to make a decision on the statement.

#### 4.1.2. Teachers' Practice about Vocabulary Teaching

In the previous sections, teachers' perceptions, teachers' strategies use, and factors affecting vocabulary teaching have been explored. In this section (see Appendix A, Part II, Section B1 of the Questionnaire), teachers' actual classroom practice of vocabulary teaching is discussed. In order to address this question, teachers were asked to indicate which vocabulary teaching practices they used. They also required reporting on other vocabulary teaching practices. The result of the vocabulary teaching practice they described is shown in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Teachers' practices for vocabulary teaching in the classrooms (a participant may respond to more than one item).

No	Items of Teachers' Practices about Vocabulary Teaching	Responses	Percentage
1	I use implicit instruction techniques on a case-by-case or ad hoc (informal) basis.	32	30.2
2	I advise learners to learn vocabulary outside of a class or use dictionaries.	35	33
3	I use explicit instruction techniques, such as explaining word form, word meaning or word use when teaching vocabulary.	78	73.6
4	I use association, for example, by identifying productive prefixes-and postfixes, synonyms or antonyms or by letting students to infer.	54	50.9
5	Using different vocabulary teaching strategies such as memorization, collocations, translation etc. I teach some new words first and then give some activities for practice.	72	67.9
6	I encourage students to discover strategies of new word learning for themselves.	45	42.5
7	I provide students with a lot of opportunities to use new words in context.	66	62.3
8	Since some words are difficult for students, I use students' L1 to explain the meaning.	27	25.5
9	Other (specify)	9	8.5

As the figures in Table 4.4 note, most teachers highlighted the importance of explicit instruction techniques, such as explaining word form, word meaning, or word use, when they were teaching

vocabulary in an EFL class. For instance, 73.6 % of participants reported that they provided students with explicit instruction techniques in their vocabulary teaching, whereas only 30.2 % of participants reported that they used implicit instruction techniques in their vocabulary teaching. Similarly, 67.9 % of the teachers stated that they use different vocabulary teaching strategies, such as memorization, collocations, translation, etc., to teach new words and give activities for practice. Besides, 62.3% of the participants stated that they provide students with a lot of opportunities to use new words in context. Likewise, 50.9 % of the participants use association, for example, by identifying productive prefixes and postfixes, synonyms or antonyms, or by letting students infer. Again, more than 42.5 % of the participants reported that they encouraged students to discover strategies for new word learning for themselves. An analysis of the data also indicated that a small number of the participants (33%) advised learners to learn vocabulary outside of a class or use dictionaries. Comparatively, very small percentages of the participants (25.5%) and (8.5%) reported that they use students' L1 to explain the meaning of the new words and use other methods of vocabulary teaching, respectively.

In general, explicit instruction techniques, using different vocabulary teaching strategies and the use of new words in context are some of the techniques frequently practiced by most teachers in EFL classes. Likewise, the approaches indicated here were comparable with the listed items on the questionnaire about teachers' strategies use. However, this section discussed teachers' self-reported actual practices for vocabulary teaching based on their classroom teaching perspectives in EFL classes.

#### **4.1.3. Teachers' Sources of Knowledge Development**

In the previous section, teachers' self-reported actual practices in vocabulary teaching have been explored. In this section (see Appendix A, Part II, Section B2 of the Questionnaire), teachers' sources of knowledge about vocabulary teaching are discussed. In order to address the responses to the item about teachers' sources of knowledge for vocabulary teaching, the responses were first counted; the percentages were calculated in the following table; and then they were analyzed and reported beneath the table.

Table 4.5 outlines the sources of knowledge about vocabulary teaching indicated by participating teachers (a participant may respond to more than one item).

No	Source Items	Response	Percentage
1	Teaching experience (the knowledge teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers).	87	82.1
2	Teachers' disciplinary background (the knowledge teachers possess at college or university in their teacher education program).	78	73.6
3	Apprenticeship of observation (prior experience of teachers as learners).	66	62.3
4	Peer learning	18	17
5	Instructors' advice.	15	14.2
6	Teachers training or seminar held by the ministry of education or zonal education bureau.	9	8.5
7	Students' feedback	51	48.1
8	Doing research or reading research articles in the area.	57	53.8
9	Other (specify)	6	5.7

As the data in Table 4.5 shows, the sources noted most frequently were: teaching experience (the knowledge teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers, 82.1%); teachers' disciplinary background (the knowledge teachers possess at college or university in their teacher education program, 73.6%); and apprenticeship of observation (the prior experience of teachers as learners, 62.3%).

Participants also reported that their knowledge is developed from the research they are doing or reading research articles in the area (53.8%) and students' feedback (48.1%). Some respondents as well stated that their knowledge about vocabulary teaching originated from peer learning, instructors' advice, and seminars held by the ministry of education or zonal education bureau, which covered 17 %, 14.2 %, and 8.5 %, respectively. Additionally, a very small percentage

(5.7 %) of the participants indicated that their knowledge about vocabulary instruction is derived from other sources, including their use of emerging technologies such as mobiles, computers, and others.

In sum, teachers' teaching experience, their disciplinary background, and teachers' apprenticeship of observation contributed a lot to teachers' knowledge about vocabulary teaching. Besides, sources such as the research they are doing in the area and students' feedback also play an important role in shaping teachers' knowledge of vocabulary instruction.

### **Summary of the quantitative part**

The findings of the questionnaire provided a preliminary understanding of teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. Firstly, teachers' perceptions, teachers' strategies use and factors affecting vocabulary teaching were presented using descriptive statistics. Then, teachers' self-reported practices about vocabulary teaching were examined by their responses to a multiple-choice questionnaire item. Finally, the sources of teachers' knowledge about vocabulary teaching were also revealed through a multiple-choice questionnaire item.

Generally, the findings showed the respondents tended to reply to most items and reported that their knowledge and practices were seen in most items of the questionnaire, and this would provide an important contribution to the design of the qualitative tools to draw a number of exploratory questions concerning teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction. The next section reported research findings from an in-depth study investigating teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction qualitatively.

## **4.2. Data from an In-Depth Study**

In this part, research findings from an in-depth study in which teachers' knowledge and practices of vocabulary instruction were examined are reported. The findings are presented in four sections, according to the research questions. Section one displays the findings with regard to the perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching, while section two presents the teachers' sources of knowledge development in vocabulary instruction. Section three presents the findings with regard to teachers' knowledge and practice relationships. At the

same time, section four deals with the findings regarding contextual factors that, in the view of the participants, affect teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction.

The researcher used abbreviations for presenting extracts from the transcripts: **SSI** for semi-structured interviews, **SRI** for stimulated recall interviews, and **Q** for questionnaire response (the open-ended questions). While presenting the interview data, the researcher refers to classroom observation, stimulated recall interview responses, and quantitative data in order to make interpretations of the participants' conceptualizations of teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction.

#### **4.2.1. Teachers' Perceptions of Their Knowledge in Vocabulary Instruction**

The findings of the questionnaire provided insights into teachers' perceptions of their knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction. To gain a deeper understanding of teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction, the qualitative data, which were analyzed under this theme with various questions, were explored in detail through a semi-structured interview, classroom observation, a stimulated recall interview, and open-ended parts of the questionnaire. In response to the question, "Why did you become an EFL teacher?" The participants mainly mentioned that they became EFL teachers for different reasons. T1, who is appointed as an English teacher without his own preference, mentioned that *in the context of our country, nobody has got the right profession in every discipline by their own preference. Things can't be what they were supposed to be, and that is why I became an English teacher and started teaching English* (SSI). Similarly, T2, who is teaching English at a government secondary school, pointed out; *Actually, I got much ridiculed regarding teaching English. When I was a high school student, honestly speaking, I didn't expect to join this department but rather to join other departments and to study other fields at the university* (SSI). Likewise, the other teacher said that *I did not have the kind of intention to be a teacher. You know, the education policy or the curriculum of our country was new, and I was forced to join the teaching profession. It was because of that; that I became a teacher* (T6, SSI).

The above excerpts show that T1, T2, and T6 became EFL teachers not because of their interests but rather because of other forces. Although these participants seem to have a similar perspective

about why they became EFL teachers, there were contradictory comments by other participants regarding this idea. The following excerpt was mainly centered on the teacher's own interest to become an EFL teacher, which developed from former teachers of English in high school. To this end, T3, who teaches English in a secondary school, endorses the statement, saying, "*I became an EFL teacher because of my previous English teachers' admiration, whom I see as models*" (SSI). T7, who studied English and became an English teacher, also provided his reason, saying; *I became an English teacher because I was good at learning English since high school. When I first started at university, I chose the department on purpose, so now I am teaching English with passion, and I enjoy both the subject matter and the teaching job* (SSI).

The above excerpts provide us with the different reasons the participants have regarding why they became EFL teachers, and this reveals that teachers have different perceptions of being teachers in their EFL study programs.

In their response to the question, "How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language?" All participants acknowledged the importance of vocabulary in learning English as a foreign language. As T1, who teaches English at a secondary school, pointed out, "vocabularies are the bricks that can have the cohesive sensible thought of ideas, so holding a lot of concepts, and it is very important in foreign language learning" (SSI). Much along the same lines, T4 explained that *vocabulary is important and that it is impossible not to teach vocabulary because it is part of the language. Without teaching vocabulary, how can we teach productive and receptive skills of the language, such as reading, speaking, listening, and writing* (SSI). Similarly, T3 added, "Vocabulary is very important, just as cells are very important for our body. The basis of our body is a cell. The basis for language is vocabulary" (SSI). T8 further explained that "the ultimate goal of the language is communication, and the life of the language is at the hands of the vocabulary; therefore, vocabulary is by far better" (SSI).

As can be inferred from T1's, T4's, T3's, and T8's responses, they affirmed the importance of vocabulary and its role in foreign language learning by developing learners' language skills and language elements such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening, as well as their grammar knowledge.

To the question, "Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?" T3 replied: *How can you miss something important? So I say no, it is not possible not to teach vocabulary because, without teaching vocabulary, we can't teach other skills... We can't teach any other language element without teaching vocabulary (SSI)*. This was also expressed in T5's comment, "It is really very important. It is impossible not to teach vocabulary "(SSI). T6 pointed out that, "let alone in the foreign language, even in the mother tongue, we should teach vocabulary because it is the core part of a language" (SSI).

It is clear from these participants' views that teaching vocabulary is an important component of one's language learning and an element not to be neglected. Similarly, T1 held a positive stance toward vocabulary teaching and seemed to support other teachers' perspectives. His perception is also influenced by the implicit way vocabulary teaching. To this end, he stated that "you might not expect to teach them all the time, explicitly telling them what this word or that word means. You can let them have knowledge cooperatively with other sub and major skills implicitly" (SSI).

Findings obtained from the questionnaire also indicate that about 60 % of the participants prefer the idea that 'prime consideration should be given to vocabulary teaching in EFL classes', showing more positive attitudes towards its importance. This implies that teaching vocabulary is one of the key elements of language learning in an EFL class.

The other question raised about teachers' perceptions is, "Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?" The findings from the interviews indicate that the participants have their own views regarding this question. For example, T5 reacted, *yes; I do have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary. Because I practice in the classroom, which I always do, and the students understand me (SSI)*. In the same way, T2, who is teaching English at a secondary school, said, *I think so. Actually, we took general pedagogy training courses at our university, and I have had a long time of English teaching experience. As a result of these, I believe I have a good understanding of how to teach English in general and vocabulary in particular (SSI)*. T7 also supported this idea and replied, "Of course, after taking a lot of training, I just have the skills" (SSI).

According to these teachers' perspectives, their teaching experience and training made them believe they knew how to teach English in general and vocabulary in particular. The data from classroom observation also confirmed what they said in the interview. Supporting this view, T1 also said, "Somehow, yah, that is right" (SSI). 'How do you feel about that?' This is the question that is raised by the researcher. *Because I have lots of experience exposure and have taken different kinds of training, and that made me feel I have the knowledge to express my views in teaching English and teaching vocabulary as well* (SSI). T4 also ratified T1's idea, saying, "As a professional, I have got a lot of experience, and that made me feel I have the knowledge" (SSI).

Similarly, to search out their perceptions, the researcher raised the question, "Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influences the way you teach English vocabulary?" For this question, T6 said, "Yes, when we talk about knowledge, there is pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge, both of which have an impact on my vocabulary teaching" (SSI). T1 also thought "Of course, yah, I am literally teaching vocabulary, and my English teaching has an influence on teaching not only vocabulary but other skills as well (SSI)". The data from these extracts show that teachers' English language teaching has an impact on vocabulary as well as other skills. T2 presented a detailed account of this aspect as follows: *Language teaching integrates the teaching of language skills and language elements. For example, if you are teaching listening, you have a chance to teach vocabulary. The same is true in the case of teaching other language skills too. So your English teaching directly influences the way you teach English vocabulary* (SSI).

The researcher further asked if they had taken any special training about vocabulary teaching in their college or university learning. In T2's words, "No, except general pedagogy and other linguistic courses, we didn't take any special training on how vocabulary should be taught" (SSI). T3 also confirmed that, *in colleges and teacher training institutions, we learned about different kinds of teaching techniques or methods that are important for language teaching, but regarding vocabulary, to be honest with you, I didn't even remember we learned about how to teach vocabulary* (SSI). T5 supports this view by saying, "In my university education, there was no special training on how vocabulary should be taught in a separate class" (SSI). As T6 in his part underscored, *actually, there are universities near our school, and those kinds of institutions are*

*giving free training in different aspects of teaching methodology. I did not get the chance to learn specifically how to teach vocabulary (SSI).*

It is clear from these respondents' views that pedagogy of vocabulary shouldn't be given to ELT trainees at teacher education colleges or universities in the country.

However, the data in the questionnaire revealed that language courses teachers have taken at the college level have some contribution to vocabulary teaching. This view is supported by about 51% of the survey respondents, and it goes along with the responses given to the teachers' disciplinary backgrounds (the knowledge teachers possess at college or university in their teacher education program) as sources of knowledge.

To get their views about the material they are using in teaching vocabulary, the researcher asked, "What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?" The participants remarked that the materials should be appropriate for students regarding their English proficiency and learning needs. The materials selected shouldn't be too difficult. The presence of the new words shouldn't be too complicated. If it's beyond the students' English level, they may be discouraged and lose interest.

From this angle, T5 commented about the textbook used by the students for learning English in general and vocabulary in particular, saying: "The textbook does not focus on teaching vocabulary; it focuses on teaching reading, writing, speaking, and other language skills" (SSI). Similarly, supporting T5's view, T4 stresses, "Even if there is a vocabulary section in the textbook, it is not directly related to the reality of our students' level of understanding" (SSI). T2 also echoed T4's idea by saying: *The text book is poor. In my opinion, the textbook is not enough and not prepared properly to teach vocabulary explicitly and implicitly. Moreover, the tasks needed to develop students' vocabulary knowledge are limited* (SSI). As can be seen from the excerpt from the stimulated recall interview, he also added: "The textbook has limited examples and exercises, but what I tried to do was search for additional prefixes from other texts to illustrate and broaden the lesson" (SRI). T6 specifically said, "As I believe the very important skill students should develop is guessing from the context," So such skills are not well practiced or incorporated in the textbook I am using for teaching" (SSI).

Although T5, T4, and T2 and T6 held an adverse outlook towards the textbook for teaching English vocabulary, denying their views T1 states *the textbook is organized based on a content-based topic orientation. In that respect, each and every piece of content supports the theme. In the textbook, vocabulary is prepared to scale up students' speaking, listening, reading, writing, and grammar aspects in light of that topic. This is how the textbook is organized, and it is essential for teaching vocabulary (SSI)*. T1's view, which T7 echoed, is that *the textbook nowadays is full of many contexts for teaching English language vocabulary. There are many texts, and many reading passages; there are many listening texts that enable students to learn very important words... This textbook is very important for grade 12 students. It is directly related to the real life of the students (SSI)*.

In the questionnaire, about 60 % of the respondents acknowledged the importance of the existing textbook for the purpose of teaching English vocabulary and said they use it as the primary source for their vocabulary teaching. This indicates the majority of the respondents didn't doubt its appropriateness for teaching English vocabulary. The data from the classroom observation also showed that, with its limitations, the textbook has an important role in teaching vocabulary. The teacher (T2) was using the textbook frequently for teaching vocabulary, and even the students were using it for their vocabulary learning. To this end, the data in the questionnaire and observation results contradict what T5, T4, T2 and T6 commented about the textbook and confirm what T1 and T7 said in the excerpt.

To search out participants' perceptions, the last question raised by the researcher is, "How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?" Participants indicated that teaching vocabulary is closely connected to students' vocabulary learning. To this end, students in high school didn't develop word power to the level expected, and they didn't possess sufficient vocabulary learning strategies to practice vocabulary learning. Besides, as most respondents emphasized, their low background knowledge and lack of motivation have created a kind of learning problem with respect to vocabulary as well as other areas of the target language. From this angle, T7 indicated his view that *students should be able to learn vocabulary... but in today's environment, students are not motivated and it is very challenging to teach vocabulary and other challenges are large class size and lack of resource (SSI)*. T1 also said, *I think the major problem is students' lack of sufficient number of vocabularies so as to express their views in learning English in general and*

*vocabulary in particular* (SSI). Likewise, T2 maintained that, *in our situation, students are very interested in learning grammar. Teachers also want to teach grammar and reading skills more than vocabulary. If the exam and other assessments consider vocabulary and other skills equally, teachers and students are also given due attention for their vocabulary teaching and learning* (SSI). T4 also agreed with the above views and further thought that "...it is expected in higher institutions like universities to study vocabulary and its teaching" (SSI). In much the same comment, a questionnaire respondent suggested, *"Foreign language teachers should consider the teaching of vocabulary as important as that of grammar, reading, and writing, because vocabulary is the core element in English language teaching and learning"* (Q).

It is clear from the above excerpts that compared to grammar and other skills, teaching vocabulary was given less attention. The reasons behind this are students' lack of background knowledge, their lack of motivation, a lack of resources and its rare presence in exams. So, attention should be given to its teaching and its assessments as well.

#### **4.2.2. Teachers' Sources of Knowledge Development**

A study about teachers' knowledge entails an investigation into the sources that contribute to the shaping of this knowledge. Thus, the results that are reported in this section center on when and where the EFL teachers developed their knowledge of vocabulary instruction. Below, the questions and their subsequent answers about teachers' sources of knowledge development in vocabulary instruction are presented.

The first question states, "Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?" T1, who taught English for more than ten years in secondary schools, said, "My knowledge regarding English teaching is not from my college or university education rather it is from teaching experience" (SSI). T8 also thought, "Basically, I give my attention for experience because the experiences that I have passed through make me feel like a full teacher now" (SSI). Similarly, T5 also supported this view and showed his position by saying, "My knowledge comes from both training and experience."

The data presented in the preceding excerpts show that the participants rely heavily on their prior experience and training in teaching English. It is clear that experience is the most important source of influence on the development of teachers' knowledge in teaching English.

Similar to experience of teaching, the interview data also reveals that the participants' formal high school learning and undergraduate education contributed to the development of their English teaching. One of the participants stated that "my prior language learning at secondary school and undergraduate education were my primary sources of knowledge in teaching English" (T2, SSI). T3 also said *the knowledge I have about teaching English comes from different sources. One is from my higher education institutions or teachers' training college. The second one is from my reading of English materials like fiction, magazines, newspapers...The third one is from different seminars and training; finally, from internet sources* (SSI). As well, T7 in his part stressed, "The first important point is that I would like to appreciate my former teachers. I have got a very important skill from my high school and preparatory school teachers" (SSI). These excerpts revealed that teachers developed knowledge of English teaching from different sources that helped them teach English in EFL classes.

Correspondingly, the researcher asked the participants, "What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?" In a similar perspective, T1 mentioned that *my sources of knowledge in teaching vocabulary are mainly developed from my long time teaching experience and reading different kinds of fiction and written materials in English* (SSI). T7 added, "I developed the way of teaching vocabulary, by just adapting the way my former English teachers taught me and from reading materials." Similarly, T6 said, "I try to read on the internet and I discuss with colleagues, so these are my sources of knowledge for teaching vocabulary" (SSI). In addition to what is mentioned by these respondents, T3 also said "the internet source and colleagues' discussions are the two main sources of knowledge on how to teach vocabulary" (SSI). It is clear from the above extracts that knowledge for vocabulary teaching was developed from different sources. The findings from the questionnaire also showed the sources noted most frequently. These include teaching experience, teachers' disciplinary backgrounds, and apprenticeship of observation.

In the same way, the analysis of the data from teachers' interviews mainly revealed that teachers' teaching experience and their apprenticeship of observation are major sources of knowledge in vocabulary instruction. Likewise, the participants pointed out that they often encountered new words in textbooks, on the internet, and in discussions with friends. This suggests that the teacher participants could develop their vocabulary knowledge from various sources when they are teaching English in EFL classes. As the participants contended, teachers gained more knowledge about how to teach vocabulary through teaching. As regards their content knowledge (English ability), the participants tended to argue that their teaching experience impacted their vocabulary development to a large extent.

The researcher also raised the question, "Do your own sources of knowledge have an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary?" It was found that teachers' own sources of knowledge in teaching English also impacted their knowledge development in vocabulary instruction. For example, T3 recalled his experience of how to teach English and how to prepare this source for vocabulary teaching, and he put it this way, *there is a saying. You do what you know. In other words, what you do is what you know. What you have in your mind is what you are going to implement, and it has an influence on your vocabulary teaching* (SSI). Supporting the above excerpt, T2 also said, *"Yes, it has an influence. This is because your teaching depends on your sources of knowledge. The more knowledge sources you have, the better your classroom teaching will be. Thus, getting various knowledge sources has an impact on your vocabulary teaching* (SSI). Similarly, T5 pointed out that: *Yes, my knowledge affects my teaching vocabulary because it is from my background information that I teach vocabulary, and books do not teach all vocabulary items, and I teach from my own knowledge* (SSI). T8 also expressed his belief, saying, "It has an influence, and it plays a major role in how I teach vocabulary lessons in a class" (SSI).

Another relevant question raised about the teacher's source of knowledge was: "What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?" The participants viewed teacher education programs aimed at developing their disciplinary knowledge in linguistics, language teaching approaches, and other related courses. They argue this stage of education has less impact on their vocabulary teaching. One of the teacher participants explicitly stated that he did not take any course that was

designed for vocabulary teaching. He took the courses, which focused on introducing general methodologies without specifically relating them to vocabulary instruction. To this end, T1 mentioned, "I took a general pedagogy course, but it didn't play as significant a role in my vocabulary teaching" (SSI). T8 revealed, in his part, that "when we attended the second degree, we took some courses; however, that was not related to teaching vocabulary to high school students" (SSI). Likewise, T3 states, *the teacher's training lesson has no influence on my vocabulary teaching because we didn't take any specific lessons regarding vocabulary teaching* (SSI). However, T2 perceived that the courses he took had some impact on his vocabulary instruction. As he underscored, *especially the methodology course plays an important role in how to teach English in general. Though there are no specific courses on how to teach vocabulary, the general methodology courses play an important role in teaching vocabulary* (SSI). T5 supports this view and puts his outlook into words by saying, "It has a contribution, but most of the time we depend on our experience" (SSI).

Similar to T2's and T5's views, the findings from the survey, both on teachers' perceptions (50.9%) and actual vocabulary teaching practices (73.6%) of the participants, exhibited that the knowledge teachers possess at college or university in their teacher education program plays an important role in their vocabulary teaching.

The other question raised concerning teachers' sources of knowledge is: "Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today?" As the responses from the participants' interview data suggest, the formal education that teachers acquired in high school and in undergraduate classes created a considerable impact on their vocabulary teaching. To this end, almost all the techniques that they shared to teach vocabulary were based on their apprenticeship of observation in formal education.

One example worth mentioning is T1's perception of vocabulary teaching. In the interview, T1 clearly said that: *I had an excellent teacher when I was a student at Yekatit 12 senior secondary school. This teacher was giving us lots of activities using different vocabulary teaching techniques so as to build our vocabulary knowledge. For example, he presented many vocabulary-developing exercises by telling a story and presenting vocabulary-building drills. This affected the way I teach vocabulary* (SSI). Compelling evidence T5 puts his view across by

saying, *my own experience as a language student has had an impact on my teaching. I remember my teacher who taught me grades 9 and 10 and I appreciated him ... he was very clever and he taught everything to us ... He was a dictionary. So I followed him and I made him as a role model* (SSI). Supporting the above excerpts, T3 also thought *I had a model high school English teacher whom I appreciate...he used to contextualize the word he was teaching in other new words that we were learning... I did the same when I taught the new words to my students* (SSI). T4 also stated, "My civic teacher is my best model. We learnt civics in English and it is very important as a basis for my vocabulary knowledge and for vocabulary teaching" (SSI).

A similar issue raised in the teachers' questionnaire relates to the teachers' apprenticeship of observation. The finding revealed that 62.3 % of the participants' rated their prior experience of knowledge as learners play an essential role in their vocabulary teaching.

It is clear from the above extracts and questionnaire findings that prior language learning, both in high school and in undergraduate classes, has a crucial role in vocabulary teaching in secondary schools.

The last question raised by the researcher in relation to teachers' sources of knowledge states: "Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?" Participants explained that by teaching, they gained more knowledge about how to teach and assess vocabulary learning. As regards their content knowledge (mainly referring to their English proficiency), the participants tended to reveal that with an increase in teaching experience, their vocabulary size increased since they could develop some words through teaching the textbooks or other supplementary materials. Besides, the experience of teaching different language skills in English in one way or another develops their vocabulary teaching techniques. For instance, as one of the interviewee's states, experience of teaching has an impact on how to teach vocabulary. In T1's words, *I've been teaching English for about 12 years, and there were some challenges in the beginning, particularly in delivering the lesson as intended in vocabulary and other types of language skills, but with my long time teaching experience, I've gained good knowledge* (SSI). Similarly, T2 mentioned that "the more you teach, the more you learn. If you are exposed to teaching, you will gain experience" (SSI). Similarly, T6, who taught English for more than five years, said, *you see, I reflect on experience. When I*

*see the way I taught five years ago and what I am teaching currently, it is quite different because, if you are a reflective teacher, you try to update yourself with changing situations and the like. So, because of my experience, there is a change in my teaching (SSI).*

What is commented on in the extracts was evident in most of the observed sessions when the researcher was observing vocabulary teaching. It is clear that the experience the participants acquired through their long time teaching English had an impact on their vocabulary teaching and helped them develop confidence in their vocabulary instruction.

