



Faculty of Education, Language and Communication

**English Language Teachers' Knowledge and Practices in Teaching
Vocabulary using Audio-Visual Approach in Rural Primary School**

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English Language Teachers' Knowledge and Practices in Teaching Vocabulary using Audio-Visual Approach in Rural Primary School

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.


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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary is the key to effective communication. Past research found that teaching vocabulary has often been neglected by teachers as they focus on other language skills such as listening, speaking, grammar, reading, and writing. This research was conducted to investigate the English language teachers' practices and knowledge with the use of the audio-visual (AV) approach to teach vocabulary in the rural east Malaysian primary school. This research focuses on the teachers' planning, approaches, perceptions, and challenges when using the AV approach to teach vocabulary. Seven primary-level English language teachers from two schools in a rural area of Bau, Sarawak, participated in this research. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observation, and document analysis, and were thematically analysed. The findings indicated that teachers viewed the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) aligned resources as their main guideline for lesson planning and approaching vocabulary teaching. Teachers were reported to use different AV approaches to teach vocabulary depending on the difficulty levels of the words. Findings show that teachers responded positively, and they were comfortable using the AV approach to teach vocabulary. However, teachers also experience infrastructure and policy challenges. The findings were then discussed in accordance with the two key themes: teachers' knowledge and practice. The challenges teachers faced seem to be linked to the gap between the teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) in the subject matter and their PCK concerning the CEFR. The findings offer crucial implications for vocabulary teaching using the AV approach.

Keywords: Teaching vocabulary, audio-visual approach, teachers' practice, teachers' knowledge, primary-level English language classroom

***Pengetahuan and Amalan Guru Bahasa Inggeris dalam Pengajaran Kosa Kata
menggunakan Pendekatan Audio-Visual di Sekolah Rendah Kawasan Luar Bandar***

ABSTRAK

Kosa kata memainkan peranan yang penting dalam komunikasi yang efektif. Kajian lepas menunjukkan bahawa guru cenderung mengabaikan pengajaran kosa kata dibandingkan dengan fokus yang diberikan kepada kemahiran bahasa yang lain seperti mendengar, bertutur, membaca, menulis dan tatabahasa. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji amalan dan pengetahuan guru tentang penggunaan pendekatan audio-visual (AV) dalam mengajar kosa kata di kelas Bahasa Inggeris peringkat sekolah rendah di kawasan luar bandar Sarawak. Fokus kajian ini adalah pada perancangan, pendekatan, dan persepsi guru dalam menggunakan pendekatan AV untuk mengajar kosa kata, serta cabaran yang dihadapi oleh guru-guru tersebut. Tujuh orang guru daripada dua buah sekolah di kawasan luar bandar Bau, Sarawak, telah terlibat dalam kajian ini. Pengumpulan data meliputi kaedah temu bual, pemerhatian bilik darjah, dan analisis dokumen, yang kemudiannya dianalisis secara tematik. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa sumber Pendidikan yang sejajar dengan Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) telah dijadikan panduan dan rujukan utama guru semasa membuat perancangan, serta pelaksanaan pengajaran dan pembelajaran kosa kata semasa kelas Bahasa Inggeris. Dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa guru mengadaptasi strategi pendekatan AV berdasarkan tahap kesukaran kosa kata yang diajar. Para guru telah memberi respon yang positif terhadap penggunaan pendekatan AV untuk pengajaran kosa kata di kelas Bahasa Inggeris. Namun, hasil kajian juga menunjukkan kekangan yang dihadapi oleh guru dari segi infrastruktur dan dasar pendidikan. Dapatan kajian adalah dibincangkan melalui dua tema, iaitu amalan guru dan pengetahuan guru. Perbincangan dapatan menunjukkan bahawa cabaran yang dihadapi

oleh guru adalah berkaitan dengan jurang antara Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) guru dalam kandungan mata pelajaran dan PCK mereka berkaitan CEFR. Dapatan ini menawarkan implikasi penting untuk pengajaran kosa kata menggunakan pendekatan AV.

Kata kunci: *Pengajaran perbendaharaan kata, pendekatan audio-visual (AV), amalan guru, pengetahuan guru, Bahasa Inggeris sekolah rendah*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AV	Audio-Visual
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
MOE	Ministry of Education
DSKP	<i>Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran</i>
SoW	Scheme of Work
CD	Compact Disc
SK	<i>Sekolah Kebangsaan</i> (National Primary School)
SJK	<i>Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan</i> (National Type Primary School)
e-Resources	Electronic Resources
KSSR	<i>Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah</i> (Standard Curriculum for Primary School)
TP	<i>Tahap Penguasaan</i> (KSSR levels of achievement)
IT	Information Technology
BPK	Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
TPACK	Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter covers the issues that underline the background of the study and the problem statement. Besides, it also includes the research objectives, research questions, significance of study, scope of study and definition of key terms.

1.2 Background of Study

Vocabulary is the building block to effective communication, without sufficient vocabulary, communication will be difficult (Augus et al., 2005; Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Sovakandan et al., 2017; Sutrisna & Artini, 2020; Yovanoff et al., 2005). Therefore, vocabulary is essential in learning English (Zhang, 2011), and it serves as the foundation for improving other language abilities including reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Koizumi et al., 2013; Mohd. Nor et al., 2015; Rasouli & Jafari, 2016; Susanto, 2017; Sutrisna, 2021). However, in reality, researchers found that vocabulary teaching has always been outshined by the attention given to teaching grammar, reading, and writing skills (Bastanfar & Hashemi, 2010; Kalajahi & Poursahian 2012; Lu, 2017; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018; Permana, 2020). This phenomenon can be seen happening globally (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008; Kalajahi & Poursahian, 2012; Lu, 2017) as well as locally in Malaysia (Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018).

In reality, teaching the English language in Malaysia can be challenging, especially for teachers in rural schools in Sarawak where English is not the learners' first language. The differences in culture and background between the teachers and learners in these schools

often affect the pedagogical decisions made by the teachers (Chan & Kapong, 2021; Ler, 2012; Musa et al., 2012).

According to Kiss and Rimbar (2017), the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MOE) has provided resources such as English textbooks for teachers. However, these textbooks were difficult to implement in rural Sarawak schools due to their extensive foreign cultural content being incompatible with the local setting. Thus, teaching vocabulary based on the textbook was a challenge for the teachers compared to teaching learners in urban schools, which have a more supportive environment, such as access to more up-to-date textbooks and technologies that can support English learning (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021). The integration of technology into the Malaysian education system has raised concerns about how vocabulary lessons are planned and executed in English classrooms, particularly in rural Sarawak schools in Malaysia. The findings from this study were crucial to providing practitioners with insights into how rural teachers implement the AV approach to teaching vocabulary in their classrooms.

Traditionally, Scott & Nagy (1997) argue that vocabulary teaching was built on the definition approach. Other researchers find it a passive approach because teachers focused on providing learners with word definitions (Zeta et al., 2019) which pushed learners to become passive receivers. In recent years, technological advancement has contributed to the popularity of the audio-visual (AV) approach among Malaysian English teachers to improve students' language acquisition (Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum [BPK], 2017).

Generally, audio-visual (AV) derived from the combination of two words: audio, which refers to "what we can hear," and visual, which refers to "what we can see" (Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Singh, 2007). In education, teachers often use the AV approach to share

information with the learners through both audio and visual resources (Swaran Singh et al., 2021) which targets both the senses of hearing and sight (Anas & Zakaria, 2019). AV approach was also adopted to increase the learners' experience in the classroom (Singh, 2007). In line with the introduction of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) into our Malaysian education system in 2017, AV resources aligned with the Teacher's Guidebook and Student's Book were provided by the MOE Malaysia (BPK, 2017). The CEFR-aligned AV resources were saved in the form of compact discs (CDs) to aid English teachers in lesson planning and classroom practice (BPK, 2017).

Studies in the past indicated that teachers have been hesitant to use CEFR-aligned resources, such as CDs, despite knowing about their availability (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Mansourzadeh, 2014; Ngu & Azlina, 2019; Utami, 2015). According to Bayuong et al. (2019), even with the availability of AV resources, integrating information technology (IT) in primary schools in Malaysia, especially in rural areas like Sarawak, has proven to be challenging. Past research has found that English teachers from rural schools were facing challenges such as the lack of resources (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Utami, 2015), poor network coverage (Ngu & Azlina, 2019), lack of equipment and facilities (Wazeema & Kareema, 2017; Yonas et al., 2020), insufficient access to technology (Nawai & Said, 2020) and lack of teacher's training (Aminuddin & Azman, 2017; Azman et al., 2018).

According to Nurul Farehah and Mohd. Sallehudin (2017), the main reason that teachers were faced with these challenges was due to the lack of CEFR experts to develop and manage the CEFR-aligned resources, and also the lack of training for teachers to implement CEFR-aligned resources in actual classroom practice. Therefore, it is crucial to

understand how teachers plan and implement the CEFR-aligned AV resources for vocabulary teaching and the challenges faced in the actual classroom practice.

As teachers play a crucial role in determining the success and failure of teaching and learning in any classroom (Borg, 2003; Philip et al., 2019). How teacher perceive vocabulary teaching will affect their choice of approaches. The recent studies by Alanazi (2019) and Phan (2021) have found that teachers' choice of pedagogical approaches in their lesson planning plays a decisive role in the success or failure of a lesson practice. Therefore, it is crucial to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' perception of using the AV approach to vocabulary teaching in the primary-level English language classroom, as well as to understand the challenges they faced in the process.

1.3 Statement of The Problem

Based on the past research and literature review, the main problem found leading to this study was the lack of research to address the use of the AV approach to teach vocabulary from the teacher's perspective. There are five key issues which will be addressed in this study.

The first issue that led to this study was the gap between teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of vocabulary teaching and their actual practice in the English language classroom. Teaching vocabulary is a complex process that does not adhere to a set of structural rules like teaching grammar, thus, how to teach vocabulary depends on the teacher's understanding (Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018).

In reality, even though pre- and in-service English teachers undergo training to gain content and pedagogical knowledge in teaching language skills, including teaching

vocabulary (Blachowicz et al., 2006; Boyd et al., 2012; Hendrick et al., 2004; Zhang, 2008), yet studies in the field showed that teachers were often uncertain of the best practice in vocabulary teaching (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008; Lu, 2017; Sutrisna, 2021). Past studies from Permana (2020) and Sutrisna (2021) found many teachers were unable to recognise the fact that teaching vocabulary was merely about explaining the meaning of the words. In fact, teaching vocabulary should not only focus on understanding the meaning of the words but also on knowing how to apply the vocabulary learned in the real world (Sutrisna, 2021).

Likewise, the findings of a recent study conducted by Maizatulliza and Kiely (2018) to investigate the understanding of teacher's PCK in ESL vocabulary teaching revealed that teachers pay less attention to teaching vocabulary compared to teaching grammar, despite teachers' claims to understand the importance of vocabulary.

As mentioned earlier, with the integration of technology into our current education system, CEFR-aligned AV resources were prioritised in terms of teaching and learning, including teaching and learning vocabulary (Ngu & Azlina; 2019). However, there were no clear instructions given in the curriculum documents showing how the audio-visual should be used to teach vocabulary, neither in the *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran* (DSKP) nor the Scheme of Work (SoW). Therefore, teachers were given the autonomy to create and decide on instructional activities for vocabulary teaching based on the word list and AV resources while depending heavily on their content and pedagogical knowledge (Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018).

However, past studies have found that teachers were not taking full advantage of the AV to teach vocabulary even though they understood the benefits of adopting the AV approach to teaching (Mansourzadeh, 2014; Utami, 2015). Similar challenges have also been

identified in recent studies where researchers found that teachers were hesitant to use CEFR-aligned AV resources, despite knowing its benefits and availability (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Ngu & Azlina, 2019). The teachers' hesitation to apply the Av approach despite knowing its benefits reflected the gap between the teachers' PCK and their actual classroom practice in vocabulary teaching. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the reason behind this gap by looking at the teacher's perceptions which will influence their instructional decision on how to teach vocabulary in the English language classroom (Chien, 2020; Kaur & Mah, 2022; Niu & Andrews, 2012; Philip et al., 2019; Sangster et al., 2013).

The second issue identified as the basis for this study is the lack of research on teachers' perceptions regarding the use of the AV approach in teaching vocabulary. Most of the studies in the field focus on learners' perception of the use of AV aids in vocabulary learning (Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Firda et al., 2018; Mathew & Alidmat, 2013; Tamimi Sa'd & Rajabi, 2018). Recently, there have been few studies which investigate the teachers' perception in terms of vocabulary teaching (Chien, 2020; Lu, 2017; Nguyen & Nguyen 2020; Susanto, 2017), but it was not related to the AV approach. Whereas the study by Make and Yonas (2018) focused on investigating teachers' perception of teaching speaking skills instead of vocabulary.

Furthermore, the findings of Tan et al. (2019) research reinforce the lack of research in terms of teachers' perception, highlighting the huge research gap regarding teacher cognition which was falling far behind in Malaysia. Based on their research, the teacher's perception was one of the issues identified which was part of the teacher cognition (Tan et al., 2019). Similarly, Kaur and Mah (2022) highlighted the need to study teachers' perceptions because they played a significant part in successfully applying any curriculum content into the field.

The third issue identified as the basis for this study was the lack of studies related to vocabulary teaching based on the CEFR-aligned curriculum, textbook and AV aids in our Malaysia English language classroom. As the implementation of CEFR in the Malaysian education system was still relatively new, there were only a limited number of studies conducted in the local context. Most of the studies found were investigating challenges faced by teachers in adopting CEFR-aligned curricula and syllabus documents as the guide for English language teaching in the Malaysia classroom (Darmie et al., 2017; Lo, 2018; Nawai & Said, 2020; Nurul Farehah & Mohd Sallehhudin, 2018). Accordingly, the studies address the issue that teachers need more guidance to understand and to incorporate CEFR-aligned curriculum with their pedagogical approach. There were also studies which investigated the teachers' proficiency level in English to align it with the standard requirement in CEFR (Rahman, 2013). However, none of those studies investigated the perception of teachers in terms of using of AV approach to teach vocabulary in the local English language classroom based on the CEFR-aligned curriculum.

The fourth issue identified as the basis for this study is the lack of qualitative research which provides a deeper understanding of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary from the teachers' viewpoint. Most of the research found in the field is either experimental or action research which focuses especially on the effectiveness of certain techniques or approaches in teaching vocabulary and their results tend to be quantitative. For instance, studies on the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching and learning using rote-memorizing (Khoii & Sharififar, 2013; Reed, 2012), spacing techniques (Schuetze, 2015), reading treatment (File & Adams, 2010), visual approach using visual aids (Bhatti, et. al., 2017; Takač & Singleton, 2008), and auditory approach using songs (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). AV approach using audio-visual aids (Azaman & Nur Ehsan, 2019; Barania et al., 2010;

Bhatti et al., 2017; Rosario, 2019; Utami, 2015). The findings of these studies were able to address the effectiveness of certain pedagogical approaches, yet it does not reflect the teacher's perception of conducting those pedagogical approaches in their classroom practice. However, even though there were a few studies investigating the AV approach in vocabulary teaching (Azaman & Nur Ehsan, 2019; Barania et al., 2010; Bhatti et al., 2017; Rosario, 2019; Utami, 2015;), its findings only manage to address the effectiveness of the AV aids instead of investigating how teachers perceive AV as a pedagogical approach. Therefore, studies which investigate the teachers' perception in the related field were limited.

The fifth issue identified as the basis for this study is the insufficient research to investigate the reason behind the challenges that teachers encountered when teaching the English language in the rural school of Sarawak. Studies in the past have found that English language teachers from rural areas were facing challenges such as the lack of resources (Ismail et al., 2017; Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Utami, 2015), poor network coverage (Ismail et al, 2017), and lack of equipment and facilities (Wazeema & Kareema, 2017; Yonas et al., 2020), as well as lack of access to technology and teachers training courses (Aminuddin & Azman, 2017; Azman et al., 2018). However, the studies did not further investigate the reason behind the occurrence of such challenges among teachers.

As the audio-visual approach was gaining popularity in the field of education of the 21st century, therefore, it is important to gain insight into the teachers' perceptions in terms of adopting the AV approach to teaching vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom.

1.4 Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' knowledge and practices of applying the audio-visual approach for vocabulary teaching in rural primary school English language classrooms. The objectives are:

1. To examine teachers' practices in teaching vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom.
2. To investigate teachers' views on teaching vocabulary through the use of an audio-visual approach in the primary-level English language classroom.
3. To explore the challenges faced by teachers in using the audio-visual approach to teach vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom.

1.5 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do teachers teach vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of using the AV approach in teaching vocabulary in line with CEFR?
3. What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in the process of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary in primary-level English language classrooms?

1.6 Significance of Study

This study aimed to investigate the teachers' perception of using the audio-visual approach for vocabulary teaching in the primary level English language classroom. Based on the research questions, the findings will cover areas such as teachers' planning,

implementation and perception in using AV approach to teach vocabulary, as well as the challenges they encounter.

Therefore, the findings of this study will benefit teachers or practitioners with insight into how teachers adopt the AV approach to teach vocabulary in the classroom, as well as help to identify the best practice for teaching vocabulary. At the same time, the findings reflected the need to enhance the teachers' technological competence as part of the pedagogical training in line with the current digital education trend.

Besides, the findings of this study will benefit the policymakers by providing insight into the teachers' perception which would reflect the teachers' knowledge. With this information, it could serve as a reference for policymakers to design a more comprehensive professional development training or course based on the teachers' needs to minimise the challenges faced.

Furthermore, the findings may also provide a reference to researchers working within the field of education and language learning. These findings will help researchers understand how teachers perceive the use of the AV approach to teach vocabulary in primary-level English language classrooms, especially in rural schools.

Furthermore, as the CEFR has recently been adopted as our English language curriculum in Malaysia, it is hoped that the outcomes of this study will contribute to the limited research regarding vocabulary teaching through the CEFR-aligned curriculum that existed in the context of Malaysian English language classrooms.

Finally, since the integration of technology into the Malaysian education system has raised concerns about how vocabulary lessons are planned and executed in English

classrooms, particularly in rural Sarawak schools in Malaysia. The findings from this study were crucial to provide researchers, practitioners and policy makers with insights into how rural teachers perceived and implemented the AV approach to teaching vocabulary in their classrooms.

1.7 Scope of Study

The study focuses on primary-level English language teachers in the rural area of Bau, Sarawak, Malaysia. Seven English teachers from two schools in Bau who fits the selection criteria were selected as the respondent of this study based on the purposive sampling method. The study focused on collecting qualitative data based on teachers' planning, implementation, perception and challenges faced in using the AV approach to teach vocabulary in the primary level English language classroom. As this study is qualitative, the findings are not to be generalised, but to gain an in-depth understanding of the English language teacher's perception of using the AV approach in vocabulary teaching.

1.8 Definition of Terms

For this study, the terms used are defined as the following:

1.8.1 Teacher's Perception

Teachers' perception is part of the teachers' cognition (Borg, 2003 & 2006; Philip et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2019). It refers to the teachers' thought, belief, opinion, understand information or awareness of their teaching and learning context (Philip et al., 2019) or surrounding through senses. (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Borg, 2003, p8; Eggen & Kauchak, 2001; Sangster et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2015).

1.8.2 Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to a collection of words or phrases in a language that communicate meanings or concepts (Lessard-Clouston, 2013). For this study, vocabulary refers to the collection of English words and phrases for the primary-level. Vocabulary plays an important role in the primary-level English language classroom, regardless of whether it is an English as Second Language (ESL) or English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, as words are needed in every language skill either to listen, speak, read or write (Koizumi & In'nami, 2013; Nor et al., 2015 Rasouli & Jafari, 2016; Susanto, 2017; Sutrisna, 2021).

1.8.3 Vocabulary Teaching

In this study, vocabulary teaching was referred to as the pedagogical approach, techniques or instruction adopted by teachers to introduce vocabulary to the learners during English language lessons. Vocabulary teaching involves teaching the words or phrases, teaching their meaning, as well as teaching how to apply the words to different scenarios (Nation, 2013).

1.8.4 Audio-Visual (AV) Approach

The term "audio-visual" or AV, refers to a combination of audio (sound) and visual (images) resources (Singh, 2007). In this study, the AV approach referred to a pedagogical approach that engages learners in learning by using both audio and visual stimuli (Swaran Singh et al., 2021). The AV approach targets the senses of hearing and sight (Anas & Zakaria, 2019), and teachers can use it by either using audio and visual resources interchangeably or by using resources that support the simultaneous application of both audio and visual stimuli, such as videos. By using the AV approach, teachers can establish

a meaningful language environment for learners, making teaching and learning more interesting and engaging (Daniel, 2013).

1.8.5 Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in Malaysia

CEFR was introduced in 2013 with the establishment of the English Language Standards and Quality Council (ELSQC) to uplift the standard of English in Malaysia. The English Language Roadmap 2015 – 2025 was developed based on CEFR (Azman, 2016; Aziz, 2016). CEFR in the Malaysia context include documents such as CEFR-aligned curriculum framework (CF), syllabus document which is the *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran* (DSKP), and scheme of work (SoW) (Ministry of Education Malaysia [MOE], 2013). The CEFR-aligned textbook and AV aids in the form of Compact Discs (CD) have been distributed to schools since 2018 (Azlina, 2019).

1.8.6 Rural Primary School English Language Classrooms

For this study, the rural primary school refers to the schools in Sarawak, Malaysia, which caters to learners ranging from Year 1 to Year 6, with the age of seven to twelve years old. As the focus of this research focused on vocabulary teaching, the English language classroom in this study accommodates both ESL and EFL as vocabulary teaching is crucial to be taught in both contexts (Koizumi & In'nami, 2013; Nor et al., 2015; Susanto, 2017).

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the background of the present study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope of study, as well as the definition of terms used in the study. The following chapter will further discuss the literature reviews and past research related to the current study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter serves to provide an understanding of the study by introducing teachers' roles, and teachers' cognition pedagogical approach in vocabulary teaching. The Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) serves as the conceptual framework for this study. Literature reviews and past studies related to vocabulary teaching in the CEFR context and the audio-visual approach to teaching vocabulary are discussed in this chapter.

2.2 Teachers' Roles in English Language Classroom

In general, the word 'role' refers to the expectation of 'what people were supposed to do' (Dörnyei and Murphey, 2003). Relatively, teachers' roles refer to what teachers should do in the classroom.

Teachers play a crucial role in determining the success and failure of any language classroom (Afrianto, 2018; Keiler, 2018; Naibaho et al., 2019; Suri Mira et al., 2021). Teachers are the main implementors of any planned curriculum and they are the captains to steer the language lessons in the direction they envision (Naibaho et al., 2019; Palmer, 1997). Hence, it is important to understand the roles of teachers in the field of education.

Recently, the field of education has been evolving drastically in line with global changes, especially in teaching and learning language because language is the medium for communication. Modern technologies have become part of the essential needs in the education field. With this, teachers should undergo a paradigm shift which transformed their

role from the traditional language teachers, which is mainly the teacher-centred classroom, into adopting multiple roles in the modern language classroom which is learner-centred (Afrianto, 2018; Choudhury, 2011).

Many researchers in the field have examined teacher roles based on Harmer's theory, which identified eight roles for teachers in classroom management (Choudhury, 2011; Naibaho et al., 2019; Suri Mira et al., 2021). According to Harmer (2007), in the classroom, a teacher plays eight roles: the controller, organizer, assessor, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, and observer.

Teacher as controller refers to the teacher's responsibility for controlling the pace of the lesson as well as planning all teaching and learning activities that take place in the language classroom (Harmer, 2003; Naibaho et al., 2019; Suri Mira et al., 2021). Such a role is particularly vital in making announcements, explaining in class, or maintaining discipline during lectures. It is essential for teachers to effectively manage their classroom in order to create a conducive learning environment for students.

Teacher as organiser refers to the teacher's responsibility to organise both learners and classroom activities (Naibaho et al., 2019). Teachers play a crucial role in planning and guiding learners through their activities by offering clear instructions along with relevant information about the activities or tasks (Suri Mira et al., 2021).

Teacher as an assessor indicates that teachers are responsible for assessing or evaluating the performances of learners (Suri Mira et al., 2021), and also for providing learners with feedback regarding their use of language (Archana & Rani, 2017; Naibaho et al., 2019).

The teacher, as a promoter, serves as a 'whisperer' (Naibaho et al., 2019), assisting learners in finding answers to specific questions. Teachers use word cues and clues to help learners complete tasks or execute planned activities (Harmer, 2003, 2007; Naibaho et al., 2019; Suri Mira et al., 2021).

