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## Stakeholders' Perceptions of Teaching and Technological Skills in EFL Vocabulary Instruction: Implications for Remote Learning

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**Abstract.** This study examines stakeholders' perceptions of teaching and technological skills in English as a foreign language (EFL) vocabulary instruction and how this relates to remote learning. This research included 280 participants from 30 public and private institutions of secondary and higher education in southern Ecuador. All participants volunteered and consented to contributing data for the study. The data collection process consisted of administering questionnaires based on a Likert scale and conducting structured interviews with teachers. The aim of these instruments was to collect participants' views on teaching and technological skills in EFL vocabulary instruction. The researchers adopted a mixed-method approach, with quantitative analysis of the questionnaire responses using descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis of interview data. The findings indicated that participants had positive perceptions of EFL vocabulary instruction in terms of teachers' classroom management, technological skills, technological resources, and teaching methods. However, some aspects, such as learning environments, teachers' training, online classes, and the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), were perceived more positively in private institutions. The findings have implications for EFL vocabulary instruction, particularly in remote learning contexts, and can inform the development of appropriate classroom management, technological resources, and teacher training programs to enhance this aspect of the EFL teaching and learning process.

**Keywords:** feedback; technological skills; ICT; remote learning; EFL instruction; EFL vocabulary

## 1. Introduction

The EFL teaching and learning process plays a vital role in education and employment in today's globalized world. The English language has become essential for social and economic mobility and intercultural communication, emphasizing the significance of EFL in promoting multiculturalism and diversity by enabling individuals to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds (Zülküf, 2017).

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on our lives, especially in developing countries (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020). One aspect that was deeply affected, specifically in Latin America, was education, including EFL teaching and learning. Regarding the teaching difficulties in EFL instruction during this pandemic, learners faced challenges such as Internet connectivity, accessibility and interaction in virtual lessons, utilization of technological tools, and downloading didactic resources (Mahyoob, 2020). Under these circumstances, vocabulary, which is a crucial element of language proficiency, requires special attention in the EFL classroom. Therefore, it is important for instructors to have a better understanding of the EFL vocabulary teaching and learning process (Bergström et al., 2022).

The integration of technology has transformed the teaching of EFL vocabulary, providing numerous opportunities for interactive, cooperative, communicative, and informative learning (Kassem, 2018). For instance, multimedia resources such as educational videos, multimedia presentations, teleconferences, chats, and webinars are popular audiovisual online tools utilized by EFL teachers (Agaltsova et al., 2020). Additionally, technology related to virtual reality and gaming can complement more traditional teaching tools such as infographics, digital boards, and collaborative tools (Bikowski, 2018). These multimedia materials have gained widespread popularity in EFL teaching and learning, their implementation being facilitated by modern media resources.

Several studies have examined perceptions of the use of ICT in EFL instruction (e.g. Pardede, 2020; Rahim & Chandran, 2021; Li, 2022). Nevertheless, despite recognizing the potential benefits of technological resources in EFL teaching, there is still a need for a comprehensive understanding of perceptions related to teaching and technological skills specifically in EFL vocabulary instruction, especially in the case of remote learning in Latin America. This study aims to address this gap, considering the situation of remote learning during the lockdown period of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, identifying perceptions related to EFL vocabulary instruction in a remote learning context is crucial for a more thorough comprehension of the experiences encountered during the teaching and learning process, and for the effective addressing of any challenges.

In view of the challenges faced when teaching and learning EFL vocabulary, especially in the use of technology in remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, the following research questions will be addressed in this study:

1. What are the participants' perceptions regarding classroom management in EFL vocabulary instruction?
2. What are the participants' perceptions regarding the teachers' technological skills used for teaching vocabulary in EFL remote education?
3. What are the participants' perceptions regarding the technological resources and methods used when teaching vocabulary in EFL remote education?