#### **4.2.3. Teachers' Knowledge and Their Classroom Practices**

Learning vocabulary is one of the major obstacles confronting second or foreign language learners in English classes. Students have difficulty expressing their ideas, desires, and feelings as clearly as they would because of a lack of vocabulary knowledge. Language teachers also encountered difficulty with decisions regarding vocabulary teaching techniques, vocabulary instructional priorities, students' vocabulary knowledge assessments, resources and others.

With respect to how participants execute their knowledge in practice, the participants asserted that they are capable of implementing their knowledge in practice. To get an answer about the relationship between teachers' knowledge and their classroom practices, the researcher raised various questions regarding this issue. The following are some of the questions and their subsequent answers given by the participants on the issue.

In their response to the question "Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?" The participants gave various answers about their ideal way of teaching vocabulary. For example, T1 stated that *most of the time, I employed sentence construction techniques using the new words to develop students' productive knowledge of vocabulary. After presenting example sentences, I usually ask students to generate their own sentences with the words they learn. Besides, I asked them to find the synonyms and antonyms of the new words (SSI).* The participant stated that in his vocabulary teaching, he mainly employed sentence construction techniques and let the students find the synonyms and antonyms of the new words in their vocabulary learning.

Data from classroom observation revealed that T1 employed sentence construction techniques and let them find antonyms and synonyms of personality-describing words when he engaged in vocabulary instruction. To be specific, when the teacher was teaching the day's lesson, he (T1) started by listing the personality-describing words on the blackboard, asked students to tell him their antonyms or synonyms, and then gave examples to show how they are used in sentence construction. Episode 1 below illustrates how T1 presented a vocabulary lesson (adjectives to describe characters) to his students in class.

### **Episode 1:-**

*T1 (the first teacher): There is an important vocabulary lesson here. Please look at the adjectives to describe characters on **page 111 of the Increase Your Word Power section**. Do you notice these adjectives have a special feature in describing leaders?*

*Students (S hereafter): (said), yes.*

*T1: Please pay attention to these adjectives. They are unique in describing people's characters. Next, I would like to give you synonyms for some of these words, and you will tell me their antonyms. For example, synonyms for strong (resilient), popular (known), and fair (reasonable) what are their antonyms?*

*S: (saying the antonyms together) weak, normal, unfair.*

*T: Very good! I would like to give you an example to show how to use these adjectives in sentence construction. For example, he is popular in sports.*

*S: (They started constructing sentences using adjectives to describe characters).*

In this episode, T1 used a method he stated in the interview. First, he told them the synonyms of the adjectives, and then he asked students to find the antonyms, and he showed the students how they were going to construct sentences using these personality-describing adjectives.

In another teacher's episode, a similar teaching technique was also witnessed. In Episode 2, we saw how T4 taught vocabulary in his class when his students were learning **collocations** from the 'increase your word power' section of unit 3 in the student's textbook.

### **Episode 2:-**

T4: *Please listen here. A collocation is a set of words that often go together. Pen and paper, chicken and rice, and pencil and paper are examples of collocations. Similarly, playing tennis, doing athletics, and going for a swim are also collocations. Who can tell me words added to collocate with words such as cloth, picture, and football?*

S: *(Some students raised their hands and one of them said) weave for weaving cloth, paint for painting pictures, and play for playing football).*

T4: *Yes, these are collocations. Who can tell me the collocations for words related to hobbies?*

S: *(Girma answered) ride a horse, collect coins, read books*

T4: *All right, the second question now. Construct your own sentences using collocations. For example, I **read books** when I am free.*

S: *(Started constructing sentences of their own using collocations).*

Generally, T4's observations about teaching collocation revealed the techniques he frequently employed when he was teaching vocabulary. However, this technique is not the only one he applied in all cases and in all situations. Based upon these observations, it is concluded that these teachers (T1 and T4) typically utilized sentence construction techniques using the new words to develop students' productive knowledge of vocabulary for the day's lesson on vocabulary teaching.

In T2's case, however, it was indicated that his vocabulary teaching usually concentrated on the contextual approach. As he explicitly says, "I'm using the context approach; using the context, I let the students guess the meanings of the new words" (SSI).

Supporting T2's idea, T5 also says, "...though there is no one best method I know, most of the time I prefer the context method" (SSI). Besides, T3 highlighted that... *my ideal way of teaching*

*vocabulary is to put words in their best context. At that point, the students don't need a dictionary. They don't need to ask their friends or go anywhere. So they simply try to answer questions based on the context (SSI).*

In Episode 3, T3 used context approach in his vocabulary teaching.

### **Episode 3:-**

T3: *Today, our topic is "Guessing the meaning of unknown words from the context." Who can tell me how to guess the meaning of the unknown words using context?*

S: *(silent)*

T3: *When we encounter a new word in a text, guessing from the context is important.*

*Look at this sentence.*

*We can't cut bread with that knife because it is blunt.*

*Look at the word blunt. What does it mean? We can work it out by:*

- 1. Looking carefully at the rest of the sentence;*
- 2. Thinking about what we need to cut bread – our knowledge of the world;*
- 3. Looking at what kind of word it is – a noun, a verb, an adjective, an adverb. We should be able to figure out that blunt means not sharp, and that it is an adjective. Who can guess the meaning of the underlined word in the following sentence?*

*1. Her father was very strict but she still felt great affection for him.*

S: *(Some students raised their hands and one of them said) love or respect*

T: *Yes, great.*

In this instructional episode, T3 employed a context approach to guess the meaning of unknown words, and he thought this method was ideal for vocabulary teaching. However, this was not the only method he used. He may also have employed other methods based on the vocabulary lessons he planned to teach. In the same way, T8 indicated the context approach is best for teaching vocabulary. He indicated in an interview he had with the researcher that "actually, my ideal way of teaching vocabulary is using context, so assimilating with their environment is the better way. I believe in using the contextual method" (SSI). This was revealed in a subsequent

classroom observation made with him when he was teaching a vocabulary lesson to grade 12 students on page 171 of their textbook.

The findings from the questionnaire, both in terms of teachers' strategy use (66.9%) and actual classroom practices (62.3%), showed that the respondents' consent to providing contextual clues to familiarize students with unfamiliar words was high. This implies that teaching words in context, where students can use context clues to apply word meaning to unknown words, is one way to foster vocabulary development and retention. This means contextual word teaching is effective, and students learn from context by making connections between the new word and the context in which it appears. Similarly, the majority of interviewed teachers believed that using a context approach was preferable to the other strategies for vocabulary teaching.

The results reported above suggest that EFL teachers use a variety of vocabulary teaching techniques to make their teaching effective for their students and to comprehend what they teach about vocabulary. The representations of the EFL teachers' ideal ways of vocabulary instruction also indicate that teachers tried to use different strategies that eased vocabulary learning for their students and were effective for their vocabulary teaching.

The other question raised by the researcher was, "Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught?" T1 replied, "I think we are not out of what the principles and approaches have provided us. What is expected is integrated skill teaching" (SSI). He further added, *Instead of taking out a certain simple word and telling them the definition or teaching that word in context, you better make the lessons integrated. I think that is a good way of teaching not only vocabulary but also the unit at large* (SSI). Similarly, T6 highlighted that "I let the students more explicitly...you teach vocabulary integrated with the other skills. For example, you teach in the grammar aspect, you can teach in speaking, whatever" (SSI). T2 supports T6's view in the follow-up interview, saying *vocabulary should be taught using different methods of teaching. For example, if teaching involves the direct presentation of a lesson, the teacher should use explicit teaching; if teaching promotes incidental vocabulary learning, the teacher should use implicit teaching; or the teacher should let the students read it outside of a class. I didn't have any specific ways of teaching* (SSI).

Supporting T2's view, T5 also said "...*vocabulary should be taught explicitly in countries where there is no environmental support, such as Ethiopian teachers... because students do not get English outside the classroom. Therefore, it must be explicitly taught*" (SSI). With a different view, T7 indicates, "*I prefer the implicit way of teaching vocabulary. If students are allowed to learn vocabulary implicitly, they can adapt the meaning of words without frustration or worry. So, it is very important to teach implicitly*" (SSI). He further stressed that "*It is very difficult to teach vocabulary always explicitly because it becomes a history or geography lesson*" (SSI).

As the above excerpts show, the participants tended to employ different techniques of vocabulary teaching, which included an integrated approach (i.e., using all language skills and language elements in teaching vocabulary), a combination of the two methods (explicit and implicit), or using explicit or implicit methods for vocabulary teaching. This implies that there is no one and only one best method for vocabulary teaching and that these teachers employ different methods for vocabulary teaching. However, qualitative data obtained from the open-ended parts of the questionnaire indicates that most teachers preferred both explicit and implicit methods of vocabulary teaching. However, compared to the two methods, i.e., explicit and implicit, they mainly preferred to use an explicit method of vocabulary teaching. As one questionnaire respondent stated, both *explicit and implicit methods of vocabulary teaching are important for students' word development. Still, compared to the two, I prefer the explicit method of vocabulary teaching because students in our school don't have a chance to go outside and read different materials to develop their word power; and they are highly dependent on the classroom vocabulary learning* (Q). Similarly, with more weight on the explicit method of vocabulary teaching, T3 presented a detailed justification as follows: *Using both explicit and implicit ways is important, but compared to the two ways, teaching explicitly is more important because everything should be taught formally in the classroom. However, if you teach them implicitly, they don't go out and do things. You can't control them; materials are not available or not accessible* (SSI).

Similarly, the findings in the questionnaire revealed that more than 63% of the participants contested the idea that vocabulary should be taught explicitly during class hours and that teachers should use an explicit instruction technique when they teach English vocabulary in class. This implies that an explicit method of vocabulary teaching better serves students in areas where

English is taught as a foreign language. In an explicit way, vocabulary is taught formally in the classroom, and teachers just bring their knowledge and take responsibility for their students' vocabulary learning. This finding is similar to the finding in self-reported practices in Part II, Section B1, of the questionnaire, where more than 73% of the teachers employed explicit instruction techniques, such as explaining word form, word meaning, or word use, while teaching vocabulary in an EFL classroom situation.

The last question raised by the researcher on teachers' knowledge and classroom practices states: "Do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice are congruent or match?" For this question, T1 asserted that...*different factors, such as limited time for vocabulary teaching, students' lack of vocabulary learning strategies, their lack of capacity and motivation, and limited vocabulary activities in the textbook, etc., made me feel my knowledge and my actual classroom practices were not congruent (SSI).*

The observation data (see episode 1), however, illustrates that the teacher's vocabulary teaching shows consistency between his knowledge and his classroom practices. He was presented with what he knew and prepared for the day's lesson, and the students also pursued the lesson and practiced what they were told to do by their teacher. This was revealed in a subsequent stimulated recall interview conducted with him, and he mentioned...*I think the lesson was successful. First, most students understood what I tried to teach. This is because I was checking what they were performing. Secondly, when I was assessing their sentence construction using the given words, the majority of them were successful in the construction of sentences using character or personality-describing words (SRI).* Similar to T1's observation result, T3 asserted that *my vocabulary teaching knowledge and my classroom practices match...I am implementing what I know. That means the two are congruent; what I have in my mind is what I read and what I practice...the implementation and the knowledge go in line (SSI).* In the same way, T4 stressed that " Even though I am not perfect, I am practicing what I have in my mind ... I am able to do that since teaching means the harmony of the two parts: knowledge and practice" (SSI). T8 in his part said... *I am practicing what I am thinking and saying in the classroom. I was teaching vocabulary and I tried to show how they guess the meaning of new words from their context. So it is critical to teach vocabulary as it is part of learning and part of their academic life (SSI).*

This is revealed in subsequent classroom observations and stimulated recall interviews conducted with the teacher. The following episode revealed his actual classroom practice.

**Episode 4:-**

T: *There is an important vocabulary lesson here. Please look at your textbook on page 171, 'guessing the meaning of unknown words'.*

*(After some minutes) Do you notice this lesson has a special feature for vocabulary learning?*

S: *... (Quiet, no response)*

T: *Please pay attention! What do you do when you encounter a difficult word when you are reading a passage?*

S: *Some students raised their hands, and one of them said) I will translate it into Amharic. The other one said, I use a dictionary because my mobile has a dictionary.*

T: *Great, nice boy! Now, I would like to give you a short note to show how you are going to guess the meaning of the unknown words when you read a text.*

S: *(Silent)*

T: *Please put this note in your exercise book.*

***When you meet an unknown word***

*First, use contextual clues to try to guess (define) the unknown words.*

*Second, try to use a dictionary if it is accessible.*

*Third, ask somebody who has the knowledge.*

S: *(students began taking the note)*

T: *Of these three alternatives, the first one is the most important. Now, look at these examples.*

*Example 1. The knife is blunt and won't cut anything. To guess the meaning of the underlined word "blunt," The context provided by the meanings of the rest of the sentences helped me guess the word "blunt".*

*Example 2. Don't sit on the chair; it is unsafe. One of the legs is wobbly and could come off at any time. The prefix before the base word and the rest of the sentence helped me guess the unknown word 'unsafe'. Now look at the underlined words in the context and try to guess using the features.*

- 1. Geologists have evidence that our planet was formed about 4.5 billion years ago.*
- 2. The last dinosaurs disappeared 80 million years ago.*

*S: (began writing in their exercise book; after a few minutes, some students raised their hands.)*

*T: (Called Henock and gave him a chance.)*

*S: Evidence is a sign or proof, and to disappear is to vanish or be forgotten.*

*T: Excellent! Is there any other answer?*

*S: (Silent)*

In this episode, the teacher (T8) was trying to teach vocabulary through situations in context. In the post-observation (stimulated recall) interview, he commented, "Okay, the lesson was very interesting as you observed and also based on our student's performance, yeah, that was good, and I did what I had in my mind" (SRI).

As the above episode revealed and the stimulated recall (post-observation) interview confirmed, the teacher (T8) presented what he thought in his mind and said in the interview. This revealed that the relationship between his mental construct and his practice was reflected while he was teaching vocabulary. His knowledge was found to be mutually interactive with his classroom activities. That is, his knowledge guides his pedagogical practices. Thus, the teacher's knowledge and his pedagogical practices are revealed to be congruent. Contradicting the above extracts, T2 made different statements in the interview regarding the congruence between his

knowledge and his actual classroom practices in vocabulary teaching. He said *that for many reasons, most of the time, my knowledge and my classroom vocabulary teaching practices are not harmonized. For example, students' lack of capacity and their lack of motivation made me not practice what I had in mind* (SSI).

Episode 5 below showed how T2 taught prefixes in his vocabulary class and his students had difficulty with a vocabulary lesson about prefixes.

### **Episode 5:-**

T: *Please listen to this note here.*

*A prefix is a group of letters added to the beginning of a word that changes its meaning and makes a new word. Who can tell me words formed by prefixes?*

S: *(Silent)*

T: *You are not familiar with the words formed by prefixes?*

S: *(Quiet)*

T: *Alright, please look at the following words and tell me which letters have been added to the beginning of the words dishonest, impatient, irresponsible, illegal, unlock, and disappear.*

S: *(Some students said) dis, im, ir, il, un, dis.*

T: *Alright. Let's look at the meanings of these prefix-added words. Who can tell me their meanings?*

S: *(Most students seem to have little understanding of their meanings, but a few of them tried: dishonest (to lie), irresponsible (careless), and disappear (to vanish).*

T: *Please note that many prefixes give the opposite meaning to the word they are put in front of.*

In this instructional episode, T2 explained to the students what a prefix is and how they can have opposite meanings. Besides, he gave them examples to show how prefixes are formed by adding letters to root words. However, except for a few of them, most students are passive in class and lack the motivation to learn the lesson. In the same way, T6, viewing the problem in his lack of using different vocabulary teaching strategies, said, *to tell you the truth, I do not say my knowledge and my practice are perfectly matched. As you see, I am not teaching vocabulary by using all the strategies and techniques because I lack the knowledge (SSI).*

Participants stated that they applied what they knew in teaching vocabulary; however, reasons such as students' low level of proficiency, their lack of motivation, and teachers' lack of using different strategies made them not practice what they knew in an actual classroom setting. Thus, teachers have to give due attention to their vocabulary teaching and employ different methods so as to match their knowledge with their actual classroom practices and solve their students' vocabulary learning problems.

#### **4.2.4. Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

In order to gain a thorough understanding of the factors affecting vocabulary teaching, in addition to quantitative data, qualitative data was also collected through open-ended questions, semi-structured interviews, and stimulated recall interviews. The following are the questions raised by the researcher in the semi-structured interviews and the subsequent responses made by the participants about these factors and findings made from other sources about factors affecting vocabulary teaching. Thus, this part of the analysis attempts to answer the following research questions:

The first question raised by the researcher is: "How do you describe your school environment in terms of English teaching and learning?" In this respect, T1 remarked that *the school environment is not conducive to teaching English in general. I am unhappy with what the directors of the school are doing in facilitating the teaching and learning process, because the school environment contributes a lot to the development of teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction (SSI).* T5 also mentioned that... *private schools are better because they have English-speaking days where they practice language skills, but in government or public schools; there is a great problem in teaching vocabulary and other skills as well (SSI).*

As the above excerpts indicate, lack of support from school administrators and lack of resources are affecting factors for their English teaching. Some participants also raised this issue as a problem that needs to be considered. As these participants revealed, English teachers should be supported by administrators such as directors and coordinators in facilitating the teaching and learning process within their school environment. T2 comments on the impact of the school environment on English teaching in general and vocabulary instruction in particular, saying, *my school environment is not, as such, a comfortable place for teaching and learning activities. It has an effect on teaching English in general and vocabulary instruction in particular. I think this has a negative impact on the teachers' ability to teach vocabulary or other skills effectively and properly* (SSI). T3's also said, "Here, we don't have resources. We don't have a reading club. So the school environment is not convenient or comfortable for teaching vocabulary, in particular" (SSI).

It is clear from the findings that participants blame the school environment for the difficulty they encountered regarding English teaching in general and vocabulary instruction in particular. This may lead us to speculate that teachers sort out vocabulary teaching according to what they perceive to be feasible and appropriate in their school context.

The second question raised by the researcher regarding contextual factors is: "What factors made your vocabulary instruction, knowledge, and practice relationship not congruent?" As the evidence revealed, a set of contextual factors and challenges affected the participants' ability to put their knowledge into action during vocabulary instruction. The following analysis showed how problems with resources and students' lack of capacity had an impact on the implementation of teachers' knowledge in vocabulary instruction.

To this end, T1, for example, says, "... there is no language laboratory for practicing different vocabulary activities. The only thing that is found in the classroom is a chalkboard (SSI). He further states, "If there is a language lab and it is equipped with different resources, we can teach not only vocabulary but also other skills at large" (SSI). Besides, this participant commented more on students' capacity as one of the factors that affect teachers' knowledge and practice congruence. From this angle, he said, "most of our students lack the necessary vocabulary to explain what is expected of them in the classroom setting" (SSI). T8 also shared T1's view and

said, *many factors affect our vocabulary teaching, For example, classroom arrangement, the way we use teaching aids while we teach vocabulary, the student's perception towards learning vocabulary, their level of understanding, all these are challenges and create incongruence between knowledge and practice (SSI).*

The data from the questionnaire also revealed that more than 60 % of the respondents affirmed that students' low level of language ability affected teachers' implementation of vocabulary instruction. Besides, the survey result indicates that large class sizes and the students' lack of motivation seriously affect their vocabulary learning.

As stated in the above extracts, students' lack of competence to communicate using the target language and lack of resources (e.g., a language laboratory), large class size, and students' lack of motivation interfered with the actualization of teachers' knowledge in action. Thus, these constraints were attributed to the inconsistent relationship between teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. T3 also clarified his view by saying, *when I want to teach using different kinds of posters, pictures or visual things, I can't get these materials and one of the problems is resources. If you want to implement vocabulary teaching in different techniques, you can't get materials. The implementation and the knowledge sometimes might not be congruent or match... These factors affect it (SSI).*

Likewise, T2 affirmed, *there are many factors that make knowledge and practice relationships not to be congruent. Among them, problems of resource, students' lack of capacity, large class sizes, etc. are the major ones (SSI).* T7 further described the problem in line with students' lack of proficiency, saying, *even if students are in grade 12, they have not captured the minimum learning competency of a lower grade level. So when you try to let them know the very important skills, including vocabulary, their capacity binds them (SSI).* Moreover, T2 argued, "I found little time to deal with vocabulary in the textbook because the other skills took most of our time" (SSI).

Questionnaire data revealed that 57.6 % of the respondents asserted the class size is too big to manage teachers' vocabulary teaching practices. This implies class size is one of the factors that affect vocabulary teaching, and teachers with large classes couldn't apply their knowledge of

vocabulary teaching better than those dealing with small class sizes. According to the survey data, more than half of the respondents believe that the time allotted for vocabulary teaching is insufficient for practicing various vocabulary activities when compared to the time allotted for teaching other skills. Generally, these and other related factors did not allow teachers to establish a compatible relationship between knowledge and practice in teachers' vocabulary instruction.

The other question inquired by the researcher was, "Do you believe your knowledge of context shapes the way you teach English vocabulary?" Participants state that schools in different contexts included students with different levels of English ability and different learning habits. These differences among learners could negatively or positively affect teachers' performance and student achievement. Therefore, this issue should be considered by the teachers, and they should restructure their teaching accordingly.

In view of this, T3 replied...*the first thing a teacher should know is the school context, including the students. You have to know the availability of materials and the culture of the students. I know the students' potential, so I tried to reshape the lesson based on their knowledge and background* (SSI). T6, for instance, pointed out, "I am a pragmatist. I see the situation and the context, then I try to reshape my teaching" (SSI). Similarly, in the interview, T1 supported this idea by saying, *when there is a lesson that is out of context; I try to organize that one to meet what the environment needs. This is because the book is prepared assuming the overall Ethiopian context and some of them might be challenging to address for the students. To teach that way, we have to redesign the lessons along with the existing situation* (SSI). As well, exemplifying his earlier experience, T5 stated, ... *before I came to teach in Addis Ababa, I was teaching English far from here, and I usually used to study vocabulary items related to animal husbandries, such as camel, milk, dung, and just vocabularies related to sheep and goat, but here in Addis, I am teaching words related to traffic lights, cars, buildings, clothing styles, yeah, therefore context is very important in teaching vocabulary* (SSI).

The extracts above revealed that teachers' vocabulary teaching is influenced by the context in which they lived and worked. This was clear from the teachers' responses in the present study, which confirmed that teachers would reshape their teaching based on their students' level of vocabulary knowledge and learning habits.

The last question concerning factors affecting vocabulary teaching states: "What other constraints do you think have an influence on the practice of vocabulary teaching?" As the participants revealed, students' background knowledge is not sufficient to understand different reading materials. This restricts teachers from providing other extra texts with valuable vocabulary. According to the findings, students' lack of reading to improve their vocabulary knowledge is one of the significant problems EFL teachers face. From this angle, T1 said, "One thing which I can see is lack motivation in learning or reading" (SSI). He further says, "When you let them read some kinds of supplementary materials, they are not interested in reading those materials" (SSI). This is supported by the survey result that more than 57 % of the questionnaire respondents confirmed that students' lack of motivation in learning affects their vocabulary teaching in EFL classes. Moreover, this participant stresses that students' high attachment to their mother tongue in EFL class is a constraint to their vocabulary teaching. He pointed out the same problem in different words, saying, instead of guessing from the context or using other techniques, students are very keen on using their mother tongue for the meaning of the new words while learning EFL vocabulary (SSI). In the same view, T2 asserted that, *lack of facilities such as conducive classes, visual and audio aids, etc., influence teachers' actualization of vocabulary knowledge in practice* (SSI). Moreover, T5 asserted, *in-service or pre-service training in our country didn't center on teaching vocabulary. Therefore, training given to teachers in secondary schools should include vocabulary teaching as well* (SSI).

In line with the familiarity of the words in the textbook to students' level of understanding, in a stimulated recall interview, T2 mentioned, "The challenging thing is the words in the textbook were difficult for them to know" (SRI). Another constraint found in the data is teachers' lack of motivation. As T2 asserted, "Lack of motivation affects teachers' instructional practices" (SSI). To confirm, he said, "teachers' lack of motivation due to their low salary income discourages them from practicing readily what they have in mind" (SSI). Moreover, remarking on the policy of language teaching and attitudes of both the students and the teachers in relation to vocabulary teaching and learning, T3 pointed out that...*grammar gets more attention because of the policy, and I object to the policy... if 80-90% of the exams are related to grammar, how can they listen to you when you teach vocabulary? So, the attitude is the result of the policy, and they are the challenging factors* (SSI). Questionnaire data also revealed that more than 59 % of

the respondents confirmed that the exams are focused more on assessing grammar and reading skills than vocabulary. Similarly, secondary school leaving exam mainly centers on assessing grammar and reading skills rather than vocabulary for students' university entrance.

Qualitative data obtained by the questionnaire also indicates that various problems affect teachers' not to use their knowledge of vocabulary teaching in practice. As one questionnaire respondent stated, *the interests of the learners are very low and many of them are attracted to learn grammar more than vocabulary. In addition, the limitation of English as an instructional language only is also a big problem. Here, both the students and the teachers have little access to practice English words outside of the school environment (Q).*

Generally, these findings revealed that participants perceived different factors to have an impact on teachers' vocabulary teaching and that these contribute to the inconsistent relationship between knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. These challenging constraints can also illustrate the level of the problems. Reducing these constraints would possibly allow vocabulary instruction to be effective in a secondary school context.

#### **4.2.4. Lesson Report of Teachers' Observation**

The actual practices related to teachers' knowledge of vocabulary teaching identified by the researcher's classroom observations are presented as follows.

Throughout the classes observed, teachers applied related techniques in teaching vocabulary. The observed teachers, for example, began the day's lesson by introducing the topic and giving students chances to say something about the vocabulary lesson they were going to learn in their vocabulary teaching. They also wrote the new words on the chalkboard and explained them with examples in their vocabulary teaching. Besides, they gave them time for practice and encouraged them to use different clues to pick up the meaning of unfamiliar words. This led to more active interaction between the teachers and students or among the students themselves, which was noticed in most classes observed.

After revision of the previous period's lesson about initials and acronyms was made, T1 presented, for example, grade 12 vocabulary lesson on personality describing adjectives from the

student's textbook, **Increase your Word Power Section on Page 111** (refer to the lesson on Appendix G). On the blackboard, there were words such as "**aggressive, charismatic, courageous, diplomatic, fair,**" etc., and he was motivating students to tell him the meaning of these personality-describing words. The teacher confirmed the right meaning of each personality-describing word that was replied by the students and added new adjectives to personality-describing words based on particular examples provided to them. He seemed to be aiming to make connections between the students' ideas about these words and the questions on the board. Besides, he was encouraging the students to use these personality-describing words in sentence construction. From this angle, some students were active in constructing sentences, while others were passive in constructing sentences and responding to their teacher. In this case, the teacher appeared to be a guide, encouraging the students to be more proactive and communicative throughout the process of constructing sentences using personality-describing words.