Teacher as the participant is a common role which most teachers play in a learner-centred classroom. Relatively, teachers took part in classroom activities to create an active and conducive learning environment for the students (Harmer, 2003, 2007; Naibaho et al., 2019). Besides ensuring a lively learning atmosphere, by participating in the learning activities, teachers learn to think and see from the learner's perspective to provide encouraging feedback (Archana & Rani, 2017).

The teacher as a resource is the centre of information in the classroom (Harmer 2003, 2007). Hence, the teacher plays the role of the information provider in the classroom to learners' questions, as well as being the reliable resource to help learners overcome the challenges faced (Naibaho et al., 2019; Suri Mira et al., 2021).

Teacher as tutor is the main character a teacher plays in the classroom, where they guide learners individually or in small groups (Harmer, 2007).

The teacher is an observer who observes the performance of learners in the classroom to provide constructive feedback after the observation (Harmer, 2003; Suri Mira et al., 2021). Besides observing the learners, teachers will know the effectiveness of the pedagogical approach and materials used to teach in the classroom (Naibaho et al., 2019).

One of the unique roles that teachers play is that of performers. To keep learners interested in learning, teachers may need to wear a variety of "hats" to make the class engaging (Naibaho et al., 2019).

Relatively, past studies have found that the roles played by teachers in the language classroom were dependent on the teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and opinions (Borg, 2003; Lynch, 1990; Shafie & Nayan, 2010). Hence, it is crucial to understand the teachers' cognition in language teaching.

2.3 Teachers' Cognition in Vocabulary Teaching

As discussed in the previous section, teachers are the key to determining the success or failure of any lesson as they are the agents of translating education policy and documented curriculum into action in the classroom (Philip et al., 2019). In reality, how teachers think and make decision are affected by their cognition regarding teaching and learning (Borg, 1999).

Generally, teacher cognition refers to the teachers' beliefs, knowledge, thoughts, perceptions, assumptions, principles, and behaviour (Borg, 2003 & 2006; Philip et al., 2019). It refers to what teachers think, know, and believe (Borg, 2006). In the classroom, these mental constructs interact with the content, and the pedagogical approach will influence teachers' actual practice in the language classroom (Hermagustiana et al., 2017). Thus, it's important to understand teacher cognitive processes to understand how they conceptualise their work (Hassankiadeh, 2012).

Studies in the field have found that teachers' beliefs influence their perception and judgement related to teaching and learning in the classroom, thus resulting in diverse practice

in the language classroom (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Li & Walsh, 2011; Mardali & Siyyari, 2019). According to Calderhead (1996), some teachers may perceive instruction as a means of knowledge transmission, while others may perceive it as a means of promoting learning. In reality, such a statement is still applicable in the modern world, where we could still see teachers conducting classes differently, such as some prefer a lecture-oriented class while others are keener to create an interactive learning environment in the classroom (Karim et al., 2020).

In terms of teachers' cognition, the lens of this research will focus on investigating the teachers' perceptions, which affect their actual practice in the language classroom. Eggen & Kauchak (2001) describe perception as a thought, belief, perspective, or awareness of something through the use of the five senses—especially sight. Perceptions refer to the ability of an individual to think and understand information or the world around us through their senses (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Borg, 2003; Eggen & Kauchak, 2001; Philip et al., 2019; Ward et al., 2015). Perception is also known as an experience-based process of information (Eggen & Kauchak, 2001), which includes the process of recognising, organising, and interpreting information (Philip et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2019; Ward et al., 2015).

Tracking back to its roots, researchers have found that teachers' perceptions devised from their learning experience as language learners, and this includes the experiences they gained through being trainee teachers before starting their service as formal in-service teachers (Deni & Fahriany, 2020; Eryaman, 2006, 2007; Shulman, 1987; Tabacbnick & Zeichner, 1984).

The teachers' perception is the decisive factor in how they select the pedagogical approach or their actions in the classroom (Karim et Al., 2020; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984). For instance, how the teacher teaches vocabulary is related to how they perceive vocabulary teaching and learning. It is either influenced by how they were taught in school as students or affected by how they were trained to teach vocabulary as a trainee teacher before becoming an in-service teacher.

According to Corbell, Reiman, & Nietfeld (2008) and Lowe (2012), teachers' perceptions in the field of education can be referred to as their self-awareness of their integrity and professional knowledge, which contribute to their readiness to carry out their tasks in the field. The term "perception(s)" in this study refers to the teacher's understanding or awareness of the actions that contribute to the learners' increased knowledge.

Previous studies have identified two relevant sources of teachers' perception (Eryaman, 2006, 2007; Karim et al., 2020; Shulman, 1987; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984). Firstly, a teacher's perception is derived from their own learning experience as a language learner. Secondly, studies show that teacher perceptions develop from ideas learned in pedagogical classes during their training in the teacher training program. Moreover, it has been found that how a teacher views and perceives their ability to teach will have a significant impact on their actual classroom practice (Lowe, 2012; Mardali & Siyyari, 2019).

Past studies on the perception towards vocabulary teaching and learning have found that vocabulary teaching and learning were often neglected by teachers and English language learners (Cahyono & Widiati, 2008; Dewi, 2017; Kebiel, 2012; Kwejdju, 2004). This leads to the problem of learners having limited vocabulary, which may affect their learning of other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Kwejdju, 2004;

Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018; Priyono, 2004). In Kebiel's (2012) research on teachers' and learners' perceptions of vocabulary learning strategies, neither teachers nor students have sufficient knowledge about vocabulary teaching and learning. Few teachers recognise the need to include vocabulary instruction in their pedagogical planning for an English language session, even though it is not explicitly covered in the English curriculum documents (Kebiel, 2012; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018).

The study conducted by Rahman et al. (2018) on English language teachers shows that teachers' perceptions, knowledge, and lesson planning do not always correspond to their actual classroom practice. The study carried out by Phipps and Borg (2009) yielded the same findings: that what teachers think and plan is not always congruent with what happens in the classroom. Findings from Phipps and Borg's (2009) studies also show that teachers' perception may be drawing from their 'technical knowledge', whereas actual classroom practice draws on their 'practical knowledge'.

Since teachers' perceptions will affect their pedagogical methods in the English language classroom, it is important to look into the teacher's cognition to understand the rationale behind their choice of pedagogical approach (Chien, 2020; Deni & Fahriany, 2020; Niu & Andrews, 2012; Philip et al., 2019; Sangster et al., 2013). However, researchers have been voicing concerns about the gap concerning teacher cognition, which is falling far behind in Malaysia (Chien, 2020; Philip et al., 2019; Rahman et al., 2018; Tan et al., 2019). According to Kaur & Mah (2022), the implementation of any curriculum reform needs to take into account the teacher's concerns, as they are the main implementors of the proposed curriculum or educational content.

As stated by Musa et al. (2012) in their meta-review of the research investigation, the majority of studies on English language teaching and learning in Malaysia have neglected the teacher variable in favour of focusing on the perspective of the learners. Similarly, local researchers Tan et. al. (2019) addressed their concern about the lack of attention given to teacher variables in Malaysian educational research, given that teachers are crucial to the implementation of education policy, which has an impact on language learners' acquisition. However, there were only a few studies regarding teachers' perceptions about teaching English.

Furthermore, there were limited studies in terms of investigating the relationship between teacher cognition and vocabulary teaching compared to the number of studies on how teacher cognition relates to teaching grammar (Borg, 2001; Borg & Burns, 2008; Farrell & Lim, 2005; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Rahimi & Asadi, 2014).

Therefore, this is a gap that needs further investigation to understand how teachers' perceptions influence their actual classroom practice, especially concerning vocabulary teaching. Hence, it is important to understand the pedagogical approaches chosen by teachers in teaching vocabulary.

2.4 Teachers' Pedagogical Approach to Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the key to effective communication; without sufficient vocabulary, communication will be a huge challenge (Augus et al., 2005; Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Sovakandan et al., 2017; Sutrisna & Artini, 2020; Yovanoff et al., 2005). The goal of vocabulary teaching was to help learners acquire more words, comprehend the meanings of new terms, and effectively communicate using words (Cahyono & Widiati, 2008). Effective strategies in vocabulary teaching and learning contribute to the learners' vocabulary growth

which in turn will affect the development of other language skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Dewi, 2017; Koizumi et al., 2013; Mohd. Nor et al., 2015; Rasouli & Jafari, 2016; Susanto, 2017; Sutrisna, 2021).

Theoretically, vocabulary teaching and learning requires two basic conditions, which are: 1) quantity—the number of words or vocabulary learners should acquire to understand the language (Lateh et al., 2018; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018; Nation, 2001, 2013b, 2017, 2020; Schmitt, 2014); and 2) quality—the meaning of words for learners to use them correctly (Lateh et al., 2018; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018; Nation, 2001, 2017, 2020; Sonbul & Schmitt, 2010).

According to Nation (2001, 2017, 2020), knowing a word means knowing its form (spoken, written, and word parts), its meaning, and its usage. Teaching vocabulary is a complex process that is not confined to any set of structural rules as applied in teaching grammar, so how to teach vocabulary relies solely on the teachers' pedagogical knowledge (Maizatulliza and Kiely, 2018; Nation, 2020). Likewise, the teacher's pedagogical knowledge is the deciding factor in the teacher's choice of pedagogical approach to teaching vocabulary in the actual classroom (Muhammad & Keily, 2018; Philip et al., 2019). Other than that, the teachers' personal experiences, points of view, beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, and perceptions are also part of the factors that affect their pedagogical system (Borg, 1998; 2003). Over the years, there have been several research which have investigated the effectiveness of various techniques and pedagogical approaches applied by teachers to teach vocabulary in the language classroom. Most of the research found in the field is either experimental or action research which focuses especially on the effectiveness of certain techniques or approaches in teaching vocabulary and their results tend to be quantitative.

For instance, Khoii and Shrififar (2013) study the effectiveness of using the rote-memorizing approach to teach vocabulary where words are taught and learned through repetition and memorization. The findings yielded positive results in increasing learners' word memory, yet there was a lack of communicative values with the approach. Similar results were found by Reed (2012) who investigated an approach of memorizing words through spelling and Thorburry (2002), investigated the drilling strategy. However, studies in recent years have found the rote memorization approach to be restraining vocabulary acquisition among learners as it was difficult for learners to apply and express the words stored in the learners' vocabulary banks naturally (Razali et al., 2017; Wang & Yamat, 2019).

Another popular approach in vocabulary teaching that has caught the attention of researchers is to investigate the effectiveness of using songs to improve learners' vocabulary acquisition (Davis & Fan, 2016; Davis, 2018; Ma'rifat, 2017; Millington, 2011; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). Studies found that using songs as an instructional approach to teaching vocabulary shows improvement and a large number of words can be retained in the learners' memory (Davis & Fan, 2016; Davis, 2018; Pavia et al., 2019) due to the repetitiveness and consistency of the vocabulary words that appear in the song (Ma'rifat, 2017).

The visual approach is another pedagogical approach in vocabulary teaching. Unlike rote memorization and the auditory-verbal approach, researchers have found the visual approach to assist learners in understanding the vocabulary through sight (Bhatti, et al., 2017; Susanto, 2017; Takač & Singleton, 2008), especially to enhance the understanding of the concrete nouns. At the same time, it helps to enhance the learners' memory of the vocabulary through visualization with the help of visual aids (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2019;

Susanto, 2017; Takač & Singleton, 2008). The visual aids range from real objects (Gairns and Redman, 1986) to pictures, posters, flashcards, charts, drawings, photographs and many more (Bhatti, et al., 2017; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2019; Susanto, 2017). The visual approach has proven to be an effective method in clarifying the meaning of words through sight (Bhatti, et al., 2017; Susanto, 2017).

In recent years, due to digital advancement, the audio-visual approach has begun to come into the limelight in the education field. With the current technological development, the strength of both the visual and auditory approaches was able to be harnessed into the audio-visual approach, which provides teachers with new possibilities by bringing a variety of learning contexts into the classroom (Anil, 2015; Kessler, 2018; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Yonas et al., 2020). Scholars have found the audio-visual approach to be an effective instructional process for increasing learners' vocabulary acquisition through sight and sound (Bhatti et al., 2017; Kakar & Naureen, 2017; Raniah & Tariq, 2018; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Utami & Fauzi, 2015; Yonas et al., 2020), making the teaching and learning process easier (Eze, 2013; Singh, 2005; Sofi, 2017; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Thamil, 2007), faster (Eze, 2013; Singh, 2005; Thamil, 2007), more practical (Fauziah et al., 2018; Yonas et al., 2020), more interesting (Make & Yonas, 2018; Sofi, 2017; Swaran Singh, 2021), and more memorable (Yonas et al., 2020). The audio-visual approach requires teachers to use audio-visual aids for vocabulary instruction, which can present information in both visual and auditory form (Bagila et al., 2019; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Yonas et al., 2020). These studies have proven the effectiveness of using the audio-visual approach to assist learners' vocabulary acquisition; however, some findings indicate that the audio-visual approach was sometimes neglected (Ngu & Azlina, 2019; Wazeema & Kareema, 2017) or resisted by teachers (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Nur Farehah & Mohd. Sallehhudin, 2018), as they

were found to be unfamiliar with the audio-visual approach (Nelson, 2016; Yonas et al., 2020), lack of resources (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Utami, 2015), lack of technical facilities (Wazeema & Kareema, 2017; Yonas et al., 2020), and lack of proper training, knowledge, and experience (Aminuddin & Azman, 2017; Azman et al., 2018; Wazeema & Kareema, 2017; Yonas et al., 2020).

According to Hassan and Selamat (2002), audio-visual has been introduced to teachers in Malaysia since the 1950s; however, teachers preferred to use the traditional methods of teaching vocabulary and ignored the benefits of using audio-visual. The audio-visual approach started to gain popularity on par with the government's aspiration for a 21st-century education, where teachers are required to implement it in their daily lessons, and yet there is limited research in the local context, especially in rural areas (Ismail et al., 2017; Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Nur Farehah & Mohd. Sallehudin, 2018). Therefore, it is important to investigate the perceptions of teachers in Malaysia regarding the use of an audio-visual approach to teach vocabulary, as their perceptions are influential in their choice of pedagogical approach.

To understand the teachers' pedagogical choices for vocabulary teaching, it is important to understand the teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) (Philip et al., 2019).

2.5 Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

The conceptual framework adopted in this study was Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), which was introduced by Shulman in 1986. PCK emphasises both pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge, which cover the 'what' and 'how' of teaching. PCK bridges content knowledge and instructional practice in the classroom. Hence, PCK is a

unique form of knowledge that is specifically crucial for teachers to acquire (Shulman, 1987; 2004).

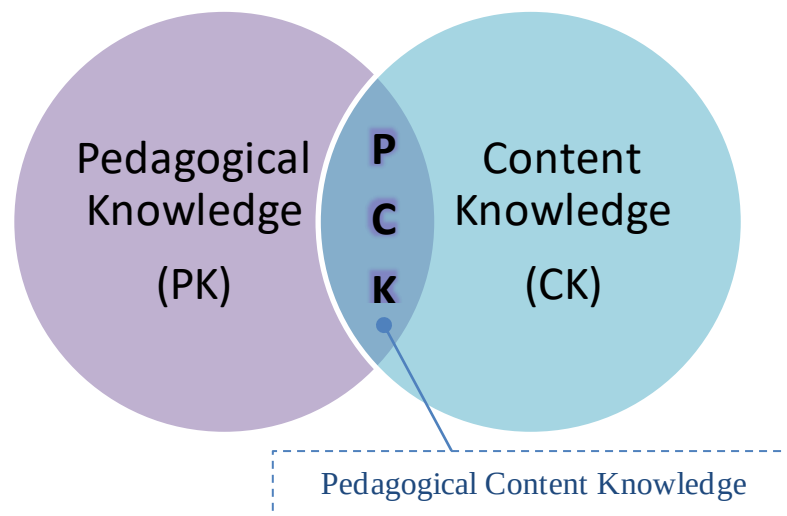
With PCK, teachers can transfer their content knowledge into instruction to teach learners in the classroom. In reality, the teachers' PCK will influence their practice in the classroom, which contributes to the success and failure of any lesson (Muhammad & Keily, 2018; Philip et al., 2019). As the main focus of this study is on teachers' perceptions of teaching vocabulary, PCK serves as the conceptual framework for this study.

PCK is the integration of two main domains: content knowledge (CK) and pedagogical knowledge (PK). CK is also known as subject matter knowledge; it refers to "what is being taught" (Pompea & Walker, 2017). CK serves as the core knowledge of teachers in a particular subject and specific content area, as well as understanding its organising structures (Grossman et al., 1989; Kultsun, 2017; Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987). For instance, an English teacher should have knowledge of the content and materials that he or she is going to teach to deliver them to the learners. The understanding of CK also enables the teachers to understand what makes learning a particular topic easy or difficult (Shulman, 1986). Thus, many scholars define CK as a prerequisite knowledge in the PCK Concept. Researchers have found that the extent of teachers' CK influences their teaching and learning process (Washburn, 2016), thus affecting the learners' achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Loewenberg, 2008; Ozden, 2008; Washburn, 2016).

Another domain for PCK is pedagogical knowledge (PK), which involves the teaching principles and strategies applied in the classroom (Shulman, 2004). According to Shulman (2004), the teachers' knowledge, theory, and beliefs about instructional practice form their PK, which decides the approaches they use to deliver the subject or content effectively to

the learners. Furthermore, PK also includes the teacher's knowledge of students' learning, assessment, and educational purposes (Konig et al., 2016). In other words, PK refers to “how a subject or content is being taught” (Pompea & Walker, 2017).

The integration of two domains of PCK, which is the CK and PK is shown in the flowing figure (Figure 2.1).



Source. The image was adapted from Shulman (1986; 2004).

Figure 2.1: Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

While a teacher's content knowledge will be expanded through professional development, studies have found that besides the educational background, the practical experience and perception of a teacher will affect his or her pedagogical knowledge (Gatbonston, 2008; Hudson, 2007; Moradkhani, 2013), as serving more time in the field of education provides teachers with more knowledge of understanding their learners, which adds to their pedagogical knowledge (Liu, 2013). *Vise versa*, the teachers' PCK will affect the teachers' perception of teaching and learning.

Overall, PCK serves as the basic knowledge that helps teachers explore their content knowledge and use an appropriate pedagogical strategy that works for learners of all backgrounds and abilities to ensure an efficient teaching and learning process.

2.6 CEFR in Malaysian English Language Classroom

In general, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, or CEFR, was created in 2001 and is intended to provide global standards for the teaching of foreign languages to meet the demands of language learners as well as both academics and other language professionals (Nurul Farehah & Mohd Sallehhudin, 2018). CEFR provides a framework to describe what language learners are required to achieve to be able to communicate using the language.

In 2013, CEFR was introduced in Malaysia with the establishment of the English Language Standards and Quality Council (ELSQC). In line with the English Language Education Reform in Malaysia, a Roadmap 2015–2025 has been developed to align the English language teaching and learning in Malaysia to the CEFR to up-skill the learners' English proficiency levels to meet the international global scales for each skill taught (Council of Europe, 2001; Hazita Azman, 2016; Ngu & Azlina, 2019).

CEFR provides a framework to define the proficiency levels of language learners based on a 'can do' statement to help teachers measure the learner's progress at each stage of learning on a lifelong basis (BPK, 2017; Council of Europe, 2001, p. 1). Relatively, six levels of descriptors are used to categorise the learner's language proficiency levels for preschool, primary, and secondary schools. The six levels are clustered into three main groups (BPK, 2017; Krishnan & Yunus, 2019; Ngu & Azlina, 2019), starting from the basic users (Levels A1 and A2), independent users (Levels B1 and B2), and proficient users (Levels C1 and C2).

To implement CEFR in the classroom, MOE Malaysia provides English teachers with documents such as the CEFR-aligned Curriculum Framework (CF), the syllabus document, which is the Standard-Based English Language Curriculum (SBELC) or *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran* (DSKP), the Scheme of Work (SoW), as well as the CEFR-aligned teacher's guidebook and textbook for the students (Chin & Rajaendram, 2017; Kiss & Rimba, 2021). The implementation of the CEFR-aligned curriculum in Malaysia focuses on using the modular approach by enhancing the teaching and learning of four main language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, as well as paying attention to grammar and language arts (BPK, 2017).

The SBELC or DSKP documents provided by MOE include the syllabus, which contains the key components of planning an English lesson, such as themes, topics, content and learning standards, cross-curricular elements, differentiation strategies, and assessment standards (BPK, 2017). This is the main document of reference for teachers to implement CEFR in their classrooms. The SoW is a document that provides teachers with the support and information needed for planning, creating, and delivering their lessons throughout the year (BPK, 2017). The SoW is a guideline for teachers in planning teaching and learning activities based on an aligned curriculum (BPK, 2017). Both DSKP and the SOW are the sources of reference for the development of the teacher's guidebook and student's book, known as textbooks.

In reality, teachers were highly dependent on the DSKP and the SOW when planning their English lessons because they were unfamiliar with the newly introduced CEFR-aligned syllabus (Ngu & Azlina, 2019).

Furthermore, past research also discovered that the CEFR-aligned resources, such as the CEFR-aligned Teacher's Guidebook and Student's Book provided by MOE, contain a

significant amount of foreign cultural elements, which presents difficulties for teachers and students due to the lack of a localised culture that they can connect with (Ngu and Azlina, 2019; Nurul Farehah and Sallehuddin, 2017). Researchers have found the reason behind such challenges is the shortage of CEFR experts who could develop CEFR-aligned materials with the integration of localised content (Nurul Farehah and Sallehuddin, 2017).

With the 4th Industrial Revolution, the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013–2025) focuses primarily on the integration of digital literacy into the language classroom in the second and seventh shifts, where both shifts emphasise the English language and technology as an essential tool to prepare youth for the digital world (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Krishnan & Yunus, 2019; Ngu & Azlina, 2019). For this reason, integrating modern technologies into language teaching and learning is essential for knowledge acquisition and global advancement (BPK, 2017). Therefore, auditory and audio-visual materials aligned with the CEFR textbook and workbook are provided in the form of a compact disc (CD) to aid language teaching and learning in the Malaysian English language classroom. However, there were studies in the field that found that teachers were struggling with the lack of expertise in using the AV content offered in the CD (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Nawai & Said, 2020; Nurul Farehah & Mohd. Sallehuddin, 2017; Utami, 2015).

2.7 PCK and CEFR in the Malaysian English Language Curriculum

Regarding the CEFR-aligned SBELC or DSKP, information about the two domains of PCK, which are content knowledge (CK) and pedagogy knowledge (PK), can be found in the curriculum document.

In terms of CK, the DSKP clearly stated the key components such as themes, topics, content and learning standards, cross-curricular elements, differentiation strategies, and

assessment standards. According to Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum (2017), three broad themes have been stated in the DSKP, namely: (1) the world of self, family, and friends; (2) the world of stories; and (3) the world of knowledge. All language skills are taught through these themes, which provide the context for language learning. The four main language skills focused on in the DSKP are listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. As for grammar and language art, they are infused during the teaching and learning process of the four main language skills. Vocabulary was not part of the main focused language skills, and it was presented in the form of a wordlist in the SBELC (BPK, 2017).

As for the PK, the DSKP outlined the suggested teaching and learning strategies as a reference for the teachers to facilitate the learning of pupils in the classroom. The teaching and learning strategies or approaches outlined in the syllabus documents are, namely, mastery learning, multiple intelligences, constructivism, contextual learning, learning how to learn skills, values, and citizenship, knowledge acquisition, project-based learning, collaborative learning, and inquiry-based learning (BPK, 2017).

Indirectly, the CEFR-aligned DSKP provides information for teachers that is related to the domain of PCK.

2.8 Vocabulary Teaching in Malaysia CEFR Context

In Malaysia, the English language is taught using a communicative language teaching syllabus aligned with the CEFR. In reality, learners need to acquire a wide range of vocabulary to enable them to understand verbal and written communication effectively (Augus et al., 2005; Folse & Briggs, 2004; Hasram et al., 2020; Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Sovakandan et al., 2017; Sutrisna & Artini, 2020; Yovanoff et al., 2005). This is important because communicative language teaching focuses on improving the learner's

communicative ability, and vocabulary is the building block to effective communication (Hasram et al., 2020; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018; Sutrisna & Artini, 2020). So, without a sufficient vocabulary, communication will be difficult. As stated by Folse and Briggs (2004), a lack of grammar limits communication, but a lack of vocabulary stops communication.