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Technology in EFL teaching**

In language teaching, technology has been a subject of great interest in research. The result is that ICT has had a fundamental role in the field of EFL teaching. In this respect, EFL teachers are expected to integrate ICT in the EFL classroom; however, this application of technology in learning requires not only language skills and strategies but also technological skills (Cakici, 2016). The use of ICT is necessary in the context of EFL, and it can be applied as an effective resource that can help students in the learning process (Al-Munawwarah, 2015). With careful planning and clear objectives, the benefits of using ICT in the classroom include boosting autonomous learning, as well as motivating and engaging students in language learning (Azmi, 2017).

Using ICT has acquired great importance in remote education, especially during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, when teachers had to find new ways of implementing their lessons by using digital tools such as Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom, and Google Forms (Blanco González & Mañoso-Pacheco, 2021). In this sense, it is important to note that educational digital resources can be used to teach EFL listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. According to Kurniawati and Sofiyah (2021), there are two types of ICT tools in the EFL classroom: non-web-based (e.g., interactive multimedia, computer, PowerPoint, virtual books, interactive whiteboard) and web-based learning tools (e.g., YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Padlet). Other examples of these digital tools also include Kahoot, Genially, Canva, Quizlet, Class Dojo, Voki, Symbaloo, and Snappet.

Mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets are other tools that have gained popularity in recent years. These devices offer the advantage of providing learners with access to learning materials anytime and anywhere (Kukulaska-Hulme, 2019). Additionally, mobile devices can be used to deliver multimedia content such as videos, podcasts, and images, which can help to contextualize the target language skill and make it more memorable.

Furthermore, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram can also be used in EFL classrooms. The effectiveness of social media platforms in enhancing learner engagement, and motivation has been acknowledged,

indicating that these platforms can serve as useful tools and resources to promote learning (Noori et al., 2022). Social media can also be used to promote collaborative learning, as students can share their knowledge and receive feedback from their peers.

Given the significance of technology and the focus of our research, this study aims to address the utilization of technology in vocabulary instruction – an essential component of EFL teaching.

## **2.2 Technology for teaching EFL vocabulary**

Vocabulary is considered an essential part of EFL instruction (Schmitt & Carter, 2000; Khan et al., 2018). Without sufficient knowledge of vocabulary, it becomes very challenging for students to communicate effectively. As a result, it can be argued that effective communication depends on acquiring appropriate vocabulary (Cook, 2013). Given the significance of vocabulary in EFL teaching, it is crucial to acknowledge that learners must have the necessary skills in this area. Schmitt (2008) has noted that vocabulary learning is a key indicator of language proficiency since inadequate knowledge of this aspect can significantly impact students' communication abilities (Adam, 2016).

Regarding the teaching of vocabulary in EFL, there are some strategies that can be employed to enhance students' success. For example, implicit and explicit vocabulary teaching strategies have been extensively used (Asyiah, 2017). Additionally, Ghalebi et al. (2020) suggest that different vocabulary learning strategies may reveal individual differences among students; therefore they encourage EFL instructors and course developers to design materials and activities that can help learners improve their vocabulary knowledge.

In addition to the diverse teaching strategies, the incorporation of technological resources has taken the teaching of EFL vocabulary to a new level, engaging learners by offering opportunities to enrich their vocabulary knowledge (Cabrera-Solano et al., 2019). In this respect, Agaltsova et al. (2020) affirm that among the various resources that EFL teachers can incorporate in vocabulary instruction, the use of multimedia provides several opportunities and allows students to interact, cooperate, communicate, and exchange useful information. The most common audiovisual online resources include educational films, videos, multimedia presentations, teleconferences, chats, and webinars. In addition, Bikowski (2018) indicates that another option in terms of teaching resources is the use of virtual reality, avatars, and gaming, which can be combined with more traditional tools such as infographics, digital boards, and collaborative tools. These resources have acquired high levels of popularity in the learning process and are easy to implement using modern media resources.

## **2.3 Classroom management in EFL instruction**

Teacher experience grows with time; in fact, experience not only provides language instruction but also contributes to learners' personal growth (Ladd & Sorensen, 2017). A crucial component of teacher experience is classroom management, which refers to how teachers regulate and control learners' movements, behaviour, and interactions during a lesson (Habibi et al., 2018).