During T2's observation, the teacher was seen introducing grade **11 vocabulary lesson, Increase Your Word Power section of prefixes on pages 49 and 50** (refer to the lesson in Appendix G). He started the day's lesson by defining what a prefix is and how it creates the opposite meaning of words when it appears on the front side of the root word. In his teaching, for instance, the teacher wrote prefixes such as:

*-anti for against, e.g., antisocial;*

*-bi for two e.g. bicycle;*

*-de for decreased e.g. devalued;*

*-eco for relating to the environment e.g. ecology;*

*-multi for many e.g., multicultural etc.*

In this lesson, the teacher asked students to complete a table that had two columns with prefixes and root words to help them understand the meaning when they were fixed together. This way of teaching seemed to be good because it led students to know the root word, the prefixes, and when fused, their entire meanings. Though a few of them were participating in class, the teacher

encouraged students to be able to recognize and memorize words with or without prefixes. The teacher apparently focuses on using a context-based approach to make them guess the meaning of the unknown words. This helped the students perform interactive activities using words with prefixes. In the class observed, working with a partner was also seen to occur, and this technique of teaching was used only by T2. This may encourage students to work together and find various words with prefixes for their vocabulary development.

In another teacher's period, a different teaching method was observed. Based upon this observation, the teacher (T3) introduced and taught grade 10 vocabulary lesson **guessing the meaning of unknown words from the student's textbook on pages 87 and 88 of the Increase Your Word Power section** (refer to the lesson in Appendix G). The teacher first showed them some techniques to help them guess appropriately. He devised some methods for them to deduce the meaning of unknown words on the board. As for each way of guessing, he gave a brief note as follows:

***When we meet a new word in a text, there are several things we can do:***

1. *We can do nothing and carry on reading.*
2. *We can guess the meaning of the word.*
3. *We can find the word in a dictionary.*
4. *We can ask someone to explain it, e.g., a friend or teacher.*

Based on the above techniques for guessing, T3 presented the following as an example.

***Look at this sentence.***

*We can't cut bread with that knife because it is **blunt**.*

*Look at the word **blunt**. What does it mean? We can work it out by:*

1. *Looking carefully at the rest of the sentence;*
2. *Thinking about what we need to cut bread—our knowledge of the world;*
3. *Look at what kind of word it is—a noun, a verb, an adjective, an adverb. We should be able to figure out that **blunt** means not sharp, and that it is an adjective.*

The teacher told students, "compared to the other three options, option two is easy to guess, but the other options are time-consuming and not always practical in classroom situations." Based on this explanation, he employed option 2 in his teaching and helped them learn more about how to guess the meaning of unknown words from the context and use them in different situations. By adopting techniques such as this, students learned some new words and knew how to handle strange words that hinder them when reading or doing something in English.

The researcher also made an observation with teacher 4. During this observation, teacher 4 was teaching a vocabulary lesson concerning **collocations**, which was found on unit three page 47 (refer to the lesson in Appendix G) of the student's textbook.

Teacher 4 began his lesson by writing the title of grade 9 vocabulary lesson **collocations** on the blackboard and asking the students to take out their textbooks. Then he started revising the previous class lesson, which was 'pronunciation practice', and he wrote phrases such as **a piece of paper, a bag of apples, a pile of newspapers, and a length of string** on the blackboard. Then he asked the students to do the pronunciation practice for the phrases he wrote on the board, which they tried to pronounce in chorus as well as individually. The revision session took about 4 minutes.

He wrote the day's lesson **collocations** from the "increase your word power" section of Unit 3 in the student's textbook. Then he ordered the students to open their textbooks on page 47 and see **the collocations section**. He noticed that some students didn't bring their textbooks. So, he let them sit with those who brought them. As it can be seen, teacher 4 first defined what a collocation means, saying 'a collocation is a set of words that often go together, and he wrote some collocations on the blackboard, such as **pen and paper, chicken and rice, pencil and paper**, etc. He also added some other collocations from the unit that he considered useful for them to learn about, like **playing tennis, doing athletics, going for a swim, collecting coins**, etc., on the blackboard. He also asked students if they knew any other collocations for words related to different hobbies. Students raised their hands and responded to words with the right or wrong collocations. In the meantime, T4 made a kind of correction for the collocations they made wrongly. Besides, he told them to read lists of words in texts like "**weave for weaving cloth, read for reading aloud, football for football players, pictures for painting pictures**," etc., and ordered them to construct sentences of their own that include a correct verb or noun

collocation. He also gave them some example sentences made with collocations, and the students practiced what he told them to do in the class while observing. The teacher gave some corrections for the sentences students made with allocations, and finally, he went out when the bell rang.

Teacher 5 began the day's lesson by revising the previous day's lesson about types of sentences, and he asked the students to tell him the types of sentences and to show one example of each type of sentence. After revision, the teacher began the lesson of the day; **"Words for the Media," from the Increase Your Word Power section of the ninth-grade students' textbook on page 106** (refer to the lesson in Appendix G). He asked first what they knew about the media, and the students told him, "The media is a means of communication." He ordered them to mention some of the words that go with the media, and they gave him different media words such as television, radio, newspaper, magazines, journalist, reporter, Facebook, Telegram, BBC, Al Jazeera, ETV, Fana, Walta, Wi-Fi, etc. Besides, he ordered them to work with a partner and classify these media words into nouns, verbs, people, adjectives, and places. Some of the students raised their hands and answered media words that are nouns, e.g., radio, magazine, newspaper, Facebook, etc.; media words that are verbs, e.g., reporting, reading, transmitting, televising, etc.; they also answered words with media people, such as journalist, reporter, cameraman, etc. After the students classified the media words, he told them to construct their own sentences individually using these media words. To make it simple for them, he wrote some example sentences that are constructed using these words on the whiteboard. For instance, he wrote, "Telegram is important for chatting," "I want to be a TV **reporter**," etc. on a whiteboard. After the teacher told them to construct the sentences, he went around the class and motivated them to do the sentence construction on their own. Finally, the bell rang, and the teacher left the classroom.

Teacher 6 presented the day's lesson from grade 10 students' textbook. The lessons were about **collocations and word patterns**. They are found in an **increase your word power section of the students' textbook on pages 127 and 139** (refer to the lesson in Appendix G). The first lesson was about collocation. The vocabulary networks are collocating with natural disasters. The teacher first wrote the headwords on the whiteboard, such as **volcano, tsunami, people, earthquake, flood**, etc. She told the students to work in pairs and ordered them to find words that collocate under each headword. Example: **volcanic** eruption, **volcanic** ash, **volcanic** cloud, **volcanic** lava, **volcanic** flow, etc. The students tried to do the same under each natural disaster, collocating words. She called on each student's name to write their answer on the whiteboard. The rest of the students approved the answers the students

wrote on the whiteboard. She sometimes gives corrections if they make an error. In the same way, the teacher taught the second vocabulary lesson, which is **fun with words**, using word squares in the students' textbooks on page 139.

N	O	I
D	A	B
S	G	R

Here, the teacher told them to make as many words as they could from the letters in the square. She instructed the students that each word must include the letter "A" in the middle. The students try to make words that hold the letter "A" in the middle. For example, **GAS, RADIO, BAD, BAG, DRAG**, etc. She encouraged groups to make more words. Following that, she told them to construct sentences using words that are created from the word square. Finally, the bell rang, and we left the class together.

Teacher 7 taught grade 11 vocabulary lesson from the "Increase **your word power section: Word building**' on page 185 (refer to the lesson in Appendix G). He first explained the function of suffixes in word building, and then he asked the students to tell him the words produced by suffixes. Some students tried to respond to the question he asked. Then he wrote: "Words can be made from some base adjectives by adding **-en,-ize, and -ify**. Example: **short-shorten, modern-modernize**. Sometimes spelling changes are required. For example, **high-heighten, simple-simplify**. **-ise and -ify** can also be added to some nouns to make verbs. After the teacher gave these examples, he told the students to change the adjectives to verbs based on the examples he gave them on the whiteboard. He told them not to use dictionaries but to make any necessary spelling changes. Here, the teacher employed the students' L1 (in this case, Amharic) to make the instruction clear. The following is the activity given to the students to make verbs from the given adjectives.

<u>Adjectives</u>	<u>Verbs</u>
Broad	broaden
Dark	darken
Deep	deepen

After the students changed the adjectives to verbs, he ordered them to find adjectives or verbs that have opposite meanings. For instance, soften (harden) and lengthen (shorten). The teacher gave students some minutes to practice the activities. After some minutes, he ordered the students to exchange their exercise books and check their partners' answers. In the meantime, the teacher was giving the students the correct answer for the adjectives changed into verbs. Finally, he told the students to construct sentences of their own using words built from the adjectives. The students worked hard on sentence construction and read what they had written to him. Finally, the bell rang, and we left the classroom.

Teacher 8 presented the vocabulary lesson from the grade 12 students' textbook **on page 171, guessing the meaning of unknown words** (refer to the lesson in Appendix G). He first asked the students if they knew strategies to guess strange words when they encountered them in reading or listening. He, for example, says, "What do you do when you encounter a difficult word when you are reading a passage?" Some students raised their hands, and one of them said, "I will translate it into Amharic." The other one said, "I use a dictionary because my mobile has a dictionary." After appreciating the students who responded to his question, the teacher wrote the following short note on the whiteboard for students to tackle strange words while reading.

- First, try to guess (define) the unknown words using contextual clues.
- Second, try to use a dictionary if it is accessible.
- Third, ask somebody who has the knowledge.

The teacher said, "Of these three alternatives, the first one is the most important." He instructed the students on what they should do when they are guessing. For example, he told them to look for the context (what is the meaning of the rest of the sentence) and its grammar (what part of speech is it?) And its structure (do you recognize any prefixes or suffixes? And it's similar to a word in another language, you know).

After a brief explanation, he gave them examples using the words that are found on page 171 and told them to employ the features to guess the unknown words.

**‘Now look at the underlined words in the context and try to guess using the features.’**

**Sentence 1.** The knife is blunt and won't cut anything.

**Sentence 2.** You understate the massive scale of the disaster by saying that it has caused a few Problems.

**Sentence 3.** Don't sit on the chair, it is unsafe. One of the legs is wobbly and could come off at any time.

As the researcher observed, the students who participated in the classroom were few in number and had similar faces. The teacher called their numbers and made them guess the new words. He tried to appreciate those who tried to answer and finally, he told them the correct meanings and how they could easily guess strange words using the features. Next, he gave them homework on page 171. A paragraph contains a number of nonsense words, and he asked them to identify these words and replace them with real words that fit the context. Finally, the bell rang, and we (the researcher and his assistant) thanked the teacher and his students and left the class.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter analyzed EFL teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction. It presented quantitative and qualitative data analysis of the findings based on the research questions of the study. The following issues were examined in detail: Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching, teachers' sources of knowledge development in vocabulary instruction, knowledge and practice relationships, and factors affecting vocabulary teaching. The findings show that most participants have positive perceptions about vocabulary instruction. Their perceptions contributed to their actual classroom practices. It was also revealed that their knowledge about vocabulary instruction was developed from a variety of sources, of which teaching experience, teachers' disciplinary backgrounds, and apprenticeship through observation were the major ones. A comparison between knowledge and practice also demonstrated that teachers' practices were generally consistent with their knowledge, but inconsistencies also existed. The findings also indicated factors that contributed to the inconsistent relationship between knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a discussion of research findings with reference to each of the four research questions. These are perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching, teachers' sources of knowledge development in vocabulary instruction, knowledge and practice relationships, and factors affecting vocabulary teaching. In each of these four sections, the quantitative and qualitative findings were briefly reported, followed by an interpretation of the results with reference to the literature reviewed and existing relevant research evidences. Finally, a brief summary of the findings was made.

#### 5.1. Summary of the Pilot Study

The pilot study is an important device for researchers to assess their research tools and discover the feasibility of the study. Burns (2000) explained that the purpose of the pilot study is not only to acquire data but also to learn how to acquire data properly and accurately. The pilot study was conducted in this research to discover weaknesses in the methodology and to test whether or not the research instruments such as the questionnaire, the semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall instruments were valid and reliable in order to answer the research questions. Bell (1993: 84) stated that:

*All data-gathering instruments should be piloted to test how long it takes recipients to complete them, to check that all questions and instructions are clear, and to enable you to remove any items that do not yield usable data.*

The pilot for the present study was conducted in three schools with a total of thirty-six teachers (thirty-one males and five females). All teachers from the representative secondary schools participated in filling out the survey questions, i.e., the teachers' questionnaire. Four other teachers were also selected from among the thirty-six based on their willingness to be involved

in further investigations with qualitative data such as interview, classroom observation and stimulated recall interview.

The questionnaire provided the researcher with a considerable amount of feedback. Firstly, the language used in the questionnaire instructions was considered complex and needed to be simplified. In addition, the wording in some items was ambiguous and needed clarification. Secondly, some items were seen as redundant, which could have had an effect on the respondents' views. At the same time, while reviewing the comments given during the pilot defense, the researcher deleted some items and added others. After the pilot defense, the researcher modified, revised, and changed some items in Part I, Section A. For example, items number 1, 3, and 10 from section A of the questionnaire were revised based on the comments given by the examiners. Besides, part of the teachers' materials use in the questionnaire were included under contextual factors based on the comments given by the pilot examiners. In the pilot study of qualitative tools such as semi-structured interviews and classroom observation, there were some points that had not been considered, which were presented as follows:

A few items of the interview were revised in terms of content and language clarity (e.g., item number 14 of the interview, which is about *how comfortable you feel about applying your vocabulary instruction knowledge in lessons with your students*). It was noticed as an ambiguous question for the respondents. Besides, excluding the probes, there were 20 questions in the semi-structured interview, and this number was too much to manage easily during the pilot. Thus, the researcher merged related items for the main study. Similarly, in the pilot study of observation, pre-informing the participant teachers in advance about the observation schedule was not considered. Thus, informing the participant teachers prior to the observation period was thought out in the main study.

The last insight gained from the pilot study was the use of the questionnaire as a preliminary data-gathering tool. Here, the result of the questionnaire helped the researcher develop questions for qualitative data-gathering instruments such as interview and stimulated recall interview. Thus, the same data collection procedures were employed for the main study.

As well, the data collection instruments employed in the pilot study were tested for their suitability in the analysis and investigation of teachers' perceptions, sources of knowledge development, knowledge and practice relationships, and factors affecting vocabulary teaching in vocabulary instruction. Thus, the results of the pilot study revealed the possibilities of investigating teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction using the given data collection instruments (questionnaire, semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interview).

Generally, the pilot study provided useful information for the researcher to improve as well as to go through different tools and procedures in the main study.

## **5.2. Teachers' Perception of Their Knowledge in EFL Vocabulary Instruction**

Based on the analysis of the findings in the quantitative parts, it is clear from the majority of the respondents' views that vocabulary is central to language and important to language learners. In the study, most participants confirmed that "learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning new vocabulary." In this regard, Gass (1999) states that learning a second language means learning its vocabulary, as vocabulary skills make a significant contribution to almost all aspects of second language proficiency. Besides underscoring the importance of vocabulary learning, Laufer (1997) stresses that vocabulary learning is at the heart of all language learning and language use. This indicates that vocabulary knowledge is central to communicative ability and the learning of a second language. Emphasizing its importance in language teaching, Nation (2001) further describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary: knowledge of vocabulary enables language use, and conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge.

The responses in the questionnaire were the same as the results from the interviews, with most teachers saying vocabulary is an important component in one's language learning and an element that is not neglected. To this angle, T3 in the interview confirmed that "vocabulary is very important, just as cells are very important for our bodies. The basis for our body is a cell. The basis for language is vocabulary" (SSI). This reveals that vocabulary is the core component of

language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write.

Vocabulary learning is a process of tasks that can be executed using a number of strategies applied for different purposes so as to help students have full knowledge of the words they need to learn. It is important for the teacher to teach effective and dynamic vocabulary learning strategies that will empower students to master the required tasks. Vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) are recognized as essential techniques that help students build up their vocabulary knowledge. In discussing the benefits of vocabulary learning strategies, Gu and Johnson (1996) stated that the most successful learners use a wide range of vocabulary learning strategies, which in turn helps them to be successful vocabulary learners as well as effective language users. To this end, the respondents confirmed that teaching vocabulary learning strategies to students should be the primary role of an EFL teacher. This entails the teacher's role in an EFL class: providing students with a variety of strategies and letting the students choose these strategies on their own and making them independent learners.

The use of vocabulary learning strategies is one crucial factor that affects the success of foreign vocabulary acquisition. Nation (2003: 159) advises the teacher to spend time on strategies that the learners can use to deal with words rather than spending time on individual words if he or she wants to help learners cope with vocabulary. Authorities (e.g., Hatch & Brown, 1995) have also expressed that the strategies of vocabulary learning that students use have a greater impact on the success of their vocabulary learning. As the material being read becomes increasingly difficult, there are many more new words to be explained. The teacher cannot and should not help students learn all of them. Allen even lists the unfortunate results of spending too much time explaining vocabulary in class.

*When the teacher spends an entire class period explaining vocabulary, there are three unfortunate results: At this point, 1) the students remain too dependent on the teacher; 2) opportunities for learning to use a dictionary are lost; and 3) no class time is left for the communicative use of the language. Allen (1983: 82).*

As no one wants this kind of result to happen, the effectiveness and use of vocabulary learning strategies become a crucial factor affecting the success of foreign vocabulary acquisition, especially for learners in an EFL context. Therefore, it is vital for students to have knowledge of vocabulary learning strategies to understand new words that are found in the text and to comprehend the concept of the text at large.

Teachers have a strong belief in the use of students' L1 when they find it hard to express key concepts and notions in English or feel students would be unable to understand the meaning of new words easily. In short, these teachers held the view that L1 could be used as a "scaffolding tool" in teaching English words. According to Cook et al. (1979), the learning of a first language is not simply a matter of learning syntax and vocabulary; rather, it is environmental, linguistic, as well as emotional. Thus, ignoring students' L1 would decrease the cognitive level of that learner. Swan (1985:96) believes that "when learning a new language, learners habitually attempt to find ways to comprehend the new structures in the L2 by trying to find the equivalents in their L1" This is the very logical reason for taking the L1 reference. Atkinson (1993) supports the use of L1 at inappropriate times and in inappropriate ways. He argues the teacher should find a balance and decide if the use of L1 is excessive or not. Moreover, Nation (2003) states that "whenever a teacher feels that a meaning-based L2 task might be beyond the capabilities of the learners, a small amount of L1 discussion can help overcome some of the obstacles" (p. 3). In other words, using L1 when necessary is helpful for both the teacher and the student to manage the target language vocabulary in class.

However, some respondents think that students' L1 should not be used in teaching vocabulary because students might develop the habit of waiting for translation now and then in class, which is not good for learning a foreign language and is not a must in vocabulary instruction. As one of the participants indicated, *when students leave the English classroom, they use their mother tongue to do their homework or other vocabulary activities since they think in L1 and respond in English. That is the basic problem in their vocabulary learning* (Teacher 8's interview). The researcher also thought that teachers are generally not familiar with methods for using L1 in a manner that would not hinder their students' vocabulary learning processes. The ongoing academic debate, together with heated arguments for and against the use of L1, has also produced some ideas on when and how to use L1 in vocabulary teaching. Accordingly, it is clear

from the findings that the use of students' L1 cannot be ignored or overused in EFL classes when teachers teach new words.

Teachers believe that vocabulary exercises should expose students to interactive activities and active learning. These teachers have high (strong) perceptions of learning vocabulary through meaningful communication. This positive perception of the use of a natural method of vocabulary learning through meaningful interaction is conducive to actual classroom practices. In connection to this idea, Richards and Rodgers (2001) pointed out that vocabulary teaching in meaningful communication focuses on meaning rather than form to achieve an effective message. Lack of context makes vocabulary learning difficult. Words taught in isolation are generally not remembered. Therefore, teaching words communicatively is very important for vocabulary learning. Students pay attention to the content and show an interest in interaction. Some related words are remembered effectively and firmly.

To this end Decarrico (2001) states that, words should not be learnt separately or by memorization without understanding. Moreover, "learning new words is a cumulative process, with words enriched and established as they are met again", Nation (2000, p.6). Thus, having a good knowledge of vocabulary is necessary to make students effective in different communication settings and help them express their ideas and feelings effectively.

As a matter of fact, learning vocabulary is one of the most important domains in the process of learning a language. Regarding its significance in learning a language, it can be said that limited knowledge of English vocabulary may affect the performance of English language learners at school. To this end, with positive feelings towards vocabulary teaching, teachers prefer the idea that "prime consideration should be given to vocabulary teaching in EFL classes." As Zhang Jianmin (2003) underscored, "Vocabulary is to the learner as building materials are to the architect, and without a large English vocabulary, no one can claim a good command of the language" (p. 53). This shows that vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication.

The importance of vocabulary is demonstrated daily, in and out of school. In the classroom, the highest-achieving students possess the most sufficient vocabulary. The teacher should prepare

and find out the appropriate techniques that will be implemented for the students. A good teacher should prepare himself or herself with various up-to-date techniques. Teachers need to be able to master the material in order to be understood by students and make them interested and happy in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Lewis (1993) went further to argue that *Lexis is the core or heart of a language and a human being's language is based on the vocabulary of that language. Vocabulary is the basic material to put even the grammar into patterns because there is no sentence, no essay, and even no language without vocabulary (p. 89)*. This implies that teaching vocabulary is one of the decisive factors for language learning, and it has to be given prime consideration in EFL classes. The teachers' views expressed in the questionnaire were consistent with their interview responses and were evident in observations made in their classroom practices.

Vocabulary instruction and learning are problematic for both learners and teachers because, traditionally, there has been a lack of attention to the best ways to impart vocabulary knowledge in the language classroom (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001). Recent research also indicates that teaching vocabulary may be problematic because many teachers are not confident about best practices in vocabulary teaching and, at times, do not know where to begin to form an instructional emphasis on word learning (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008). Furthermore, it is not clear in L2 vocabulary learning what rules should be applied or which vocabulary items should be learned first (Oxford 1990). In the same way, perceiving the open-end nature of a vocabulary system as a cause of the difficulty, participant teachers thought that "teaching vocabulary is the difficult part of EFL teaching." Thus, teachers should develop knowledge about best practices in vocabulary teaching and try to ease the problems associated with its learning on the part of their students. As far as teachers' difficulty with vocabulary instruction, an inconsistent relationship existed between the questionnaire findings and an in-depth study results (observation and stimulated recall interview). The results of the questionnaire indicated that teaching vocabulary is the most difficult aspect of EFL teaching. However, classroom observations and subsequent stimulated recall interview results revealed that teachers practiced vocabulary teaching differently than indicated in the questionnaire. From this angle, one of the observed and later interviewed teachers stated, "I think the lesson was successful... most students understood what I tried to teach. This is because I was checking what they were doing" (T1, SRI). This reveals

inconsistencies sometimes occurring between what teachers thought and what they actually practiced while teaching English vocabulary.

The respondents actually considered teaching vocabulary more important than teaching grammar. They think that vocabulary plays an important role in expressing ideas and thoughts. As Wilkins (1987) underscored, "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (p. 135). Therefore, to a great extent, students' abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all influenced by the vocabulary of the language. McCarthy (1990) also states that the single biggest component of any language course is vocabulary. No matter how well students learn grammar or master L2 sounds, meaningful communication in an L2 cannot take place unless they have words to express a wide range of meanings. Thus, if students do not have a vocabulary to work with, they cannot even learn grammar. As one participant stated, *I see vocabulary as the core of the language. Without vocabulary, language is nothing. If the students know the vocabulary of the language well enough, they can use it in grammar, speaking, and listening. Even in the mother tongue, let alone the foreign language, we should teach vocabulary because it is the core part of a language* (Teacher 6's interview).

It is clear from the above points that, to acquire a language, learning vocabulary is more compulsory than learning grammar.

Vocabulary learning is a difficult and lifelong task and vocabulary errors are most undesirable since they distort communication and can have a negative impact on the image of the learners. However, they are also positive signs of vocabulary development. We believe that teaching learners the origin and causes of their lexical misuse and how to remedy and prevent it, is a good start for successful and effective lexical acquisition (Hemchua & Schmitt, 2006). In line with correcting students' word problems, the majority of the respondents supported the idea that teachers should correct students' word problems in written form. This indicates teachers have a strong preference for the written form of word error correction rather than oral correction method, thinking that students will learn more if they have obtained written feedback from their teachers. Interestingly, recent studies (Sheen 2007; Ellis et al. 2008) have shown that when written correction feedback is "focused", it is effective in promoting acquisition. However, research on

error correction methods is not at all conclusive on the most effective method or technique for word error correction. As Diab (2006) recommends, if teachers and students have mutually exclusive ideas regarding correction techniques, the result will most likely be feedback that is ineffective and, in the worst case, discouraging for students who are learning second language vocabulary.

Participants contrasted the idea that students have to find vocabulary learning strategies that work best for them on their own and held the view that students do not have that much responsibility to find their own vocabulary learning strategies since they lack the capability and motivation to do that and need support from their teachers. From this angle, Allen (1983) makes the judicious point that, although students and teachers alike often think of vocabulary words as something that can be simply translated and memorized, this is not always the case. Learning vocabulary requires more than a dictionary. Vocabulary is complex in learning and holds linguistic features. Therefore, foreign language students need some sort of support and motivation from their teachers to make them want to learn new words. Thus, in order for students to be effective with their vocabulary knowledge, they need to work with their teachers. This will help them acquire more new words and different strategies that help them learn vocabulary through instruction aimed at increasing their vocabulary knowledge. On the other hand, some agreed with the view that students are responsible for their own learning and should react actively and find strategies that work best on their own to develop their vocabulary knowledge. Accordingly, Alqahtani (2015) underscored that learners, particularly as they get older and more familiar with the target subject, wish to be independent most of the time because they are aware that teachers' assistance might not be available when they need it. Thus, how their vocabulary learning strategies really influence vocabulary skills or how vocabulary skills even influence their vocabulary strategies is questionable.