According to Staehr (2008), a learner's mastery of vocabulary determines their abilities for reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In terms of reading comprehension, it assists in the text's understanding by allowing the reader to grasp the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases. When studying English, either as a foreign language or a second language, vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role, which links to mastering the four main language skills, which cover listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Dewi, 2017; Rouhani & Purgharib, 2013; Sutrisna & Artini, 2020; Sutrisna, 2021).

In the local scenario, vocabulary was presented in the form of a word list in CEFR-aligned syllabus documents such as the DSKP and SOW (BPK, 2017). The word list was presented in three ways: by topic, by category, and alphabetically. A similar word list can also be found in the student's textbook and workbook.

A word list is a list of words or phrases collected for a particular purpose, such as words that need to be learned for a particular topic or piece of content (Nation & Meara, 2013). A word list serves as a source of reference for vocabulary teaching and learning.

In reality, an individual word list is just a list of words without further instruction on how to introduce or teach these words (Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018; Nation & Meara, 2013). Relatively, it was stated in the DSKP and SOW that the vocabulary listed in the word list is just for reference (Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, 2017), so the teachers can choose

and pick the suitable vocabulary to teach their learners, and they are free to introduce additional words to the learners (Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018).

Past research has found that with merely a word list provided as a reference without any further instructional details about vocabulary teaching and learning in the DSKP and SOW, teachers are given the autonomy to plan and implement instructional activities for vocabulary teaching that rely heavily on their pedagogical knowledge (Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018). According to Maizatulliza and Kiely's (2018) study on 'Understanding Teachers' Pedagogical Knowledge in ESL Vocabulary Teaching', their findings show that the teachers' assumptions and attitudes about vocabulary were less significant compared to the attention given to developing grammar and other language skills. This is mainly due to the fact that only a very small portion of the Malaysian English syllabus document was allotted to vocabulary, which reinforced the teachers' assumptions and attitudes towards vocabulary teaching and learning in the English language classroom.

The Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah (KSSR), Malaysia's national primary school curriculum, specifies the range of vocabulary learners need to master at the primary level. A total of 12,000 words must be learned by the end of primary school, based on the requirement of KSSR (BPK, 2017).

In addition, the MOE also provides teaching resources such as CDs to help teachers implement the CEFR-aligned curriculum in the local Malaysian English language classroom (Zulkefli, 2017). Similarly, since there are no strict guidelines for using CDs to teach in the classroom, teachers are the ones who decide how and when to use them (Ngu & Azlina, 2019). As reported by Ngu and Azlina (2019) in their study, teachers were hesitant to use the CDs despite MOE Malaysia providing AV materials in the form of CDs. Most teachers

preferred downloading AV resources online for vocabulary lesson planning compared to using AV resources that were already saved on CDs. The findings from their research urged policymakers to provide suitable resources to support teachers, especially concerning foreign cultures, which was a challenge for the teachers.

Hence, there is a need to understand the pedagogical knowledge that teachers possess as well as the approaches they choose to use in teaching vocabulary. This strengthens the significance of investigating the teacher's perception in this area.

2.9 Audio-Visual Approach in Vocabulary Teaching

Audio-visual (AV) is derived from the combination of two words: audio, which refers to 'what we can hear', and visual, which refers to 'what we can see' (Anas & Zakaria, 2019; Singh, 2007).

According to Swank (2011), learning through visual experience helps learners remember 40% of the concept, 25% from auditory experience, 17% from tactile experience, 15% from miscellaneous organic sensation, and 3% from taste and smell. Theoretically, adopting the audio-visual approach to teaching vocabulary, makes teaching and learning easier and more effective as it benefits from the strength of different senses (Ashever & Igyuve, 2013; Swaran Singh et al., 2021).

In reality, using AV in teaching was nothing new; however, in formal teaching, especially in the language classroom, it was a relatively new pedagogical idea that has begun to attract the interest of teachers due to the current technological development to promote 21st-century learning (Anil, 2015; Kessler, 2018).

In the education field, the audio-visual approach method entails using both sound and visuals to convey information to the learners (Swaran Singh et al., 2021) and to increase learners' experience in the classroom (Singh, 2007). Adopting an audio-visual approach in the language classroom requires the use of AV aids as educational materials that target both the senses of hearing (audio) and sight (visual) (Anas & Zakaria, 2019).

AV aids can be classified based on the sensory experience. According to Anzaku (2011), audio-visual aids are usually referred to as educational materials used to convey meanings or information without solely depending on the spoken language or symbols. For instance, a textbook or any reference book cannot be considered instructional materials, but the illustrations in a book can. In general, audio-visual aids can be categorised into three main categories: audio aids, visual aids, and audio-visual aids (Dike, 1993; Sithara Balan V & Sunanda Chande, 2019; Swaran Singh et al., 2021).

Audio aids are audible materials or “something that can be heard” using hearing senses (Park, 1999; Swaran Singh et al., 2021). For example, spoken words, recognisable sounds, cassettes, songs, radio broadcasts, tapes, CDs, and so on. The advantage of integrating audio aids into vocabulary teaching is that it allows learners to hear a variety of different voices apart from their teacher, as well as having the opportunity to listen and learn directly from the native speakers’ voices (Harmer, 2007).

Visual aids are materials used to communicate information through the sense of sight (Park, 1999) or “something to show” (Swaran Singh et al., 2021). For example, pictures, graphs, flashcards, maps, charts, slides, real objects, and printed materials. The visual aids help to maximise learners’ exposure to real life in the classroom as well as help them visualise the lesson content effectively (Sithara Balan V. & Sunanda Chande, 2019).

Audio-visual aids are those materials that involve both the audible and vision senses (Çakir, 2006) and provide a fun learning experience in which learners can “see and hear” at the same time (Swaran Singh et al., 2021). For example, videos, 3D shows, virtual classrooms, animated films, TV programmes, movies, etc. usually involve technological assistance.

To ensure the effectiveness of using the AV approach in teaching vocabulary, teachers should use the visual or audio aids interchangeably and within the appropriate timeframe instead of merely focusing on using only the visual or audio aids alone (Park, 1999; Sithara Balan V. & Sunanda Chande, 2019). Whereas, the use of AV resources can supplement the teacher’s presentation both in audio and visual form (Resti, 2017).

With the use of an AV approach in vocabulary teaching, teachers provide an opportunity to integrate technology in the classroom through AV resources, which helps to reinforce the learners' understanding of the words learned, thus stimulating their interest in learning (Yonas et al., 2020). The audio-visual approach makes teaching and learning meaningful (Ma’rifat, 2017; Yonas et al., 2020), approachable (Ritcher & Nel, 2017), and impactful (Daniel, 2013) by creating a realistic learning experience for the learners (Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Yonas et al., 2020). In terms of teaching vocabulary to primary-level learners, the audio-visual approach provides opportunities for teachers to create teaching and make the learning process fun and meaningful to fit the characteristics of young primary-level learners (Ma’rifat, 2017).

In the big picture, the AV approach has proven to be an effective method for teaching vocabulary, yet teachers are found to face challenges in conducting the audio-visual approach. Some of the challenges mentioned were the lack of resources (Ismail et al., 2017;

Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Utami, 2015), poor network coverage (Ismail et al., 2017; Ngu & Azlina, 2019), lack of equipment and facilities (Wazeema & Kareema, 2017; Yonas et al., 2020), and lack of training (Aminuddin & Azman, 2017; Azman et al., 2018; Wazeema & Kareema, 2017; Yonas et al., 2020). These are external factors that might hinder the teachers from using the audio-visual approach. Some teachers face difficulties because they are not familiar with the AV approach (Nelson, 2016; Yonas et al., 2020).

Even though there are several research studies in the field that have been carried out to investigate the effectiveness of using the audio-visual approach for vocabulary teaching and learning, research into understanding the teachers' perceptions that influence their pedagogical decisions is limited. Whereas in the local context, Malaysia, there are limited numbers of studies in this area, particularly in rural areas, as the audio-visual approach has been recently highlighted in line with the implementation of CEFR.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the teachers' perceptions of using an audio-visual approach to teach vocabulary in the primary-level language classroom.

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided information about the teachers' roles in the English language classroom. Then, it is followed by a discussion of the teachers' cognition pedagogical approach to vocabulary teaching based on Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), which served as the conceptual framework for this study. Literature reviews and past studies related to vocabulary teaching in the CEFR context and the audio-visual approach to teaching vocabulary were reviewed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter begins with an overview of the research design. Next, it addressed the context of the study which includes detailed information about the setting of the study and the selection of participants. This chapter also comes with a detailed explanation of the data collection methods, procedure and framework. The chapter ends with a description of the data analysis and research ethics.

3.2 Research Design

This is a qualitative study which aimed to investigate teachers' perceptions of using an audio-visual approach to teach vocabulary in the primary level English language classroom. Qualitative research involves collecting and analysing non-numerical or textual data generated through different methods such as interviews, observation or documents (Fossey et. al., 2002; Hennink, 2020). Relatively, the samples involved in the qualitative study were referred to as 'participants' as they are seen as participating in the study to share their thoughts and story through in-depth interview (Hennink, 2020).

As qualitative data analysis is interpretive, it allows for a deeper exploration of the complexities and nuances of the participants (Hennink, 2020). At the same time, it allows for flexibility and adaptability in data collection, which helps to collect data regarding beliefs, values, motivations, experiences, attitudes, perspectives, and behaviour, as well as the interaction between individuals (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018; Creswell, 2014; Hennink, 2020; Pathak et al., 2013). Thus, adopting a qualitative approach enables the researcher to

seek critical and in-depth understanding from the teachers' perspective in their natural setting (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Hennink, 2020). The qualitative approach seeks an answer for 'WHY', thus providing non-numerical data (Fossey et. al., 2002; Hennink, 2020; Pathak et al., 2013).

The purpose of conducting the qualitative research was to gain a better understanding of the teachers' perception through direct collaboration with the teachers involved in teaching vocabulary using the audio-visual approach within the CEFR-aligned English language classroom. The value of the qualitative approach was to provide a richer and deeper understanding of how people perceive actions, events, behaviours, and relationships (Yin, 2011).

3.3 Context of the Study

The data collection process for this study was conducted over three months in the targeted rural schools located in the Bau district. This study focused on the Bau district due to the lack of vocabulary-related research conducted in the Bau district at the time of study. The following section explains the population and setting of this study.

3.3.1 Setting of the Study

Two rural schools located in the Bau district have been selected as the sample schools for this study based on the assignment of the Bau district education office. These two schools share similar characteristics and are considered representative schools in the area due to their size and high student enrolment rates. Both schools cater to a diverse range of students from different racial backgrounds, as well as adopting the National curriculum for teaching the English language. For ethical reasons, the two sample schools are referred to as School A and School B. Details for both schools were as follows.

School A was a National Primary School known as *Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK)* in which the Malay language was the main medium of interaction. School A consist of approximately 369 learners from multiracial background and the learners for each class are of mixed ability. There were a total of 31 teachers in the school which included 5 English language teachers at the time of data collection. The English subject was a compulsory subject for School A and the CEFR-aligned curriculum was adopted for English language teaching and learning. The English language achievements of School A were at the average level.

School B was a Chinese-medium National-type Primary School known as *Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJK (C))*. School B consists of approximately 358 learners from the multiracial background and the learners for each class are of mixed ability. There was a total of 28 teachers in the school which included 4 English language teachers at the time of data collection. The English subject was a compulsory subject for School B and the CEFR-aligned curriculum was adopted for English language teaching and learning. The English language achievements of School B were at the average level.

Being the representative schools in Bau district, both School A and School B were selected as the sample school for this study.

3.4 Sampling

The purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of participants in this study. Purposive sampling is a popular sampling strategy in qualitative research as it allows the researcher to identify and select the participant who can provide rich information related to the research interest (Cresswell & Clark, 2011; Patton, 2002). The sample size is flexible depending on the resources, time available, and the research objectives (Bernard, 2002).

For the purpose of this study, the main criteria for participant selection were to have more than five years of experience in teaching English. Participants were selected from both School A and School B as detailed in the next section.

3.4.1 Selection of Participants

This section described the selection of participants for this study.

In School A, three out of five English teachers participated in this study. There were only three teachers who participated because one of the teachers had medical leave during the time of data collection and could not participate in the study, and another teacher did not fulfil the criteria of having experience teaching English for more than five years. The three teachers who fulfilled the criteria were selected as the participants for this study, in which they are labelled as A1, A2 and A3.

Teacher A1 was trained as an English major in the Teacher's Training College under the *Program Diploma Pendidikan Lulusan Ijazah* (DPLI). She has been teaching the English language since 2014 for eight years during the time of data collection. Teacher A2 was also majoring in English language during her training in the Teacher's Training College for *Pengajian Bahasa Inggeris*. She has been teaching the English language since 1990 for over 32 years at the time of data collection. Likewise, teacher A3 was also trained as an English teacher in the Teacher's Training College. She has been teaching the English language for 17 years at the time of data collection since 2005. Overall, all three participant teachers, A1, A2 and A3, were trained as English teachers from the Teacher's Training College in Malaysia.

Whereas for School B, all four English teachers fulfilled the criteria and participated in the data collection for this study. They are labelled as teachers B1, B2, B3 and B4.

Teacher B1 was majoring in Mandarin or *Pengajian Bahasa Cina* during her training in the Teacher's Training College. However, teacher B1 has only been teaching Mandarin for 2 years, and then, she shifted to teaching English instead. She has been teaching English since 2013 for 11 years during the time of data collection. Teacher B2 however was trained in English and she has been teaching English for over 30 years at the time of data collection. Teacher B3 was also trained in teaching Mandarin, yet she has been teaching the English language in school instead of Mandarin. She has 19 years of teaching experience in English at the time of data collection since 2003. As for teacher B4, she is also majoring in Mandarin or *Pengajian Bahasa Cina* but teaching the English language instead of Mandarin. She has been teaching English for 10 years since 2012 during the time of data collection. In addition, teacher B4 was the CEFR Teacher's Support for English teachers in the Bau district. Overall, there was only one teacher from School B who was majoring in English language, whereas the other three teachers were trained to teach Mandarin instead of English.

To sum up the background of the participants, the following Table 3.1 presents the demographic information of the teachers who participated in this study.

Table 3.1: Demographic Information of Study Participants

School	Teacher Code	Option / Major	Subject They Taught	Experience in the Teaching Field	Experience in Teaching English
School A	A1	English	English	8 years	8 years
	A2	English	English	32 years	32 years
	A3	English	English	17 years	17 years
School B	B1	Mandarin	English	13 years	11 years
	B2	English	English	30 years	30 years
	B3	Mandarin	English, Mandarin, Music, Physical Education	19 years	19 years
	B4	Mandarin	English, Mathematics, Physical Education	10 years	10 years

3.5 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

For this study, data was collected through three methods, which is: (1) interview; (2) observation; and (3) document analysis.

3.5.1 Interview

As qualitative research often seeks to understand human experiences and perceptions, hence, the semi-structured interview was the main data collection method used for this qualitative study.

For this study, each participant took part in the pre-and post-observation interviews, as described in the next section. The semi-structured interview was conducted face-to-face with the participant in school and it was recorded with the consent of the interviewees. The audio recordings were transcribed for further analysis to find its emerging patterns and themes.

The semi-structured interview instrument includes a list of open-ended questions (refer to Appendix B and C) developed based on the research objectives or research questions for the study (Rabionet, 2011). The open-ended questions allow both the interviewer and the interviewee to discuss specific issues in depth (Bearman, 2019).

The pre-observation interview consisted of nine open-ended questions (refer to Appendix B). The first three questions were aimed to obtain demographic information from the participants. The fourth, fifth, and sixth questions were designed to gather information on participants' knowledge and practice in vocabulary teaching. The seventh and eighth questions were designed to gather information about the participants' understanding of vocabulary teaching using the CEFR-aligned curriculum. Last but not least, the ninth

question was designed to gather information about the participants' perceptions of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary.

The post-observation interview consisted of ten open-ended questions (refer to Appendix B). The first and second questions were designed to help participants reflect on the strengths of the observed lesson while understanding how they wished to improve their lesson. The third and fifth questions aimed to collect data regarding the pedagogical approaches that participants used in teaching vocabulary. The fourth, sixth, and seventh questions were designed to elicit information regarding the participants' perceptions of using the AV approach and materials in their lessons. The eighth and ninth questions were asked to collect data on the challenges encountered by the participants, as well as data on their advice and recommendations for other teachers. The tenth question was designed to collect data regarding participants' perceptions of the audio-visual aids that come with the CEFR-aligned textbook.

Due to the nature of open-ended questions, the questions' sequencing was flexible to acquire in-depth details about the subject being discussed (Bearman, 2019). Besides the planned open-ended questions, the interviewer used probe questions to assist interviewees in understanding difficult questions.

3.5.2 Observation

Observation was a method of collecting data by carefully examining and recording how people behave or react in their natural settings (Cowie, 2009; Walian, 2011). According to Cowie (2009), in applied linguistics, the natural setting for observation can be a classroom, a teacher's office, or any environment where the language is being studied. There were two types of observations: participant and non-participant (Kothari 2004).

For this study, non-participant observation was selected as one of the data collection methods. Non-participant observation involves observing participants from a distance without interfering with their activities (Liu & Maitlis 2010). This method was adopted in the hope of minimising the researcher's bias by observing from a distance and not influencing or participating in classroom activities.

During the observed English lessons, the researcher used the observation field-note template to record his observations. The observation field-note template (refer to Appendix D) was an instrument used to collect data from observations for this study. The instrument enabled the researcher to record the details of the observed lessons. The template had columns for documenting observation data during the pre-lesson, lesson delivery and post-lesson.

Furthermore, the instructional process was also recorded in either video or audio format, with the consent of the participants. The participants' verbal and nonverbal cues were recorded and analysed to identify their patterns and emerging themes. The observation data was analysed, coded, and categorised into suitable themes to support the interview data.

3.5.3 Document Analysis

Document analysis is a popular method used in qualitative research which consists of analysing or reviewing various forms of documents, both printed and electronic materials (Fisher, 2006; Patton 2015). In this context, "document" refers to a wide range of visual resources, including images, videos, films, text documents, and many more (Flick, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

For this study, the documents collected include the teachers' lesson plan and reflection log, as well as the students' worksheets (if applicable). After collecting the

required documents, the data was analysed and interpreted to generate meaning relevant to its context.

For this research, the document analysis method was used in conjunction with the interview and observation method as a means of triangulation to seek credibility, validity and reliability of the data collected through different methods (Abdalla et al., 2017; Denzin, 2017; Patton, 2014; Rapley, 2007;). According to Fischer (2006) and Patton (2014), by analysing the data collected from different methods, the researcher was able to cross-check the data sets, thus reducing the chances of potential biases which may emerge in a single study. The following Figure 3.1 shows the triangulation of methods which was adopted to cross-check the findings of this study.

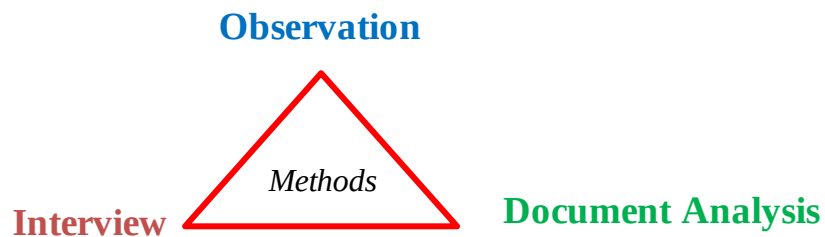


Figure 3.1: Triangulation of Methods

3.6 Data Collection Process

The data collection process was guided by the three main objectives and four research questions of this study. The process was divided into five stages. The following diagram illustrates the five stages of the data collection process (refer to Figure 3.2).

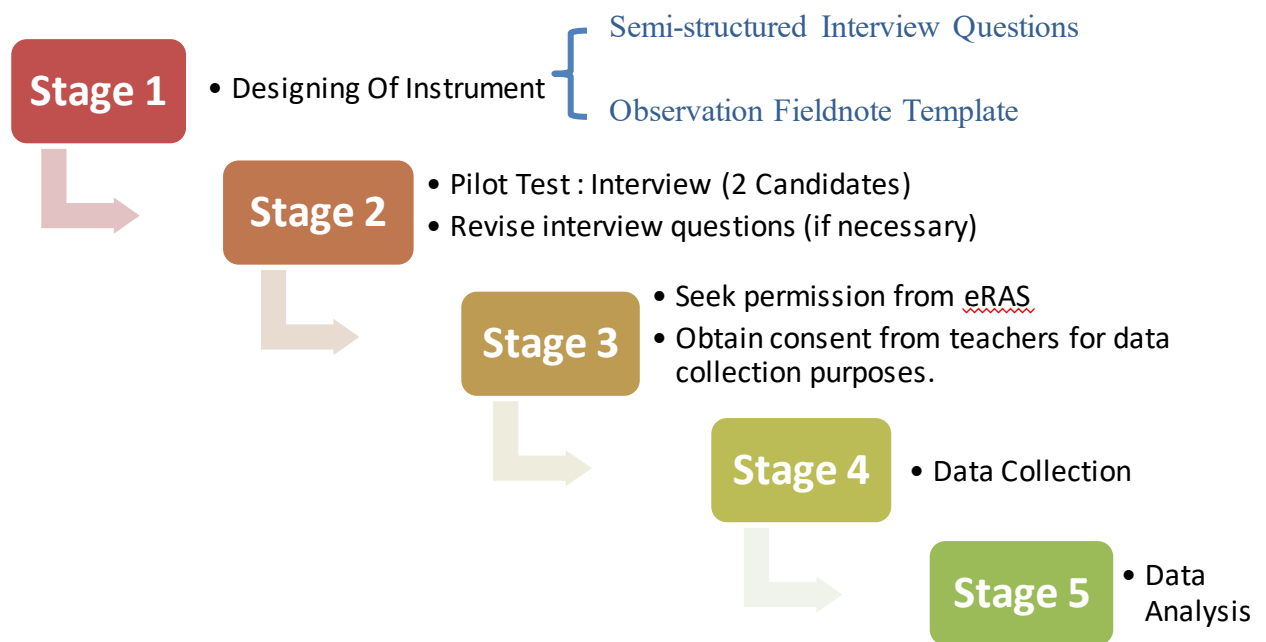


Figure 3.2: Data Collection Process

Stage one involved designing the instrument which is the list of semi-structured interview questions for both pre- and post-observation interviews (refer to Appendix B and C), as well as designing the observation fieldnote template (refer to Appendix D) to be used during classroom observations.

Stage two involved pilot testing of the pre-observation interview questions with two candidates. Both candidates selected for pilot testing were English teachers from other schools which were not from the sample school. The interview questions were revised based on the feedback or outcomes of the pilot test. Probe questions were also added in this stage.

Stage three involved ethical considerations for taking the research into the field. In this stage, the researcher seeks permission from e-RAS to conduct the study in school. At the same time, the participants' consent was obtained for data collection. The participants were informed that the use of the data was only for the purpose of this research.

Stage four was the main study where the data was collected in the field. As mentioned earlier, data for this study were collected through the interview, observation and document analysis method. Information about this stage will be discussed in the following section, which is the data collection framework.

The last stage, stage five was the data analysis, where the data collected will be analysed thematically.

3.7 Data Collection Framework

Corresponding to stage four of the data collection procedure, the following Figure 3.3 shows the data collection framework which happened in the field.

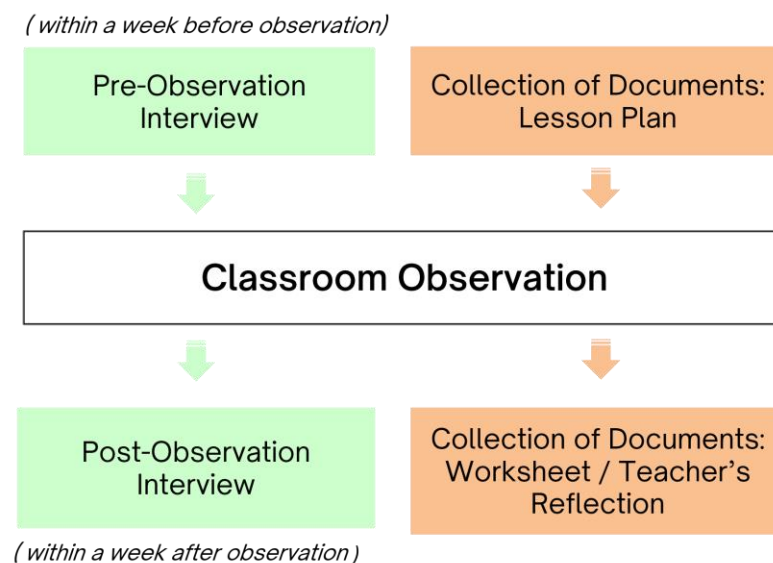


Figure 3.3: Data Collection Framework

Within a week before the classroom observation, the researcher conducted a pre-observation interview with the participants to gain their viewpoints and understanding of vocabulary teaching, as well as regarding the AV approach. At the same time, a copy of the participant's lesson plan was being collected as part of the data.