Likewise, Chandra (2015) asserts that classroom management is a process to achieve students' self-control which implies promoting favourable student achievement and behaviour leading to class control and a suitable teaching-learning environment.

Effective online classroom management requires the development of several competencies for teachers; thus, communication skills, technological competence, provision of informative feedback, administrative skills, responsiveness, monitoring learning, and providing student support are necessary (Bigatel et al., 2012). However, achieving effective teacher-student communication in an online class can be challenging (Song et al., 2016). Similarly, teachers need to have adequate technological skills to solve issues that may arise during virtual sessions, as students might encounter difficulties accessing materials. Finally, building a positive rapport and monitoring students' progress are important in establishing an effective and supportive online learning environment (Kaufmann & Vallade, 2022).

#### **2.4 Previous work**

Silviyanti and Yusuf (2015) conducted a study to identify EFL teachers' perceptions of the use of ICT in their instruction. The participants were 42 EFL teachers enrolled in two state universities in Indonesia. To collect data, a closed-ended questionnaire based on the technology acceptance model (TAM) was administered, and interviews were conducted. The results showed that 31 teachers perceived themselves to have a high level of motivation to use ICT because it promotes an interesting learning environment; however, 11 instructors believed that even though the use of technology is a fundamental aspect in the EFL classroom, their motivation remained low. Moreover, the non-user teachers believed that the implementation of ICT requires much effort and training because, although ICTs offer positive outcomes in the teaching and learning process, some barriers such as cost and insufficient knowledge prevent instructors from integrating them into their lessons.

Irzawati and Hasibuan (2020) determined students' perceptions of using ICT for English learning. The study involved 134 university students who completed questionnaires to share their perceptions. A survey design was applied to obtain information related to the students' perceptions of the use of ICT. The findings revealed that using ICT was helpful in promoting learning activities, maintaining motivation, and improving achievement. However, there were also negative consequences such as hindering students' focus and exposing them to data misuse. To optimize the benefits and minimize the negative aspects, it is important to take measures such as setting rules, educating students on proper data usage, and monitoring their learning activities.

Pardede (2020) analyzed the teachers' perceptions of ICT use in EFL learning activities. The participants included 32 EFL instructors from several educational institutions in Greater Jakarta. Surveys and interviews were employed to gather quantitative and qualitative data. The findings revealed that most of the teachers had integrated technological resources in their EFL classrooms. Their perceptions regarding the use of ICT in teaching activities were positive; however, they

acknowledged that they had to face several challenges with respect to facilities and technical expertise. They also agreed on the necessity of continuous training for improving their use of technological skills in the classroom.

Rahim and Chandran (2021) examined the perceptions of EFL students in Afghanistan towards the implementation of e-learning at the university level during the COVID-19 pandemic. To identify the obstacles and opportunities associated with e-learning in EFL education, the study utilized a qualitative method employing semi-structured interviews to elicit the students' perceptions. The study selected 21 male and female students from universities in Afghanistan as respondents through purposeful sampling, while the data from the interviews were thematically analyzed. The findings indicated that EFL learners view e-learning as a preferable alternative to traditional face-to-face classrooms. However, the lack of regular electricity, limited Internet bandwidth, high costs of ICT tools, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of ICT knowledge among teachers and students were viewed as obstacles to implementing e-learning in higher education in Afghanistan.