Particular consideration should be given to the students' involvement in vocabulary classes since their active participation has changed their vocabulary knowledge development in EFL class. According to Fredericks, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004), it is important for students to experience learning engagement, for example during the learning of new vocabulary, so as to best improve their chances of noticing and retention. Regarding the statement, "Teachers shouldn't let students say anything in English until they know the words correctly", the majority of the participants

disagreed with the view, thinking it discourages students from participating in learning and developing their own vocabulary knowledge. In the classroom, students possess vocabulary when they are actively participating in learning and doing what is expected of them. Besides, teachers should motivate students because students learn more when they get encouragement from their teachers. Santrock (2011) states "motivation is a crucial aspect of learning" (p. 437). It is because students' motivation is a key factor that influences the rate and success of second or foreign language learning (Al-Tamimi & Munir Shuib, 2009). Thus, teachers shouldn't discourage students while they are making errors, expecting correction from their side. In most cases, since students learn more when they make errors and get corrections, teaching and learning vocabulary appears to some people as an easy task to do in order to get new language concepts. However, it is one of the most difficult things one can do, especially at a certain age (Pérez-Milans 2013).

Textbooks are an indispensable part of the world of education, as they serve numerous purposes. Teachers often become the embodiment of the curriculum. Learners not only constitute the body of the subject matter at their grade level but also provide structure and reinforcement to their learning by the way they are organized and illustrated (Miller & Berry, 1962). From this angle, most respondents in the study preferred to use students' textbooks as primary sources of knowledge in teaching vocabulary. They think students' textbooks are important for learning the language and developing a vocabulary. This implies the material prepared by experts in the area, considering the learners' grade level and their learning capacity. However, some of the respondents disagreed with the statement and believed that vocabulary should be taught using different teaching materials instead of concentrating mainly on students' textbooks. They further state that to provide additional knowledge, teachers should use supplementary materials (materials other than textbooks) when they are teaching English vocabulary. Using different materials, such as texts, songs, and audio-visuals, in the teaching and learning of vocabulary will make the lesson more meaningful and successful for language learners (Ruiz, 2015). In the same way, a difference existed between the findings in the questionnaire and an in-depth study regarding the existing material (students' textbooks) for teaching English vocabulary. In the questionnaire, the majority of respondents support the importance of the existing material for vocabulary teaching, whereas in an in-depth study, most respondents claim the existing material has its own drawbacks concerning vocabulary teaching. Supporting this view, T2 stresses that

*the text book is poor. In my opinion, the textbook is not enough and not prepared properly to teach vocabulary explicitly and implicitly. Moreover, the tasks needed to develop students' vocabulary knowledge are limited (see Teacher 2's interview).*

It is clear from this respondent's view that the textbook has limitations in improving students' vocabulary knowledge.

How best to prepare teachers for the daily responsibilities of classroom teaching is an ongoing debate in many places around the world. Language teaching differs in essence from teaching other subjects, especially in terms of the nature of the process where the means of instruction are carried out. Thus, EFL teachers' training programs are crucial for developing student teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge. Concerning the statement that "language courses teachers have taken at the college level were sufficient to teach vocabulary well," in the context of the current study, most respondents opposed the statement. Discerning the language courses teachers have taken at college has limited importance to vocabulary teaching since the courses are mainly centered on general pedagogy and linguistic elements. As teacher 6 noted, *the way I was taught vocabulary in my first language helped me teach vocabulary in my second language, but the courses I took have limited relevance for vocabulary teaching (teacher 6's interview).* The course where English as a second language is practiced is viewed as critical to the development of student teachers because it is their first hands-on experience with teaching (Al Sohmani, 2012). Thus, teacher trainees should obtain pedagogical and content knowledge courses that help them develop both macro and micro skills since they are helpful for teaching each language skill and language element in an EFL class.

### **5.3. Teachers' Sources of Knowledge Development**

In order to recognize teachers' classroom practices and the knowledge embodied in these practices, it is important to understand the sources of influence that shape teachers' conceptions of knowledge and practice (Tsui, 2003). To this end, EFL teachers' knowledge about vocabulary instruction is developed from a variety of sources.

The result of an in-depth study (the semi-structured interview) showed that the participants were mainly reliant on their own experience of teaching English. It is clear that experience is an

important source of influence on the development of teachers' knowledge in teaching English. The findings regarding the role of experience in shaping and developing teachers' knowledge replicate existing research evidence supporting experience as an indispensable source for the development of teachers' knowledge. For example, Verloop et al. (2001) maintain that input for the knowledge base of teaching can originate from practical experiences. Likewise, Grangeat (2008) highlighted that professional knowledge is shaped by professional lived experience at work. T1, who taught English for more than ten years in secondary schools, said, "With my long time teaching experience, I've gained good knowledge in delivering vocabulary and other language skills as well" (SSI).

Similar to the experience of teaching, the participants' formal high school learning and undergraduate education contributed to the development of their English teaching. One of the participants stated, "I would like to appreciate my former English teachers. I have got a very important skill from my high school and preparatory school teachers" (Teacher 7's SSI). These teachers developed knowledge of English teaching from their former schooling, which helped them teach English in EFL classes. It is clear that experience and apprenticeships of observation are the most important sources of influence on the development of teachers' knowledge in teaching English. Thus, these sources could make teachers good at teaching language skills and language elements, including vocabulary, in EFL classes.

In line with contributing sources for teaching vocabulary, the response in the questionnaire was almost the same as the results from the interviews, with most teachers saying teaching experience (82.1%), teachers' disciplinary background (73.6%), and their apprenticeship of observation (62.3%) are major sources of knowledge in vocabulary instruction. Participants explained that by teaching, they gained more knowledge about how to teach vocabulary and assess vocabulary learning. As regards their content knowledge (mainly referring to their English proficiency), the participants tended to reveal that their teaching experience, college training, and former schooling contributed a lot to the growth of their vocabulary teaching knowledge.

There were other sources revealed to be useful for the development of the various areas of teachers' knowledge in teaching English vocabulary. To this end, the teacher participants stated researches they are doing in the area and the students' feedback as an important source of their

knowledge development. On the other hand, most teacher participants did not seem to value training or seminars held by the ministry of education or zonal education bureau as a source of their knowledge. It seems that those seminars were not relevant to their teaching and research interests, or that they were quite general and not specific about how to teach English vocabulary.

The data on the questionnaire also showed that about 52 % of the respondents perceived the courses they had taken at teachers' college had some contribution to teaching language skills and language elements, including vocabulary, yet the courses focus on general pedagogy and linguistic elements. Besides, it is important to note that in the interviews, teachers' own sources of knowledge in teaching English also impacted their knowledge development in vocabulary instruction. For example, T2 recalled his experience of teaching English and how this source helped him with vocabulary teaching, saying, *your teaching depends on your sources of knowledge. The more sources of knowledge you have, the better you will be at teaching in the classroom. Thus, getting various knowledge sources has an impact on your vocabulary teaching* (SSI).

The findings from the survey, both on teachers' perceptions (51.9%) and actual vocabulary teaching practices (73.6%), respectively, showed the knowledge teachers possess at college or university in their teacher education program plays an important role in their vocabulary teaching. However, some interview results revealed that the teacher participants did not seem to value the coursework of EFL teacher education as an important source of their vocabulary knowledge. The teachers' views expressed in the interviews were inconsistent with their questionnaire responses. As one of the interviewed participants said, *the teachers' training lessons has no influence on my vocabulary teaching because we haven't taken any specific lesson regarding vocabulary teaching* (Teacher 3's SSI). In the participants' views, the major reasons for this perception, as reported in the analysis section, include: The teacher education program aims to develop teachers' disciplinary knowledge in linguistics, language teaching approaches, and other related courses. They argue this stage of education has less impact on their vocabulary teaching. Yet, T2 conceived that the courses he took had some impact on his vocabulary instruction. As he underscored, "Though there is no specific course on how to teach vocabulary, the general methodology courses play an important role in teaching vocabulary" (SSI). T5 supports this view

and puts his outlook into words by saying, "It has a contribution, but most of the time we depend on our experience" (SSI).

Generally, the three most frequently mentioned sources for vocabulary teaching were: teachers' teaching experience (the knowledge teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers), teachers' disciplinary background (the knowledge teachers possess at a college or university in their teacher education program), and apprenticeship of observation (the prior experience of teachers as learners). This finding echoed other researchers' studies concerning ESL teacher knowledge (e.g., Tsui, 2003) and EFL teacher knowledge (e.g., Gao, 2007).

#### **5.4. Teachers' Knowledge and Their Classroom Practices**

The relationship between teachers' knowledge and their classroom practices was investigated through quantitative and qualitative studies. Teachers' knowledge elicited through both the questionnaire and an in-depth study revealed that teachers' practices were consistent with their knowledge. There were, however, a few mismatches for various reasons. Thus, in this section, the major findings addressing these issues are discussed in the following paragraphs.

As the results reported in the analysis section indicate, participants use a variety of techniques to make their teaching effective so that their students understand what they teach about vocabulary. In order to give an overall representation of vocabulary-related techniques influencing instructors' pedagogical knowledge for their teaching, participant teachers outlined certain techniques they employed, especially those they thought to be effective in developing their learners' vocabulary knowledge. Some of the techniques include sentence construction techniques using the new words (see episodes 1 and 2); finding synonyms and antonyms for the new words; employing context clues; and allowing students to guess the meanings of the new words (see episode 3). From this angle, it is difficult to single out one specific technique as being especially beneficial for students due to the number of techniques teachers use. However, as one of the participant teachers says, *my ideal way of teaching vocabulary is to put words in their best context. At that point, the students don't need a dictionary. They don't need to ask their friends or go anywhere. So they simply try to answer questions based on context* (T3; SSI).

The findings from the questionnaire, both in teachers' strategy use (66.9%) and actual classroom practices (62.3%), showed that the respondents' consent providing contextual clues to familiarize students with unfamiliar words was high. This means that one way to foster vocabulary development and retention is to teach words in the best possible context, where students can use contextual clues to apply word meaning to unknown words. This type of contextual word teaching is effective, and students learn from context by making connections between the new word and the context in which it appears. Similarly, the majority of interviewed teachers believed that using a context approach was preferable to other strategies for vocabulary teaching.

Besides, the majority of the shared teaching techniques indicated in the interviews were observed in the teachers' pedagogical practices (see the classroom observation report). A commonly used strategy for teaching vocabulary reported by the participants in the questionnaire was providing contextual clues to familiarize students with unfamiliar words. This instructional strategy was matched with their pre-observation interview results and was reflected during observation sessions. The way they taught vocabulary was to approach it essentially through situations where students could use context clues in applying word meaning to unknown words. This methodology is also supported by Thornbury (2002), who suggests that placing words in context increases the chances of learners' understanding not only their meaning but also their typical environments, such as their associated collocations or grammatical structures.

Teachers who answered the questionnaire claimed that vocabulary should be taught explicitly, and the result in Part II, Section 2 (teachers' strategy use) of the questionnaire is also comparable with the result obtained in self-reported practices in Part II, B1, of the questionnaire for vocabulary teaching, which is that about 74 % of the teachers said they use explicit instruction techniques, such as explaining word form, word meaning, or word use, when they are teaching vocabulary. It is clear that vocabulary is best taught explicitly, which is also what many researchers of second language acquisition promote. Explicit vocabulary teaching is the best way for students to acquire new words (Lightbown and Spada 2006; Milton 2009; Allan 2010; Schmitt 2010). As a consequence, the responses in the questionnaire are consistent with the results obtained through classroom observations, where most teachers in a classroom use explicit techniques of vocabulary teaching. On the other hand, participants tended to employ other methods of vocabulary teaching, which included an integrated approach (teaching vocabulary

with language skills and language elements), a combination of the two methods (explicit and implicit), or using explicit or implicit methods for vocabulary teaching separately. This implies that there is no one and only best method for teaching vocabulary and teachers use a variety of methods. Qualitative data obtained from the open-ended parts of the questionnaire also indicates that most teachers preferred both explicit and implicit methods of vocabulary teaching. Besides, compared to the two methods, i.e., explicit and implicit, they primarily preferred to use an explicit method of vocabulary teaching. As one questionnaire respondent stated, both *explicit and implicit methods of vocabulary teaching are important for students' word development. However, compared to the two, I prefer the explicit method of vocabulary teaching because students in our school don't have a chance to go outside and read different materials to develop their word power; rather, they are highly dependent on classroom vocabulary learning* (Q).

Yet, inconsistency also existed between the findings in the questionnaire and in an in-depth study in line with using explicit, implicit, or both ways of teaching vocabulary. In the questionnaire, it seems that the majority of the teachers preferred an explicit method of vocabulary teaching, whereas in an in-depth study, most teachers decided to integrate both methods (explicit and implicit) in their vocabulary teaching. Implicit (incidental) learning of vocabulary may be a useful way of acquiring vocabulary for most advanced learners, but explicit (intentional) instruction is also essential for second-language learners whose reading ability is limited. In fact, there is already evidence from recent studies of second language learners that a combined approach is superior to incidental or intentional vocabulary learning alone (Zimmerman 1997).

The results of the study also reflected the relationship between teachers' mental constructs and what they did when they were teaching vocabulary. The teachers' knowledge has been found to interact mutually with their pedagogical practices. To this end, some of the observation results illustrate that teachers' teaching about a word shows consistency between their knowledge and their classroom practices. The teacher presented what he knew and prepared for the day's lesson, and the students also pursued the lesson and practiced what they were told to do by their teacher (see episode 4), and this was revealed in a subsequent stimulated recall interview with the teacher. For instance, the observed teacher mentioned in his post-observation interview, "Okay, the lesson was very interesting as you observed and also based on our student's performance, yeah, that was good, and I did what I had in my mind" ( T8, SRI).

Thus, classroom observation results and stimulated recall interviews revealed that teachers' practices were consistent with their knowledge. This shows the relationship between a teacher's mental construct and his practice was reflected while he was teaching vocabulary. That is, his knowledge guides his pedagogical practices. Thus, the teacher's knowledge and his pedagogical practices are revealed to be congruent. Similar to T8's observation result, T3 asserted that "I am implementing what I know. That means the two are congruent, and they match. The implementation and the knowledge go in line" (SSI). This finding is similar to many previous studies that have concluded that language teachers' knowledge is consistent with their practices (e.g., Borg, 2011; Farrell & Ives, 2015).

On the other hand, various detailed occurrences have also been identified, indicating the variations that exist between teachers' use of their vocabulary instruction knowledge in lessons with their students. It was observed in episode 5 that most students in the classroom are passive learners and only a few of them are actively participating in the classroom. Thus, inconsistencies have been identified between teachers' knowledge and their vocabulary teaching in the classroom. The inconsistencies created between what teachers do and what they know are due to learners' lack of ability, their lack of motivation, and other factors that intervene in the process. Borg (2006) refers to this sort of relationship and notes that teachers' stated cognitions are not always reliable as a basis for their actions, and a mismatch between teachers' knowledge and practices has been detected in some empirical studies too (e.g., Pajares, 1992; Roothoof, 2014). Other studies have also found that language teachers' knowledge is occasionally inconsistent with their practices in some aspects for a range of reasons (e.g., Basturkmen et al., 2004; Phipps & Borg, 2009).

Generally, the method of revealing the relationship between teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction in the context of this study brought relevant research evidence concerning this issue. The rationalized practices evident in this study also bear some resemblance to the account provided by Hegarty (2000), viewing teaching as a form of intelligent behavior and creative application of knowledge. Thus, it is accepted that teachers' knowledge plays an important role in their practices and guides their classroom instructions (Borg, 2015; Farrell & Ives, 2015).

## 5.5. Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching

Borg (2006) stated that the context in which teachers work has a major impact on their knowledge and practice relationships, which may have both negative and positive effects on their performance in the classroom. This was also confirmed by the teachers themselves, particularly when they explained the reasons behind their practices. Regarding this study, teachers' reflections on their practices and the context of their work informed their knowledge of the teaching and learning of vocabulary. Therefore, these teachers often considered the context as a factor that they had to deal with. As one of the participants indicated, *the school environment plays a very significant role in vocabulary teaching. Private schools are better because they have English-speaking days where they practice language skills, but in government or public schools, there is a great problem in teaching vocabulary and other skills as well* (T5's SSI).

As the above quotation indicates, teachers perceive the school environment as an influential factor, and they blame it for the difficulty they experience in teaching English in general and vocabulary instruction in particular. Participants suggested that English teachers should be supported by administrators such as directors and coordinators in facilitating the teaching and learning process within their school environment. This may lead us to speculate that these teachers sort out vocabulary teaching practices according to what they perceive to be feasible and appropriate in their school context. This situation is echoed in Nunan and Lamb's (2001) argument that head teachers are expected to play a more effective role in and out of school to improve the teaching and learning process. These limitations should be considered because the school context and the culture of learning contribute to the development of teachers' knowledge and practices.

In the same respect, a set of challenges affected the participants to realize their knowledge into action during vocabulary instruction. Factors such as lack of resources, students' lack of capacity, their lack of motivation, large class sizes, and little time given for vocabulary lessons in the textbook are some of the challenges. Besides, these challenges are attributed to the inconsistent relationship between teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. As one of the participant teachers reveals, "There are many factors that make knowledge and practice relationships not congruent. Among them problems of resource, students' lack of capacity and

large class size are the major ones" (T2's SSI). Such findings are also in alignment with what Borg (1997) has referred to as contextual factors. It also seems that the findings of this study in terms of challenging factors can give a picture of the barriers whose removal would possibly cause vocabulary instruction to be effective in an EFL secondary school context.

Similarly, the findings revealed that teachers' vocabulary teaching was influenced by the context in which they lived and worked. Participants state that schools in different contexts included students with different levels of English ability and learning habits. These differences among learners could negatively or positively affect teachers' performance and student achievement. This was clear from the teachers' responses in the study and confirmed that teachers would reshape their teaching based on their students' level of language proficiency and learning habits. This issue has also been acknowledged by a participant, who pointed out that *teachers should know the context. They have to know their students; they have to know the school environment, the availability of materials, and the culture of the students. Knowing the context is very important. I know the students' potential, so I tried to reshape the lesson based on their knowledge and background* (T3's SSI). Therefore, participants stressed that this issue should be considered by the teachers, and they have to restructure their vocabulary teaching accordingly.

As well, the teachers in this study also indicated other constraints that have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching. Constraints such as students' lack of reading to improve their vocabulary knowledge; teachers' lack of motivation due to their low salary income; and students' high attachment to their mother tongue in EFL classes are a few of the constraints. In line with students' high attachment to their mother tongue, teachers believed that giving the L1 equivalent to new vocabulary items was not an effective instructional technique. However, its sensible use is important to make EFL vocabulary teaching more effective. This agrees with Lamb's (2007) conclusion that L1 could be used strategically by the teacher for learning to occur successfully. Besides, constraints such as exams mainly centered on assessing grammar and reading skills rather than vocabulary, the limitation of English as an instructional language only, and a lack of pre- and in-service training about vocabulary teaching affect teachers' knowledge and practice congruence in vocabulary instruction. These findings lend support to the literature review that demonstrates that contextual factors impede the congruence of teachers' practices and their knowledge (Phipps & Borg, 2009; Basturkmen, 2012).

Generally, these findings revealed that participants perceived different factors to have an impact on their vocabulary teaching and that these contribute to the inconsistent relationship between knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. These challenging constraints can also illustrate the picture of the problems. Reducing these constraints would possibly allow vocabulary instruction to be effective in a secondary school context.

### **Summary of the chapter**

In this chapter, the findings of the study are discussed in relation to context and existing research evidence. Four themes are constructed. The first dealt with perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about vocabulary instruction. The second theme outlined EFL teachers' sources of knowledge development in vocabulary instruction. Then, the relationship between teachers' knowledge and practice was revealed based on practical examples evident in the data. The last section dealt with factors affecting the practice of teachers' knowledge in vocabulary instruction.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

This chapter begins by providing a summary of the entire research process. It also presents the conclusions by revealing the major findings of the study. It then presents a set of recommendations for a future research agenda in teachers' knowledge and practices. Finally, based on the findings of the study, certain implications are outlined.

#### **6.1. SUMMARY**

The purpose of this study was to investigate secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction. Studying teachers' knowledge seems to carry an understanding of the role of the teacher in the process of teaching and learning. However, such a study needs to be considered in light of the context in which it is carried out. This is because what teachers perceive, the sources that help them develop their knowledge, what they know and practice, and factors affecting their teaching are related to the context in which they realize the process.

Thus, to get an understanding of the subject, the literature in the area was reviewed, and it mainly focused on two key concepts, i.e., teachers' knowledge and practices and vocabulary teaching. The literature also goes through the theoretical framework of the study and major themes indicating teachers' knowledge and practices in various curricular areas. However, little research has been conducted to examine EFL teachers' knowledge of vocabulary teaching. Thus, this study aims to fill the research gap and expand teachers' knowledge of vocabulary teaching in EFL class situations.

Within the explanatory research design, a mixed-method approach was used in the study. To collect data, a triangulation of methods was used, including a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall. Information on and justification of these

methods, including the participants, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations, were also presented.

Based on the quantitative components of the study, an analysis of EFL teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching, strategies used by teachers, and factors influencing vocabulary teaching were presented using frequency and percentages. Secondly, teachers' self-reported practices about vocabulary teaching and the sources of teachers' knowledge development were also discussed through multiple-choice questionnaire items. Finally, open-ended questions were accessed to gather replies from teachers about their perceptions, their vocabulary teaching techniques, and other factors affecting vocabulary teaching. Similarly, a qualitative study was conducted on teachers' perceptions, their sources of knowledge, knowledge and practice relationships, and factors affecting vocabulary teaching through interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall interview.

The research findings revealed that teachers held positive perceptions of their knowledge in vocabulary teaching. It is clear from the respondents' views that vocabulary is central to language and is regarded as an indispensable element in their instructional processes. Besides, the results indicate that teaching vocabulary learning strategies to students should be the primary role of an EFL teacher. This thought was affirmed by participants in both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study. The finding also verified that teachers develop their sources of knowledge from their experience, their disciplinary backgrounds, and apprenticeships of observations. Another noteworthy finding in this study is that teachers' knowledge was generally consistent with their classroom practices; however, a few inconsistencies were also noticed. At the same time, the results identified contextual factors that contributed to the mismatches between teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction. These contextual factors include students' lack of ability, their lack of motivation, lack of resources, large class size, teachers' lack of vocabulary teaching training and others. The study contributes to and extends previous research on language teachers' knowledge and practices through a mixture of quantitative and in-depth research findings.

## 6.2. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate secondary school EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. This study yielded important findings about teachers' perceptions, sources of knowledge, knowledge and practice relationships, as well as factors affecting vocabulary teaching. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that:

1. Teachers generally held positive perceptions about their knowledge of vocabulary teaching and learning. It is clear from the respondents' view that vocabulary is central to language and has critical importance both in EFL learning and teaching. In the study, most participants confirmed that 'learning a foreign language is the same as learning the vocabulary of the language'. This thought was affirmed by participants in both the quantitative and in-depth aspects of the study. Besides, the finding revealed that teaching vocabulary learning strategies to students should be the primary role of an EFL teacher. This implies that the teacher's role in an EFL class is to provide students with a variety of strategies and make them independent learners. In addition, teachers held the view that L1 could be used as a "scaffolding tool" in teaching English vocabulary. However, some respondents think that students' L1 should not be employed in teaching vocabulary because students might develop the habit of using it now and then in class, which is not good for learning a foreign language and is not a must in vocabulary instruction. Though it is hard to implement communicative language teaching practice in our context, teachers have strong perceptions of learning vocabulary through meaningful communication. These teachers believe that vocabulary exercises should expose students to interactive activities and active learning. Likewise, with positive feelings towards vocabulary teaching, teachers support the idea that 'prime consideration should be given to vocabulary teaching in EFL classes'. Besides, they reflected that teaching vocabulary is more important than teaching grammar, and they stressed that to acquire a language, learning vocabulary is more compulsory than learning grammar. In the same way, most respondents in the study preferred to use students' textbooks as primary sources of knowledge in teaching vocabulary. However, some of them believed vocabulary should be taught using different teaching materials instead of limiting students only to their textbooks. What is more, most in-depth study respondents showed disagreement about

the instructions they received in an EFL teacher education program as the courses are mainly centered on general pedagogy and linguistic elements, and they held the view that trainees should get specific courses that help them teach each language skill and language element, including vocabulary, in EFL classes.

2. Professional knowledge is shaped by professional lived experience at work. Participant teachers revealed that experience is an important source of influence on the development of teachers' knowledge in teaching English. Thus, relevant work experience helped teachers a lot to teach all language skills and language elements, including vocabulary, in EFL classes. To this end, the most frequently mentioned knowledge sources for vocabulary teaching were: teachers' teaching experience (the knowledge teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers), teachers' disciplinary background (the knowledge teachers possess at college or university in their teacher education program), and apprenticeship of observation (the prior experience of teachers as learners). There were also other sources revealed to be useful for the development of the various areas of teachers' knowledge in teaching English vocabulary. These include research teachers are doing in the area, students' feedback, and peer learning.
3. Teachers outlined certain techniques they employed, especially those they thought to be effective in developing their learners' vocabulary knowledge. Some of the techniques include sentence construction techniques, finding synonyms and antonyms for the new words, employing context clues, and allowing students to guess the meanings of the new words. The majority of the shared teaching techniques indicated in the interviews were observed in the teachers' pedagogical practices. A commonly used strategy for teaching vocabulary reported by the participants was providing contextual clues to familiarize students with unfamiliar words. This instructional strategy was consistent with their pre-observation interviews and classroom observation results.

The results of the study also reflected the relationship between teachers' knowledge and practices when they were teaching vocabulary. These relationships could be consistent or inconsistent. However, in most cases, teachers in the study were able to apply their

knowledge of vocabulary instruction in the classroom. This means their knowledge guides their pedagogical practices. There were, however, a few mismatches for various reasons.

4. Teachers' vocabulary teaching was influenced by the context in which they lived and worked. Hence, the results of the study informed teachers that they would reshape their vocabulary teaching based on their students' level of language proficiency and learning habits. Thus, the findings exhibited several factors that could obstruct vocabulary teaching and learning when teachers were dealing with their instructional practices. These factors include an unfavorable school environment, lack of resources, students' limited capacity, a large class size, and teachers' lack of vocabulary teaching training. Besides, factors such as students' lack of motivation, little time given for vocabulary lessons, students' high attachment to their mother tongue, and exams mainly centered on assessing grammar skills affect teachers' vocabulary teaching.

### **6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study offers the following recommendations for teaching English as a foreign language in general and vocabulary teaching in particular.

EFL teaching means teaching all language skills and language elements without overemphasizing some skills at the expense of others. This is because all of them are important for language learning. A change in attitude should come first towards teaching and learning EFL vocabulary, listening and speaking skills and including these skills in the exam system. This will provide a motive for teachers and learners to find value. Language is a whole system. Unless all language skills and language elements are taught and tested in the system, the overemphasis on teaching and assessing grammar and reading at the expense of other skills and language elements affects the entire system.