During classroom observation, the researcher plays the role of a passive observer sitting behind the classroom and records his observation details in the observation fieldnote template. The lesson was recorded with the consent of the participant.

Within a week after the classroom observation, the post-observation interview was conducted between the researcher and the participant to collect data. Simultaneously, the teachers' reflection logs and learners' worksheets were collected as data for document analysis according to their availability.

The same process was conducted for each participant who was involved in this study for data collection.

The data collection was conducted within three months in the targeted school. For the first half, data collection was conducted in School A, and for the second half, data collection was conducted in School B.

3.8 Data Analysis

For this study, thematic analysis was used since it is an analytical framework that was driven by the research questions (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Hayes, 1997). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis engaged researchers in the process of seeking themes within the collected data, thus using those themes to address the research question.

For this study, all the data collected through interviews, observations and document analysis were analysed thematically based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis method, which consists of six steps, as indicated in Figure 3.4.

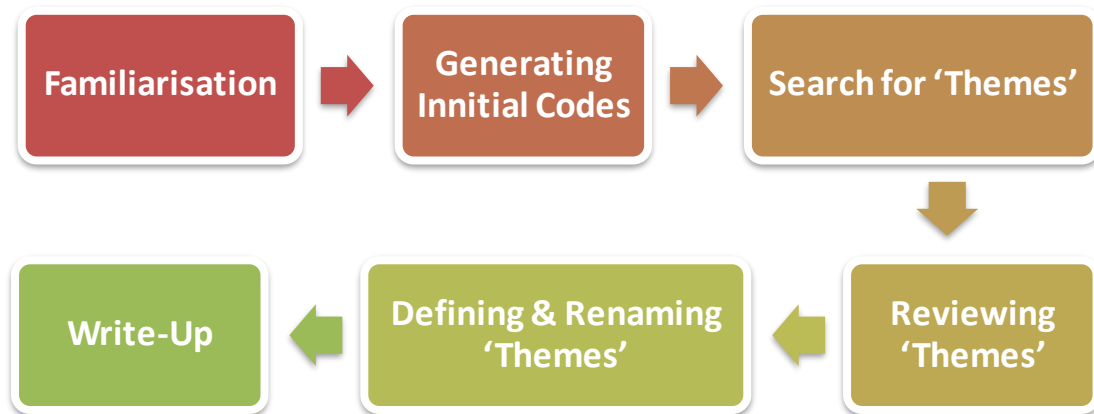


Figure 3.4: Braun & Clarke (2006) Thematic Analysis Method

Before the analysis, data from the interview was transcribed verbatim and thematically examined for this study. Then, by referring to Figure 1, step one began with rereading and getting familiar with the data collected from the interview, observation and document analysis. Step two involved generating a list of initial codes for the data and coding the data. The process of coding was part of the analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994), as the researcher is organizing the data into meaningful groups (Tuckett, 2005).

Step three involved sorting the different codes into categories and searching for themes. This step involved collating all relevant coded data and categories into the emerging themes.

After sorting relevant codes into themes, step four required the researcher to review the themes. Reviewing themes involved the process of checking whether the themes work concerning the coded extracts and the entire data set, as well as referring to the research questions.

Next, step five was the defining and naming of themes which consist of determining the meaning conveyed by each theme. It is important to identify what each theme was and what they were not.

Finally, step six involved a discussion of the emerging themes to answer the research questions. This was where the final analysis occurred and it included a write-up of the final report.

3.9 Ethics of Research

Research ethics were taken into account while conducting this study. Permission was asked from authorities and the participants for data collection, thus ensuring the data collected was used only for this study. The participants were asked to fill out the consent form to ensure that they were informed of the purpose of this study. The information and data collected remained confidential, and it was only represented in the coded form to avoid disclosing details about the participant.

Furthermore, fairness and honesty were the priorities throughout the process of collecting, analysing, and reporting the research findings.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the methodology of the study which includes a detailed explanation of the context of the study, research design, data collection methods, data collection procedure, data collection framework, data analysis and research ethics. In the next chapter, the results and findings of the study will be presented.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section is the reporting of findings based on the four research questions, which concern how teachers teach vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom, as well as their perceptions of and challenges encountered with the AV approach to vocabulary teaching. The second part further discusses the findings based on the themes that emerged.

4.2 Teachers' Practice in Vocabulary Teaching

The findings reported in this section is to address the first research question about how teachers teach vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom. The two major theme that emerged were teachers' planning and pedagogical approaches in teaching vocabulary.

4.2.1 Teachers' Planning

In terms of planning, during the interview, the teachers were asked about their vocabulary lesson planning, and all of them cited CEFR. Therefore, the reporting of the findings centred on CEFR-aligned resources and benchmarks based on CEFR requirements.

(i) Resources

Lesson planning was predominantly based on the support of resources aligned with CEFR, which is divided into (1) printed resources which include the curriculum documents and books, and (2) e-resources which include CDs and online teaching and learning

materials. Therefore, this section reports the findings related to the type of resources teachers referred to in vocabulary lesson planning based on CEFR.

In terms of printed resources, the finding shows that all the teachers were aware of the curriculum documents provided by our MOE Malaysia which aligned with CEFR. The curriculum documents mentioned by teachers were the *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran (DSKP)*, Scheme of Work (SOW) and the CEFR framework. All the teachers cited the DSKP and SoW when they were asked about how they plan their English language lessons, including planning how to teach vocabulary. As mentioned by teacher B1 during the pre-observation interview,

“We have erm the DSKP, SoW and also our RPT. I refer to them to plan my lessons and to write lesson plan every day. DSKP is *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran*, it is our curriculum syllabus. SOW is like our teacher’s bible; we refer to it as a guideline to plan lessons and activities. All the teaching activities are written inside the SoW, we can just copy it into our lesson plan. RPT is *Rancangan Pengajaran Tahunan* which is our yearly plan that we make ourselves based on DSKP and SoW topics. These CEFR documents all we refer to plan lesson activities.” (B1)

Teacher B1 referred to the DSKP and SoW to plan her daily lesson and to write lesson plans. She referred to the DSKP as the curriculum syllabus and described the SoW as the ‘teacher’s bible’. She reviewed the reason DSKP and SoW were used as the main reference and guideline for lesson planning because of the readily planned instructional activities suggested in the documents. This made lesson planning easier for the teachers as they were able to “copy and paste” the suitable activities as suggested into their lesson plans. Besides lesson planning, teacher B1 also referred to the DSKP and SoW when doing her yearly plan. This indicates that the teacher was relying on DSKP and SoW for lesson planning. The findings indicated that all the other teachers cited DSKP and SoW for lesson planning.

Furthermore, the teachers understood the flexibility of the suggested activities in the DSKP and SOW. Based on the findings, all the teachers think that the instructional activities suggested in the curriculum documents can be modified based on the learning objectives and success criteria outlined for each learning context. As shared by teacher A1 during the pre-observation interview,

“Erm, basically SoW is the Scheme of Work prepared by the Ministry of Education Malaysia or the panel of CEFM. They have prepared the SoW as a guideline for us, so we just follow that. But if we want to improvise, we can improvise, and if we want to change the activities, we also can change. *Cuma kita* have to do our own learning objective and success criteria.” (A1)

From the extract, besides being aware of the curriculum documents prepared by MOE Malaysia, Teacher A1 reviewed that teachers were allowed to improvise the suggested instructional activities as listed in the SoW. She even mentioned that teachers were able to “change” the activities to suit their learners’ needs and classroom context. This shows that the teachers understood the curriculum documents were just guidelines and it was not necessary to apply everything listed in the real classroom. There were rooms for teachers to explore and expand to tally their lesson planning with the suitability to their own learners and classroom context. Moreover, teacher A1 has pointed out that teachers were given the autonomy to develop their learning objectives and success criteria based on the content standard and learning standard listed in the SOW to suit the activities they planned. All the teachers being interviewed responded similarly regarding this issue.

Similarly, how the teachers plan their vocabulary lessons by referring to the DSKP and SoW can be seen through their lesson plans. Through document analysis, the teacher’s lesson plan was compared with the DSKP and SoW documents to check what teachers have shared about how they plan their lessons during the pre-observation interview. The finding shows

that teachers obtained the themes, topics, language focus, main skill, content standard and learning standard directly from the DSKP and SOW. These elements have been copied directly into the teachers' lesson plans. Followed by the learning objectives and success criteria which the teacher develops based on the content and learning standard. As for the instructional activities, most of the teachers did not copy the suggested instructional activities from the SOW. They either improvise or change all the activities to suit their learner's needs and the classroom context. For instance, when comparing the lesson plan prepared by teacher B3 with the suggested activities listed in SOW, the findings show that in her lesson plan, teacher B3 emphasises using video as her main approach to teaching vocabulary during the lesson. However, the activities written in the teacher's lesson plan were different from the activities suggested in the SOW which focus on using flashcards to teach the words as part of the pre-lesson. This shows that the teacher did improvise the activities based on her learner's needs and classroom context.

The findings were confirmed by a few teachers who responded during the post-observation interview and cited DSKP and SOW as their main guidelines for lesson planning again. For example, during the post-observation interview, teacher B2 referred to the DSKP and SOW as "it's like a 'dictionary' for teachers teaching CEFR syllabus". This statement is similar to the statement given by teacher B1 earlier about referring to the DSKP and SOW as the "teacher's bible". Teacher B3 also shared about how she adapts and adopts the suggested activities listed in the SOW by mentioning, "Usually I will refer to it, but I will sometimes change the activities according to what is suitable for my class. Sometimes I follow the activities, sometimes I plan my activities" (B3). This further confirmed that the teachers were clear about DSKP and SOW serving as the curriculum guideline in which

teachers have the autonomy to improvise and make changes to the recommended instructional activities.

However, in terms of vocabulary teaching, all the teachers who have participated in this study claimed that vocabulary is not seen as a stand-alone topic or language skill, but it was integrated with the teaching and learning of other language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Following is the response of teacher B during the pre-observation interview,

“Vocabulary is taught together with other skills. No specifically mentioned in the documents but every topic has vocabulary needed to learn before learning the skills. Can find it on top of every topic in the pupil’s book.” (B1)

According to B1, there was no specific instruction on vocabulary teaching mentioned in the curriculum documents, yet there was vocabulary listed at the beginning of every topic in the student’s book as mentioned earlier. She understands that learners need to learn vocabulary before learning other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Thus, she has chosen to integrate it with teaching the other language skills. The other participants yielded similar responses regarding this matter. As confirmed by teacher B4 during the pre-observation interview,

“Yes, vocabulary is important, but the CEFR document didn’t focus on how to teach vocabulary, they just provided a word list. So, I think vocabulary is integrated in teaching other skills, not taught separately.” (B4)

Teacher B4 understood the importance of vocabulary, yet she seemed confused when vocabulary teaching was not stated in the CEFR curriculum documents. She shared how the CEFR curriculum papers supplied vocabulary in the form of a wordlist without providing any additional guidance on how to teach the vocabulary listed in the word list. Therefore,

teacher B4 assumed that vocabulary should be taught integrated with other language skills, which led to how she planned her vocabulary lesson. This shows that despite the teachers were required to teach vocabulary, the curriculum documents did not specify how to teach vocabulary which means teachers have the autonomy to decide how to teach vocabulary. However, findings show that the teachers still choose to integrate vocabulary teaching with other language skills, perhaps they do view vocabulary as part of the building blocks for other language skills and not a stand-alone skill or topic to be taught separately.

Another type of printed resources cited by teachers were books that aligned with CEFR, such as the CEFR student's book, workbook and teacher's guidebook for every level.

During the interview, teachers were aware that MOE Malaysia provides each school with the CEFR Student's Book and Teacher's Guidebook for every level. So, the CEFR Student's Book and Teacher's Guidebook were standardised between schools. Whereas the CEFR Workbook may differ between schools as schools are given autonomy to choose the workbook that suits their learners. The workbook was not provided by MOE Malaysia but was bought by the learners themselves. As shared by teacher A3 during the post-observation interview,

“The Ministry of Education provides it. Yes, it is standardised for both SK and SJK too. We use the same CEFR Student's Book and Teacher's Book, but the workbook may be different because students need to buy it.” (A3)

From the extract, teacher A3 reviewed that the CEFR Student's Book and Teacher's Guidebook provided by MOE Malaysia were the same as all the National Primary Schools, which she referred to as SK, and the National Type Primary School, or known as SJK. This means that the learning content for both learners from both SK and SJK was the same. However, learners need to buy their workbook as it was not provided by MOE Malaysia. The

selection of workbooks is solely the decision of each respective school as mentioned by a few teachers during the interview.

Besides the DSKP and SOW as mentioned earlier, the finding shows that the CEFR Teacher's Guidebook was one of the main references for teachers in planning their lesson. During the interview, all the teachers cited the Teacher's Guidebook for lesson planning. Most of the teachers were in agreement that the Teacher's Guidebook was very detailed which included the recommendation of instructional activities, a list of teaching aids, complimentary CDs, a detailed explanation of the content, colourful pictures, words, as well as suggested questions to assist teachers. As reviewed by teacher B2 during the pre-observation interview,

“They have the Student's Book and also the Workbook. The Teacher's Book is more detailed, mostly about how to teach the activities in the student's book and workbook. We have 3 of this book with colourful and all the words here, and they have the audio also. The teacher's book is very detailed already. They teach us everything, even they show you one picture like this, then we know how to teach and what questions we are going to ask. Everything is written in the teacher's guidebook.” (B2)

Teacher B2 mentioned that the Student's Book, Workbook and Teacher's Guidebook were attractive as it was colourful with audio provided, and included all the words that needed to be taught. However, in terms of lesson planning, she recommended the Teacher's Guidebook as it is much more detailed with suggested instructional activities on how to teach the content presented in the Student's Book, as well as instruction regarding tasks from the Workbook. In the CEFR Teacher's Guidebook, there were pictures and instructions to guide teachers, as well as providing a list of suggested questions that teachers could ask learners during lessons. According to her, everything was provided in the Teacher's Guidebook which was the reason teachers treat it as one of the main guidelines for lesson planning. Similarly,

all the teachers agree that the Teacher's Guidebook provides detailed instruction and explanation of the task and content that they need to teach. The findings show that all the teachers agreed that "everything is provided in the Teacher's Book".

In terms of planning for vocabulary teaching, teachers sometimes check the vocabulary words from the Student's Book first before they refer to the suggested activities planned in the SOW or the Teacher's Guidebook. As mentioned by teacher B1 during the pre-observation interview,

"Usually for vocabulary, I look at the words in the pupil's book first, then I refer to the suggested activities in the SOW or the teacher's guidebook. If suitable, I use, if not sometimes I refer to Teacher Fiera or Teacher Ash too for the activities." (B1)

When teacher B1 shared her experience of planning for vocabulary lessons, she claimed that she usually refers to the vocabulary words in the Student's Book first before proceeding to check the recommended instructional activities listed in the SOW or Teacher's Guidebook. This is perhaps an effort made by the teacher to cross-check the relevancy of the vocabulary listed in the Student's Book with the activities suggested in the Teacher's Guidebook. She has also mentioned that if the activities suggested in the Teacher's Guidebook were suitable for her learners, she would be using them in her lesson planning. If it's not suitable, then she will be searching for alternatives online through Teacher Fiera or Teacher Ash's blog. This indicated that the teacher understood the flexibility to adopt or modify the suggested instructional activities from the CEFR Teacher's Guidebook.

In continuation, the finding shows that some teachers were also making a similar claim regarding the CEFR Teacher's Guidebook as the main reference for lesson planning during post-observation interviews. Some teachers restated that "everything is provided in the Teacher's Book" when they were asked about vocabulary lesson planning. This indicated the

teachers' recognition of the CEFR Teacher's Guidebook as being one of the main references during lesson planning. As restated by teacher B1 during the post-observation interview,

“Ya, everything is provided with the instructions on how to use it and when to use it also stated in the teacher's guidebook. Even questions also have in the teacher's book and also on how you want to teach that lesson. One by one, the steps and what questions you need to ask and the answers are also provided.” (B1)

During the post-observation interview, teacher B1 confirmed the detailed instruction provided in the CEFR Teacher's Guidebook which assisted the teachers in lesson planning. She restated that the Teacher's Guidebook includes detailed instructions on “how” and “when” teachers were to carry out the instructional activities planned, as well as suggested “questions” that teachers could raise during lessons. The answers to the suggested questions were also provided according to teacher B1. Findings indicated that the Teacher's Guidebook was convenient for the teachers because everything was provided to assist them in lesson planning. This made it a popular choice among teachers.

Teacher A3 also responded similarly regarding the flexibility of the instructional activities suggested in the book. In addition, besides the suggested instructional activities, the vocabulary listed in the CEFR Student's Book can also be modified or replaced with other vocabulary words to suit the teacher's lesson planning. Teacher A3 shared that,

“Some of the vocabulary listed in the Student's Book for them to learn is very easy, they already know it, so I add in some harder words for them to learn but it is related to the topic also.” (A3)

Furthermore, teachers were aware that vocabulary was not taught as a stand-alone topic or skill, but it was integrated into the teaching of other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. As shared by teacher A3 during the interview,

“Ohh! If that is the case, because uhh when I am teaching vocabulary right, it is integrated in... like on Monday when I teaching listening right, so the vocabulary is inside the listening lesson also.” (A3)

Teacher A3 mentioned that vocabulary was integrated into other language skills during lesson planning. This indicates that even though there was a list of vocabulary listed in the book, there was no sign of further instruction given in the book on vocabulary teaching as it is seen as an integrated element with other skills.

In terms of e-resources, Compact Disc (CD) was one of the e-resources provided by MOE Malaysia. The CDs were provided by MOE Malaysia which comes together with the CEFR Teacher’s Guidebook and Student’s Book. During the interview, most of the teachers admitted that they seldom use the provided CDs, despite their good responses to the teaching and learning elements contained on the CDs. As stated by teacher A2 during the pre-observation interview,

“Actually, everything is provided for the textbook and teacher’s book. If you look at the textbook, they have the logo of a CD there, and then they can find its audio in the CD. The CDs are paired with the student’s book. It’s very convenient. There is audio inside, I think there were some short videos in it too. But I am not too sure as I seldom use it.” (A2)

Teacher A2 reviewed that everything was provided in the CDs to aid teachers in conducting the activities listed in the CEFR Student’s Book and Teacher’s Guidebook. According to teacher A2, the CEFR-aligned CDs provided by MOE Malaysia were paired together with the activities or tasks in the CEFR Student’s Book. The CD logo could be found in the book which indicates the audio or AV materials were provided in the CD for that particular section. There were even instructions provided to show how these audio or AV materials can be used to teach the content. This will help the teachers in terms of planning how to include the AV materials to teach vocabulary which aligned with the CEFR

requirements. However, the finding shows that even though teachers were aware of the benefits of the CEFR-aligned CDs, teachers “seldom use” them due to constraints.

When the teacher’s lesson plan was analysed, there was only one teacher who included the use of CD in her lesson planning, which is teacher B2. She included the use of audio recording from the CEFR CD to assist the learners in listening and pronouncing the five vocabulary words correctly, which are “cupboard, armchair, bookcase, fridge, and hall”. The lesson was executed as planned at the time of observation. The rest of the teachers did not include the materials from the CD in their lesson planning. This corresponded to the teachers’ response during the pre-observation interview that they “seldom use” the CEFR-aligned CDs.

The absence of use of the CEFR-aligned CDs was further confirmed by the teachers during the post-observation interview, and they reviewed the reason behind it. As mentioned by teacher B4 during the post-observation interview,

“The CDs are paired with the student’s book. There is audio inside, I think there were some short videos in it too. But I am not too sure as I seldom use it. Erm...mainly because my laptop doesn’t have a CD player, so it's hard for me to access the CD or use it to prepare for lessons.” (B4)

Teacher B4 was aware that the CDs provided are paired with the CEFR Student’s Book, but she was not sure about the materials included in the CDs, whether audio materials or short videos. The reason was that she “seldom use” the CDs provided due to the restriction of accessing the CDs with a laptop which does not have a CD player. Thus, this caused inconvenience for the teacher to use the materials from the CD to plan for her lesson. These issues will be reported later in the section on challenges.

Besides the CD, the online teaching and learning materials are part of the e-resources as well. According to the teachers, the online teaching and learning materials can be retrieved from the teacher's Telegram Group, YouTube, as well as from teacher's blogs. These online materials were a popular choice among the teachers in planning their vocabulary lessons. Findings show that teachers preferred online resources compared to materials from the CD even though the content was similar. The teachers reviewed that they prefer the online materials because of their flexibility which allowed teachers to modify audio or AV materials from the CDs or add extra tasks for the learners from time to time. As reviewed by teacher B1 during the pre-observation interview,

“Because actually, it is the same, but if use the CEFR CD, there is no the extra one. Maybe for the YouTube have the extra exercises or extra information because they are using the same one, audio is the same. They only take some of the important ones from the CEFR audio, then they add on some. So, I prefer that one lar.” (B1)

Teacher B1 were aware that the content and materials provided in the CDs were the same as the online teaching and learning materials. According to her, the difference was that materials from the CDs were fixed because they needed to be stored on a compact disc, which does not allow modification, whereas the online materials allow flexibility for teachers to modify any content or materials from time to time. Teacher B1 gave an example of how the YouTube video incorporates the audio recording retrieved from the CEFR-aligned CDs with extra information or tasks that are much more suitable to adopt in lesson planning. She also highlighted the flexibility of the online materials which allows teachers to extract important information from the audio recording, at the same time adding additional content or tasks to be developed and shared as online videos for teaching and learning purposes. These online resources expand the options available for teachers in planning their lessons. As responded by teacher B4 during the pre-observation interview,

“Well, we live in the digital era now, so audio-visual is in our daily life and we have to use it every day. So, to me, I think it comes naturally to use audio-visual as my main approach. And there are a lot of videos shared on social media about teaching and learning activities, as well as the materials for teaching can be retrieved easily online through YouTube, Facebook, Telegram Group, blogs and many more.” (B4)

According to teacher B4, living in the digital era exposed teachers to a mass variety of teaching and learning materials. For instance, “there are a lot of videos shared on social media about teaching and learning activities, as well as the teaching materials can be retrieved easily online through YouTube, Facebook, Telegram Group, blogs and many more.” This provides an opportunity for teachers to be creative with lesson planning as online materials are accessible to them.

Relatively, all the teachers expressed their preference for using online teaching and learning materials due to the accessibility of those materials. During the interview, a few popular sources were constantly referred to by the teachers, such as Telegram Group, YouTube, Facebook, Teacher Feira and Teacher Ash blogs, Quizizz, Wordwall, and the Online Worksheet. Among all, Teacher Feira’s blog and telegram were mentioned the most. Based on the findings, YouTube, Teacher’s Blog and Telegram Group were the most cited sources among the teachers in planning to teach vocabulary. As mentioned by teacher B1 during the pre-observation interview,

“Usually for vocabulary, I look at the words in the pupil’s book first, then I refer to the suggested activities in the SOW or the teacher’s guidebook. If suitable, I use, if not sometimes I refer to Teacher Fiera or Teacher Ash too for the activities. But for audio or video, I refer to YouTube videos.” (B1)

“Teacher Fiera's group, one they provided the lesson plan. Second, they provided all the sources of what you need to do when you conducting the lesson. For example, the worksheet, the supplementary worksheet, picture cards, audios, the videos and then some games also.” (B1)

In terms of planning for vocabulary teaching, teacher B1 used the online teaching and learning materials as complementary to the activities planned in the SoW or the Teacher's Guidebook. According to her, she referred to the teacher's blog or telegram group such as Teacher Feira or Teacher Ash for additional information and its online teaching and learning materials when planning her vocabulary lesson. She also explained that the sample lesson plan and a variety of teaching and learning materials such as the worksheet, the supplementary worksheet, picture cards, audio, videos and some games were provided in the Teacher Feira Blog or Telegram Group. As for videos, she preferred to download them through YouTube, as she had further mentioned that "it's very clear and easy to understand. YouTube comes with a video which is audio plus visual materials." (B1).