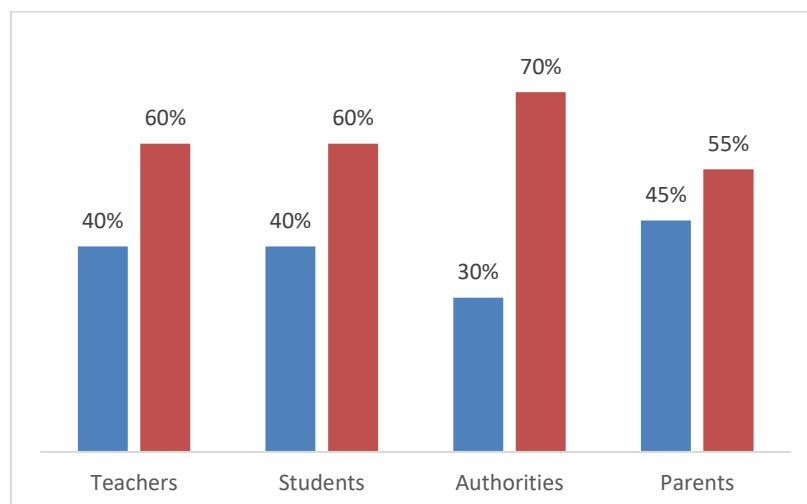
Li (2022) carried out a study to investigate teachers' acceptance of ICT and their ICT literacy during the COVID-19 pandemic in China. A total of 186 high school EFL teachers participated in this research. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected through an online survey which included four sections and 29 items. The results evidenced that the participants' perceptions regarding their acceptance and knowledge of ICT were overall positive, indicating their readiness for applying technological tools in COVID-19 emergency remote teaching. Nevertheless, there were critical difficulties when integrating technology with pedagogy during an unprecedented crisis.

The aforementioned studies have addressed perceptions of ICT and EFL instruction; however, they do not specifically focus on EFL vocabulary instruction in remote learning. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap and provide a comprehensive understanding of perceptions related to teaching and technological skills in EFL vocabulary, particularly in the context of remote learning in Latin America.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Setting and participants**

A total of 280 participants voluntarily participated in this study, including 90 EFL teachers, 30 educational authorities, 110 students, and 50 parents from 30 public and private secondary and tertiary institutions in southern Ecuador (see Figure 1). In other words, purposeful sampling was employed across the stakeholder groups. Students belonged to different proficiency levels that were aligned with the standards of the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2020). These students were studying English as a foreign language based on the curriculum established by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the students were involved in a remote learning environment.



**Figure 1. Sample distribution**

*Note:* The percentages in red represent stakeholders from private institutions, while the percentages in blue represent stakeholders from public institutions.

### 3.2 Data collection instruments

Various data collection instruments were developed by the researchers to carry out this study. Firstly, a 15-item questionnaire was administered to students to assess their perceptions of their EFL teachers' classroom management in EFL vocabulary instruction, as well as their own learning experience in this aspect. Secondly, a 27-item questionnaire was administered to EFL teachers to determine their perceptions regarding their classroom management experience, technological skills, technological resources, and methods for vocabulary instruction. Thirdly, a 10-item questionnaire was administered to parents of secondary and higher education students to evaluate their perceptions of the English vocabulary that their children learned via remote learning. In addition, a 10-item questionnaire was administered to education authorities to explore their opinions on EFL vocabulary instruction. Finally, a structured interview was conducted with 10 teachers from the sample to obtain further information about their experience in EFL vocabulary instruction, their technological skills for teaching vocabulary, as well as their technological resources and teaching methods.

All the questionnaires were designed using Google Forms and were based on a Likert scale with five options: Strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. These instruments were pilot-tested prior to their final administration, while their internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results showed an acceptable level of internal consistency for the questionnaires with an  $r$  coefficient of 0.7.

### 3.3 Procedure

A mixed-method approach was utilized in this study, combining quantitative analysis of the questionnaire responses and qualitative analysis of the interview data. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, and they gave their

consent before completing the questionnaires. Permission was also obtained from private and public institutions. All participants voluntarily completed the questionnaires and participated in the interviews. Education authorities were contacted via email and assisted in distributing the questionnaires to EFL teachers, parents, and students.

Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured during the data collection process, which lasted for four months. The questionnaires were administered online through Google Forms, while the interviews were conducted via Zoom sessions. The data obtained were organized into frequency tables using the SPSS software, while the questionnaire results were triangulated with the interview data during the analysis and discussion of the results to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

#### 4. Results

The results presented in Table 1 indicate teachers' perceptions regarding their experience in EFL vocabulary instruction. Most EFL teachers agreed that they had effective presentation and communication skills for teaching vocabulary in both public (98.1%) and private (100%) institutions. They also believed that they could provide clear explanations of complex vocabulary-related issues. Regarding didactic experience, 85.4% of teachers from private institutions reported being able to create a comfortable classroom environment when teaching vocabulary, 68.8% could provide personalized interactions, and 81.3% could increase students' interest in learning vocabulary.