Teacher educators have a responsibility to investigate whether and to what extent their course content addresses teacher candidates' needs and what difficulties the candidates may experience in EFL teaching, including vocabulary instruction. In this sense, teacher education should include explicit courses in terms of how to learn and teach vocabulary through the introduction

of appropriate approaches and methodologies in teachers' college learning. Therefore, teacher educators themselves need to reconsider their teaching and make needed changes in teachers' training.

The findings reveal some inconsistent relationships between knowledge and practice resulting from contextual factors such as students' lack of capacity, their lack of motivation, lack of resources and large class sizes. Thus, providing teachers with appropriate facilities and resources leads to effective teaching and learning, and learners who receive good instruction and practice regularly can quickly improve their knowledge of vocabulary in an EFL class.

## **6.4. IMPLICATIONS**

This research has the following implications, which are presented in terms of its contributions to research methods in the field of teachers' knowledge and practices for English teaching in general and vocabulary instruction in particular.

### **6.4.1. Methodological Implications**

This study has contributed to the field of research methodology. Consistent reference has been made in the literature review to the methodological gaps that this study was intended to fill. First, the research design used in this study has promoted deeper investigation into teachers' classroom practices and their knowledge in order to gain insight into the way vocabulary instruction is practiced in their classes. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this study has been carried out in a context that has little research in the area of teachers' knowledge and practices. Thus, it could serve as a basis for further studies to be undertaken regarding vocabulary or other language skills in different areas.

In the studies reviewed, the most common research method used was qualitative research in nature, using interviews and classroom observation as research instruments. To this end, the researcher believes it is important to do research and investigate what teachers know and how they use their knowledge in actual classroom practices, employing mixed methods designs with various data gathering instruments. Thus, the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to

collect data in this study serves to elicit information on a broad scale and to investigate EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in depth.

#### **6.4.2. Pedagogical Implications**

The study offered a clear picture of how EFL teachers were able to put their knowledge about teaching vocabulary into practice. Although the findings of this study relate particularly to teachers in Addis Ababa, where the study was conducted, many of these implications may be relevant to other educational contexts. This means that the study makes a contribution to understand the relationship between teachers' knowledge and practice in different contexts when teachers teach English vocabulary at various levels in different areas.

The findings of this study also provide significant implications for and insights into the relationship between what EFL teachers know and do about teaching English in general and vocabulary instruction in particular. This may lead to changes in teachers' existing knowledge in order to contribute to their professional development. Much of what has been investigated in this study could be used to support and improve teachers' activities in class. These findings may help educators interested in the teaching and learning of English vocabulary know to what extent their recommendations are valid at the present time before suggesting essential changes and organizing training for secondary school teachers. Thus, this may help both teachers and the educational authorities themselves.

#### **6.5. Suggestions for Further Research**

This study investigated teachers' knowledge and practices of vocabulary teaching in an EFL secondary school context. As noted earlier, there are recommendations for further research into EFL teachers' knowledge of vocabulary teaching. Firstly, to increase the generalizability of the study, the research sample should not be limited to the city administration of Addis Ababa secondary schools. If teachers from other areas can be included, the research result will be more representative. Secondly, research that investigates students' knowledge in relation to teachers' knowledge about vocabulary teaching may be useful. Thus, understanding the relationship between teachers' knowledge and students' knowledge may provide insights into influences on students' vocabulary learning outcomes.

## **Summary of the chapter**

The study has made a significant contribution to the state of knowledge about EFL teachers' knowledge and practice in teaching English vocabulary. It provided a picture of teachers' perceptions, teachers' sources of knowledge development, the relationship between teachers' knowledge and practice, and the factors affecting vocabulary teaching. It is hoped that further studies such as this can expand our knowledge of foreign language vocabulary teaching.

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# APPENDICES

**Appendix-A: Teachers' Questionnaire**  
**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES**  
**JOURNALISM & COMMUNICATION**  
**Department of Foreign Languages & Literature**  
**Teachers' Questionnaire**

Dear teacher, this questionnaire is designed for study purposes. It has nothing to do with an evaluative purpose. Your genuine and honest responses have determined the values for the success of this study. The information gained from this questionnaire will be used as part of a Ph.D. thesis at Addis Ababa University's department of foreign languages and literature. Thus, you are kindly requested to respond to the questions frankly and honestly.

Thanks so much for your cooperation in advance.

**Part I: Personal Information**

**Please put a tick mark (✓) in the given box as appropriate to you.**

**Sex:** Male       Female   
**Age:** 20-24       25-29       30-34       35-39       40-44   
45 or more

**Qualifications:** Diploma       BA       MA       If any other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Experience:** 1- 5 years       6 -10 years       11 - 15 years       16 -20   
21 and above

**Part II: The Close-Ended Section**

**A. Please read each statement carefully and put a tick mark (√) as appropriate to you.**

<b>I</b>	<b>TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Can't Decide</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1	Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning new vocabularies.					
2	Teaching vocabulary learning strategies to students should be the primary role of an EFL teacher.					
3	Teachers should use students L1 when they teach new words.					
4	Vocabulary is best learned naturally through meaningful communication.					
5	Vocabulary teaching has to be given prime consideration in EFL classes.					
6	Teaching vocabulary is the difficult part of an EFL teaching.					
7	Teaching vocabulary is more important than teaching grammar.					
8	Teachers should correct students' word problems in written form rather than in oral way.					
9	Students have to find vocabulary learning strategies that work best for them on their own.					
10	Teachers shouldn't let students say anything in English until students know the words correctly.					
11	Teachers should use students' textbook as the primary source of activities for vocabulary teaching.					
12	Language courses teachers have taken at college level were sufficient to teach vocabulary well.					
<b>II</b>	<b>TEACHERS' STRATAGIES USE</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Can't Decide</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
13	Using EFL vocabulary teaching strategies such as examples is better for students' learning than translating the meaning.					

14	Teachers should make an effort to introduce vocabulary in a way that helps students to memorize new words.					
15	Teachers should focus on function based and meaning based vocabulary teaching techniques than memory based.					
16	Teachers should use an explicit instruction technique when they teach English vocabulary.					
17	Teachers should practice task-based vocabulary teaching strategies to enhance their students' vocabulary knowledge through different tasks.					
18	Teachers should provide contextual clues to familiarize students with unfamiliar words.					
19	Teachers should teach vocabulary in context than providing a translation.					
20	Teachers should tell students to work in pairs/groups to complete vocabulary activities.					
21	Teachers should tell students to learn words by consulting a dictionary.					
22	Teachers should teach association, for example, by identifying synonyms and antonyms or by letting students to infer					
23	Teachers should use communicative activities (information-gap, games, role-plays, etc.) for helping students learn vocabulary better.					
24	Teachers should teach vocabulary with collocations or lexical chunks					
25	Teachers should give reading, writing speaking and listening activities using new words.					
26	Teachers should use follow-up activities to review new vocabulary items					
<b>III</b>	<b>FACTORS AFFECTING VOCABULARY TEACHING</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Can't Decide</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
27	Vocabulary instruction time is too limited to teach vocabulary well.					
28	The class size is too big to manage teachers' vocabulary teaching practices.					

29	Students' English proficiency level is too low to apply teachers intended vocabulary instruction techniques.					
30	Students' lack of interest (motivation) to learn about new words affects their vocabulary knowledge.					
31	The exams are focused more on assessing grammar, reading and writing skills than vocabulary.					
32	Teachers shouldn't get training related to vocabulary teaching through which they develop practical guidelines.					
33	Teachers should not use emerging technologies (such as computers, mobiles and others) to teach vocabulary.					
34	The existing English language materials and resources do not encourage teachers to apply their vocabulary teaching purpose.					

**A. Please circle the appropriate choices to answer the following questions according to your own vocabulary teaching experience.**

**1. How do you practically teach English vocabulary in your class? (More than 1 answer is allowed; however, please be noted that some items are contradictory in meaning and you cannot choose both of them).**

- a. I use implicit instruction techniques on a case-by-case or ad hoc (informal) basis.
- b. I advise learners to learn vocabulary outside of a class or use dictionaries.
- c. I use explicit instruction techniques, such as explaining word form, word meaning or word use when teaching vocabulary.
- d. I use association, for example, by identifying productive prefixes-and postfixes, synonyms or antonyms or by letting students to infer.
- e. Using different vocabulary teaching strategies such as memorization, collocations, translation etc. I teach some new words first and then give some activities for practice.
- f. I encourage students to discover strategies of new word learning for themselves.
- g. I provide students with a lot of opportunities to use new words in context.
- h. Since some words are difficult for students, I use students' L1 to explain the meaning.
- i. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_



3. What factors affect you not to put your knowledge of vocabulary teaching in practice?

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**Appendix-B: Teachers' Interview Protocol**  
**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES**  
**JOURNALISM & COMMUNICATION**  
**Department of Foreign Languages & Literature**  
**Interview Protocol for the Main Study**

**Teachers' Interview Guide**

The main purpose of this guide is to gather information about EFL secondary school teachers' knowledge and practice in vocabulary instruction. The interview guide is an outline. The interviewer is expected to adjust the questions depending on the situation. Thus, it helps to extend or elaborate, to provide detail, and to clarify or qualify various aspects in the process of data gathering.

**Interviewee's Pseudonym** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sts. Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Qualification: Diploma ( ) Degree ( ) MA ( ) or Other ( ). Put a tick mark (√).**

**Years of experience in teaching English** \_\_\_\_\_

NO	Area to be Explored	Likely Questions
1	<b>Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching</b>	1. Why did you become an EFL teacher? 2. How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language? Probe: Is it possible not to teach vocabulary? 3. Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary? 4. Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary? Probe: Is there any special training you had taken about vocabulary teaching in your college or university learning? 5. What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary? 6. How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?

<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Teachers' knowledge Source development in vocabulary instruction</b></p>	<p>7. Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?</p> <p>8. What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?</p> <p>9. Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?</p> <p>10. What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?</p> <p>11. Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? (If so, give specific examples?).</p> <p>12. Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Knowledge and practice relationship</b></p>	<p>13. Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?</p> <p>14. Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught? Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of class?</p> <p>15. Generally, do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Factors that affect vocabulary teaching</b></p>	<p>16. How do you describe your school environment? What effect does this have on your vocabulary teaching?</p> <p>17. What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent? Probe: Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc.?</p> <p>18. Do you believe your knowledge about context shapes the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?</p> <p>19. What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?</p>

**Appendix-C: Teachers' Observation Checklist**

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES  
JOURNALISM & COMMUNICATION  
Department of Foreign Languages & Literature**

**Observation Checklist for the Study**

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade and section \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher to be observed (Pseudonym) \_\_\_\_\_ Number of students \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Type of observation \_\_\_\_\_

Duration of the class \_\_\_\_\_ Observer's name \_\_\_\_\_

T= Teacher

N O	Vocabulary Teaching Practices Planned to be Observed	T 1		T 2		T 3		T 4		T 5		T 6		T 7		T 8	
		Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No
1	introduce the objective of vocabulary teaching lesson.																
2	write the new words on the chalk board and explain with examples using a context.																
3	teach meaning of a word through synonyms and antonyms.																

N O	Vocabulary Teaching Practices Planned to be Observed	T 1		T 2		T 3		T 4		T 5		T 6		T 7		T 8	
		Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	No	Y e s	N o	Y e s	No	Y e s	No
4	teach students to recognize word parts like prefix, suffix, and root with their meaning																
5	give contextual clues or guessing activities.																
6	give analyzing or word formation activities.																
7	teach students vocabulary learning strategies.																
8	give them chances to participate in vocabulary learning activities.																
9	encourage them to use the new words in speaking and writing.																
10	give them appropriate amount of practice.																
11	guide and supervise them during group or pair works.																
12	monitor students' performance to see that it is adequate.																
13	teach them the meaning of words, their pronunciation, usage, spelling etc.																

	<b>Does the teacher...</b>	Y	No	Y	No	Y	No	Y	No	Y	N	Y	No	Y	N	Y	No
		e		e		e		e		e	o	e		e	o	e	
		s		s		s		s		s		s		s		s	
14	encourage students to use their own strategies to learn vocabulary.																
15	encourage them to use contextual clues to pick up the meaning of unfamiliar words.																
16	encourage students to read different texts to improve their vocabulary.																
17	use pictures/real objects/mime in vocabulary teaching.																
18	use students L1 to give them the meaning of unfamiliar words.																
19	give contextual clues, definition, restatement, cause and effect, compare and contrast, examples etc.) to teach the meaning of unfamiliar words.																
20	use supplementary materials (i.e., materials other than the textbook) for vocabulary teaching.																

## **Appendix-D: Teachers' Stimulated Recall Guide Questions**

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES**  
**JOURNALISM & COMMUNICATION**  
**Department of Foreign Languages & Literature**

### **Teachers' Stimulated Recall Guide Questions**

1. In light of your instructional goals, how do you think this lesson went?
2. Did you notice any example in the stimulated video that provides evidence of your purpose for vocabulary instruction?
3. What were you doing in this period and why did you choose this section of the lesson?
4. Did you feel the students learned the new vocabulary you introduced?
  - a. How do you know?
  - b. What follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?
5. How does this section of teaching relate to the lesson as a whole?
6. How do you think the students felt when you handled the lesson in this way and what were the challenges?
7. Can you please comment on the materials and activities you used?
8. If you could teach this class period again to the same class,
  - a) What would you do differently about vocabulary teaching? Why?
  - b) What would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?
9. Did you depart from anything you had planned to do during the class period? If so, when and why?
10. Based on what you taught about vocabulary in this lesson, what do you plan to do next with this class?
11. Overall, how successful was the lesson?

## Appendix-E: Teachers' Interview Scripts

R = Researcher T1 = Teacher One T2 = Teacher Two T3 = Teacher Three T4 = Teacher Four T5= Teacher Five T6= Teacher Six T7=Teacher Seven T8=Teacher Eight

### TEACHER ONE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

#### **PART ONE: Perceptions EFL Secondary School Teachers have about Their Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: Why did you become an EFL teacher?**

**T1:** Yeah I think, in the context of our country nobody is getting the right profession in every discipline and things can't be what you have supposed to be and that is why I became an English teacher and started teaching at a private school before I was starting teaching at government secondary school.

**R: How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language?**

**T1:** Of course, vocabularies are the bricks that can have the cohesive sensible thought of ideas so holding a lot of concepts and is very important in foreign language learning.

**R: Probe: Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T1:** You might not expect to teach them all the time explicitly telling them what this word or what that word means. You can let them have knowledge cooperatively with other sub and major skills implicitly. So you are not supposed to teach something so you have to teach together with the other micro skill.

**R: Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?**

**T1:** Somehow yeah.... that is right.

**R: How do you feel that?**

**T1:** Because I have lots of experience, exposure plus and I have taken different kinds of training and that made me feel I have the knowledge to express my views in teaching English and teaching vocabulary as well.

**R: Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary?**

**T1:** Of course yeah, because when you are looking at exams and other things they are related and most of them are focusing on grammar points but I am literally teaching vocabulary and my English teaching has an influence on teaching not only vocabulary but other skills as well.

**R: Probe: Is there any special training you had taken about vocabulary teaching in your college or university learning?**

**T1:** No, we didn't take any vocabulary teaching training of course we had taken general teaching training.

**R: What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T1:** Yeah, as far as my grade level is concerned (he indicates grade 12) the textbook is organized based on content-based topic orientation in that respect each and every content supports the theme. In the textbook, vocabularies are prepared to scale up their speaking, reading, and grammar aspects in light of that topic that is how the textbook is organized and it is essential in teaching vocabulary.

**R: How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?**

**T1:** Regarding vocabulary teaching, I think the major problem in government secondary schools is students' lack of sufficient amount of vocabulary so as to express their views in learning English in general and vocabulary in particular. So we have to give special attention to teaching vocabulary to make them effective in expressing their views using the language efficiently and effectively.

## **PART II Teachers' Sources of Knowledge Development**

**R: Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?**

**T1:** I think my prior knowledge regarding English teaching is not from my college or university education rather it is from teaching experience that can capacitate my profession.

**R: What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T1:** My sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary also might be from my long time teaching experience, reading different kinds of fiction and different kinds of written materials in English.

**R: Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T1:** Do you mean my own source? Of course let me tell you one thing If a topic is about tourism I am not supposed to do all the time what the textbook tells about it, I have to come out with other kinds of sources especially magazines like Selamta. Based on that stuff I let the students have the desired vocabulary knowledge.

**R: What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?**

**T1:** I took a general pedagogy course it didn't play such a significant role in my vocabulary teaching.

**R: Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? (If so, give specific examples?).**

**T1:** Of course, let me tell you something; I had an excellent teacher when I was a student at Yekatit 12 senior secondary school. This teacher was giving us lots of activities using different vocabulary teaching techniques so as to build our vocabulary knowledge. For example, he was presenting many vocabulary-developing exercises by telling a story and presenting vocabulary-building drills. As far as my education is concerned, that is my good experience and has affected the way I teach vocabulary.

**R: Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?**

**T1:** Of course, I've been teaching English for about 12 years, and there were some challenges in the beginning, particularly in delivering the lesson as intended, particularly in vocabulary and other types of language skills, but with my long time teaching experience, I've gained good knowledge in delivering vocabulary and other language skills as well.

### **PART III Knowledge and Practice Relationship**

**R: Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?**

**T1:** Most of the time, I employed sentence construction techniques using the new words to develop students' productive knowledge of vocabulary. After presenting example sentences to show how to use a new word in sentence construction, I usually asked students to generate their own sentences with the word they learned. Besides listing keywords on the blackboard, I asked them to find the synonyms and antonyms of the new words.

**R: Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught?**

**Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of class?**

**T1:** I think we are not out of what the principles and approaches have provided us. Nowadays, what is expected is an integrated skill teaching. If the units that are found in the textbook are content-based, we may have to read the context at the very beginning or listen to it under that one. You are building some kinds of vocabulary that are used in the speaking session, and you may also be given some kinds of synonym and antonym-related questions after the speaking lab. These are all integrated. If one student is good at reading activities, he can be good at vocabulary and integrating matters. Instead of taking out a certain simple word and telling them the definition or teaching that word in context, you better make the lessons integrated. I think that is a good way of teaching, not only for vocabulary but also for the unit at large, what I would like to say.

**R: Generally, do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T1:** Not congruent. For example, different factors, such as limited time for vocabulary teaching, students' lack of vocabulary learning strategies, their lack of capacity and motivation, and limited vocabulary activities in the textbook, etc., made me feel my knowledge and my actual classroom practice were not congruent.

#### **IV. Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: How do you describe your school environment?'**

**T1:** The school environment is not conducive to teaching English in general. I am unhappy with what the directors of the school are doing in facilitating the teaching and learning process. They are expected to play a more effective role in and out of school to improve the teaching and learning process. All of these limitations should be considered because the school environment contributes to the development of teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary instruction.

**R: What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent?**

**Probe: Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc.?**

**T1:** When we come to resources, I would like to say there is no language laboratory for practicing different activities. The only thing that is found in the classroom is a chalkboard. If there is a language lab and it is equipped with different kinds of resources, we can teach not only

vocabulary but other skills at large. That might be one problem. So if the resources are a problem, there is also a management problem. They are supposed to fulfill this material. The other one is the students' capacity. As it is known, most of our students lack the necessary vocabulary to explain what is expected of them in the classroom setting. So if you have less capacity, you are less motivated, and this is what is meant by integrated resources and management, student capacity and motivation.

**R: Do you believe your knowledge about context shape the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T1:** Of course, Yhhh. When there is a lesson that is out of context, I try to organize that one to meet what the environment needs. This is because the book is prepared assuming the overall Ethiopian context and some of them might be challenging to address for the students. To teach that way, we have to redesign the lesson along with the existing situation.

**R: What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?**

**T1:** One thing which I can see is a lack of motivation in learning or reading. When we visit the students, we find that the majority of them are concerned with the day-to-day teaching and learning activities. When you are letting them read some kinds of supplementary materials which are found in the libraries, they are not voluntarily reading those materials, so that might be one problem. When they are reading different kinds of books, like fiction, they can scale up their vocabulary capacity and their global knowledge is also broadened. So that is a problem. Besides, instead of guessing from the context or using other techniques, students are very keen on using their mother tongue for the meaning of the new words when learning EFL vocabulary.

**R:** Thank you very much.

**T1:** It is Okay.

## **TEACHER TWO INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

### **PART I Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching**

**R: Why did you become an EFL teacher?**

**T2:** Actually, I got much ridiculed regarding teaching English. When I was a high school student, honestly speaking, I didn't expect to join this department but rather to join other departments and to study other fields in university.

**R: How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language?**

**T2:** I believe that vocabulary is a backbone for teaching English these days. Still, in order to speak, vocabulary is important; to construct sentences, vocabulary is important. Generally, for anything you are doing in English, vocabulary is important.

**R: Probe: Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T2:** It is not possible not to teach vocabulary in any language teaching especially English.

**R: Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?**

**T2:** I think so. Actually, we took general pedagogy training courses at our university and I have had a long time of English teaching experience. As a result of these, I believe I have a good understanding of how to teach English in general and vocabulary in particular.

**R: Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary?**

**T2:** Yes, of course. Language teaching integrates teaching language skills and language elements. For example, if you are teaching listening, you have a chance to teach vocabulary. The same is true in the case of teaching other language skills too. So your English teaching directly or indirectly influences the way you teach English vocabulary.

**R: Probe: Is there any special training you had taken about vocabulary teaching in your college or university learning?**

**T2:** No, except for general pedagogy and other linguistic courses, we didn't take any special training on how vocabulary should be taught.

**R: What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T2:** The text book is poor. In my opinion, the textbook is not enough and not prepared properly to teach vocabulary explicitly and implicitly. Moreover, the tasks needed to develop students' vocabulary knowledge are limited.

**R: How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?**

**T2:** Of course, in our situation, students are very interested in learning grammar. Teachers also want to teach grammar and reading skills more than teaching vocabulary. If the exam and other assessments are considered vocabulary and other skills equally, teachers and students are also given due attention for their vocabulary teaching and learning.

## **Part II Teachers Sources of knowledge Development**

**R: Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?**

**T2:** My prior language learning at secondary school and undergraduate education were my primary sources of knowledge in teaching English. Other sources include my long-time teaching experience; my university education; reading different kinds of magazines written in English; and watching different television programs in English.

**R: What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T2:** It is almost the same as what I mentioned earlier, like my prior language learning at high school, my teaching experience, and reading fiction are my sources of knowledge for vocabulary teaching, but what I want to add is that the text book which my students and I use in the classroom is also a good source of knowledge for my vocabulary teaching.

**R: Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T2:** Yes, it has an influence. This is because your teaching depends on your sources of knowledge. The more sources of knowledge you have, the better you will be at teaching in the classroom. Thus, getting various knowledge sources has an impact on your vocabulary teaching.

**R: What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?**

**T2:** It plays a great role. Especially the methodology course plays an important role in how to teach English in general. Though no specific courses on how to teach vocabulary, the general methodology courses play an important role in teaching vocabulary.

**R: Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? (If so, give specific examples?).**

**T2:** Yes, my prior language learning, both at secondary school and university, has an impact on my English teaching in general and vocabulary teaching in particular. For example, from my high school English teachers, I learnt many things when I was a student at secondary school.

**R: Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?**

**T2:** Yes, it has an influence. I have 17 years of teaching experience. The more you teach the more experience you have. Teaching by itself is learning. The more you teach, the more you learn. If you are exposed to teaching, you will gain experience and it will have an impact on your vocabulary teaching.

### **Part III Knowledge and practice relationship**

**R: Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?**

**T2:** I'm using the context approach; using the context, I let the student guess the meanings of the new words. I mostly use the context approach, and it is easy for students to understand and practice vocabulary learning activities in the classroom.

**R: Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught? Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of a class?**

**T2:** Vocabulary should be taught using different methods of teaching. For example, if teaching involves the direct presentation of a lesson, the teacher should use explicit teaching; if teaching promotes incidental vocabulary learning, the teacher should use implicit teaching; or the teacher should let the students read it outside of a class. I didn't have any specific ways of teaching.

**R: Do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T2:** For many reasons, most of the time, my knowledge and my classroom vocabulary teaching practices are not harmonized. For example, students' lack of capacity and their lack of motivation made me not practice what I had in my mind.

### **Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: How do you describe your school environment?**

**T2:** My school environment is not, as such, comfortable for teaching and learning activities. It has a huge impact on teaching English in general and vocabulary instruction in particular. I think this has a negative impact on the teachers' ability to teach vocabulary or other skills effectively and properly.

**R: What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent?**

**Probe: Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc?**

**T2:** There are many factors that make knowledge and practice relationships not congruent. Among them, problems of resource, students' lack of capacity, large class size, etc. are the major ones. Moreover, I found little time to deal with the vocabulary in the textbook because the other skills take most of our time.

**R: Do you believe your knowledge about context shape the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T2:** Yes, I believe Here, the teacher has to reshape or adjust his teaching according to his students' level of learning. Otherwise, it is hard for him to manage the teaching. For example, if he presents very difficult vocabulary that is above their level of understanding, students become frustrated and do not respond to his teaching. Thus, adjusting the lesson based on the context of learning is very important.

**R: What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?**

**T2:** There are many other constraints that hinder teaching English in general and vocabulary instruction in particular. These include lack of facilities such as conducive classes, visual and audio aids, etc., influence teachers' actualization of vocabulary knowledge in practice. Another constraint is teachers' lack of motivation. Lack of motivation affects teachers' instructional practice. For example, teachers' lack of motivation due to their low salary income discourages them from practicing readily what they have in mind.

**R: Thank you very much.**

**T2:** You welcome

## **TEACHER THREE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

### **I Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching**

#### **R: Why did you become an EFL teacher?**

**T3:** First of all, I would like to thank you for giving me this chance to be selected as your interviewee to answer your question. I became an EFL teacher because of my previous English teachers' admiration. Especially in my high school, there was an instructor named Mr. Belay who was so energetic and friendly and his accent or his English was wonderful, so starting from that time I was motivated to become an English teacher. The reason is because of my English teacher, whom I see as a model.

#### **R: How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language?**

**T3:** Haa vocabulary is very important as cells are very important for our bodies. The basis for our body is a cell. The basis for language is vocabulary. Vocabulary is very vital in learning a language because if you don't know the word, how can you know the sentence? If you don't know a word, how can you say something in the language? If you don't know a word, how can you make a paragraph? Vocabulary is very important in language learning and also teaching.

#### **R: Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T3:** As I told you, how can you miss something important? So I say no, it is not possible not to teach vocabulary because, without teaching vocabulary, we can't teach other skills, we can't even teach grammar right. We can't teach speaking; we can't teach reading; we can't teach any other language element without teaching vocabulary. That means this shows how important this language element is. So the answer is no.

#### **R: Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?**

**T3:** In terms of my knowledge or opinion, I believe I have some knowledge about teaching vocabulary. Where do I get it? The sources are my long time teaching experience, my reading and also my discussions with my colleagues. Because of that, I have the knowledge about vocabulary teaching and I feel that I have the knowledge.