When the teachers' lesson plan was analysed, the findings showed that YouTube and Teacher Feira Telegram Group were their main sources of reference in planning vocabulary lessons. For instance, when planning her lesson, teacher A2 was referring to the radio programme about "the best job in the world" which was downloaded from the telegram group. Similarly, teacher B1 also downloaded the audio recording of "Rooms in the House" from the Teacher Fiera Telegram Group as a reference for her vocabulary lesson planning. Both teachers B3 and B4 referred to the videos on YouTube to plan their vocabulary lessons. In relation, teacher B3 was referring to the video which includes vocabulary extracted from the story "Future City", whereas teacher B4 referred to the video which teaches vocabulary regarding "parts of the body" for her lesson planning.

Findings from the post-observation interview confirmed the teachers' preference for using online resources. Teachers suggested that the AV materials found online are kept up-to-date compared to the materials saved in the CDs. Teachers also think that online resources are easier to access. As stated by teacher B4 during the post-observation interview,

“Erm I think the materials prepared are good and it makes life easier for teachers. Hehe [giggles]. But personally, I would prefer to find the materials online compared to using the CDs because my laptop doesn’t have a CD player. The videos online are easier to access, and also it’s up-to-date, not like CDs you have to develop a new version in order to get the updated ones. But with videos online, it is always up-to-date.” (B4)

Teacher B4 stated that using online resources "makes life easier for teachers" and suggested that one advantage of using online teaching and learning resources is the convenience of access. Due to this reason, she preferred using teaching and learning materials retrieved online compared to using materials from the CDs provided. Furthermore, due to the convenience of access, she found that the online resources can be kept up-to-date and allow modification. Unlike the materials on the CD, it's pre-saved in CD format and does not allow modification.

Overall, in terms of resources used for planning vocabulary lessons, online resources were a popular choice among teachers. Quoting teacher B4, “We live in the digital era now, so audio-visual is in our daily life and we have to use it every day” indicates the teachers’ preference for using online resources in their lesson planning, especially planning to teach vocabulary.

(ii) Benchmark

In general, CEFR language proficiency levels were used as a reference to develop the levels of achievement (*Tahap Penguasaan*) as documented in the Standard Curriculum for Primary School (*KSSR or Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah*) in Malaysia (Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, 2017).

Findings from this study indicate that teachers were aware of the CEFR proficiency levels being the benchmark for international language proficiency levels. All the teachers have the basic knowledge of the six language proficiency levels listed in CEFR which they use as a reference when planning instructional activities. As mentioned by teacher A3 during the pre-observation interview,

“CEFR is the Common European Framework Reference for language languages. Scales A1 A2 which is for beginners or basic, B1 B2 for independent, and C1 and C2 for proficient level. So, we have to plan activities to see which scale they can reach to.” (A3)

As explained by teacher A3, the CEFR language proficiency level consists of six levels which range from scale A1 to C2. At the international level, those achieving scales A1 and A2 will be referred to as the beginner or basic learner; scales B1 and B2 will be referred to as the independent learner; and scales C1 and C2 will be referred to as the proficient learner. Thus, according to her, these CEFR language proficiency levels were referred to as a guideline to decide the difficulty level of the instructional activities in terms of planning. The instructional activities planned were to assist learners in reaching the targeted language proficiency level.

During the interview, even though teachers were able to list out the six language proficiency levels in CEFR, findings show that the teachers were only equipped with the basic knowledge and they were not applying it in the actual classroom. In reality, when the teachers cited CEFR language proficiency levels, their explanations somehow shifted to the KSSR levels of achievement, which is *Tahap Penguasaan (TP)* on a scale of 1 to 6. As mentioned by teacher A1 during the pre-observation interview,

“Okay. CEFR is erm... CEFR is erm... an international standard that is used by our Ministry of Education of Malaysia to improve English language proficiency of Malaysian students. The benchmark for English standard in Malaysia is like 6 levels, there are 6 levels.” (A1)

“In primary school, we use the *Tahap Penguasaan* or *TP*, or the level of achievement. It is not based on each school level, this one is the overall, after schooling, after after uhh maybe this one is the benchmark for the students after they finish form 6. Erm.. but in school, we have our own benchmark *tahap penguasaan satu, dua, tiga, empat, lima dan enam*. Level 3 or TP 3 - *tahap penguasaan tiga* is the minimum requirement. We refer to the TP when deciding what to teach and how to assess the pupils” (A1)

Teacher A1 hesitated when she answered about CEFR being referred to as the benchmark for the English standard in Malaysia, which aligned with the international standard. Other than that, the finding shows that she has the basic knowledge about the six language proficiency levels of CEFR which served as the benchmark for the English language in the global arena. However, in reality, she applied the levels of achievement or TP as the benchmark in school instead of referring to the CEFR language proficiency levels. No sign showed the teacher’s understanding of the connection between the CEFR language proficiency levels and the KSSR levels of achievement. The teacher seems to view CEFR language proficiency levels and KSSR levels of achievements as two different things, which in reality, were both related as the KSSR level of achievements were derived from the CEFR language proficiency levels. She viewed the KSSR levels of achievement as their benchmarking which they referred to for lesson planning and assessment. This perhaps indicates that the teacher was referring to the level of achievement or *Tahap Penguasaan* in deciding the difficulty levels of the instructional activities during their lesson planning. Similarly, teachers A2 and A3 also show similar responses regarding how they refer to CEFR language proficiency as the benchmark for international standards and apply it in their lesson planning in school.

4.2.2 Teachers' Pedagogical Approaches

In terms of pedagogical approaches, this section addressed the pedagogical approaches teachers have chosen to teach vocabulary. This section focused on reporting findings regarding the non-integrated and integrated approaches.

(i) Non-Integrated Approach

When approaching vocabulary teaching, the teachers were using visual and auditory as a stand-alone approach. They were used separately during vocabulary teaching.

When teaching vocabulary, the teachers described the visual approach as involving the sense of sight, which includes using picture cards, word cards, flashcards, mind maps, palm cards, real objects and reading materials that enable the learners to visualise what they are learning. As shared by one of the teachers from School A during the pre-observation interview,

“Because if using picture cards and word cards ahh, if picture they can see the pictures, right? And the word cards they can read and spell. So, these two things can be connected to each other.” (A3)

The focus of the approach here suggested that the non-integrated which emphasises the visual. The findings suggested that teacher A3 approached vocabulary teaching through the visuals because she only showed picture cards and word cards, and expected the learners to “read and spell”. The teacher was trying to help learners understand the vocabulary by matching the words and the pictures they saw on the cards. This shows that the teacher is trying to help learners visualise the words using visual materials. The teacher was able to provide an opportunity to help learners make connections visually between the pictures on the picture cards and the vocabulary on the word cards. This shows that the teacher was applying the visual approach to guide learners to learn through the sense of sight.

During the observation session, teacher A3 was using picture cards and word cards simultaneously to assist the learners in making connections between the picture of “fruits” with the “name of fruits” shown on the word cards such as grapes, apples, cherries, pears, berries, and mangoes. While completing the worksheet, one of the learners experienced difficulty in matching the picture “pear” with its name, instantly the other learners in the class helped him by reading and spelling out the word “pear” to him. This shows that learners were able to recognise the shape of the fruits and their names. A similar view was given by teacher A3 in her reflective log where “18/21 learners were able to match the picture with the correct words in the worksheet given” which reflected the effectiveness of the teaching approach used by the teachers.

Likewise, when asked about how they taught vocabulary, all the other teachers confirmed the use of picture cards, word cards, flashcards, and real objects. These visual aids were common choices to the teachers when teaching vocabulary because they claimed it is effective in helping the learners visualise the vocabulary learned. They believed that the visual aids were suitable for teaching simple vocabulary, which are mainly concrete words such as words related to people, animals, vegetables, fruits and things that can be shown visually.

The teachers' use of a visual approach to teach vocabulary was further supported by the observational data and the instructional activities listed in the lesson plan. During the observation session, teacher A1 was using flashcards and a real object to teach vocabulary about “classroom objects”; teacher A3 was using picture cards, word cards and flashcards to help learners visualise “the name of fruits”; and teacher B1 was using a real object to help learners revise the vocabulary about “things in the classroom”. All these teachers were using

visual aids to teach the vocabulary, helping learners to connect what they saw to the words they were learning.

Furthermore, the teachers considered the visual approach an ideal choice to pre-teach vocabulary as it helped the learners to visualise the vocabulary words learned, thus engaging them in the learning process. Teacher A1 stated during the pre-observation interview,

“Erm.. I think it is very important and the teacher should use this technique to pre-teach the vocabulary because students will get engaged with the pictures, sometimes they get engaged with the real object and then they really like the visual also.” (A1)

Teacher A1 considered the visual approach important due to the advantage of using visual materials such as pictures and real objects to pre-teach vocabulary. Through the visual approach, she believed that she was able to engage learners in the lesson through a sense of sight, in which they could “see” the pictures and real objects with their own eyes, as well as being able to “feel” the real objects. This was supported by her statement during the post-observation interview which she shared, “My students can take out the objects, can touch and can see”. Seeing and touching the objects could enable the learners to experience learning first-hand which would encourage them to “like the visual”. Likewise, the learners’ preference for the visual approach is the key to attracting their interest towards learning vocabulary. Therefore, the teacher thinks it is important to use a visual approach to pre-teach vocabulary to attract the learners’ interest so that they will be interested to engage in the learning process.

Teachers A2, A3 and B2 responded similarly about the importance of using the visual approach to pre-teach vocabulary. However, during the lesson observation, the visual approach was not only applied during the pre-teaching stage of the lesson, some teachers have adopted the visual approach during the lesson development stage. For instance, teacher

A1 was using flashcards to teach about classroom objects during the lesson development stage, and it was documented in the lesson plan as well in which “teacher shows the flashcards and pupils look at the pictures and read the words aloud”. This checked with how the teacher responded about using the visual approach to teach vocabulary.

Besides the visual approach, findings show that teachers also applied the auditory approach for vocabulary teaching. During the interview, teachers A1, A3 and B1 mentioned that they have adopted the auditory approach to teach vocabulary, such as through singing songs or nursery rhymes, as well as chanting. Findings show that these teachers preferred using the auditory approach during pre-teaching to arouse the interest of learners about the topic or content and, at the same time, learn vocabulary while enjoying the learning process. As stated by teacher B1 during the pre-observation interview,

“... So, the vocabulary is important and the main thing. Normally, when I teaching the English, I prefer to use singing first, although they don't understand the meaning but at least through the singing they know erm... for example I prefer “head, shoulder, knees and toes”. At least they do the action, then they know the things ah, where is the part of the body. If they have the vocabulary, they know how to use it. The vocabulary is the basic one to start their learning in English... Because for my opinion, if the pupils like my class, they will like singing first, then they will more enjoy my class. So, I prefer singing during the class.” (B1)

The interview extract shows that teacher B1 understood the importance of teaching and learning vocabulary in an English language classroom. As she has a clear understanding of her learners' proficiency level, she reviewed that some of the learners might face difficulties when it comes to recognising words, which perhaps might demotivate them from learning. Thus, she has chosen to use the auditory approach by starting her class with singing to attract the learner's interest to learn before proceeding with the lesson delivery. According to her, when the learners enjoy learning, they will eventually “like” learning, with this, perhaps they

will be motivated to learn what is being taught to them. As suggested by B1, “If the pupils like my class, they will like singing first, then they will more enjoy my class”. For example, with a lesson about parts of the body, she started her lesson by singing the song “head, shoulders, knees and toes” to arouse learners’ interest, letting them enjoy singing along with doing the action. At the same time, she is getting learners familiar with the words related to parts of the body through singing the song. With this, she has mentioned that when the learners are familiar with the words, they will have them in mind and indirectly learn how to use the words through the lyrics of the songs. She has reflected on the importance of teaching and learning vocabulary during both the pre-and post-observation interview to support the idea of using the auditory approach to arouse the learner’s interest so that they would enjoy the learning process.

Similarly, teachers A1 and A3 supported the idea of adopting the auditory approach to arouse the learner's interest in learning. As mentioned earlier, they have chosen to apply the auditory approach either through singing songs, nursery rhymes or chanting. Since teachers presume the auditory approach aims to arouse the learners’ interest, this may be the reason teachers are using it when pre-teaching vocabulary.

Although teachers reviewed that the primary goal for using the auditory approach is to arouse learners’ interest, their lesson plan and findings from the observation indicated differently. The observational findings show that apart from pre-teaching, teachers also applied the auditory approach during lesson delivery to strengthen the learner's memory of the vocabulary learned. Evidence from the observation shows that to familiarise the learners with the vocabulary, teacher A1 instructed the learners to “chant a song based on the Student’s Book”; whereas teacher A2 “plays the audio of a recorded radio programme”; and teacher A3 was constantly repeating the songs during the lesson delivery and post-lesson to

help learners remember the vocabulary learned. As recorded during the observation of teacher A3's lesson,

“Teacher plays the song again and shows the movement from behind the class as a reminder for those pupils who are leading the song in front of the class. The rest of the pupils follow the actions.

Teacher plays the song again and pupils take turns to lead the song with actions in front of class.

Pupils were very excited to repeat the song again.” (A3)

The findings show that teacher A3 was repeating the songs multiple times during the lesson. The reason she has chosen to repeat the song multiple times is to get learners to familiarise themselves with the words repeated in the song, at the same time improving their memory of the words learned. Findings show that teachers tend to use the repetitive nature of auditory techniques and materials, such as through singing and chanting to enhance the learner's memory and to get learners to familiarise themselves with the vocabulary words.

To sum up the first theme, the non-integrated approach in teaching vocabulary was divided into the visual and auditory approaches. Both visual and auditory approach was used separately during vocabulary teaching, thus it fits into the non-integrated theme.

(ii) Integrated Approach

The findings that led to this second theme indicated that when approaching vocabulary teaching, most of the teachers suggested the use of an integrated approach in teaching vocabulary which can be divided into the audio-visual (AV) approach and language games. Both approaches required the integrated use of both the visual and audio elements. Therefore, the findings reported in this section were based on these two subthemes, which are the AV approach and language games.

In terms of the AV approach, findings show that teachers approach vocabulary either through the integrated use of audio and visual aids or through videos.

From the findings, teachers are providing positive feedback regarding the integrated use of audio and visual aids to teach vocabulary compared to using visual or audio aids separately. During the interview, the teachers reviewed that the integrated AV approach was their choice, especially when teaching topics or contents which is difficult to present through the non-integrated approach alone. As teacher A1 had mentioned during the post-observation interview,

“Okay. For me, when I use the word cards, it's not really works. So, I have to start with the pictures first, then I say the words, they repeat. After I introduce the words with the pictures so they can remember the words. The next lesson, they will remember the words because they can see the pictures, they can hear the words, they can say the words, and they can see the spelling.” (A1)

From the extract, teacher A1 shared her experience of applying the AV approach, which she found to be more effective compared to using only the visual approach independently. When teaching vocabulary, she does not find using merely “word cards” effective compared to applying both “pictures” and “saying the words” verbally. This indicates she believed that the non-integrated visual approach was less effective compared to the integrated AV approach for teaching vocabulary. According to teacher A1, the AV approach was able to provide the opportunity for learners to “see the pictures” and “see the spelling” through the sense of sight, as well as being able to “hear the words” and “say the words” through the sense of sound simultaneously. Similar feedback has been given by teacher A2 during the interview session.

Furthermore, findings also show that teachers were comfortable combining both audio and visual methods of teaching vocabulary. This provided teachers with more flexibility in

how they plan and implement their lesson plans while giving them access to a variety of AV resources, allowing them to be creative with their lesson plans. For instance, during the interview, teacher A1 shared how she used “picture cards or flashcards with the recording” to introduce new words to the learners, and teacher A2 mentioned using a similar approach to teach vocabulary as well. Teacher A3 shared how she had adopted the AV approach to introduce vocabulary to the learners through pictures and songs, as well as assessing their understanding through “identifying the vocabulary from the song lyrics given”. Teachers B2 and B3 shared about using the eBook and flashcards plus the audio recording from the Compact Disc (CD) provided to teach vocabulary. According to teacher B2, as eBook is digital, “some activities have the audio tab that we can click and let the students listen”. These are examples of teachers getting creative with their instructional approach using audio and visual integration.

Besides the interview, the integrated use of audio and visual approach was also documented in the teacher’s lesson plan which aligned with the observation data. During observation, teacher A2 played the recorded radio programme while instructing the learners to refer to the text in their Student’s Book followed by the activity of placing the related vocabulary flashcards around the classroom. As for teacher B1, she instructed the learners to listen to the song and place the pictures of toys into the “correct room” according to their workbook; and teacher B2 taught vocabulary through pictures from the e-book together with the audio recording provided in the CDs. The variety of AV instructional activities carried out by the teachers reflected the flexibility of the AV approach.

Apart from the integrated use of audio and visual aids, video is another popular technique among teachers. Findings show that video is one of the most used teaching methods and tools among teachers to teach vocabulary because it benefits from the

integration of audio and visuals simultaneously. As mentioned by teachers B2 and B4 during the pre-observation interview,

“Video has the audio effect where pupils can listen to, and also the visual effect where students can see what the audio is talking about through the image shown.” (B2)

“For me, I think it's an effective method in teaching my pupils because, through audio-visual materials, my pupils can see and listen at the same time to things or situations related to the vocabulary words that they are learning. This helps to lock the image in their mind and help them understand the words better. It's better than just explaining the meaning of the words and they still need to be imagined.” (B4)

Both teachers B2 and B4 were of the similar opinion that video was one of the audio-visual materials that is effective in teaching vocabulary as learners “can see and listen at the same time to things or situations related to the vocabulary words”. Teacher B4 reviewed that such an AV approach could help to lock the image and the pronunciation of the words learned in the learner's memory, thus helping them to remember and understand the words better. According to her, this method was much more effective compared to solely explaining the words verbally, which the learners still need to imagine what the words mean. Other teachers had responded similarly regarding the use of videos as part of their AV approach to teaching vocabulary.

During the post-observation interviews, all the teachers agreed on the effectiveness of using video to teach complicated topics with difficult vocabulary which is hard to explain to the learners. This is mainly due to the characteristics of videos which enable learners to visualise the vocabulary that they are learning which helps them to understand the meaning of the words. As mentioned by teacher B1 during the post-observation interview,

“For the reason why I am using the video, it is because some of the meanings you can't explain, then we can show the pictures or action or

real things in live and anything through the videos ah. It helps the pupils understand the vocabulary easily.” (B1)

Teacher B1 explained that she was able to bring the words to life by showing learners the pictures, actions or things in the real world through videos. She responded positively regarding the effectiveness of videos in helping learners understand the vocabulary learned.

Even though all the teachers agreed on the effectiveness of using videos to teach vocabulary, however, when it comes to applying it in the classroom, teachers from School A and School B seem to have different opinions during the interview sessions.

Teachers from School A expressed that they seldom use video to teach vocabulary although they understand its advantages. Teachers A1, A2 and A3 from School A preferred the integrated use of audio and visual compared to using videos. The interview data shows that they only use videos to teach complicated topics. As responded by teacher A1 during the post-observation interview,

“Erm audio-visual.... picture cards with the recording, yes. But video I seldom use, unless very complicated topic. Picture card is good for simple vocabulary.” (A1)

Teacher A1 admitted that she seldom uses videos to teach although she understood the benefits videos bring to her teaching. She only applied the use of videos when teaching complicated topics. As for simple vocabulary, she preferred using pictures as her teaching techniques.

After further investigation, the researcher found that the reason that hinders the teachers from School A from using videos was due to the challenge that they face regarding the lack of infrastructure. This issue will be further discussed in section 4.4.1.

As for teachers in School B, the teachers claimed that they are comfortable using videos in their daily lessons. Teachers B1, B2, B3 and B4 mentioned that they are using videos as their main approach to teaching almost every lesson which includes teaching vocabulary using videos. As stated by teacher B4 during the pre-observation interview,

“I use the audio-visual approach to teach every day because we have the facilities or digital equipment in the classroom. Usually, I will play a video and do some explanations along the way. For vocabulary, when the pupils watch the video, they can see the object or action for the words they are learning.” (B4)

In contrast to School A, teachers from School B chose to use videos daily as they are well equipped with the infrastructure needed. This shows that with a fully equipped classroom, teachers were able to benefit from the use of videos to teach vocabulary. Through videos, learners had a chance to see for themselves the object and action that the words represent.

These findings could be supported by the observation data whereby at the time of observation, teachers A1, A1 and A3 from School A were not using any videos during the lesson observed; whereas School B, teachers B1, B3 and B4 were using videos in their lesson, except for teacher B2 who was integrating the used of audio and visual approach. Similarly, the teachers documented how they applied videos in their teaching in their lesson plans.

Furthermore, the AV approach was also applied in language games because games were able to accommodate the integrated elements of audio and visual approach to create a fun learning environment for the learners. Based on the data from the interview, a few teachers mentioned using games for vocabulary teaching and these teachers are aware of the

use of the integrated elements of AV within the language games. As reviewed by teacher B4 during the pre-observation interview,

“Sometimes I use games too as some games require pupils to listen to the words or meaning and match it with the correct words, sentences or even pictures, and vice versa. Sometimes it's about a story and pupils need to rearrange the pictures according to the words mentioned in the story.”
(B4)

Teacher B4 explained the reason she likes to use games in teaching vocabulary as games are flexible. The elements of audio and visual can be included in the games which enables the learners to “listen to the words or meaning and match it with the correct words, sentences or even pictures”. Besides audio and pictures, she mentioned that stories were sometimes added into the games to teach vocabulary, such as requiring the learners to “rearrange the pictures according to the words mentioned in the story”. With this, games can be seen as a form of AV materials as well and it allows incorporation of audio and visual elements.

Moreover, teachers A2, A3, B1 and B2 mentioned that language games require learner's involvement which is a good way of engaging learners with the learning content. As shared by teacher B1 during the pre-observation interview,

“Now, we have the equipment to use audio-visuals in the classroom. So, besides videos, sometimes we can ask them to do the quiz like Quizziz or something like that, they prefer that one. Everyone wants to stand there and play the games ah.” (B1)

“Erm for example Year 3, Year 3 still in Level 1, so I prefer to use games, then sometimes I prefer to ask them in pairs in the buddy. For example, erm I ask them to list down how many vocabulary that they have learn for today. They can walk around to find as many as their friends, then they share together what they have learned for today. They prefer games for the Level 1.” (B1)

According to teacher B1, the IT infrastructure available in the classroom allows her to apply games to teaching vocabulary. She shared an example of how she used Quizzizz to teach vocabulary and to help learners review the vocabulary learned. As games come with audio-visual elements, using games to teach vocabulary enables the teacher to create a fun learning environment for the learners.

However, although teachers gave positive feedback regarding the integrated use of games in teaching vocabulary, they admitted that language games were only used occasionally, for example once a week. This is because the preparation and implementation process for language games requires additional time and energy from the teachers apart from teaching. As reviewed by teachers A2 and B1 during the post-observation interview,

“Erm. If we have enough time ah, I think it’s better like using games. But games need a lot of time to prepare, so can’t use it always. Erm... because games we can add in many things like pictures, music...and it is interactive.” (A2)

“Games, normally one week at least once but for the Quizizz it depends if I got the free time or not. For example, if I still got the time after my lesson, like 10 minutes, then they can play Quizizz on the spot.” (B1)

This corresponded with the observation data as during observation, only teacher B2 was conducting language games during her lesson to engage learners in the process of learning vocabulary. During the observation, teacher B2 was conducting a mini-game, a guessing game and a matching game based on the vocabulary learned during her lesson (B2). When her lesson plan was analysed, the language game was recorded in her lesson plan as one of the activities in the lesson development stage (B2).

At the same time, the teacher's B2 reflection log further confirms how games were able to engage learners to participate actively in the lesson. She wrote that “the pupils enjoy the

games and everyone had a chance to participate actively during the lesson”. She further confirmed the visual and audio elements incorporated in the games had helped her learners recognise the vocabulary words learned.

4.3 Teachers’ Perception of Using Audio-visual Approach to Teach Vocabulary

Based on the findings of the second research question, two main themes emerged when addressing the teachers’ perception of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary. These two themes focus on teachers and learners respectively.

4.3.1 Teachers

Based on the findings, teachers were benefiting from the technological advantage of the AV approach in teaching vocabulary. Therefore, the first theme focused on teachers, with a sub-theme about technology.