In terms of adapting materials and activities for teaching vocabulary, 87.2% of private institution teachers and 61.1% of public institution teachers could adjust didactic resources for remote education. They also have experience in selecting appropriate activities for teaching vocabulary and transitioning between them. When asked about their knowledge of English vocabulary, 78.7% of private institution teachers and 51.9% of public institution teachers strongly agreed that they had sound lexical knowledge. Furthermore, authorities, students, and parents also expressed their positive perceptions regarding the aforementioned aspects, especially those from private institutions. The findings of the teachers' interviews also revealed that teachers from private education have more teaching experience with respect to vocabulary instruction.

**Table 1. Teachers' perceptions regarding their experience in EFL vocabulary instruction**

Items	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %
I have effective presentation and communication skills for teaching vocabulary.	0	0	0	0	1.9	0	44.4	39.6	53.7	60.4



I provide clear explanations of complex issues related to vocabulary.	0	0	0	0	1.9	2.1	43.4	37.5	54.7	60.4
I have experience in personalized interactions for teaching vocabulary.	0	0	0	0	9.3	2.1	50	29.2	40.7	68.8
I try to create a comfortable environment in the classroom when teaching vocabulary.	0	0	0	0	0	0	29.6	14.6	70.4	85.4
I have the creativity to motivate students to increase their interest in learning vocabulary.	0	0	0	0	3.8	0	41.5	18.8	54.7	81.3
I am able to conduct a smooth transition from one activity to the next.	0	0	0	0	5.7	0	50.9	31.3	43.4	68.8
I can adapt materials and resources to use them in online classes.	0	0	0	0	1.9	2.1	37.0	10.6	61.1	87.2
I have experience choosing activities relevant to vocabulary teaching.	0	0	1.9	0	7.4	2.1	38.9	31.9	51.9	66
I have a vast knowledge of EFL vocabulary.	0	0	0	0	1.9	0	46.3	21.3	51.9	78.7

\* 1 = public; 2 = private

The results in Table 2 show teachers' perceptions regarding technological skills for teaching vocabulary in EFL remote education. Most instructors from private institutions (87.2%) strongly agreed that they could use technology to promote collaborative work in their instruction. Additionally, 73.6% of teachers from public institutions considered themselves to be able to promote collaboration when teaching vocabulary through ICT tools.

With respect to teachers' skills in using ICT tools in EFL vocabulary teaching, the majority of instructors from private institutions (93.6%) agreed that they conformed to this requirement. Similarly, most teachers from public education (85.2%) also had a positive perception of their ability to use technology effectively. Likewise, 72.3% of teachers from private institutions agreed that they had the skills to implement a variety of technological resources in EFL vocabulary instruction. On the other hand, 44.4% of instructors from public education

affirmed that they could make use of a variety of ICT tools in vocabulary teaching.

Regarding teachers' perceptions of their technological skills to find and evaluate authentic web-based content for teaching vocabulary, most teachers agreed with this statement, both in public (62.2%) and private institutions (91.5%). Furthermore, the majority of teachers in private (93.6%) and public (88.9%) education affirmed that they could create interactive digital resources for their virtual vocabulary lessons. In terms of assessment and feedback, most teachers in public (50%) and private (68.1%) institutions considered that they could assess their students' vocabulary by using technological tools. It is important to note that a significant percentage of teachers (40.7% in public and 27.7% in private institutions) responded "neutral" to this aspect. Additionally, teachers' opinions (64.8% in public and 87.6% in private institutions) show that they can use technological tools to provide feedback on vocabulary.