#### **R: Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary? Is there any special training you had taken about vocabulary teaching in your college or university learning?**

**T3:** Haa my English teaching experience is very important for my vocabulary teaching. In colleges and teachers' training institutions we have learned about different kinds of teaching techniques or methods that are very important for language teaching, but regarding vocabulary, to be honest with you, I didn't even remember we learn about how to teach vocabulary. I remember how to teach general methodology on speaking, reading, and general skills or methods

introduction by presentation and then how we conclude the class's general methodology specifically. I don't think I can remember. So I don't think there is no specific training regarding vocabulary teaching as far as I remember.

**R: What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T3:** Most of the time, vocabulary arises from reading passages. Whenever there is a reading passage, there are questions related to vocabulary questions and related to that specific reading passage. So regarding the text book, there are vocabulary parts in the increase your word power sections. There are also some units that contain vocabulary questions, but most of them just skip and ask reference questions and some general questions regarding the reading passage but not about vocabulary. So my feeling concerning vocabulary teaching is less in the text book.

**R: How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?**

**T3:** I think teaching vocabulary is not given the emphasis that it deserves. It is given less emphasis. As I told you, vocabulary is a very key element in language teaching, but it doesn't get as much emphasis as that of grammar and other skills. So when we see most teachers, including me, we teach grammar more because it appears in national exams in students' tests and quizzes and mid-exam final exams but not often enough. That shows that vocabulary is not given an emphasis. It is marginalized not only compared to the other skills; vocabulary is even marginalized compared to grammar. Grammar gets more focus. If you asked other teachers also, they told you the same thing. It doesn't get the attention it deserves. The short thing that I can say to you is this:

## **II Teachers' Sources of Knowledge Development**

**R: Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?**

**T3:** The knowledge I have about teaching English comes from different sources. One is from my higher education institutions or teachers' training college experience. The second one is from my reading of English materials like fiction, magazines, newspapers, and different sources; the third one is from different seminars and training; finally, from internet sources. I also often read articles on how to teach vocabulary and other skills, because these four are the sources of my knowledge for teaching English generally.

**R: What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T3:** Like what I mentioned earlier, I know this one is very specific for vocabulary and I used the same source. As previously, the sources I used have their own effect. In higher institutions, we haven't learned how to teach vocabulary more effectively by relying on internet sources. I occasionally browse the internet and converse with friends whenever I want. Even in language

seminars, they don't teach how to teach vocabulary. The internet source and the colleagues' discussion are the two main sources of knowledge on how to teach vocabulary. This is what I said to you as far as my knowledge is concerned.

**R: Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T3:** Sure, there is a saying, you do what you know, or in other words, what you do is what you know. What you have in your mind is what you are going to implement, so ya...ya. In short, they have an influence on my vocabulary teaching. To be more specific, when I am motivated and energetic, I try to implement what I read on the internet about how to teach vocabulary in the classroom. I tried to implement those things from the experience of the colleague discussion. I tried to implement it in the classroom. So yes, they have an influence on the implementation.

**R: What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?**

**T3:** As I repeatedly said, we haven't learned specifically how to teach vocabulary or language elements. We even have techniques of grammar teaching, even if grammar is a language element like that of vocabulary, but I don't remember anything about teaching vocabulary. It has no influence on my vocabulary teaching because we haven't taken how come something you didn't know or learn can influence your teaching. So I can say that the teacher's training lesson has no influence on my vocabulary teaching because we haven't taken any specific lessons regarding vocabulary teaching.

**R: Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? If so, give specific examples?**

**T3:** As I told you, I had a model English teacher, whom I appreciate. Yes, to some extent. I remember his every activity and movement. One of these techniques is to teach vocabulary by writing the unique word on the board. He used to ask us what it said first, and then we would practice reading or pronunciation. Second, he asks the class if there is anyone who can answer the meaning of that word, and then if somebody tries, he will just further explain it. If not, he contextualizes. He used that word to contextualize other words that we know. That means every word in a sentence that he uses to write, we know, is a simple word. He only adds that word and uses it to ask us. I did the same thing when I taught the new word to students. The main influence came from my former high school teacher's teaching. That I used to appreciate (SSI).

**R: Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?**

**T3:** Ya, my experience as a high school teacher helped me to develop my vocabulary teaching skills, but one thing that you have to know as a researcher is we don't often focus on vocabulary teaching as I told you because most of the things that appear in the exam are grammar. We have to rush to finish the text book. We skip different passages, and one unit may have three or four passages, but we may teach only one that is mandatory. Otherwise, we just focus on the present tense, past tense, and future tense and the grammar of the conditional sentences like that. To be honest with you, we often skip vocabulary lessons.

### **III Knowledge and Practice Relationship**

**R: Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?**

**T3:** Ok, literature says contextual teaching, or putting the words in the context, is the best. I believe in that. So my ideal way of teaching vocabulary is to put words in their best context. At that point, the students don't need a dictionary. They don't need to ask their friends or to go anywhere. So they simply try to answer questions based on context. So the best way to teach vocabulary is by putting words in context and trying to find the sentence or words in a sentence that the students know. So, contextual teaching is the best or ideal way to teach vocabulary. There are various techniques such as synonym, antonym, and collocations that can be taught, but making students understand in perfect contextualization is critical. By the way, the target of teaching vocabulary is to let them know the words or the language. Then whenever they get the word, they refer to the dictionary, which is time-killing or useless. So teaching them in context is the best or ideal way for me, and the literature supports this.

**R: Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught? Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of class?**

**T3:** In my point of view, using both explicit and implicit ways is important, but compared to the two ways, teaching explicitly is more important because everything should be taught formally in the classroom, and I will just bring my knowledge and I will take the responsibility. However, if you teach them implicitly, they don't go out and do things. You can't control them; materials are not available or not accessible. But it doesn't mean that I will not motivate them to go out and read. That is one thing, but I am not sure whether they do it or not, so I should teach them in the classroom explicitly in detail with context and different techniques, and then you live the rest for the students. So, teaching in the classroom is very important as far as my view is concerned.

**R: Generally, do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T3:** OK, my vocabulary teaching knowledge and my classroom practices match and it is yes. To explain this, I will implement what I know. That means I am trying my best. Actually, there are students who don't understand what you say. You might have lots of reasons for their cultural

background or their poor reading ability. But there are students who really love the way you teach and try to implement the words that you teach. So, as much as possible, I am implementing what I know. That means the two are congruent and they match. What I have in my mind: what I read and what I practice are the two things that the implementation and the knowledge go in line.

#### **IV Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: How do you describe your school environment? What effect does this have on your vocabulary teaching?**

**T3:** As you know, this is a government school. Government schools have different resource problems, material problems not only for teaching vocabulary but also for teaching English in general, including other skills that make it very difficult. To make it specific, there should be books students read with the teacher to develop their vocabulary skills. There are no reference books in the library. Even if you go to the library, you can get Amharic fiction. It doesn't mean Amharic is not important, but they should develop their international language, which is English. So if they don't read, how can they develop their vocabulary skills? There is a lack of available resources. In government schools, there is a reading club. For example, around Kolfe there is a library, but here we don't have resources. We don't have a reading club. So the school environment is not convenient or comfortable for teaching vocabulary, in particular.

**R: What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent? Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc?**

**T3:** Ya, to mention one example of my own, when I want to teach using different kinds of posters, pictures for students or visual things, if that is one of my methods, I can't get these materials and one of the problems is resources. If you want to implement vocabulary teaching in different techniques, you can't get materials. The implementation and the knowledge sometimes might not be congruent or match. You try to make them congruent, but these factors affect it. If you are talking about the students, we can say they totally don't have the knowledge, the confidence, reading capacity, speaking capacity, or even the grammar. Knowing grammar is not a guarantee of knowing a language or even skills. Their capacity is also directly related to their motivation. If they don't have the capacity, how do they motivate so, every energy relies on the teachers' effort. You are the one who motivates them. You are the one who imitates their knowledge and capacity, so all these affect the congruence between knowledge and practice.

**R: Do you believe your knowledge about context shapes the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T3:** Yes, a teacher should know the context. That means the school environment, the culture of the students, their background. Even in our teacher training institutions, the first thing a teacher should know is the school context, including the students. You have to know your students; you have to know the school environment, the availability of materials, and the culture of the students. In short, the answer to your question is yes. Knowing the context is very important. That is why I said I know the context of the school, but when I want something I can't get it. So I don't implement it. The solution that I have is just trying to do the thing that I have at hand. I know the students' potential, so I tried to reshape the lesson based on their knowledge and background. I can't get resources, so I will try to use the resources I have at hand. I know my context. I am trying to work based on that.

**R: What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?**

**T3:** Regarding other constraints, the first thing is attitude. The attitude of both the students and the teachers regarding vocabulary and its implementation affects its teaching. We repeatedly said that grammar gets more attention because of the policy, and I object to the policy and I hope the ministry of education will change it very soon. So if you let the students focus on grammar and if 80-90% of the exams are related to grammar, how can they listen to you when you teach vocabulary? So, the attitude is the result of the policy, and they are the challenging factors. So the students should think that way.

**R: Thank you very much**

**T3:** The pleasure is mine and thanks.

## **TEACHER FOUR INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

### **I Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching**

#### **R: Why did you become an EFL teacher?**

**T4:** Thank you for giving this opportunity to me. I wonder if I should be a teacher of foreign languages and literature because I would like to be a man of literature and a man of language. Beyond this, English is a widely spoken foreign language throughout the world and is caught in the overall systems of the language. It is helpful not only for teachers but even for students as well as parents. Generally, to communicate and shape our communities through reading different literary products, I became an English teacher.

#### **R: How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language? Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T4:** Vocabulary is important and it is impossible not to teach vocabulary because it is a part of the language. Without teaching vocabulary, how can we teach productive and receptive skills of the language such as reading, speaking, listening, and writing? They are inextricably linked and cannot be separated. When we teach English, we have to enhance the four macro skills of the language. So vocabulary should be thought of for our students. More than this, it is not enough without having knowledge about vocabulary to construct sentences. It is difficult to listen to the news. So it is very important in order to enhance their word power.

#### **R: Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?**

**T4:** As a professional, I have got a lot of experience, and that made me feel I have the knowledge. In teaching vocabulary, there are a variety of techniques that may be determined by the teacher. As much as possible to incorporate the knowledge and skills into the course, I would like to try my best. I try to relate the vocabulary of the new words to reality when I face a strange word and I need to put it in a sentence unless it is very difficult to use in a sentence.

#### **R: Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary?**

**T4:** Even though there are no strict methods of teaching, vocabulary needs the intrinsic motivation of the students. Not only is it difficult to teach vocabulary without their interest, but it is also difficult to teach grammar. So I have to give them advice in order to understand the whole system of the language, since vocabulary is everything in a language.

#### **R: What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T4:** Even if there is a vocabulary section in the textbook, it is not directly related to the reality of our students' level of understanding. Thus, we have to struggle as a professional in order to catch up with the objectives of the course in the text book in teaching vocabulary.

**R: How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?**

**T4:** Even though there are limitations in the text book and in the teacher's guide in how to teach vocabulary to students, it should be considered the students' grade level and vocabulary should be taught from simple to complex. It should be studied in the future and it is expected in higher institutions like universities to study vocabulary and its teaching.

## **II Teachers Sources of Knowledge Development**

**R: Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?**

**T4:** My source of knowledge is my intrinsic motivation, made by myself for teaching English. It is not my background. The basis is my interest in teaching. Beyond this, I share experiences with others and my colleagues.

**R: What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T4:** Locally available materials, including the textbooks, are my sources of knowledge. If it is necessary, I need to use a dictionary, but I don't want to depend on it. I need to give contextual meanings that are the way I teach, and I don't want to use an Amharic English dictionary.

**R: Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T4:** Yes, it has an influence; you know that, for example, the accent and the way I pronounce words may be influenced by my English teaching. For example, I come from the southern part of Ethiopia and I speak Sidama. As a result, English is near to me, but for those of Semitics it is too difficult to pronounce the words. That is the difference.

**R: What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?**

**T4:** The courses I took at university have some importance, but our teachers advise us to give attention to learning words or widening our vocabulary power. That is very fundamental to me and to being a good teacher.

**R: Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? If so, give specific examples?**

**T4:** My civic teacher is my best model. We learnt civics in English and it is very important as a basis for my vocabulary knowledge and for vocabulary teaching. That is the foundation and figure for me because some of the words in civic require a lot of effort from the language and word meanings. That helps me a lot to go to university and study English, and I have a positive attitude towards my civic teacher, who laid the foundation for my life and my vocabulary development.

**R: Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?**

**T4:** Yes. I would like to give you examples. The methods I use in the classroom for vocabulary teaching evolved from my experience; they may differ from those used by other teachers; the perception of my students about my English teaching is positive, which aided me in this variation. Besides, my experience helped a lot to identify the level of the learners and materials for the vocabulary I teach.

### **III Knowledge and Practice Relationship**

**R: Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?**

**T4:** Most of the time, I use an explicit method of vocabulary teaching because it provides an opportunity to explain the meaning of the words, the word class, and the synonyms and antonyms of the words. Besides, I made them construct sentences using the new words. Thus, I use an explicit way and it is my ideal method of vocabulary teaching.

**R: Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught? Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of class?**

**T4:** I prefer to start with an explicit method of vocabulary teaching and then help students learn vocabulary on their own outside of class. For example, in my experience of vocabulary teaching, I told the students to prepare their own vocabulary notes in their pockets and asked them to present the synonym and antonym of those new words, and they calculated how many new words they acquired within a week. That is my method for adding students' word power, and I employ it as one strategy for teaching vocabulary.

**R: Generally, do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T4:** Even though I am not perfect, I am practicing what I have in my mind, and I have to struggle to insert what I have in my mind as much as possible. If I once had a positive thought regarding

my students, I am able to do that since teaching means the harmony of the two parts: knowledge and practice.

#### **IV Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: How do you describe your school environment? What effect does this have on your vocabulary teaching?**

**T4:** The school is new and there are a lot of factors that hinder students regarding vocabulary learning. For example, environmental factors are one of those factors. They learn vocabulary in the classroom. There is no practice outside the classroom. That is one of the factors that hinders students' academic performance regarding vocabulary. Another factor is the lack of the habit of grasping new words, and they expect a lot of things from their teachers. This is also another factor, and they don't have the motivation to learn language. Sometimes they say why do we learn others' languages when we have our own language and why do we bother to learn others' languages? That means they have negative thoughts regarding learning the language.

**R: What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent? Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc?**

**T4:** There are limitations to resources. Schools should have to provide appropriate resources for teaching English in general and vocabulary in particular. There is a gap and we have to share experiences from others. Teaching vocabulary is different from teaching other skills. It needs resources. We encountered a number of problems. Students themselves have their own problems, and even the management has its own limitations and needs training.

**R: Do you believe your knowledge about context shapes the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T4:** By the way, if I have a limitation in my teaching profession, I need to get constructive advice from others. Teachers should use simple language based on their students' level of understanding and reshape their teaching based on their students' level of learning.

**R: What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?**

**T4:** There is a problem; our place of work is very far from our residence. This has an effect on our teaching. Besides, we don't get any training regarding language teaching in general and vocabulary instruction in particular. These are some of the other constraints that influence the actual practice of vocabulary teaching.

**R:** I appreciate it.

**T4:** Ok, thank you.

## **TEACHER FIVE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

### **I Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching**

**R: Why did you become an EFL teacher?**

**T5:** Good afternoon. Thank you very much I became an EFL teacher because I was assigned by the university without my understanding and interest.

**R: How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language? Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T5:** It is very important to learn vocabulary. It is very important really. It is impossible not to teach vocabulary. It is easy and it is very important as well.

**R: Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?**

**T5:** Yes, I do have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary. Because I practice in the classroom, which I always do, and the students understand me.

**R: Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary? Have you taken any special training about vocabulary teaching?**

**T5:** Yes, because my knowledge of teaching vocabulary comes from my knowledge of how to teach the English language. In my university education, there was no special training on how vocabulary should be taught in a separate class.

**R: What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T5:** The textbook does not focus on teaching vocabulary; it focuses on teaching reading, writing, speaking and other language skills, but it does not focus on vocabulary. We teach, but I mean hear; I'm not saying it doesn't exist; it does, but it's very low in comparison to other language skills and items.

**R: How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?**

**T5:** Teaching vocabulary is very important and it is very necessary because language is made up of vocabulary. Language is made up of words, and we make sentences with words, so teaching vocabulary is very important.

### **II Teachers' Sources of Knowledge Development**

**R: Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?**

**T5:** My knowledge comes from both training and experience.

**R: What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T5:** My knowledge of vocabulary teaching also comes from my experience and the training I have developed.

**R: Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T5:** Yes, my knowledge affects my teaching vocabulary because it is from my background information that I teach vocabulary, and books do not teach all vocabulary items, and I teach from my own knowledge.

**R: What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?**

**T5:** Yes, it has a role. For example, I learnt how to teach vocabulary in contexts with examples and give different types of definitions etc. But more, we depend on our practical activities and student interests and then teach vocabulary. Therefore, It has a contribution, but most of the time we depend on our experience.

**R: Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? If so, give specific examples?**

**T5:** Yes, my own experience as a language student has an impact on my teaching. For example, when I was in high school, I remember my teacher who taught me in grades 9 and 10 and I appreciated him. He graduated from Bahirdar University. He was very clever and he taught us everything. He knew a very large number of vocabulary items. He was a dictionary. So I followed him and made him a role model whenever I teach vocabulary in a classroom now.

**R: Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?**

**T5:** Look at this... Whenever we teach vocabulary, we will depend on our teaching experience in general. Because teaching experience includes teaching vocabulary, speaking, writing, and everything. Therefore, sometimes I change my method, and the method helps me make clear the vocabulary items very easily. I usually use that. Therefore, this is from experience, and it helps a lot.

### **III Knowledge and Practice Relationship**

**R: Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?**

**T5:** Yeah, of course, I use it most of the time in classroom contexts, though there is no one best method I know, most of the time I prefer the context method.

**R: Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught? Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of class?**

**T5:** Yeah, vocabulary should be taught explicitly because, in countries where there is no environmental support, such as Ethiopian teachers, in a foreign classroom, students' knowledge of what they learn depends on the classroom teaching because they do not get English outside the classroom. Therefore, it must be explicitly taught.

**R: Generally, do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T5:** Yes, yeah, my knowledge of vocabulary and my teaching practice are matching, though I do not know all the vocabulary items in English.

#### **IV Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: How do you describe your school environment? What effect does this have on your vocabulary teaching?**

**T5:** The school environment plays a very significant role in vocabulary teaching. For example, here in Addis Ababa, children after school don't watch films in English. They do not have any exposure to the language outside the classroom. Their parents do not speak with them in English. They do not speak with their peers in English. Private schools are better because they have English-speaking days where they practice language skills, but in government or public schools, there is a great problem in teaching vocabulary and other skills as well.

**R: What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent? Probe: Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc.?**

**T5:** Yeah, of course, in teaching vocabulary there are so many obstacles. The first one is lack of resources. For example, in the pedagogical center, the rooms are empty and we do not even have different maps or globes on which we can show students to teach vocabulary. If you want to make charts, you won't find them in school, and there are many issues with students themselves: low proficiency and a lack of knowledge of the English language affect our vocabulary teaching.

**R: Do you believe your knowledge about context shapes the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T5:** Yes, the knowledge of the context shapes how we teach vocabulary. Before I came to teach in Addis Ababa, I was teaching English far from here, and I usually used to study vocabulary items related to animal husbandries, such as camel, milk, dung, and just related to sheep and goat

skin, but here in Addis, I am teaching words related to vocabulary. I mean, traffic lights, cars, buildings, clothing styles, yeah, therefore context is very important in teaching vocabulary.

**R: What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?**

**T5:** Yes, there are other constraints, especially in service training. In our country, we do not focus on teaching vocabulary. It is not given equal emphasis with other skills or language items. In-service or pre-service training in our country didn't center on teaching vocabulary. Therefore, training given to teachers in secondary schools should include vocabulary teaching as well. In particular, in-service training should be given to teachers in cluster schools. CPD (continuous professional development) is achieved through reflecting on one's own teaching experience, and teachers must be given support in different ways.

**R:** Thank you very much.

**T5:** It is all right.

## **TEACHER SIX INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

### **I Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching**

#### **R: Why did you become an EFL teacher?**

**T6:** Good afternoon. Yeah, actually, to tell you the truth, I have come through by chance. I did not have the kind of intention to be a teacher. You know, the education policy or the curriculum of our country was a new approach when I was a young man during W/ro Genet Zewde. If you remember, it was a new kind of attracting teachers—those who have a good GPA—and I was forced to join the teaching profession. It was of that kind that I became a teacher.

#### **R: How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language? Probe: Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T6:** Yeah, I see vocabulary is the core of the language. Without vocabulary, language is nothing. So personally, I teach our students vocabulary because I believe that if the students know the vocabulary of the language well enough, they can use the language in grammar, speaking, and listening. I do have that kind of belief. Actually, even if this is a misunderstanding in a foreign language, we should teach vocabulary because, as I previously stated, let alone in the foreign language, even in the mother tongue, we should teach vocabulary because it is the core part of a language. So vocabulary is also shown as the extent to which we can use the language, and this may be in writing, speaking, or whatever, so students need to learn vocabulary.

#### **R: Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?**

**T6:** Yes, I had teaching training. That means some training on how to teach vocabulary; the techniques, strategies, and yeah, personally, I believe that I am capable of teaching vocabulary as much as I can. I think so.

#### **R: Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary? Probe: Is there any special training you had taken about vocabulary teaching in your college or university learning?**

**T6:** Yes, when we talk about knowledge, there is pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge, both of which have an impact on my vocabulary teaching. Personally, I read to keep up with changes in the ELT so that I can see them. I try to read different things to make myself better. There is no such kind of special training for the teaching of vocabulary. Actually, there are universities near to our school, and those kinds of institutions are giving free training in different aspects of teaching methodology. I did not get the chance to learn specifically how to teach vocabulary.

**R: What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T6:** Yeah, in the textbook, I am teaching grade 12 and grade 11. Actually, I have experience of teaching starting from grade 9. So when I see the material, that means specifically the textbook, the way vocabulary is presented most of the time without context. What I try to do is to make my students guess the vocabulary from the context, because when they are setting for an exam, there is no dictionary and the like. As I believe the very important skill students should develop is guessing from context. So, such skills are not well practiced or incorporated in the textbook I am using for teaching.

**R: How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?**

**T6:** Yeah, just to summarize and to repeat what I have said, vocabulary is a very important part of a language. Without vocabulary, it's impossible to think about language teaching. So learning new vocabulary words is very important, so I personally believe in teaching vocabulary and also most of the time I talk to colleagues to let the students know the new vocabulary in the materials and also bring new vocabulary from related sources outside the class room and the like, so I am doing that kind of teaching.

## **II Teachers' Source of Knowledge Development**

**R: Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?**

**T6:** Oh, as I said to you, I had no intention of being a teacher. The knowledge regarding teaching vocabulary, grammar, whatever is from the training and from what I have been reading so far. When I say training, I trained as a teacher and then I took different pedagogy courses specifically. In the previous curriculum, I had a lot of pedagogical courses like Teaching English Methodology 1 and 2, and those kinds of classroom practices and activities were sources of knowledge for teaching English.

**R: What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T6:** Yeah, the source of knowledge for vocabulary is also the same. As I previously stated, training is important, so I try to educate myself in English language teaching. When I say this one, I try to read on the internet and I discuss it with colleagues and the like. So these are my sources of knowledge for teaching vocabulary.

**R: Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T6:** Of course, when I was learning English, there were ways teachers were teaching me. That means what you model is from the teacher or from your colleagues, so taking the way others teach is important.

**R: What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?**

**T6:** The way I was taught vocabulary in my first language helped me teach vocabulary in my second language, but the courses I took have limited relevance for vocabulary teaching.

**R: Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? (If so, give specific examples?).**

**T6:** Absolutely, yeah, that is what I said, modeling the way my teacher was teaching. You can take something from that and so that affects a lot.

**R: Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?**

**T6:** Of course, you see, I reflect on experience. When I see the way I taught five years ago and what I am teaching currently, it is quite different because if you are a reflective teacher, you try to update yourself with changing situations and the like. So, because of my experience, there is change in my teaching.

### **III Knowledge and Practice Relationship**

**R: Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?**

**T6:** Yeah, I give priority to context-based teaching. The reason is, as I said to you, I try to exist in a real-life situation. For example, if the students are reading on the notice board, if they find new vocabulary, there is no time to refer to the dictionary and the like, so what I prefer is to let the student guess from the context.

**R: Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught? Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of class?**

**T6:** Yeah, personally, I believe that it depends on the stage of the learners or the grade of the learners. For example, if teaching English with focus at the elementary level, I do it explicitly. When you go to high school, it is quite different from that. Actually, I let the students more explicitly. Yeah, actually you teach vocabulary integrated with the other skills. For example, you teach in the grammar aspect, you can teach in speaking, whatever.

**R: Generally, do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T6:** To tell you the truth, I do not say my knowledge and my practice are perfectly matched. As you see, I am not teaching vocabulary by using all the strategies and techniques. So I try to see

other ways of teaching and then developing myself with the techniques, methodology, and the likes and not perfectly matching what you have mentioned.

#### **IV. Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: How do you describe your school environment? What effect does this have on your vocabulary teaching?**

**T6:** The school environment actually does not encourage the students to use the language as much, so it is one of the big challenges. As previously stated, students are not even encouraged or motivated to learn the language because, as previously stated, their previous experiences show that there is something to be changed, personally, I believe in the school environment.

**R: What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent? Probe: Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc.?**

**T6:** Yeah, you mentioned the student capacity and the student motivation. The school compound, as I said, is a major factor influencing the teaching of vocabulary.

**R: Do you believe your knowledge about context shapes the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T6:** Oh yeah, I am a pragmatist. I see the situation and the context, then I try to reshape my teaching and also do things differently because I am a pragmatist, as I said.

**R: What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?**

**T6:** Yeah, you see, there is a lack of free training and the like that had a really profound effect on my career. Currently, we are not finding this kind of training. As a result, one of the most significant influences on vocabulary teaching is a lack of training.

**R: Thank you a lot.**

**T6:** All right, the pleasure is mine.

## **TEACHER SEVEN INTERVIEW SCRIPT**

### **I Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching**

**R: Why did you become an EFL teacher?**

**T7:** Alright, first of all, thank you very much for this chance and I appreciate this real research. So I became an English teacher because I was good at learning English since high school. When I first started at university, I chose the department on purpose, so now I am teaching English with passion, and I enjoy both the subject matter and the teaching job.