Findings indicate that technology has supported the teachers in terms of planning, as well as instructional practice in the classroom. Technological advancements in recent years have promoted the use of the AV approach among teachers. AV approach has been a popular choice among teachers as it is user-friendly, and there is a mass variety of AV materials available online. As responded by teacher B4 during the pre-observation interview when she was asked about how she came across the idea of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary,

“Erm, how did I come across the idea ah? Erm... well we live in the digital era now, so audio-visual is in our daily life and we have to use it every day. So, to me, I think it comes naturally to use audio-visual as my main approach. And there are a lot of videos shared on social media about teaching and learning activities, as well as the materials for teaching can be retrieved easily online through YouTube, Facebook, Telegram Group, blogs and many more.” (B4)

Teacher B4 reviewed that with AV technology being user-friendly, the AV approach has become her main approach to teaching in this digital era. She pointed out the mass variety

of AV materials that can be easily found and downloaded online, such as through “YouTube, Facebook, Telegram Group, blogs and many more”. Due to easy access to online AV resources, using audio-visual as the primary approach in teaching feels natural to her. During the pre-observation interview, when explaining how she applied the AV approach to teaching vocabulary, she further added that,

“Mostly videos as it's easy to use and easier for the pupils to understand. It saves my time to explain about the words too because usually, pupils can understand it after watching the videos. I only need to explain the part which needed additional explanation.” (B4)

Teacher B4 highlighted the use of AV materials such as videos being user-friendly which makes it easier for her to teach the learners. She admitted that using videos in her lesson saved instructional time of having to explain each word to the learners. By viewing it from the videos, she perceived that the learners would understand the words and further explanation would only be given when needed. Therefore, she believed that adopting the AV approach to teaching vocabulary would free up instructional time for explaining the words so that she could concentrate on teaching learners how to apply the words.

During the post-observation interview, teacher B4 further confirmed that she was comfortable with using the AV approach to teach as AV materials are part of her daily life. The availability of AV materials made it a user-friendly approach for teachers. As mentioned by teacher B4 during the post-observation interview,

“Erm because now audio-visual is actually part of our daily life, especially for the pupils who are the younger generation, so it's a way of teaching and learning that me and the pupils feel comfortable with. So, I guess this approach comes naturally and there are tons of videos shared on social media by teachers sharing about various ideas and materials of using audio-visual, so it's easy to pick it up and use... And audio-visual materials are always up-to-date as they can be uploaded and downloaded easily online.” (B4)

Teacher B4 confirmed that she felt comfortable utilising the AV approach to teach vocabulary because it was embedded in her daily life, as well as the learners. She again reviewed the vast selection of videos regarding instructional strategies and AV resources that teachers uploaded on social media once more, noting that they were "easy to pick it up and use." She also pointed out that AV materials available online are usually kept up-to-date, and user-friendly as they could be uploaded or downloaded easily. Similarly, all the other teachers agreed that AV materials were user-friendly and saved time. They have responded positively regarding the advantages of using the AV approach which helps make teaching vocabulary easier and effective.

Furthermore, findings indicate that teachers perceived audio-visual technology, which combines auditory and visual features, enabled them to create realistic teaching and learning environments for their learners to experience. As shared by teacher A1 during the post-observation interview,

“If students cannot understand through visual approach, so better prepare with the audio-visual, more realistic because have picture and sound, especially videos because videos are more attractive. Pupils can listen, can look at the pictures, can look at the movement in the video, and we can search for the other video related to the words.” (A1)

Teacher A1 suggested the AV approach compared to the visual approach. She believed that the integration of both visual and auditory elements in the AV approach allowed her to create a realistic teaching and learning environment in the classroom. Through the AV approach, the teacher could a realistic scenario where the learners “can look at the pictures, can look at the movement in the video”. With this, the teacher was able to create a realistic

learning environment for the learners in which they could visualise the words they were learning.

Similarly, teacher B4 agreed about using the AV approach to create a realistic experience in teaching vocabulary. During the post-observation interview, teacher B4 explained,

“It helps a lot because, through the audio-visual approach, we as teachers could easily show what's going on around the world to the pupils in the classroom. With the audio-visual materials such as videos, pupils can learn through visual and auditory, to see it through their own eyes and listen through their own ears, learning the information and words first hand instead of learning it through the teacher’s explanation.” (B4)

“I think it benefits the pupils a lot because through audio-visual, pupils learn using both their sense of sight and sound to learn. At the same time, we can add in activities which trigger the use of the sense of touch, taste or smell. We as teachers just need to be creative.” (B4)

Teacher B4 reviewed that teachers were able to take advantage of the AV technology to recreate the real-world scenario and bring “what's going on around the world” into the classroom. Through the AV approach, she applied AV materials such as videos in teaching vocabulary, which could trigger learners to “see it through their own eyes” and “listen through their own ears”. With this, the teacher was able to create a realistic environment for the learners to learn the vocabulary words through the sense of sight and hearing instead of only learning it through the teacher’s explanation. Besides the sense of sight and hearing, teacher B4 suggested adding in other activities to trigger other senses such as the “sense of touch, taste or smell” based on the teachers’ creativity.

However, in reality, findings indicate that the teachers at Schools A and School B have different perceptions in terms of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary. Thus, the perception of teachers from both schools will be reported in the following.

Findings indicate that although teachers from School A agreed on the benefits of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary, they have chosen different methods to approach vocabulary of different degrees of difficulty. They perceived the AV approach as effective in teaching complicated topics which would be hard to learn through visual or audio alone. As mentioned by teacher A1 during the post-observation interview,

“Erm audio-visual.... picture cards with the recording, yes. But video I seldom use, unless very complicated topic. Picture card is good for simple vocabulary. If students cannot understand through visual approach, so better prepare with the audio-visual, more realistic because have picture and sound...” (A1)

“Depends on the topic, you can use the real object or you can use the visual for the difficult words. For the topic that we think we cannot use the real object or the only picture card, please use the audio-visual.” (A1)

Teacher A1 reviewed that the visual approach such as using picture cards alone was good for teaching simple vocabulary, but for complicated topics or vocabulary, she recommended the AV approach. She arranged her instructional approaches following the degree of difficulty or complexity of the vocabulary covered in the topics. She recommended employing a visual approach, such as picture cards for “simple vocabulary” and teaching with real objects for more challenging vocabulary. As for “very complicated” topics or vocabulary, she suggested the use of the AV approach because it can provide a realistic teaching and learning environment for the learners to learn the vocabulary words. Based on the findings, teachers A2 and A3 responded similarly in which AV approach was their preferred choice in teaching “complicated vocabulary”.

As for School B, findings indicate that the teachers were in favour of using the AV approach to teach every day. The AV approach was especially popular in teaching complicated words that the teachers find hard to explain. As mentioned by teacher B2 during the pre-observation interview,

“Ya, because some of the vocabulary is difficult to explain to them. Sometimes they don’t understand, so I have to repeat a few times. If it is hard to understand, I will use the videos so that they can watch and listen at the same time, to help their understanding.” (B2)

“Video has the audio effect where pupils can listen to, and also the visual effect where students can see what the audio is talking about through the image shown.” (B2)

Teacher B2 has pointed out the reason behind her choice of using the AV approach to teach complicated vocabulary. She justified that when teaching vocabulary words whose meaning is hard to explain, the AV approach is a better choice as it allows the learner to “watch and listen at the same time”. She reviewed that the use of videos will help to increase the learners' understanding of the vocabulary taught during the lesson. She believed that videos have the benefit of both auditory effects that stimulate learners' listening, as well as visual effects that aid learners in visualising what they have heard.

Similarly, teachers B1, B3 and B4 agreed that the AV approach aids their teaching in the classroom every day. The AV approach was their primary choice for teaching complicated vocabulary which is hard to explain its meaning.

These are the findings of teachers' perception of how the AV approach helps the teachers in teaching vocabulary.

4.3.2 Learners

The second theme focused on the teachers' perceptions of how students were affected when vocabulary was taught using the AV approach. The two sub-themes that emerged from the findings will be reported in this section, which are the learner's engagement and skills development.

In terms of learners' engagement, findings indicate that when teachers employed the AV approach to teaching vocabulary in the classroom, it was able to spark the learners' curiosity about what they were going to learn. As reported in the earlier section, using AV materials such as videos to teach, provides a realistic experience for learners to learn through “seeing” and “listening”, this will spark their curiosity about what they are going to learn. As shared by teacher A2 during the post-observation interview,

“I think it was in Year 3 or Year 4. They learn about the season. Because when we say for example summer, spring, autumn or winter, they can't imagine that. So, I show them using laptops in the class, so I call them in groups, a group of five pupils. I show them the video, I download it on my laptop, then they look at the pictures of summer, winter, and the activities there will spark their curiosity ya.” (A2)

Teacher A2 gave an example of her vocabulary lesson which adopted the AV approach to teach about vocabulary related to “Seasons”. She reviewed that the learners were unable to imagine the four seasons such as “summer, spring, autumn or winter”. The reason behind this might be because the learners lived in Malaysia, which is a tropical country without four seasons. Hence, it is hard for the learners to imagine it. Teacher A2 agreed that the help of AV such as videos, helped to spark the curiosity of learners as they could see for themselves what the activities that can be carried out during the four seasons.

Findings from the observation supported the teachers' perception of how the AV approach helped to spark learners' curiosity during vocabulary lessons. For instance, when

teacher B4 was teaching about vocabulary related to “parts of the body”, she showed a video of a few characters assembling a robot from a mystery box. The learners were excited and asked the teacher, “Teacher, can we make a robot?”. One of the girls shouted with excitement, “Teacher, I want to make a robot!”. With this, teacher B4 introduced the topic by telling the learners that to build a robot, they first need to learn about “parts of the body”. This was an example that shows how the AV approach manage to spark the curiosity of the learners to learn vocabulary. Similarly, during the observation of teacher A2 and B2 lessons, the learners were excited whenever the teacher played a video, and the sound "Wow!" could be heard from them.

Consequently, other than being able to spark learners’ curiosity, teachers perceived the AV approach to be effective in attracting learners' interest in learning vocabulary as well as focusing their attention on learning. By attracting the learners’ interest and attention towards learning, teachers believed that learners would be able to engage themselves in learning the vocabulary taught. As shared by teacher B4 during the pre-observation interview,

“For me, I think it's an effective method in teaching my pupils because, through audio-visual materials, my pupils can see and listen at the same time to things or situations related to the vocabulary words that they are learning. This helps to lock the image in their mind and help them understand the words better. It’s better than just explaining the meaning of the words and they still need to be imagined. With audio-visual, they can see it for themselves and it helps them to remember what they have learned. And most importantly, my pupils love it when I play the videos for them. It helps to attract their attention and interest in learning what I am teaching.” (B4)

Teacher B4 believed in the effectiveness of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary. According to her, through the AV approach, the use of AV materials enables her learners to “see and listen” simultaneously, which will attract their interest to what they are learning and relate it to the vocabulary words. By engaging the learners through a sense of sight and

hearing, the AV used will be able to attract the learners' attention, helping them to understand the vocabulary. She agreed that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary was more effective compared to merely listening to the teacher's explanation because the learners would still need to imagine the meaning of the words instead of experiencing them through their own eyes and ears.

Other than that, during observation, some of the teachers were using the AV approach during pre-lesson to attract learners' interest before introducing the vocabulary. For instance, teacher B1 was using short videos to show things in the classroom before introducing the related vocabulary. Teacher B3 showed a video of a few puzzle pieces and attracted the learners' interest to observe and guess about the topic they were going to learn. Whereas for Teacher B4, played the music video of "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" to attract the learners' interest in the topic of the day – "Parts of the Body (The Robot)". This evidence showed that the AV approach was the teachers' choice to attract the learners' interest and attention in learning. Teachers B1, B3 and B4 have recorded similar opinions in their reflective logs as well. In their reflective log, the teachers reflected on how the AV approach was used to attract learners' interest and attention to learn vocabulary. For instance, as written by teacher B4 in her reflective log,

"The pupils were very excited to see how the body parts of the robot was being assembled. By using animated video, it helps to provide better understanding to the pupils about parts of the body by building a robot in the video. Instead of just showing it through human body. It is something new that can attract the pupils' interest. The pupils love the robot dance and they like to follow the robot movement and sound." (B4)

Findings from the post-observation interview also confirmed how the AV approach helps to attract learners' interest and attention during vocabulary lessons. As mentioned by teacher A1 during the post-observation interview,

“For the pre-lesson, it is to get pupils' attention to the topic, so we have to introduce the words or related to the topic. Sometimes we use the erm laptop to use video, short videos. Because the students will be attracted to the movement in the video and then they can erm... how to say... they can talk about the videos because it includes like real situation.” (A1)

“The audio-visual approach means that we use something to attract pupils, maybe by the pictures, by the listening skills to the audio so they get the answer from the audio. Sometimes we use the video, video clip or short movie or short advertisement to make them to get engage with the lesson. Even for the lesson development, we can also use this technique. It's not only in the pre-lesson, it keeps on going using the strategy.” (A1)

Teacher A1 recommended using the AV approach to attract learners' attention to the vocabulary words related to each topic, especially during pre-lesson. She agreed that when AV materials such as videos were used during lessons, learners seemed to be attracted to the movements in the video. When the learners were attracted to the videos, it triggered their interest to discuss what they saw, especially if the videos were related to a situation that they might have encountered in real life. Therefore, she perceived the AV approach as a way to engage learners in vocabulary lessons, as it can attract their interest and attention to learning. Similarly, all the other teachers from both schools shared the opinion that the use of the AV approach to teach vocabulary was able to attract the learners' interest and attention.

Furthermore, by engaging learners to learn through a sense of sight and hearing, findings indicate that it helps to increase learners' understanding of the vocabulary as well. Teachers perceived that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary does help to increase learners' understanding of the vocabulary learned. As mentioned by teachers B4 and B3 during the pre-observation interview,

“Well, through video they can use both their eyes to see and ears to listen. It helps them to understand the words better, especially for vocabulary which is hard to explain the meaning.” (B4)

“If I use audio-visual, that means the children can listen to the proper pronunciation for the words and also, they can see because of visuals. They can see the pictures and it is easy to understand. They can watch the videos or just see the pictures to understand the words. Of course, using audio-visual is easier and students can learn more and understand the vocabulary easily. And they enjoy listening to the audio and watching the video or the pictures.” (B3)

Both teachers B4 and B3 highlighted the point that by engaging learners’ senses of sight and hearing in learning, the use of the AV approach indeed helped to increase the learners’ understanding of the vocabulary. Through the AV approach, they mentioned that the learners could listen to the “proper pronunciation of the words” and visually “see” what the words meant. Teachers believed that being able to visualise the words was the key to helping learners understand the vocabulary, especially helpful to teaching vocabulary that they find “hard to explain the meaning”. This is how the teachers optimised the use of the AV approach to increase learners’ understanding of the vocabulary.

Findings from the observation confirmed the teachers’ perception of the use of the AV approach to increase learners’ understanding of vocabulary. The learners’ understanding of vocabulary was assessed through the vocabulary exercises given. Most of the learners were able to complete the vocabulary exercises given by the teachers after learning the vocabulary through AV materials. For instance, during lesson observation of teacher B3, after using the AV approach to teach vocabulary, it was recorded in the observation field notes that “Pupils were able to have a clear vision and understand the meaning of the vocabulary through the animated scenes related to each vocabulary.” Similar feedback has been found in the teachers’ reflective log on how the AV approach helps increase learners’ understanding of the vocabulary. As written by teacher B3 in her reflective log,

“This lesson was successful. The pupils can understand the vocabulary through the videos and they can apply the vocabulary learned to do the

exercises given. The video was lively and animated, it helped to improve the pupils understanding. The pupils were also able to share their thoughts and ideas based on the story.” (B3)

Likewise, findings show that some of the teachers were sharing similar opinions during the post-observation interview. As shared by teacher B3 during the post-observation interview,

“Oh! For Year 2, they can understand all the words because when they learn the words. I will show them the pictures and videos to let them become more familiar and understand the words. So, I think this one is very good for the pupils.” (B3)

Teacher B3 thinks that the AV approach is a very good option to teach vocabulary. She confirmed that her Year 2 learners were able to understand all the words taught using the AV approach. She shared her experience of adopting the AV approach to help learners become familiarised with the vocabulary words, as well as making it easier for learners to understand them. Findings show that all the teachers agreed that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary helps to increase the learners' understanding.

Other than that, findings also indicate that teachers believed using the AV approach to teach vocabulary helps to enhance learners' memory of the vocabulary. As mentioned earlier, engaging the learners' senses in learning vocabulary through the AV approach, helps learners remember the vocabulary taught. As mentioned by teacher B4 during the pre-observation interview,

“For me, I think it's an effective method in teaching my pupils because, through audio-visual materials, my pupils can see and listen at the same time to things or situations related to the vocabulary words that they are learning. This helps to lock the image in their mind and help them understand the words better. It's better than just explaining the meaning of the words and they still need to be imagined. With audio-visual, they can see it for themselves and it helps them to remember what they have learned. And most importantly, my pupils love it when I play the videos

for them. It helps to attract their attention and interest in learning what I am teaching.” (B4)

“...I noticed that using audio-visual helps the pupils to remember the words better as its image and the pronunciation of the vocabulary words are stuck in their mind.” (B4)

Teacher B4 repeatedly mentioned that engaging both senses of sight and hearing simultaneously through the AV approach, did help to lock the image in the learners’ minds. She believed that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary was better compared to relying solely on the teacher’s explanation in which the learners still need to imagine the words themselves. She mentioned that the visual and audio elements in the AV materials helped learners visualize the words and listen to the correct pronunciation, thus locking it in their memory. Teacher B4 repeated how using the AV approach helps learners remember the vocabulary better during the post-observation interview,

“The strength ah... To me, it should be how the pupils could learn and remember the vocabulary about parts of the body through the video on how the character in the story assembles the parts of the robot. It’s an interesting way to introduce vocabulary about parts of the body to the pupils.” (B4)

During the post-observation interview, teacher B4 shared an example of how the AV approach helped to enhance learners’ memory during vocabulary lessons. She was sharing her lesson on how the learners remembered the parts of the body through the videos which showed the character assembling parts of the robot. By visualizing parts of the robots, learners relate it to their human body parts which imprinted the image in their memory. This shows how using the AV approach to teach helped with learners’ memory of the vocabulary. Similarly, teachers A3 and B3 agreed with teacher B4 on this issue.

For the second sub-theme, the focus will be on learners' skill development. The findings indicate that teachers perceive that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary affects the skills development of learners.

As stated in the previous chapter, due to the Cambridge origins of the CEFR framework, foreign languages and accents were incorporated into the teaching materials. Based on the findings, teachers believed that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary helped to improve learners' pronunciation of the words. As mentioned by teacher B1 during the pre-observation interview,

“Erm because from my opinion, vocabulary you need to repeat it and listen to it. And then I use this audio-visual approach, erm at least they need to listen how to pronounce the words properly from the British pronunciation, so I prefer to use it. And then for the why I am using the video, it is because some of the meaning you can't explain, then we can show the pictures or action or real thing in live and anything through the videos ah. It helps the pupils understand the vocabulary easily.”
(B1)

Teacher B1 believed that to improve the pronunciation of the vocabulary, learners need repetitive drills to listen to correct pronunciation. She thinks that the AV approach was able to provide such a learning opportunity for the learners to experience it first-hand by listening to “how to pronounce the words properly from the British pronunciation” through the AV materials such as videos. Teachers believed that the AV approach exposed learners to how to pronounce the vocabulary accurately based on the British pronunciation as shown in the videos.

In addition, teachers also believed that being able to pronounce the words correctly does indeed motivate the learners to apply the words for communication. As added by teacher B4 during the post-observation interview,

“Using audio-visual approach is not much of an issue to me because I am used to using it and my pupils are used to learning through audio-visual too. It works for my class at least. I find that it’s good that it helps my pupils to speak up and they learn the correct pronunciation of the vocabulary through it too.” (B4)

Teacher B4 further agreed that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary does help learners learn its correct pronunciation. Additionally, she reviewed that learning how to pronounce the words correctly, will motivate the learners to “speak up”. This shows that learners will be comfortable applying the vocabulary words for communication when they learn how to pronounce them correctly. Similarly, all the other teachers agreed on how the AV approach helped to improve learners’ pronunciation of the vocabulary.

Besides improving learners’ pronunciation, teachers found that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary also helps to improve other language skills. As reported earlier, teachers perceived vocabulary as being taught integrated with other language skills. Vice versa, vocabulary teaching also affects the teaching and learning of other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As mentioned by teacher B2 during the pre-observation interview,

“Vocabulary we teach together before teaching other skills cause that’s the basic they need to learn before they can listen, speak, read and write. I think every day I need to teach vocabulary. But I have to drill them all the vocabulary first or they have to follow the audio-visual in the CD before I can teach the other skills.” (B2)

Teacher B2 believed vocabulary to be the basis for learning any language skills. She mentioned that it was taught integrated with other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Yet, before teaching any language skills, she needed to teach vocabulary first by using the AV materials provided in the CD. She suggested the AV approach be used

as drills for teaching vocabulary which form a basis for teaching other language skills next.

This was further confirmed by teacher A1 during the post-observation interview,

“Audio-visual...Erm that is a good way for teaching vocabulary and so that they can go further for the reading skills. If they can master the words, they can read. Master the words first and keep reading the sentences.”
(A1)

Teacher A1 agreed that the AV approach was a good way to teach vocabulary which leads to developing the learners’ reading skills. According to her, if the learners manage to “master the words”, they will be able to read. Therefore, she suggested using the AV approach to help learners “master the words” first before moving on to read sentences repetitively.

In accordance, teachers B3 and B4 agreed with teachers B2 and A1. They agreed that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary was able to help learners improve other language skills as well.

Regarding skills development, teachers perceived the use of the AV approach to teach vocabulary as setting a foundation to prepare the learners for the secondary level. This was highlighted by teacher A2 during the pre-observation interview,

“Meaning that using the materials, we tried to introduce that to them, to prepare them for the listening test that they need to do in Form 3 later on. And also, the MUET. The MUET is for Form 6 if they continue to Form 6.” (A2)

“Ya, secondary school. I used to tell them. “Oh, yakah teacher?” “Ya”, I said. “That’s why you must listen carefully and try ya.” That’s why it seems quite good, ah quite good. When using audio and video, at least they listen not just listen to our Malaysian language, at least they can learn from the pronunciation just like some native speakers, isn’t it?” (A2)

Teacher A2 highlighted that she was using the AV materials provided to prepare her learners before advancing to the secondary level. She reviewed that using AV materials such as audio or video, provides an opportunity for the learners to hear the correct pronunciation of the words through native speakers instead of only hearing them in our local pronunciation. The AV approach to teaching vocabulary increases learners' pronunciation of the words, as well as their speaking and listening abilities, which in turn helps to prepare them for secondary levels, such as sitting for "listening test" in form three and "MUET" (Malaysian University English Test) in form six.

To sum up, teachers have the perception that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary helped with maintaining learners' engagement during lessons, as well as the development of language skills.

4.4 Challenges in Using the AV Approach to Teach Vocabulary

Based on the findings of the third research question, two main themes emerged when addressing the challenges that teachers faced when using the AV approach to teach Vocabulary. These themes are the infrastructure and the policy challenges.

4.4.1 Infrastructure Challenges

The first theme that emerged from the data concerning the challenges teachers encountered while using the AV approach to teach vocabulary was infrastructure-related challenges. With this, the findings are presented based on three categories: a lack of information technology (IT) infrastructure, quality of AV materials, and convenience of access.

One of the challenges related to infrastructure faced by teachers in using the AV approach to teach vocabulary is the lack of IT infrastructure in school. Findings indicate that

this was one of the main challenges faced by teachers from School A. The teachers from School A had expressed their desire to use the AV approach to teaching because they were aware of its benefits, but they were constrained by a lack of IT infrastructure provided in the school. According to teachers A1, A2 and A3, this was the main challenge restricting them from using the AV approach to teach in the classroom. As mentioned by Teacher A1 and Teacher A3 in the pre-observation interview session,

“Sometimes I feel like showing them videos, but *susah juga kena bawa laptop dan pasang LCD*...Ya, but I think, if possible la, video would be a good choice.” (A1)

“...how I wish in each class we have our own LCD. Yes, so we can just switch on the LCD and display what we want to teach. How I wish it is real.” (A3)

Teachers A1 and A3 both expressed their frustration of not having the IT infrastructure such as a Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) projector, which restricted them from showing the videos. Both teachers wished to use videos to teach in class as they expressed it, “If possible la, video would be a good choice” (A1) and “how I wish in each class we have our own LCD” (A3).