**Table 2. Teachers' perceptions regarding their technological skills for teaching EFL vocabulary**

Items	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %
I can use technological tools to promote collaborative activities for vocabulary learning.	0	0	1.9	0	3.8	0	20.8	12.8	73.6	87.2
I know how to use technological tools for teaching EFL vocabulary.	0	0	5.6	0	9.3	6.4	33.3	23.4	51.9	70.2
I can use a variety of technological tools for teaching EFL vocabulary.	7.4	4.3	16.7	6.4	31.5	17	18.5	38.3	25.9	34
I can assess my students' vocabulary knowledge by using technological tools.	0	0	9.3	4.3	40.7	27.7	33.3	42.6	16.7	25.5
I can find and evaluate authentic web-based content for teaching vocabulary.	0	0	17	2.1	20.8	6.4	26.4	36.2	35.8	55.3

I can create interactive digital resources to be used in my virtual vocabulary lessons.	0	0	1.9	2.1	9.3	4.3	46.3	21.3	42.6	72.3
I provide feedback on my students' vocabulary performance by using technological tools.	3.7	0	5.6	6.3	25.9	6.3	40.7	43.8	24.1	43.8

\* 1 = public; 2 = private

The participants' perceptions regarding technological resources and methods used when teaching vocabulary in EFL remote education are presented in Table 3. With respect to the use of virtual platforms in remote teaching, the majority of participants in public (88.9%) and private (97.9%) institutions affirmed that they used tools such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, CANVAS, Cisco Webex, and Moodle in their online classes. These platforms enabled teachers to implement collaborative work using different technological resources. Thus, the majority of teachers in both public (62.6%) and private (75.9%) institutions used technological resources to promote collaborative work.

As for the use of social networks for teaching EFL vocabulary in remote education, the majority of teachers from private institutions (77.1%) and 38.9% of instructors from the public education system strongly agreed with this statement. In relation to the use of audiovisual material to teach EFL vocabulary, 57.4% of teachers from private education agreed with this aspect, while 31.2% of instructors from public institutions also affirmed that they use these types of resources in their lessons. Regarding the use of text files to teach vocabulary, the majority of teachers (75%) from private institutions and 55.5% of instructors from the public education system used these resources.

Teachers' views concerning methodologies showed that they used a variety of innovative methodologies, strategies, and activities to teach vocabulary in both public (72.2%) and private institutions (91.7%). It is also necessary to mention that, when teaching EFL vocabulary, there was a prevalence of student-centered methods in public (70.4%) and private (83.4%) institutions compared to teacher-centered methods, which were less frequent in both types of institutions.

Furthermore, in terms of assessment, the majority of teachers responded that they used online tools (95.9% in private and 85.1% in public) and self-assessment techniques (79.2% in private and 64.8% in public) to evaluate students' vocabulary learning. Moreover, private institutions use online tools for assessment and self-assessment more frequently than public institutions do. The interview data also showed that private education institutions had the appropriate infrastructure to use ICT when teaching EFL vocabulary.

**Table 3. Technological resources and teaching methods used for teaching EFL vocabulary in EFL remote education**

Items	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %
I use social networks to teach EFL vocabulary	0	0	3.7	0	20.4	6.3	37	16.7	38.9	77.1
I use virtual platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, CANVAS, Google Classroom, Cisco Webex, Moodle)	0	0	1.9	0	9.3	2.1	51.9	25	37	72.9
I use audiovisual material to teach EFL vocabulary.	0	10.4	14.8	18.8	27.8	10.4	13	20.8	44.4	39.6
I use text files to teach EFL vocabulary.	3.7	2.1	13	4.2	27.8	18.8	40.7	41.7	14.8	33.3
I use online tools (e.g., quizzes, blogs, chatrooms) to evaluate vocabulary.	1.9	0	0	2.1	13	2.1	40.7	31.3	44.4	64.6
I use a variety of innovative methodologies, strategies, and activities to teach vocabulary.	1.9	0	7.3	0	18.5	8.3	46.3	29.2	25.9	62.5
I use technological resources that promote collaborative work.	0	18.8	11.1	2.1	13	16.7	18.8	31.5	43.8	44.4
I use student-centered methods and strategies when teaching vocabulary.	0	2.1	7.4	2.1	22.2	12.5	42.6	41.7	27.8	41.7
I use teacher-centered methods and strategies when teaching vocabulary.	5.6	16.7	24.1	8.3	27.8	14.6	33.3	37.5	9.3	22.9