**R: How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language?  
Probe: Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T7:** So how can we teach language without teaching vocabulary? Words are very important as a building block of communication. Without a word, we cannot communicate. So, how can your students communicate in English, the target language, if you don't teach them vocabulary? Communication without words is very difficult, so it is very important to teach vocabulary.

Actually speaking, it is not possible not to teach vocabulary. However, the reason is that without showing the way to learn the vocabulary or the words in the natural way to kids, children, or just high school students, how can they be able to learn the words in the natural way? First of all, we have to show them the way they learn vocabulary. Actually, sometimes it is possible to learn words naturally by reading, by watching movies, or by listening to different types of communication, but it is very difficult without knowing at least the way to learn those words. We have to show them the way of adapting the words naturally. It is very difficult not to teach vocabulary to students.

**R: Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?**

**T7:** Of course, after taking much training, I just have the skills, even if they are not 100 % perfect. I do have the knowledge and the skills to teach vocabulary. I have taken many formal or informal trainings.

**R: Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary? Probe: Is there any special training you had taken about vocabulary teaching in your college or university learning?**

**T7:** Teaching other language skills helps me teach vocabulary. I have taken formal training on how to teach vocabulary and how to teach general pedagogy. In addition to that, I have taken special training in vocabulary teaching in job training. I have taken a job training course given by foreigners at Sululta prepared by Addis Ababa University College of language and humanity.

**R: What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T7:** The text book nowadays is full of many contexts for teaching English vocabulary. There are many texts, reading passages, and listening texts. That enables students to learn very important words. So the text I have now is very important for teaching English vocabulary. Students can infer many difficult words from the text book by reading texts and by looking at many other texts as well. The text is very important. This textbook is very important for grade 12 students. It is directly related to real life and the students.

**R: How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?**

**T7:** Alright, teaching vocabulary is, of course, very important, but it is very difficult. The importance is that, as I told you, students should be able to learn vocabulary... as long as it is a second or foreign language for them, but in today's environment, students are not motivated and they are learning without interest, it is very challenging to teach vocabulary to such kinds of students, and the other challenge is the class size. There are more than 50 students in my class. Grade 12 as far as vocabulary teaching needs full follow-up. It is very difficult to follow the students' vocabulary and then their communication in a very strict way. So that is a very difficult situation. In addition to that, there are no ample resources and all these problems affect my vocabulary teaching.

## **II Teachers' Source of Knowledge Development**

**R: Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?**

**T7:** The first important point is that I would like to appreciate my former English teachers. I have got a very important skill from my high school and preparatory school teachers. After I graduated from university, I tried to read different materials, and my experience as well helped me to be able to teach the skill very effectively.

**R: What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T7:** Yeah, I developed the way of teaching vocabulary, as I told you, by just adapting the way my former English teachers taught me and then reading materials.

**R: Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T7:** You know, sometimes, implicitly or passively, the way of learning vocabulary influenced me. I just look at the dictionary as well, even if it is passive. When I get a very difficult vocabulary word, I use the dictionary. The most important method I use to adapt to new words is context clues, so these are my techniques.

**R: What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?**

**T7:** Of course, that is the basis. That is the basis for teaching language skills. Except for the general pedagogy, there was no special training, even for the section of vocabulary.

**R: Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? (If so, give specific examples?).**

**T7:** As a language student, that helps me get some knowledge of general pedagogy. First, I should be able to know the way of adapting new words that helps me teach vocabulary very easily.

**R: Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?**

**T7:** Yes, I have more than 11 years of teaching experience now. Even after 2 or 3 years, I have become a good vocabulary and good language teacher. Thus, experience helps me a lot. When I was a university student in a post-graduate class, my teachers were giving me very important ways of teaching vocabulary. Generally speaking, there are two strategies: implicit and explicit, and most of the time I try to teach vocabulary implicitly. Unless the vocabulary or the words are given in isolation, I try to let my students know the meaning of words in an implied way, and this is the technique I especially employ. This technique is my repeated technique.

### **III Knowledge and Practice Relationship**

**R: Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?**

**T7:** I used to teach vocabulary in my day to-day activities in context because it is a much recommended way of teaching vocabulary. Without context, it is very difficult to know the meaning of words. It is better to look at their relationship with the text, their relationship with the title of the text, and their relationship with the type of text preceding and following them. So context is my primary technique, but sometimes I use other techniques. For example, affixation, the use of prefixes and suffixes, and the knowledge of parts of speech, sometimes it is possible to know the meaning of words using the parts of speech, whether it is a noun, pronoun, adjective, or adverb. Parts of speech sometimes help the students, but I never recommend my students to look at their dictionary and ask somebody because that is passive.

**R: Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught? Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of class?**

**T7:** I prefer the implicit way of teaching vocabulary. If students are allowed to learn vocabulary implicitly, they can adapt the meaning of words without frustration or worry. However, it is very

important to teach implicitly. When words are given in isolation, for example, in my text book, there are words given in isolation. This time I do not have the chance to create a context. If I do have the time, I try to create a context to let them know the words without frustration and without worry. But in that case, if I do have a scarcity of time, I try to teach English explicitly but rarely. In my opinion, even if it is a second language, students do not have the chance to practice outside. It is very difficult to teach vocabulary always explicitly because it becomes a history or geography lesson. If we teach a word's meaning explicitly, if we make a word or if you enter that word in a context in an implied way, the students can adapt to the way that word is used, otherwise it is very difficult to teach explicitly in any case.

**R: Generally, do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T7:** Yes really. I am practicing it now. In fact, you already know a lot about your students and can relate their lessons to the national exam. In the past, the national examination was given as a way of developing the student's knowledge of grammar. But nowadays, the way they change vocabulary is part of their national examination. There are more than 20 questions in their national examination. Contextual vocabulary appeared due to students' liking to learn vocabulary. So I am practicing what I am thinking and saying in the classroom. Even now, I was teaching vocabulary in my 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> periods. I was teaching vocabulary and I tried to show how they guess the meaning of new words from their context. So it is critical to teach vocabulary as it is part of learning and part of their academic life.

#### **IV. Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: How do you describe your school environment? What effect does this have on your vocabulary teaching?**

**T7:** Our school is a government school with more than two thousand students. There are more than 50 students in the classroom, and this class size is a very prominent and difficult factor to teach, not only vocabulary but other skills too. For example, the first important factor is the class size. In addition, student motivation is another problem. Nowadays, student motivation is less comparable to our motivation when I was a student. Most students come to school just to waste their time. More than 50%, we can say, come to waste their time or pass their time in the school compound, not for learning. That is a very difficult situation to teach vocabulary as well as the other skills. Student interest is a very difficult factor in addition to class size.

**R: What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent? Probe: Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc.?**

T7: Yeah, what I have forgotten about the factor is that the students' capacity now days is very difficult. Even if students are in grade 12, they have not captured the minimum learning competency of a lower grade level. So when you try to let them know the very important skills, including vocabulary, their capacity binds them and then they assume that they are not learning very important things, so that is an additional factor and very influential. Of course, related to materials, now in our school there is internet access. We always refer to additional materials and bring them to our students. The text book is attractive enough. But we tried to prepare other important materials from the internet source. Nowadays, there is no scarcity of resources; even students have smart phones in their pockets, but they do not have the interest in learning. With that, they are not using the technologies for good.

**R: Do you believe your knowledge about context shapes the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

T7: Of course, even if the level is very difficult, I try to initiate them by preparing a material near to their level to let them come to the point where I bring a material related to their grade 12 level. Actually, now it is very difficult because the students' level is very challenging. Students pass to university without knowing anything.

**R: What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?**

T7: Yeah, other than what we have mentioned, the emphasis is given to the teaching profession. When you were a teacher, it was difficult to get societal respect. Nowadays, the respect given to professions is very low. Students do not respect teachers; families do not respect teachers and teaching. English language skills need the courage of EFL teachers. If you look at the low emphasis given to this profession, you enter into class without the courage to teach not only vocabulary but other skills too. That is a difficult situation. So many teachers have now left their jobs and the profession. I even left the professions in the past, but I rejoined them because I love the professions. That is the challenge.

**R: Thank you very much**

T7: It is fine.

## **TEACHER EIGHT INTERVIEW SCRIPT**

### **I Perceptions EFL secondary school teachers have about their vocabulary teaching**

#### **R: Why did you become an EFL teacher?**

**T8** Because I have joined education and I prefer to learn English. From my elementary education up to high school, I was interested in English. That made me want to be an English teacher.

#### **R: How important do you believe vocabulary is in learning English as a foreign language?**

#### **Probe: Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T8:** Okay, as far as my knowledge is concerned, learning vocabulary is better than learning other skills. Because the ultimate goal of the language is communication, and the life of the language is at the hands of the vocabulary; therefore, vocabulary is by far better.

#### **R: Probe: Is it possible not to teach vocabulary?**

**T8:** Because, as you know, language by itself is vocabulary, and the students may learn vocabulary naturally. For instance, when you take second language learners, unless they learn different strategies, they will not get it naturally.

#### **R: Do you feel you have the knowledge of how to teach English vocabulary?**

**T8:** Perhaps I hope I do have my own experience and performance to teach vocabulary using different mechanisms and strategies. Yeah, I taught for about 10 years. Therefore, within these 10 years of experience, I do have a lot of experience and I have an old hand for teaching and I have different strategies and mechanisms to teach vocabulary. I have seen different experiences while I teach students, so I have a full performance I hope.

#### **R: Do you think that your knowledge regarding language teaching influence the way you teach English vocabulary? Probe: Is there any special training you had taken about vocabulary teaching in your college or university learning?**

**T8:** Yes, it has an influence. Actually, when we were at university, for my first degree and second degree as well, I took different block courses. Interestingly, that helped me still now.

#### **R: What is your idea of the textbook in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T8:** In my perception, the textbook for teaching vocabulary is interesting. However, the students' levels are very low. Not only the level, even their understanding and perception, and the way the text book presents vocabulary lessons is far different from their level, which makes it difficult unless the teacher modifies them. In my observation, you know those skills are integrated in the text book because it has a full and sufficient vocabulary.

**R: How do you see teaching vocabulary generally?**

**T8:** In my opinion, teaching vocabulary is important because we don't teach a language without teaching vocabulary or knowledge of vocabulary.

## **II Teachers' Source of Knowledge Development**

**R: Where do you think the knowledge you have about teaching English comes from?**

**T8:** Basically, I give my attention for experience. Because the experiences that I have passed through make me feel like a full teacher now. As a result, how I teach the vocabulary lesson, for example, basic sources of knowledge to teach vocabulary and different courses that we took may have been important in the past.

**R: What are your sources of knowledge in teaching English vocabulary?**

**T8:** Okay, my teaching experience is my source of knowledge in vocabulary teaching. Because the more I teach, the more experience I gain in teaching vocabulary and other language skills. The second one is that, naturally, I do have reading habits, so while I read different textbooks, I take different strategies.

**R: Do your own sources of knowledge have had an influence on the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T8:** It has an influence and it plays a major role in how I teach in the classroom while I teach vocabulary lessons.

**R: What role does the knowledge about teaching English you acquired in the EFL teacher education program play in how you teach English vocabulary?**

**T8:** It has some role in that most courses are general and do not specifically show how we teach vocabulary. Yes, I have taken courses while I was in university. Yes, when we attended second degree, we took some courses; however, that was not appropriate for teaching vocabulary to high school students. Rather, we have taken some general pedagogy courses.

**R: Do you believe that your own education as a language student has affected the way you teach English vocabulary today? (If so, give specific examples?).**

**T8:** It really impresses me now, even though you know I compare and remember how teachers taught vocabulary when I was a student, and I am teaching now, so it helps me so far.

**R: Do you feel that your experience as an EFL teacher had an influence on the way you taught English vocabulary?**

**T8:** Experience is important in teaching and learning. My experience of teaching English helped me a lot in my vocabulary teaching. So it has an influence.

### **III Knowledge and Practice Relationship**

**R: Could you tell me your ideal way of vocabulary teaching?**

**T8:** Actually, my ideal way of teaching vocabulary is context, so assimilating with their environment is the best way. I believe in using the contextual method. But you know there are different types of learners in the class room. As a result, to address that, I used different vocabulary teaching techniques.

**R: Do you have any specific views on how vocabulary should be taught? Probe: Should it be taught explicitly as part of a lesson? Taught implicitly in an informal basis? Or should learners simply be encouraged to read it outside of class?**

**T8:** Okay, in my experience, you know a language needs exposure, therefore it is better to use both. Because the exposure of the students is different, some students have exposure outside of the classroom. Therefore, using both techniques is better, I hope.

**R: Generally, do you feel your knowledge and your classroom vocabulary teaching practice congruent/ matching? If yes, how? If not, why?**

**T8:** I do not think so. Because there are different strategies and even my interest in the way I should deliver my classroom presentation, but that may not go with their level or the way the students perceive it. So that may not be congruent. Okay, I understand your question, but that does not mean it contrasts with that, but you know, potentially, I do have or the way I think and the level of the students are difficult, therefore I should limit myself to the level of the students.

### **IV Factors Affecting Vocabulary Teaching**

**R: How do you describe your school environment? What effect does this have on your vocabulary teaching?**

**T8:** In particular, in the class room environment, it is not that much more comfortable to teach vocabulary because their past experience is determined by grammar. Therefore, when you teach vocabulary, they may disturb, they may not pay attention, and again, the number of students in the class room affects whether they use different methods that make it challenging to teach vocabulary.

**R: What factors made your vocabulary instruction knowledge and practice relationship not to be congruent? Probe: Do you face problems of resources, management, students' capacity, lack of motivation, etc.?**

**T8:** Actually, you know, there are a lot of challenges. Many factors affect our vocabulary teaching, especially when you compare it with the strategies used to deliver strategies in the classroom. For example, class room arrangement, the students' setting arrangement, and the way we use teaching aids while we teach vocabulary, the students' perception towards learning

vocabulary, their level of understanding, all these are challenges and create incongruence between knowledge and practice.

**R: Do you believe your knowledge about context shapes the way you teach English vocabulary? If yes, how? If not, why?**

T8: Perhaps while I make it contextual, especially based on what they feel and what they see in their environment, Somehow they get nearest to the lesson, especially based on their learning capacity for low-level learners. I give simple examples of what is near to them that makes it somehow easy the lesson in the classroom.

**R: What other constraints do you think have an influence on the actual practice of vocabulary teaching?**

T8: Actually, there are different constraints outside or inside the school. When students leave the English classroom, they use their mother tongue in doing their homework or other vocabulary activities since they think in L1 and respond in English. That is the basic problem in their vocabulary learning as second or foreign language learners. The others are the entities we mentioned earlier.

**R: Thank you a lot.**

T8. Ok, Pleasing.

## Appendix-F: Teachers' Stimulated Recall Scripts

### TEACHER ONE STIMULATED RECALL TRANSCRIPT

**R: In light of your instructional goals, how do you think this lesson went?**

**T1:** I think we have done very best because the students were interactive and everything was good.

**R: Did you notice any example in the stimulated audio that provides evidence of your purpose for vocabulary instruction?**

**T1:** I think things are good. I met what I planned to do but I noticed some obscurity when I was presenting personality describing adjectives specially in describing the word pessimistic as positive lately I tried to remember it.

**R: What were you doing in this period and why did you choose this section of the lesson?**

**T1:** I was teaching vocabularies of adjectives describing people's personality. The lesson is part of grade 12 text book. So students are expected to know in the course of their level about adjectives describing people's personality.

**R: Did you feel the students learned the new vocabulary you introduced?**

**T1:** Of course I feel they learnt the vocabulary I presented about adjectives describing people's personality to them.

**R: How do you know?**

**T1:** Because when I tried to ask them whether the adjectives they learnt are negative or positive they were good in responding to my question. Besides they were constructing sentences using personality describing adjectives.

**R: What follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?**

**T1:** I let them write some sentences along with each and every character describing words so they were good at constructing sentences by these words. I was walking through each student's seat watching each student action or practices and I try to see what they are constructing and even I try to scale up their potential in constructing effective and efficient sentences because some of them may lack constructing sentences that was what I was trying to do.

**R: How does this section of teaching relate to the lesson as a whole?**

**T1:** This section of the lesson relate to the other sections in many ways. This lesson is a continuation of the previous lesson about people's physical appearance. Besides, I tried to relate this vocabulary together with writing and I tried to use different methods of vocabulary teaching as you were observing what I presented now is a definition method. The second might be contextualizing the event. I tried to make the situation as friendly as the setting under which the students are learning. Thus, it has relation with the lesson as a whole.

**R: How do you think the students felt when you handled the lesson in this way and what were the challenges?**

**T1:** The students are participating on the lesson as a whole. The challenge was especially on the students who are sitting on the back of the seat. They weren't actively participating in constructing sentences. They just write one or two sentences but most of them were working hard and they were good in constructing sentences.

**R: Can you please comment on the materials and activities you used?**

**T1:** The material I used for teaching was students' text book. It has some limitation in teaching vocabulary. For example in today's lesson the text book is just classifying the adjectives as positive and negative assuming to categorize based on that list. What I did was trying to contextualize and defining the new words. Such kinds of presentations are better to discuss assuming certain contexts that was what I tried to do. The activities in the book were inadequate to present adjectives of personality character but I added some personality describing adjectives from other sources.

**R: If you could teach this class period again to the same class,**

**a)What would you do differently about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T1:** That is a nice question. I can use another method. I am not letting them to have the definition and context. I am using certain personality describing paragraphs using some other methods. So I will let them insert the words based on appropriate setting that might be integrating vocabulary with writing. I let the students to write a paragraph, so as to describe a certain individual characters.

**R: b) What would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T1:** Using the previous methods, I am repeatedly teaching this lesson. Because I saw good participation from the student side and I felt they understood the lesson.

**R: Did you depart from anything you had planned to do during the class period? If so, when and why?**

**T1:** No, I didn't depart. I did what I planned.

**R: Based on what you taught about vocabulary in this lesson, what do you plan to do next with this class?**

**T1:** If I am teaching another vocabulary lesson the method might be changed. I may use different methods like context clue indicating sentences and I will let them write or if action forms of vocabularies are supposed to be entertained I will tell students to act out in the classroom.

**R: Overall, how successful was the lesson?**

**T1:** I think the lesson was successful. First, most of the students understood what I tried to teach. This is because; I was checking what they were performing. Secondly, when I was assessing students' sentence construction using character or personalities describing words they were successful in the construction of the sentences.

**R: Thank very much.**

**T1:** You welcome.

## **TEACHER TWO STIMULATED RECALL TRANSCRIPT**

**R: In light of your instructional goals, how do you think this lesson went?**

**T2:** In my view the lesson went good. The students were somehow interactive. That is what I feel.

**R: Did you notice any example in the stimulated audio that provides evidence of your purpose for vocabulary instruction?**

**T2:** Yes I saw it. Since students were active in the process of learning new words made by the addition of prefixes and finding the opposites of the words sing different contexts.

**R: What were you doing in this period and why did you choose this section of the lesson?**

**T2:** I was teaching about prefixes added to the beginning of a word. This lesson is important for changing the meanings of the words and makes a new opposite word. Prefixes give the opposite of a word when they entered in front of the word. un, in, dis , for example are prefixes added to the words such as happy as unhappy, complete for incomplete, honest for dishonest etc.

**R: Did you feel the students learned the new vocabulary you introduced?**

**T2:** I hope so.

**R: a) How do you know?**

**T2:** After I explained the prefixes for creating new words they try to give similar new opposite meaning words using different prefixes. I told them to construct sentences using the new words and I tried to observe them in the class and I saw most of them were writing sentences on their exercise books based on the prefixes the learnt such as anti, bi, de, extra etc.

**R: b) What follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?**

**T2:** First I gave them examples in order to make them familiar with the lesson. Then, I just gave them new prefixes that I thought and found in students text book. A after I explained that I let them try to write sentences on their exercise books based on the listed prefixes in the text book and I engaged them to do that.

**R: How does this section of teaching relate to the lesson as a whole?**

**T2:** It has direct or indirect relation because vocabulary is an important element in every route of developing receptive skills or productive skills of the language.

**R: How do you think the students felt when you handled the lesson in this way and what were the challenges?**

**T2:** The students feel good. This is because I saw this from their reaction to the lesson as whole. The challenging thing is the words in the text book were difficult for them to know. I observed that. First few of them were trying to figure out what it is but after I explained the meaning most of them try to use them in their sentence construction.

**R: Can you please comment on the materials and activities you used?**

**T2:** Regarding the text book in the teaching of the day's lesson is good but it has limited examples and exercises, but what I tried to do was searching for additional prefixes from other texts to illustrate and to broaden the lesson.

**R: If you could teach this class period again to the same class**

**a)What would you do differently about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T1:** Next time when I present the same lesson about prefixes with the other section, I observed the challenges in the first class and I try to present in different way to overcome that problem. For instance I first briefly explain the meaning of each prefix and renew the lesson by changing the difficult one.

**R: b) what would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T1:** I'm choosing something good from the lesson I presented about prefixes that helps them develop their vocabulary knowledge and I follow the same procedure and add more prefixes using adjectives for the new class to increase students' word power.

**R: Did you depart from anything you had planned to do during the class period? If so, when and why?**

**T2:** Actually I did what I planned earlier and I didn't depart from what I planned.

**R: Based on what you taught about vocabulary in this lesson, what do you plan to do next with this class?**

**T2:** What I am doing in the next class is, with their partner I would let them find list of words beginning with prefixes and construct sentences using the new words with prefixes.

**R: Overall, how successful was the lesson?**

**T2:** The lesson was very successful. The prefixes they were learnt are very important and they are key in finding new words with opposite meanings.

**R: Thank you, sir**

**T2:** It is all right.

## **TEACHER THREE STIMULATED RECALL TRANSCRIPT**

**R: In light of your instructional goals, how do you think this lesson went?**

**T3:** Thank you for giving this chance. The things that made my lesson effective were that the preparation of organized lesson plan and giving care to prepare smart lesson. Another one is the attention students were given to their lesson during vocabulary learning. I think it made the lesson very effective and gives opportunity to present the lesson well. These are the factors that made the lesson effective.

**R: Did you notice any example in the stimulated audio that provides evidence of your purpose for vocabulary instruction?**

**T3:** I noticed and what I presented about guessing the meanings of unknown words was also found on the stimulated audio. The purpose as I indicate in my lesson plan to increase students' vocabulary knowledge through guessing the meanings of strange words.

**R: What were you doing in this period and why did you choose this section of the lesson?**

**T3:** I was presenting principles to guess the meaning when students meet new words in a text that can enhance and widen their vocabulary know how's. Through guessing students realize the words in their minds in receptive and productive skills these are fundamental and the base.

**R: Did you feel the students learned the new vocabulary you introduced?**

**T3:** Yes I feel they learnt the lesson I presented.

**R: a) How do you know?**

**T3:** They tried to guess the meanings of some new or strange words through the way they learnt about guessing the meaning of unknown words.

**R: b) what follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?**

**T3:** If I had plenty of time they would have a lot of activities to do and I will make them guess different strange words using the way they learnt about guessing. The specific objective of the lesson is also to guess and decide what kind of words they are: verbs, nouns, adjectives or adverbs.

**R: How does this section of teaching relate to the lesson as a whole?**

**T3:** They are interrelated and have vertical and horizontal relations to the lesson as whole.

**R: How do you think the students felt when you handled the lesson in this way and what were the challenges?**

**T3:** Some of the students are bodily present in the classroom. When I asked them again about what they learnt they are unable to understand and this is the challenge. I don't know the reason behind whether it is economic, social or family problem. Yet some are active participant.

**R: Can you please comment on the materials and activities you used?**

**T3:** the lesson I presented was taken from the text book increase your word power part of guessing the meaning of unknown words but the activities are constructed by myself and the sentences I used as an example and the way they guess the meaning of the new words are prepared by myself. Regarding the textbook it has limitation on showing how vocabulary should be learnt.

**R: If you could teach this class period again to the same class**

**a) What would you do differently about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T3:** I can prepare new vocabulary developing lessons that better serve my students and my mind will create a new way of presenting vocabulary item for my students.

**R: b) what would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T3:** I will keep it up the important once and I use constructive feedback to renew the lesson otherwise I will use it as it is.

**R: Did you depart from anything you had planned to do during the class period? If so, when and why?**

**T3:** I did what I planned but to the students side some of them are not going based on what I planned. They are not an active participant but I tried to accomplish what I stated in the lesson plan.

**R: Based on what you taught about vocabulary in this lesson, what do you plan to do next with this class?**

**T3:** It may be determined by the text book or teachers guide. Based on that, I add my own to improve the lesson for students' word power improvement.

**R: Overall, how successful was the lesson?**

**T3:** Students should learn more than this. They have the potential if they once know the way. To me, even though it is not excellent it is nice and I taught happily and provided what I have in my mind.

**R: Thank you very much.**

**T3:** It is Okay.

## **TEACHER FOUR STIMULATED RECALL TRANSCRIPT**

**R: In light of your instructional goals, how do you think this lesson went?**

**T4:** Ok thank you so much for the chance. In my view the lesson was great. I can say it went good and I tried to show or present as I planned. So I can say it went good.

**R: Did you notice any example in the stimulated audio that provides evidence of your purpose for vocabulary instruction?**

**T4:** When I heard the audio I think I tried to meet the purposes of my presentation. So I have seen examples and as you saw the lesson is was collocation. So when I teach specifically I tried to show them what collocation means and how words go together like for example pencil and rubber, pen and paper, play tennis I also added from my own not only from the text book like make a bed we don't see other words she makes a bed or he makes a bed we say like that so I have seen specific examples on that.

**R: What were you doing in this period and why did you choose this section of the lesson?**

**T4:** Actually, I don't choose lesson. I just depend on the textbook. So, the text book lesson is collocation based on the text book I taught that part...the vocabulary part and I believe that vocabulary is vital. So, I taught them the collocation section based on the text book and not based on my choice.

**R: Did you feel the students learned the new vocabulary you introduced?**

**T4:** Yaa I feel that. They learned the vocabulary part about collocation. The evidence for that is as you saw students gave me examples. I asked them to tell me if they know any collocation and I remember some students gave me examples.

**R: a) How do you know?**

**T4:** Because they gave me examples and did the exercises.

**R: b) what follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?**

**T4:** As you saw I tried to give them additional exercises even the textbook itself has two exercises. The second exercise can be considered as a follow up question so the follow up

procedure was the additional exercises and what I gave them. I also planned to add more things about collocations in the future classes.

**R: How does this section of teaching relate to the lesson as a whole?**

**T4:** The lesson is about hobbies and craft and that part has vocabularies, reading part and different grammatical parts. So, collocation in this hobbies and craft unit is important because in hobbies and craft there are words that much and go together. So this typical collocation is important for the session of this unit and also for the students to develop words. They can develop words through different styles like synonyms is one way to teach vocabulary; antonym is the other way and collocation is also one of them. So, I think in my believe collocation appears on the exact place which is hobbies and craft in unit 3. So it goes together in my view.