Teachers from School A seem to be expressing the same concern during both the pre-observation interview and the post-observation interview when they were asked about how they would like to improve their lesson if they were allowed to do so. As mentioned by Teacher A1 and Teacher A2 in the post-observation interview session,

“If only the facilities are good, I think using video will be more effective compared to using audio only. I like using video, but I don’t use often because no LCD in class.” (A1)

“If LCD and speaker is provided, of course, I would want to use audio-visual because it will make the class lively. Students can see it with their

own eyes, and easier to understand. If teaching new vocabulary, just play the video, *murid akan tengok dan faham sendiri, kan senang...* But we don't have that here, so..." (A2)

Teacher A1 admitted that video would be her main choice if IT infrastructure such as an LCD projector was available to her. Similarly, teacher A2 shared the same opinion, and she further added that with the use of videos, the learners will be able to "see it with their own eyes" which makes the content taught easier to understand.

The alternative chosen by teachers to address this issue was to bring the portable LCD into class and this caused another issue of having needed extra time to assemble the LCD and the projector screen. During the interview, teachers A1 and A2 both shared similar experiences regarding this issue. As mentioned by teacher A2 in the post-observation interview session,

"If in the classroom, we got that limitation. Usually, we can paste the white paper, then bring in LCD to project on the white paper as screen. That's why we seldom use video to teach, very *susah*. Mostly use flashcards and audio recording." (A2)

Due to the lack of IT infrastructure in class, teacher A2 shared about how she "paste the white paper" in the classroom as a replacement for an actual screen. This is an alternative she took for her to use the LCD projector to show videos in the classroom.

Besides bringing the LCD into the classroom, teachers A2 and A3 also said that sometimes they brought the learners to the computer room which is equipped with the IT infrastructure such as LCD projector and computers. As mentioned by teacher A2 in the post-observation interview session,

“No LCD in the classroom unless we bring the LCD. Or they can use the *bilik* computer too, but the table is not suitable. Very difficult, isn’t it? They have the tables then the computer there.” (A2)

Teacher A2 mentioned that when she wanted to show videos, sometimes she brought the learners to the computer room to use the LCD projector and computer. However, teaching in the computer room was not a suitable choice as she was faced with another issue whereby the computer room could not provide enough learning space for the learners as its tables were preoccupied with computers.

The challenges faced by teachers regarding the lack of IT infrastructure can be further confirmed by the observation data where the researcher observed teachers facing difficulties when they tried to apply the AV approach to teach vocabulary in the classroom. During the classroom observation, teachers A1 and A2 adopted the integrated use of audio and visual approach, and both teachers faced some difficulties in grabbing the learner’s attention when the audio recording was played. The researcher found out one of the reasons was the lack of IT infrastructure in the classroom, which is the lack of speakers. During the observation, teacher A1 had to bring her mini speaker into the classroom, whereas teacher A2 did not have access to any speaker and she played the audio straight from her mobile phone. This led to learners seated at the back of the class were not able to hear the audio. As observed during the classroom observation of teacher A1,

“As the audio wasn’t clear, the pupils sitting at the back row couldn’t hear it clearly. A few of them wasn’t paying attention when the audio was played, A1_P18 started to take out his pencil and looked at the exercise without listening to the audio recording; A1_P18 didn’t pay attention to the audio and started drawing at the exercise...” (A1)

During the observation, the learners sitting in the back row of teacher A1’s class were unable to hear the audio. So, the learners started to lose their focus and were not paying

attention to the lesson since they could not hear it. Similarly, the classroom observation of teacher A2 yielded similar findings.

This led to another challenge, which is the quality of the AV materials which leads to the audio recording being unclear. When the sound of the AV materials is unclear, it will affect the learning process of the learners as they are unable to hear what the audio is about. Similar feedback was given by the teacher A1 and B4 during the interview session when the researcher asked about the challenges, they had faced in using the AV approach to teach vocabulary in the classroom. As mentioned by teacher B4 in the pre-observation interview session,

“If I really want to say the challenge, it should be the sound of the videos sometimes is not loud enough or when the LCD in class is broken. Hehe [giggles]. Then I can’t use this method to teach...” (B4)

Teacher B4 reviewed the challenges that emerged when using the AV approach to teach either due to the quality of the sound or the malfunction of the LCD projector in the classroom.

In reality, findings show that the teachers from School B faced fewer challenges compared to the teachers from School A. This was perhaps due to the differences in the IT infrastructure available at the school.

The next challenge found in the data was the convenience of access. Findings from the interview which reflects the convenience of access can be divided into three subcategories, which is the challenge of having a laptop with a CD player, time consumption, connectivity issue, and sharing of CD.

Teachers mentioned during the interview that they had trouble accessing the AV materials on the CD since they needed a laptop with a CD player to do so. The teachers complained that they could not access the AV materials on the CD using the function on their laptops, thus, the teachers decided to source it online instead. During the interview, teachers A3, B1, and B4 all made similar claims about this challenge. As mentioned by teacher B4 in the post-observation interview session,

“Personally, I would prefer to find the materials online compared to using the CDs because my laptop doesn’t have a CD player. I think most of the new laptops can’t play CDs, so it’s hard for me to access the CD or use it to prepare for lessons. And the materials that we find online are basically similar to the ones in the CDs, it’s like an extension to it which is mostly in video version.” (B4)

Teacher B4 claimed that she preferred to source teaching and learning materials online compared to using those prepared in the CDs. She reviewed that it was mainly caused by the absence of a CD player. She mentioned that the teaching and learning materials obtained online were similar to those saved in the CDs. She claimed that online materials were an extension of the CDs which were mostly videos.

Besides having the accessibility issue of the CD, teachers claimed that searching for the AV materials from the CD itself is time-consuming. As mentioned by teacher B1 in the post-interview session,

“It depends on which activity is suitable for my class. Normally, I choose directly from the internet, because no need to take out the CD and find it, it takes time. I just type in the internet for Teacher Fiera or use telegram search, then any unit I can find it directly and just download it.” (B1)

Teacher B1 reported that it “takes time” to search for the materials from the CDs compared to searching it through online platforms such as an internet browser page, Teacher Fiera or telegram group. Through the online platform, the teacher could just type the name

to search for the materials and download it directly into their laptops or phones. Teacher A1 were of a similar opinion to teacher B1 regarding this matter.

Relatively, the researcher found out that most of the teachers preferred sourcing the AV materials online. So, this leads to another challenge faced by some teachers, which is the connectivity issue. Teacher A2 pointed out the connectivity issue will determine the accessibility of the AV materials online. As an alternative, teachers will need to download the materials in advance when the internet connection is available. As mentioned by teacher A2 in the post-interview session.

“When the internet is okay, then it's okay, it's easy for us. Sometimes I use videos from YouTube, but if we have time to download, better still because it's ready on our laptop, isn't it?” (A2)

Teacher A2 reviewed that connectivity was part of the challenge she faced when employing the AV approach in the classroom. So, her alternative was to download the videos beforehand to avoid the issue. A few other teachers were using the same alternative to overcome this issue.

Other than that, teachers also faced the challenges of having to share the CDs due to the limited amount provided for each school. As teacher B1 mentioned during the interview, there were approximately six CDs provided for six primary levels. This means that the teachers have to take turns and share the CD which causes inconvenience to the teacher who wanted to access the AV materials in the CD. As mentioned by teacher B1 in the pre-observation interview session.

“Ya, 6 CDs, but need to share with other classes. Normally only provide 1 copy only, we need to share. Means for Year 6, I will share with the other teacher, I didn't use it [giggle], I just downloaded from the Youtube.” (B1)

Teacher B1 reviewed that the CDs given were shared among English teachers who were teaching the same grade. This limited the teachers' use of the CDs as they needed to take turns to use them.

4.4.2 Policy Challenges

The second theme that emerged from the data is the policy challenges related to CEFR which is incompatible with the learner's competence. The issue of competence is divided into the issue of cultural unfamiliarity, and the issue of learner's language proficiency level which affects their competence.

For this study, the issue of cultural unfamiliarity occurred in two areas, which are the content, as well as the accentedness which are not familiar to the learners. This is a challenge for the teachers in the classroom.

Based on the data, teachers faced challenges in terms of cultural unfamiliarity when it comes to vocabulary teaching using the CEFR-aligned syllabus documents. The majority of the teachers agreed that the CEFR-aligned syllabus covers topics and content related to foreign countries and cultures that are unfamiliar to the learners. Thus, teachers find it difficult to teach certain topics and contents as stated in the syllabus documents, especially for Level 2, as it's hard for them to relate it to our local Malaysian culture, making it hard for learners to understand. As mentioned by Teacher A1 and Teacher A3 during the pre-observation interview session,

“Level 2, it is very difficult because we have to learn other cultures, foreign cultures. For example, when...when we go to the topic about food, some of the foods mentioned in the book are not the food we have here, for example, tortillas. So, it's hard to relate it to Malaysia *sedangkan* in the book we talked about the foreign country and foreign culture, so it's quite difficult.” (A1)

“Ya, foreign. That’s why it is a very challenging task also for me as a teacher to introduce, like you say to introduce the vocab and so on, because it is more to foreigners right? So, we have to search for the photos and also Google it...Sometimes it is too hard for the students and they struggle because what I found in the textbook right, the lesson that the students learn from there is also different from our culture here.” (A3)

Teacher A1 presumed the syllabus in Level 2 as “very difficult” because it involves teaching foreign cultures. She gave an example about teaching “foods”, where foods listed in the book were from other countries around the world, such as tortillas. So, she finds it hard to relate it to the local culture. Similarly, teacher A3 also admitted that it was a “very challenging task” to introduce the vocabulary to the learners because it focused more on words related to the foreign culture. Therefore, the teachers have to put in additional effort to search for related photos through Google to teach them to the learners.

This is a big challenge for the teachers as they need to put in additional effort and time to research the topics to gain more information so that they can teach the learners and help them understand cultures which were different from theirs. As responded to by Teacher A1 and Teacher B4 in the pre-observation interview session,

“Just that we have to work hard because CEFR is not the topic that we can relate to our country. Ya, all the Western food here. It’s quite difficult actually in Level 2, as I mentioned before in Level 2 the teacher has to work hard to get more information for explanation.” (A1)

“Erm to me, Level 2’s syllabus is harder. It has lots of elements from foreign countries. It is good that pupils are exposed to the culture of other countries, but it also needs more time for the pupils to understand it.” (B4)

Both teacher A1 and teacher B4 reviewed the syllabus for Level 2, which was much more difficult as there were lots of elements related to foreign countries that they found hard to relate to the local culture. With this, both teachers admitted that they needed to “work hard

to get more information” to explain it to the learners, as well as needed “more time for the pupils to understand it”. All the other teachers faced similar challenges in terms of the content from the CEFR-aligned syllabus document.

Besides the content, the unfamiliarity of the accentedness presented in the CEFR-align materials was one of the challenges faced by both teachers and learners. Teachers A2, B2 and B3 expressed their concern about the native accent presented in the CEFR-align materials provided. The use of the British accent in the audio recording is a challenge for the teachers to apply in the classroom as the pronunciation is something different for the learners. The teachers also mentioned that the native speakers in the audio recording are speaking at a fast pace which adds difficulty for the learners to understand, especially for the slow learners. As mentioned by teacher A2 during the pre-observation interview,

“Sometimes, they use the students, the students are also native speakers. They like it. But this will be challenging for us, especially for those slow students, maybe we try to play many times to make them get used to it ya” (A2)

As accentedness was already a challenge among teachers, teacher A2 further added that the provided materials were sometimes recorded by learners who are native speakers which indeed causes a bigger challenge to the teachers. This is especially challenging when teachers want to use it for teaching learners who are slow in progress.

During the post-observation interview, teacher A2 explained how the unfamiliarity of accentedness affects the teachers and learners. As mentioned by teacher A2 during the post-observation interview,

“If for the slow students, maybe they don’t really understand because have foreign slang and speak very fast... We have to tell them and stress on what are being told in the audio. We repeat it with our own voice.” (A2)

As mentioned in the earlier sections, the AV materials provided were developed by Cambridge which integrated the foreign culture and accent into its content. Hence, teacher A2 explained that the main challenge of using these AV materials to teach was that slow learners find it hard to keep up. With the native accent and slang, combined with speaking at a fast pace, it has posed a great challenge to the slow learners. With this, the teachers had to put in extra effort to repeat the content in their own words and stress the main points for the learners to understand.

Findings show that all the teachers had voiced similar concerns about the unfamiliarity of accentedness regarding the use of AV materials aligned with the CEFR requirements.

Next, another subtheme for policy challenges was the issue of the learner's language proficiency level. Based on the interview data, all the teachers viewed the differences in the learner's language proficiency level as part of the challenge to implement CEFR-aligned content. This is mainly due to learners of different standards, studying at a different rate, and the slower learners were unable to catch up and were consequently left behind in their studies. Evidence extracted from one of the interviews was shown in the following by teacher B4 in the post-observation interview session.

“The biggest challenge that I’ve faced during the lesson is the gap between the good and weak pupils. When doing the exercises, the good pupils will finish it fast and start to disturb the class, and the weak ones need more time to complete it. Sometimes the weaker pupils have the tendency of waiting for answers from their friends instead of trying to do it themselves. Luckily for this lesson, there are only 3 pupils that I’ve noticed to be slow, the rest of them seem to be doing quite well. This shows that they understand what has been learned.” (B4)

Teacher B4 expressed her concern about the gap between the learners' language proficiency level which will affect their pace of learning. She mentioned that the “good”

learners who completed their work at a faster pace would start to disturb those who had yet to complete their work. She also mentioned that, sometimes, the “weaker” learners show the tendency to wait for an answer from their friends without even trying to answer it themselves. All the teachers had similar responses regarding this issue.

The task of teaching language to learners while dealing with new foreign aspects is a challenge to the teachers, who believe they are up against a difficult task. As mentioned by teacher A3 in the pre-observation interview session.

“Nowadays, [giggles] I think it is quite challenging. Challenging in a way that if we see from the students’ background as this language is not their mother tongue. So, it is very challenging, erm how to say, it's the responsibility for the English teacher to teach this language to them.” (A3)

Teacher A3 understood the responsibility of teaching the English language falls on the shoulders of teachers, especially when the learners do not come from an English background. Therefore, the teacher plays an important role in teaching the English language.

4.5 Discussion

This study aimed to investigate teachers' knowledge and practices of applying the audio-visual approach for vocabulary teaching in rural primary school English language classrooms. The findings have been reported in three major areas concerning teachers' practice, perception and challenges faced. In relation, this section discussed the findings and presented them based on two key themes, which are teachers' practice and teachers' knowledge.

4.5.1 Teachers' Practice

In recent years, studies in the field have proven that lesson planning plays a decisive role in the success or failure of a lesson (Alanazi, 2019; Nga, 2021). According to Borich

(2007) (cited in Cicek and Tok, 2014), effective lesson planning assists teachers in achieving the national content standard as well as optimising the outcomes of teaching and learning in the classroom. This underscores the importance of effective lesson planning to minimise the possible challenges faced by teachers in the classroom. This is an important aspect when planning to teach vocabulary using the AV approach.

The findings from this study indicated that the teachers were referring to the CEFR-aligned curriculum documents as their main guideline to set lesson objectives as well as to plan for a lesson. This corresponded to the findings from Ngu and Azlina (2019), who reported that the CEFR-aligned curriculum showed a positive impact on the teacher's planning and teaching processes.

In the past, research by Ngu and Azlina (2019) has found that teachers were strongly dependent on the CEFR-aligned curriculum documents when planning their lessons, mainly because they were unfamiliar with the newly introduced CEFR-aligned syllabus. Similarly, the findings of this study reported that the teachers' planning for vocabulary lessons was predominantly based on the CEFR-aligned resources available to them. All the teachers cited printed resources such as curriculum documents, which are the DSKP and SoW, as their main reference for lesson planning. The teachers then compared the suggested activities and benchmarks in the curriculum documents with the instructional activities suggested in the teacher's guidebook and student's book. Some of the teachers even referred to the curriculum documents as a "dictionary" or "teacher's bible." Although teachers cited the CEFR-aligned curriculum documents and books for lesson planning, findings show that the teachers were beginning to understand its flexibility instead of following the suggested instructional activities blindly. Based on the findings, the teachers were aware of their

autonomy to “change” or “improvise” the activities suggested, and the flexibility given provided room for creativity in lesson planning.

In terms of vocabulary, previous research has found that teachers do not see vocabulary as a priority in their classrooms (Bastanfar & Hashemi, 2010; Kalajahi & Poursahian, 2012; Lu, 2017; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018), as vocabulary only appeared in the DSKP and SoW as a wordlist with no further instruction (BPK, 2017; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018). Similarly, findings from this study also show that vocabulary was not the main focus of the teachers when planning for an English lesson due to the lack of emphasis in the CEFR-aligned documents. As there was limited information provided in the CEFR-aligned curriculum documents on vocabulary teaching, the teachers needed to rely on their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) to integrate vocabulary into their English lessons (Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H., 2021; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018). The teacher's PCK was essential in bridging the content knowledge of "what is vocabulary" and the pedagogical knowledge of "how to teach vocabulary" (Pompea & Walker, 2017; Shulman, 1987; 2004). Based on the findings of this study, teachers decided to incorporate vocabulary instruction into teaching other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This shows that the teachers understood that vocabulary acts as a building block for learning other English language skills (Mohd. Nor et al., 2015; Sovakandan et al., 2017).

The findings of this study showed consistency when teachers shared how they integrated vocabulary into their lesson planning during the pre-observation interviews with how they wrote their lesson plan and approached vocabulary teaching during the actual practice in the classroom as observed during the classroom observation sessions. Furthermore, the teachers' planning and practice were supported by perceptions about how

vocabulary was taught through the AV approach, as reviewed during the post-observation interviews. At the same time, the teachers shared the challenges they faced throughout the process.

Based on the findings, it was found that when teachers were given the autonomy to plan and decide on vocabulary teaching, one of the issues that emerged was the barrier caused by the lack of localised content and teaching resources aligned with CEFR. Similar to the findings of this study, research in the past also reviewed that the CEFR-aligned resources, such as the teacher's guidebook and student's book provided for Malaysian teachers and learners, consist of extensive foreign cultural references, thus lacking localised culture that teachers and learners could relate to (Ngu and Azlina, 2019; Nurul Farehah and Sallehuddin, 2017). This limitation leads to teachers facing challenges such as issues of cultural unfamiliarity in terms of content and accentedness. Research conducted by Nurul Farehah and Sallehuddin (2017) and Kiss, T., & Rimbar, H. (2021) identified a significant challenge in Malaysian education policy: a shortage of CEFR experts. This shortfall has led to a dearth of locally-sourced CEFR-aligned materials, such as curriculum documents and books. As a result of the findings from both present and previous research, the heavy use of foreign culture in the resources confused the teachers and learners, which is why they find it difficult to adapt. This reflected the teachers' knowledge, and the teachers were well equipped with PCK in terms of subject matter, as shown in how they integrated vocabulary into the lessons. However, teachers are still facing challenges of cultural unfamiliarity, reflected in the teachers' inability to make the connection between their prior PCK and the PCK related to CEFR, which is relatively new in Malaysia. There is a need to enhance the teachers' knowledge of how to bridge their existing PCK with the PCK related to CEFR, especially with the help of modern technologies.

In recent years, with the integration of technology into the current Malaysian education system, e-resources such as AV resources in line with the CEFR-aligned textbook were developed by education experts and saved in CD format (Ngu & Azlina, 2019; Zulkefli, 2017). According to the findings, even though MOE Malaysia provided AV resources in the form of CDs, teachers were reserved about using the CDs. The findings of this study, similar to those reported by Ngu and Azlina (2019), revealed that most teachers preferred downloading AV resources online for vocabulary lesson planning rather than using AV resources pre-saved on CDs, and they urged policymakers to provide sufficient resources to assist teachers, especially in teaching about foreign cultures as listed in the books. However, in the current study, teachers still preferred to source AV materials online because they believed that online resources are kept up-to-date and flexible, which allows modification as well as additional information that will be able to assist teachers, especially in explaining foreign cultural elements from the CEFR-aligned books. Findings also show that most teachers understood the benefits of using AV in their approach to teaching vocabulary from different cultures that are difficult for teachers to convey verbally. Thus, the teachers needed to plan carefully to maximise the impact of the AV approach. This addressed the need for policymakers to provide suitable resources to aid teachers in vocabulary teaching, especially when it comes to foreign cultures.

Even though teachers have taken the initiative to address the challenges, similar policy challenges can still be seen in today's English language classroom. The findings of this study indicated that teachers were still facing challenges of cultural unfamiliarity and unfamiliarity with accentedness, which is similar to what teachers encountered earlier, as mentioned in research by Ngu and Azlina (2019) and Nurul Farehah and Sallehhudin (2017). Even with all the resources provided for the teachers, whether printed or electronic, findings from this

research continued to demonstrate that teachers were still having difficulties with cultural unfamiliarity and accentedness owing to a lack of localised context. This indicated that the teachers who took part in this study were still struggling with a lack of expertise in using the AV contents offered on the CDs (Nawai & Said, 2020; Nurul Farehah & Mohd. Sallehudin, 2017). Undoubtedly, there were findings indicating that some teachers believe the foreign content in the curriculum adds to the understanding of learners, but they still disagree with having an extensive amount of foreign content in the CEFR-aligned curriculum.

Therefore, it is crucial to know whether the policy was seen as a form of constraint or guidance by the teachers as they prepared for vocabulary teaching. Perhaps it has something to do with how well-informed the teachers were about the policy's application. As the teachers' practice is guided by their knowledge, it is important to understand the teachers' PCK. It is crucial to uncover the gap between the teachers' PCK.

4.5.2 Teachers' Knowledge

According to Woolfitt (2015), due to technological advancement, education is shifting from a traditional "brick-and-mortar classroom" into a borderless classroom with endless possibilities due to digital technology. As technology plays a major role in the 21st century, it is crucial to include technology as part of pedagogical competence in the field of education (BPK, 2017; Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

Pedagogy Content Knowledge (PCK) by Shulman (1986) was the conceptual framework for this study. Due to the integration of technology found in the findings, Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) was brought into discussion. TPACK is an extension of Shulman's (1986) idea of PCK in the study of Koehler and Mishra in 2006 (Valtonen et al., 2020). TPACK explains the set of knowledge that teachers need to

plan and approach teaching effectively with the integration of technology (Santos & Castro, 2021). In reference to PCK, TPACK includes three knowledge domains, which are content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), and technological knowledge (TK) (Ajloni & O'Toole, 2021; Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Santos & Castro, 2021). Teachers were encouraged to actively engage their TPACK in the same way that they were urged to engage their PCK during instruction practice (Yeh et al., 2014). Ensuring effective use of pedagogical techniques and technology resources will help to improve the quality of their content delivery. Therefore, to understand the teachers' practice of vocabulary teaching, it is important to understand the extent of their TPACK in teaching vocabulary.

The findings from the interviews, observation, and document analysis show a connection between the teachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching and the pedagogical approach that teachers applied to vocabulary teaching in the classroom, especially with the integration of technological components such as AV resources aligned with the CEFR curriculum.

In terms of pedagogy, when approaching vocabulary, the teachers adopted both the non-integrated and integrated AV approaches, depending on the choice of vocabulary taught. The approaches that teachers use in teaching vocabulary reflect their readiness in terms of PK and how it relates to their TK and CK. For this study, the difference between both approaches was that the non-integrated approach refers to the use of audio or visual elements separately as a stand-alone approach, whereas the integrated approach refers to the integrated use of both audio and visual elements simultaneously. Findings reported that the teachers preferred the non-integrated AV approach when teaching simple vocabulary; as for teaching complicated vocabulary, the teachers preferred the integrated AV approach instead. This

shows that teachers were deciding their pedagogical approach and the technological resources based on the content, which is the vocabulary. Thus, this shows an integration between the teachers' content knowledge with their pedagogical and technological knowledge, which are the three main knowledge domains of TPACK (Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

As reported in the findings, most of the teachers reviewed said that they were only using the non-integrated approach to teach simple vocabulary, especially for concrete words that were easy to present through either audio or visual. Based on the teachers' knowledge, they understood the strengths and limitations that existed in both auditory and visual approaches when they were used separately. For instance, the repetitive nature of the auditory approach was used by teachers to help strengthen the learners' memory as well as to help learners recall a substantial number of vocabularies learned (Davis & Fan, 2016; Davis, 2018; Ma'rifat, 2017; Pavia et al., 2019). The current study also reported similar results, and the teachers understood that the non-integrated auditory approach was only able to provide audible assistance to the teachers in vocabulary teaching (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020), which means it only involves teaching and learning through the sense of hearing. Similar to the current study, past research has also found that the visual approach was effective in assisting learners in understanding vocabulary meaning through the sense of sight (Bhatti et al., 2017; Susanto, 2017; Takač & Singleton, 2008), especially to enhance the understanding of concrete nouns. Relatively, the pedagogical decision made by teachers reflected their understanding that it is difficult to teach complicated vocabulary by merely using "audio" or "visual" alone, as it only involves teaching and learning through either one of the senses of sight or hearing. Therefore, most of the teachers agreed that the non-

integrated approach was suitable for teaching simple vocabulary, which is easy to visualise or explain verbally.