I use the communicative approach and the content and language integrated learning approach to teach EFL vocabulary	0	2.1	0	2.1	17	12.5	56.6	37.5	26.4	45.8
I use self-assessment techniques for evaluating vocabulary.	0	2.1	7.4	4.2	27.8	14.6	35.2	39.6	29.6	39.6

\* 1 = public; 2 = private

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Perceptions regarding classroom management in EFL vocabulary instruction

Most EFL teachers in both public and private institutions believed that they possess effective presentation and communication skills for teaching vocabulary, enabling them to provide clear explanations of complex vocabulary-related issues. This aspect is crucial for effective language learning, as argued by Bergström et al. (2022). Therefore, EFL instructors should employ different approaches to help learners enhance their vocabulary knowledge, which implies that they need to be equipped with effective tools and authentic materials.

The majority of instructors from private institutions reported being able to create a comfortable classroom environment when teaching vocabulary, providing personalized interactions, and increasing students' interest in learning vocabulary. This suggests that teachers from private institutions are better prepared in these aspects. In this respect, Almusharraf (2021) claims that creating a comfortable environment can improve rapport with EFL students and help them focus on learning new vocabulary.

Both private and public institution teachers had experience in adjusting didactic resources for remote education and selecting appropriate activities for teaching vocabulary. According to Fatmawaty et al. (2021), adapting teaching materials is an effective way to address students' needs when teachers do not have sufficient time to design their own resources. Likewise, private institution teachers also appeared to be more knowledgeable about vocabulary. In this sense, Rogers (2018) emphasizes the importance of effective vocabulary input for students; therefore, EFL teachers should be well-equipped to guide their students in the vocabulary acquisition process both in and beyond the classroom.

Authorities, students, and parents expressed mostly positive perceptions about the aforementioned aspects, especially those from private institutions. It was also revealed that teachers from private institutions were much more skilled in classroom management regarding EFL vocabulary instruction. This may be attributed to more training opportunities, available funding, and efficient administration in private institutions, which, according to Quiñonez et al. (2020), are the result of the socio-economic inequality in Ecuador.

## **5.2 Perceptions regarding the teachers' technological skills used for teaching vocabulary in EFL remote education**

Teachers in this study considered themselves capable of promoting collaborative work using ICT tools. Collaborative work through technology can provide an effective environment for activities that promote group work, which is crucial in the learning process (Graham & Misanchuk, 2004). Similarly, these teachers had a positive perception of the use of ICT in EFL vocabulary instruction. Owing to the importance of ICT in education, it is essential that teachers have appropriate technological skills to perform tasks related to the use of audio and video files, PDFs, and PPTs, among others (Ja'ashan, 2020).

There was also greater variety in terms of implementing technological resources in EFL vocabulary instruction among teachers from private institutions. It is worth mentioning that ICT is regarded as a resource that can have a positive effect on learning (Nikolopoulou, 2018), including the development of vocabulary (Maureen et al., 2018). On the other hand, the majority of teachers in private and public institutions affirmed that they could create interactive digital resources for their virtual vocabulary lessons. In terms of online teaching and learning, teachers must have appropriate preparation and training to improve their teaching practice, including aspects such as the evaluation and creation of digital material (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020).

With respect to assessment and feedback, most teachers in public and private institutions indicated that they could assess their students' vocabulary using technological tools. In fact, a wide range of technological tools can be effectively used for implementing assessment and providing feedback, which are crucial elements in language learning (González-Lloret, 2020). Nevertheless, a significant number of teachers may not use technological tools for this purpose.