**R: How do you think the students felt when you handled the lesson in this way and what were the challenges?**

**T4:** Actually it is hard to know students feeling because vocabulary and other reading skills are more of receptive skills. As I saw I think their feeling was good and for most of them I think this part seems new so they were excited to some extent. The challenges were two. One is I didn't get as many students as to participate in giving examples of collocations only a few students and that is one challenge. The second one is collocation from synonym and antonym it is more different and has slang or idiomatic expressions and it needs depth knowledge of English to know what words right and what words go together so the nature of the lesson was challenging.

**R: Can you please comment on the materials and activities you used?**

**T4:** The material I used is the text book itself. I like the activities to some extent because first it defines what collocation is and then it gave examples and two exercises were there. The level of the exercises is different. First it asks them what they know about collocation then it gives examples and asked them to add other words like wave as you saw, read, foot ball and then just asks students to find a word that right or go together with this words. So I can say the material is good.

**R: If you could teach this class period again to the same class**

**a) What would you do differently about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T4:** Differently what I do is before I start the class for example for the other section I will give them a chance to read and refer what collocation means from a dictionary and other materials and I will do this differently because today as you saw I get in and I just started the class by teaching collocation. I didn't try to provoke their background knowledge and something like that by asking them to read first so differently what I do is before starting I give them as a home work to read about collocation and to bring examples then I may proceed.

**R: b) what would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T4:** What I do the same is I just follow the text book definition by adding my own examples and I wouldn't change much than giving homework.

**R: Did you depart from anything you had planned to do during the class period? If so, when and why?**

**T4:** I don't think so. I stuck to the text book. So based on the objectives of the text book and the objectives of vocabulary teaching I think I don't depart much. I tried to target and meet my objective that is teaching vocabulary through collocations and I think I did that. So, no departure was there.

**R: Based on what you taught about vocabulary in this lesson, what do you plan to do next with this class?**

**T4:** For the next class, I will try to teach them techniques of vocabulary learning like synonym, antonym, referring dictionary, collocation etc all these are what I am doing for the next class. I will teach it them.

**R: Overall, how successful was the lesson?**

**T4:** I can say it was successful. I did my best as much as possible. So if you asked me to put it with a percentage it may be 80 percent and more than that.

**R: Thank you teacher.**

**T4:** Thank you so much for including me in your research.

## **TEACHER FIVE STIMULATED RECALL INTERVIEW**

**R: In light of your instructional goals, how do you think this lesson went?**

**T5:** The lesson went very good...very well. It was very interacting lesson I completed within my plan.

**R: Did you notice any example in the stimulated audio that provides evidence of your purpose for vocabulary instruction?**

**T5:** Yes I noticed and yeah I have fulfilled the purpose of teaching that lesson. Of course my purpose of teaching that vocabulary lesson is enabling students be able to identify how to guess the meaning of the words from their context and then I tried to achieve that as much as possible. According to pedagogical instructions of teaching vocabulary the most recommended way of teaching vocabulary is the contextualization. Because it is very active and student come to identify or guess the meaning of the words whenever and wherever they go. Not passive techniques it is an active technique that's why I selected the strategies.

**R: What were you doing in this period and why did you choose this section of the lesson?**

**T5:** I was teaching vocabulary lesson and it is part of the text. I try to identify that most of the students learn the meaning of the words. As I tried to check their understanding and their reflection some of them were answering the question that I gave during the class that is my evidence.

**R: Did you feel the students learned the new vocabulary you introduced?**

**a. How do you know?**

**b. What follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?**

**T5:** Yes I feel. I understood some of them tried to answer what I asked them in the classroom. Actually I have given them home work to be completed and I will check it for tomorrow. So I would like to cross check their lesson, their knowledge, their understanding that and the relationship with their homework.

**R: How does this section of teaching relate to the lesson as a whole?**

**T5:** Yeah actually the vocabulary lesson is just taken from a reading lesson from the student's text book. So it is directly related to the reading lesson the reading skills of the student.

**R: How do you think the students felt when you handled the lesson in this way and what were the challenges?**

**T5:** Most students were feeling good and they were attending very attentively in the class. But there were some students just being in the class room but not actually in the class room they came just for the sake of seating in the class room that is the challenge. But many of them are interactive and attending. I noticed that they were attending very well and their face show or indicates that some sorts of good reflection they were understanding the lesson very well.

**R: Can you please comment on the materials and activities you used?**

**T5:** The material I used is just examples taken from the text book and other materials so the examples were better if they were given in a form of worksheet. So that the students can understand and look at clues very closely and very easily other than writing on the board that is my comment on the material I prepared.

**R: If you could teach this class period again to the same class,**

**a) What would you do differently about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T5:** Yeah after teaching grade 12 D I directly move to 12 C I have made a sort of modification. I gave the examples in the form of question to students to try themselves and then after they tried the question themselves I come up with the sort of reflection and feedback that was the modification I made.

**R: What would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T5:** Just I showed the same strategies as contextualization is very important techniques rather than using dictionary or other passive strategies this is because this strategy is very nice in teaching vocabulary.

**R: Did you depart from anything you had planned to do during the class period? If so, when and why?**

**T5:** Actually I thought according to my plan. As you have understand or observed the situation in my class I gave students a reading assignment about their technique of vocabulary learning and I thought my lesson according to my plan. I tried to listen their reflection and then I come up with the most important recommended strategies.

**R: Based on what you taught about vocabulary in this lesson, what do you plan to do next with this class?**

T5: Is not always contextualization and it is not the only strategies to be used to teach vocabulary. There are other strategies for example word family, vocabulary game and the other strategies will be used accordingly.

**R: Overall, how successful was the lesson?**

T5: In my understanding the lesson was successful. I achieved what I planned and as I tried to look at in their classroom practice the students have some sorts of understanding of the vocabulary lessons and I expect that they will practice it more and will use the strategies to guess the meaning of difficult words when they are reading a new materials so in my opinion the lesson was successful.

**R: Thank you**

T5: Alright.

## **TEACHER SIX STIMULATED RECALL INTERVIEW**

**R: In light of your instructional goals, how do you think this lesson went?**

**T6:** Perhaps partially it is. I believe I have to use different pictures and I have to show them different demonstrations or the adjectives or verb forms are changed but I did to those activities so it is good.

**R: Did you notice any example in the stimulated audio that provides evidence of your purpose for vocabulary instruction?**

**T6:** I saw it and read the observation note. For vocabulary lesson I missed some techniques like as I mentioned it before like demonstration, showing pictures constructing, different sentences using contextual clause and such things.

**R: What were you doing in this period and why did you choose this section of the lesson?**

**T6:** As you observed I was teaching vocabulary lesson from the students' text book. Actually the lesson is based on my lesson plan so I go through the textbook.

**R: Did you feel the students learned the new vocabulary you introduced?**

**a. How do you know?**

**b. What follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?**

**T6:** I believe that because I know my students their facial expression when they understand the lesson and not so because of their facial expression. Furthermore my students are clear enough they ask if they get confused therefore I believe that they understand the lesson well.

**R: b. What follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?**

**T6:** Yeah as you have observed in the class room I rotate in the class room and checked how they are doing their activities and I gave oral question as well. Furthermore though the time is limited by today in the other class I will give further different activities to list out new words.

**R: How does this section of teaching relate to the lesson as a whole?**

**T6:** Actually language skills are integrated that we can never line up boundary. For example in the 4<sup>th</sup> class I was teaching about expressing the future will and going to and directly it is a vocabulary section so even it is better to go for that lesson that works as a prior knowledge.

**R: How do you think the students felt when you handled the lesson in this way and what were the challenges?**

**T6:** The students feel good. The challenge was you know to show them especially in demonstration to produce or give picture for the students to make words clear enough and giving contextual clues to assimilate the new vocabulary that was the challenge.

**R:** Can you please comment on the materials and activities you used?

**T6:** Actually the text book is just enough for the vocabulary lesson that's presented there. However my comment is for myself I need to have different teaching aids further that are my comment.

**R:** If you could teach this class period again to the same class,

- a) What would you do differently about vocabulary teaching? Why?
- b) What would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?

**T6:** If I get the chance once again to other class I will add the comment what I give for myself. For instance, I will show different demonstrations and even I will use pictures to make it further clear that's what I will add because it is important.

**R: b) What would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T6:** The experience what I have passed by today's lesson for instance if I get another class once I will do the contextual clue for the sentences. I got that I construct using the adjective and the verb at that time the students can easily understand the form of the adjective and the verb so I will use practice since it further describe the adjectives.

**R: Did you depart from anything you had planned to do during the class period? If so, when and why?**

**T6:** Yeah there was reshuffle of the topic or the technique that I have planned. For Instance different demonstration but when I observe the class room there is no enough time and the activities shall go to the students that are why I reshuffle.

**R: Based on what you taught about vocabulary in this lesson, what do you plan to do next with this class?**

**T6:** I will add other techniques that I regret by today you know like as I mentioned and like demonstration, like showing different pictures, like makes students to add further more words peer or group work and a lot.

**R: Overall, how successful was the lesson?**

**T6:** Almost it was good as the feedback of the students. That was good they understand well though there were some techniques that I have missed.

**R: Thank you**

**T6:** The pleasure is mine

N.B. Because of personal problem, teacher seven was out of the school compound and he didn't make a stimulated recall (post observation) interview with the researcher.

## **TEACHER EIGHT STIMULATED RECALL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

**R: In light of your instructional goals, how do you think this lesson went?**

**T8:** Okay the lesson was very interesting as you observed. And also based on our student's performance yeah that was good I did what I have in my mind.

**R: Did you notice any example in the stimulated video that provides evidence of your purpose for vocabulary instruction?**

**T8:** I saw some of it. Okay may be when I thought that vocabulary to the students in my believe or in my perception practically if the students work more they develop their vocabularies. So, I give some hint then they drive or they create different words from a word or a root word that may help them to develop and it used as an example for teaching vocabulary.

**R: What were you doing in this period and why did you choose this section of the lesson?**

**T8:** I was teaching vocabulary lesson related to natural disaster. Actually it is on their text book on the student's text book so that is directly I thought that lesson. The lesson is already on their text book it is important to develop their word power.

**R: Did you feel the students learned the new vocabulary you introduced?**

**a. How do you know?**

**T8:** Yeah I feel the students first of all have the ability or the capacity to the topic or they are familiar with that topic. Because first of all before a day we read a text and again it may be a chart just like on their text book. There is a chart to teach that vocabulary that may be helping them.

**R: b. What follow up procedures will you use to know what they learned, if any?**

**T8:** Yeah follow up procedure...first of all I will ask oral question and I give more chance for students again that may be just like class work. I gave this for them next time.

**R: How does this section of teaching relate to the lesson as a whole?**

**T8:** Of course the main topic of the lesson is says natural disasters. So, that is directly related with the reading passage even if the main topic is about disaster the vocabularies are also came out of that passage.

**R: How do you think the students felt when you handled the lesson in this way and what were the challenges?**

**T8:** From my observation... they feel good. When I read their face they feel good or they are best but maybe there is a challenge and that challenge is when they write on the board. There

may be a little bit fear...they may afraid that a problem. By the way I am free and friendly with my students.

**R: Can you please comment on the materials and activities you used?**

**T8:** Yeah I comment on the material why because it is not comfortable directly to teach the vocabulary part. I crate the situation and divert to my understanding and noticed how I teach the vocabulary. So, it is not as such attractive.

**R: If you could teach this class period again to the same class,**

**a) What would you do differently about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T8:** Actually teachers are students. So from that class I learned something so I did more modification. I had more modification... I changed these methods...okay I use these words contextually just different methods different techniques.

**R: b) What would you do the same about vocabulary teaching? Why?**

**T8:** Yeah I think I use it as I modified...depending on the class situation even if their level of understanding determines it.

**R: Did you depart from anything you had planned to do during the class period? If so, when and why?**

**T8:** Okay I did based on my plan but there is a modification change may be in the techniques. Why because depending of my students... yeah that a modification is based on my plan.

**R: Based on what you taught about vocabulary in this lesson, what do you plan to do next with this class?**

**T8:** Okay may be this is the starting point but as I told you before I add more vocabularies. I learnt from that class many things when I practice this word or this teaching vocabulary for another class may be I will change it...depending on my class size, my class students' performance and so on there is modification.

**R: Overall, how successful was the lesson?**

**T8:** I am sure, it was very successful.

**R: Thank you very much**

**T8:** It is okay. Thank you.

**Unit 7** Weather and climate change

- 2 Some of the verbs and adjectives in your table are opposites, or antonyms. For instance: *soften* and *lengthen*. Identify the other antonyms.
- 3 In your table, add some more adjectives and verbs that follow the same pattern.
- 4 The stress patterns of the adjectives is unchanged when they become verbs with these suffixes. Practise the pronunciation of the adjective and verb pairs.
- 5 Test your partner. One of you must close your book, while your partner calls out a word from the table: an adjective or a verb. You must then give the verb or adjective equivalent.  
Example: A: Purify  
B: Pure  
A: Correct!
- 6 Complete these sentences and short paragraphs with the four adjectives in brackets, adding verb suffixes where necessary.

Note:

- The adjectives are not given in the order in which they are used in the sentences
- You may have to change the form of some of the verbs.

1. The main road into the city is too \_\_\_\_\_ and the city council is going to \_\_\_\_\_ it. To \_\_\_\_\_ the period of construction, work will be carried out 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, which may not be \_\_\_\_\_ with local residents. (*narrow / popular / short / wide*)
2. During the experiment, the \_\_\_\_\_ liquid \_\_\_\_\_ and then \_\_\_\_\_ to a \_\_\_\_\_ brown substance. (*clear / dark / hard / solid*)
3. If someone is feeling \_\_\_\_\_ and is likely to faint, lie them down on a \_\_\_\_\_ surface and raise their feet above the level of their head. \_\_\_\_\_ any clothing around their neck and give them some \_\_\_\_\_ water to drink. (*cold / flat / loose / weak*)
4. My muscles are too \_\_\_\_\_, so I am starting to do \_\_\_\_\_ exercise with weights. My aim is to \_\_\_\_\_ my stomach and \_\_\_\_\_ my muscles all over. (*flat / regular / soft / strong*)



**B7.7 Reading:** Why weather forecasts are important

- 1 The text below has been cut up into paragraphs and some topic sentences removed. You must do the following:

- a Put paragraphs (A-E) in the correct order (1-5)
- b Add the three topic sentences in the box below (X-Z) to the three middle paragraphs (2-4)

A Around the country there are weather stations where information is collected about temperature, precipitation (rainfall), wind direction and speed and atmospheric pressure. In addition, data is obtained from satellites in space and radar. All this data is sent on a daily basis, or more frequently than that, to the National Meteorological Agency where it is analysed using powerful computers. These apply physical laws to the data to create mathematical models which are then used to produce charts, weather and air-quality forecasts, climate predictions, risk assessments and early warning services.

**B7.11 Fun with words:** Word square

Make as many words as you can from the letter in the square. Each word must contain the letter in the middle. Also try to make one word using all nine letters. Write your words in your exercise book.

N	O	I
D	A	B
S	G	R

**Assessment**

**1** Reading

Your teacher will give you a newspaper article. Read it and say how it relates to something you have seen or read about.

**2** Writing

Revise the layout of a formal letter, then your teacher will ask you to write a short formal letter to someone.

**Unit 7** Natural disasters

Home skip the little children:  
"Where have you been you naughty boy?"  
The child feels nothing but joy  
For he loves the approach of the rain.

The streets clear, the houses fill,  
The noise gathers as children shout  
To rival the raging wind without,  
And nought that can move is still.

A bright flash! A lighted plain;  
Then from the once-blue heavens,  
Together with a noise that deafens,  
Steadily pours the rain.

*Pius Oleghe* (From *African Poetry for Schools* Book 1, Noel Machin, Longman 1978)

**2** Discuss these questions with a partner.

- 1 Music and drumming have rhythm and so does most poetry. Read the poem aloud. Can you feel the rhythm of the lines?
- 2 Pick out the words that rhyme, or nearly rhyme. What is the rhyming pattern?
- 3 Which of these feelings does the writer try to convey?
  - a quietness
  - b chaos
  - c excitement
  - d pleasure
  - e fear
- 4 The poet uses words to help us see and hear things in our minds as we read. Here are some examples:  
The wind *howls*.  
The trees *sway*.  
The children *skip* home.
  - a Match the verbs the poet has used with these more commonly used verbs:  
move go blow
  - b Find some other examples that help us hear the noise of the storm and the things it causes.
- 5 Do the children react to the storm in the same way as the adults? Find some words in the poem to support your answer.
- 6 How do you react to this poem? What do you feel about it?

**B7.10 Study skills:** A vocabulary target

Set a vocabulary target for the next unit, for example, make a vocabulary network for the unit topic; do some extensive reading and record new words; find collocations for words you have already recorded for this grade or for new words in the next Unit, etc.

**A7.10 Increase your word power: Collocations and word partners**

A collocation refers to the way in which some words are always used together, or a particular combination of words is used in this way (for example, *commit a crime*). Each word in the collocation keeps its own meaning. Collocations can consist of an adjective and a noun, a verb and a noun, a noun, a verb and an adverb, a noun and a verb or even a noun and a noun.

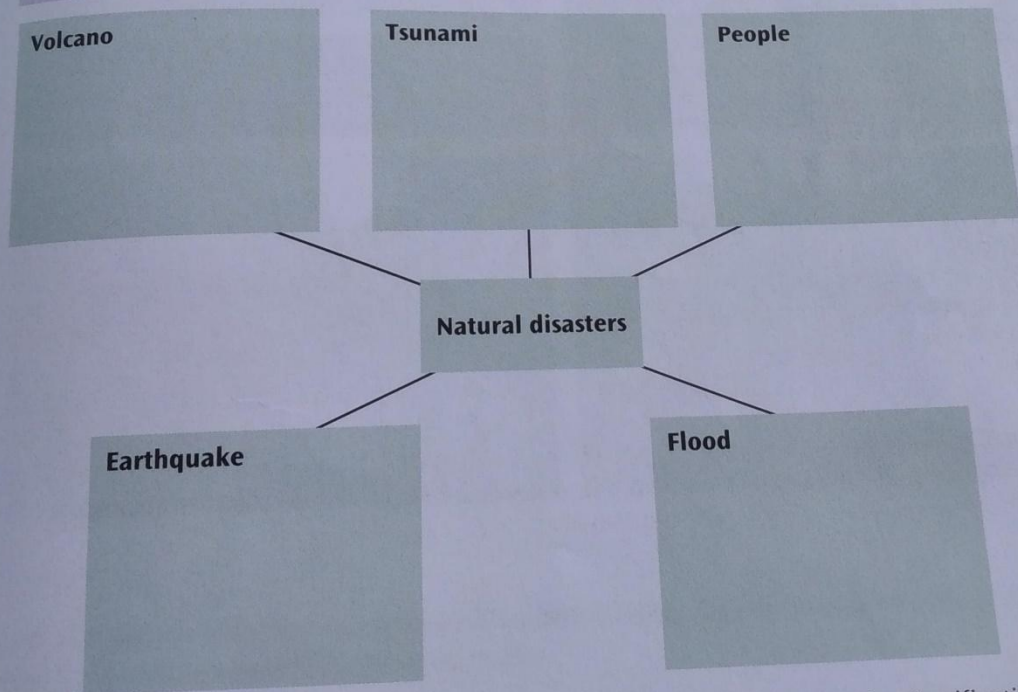
**1 Match a word from the topic with their natural collocations / word partners.**

**Example:**

- |                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| <i>man-made disaster</i> | disaster |
| volcanic                 | warming  |
| mud                      | eruption |
| tsunami                  | flood    |
| global                   | disease  |
| man-made                 | slide    |
| water-borne              | wave     |
| flash                    |          |

**2 Copy the vocabulary network below into your exercise book, and work in pairs to record the following disaster collocations under the correct headings. Add any further words related to natural disasters that you think collocate.**

volcanic eruption    flash flood    aid worker    giant wave    collapsed buildings  
 ash cloud    water surge    water-borne disease    death toll    torrential rain  
 earthquake zone    coastal areas    rescue team    earth movements    lava flow



Discuss your diagrams with your group and say if you agree or disagree with the classifications you have used.

### Part B

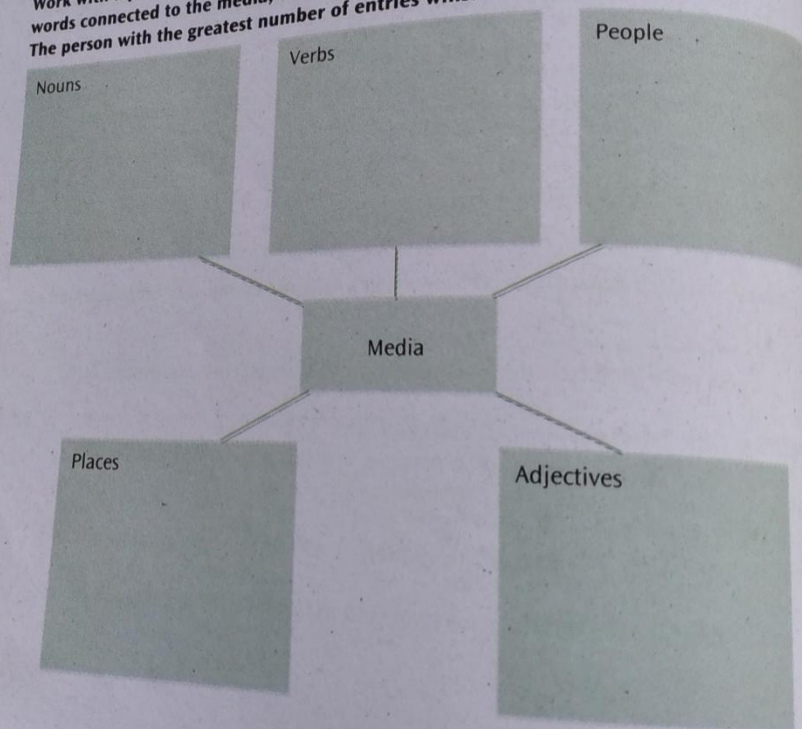
#### Objectives

By the end of this part of the unit you will be able to:

- classify media words
- discuss a television schedule
- listen to an interview about Tilahun Gessesse and answer questions about it
- use some synonyms and antonyms
- use the present perfect tense
- report what someone has said
- talk about your favourite celebrity
- read about the advantages and disadvantages of radio and television
- pronounce words with a different number of syllables
- read and contrast two biographies
- learn a spelling rule
- classify associated words.

### B6.1 Increase your word power: Words for the media

Work with a partner and copy the diagram below into your exercise book. Complete it with words connected to the media, classifying them according to the headings in each box. The person with the greatest number of entries wins!



### B Guessing the meaning of unknown words

When you come across a word you don't know, what can you do to try to understand it, without looking it up in a dictionary or asking someone else to explain it?  
There are some important features of the word that can help us to work out what it means:

- 1 Its context (what's the meaning of the rest of the sentence?)
- 2 Its grammar (what part of speech is it? Noun, verb, adjective? Does it look like a plural noun? What tense is it if it's a verb?)
- 3 Its construction (Does it have any prefixes or suffixes you recognise? Do you recognise its base? Is it compound? Do you recognise either part?)
- 4 Its similarity to a word in another language you know.

**1 Look at these words. Single words do not give you any contextual clues, but see if you can identify features 2–4 listed above.**

- blunt
- unicycle
- malodorous
- wobbly
- understate

**2 Now look at the words in a context. Does it help you to understand them?**

- 1 This knife is blunt and won't cut anything.
- 2 A malodorous presence greeted them as they opened the door, which made them gasp and cover their noses in horror.
- 3 You understate the massive scale of the disaster by saying that it has caused a few problems.
- 4 The circus clown made everyone laugh as he rode backwards and forwards on top of his unicycle, looking as though he would fall off at any moment.
- 5 Don't sit on that chair, it's unsafe. One of the legs is wobbly and could come off at any moment.

**3 This paragraph contains a number of nonsense words. Identify them and replace them with real words that fit the context.**

Water is vital for life. It is two-thirds of our body's schlophen and 90 per cent of its volume. When we are ppitke it satisfies us, it kllrths our clothes when they are dirty and it modrties our crops. Every person needs four litres of water a day for cooking and drinking and at least another twenty litres to stay clean and healthy. However, water can carry xelops like bilharzia, malaria, dysentery and diarrhoea. The World Health Organization estimates that 80 per cent of all disease can be attributed to poor water and wethres. As many as 50,000 people lkel every day from diseases associated with dirty water. A further 1,500 million are awfthing from these diseases on that same day.

### C Reading practice

**1 The best way to improve your reading is to read more. How can you do this? Have a class**

**Work with a partner. Ask and answer questions about the topics in the circles. Justify or explain your answers.**

**Example:**  
 - What are your hopes for the weather in the coming months?  
 - I hope that we'll have good rains this year so that farmers will be able to plant and have good crops. Otherwise we could face a serious food security problem in our region later on this year.

The weather in the coming months

Your future

Ethiopia's future

Africa's future

Your family's future

**B7.6 Increase your word power: Word building**

Verbs can be made from some base adjectives by adding *-en*, *-ise\** and *-ify\**.  
**Example:** *short - shorten*  
*modern - modernise*  
 Sometimes spelling changes are required  
**Example:** *high - heighten*  
*simple - simplify*  
 \*-ise and -ify can also be added to some nouns to make verbs

**1** Make verbs from these adjectives. Make any necessary spelling changes. See how many of them you already know, without using a dictionary.

Adjectives	Verbs
broad	
dark	
deep	
false	
flat	
hard	
legal	

Adjectives	Verbs
pure	
regular	
soft	
solid	
strong	
tight	
weak	
wide	

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

### **1. Investigating EFL Teachers' Knowledge and Practice in Vocabulary Instruction.**

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***LET: Linguistics, Literature and English Teaching Journal***

||Volume||12||Issue||2||Pages||259-285|2022||

|P-ISSN: 20869606; E-ISSN: 25492454|

Available online at: <http://jurnal.uin-antasari.ac.id/index.php>

### **2. Teachers' knowledge: Teachers' perceptions and their sources of knowledge in vocabulary instruction. English Language Teaching Educational Journal ISSN 2621-6485**

Vol. 5, No. 3, December 2022, pp. 191-202 <https://doi.org/10.12928/eltej.v5i3.6879>

<http://journal2.uad.ac.id/index.php/eltej/index> [eltej@pbi.uad.ac.id](mailto:eltej@pbi.uad.ac.id)

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