In reality, Swank (2011) has found that learning through visual experience helps learners remember 40% of the concept, 25% from auditory experience, 17% from tactile experience, 15% from miscellaneous organic sensation, and 3% from taste and smell. This means that adopting the auditory approach alone only helps learners to understand 25% of the vocabulary, whereas the visual approach only assists in learning 40% of the vocabulary. So, theoretically, the integrated use of an audio-visual (AV) approach in teaching vocabulary is expected to reach 65% of vocabulary acquisition. Researchers found that using the AV approach to teach vocabulary is more effective as it benefits from both the strengths of the audio and visual approaches (Ashever & Igyuve, 2013; Swaran Singh et al., 2021).

The current technological development was able to support the integrated use of audio and visuals simultaneously, which enabled teachers to create and recreate different learning contexts in the classroom (Anil, 2015; Kessler, 2018; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Yonas et al., 2020). In the past, scholars and researchers have discovered that the AV approach is a successful teaching method for boosting learners' vocabulary acquisition through sight and sound (Bhatti et al., 2017; Kakar & Naureen, 2017; Raniah & Tariq, 2018; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Utami & Fauzi, 2015; Yonas et al., 2020). However, some studies found that AV approaches were sometimes neglected (Wazeema & Kareema, 2017) or resisted by teachers (Nur Farehah & Mohd. Sallehuddin, 2018) because they were unfamiliar and uncomfortable with using the AV resources (Nelson, 2016; Yonas et al., 2020).

As regards the current study, findings indicated that teachers were more open and accepting of the idea of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary as compared to studies

in the past. Perhaps this has something to do with the improvement of the teachers' TPACK, where teachers were gaining knowledge on “what to teach” (CK), “how to teach” (PK), and “how to make use of the technological resources provided” (TK) (McGraw-Hill, 2019; Santos & Castro, 2021).

In the current study, the teachers were in favour of using the integrated AV approach for vocabulary teaching, especially for teaching complicated vocabulary such as abstract words, which they find difficult to explain verbally or visualise through pictures. Three main methods have been shared by the teachers in this study, which are videos, the integration of audio and visual resources, and language games. Findings from this research corresponded to the previous study, which indicated that video has been utilised the most by the teachers to create a realistic and fun learning experience for the learners as they could “see and hear” at the same time (Swaran Singh et al., 2021). Other than that, the teachers also felt comfortable integrating the use of both audio and visual resources simultaneously to teach vocabulary, as they believed it to be more flexible for vocabulary lesson preparation and implementation. Furthermore, the teachers who experienced infrastructure issues used this method as an alternative to videos. The teachers also see language games as part of the AV approach, as they consist of both audio and visual elements with an additional interactive element. As language games require additional time and effort from the teachers in terms of preparation and implementation, they're only used occasionally by teachers, even though they are aware of their benefits for vocabulary teaching. These findings show that the teachers understood that every instructional situation is unique and that there is not one technology that could be applied to all contexts.

Based on the findings, the teachers were aware that there is no single piece of technology that can be used in every instructional situation (Mutanaga et al., 2018). Therefore, the teachers understood that they needed to be flexible in how they comprehended and adapted to the dynamic connections between content, pedagogy, and technology. The teachers were able to find alternatives, such as using different strategies to employ the AV approach to teach vocabulary in the classroom. Consequently, this reflected the teachers' TPACK and their readiness to adopt the AV approach for vocabulary teaching.

The current study also reviewed the teachers' perceptions of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary. The findings about the teachers' perceptions were similar to the previous research, which will form a cohesive discussion in this area. As technology in the 21st century is embedded in the teachers' and learners' daily lives, the teachers perceive the AV technology to be user-friendly (Santos & Castro, 2021), and they are comfortable with the idea of the AV approach to teaching vocabulary. Furthermore, as the AV approach allowed teachers to present vocabulary by combining both auditory and visual features through technology (Bagila et al., 2019; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Yonas et al., 2020), the teachers believed it enabled them to create a realistic learning environment for the learners in which they could experience it through sight and sound (Bhatti et al., 2017; Kakar & Naureen, 2017; Raniah & Tariq, 2018; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Utami & Fauzi, 2015; Yonas et al., 2020). The teachers from this study saw this as an opportunity for them to recreate the real-world scenario in class, which enables the learners to learn how to apply the vocabulary in their daily lives.

Moreover, by providing a realistic learning experience for the learners, the teachers were able to spark the learners' curiosity about the content they were going to learn, which

in turn helped to attract the learners' interest in learning the vocabulary taught. Past research has found that numerous instructional technologies employed in TPACK provide audio, visual, motion, colour, and texture enhancement, which has a multisensory arousal effect on learners (Mutanaga et al., 2018). Thus, teachers perceived the AV approach as a strategy to attract learners' interest and attention to learning vocabulary (Make & Yonas, 2018; Sofi, 2017; Swaran Singh, 2021). Additionally, teachers believed that the use of the AV approach simplified the teaching and learning process (Eze, 2013; Singh, 2005; Sofi, 2017; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Thamil, 2007), which contributed towards increasing learners' understanding of the vocabulary learned. This is mainly because, with the help of technology, AV provides an opportunity for learners to experience learning by listening to the correct pronunciation and visualising the words themselves without having to wait for the teachers' explanation. This helped teachers save instructional time by not having to explain each word to the learners. Besides, when teachers provide a safe environment for the learners to experience learning through AV, it helps to enhance the learners' memory of the vocabulary taught (Yonas et al., 2020).

In addition, the current study also found that teachers were aware of the impact of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary on learners' skill development. The teachers were aware that both the auditory and visual elements in the AV approach play a distinctive role in developing the learners' language skills. Teachers perceived that the auditory element was able to help in improving the learners' pronunciation of the vocabulary, whereas the visual element helps with visualising the meaning of the words. Since teachers perceived vocabulary as the foundation of communication, increasing the learners' vocabulary knowledge and pronunciation indirectly aided in the development of other language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The teachers' perception supported the idea that teachers from this study not only knew how to adopt the AV approach to teach vocabulary, but they also understood the benefits that AV brings to the table. Their understanding of the AV approach was the rationale behind their instructional decision for content delivery in the classroom.

However, there were studies in the field that found that the issue of the digital divide, such as the lack of information technology (IT) infrastructure and issues of accessibility, hinders the effective application of the TPACK framework (Ajloni & O'Toole, 2021; Ertmer, 2005; Scherer, Tondeur, & Siddiq, 2017). Although there were policies developed by the MOE to provide continuous support to teachers by preparing resources to help teachers implement the CEFR-aligned curriculum effectively (Zulkefli, 2017), However, it is not adequate to accommodate all the schools in the country (Ngu & Azlina, 2019), especially those lacking in rural schools. Likewise, the teachers in this study were faced with similar issues, such as a lack of IT infrastructure and convenience of access. Findings reported that even though the teachers from School A were faced with these challenges, they were able to come up with different alternatives to using the AV approach in their instructional practice. For instance, bringing a portable LCD projector into the classroom, moving the class to the computer room, adopting different AV strategies or materials, and so on. Past research has also reported that most teachers were taking the initiative by sourcing resources online to overcome these challenges (Ngu & Azlina, 2019). This reflects the teachers' TPACK and their readiness to employ the AV approach in teaching vocabulary, even with restrictions from their teaching and learning context. In reality, there is no technology that could be applied to every context, as each instruction process is unique (Mutanaga et al., 2018). Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the flexibility of dynamic connections between content, pedagogy, and technology.

To overcome these challenges, additional IT support and the increase of IT infrastructure should be taken into account by higher authorities to select and value the use of video technology in their teaching practice. Past research posed similar recommendations, which urged schools to create a supportive environment for the integration of technology in the instructional process (Ajloni, 2019). By doing so, it is believed that the acceptance and readiness of teachers to teach vocabulary using the AV approach will increase.

Another issue that emerged, as mentioned earlier in 4.4.2, about the policy challenges can be related to the teachers' acceptance of the CK when integrating AV into teaching (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). As reported in the current study, some teachers were still struggling to understand the foreign content and the accent presented in the resources provided, regardless of the technology that was integrated into their lesson. As teachers' practices are guided by their TPACK and the education policy, there is a need to investigate the teachers' TPACK regarding the CEFR-aligned curriculum.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed and discussed the findings of the current study. The findings were reported based on four main areas that answered the four research questions listed in Chapter One, namely teachers' planning, teachers' approaches, teachers' perceptions, and the challenges teachers encountered in using the AV approach to vocabulary teaching. The findings were then discussed, and two main themes emerged during the discussion, which were the teachers' practice and teachers' knowledge.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the overall findings of the current study based on the research questions. It followed by presenting the implication, as well as the recommendation for future study. The chapter ends with a concluding remark.

5.2 Summary of Study

Vocabulary is the key to developing other English language skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills (Koizumi et al., 2013; Mohd. Nor et al., 2015; Rasouli & Jafari, 2016; Susanto, 2017; Sutrisna, 2021). However, researchers found that vocabulary teaching has always been outshined by the attention given to teaching grammar, reading, and writing skills (Bastanfar & Hashemi, 2010; Kalajahi & Poursahian, 2012; Lu, 2017; Maizatulliza & Kiely, 2018). Recently, the AV approach has come into the spotlight in line with the AV aids provided by MOE Malaysia for teaching the CEFR-aligned syllabus. Nation (2013) found that AV materials helped learners achieve higher scores on vocabulary tests, and he recommended teachers use audio-visual materials in vocabulary teaching (Nation & Macalister, 2020). However, there were studies in the field that found teachers facing challenges with the unfamiliarity of using an audio-visual approach (Nelson, 2016), as well as not taking full advantage of the audio-visual to teach vocabulary (Mansourzadeh, 2014; Utami, 2015). As such, there is a need to conduct this study to look at the following objectives, followed by the research questions that derive from them.

This study aimed to investigate the teachers' perceptions of using an audio-visual approach to teach vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom. To achieve its aim, this study was driven by three objectives. The first objective was to examine teacher practices in teaching vocabulary in primary-level English language classrooms. The research question that derived from this first objective was “How do the teachers teach vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom?”. The second objective was to investigate teachers' views on teaching vocabulary through the use of the AV approach in primary-level English language classrooms. The research question that derived from this second objective was “What are the teachers' perceptions of using the AV approach in teaching vocabulary in line with CEFR?”. The third objective was to explore the challenges faced by teachers in using the AV approach to teach vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom. The research question derived from this third objective was “What are the challenges encountered by the teachers in the process of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary in primary-level English language classrooms?”.

As the main aim of this study focuses on investigating the teachers' knowledge and practices in vocabulary teaching, the purposive sampling method was adopted for the selection of participants. This study involved the participation of seven primary-level English language teachers from two rural schools in the Bau area. Semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis were used to collect data. All the data obtained were thematically analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis method. The reporting of findings focused on interviews and was complemented by observation and document analysis.

The research findings were reported based on four main areas that were used to address the four research questions. The first area of the findings focused on teachers' practice. The findings reported that the teachers were aware of the flexibility of the CEFR-aligned resources, which served as guidelines to help teachers integrate vocabulary as part of the lesson planning for other language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In terms of pedagogical approaches, the findings reported that teachers preferred to teach simple vocabulary using the non-integrated AV approach, which involves using audio and visual materials separately or interchangeably, and complicated vocabulary using the integrated AV approach, which involves materials that present audio and visual simultaneously. The second area of the findings focused on the teachers' perceptions of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary. The findings revealed that teachers were comfortable with using the AV approach and understood its benefits, such as being user-friendly and creating a realistic teaching and learning environment in the classroom. The teachers also shared their perception that the AV approach helps to engage learners in their learning as well as enhance their skill development to prepare them for secondary school. Finally, the third area of findings reported the challenges faced by teachers, which are related to infrastructure and policy challenges. Findings reported infrastructure challenges including a lack of information technology (IT) infrastructure, convenience of access, and quality of AV materials. As for policy challenges, findings revealed the issue of cultural unfamiliarity, such as the lack of localised content, and the issue of learners's language proficiency level, which affects their competence.

The findings were then discussed based on two key themes, which are the teachers' practice and the teachers' knowledge. In terms of teachers' practice, there is a gap between the teachers' subject matter PCK and their PCK related to CEFR. This leads to challenges

such as issues of cultural unfamiliarity and accentedness due to the teachers' limited knowledge of how to interpret the extensive foreign content included in the CEFR-aligned resources. With this, it leads to the second emerging theme, which is the teachers' knowledge. The teachers' choices of approaches and their perception of the use of the AV approach to teaching vocabulary were analysed and discussed alongside the teachers' PCK as well as its extension, TPACK.

5.3 Implication

Apart from fulfilling the research objectives, the findings of this study provide important insights into how teachers perceive the use of the AV approach to teach vocabulary in Malaysian primary-level English language classrooms.

The first implication of this study is that the findings will be able to provide insights to policymakers regarding the policy challenges that teachers face in vocabulary teaching. According to the findings, teachers encountered issues of cultural unfamiliarity in terms of content and accentedness due to the lack of localised content. It is challenging for teachers to integrate the CEFR-aligned resources into our local English language classroom because of the significant foreign content featured in them, regardless of curriculum documents, books, or AV resources. In reality, issues regarding the lack of localised culture in the CEFR-aligned resources have already been addressed in past research by Nurul Farehah and Sallehuddin (2017) and Ngu and Azlina (2019). Given that similar challenges were discovered in the current research, it provides policymakers with an insight into how teachers perceive their present circumstances.

The second implication of this study is related to the conceptual framework, which is PCK (Shulman, 1986). The teacher's PCK is essential in bridging the content knowledge of

"what is vocabulary" and the pedagogical knowledge of "how to teach vocabulary" (Pompea & Walker, 2017; Shulman, 1987; 2004). The findings showed that teachers applied their PCK to integrate vocabulary into teaching other language skills, but the teachers were facing difficulties in connecting the competency of CEFR with their existing PCK even with the help of technology. This indicated that teachers not only need to know how to teach, but it is also important to know how to incorporate CEFR competence into their instruction, along with the integration of technological components. Therefore, the theory has to be based on a framework that could potentially incorporate CEFR as well as the integration of technology to address teachers' pedagogical and content knowledge. This study implies that PCK alone is insufficient to address the issue; there is a need to address this issue through the teachers' TPACK. Hence, the findings of this study could help policymakers gain insight into the teachers' knowledge as well as help them plan for professional development to enhance teachers' TPACK.

The third implication of this study is to provide a reference to practitioners regarding the teachers' best practices for using the AV approach to teach vocabulary. The findings were able to provide a deeper understanding of how teachers applied the non-integrated and integrated AV approaches to teaching vocabulary with different levels of difficulty. The teachers provided positive feedback on how the AV approach was able to create a realistic learning environment for the learners in which they could experience it through sight and sound (Bhatti et al., 2017; Kakar & Naureen, 2017; Raniah & Tariq, 2018; Swaran Singh et al., 2021; Utami & Fauzi, 2015; Yonas et al., 2020). Additionally, findings showed the various strategies that teachers used to cope with the challenges encountered when implementing the AV approach in the classroom.

The fourth implication of this study is the methodological implication. Due to the qualitative methodology used in this study, findings were drawn from a variety of sources, including pre- and post-interviews, observations, and document analysis. Thus, the findings were able to provide other researchers with a holistic perspective and an in-depth understanding (Creswell & Poth, 2017) of the teachers' perception of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom. The importance of this qualitative study still rests in offering a richer and deeper understanding of how people perceive acts, events, behaviours, and relationships (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Yin, 2011), even though teachers' perceptions cannot be generalised to other teachers because every individual is unique.

5.4 Recommendation for Future Research

This study focused on investigating the perception of teachers as the main practitioners of education policy. Since the current study focused on the perspective of teachers, future studies could investigate the perspectives of learners regarding the application of the AV approach to vocabulary learning. Understanding learners' perceptions of how their teachers teach them is also important. Interviews, classroom observations, or even pre- and post-tests on vocabulary could be conducted to examine how learners respond to the teachers' choice of pedagogical approach. Additionally, this will enable researchers to compare teachers' and students' perspectives on the same subject. Consequently, it can offer a more thorough understanding of how the AV approach is used in the field of education to teach language from various perspectives.

According to the agreement reached between the teachers and the researcher, only a 60-minute classroom observation was permitted for each teacher, with a pre-and post-

interview afterwards. In order to track teachers' practice over a longer period, future research may adopt a more longitudinal approach and collect data in schools for an entire school year. With these findings, future research will be able to present a clearer picture of how teachers' perceptions relate to their actual classroom practices.

The present study focused especially on the rural primary schools in Bau, Sarawak. Future studies might include primary schools from the suburban or urban areas of Sarawak. The researcher may then use the findings to compare and contrast how the teachers perceive using the AV approach to teach vocabulary in different settings.

5.5 Conclusion

Finally, the study's findings shed light on how teachers perceived the employment of an audio-visual strategy for teaching vocabulary in the primary-level English language classroom. The findings demonstrated that when teachers are given autonomy to create and implement their preferred approaches to vocabulary instruction, it is dependent on the teachers' PCK as well as their extension of TPACK. The findings of this study suggested that teachers understood the flexibility of the CEFR-aligned resources, which serve as a guideline to help teachers integrate vocabulary into teaching other language skills. The findings also revealed that teachers preferred to use the non-integrated AV technique to teach simple vocabulary and the integrated AV approach to teach complicated vocabulary. The teachers were comfortable with using the AV approach, and they understood its benefits, such as being user-friendly and creating a realistic teaching and learning environment in the classroom. However, the teachers still face challenges when adopting the AV approach to planning and teaching vocabulary in a rural school in Sarawak. Even though teachers were aware that MOE Malaysia provides CEFR-aligned AV resources, teachers at the rural school were found to be dealing with a lack of IT infrastructure and ease of access. This study also

reflected on policy challenges that occur in the classroom, such as the issue of cultural unfamiliarity and the learner's language proficiency level. The outcomes of this study can be used as a reference for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, providing insight into the teachers' perceptions of using the AV approach to teach vocabulary as well as providing recommendations for future research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interviews and Classroom Observation Protocols

 UNIMAS UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK	Participant Number/Initials /	
Title: Teachers' Perception of Using Audio-Visual Approach to Teach Vocabulary in the Primary Level English Language Classroom Consent Form for Data Collection: Interviews and Classroom Observation Thank you for reading the information sheet about the data collection for the research. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Therefore, read the statement below and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:		
<i>Please Initial box:</i>		
I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated [_ / _ / _] and have had the opportunity to ask questions.		
I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.		
I agree for this classroom observation and interview to be recorded. I understand that the recording made will only be used for data analysis and that extracts from the interview, from which I would not be personally identified, may be used in any conference presentation, report or journal article developed as a result of the research. I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission, and that no one outside the research team will be allowed access to the original recording.		
I understand that a transcript of the interview will be produce and I will be given the opportunity to read it and correct any factual errors.		
I agree to share a copy of the lesson plan, student's worksheet or any document in relation to the observed lesson with the researcher.		
I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study.		
I agree to take part in this interview.		
Name of participant	Date	Signature
Researcher	Date	Signature
Copies: Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, and the information sheet		

Appendix B: Pre-Observation Interview Questions

Suggested Pre-Observation Interview Questions:

Pre-observation interview will be carried out before observing the teacher's lesson to find out how teachers view their own teaching.

Note: Questions in bullet form are suggested probing question.

1. How many years have you been in this teaching field?
2. What is your major?
3. When did you start teaching English?
4. Is vocabulary important in learning English?
5. How do you teach vocabulary in class?
6. Is there any guideline to refer to teach vocabulary in class?
(If not, how do you plan? Do you have guidelines in your mind?)
7. What do you understand about CEFR?
8. Does our Ministry of Education provide teachers or students with materials to teach the CEFR syllabus? Any books or teaching aids?
9. What do you think about using audio-visual materials in teaching vocabulary?

Appendix C: Post-Observation Interview Questions

Suggested Post-Observation Interview Questions:

Post-observation interview will be carried out after observing the teacher's lesson and open-ended question will be developed based on the observation findings/ questions found during classroom observation.

1. What do you think is the strength of your lesson?
2. If you had the opportunity to improve your lesson, what would you do?
3. In your lesson you've used several approaches. Can you share with me what are these approaches that you've used to teach vocabulary?
4. I saw some CDs attached to the CEFR-aligned textbook, may I know what's the CD for and what's in it?
5. What can you comment about the approaches used? How do you think it will help in your teaching lesson?
6. Why did you choose to use YouTube videos compared to the materials provided in the CD?
7. How do you think the vocabulary learnt through the lesson will benefit the students?
8. Do you think you've experienced any challenges or issues during your lesson? Can you explain more about it?
9. Which approach/method will you recommend to other teachers for vocabulary teaching? Why?
10. What do you think about the audio-visual aids which come together with the CEFR-aligned textbook? Why?

Appendix D: Classroom Observation Template

OPEN-ENDED CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Date : Time/Period :
Teacher : School :
Subject : Grade :
Topic : Language Skills/ Focus :

Pre-lesson	
Observation Notes	Remarks
Lesson Delivery	
Observation Notes	Remarks
Post lesson	
Observation Notes	Remarks

General Remarks & Comments

Appendix E: Permission Letter from Ministry of Education Malaysia



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA
BAHAGIAN PERANCANGAN DAN PENYELIDIKAN DASAR PENDIDIKAN
ARAS 1-4, BLOK E8
KOMPLEKS KERAJAAN PARCEL E
PUSAT PENTADBIRAN KERAJAAN PERSEKUTUAN
62604 PUTRAJAYA

TEL : 0388848591
FAKS : 0388848579

Ruj. Kami : KPM.600-3/2/3-eras(12942)
Tarikh : 7 Julai 2022

BRYAN LIM CHEN YANG
NO. KP : 910819135329

61, TAMAN MEWAH,
JALAN ARANG 93250 KUCHING
SARAWAK

Tuan,

**KELULUSAN BERSYARAT UNTUK MENJALANKAN KAJIAN :
TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF USING AUDIO-VISUAL APPROACH TO TEACH VOCABULARY IN THE PRIMARY LEVEL
ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM**

Perkara di atas adalah dirujuk.

2. Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa permohonan tuan untuk menjalankan kajian seperti di bawah telah diluluskan dengan syarat :

" KELULUSAN INI BERGANTUNG KEPADA KEBENARAN PENGARAH JPN DAN PERTIMBANGAN PENTADBIR SEKOLAH. PENGLIBATAN, PEMERHATIAN SERTA RAKAMAN VIDEO TERHADAP AKTIVITI PENGAJARAN DAN PEMBELAJARAN MURID DI DALAM BILIK DARJAH TIDAK DIBENARKAN. "

3. Kelulusan adalah berdasarkan kepada kertas cadangan penyelidikan dan instrumen kajian yang dikemukakan oleh tuan kepada bahagian ini. Walau bagaimanapun kelulusan ini bergantung kepada kebenaran Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri dan Pengetua / Guru Besar yang berkenaan.

4. Surat kelulusan ini sah digunakan bermula dari **7 Julai 2022** hingga **31 Disember 2022**

5. Tuan dikehendaki menyerahkan senaskhah laporan akhir kajian dalam bentuk *hardcopy* bersama salinan *softcopy* berformat pdf dalam CD kepada Bahagian ini. Tuan juga diingatkan supaya mendapat kebenaran terlebih dahulu daripada Bahagian ini sekiranya sebahagian atau sepenuhnya dapatan kajian tersebut hendak diterbitkan di mana-mana forum, seminar atau diumumkan kepada media massa.

Sekian untuk makluman dan tindakan tuan selanjutnya. Terima kasih.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

Saya yang menjalankan amanah,

Ketua Penolong Pengarah Kanan
Sektor Penyelidikan dan Penilaian Dasar
b.p. Pengarah
Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan
Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia

salinan kepada:-

JABATAN PENDIDIKAN SARAWAK

* SURAT INI DIJANA OLEH KOMPUTER DAN TIADA TANDATANGAN DIPERLUKAN *