The perceptions of authorities, students, and parents regarding technological skills were more positive in private institutions, specifically in the aspects of vocabulary teaching, interactive resource design, feedback, and assessment. Moreover, teachers from public institutions expressed the urgent need for more training and infrastructure related to technological resources that can be used in the EFL classroom. All in all, training and access to technology are aspects that must be prioritized today in the field of ICT for EFL learning (Ja'ashan, 2020).

## **5.3 Perceptions regarding the technological resources and methods used when teaching vocabulary in EFL remote education**

Teachers, in general, affirmed that they used tools such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Classroom in their online classes to implement collaborative work using different technological resources. These virtual workspaces are useful and stimulating learning environments that enable students to increase their interest in learning and work in collaborative activities, in which they can spontaneously show originality when delivering their projects in class (Castillo et al., 2022).

With respect to social networks, their use was more frequent in private institutions, likely owing to their better technological infrastructure, which favors

the application of different types of ICT tools. As Siddig (2020) acknowledges, the use of social media platforms allows English language learners to develop and enhance their listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills because they can immerse themselves in the culture associated with the target language, increase their interaction with native speakers, and improve their learning experience.

Regarding the use of audiovisual material to teach EFL vocabulary, teachers from private institutions were more capable of using different types of technological resources in remote education. Moreover, audiovisual materials help teachers explain meaning more clearly by representing connections in a more effective way than when using words (Chiekezie & Inyang, 2021).

Teachers used a variety of innovative methodologies, strategies, and activities to teach vocabulary in both public and private institutions. Student-centered methods, such as the communicative approach and the content and language integrated learning approach (CLIL), prevail. Implementing new methodologies helps students improve their target language skills and achieve their academic goals (Ortega-Auquilla et al., 2020).

As for assessment, the majority of teachers claimed that they use online tools and self-assessment techniques in the evaluation of vocabulary learning. Online resources such as self-test quiz tools, discussion forums, and e-portfolios foster formative assessment, which is beneficial in terms of students' engagement in the learning process (Gikandi et al., 2011).

Perceptions regarding technological resources and methods for teaching EFL vocabulary indicated that, in private institutions, teachers use a wider variety of technological resources to promote collaborative work. Both types of institutions favor student-centered methods, such as the communicative approach and CLIL. Moreover, private institutions used online tools for assessment and self-assessment more frequently than public institutions do. It is also important to mention that private education institutions had better opportunities and infrastructure to use ICT when teaching EFL vocabulary, particularly in terms of collaborative work, teaching methodologies, and assessment.

## **6. Conclusions**

The stakeholders' perceptions regarding classroom management in vocabulary instruction are highly positive. EFL instructors from both private and public institutions have effective presentation and communication skills which play a significant role in language instruction. Teachers can also manage complex issues when teaching new lexicon in the target language.

EFL instructors from private institutions are perceived to create more comfortable environments when teaching vocabulary, provide more personalized interactions, and increase their students' interest by adapting activities and materials to be used in remote education. The participants also perceived that instructors from private education have a sound knowledge of lexicon and more effective classroom management than teachers from the public system.

Regarding the perceptions of technological skills, it can be concluded that teachers from private schools have better preparation and access than teachers in public institutions in terms of teaching EFL vocabulary using ICTs. This situation is evidenced in the participants' views regarding their technological skills, as well as their pertinent training and technological infrastructure.

Teachers from private institutions in this study also claim to have more efficient management of online classes than teachers from public institutions. This aspect has been noticed in their perceptions related to the promotion of collaborative work, students' assessment, feedback, variety in the use of technological tools in the EFL classroom, as well as the evaluation and creation of digital didactic material.

The participants' perceptions regarding technological resources used when teaching vocabulary revealed that teachers in private institutions utilized virtual platforms, social networks, audiovisual materials, online assessment resources, and other technological tools more frequently during EFL remote education than those in public institutions. Also, private institutions had better technological infrastructure than the public ones concerning access to virtual platforms and other ICTs for working collaboratively, as well as for presenting and assessing EFL vocabulary.

Regarding the methods used for teaching EFL vocabulary in remote education, instructors in both public and private institutions used student-centered approaches. Thus, the communicative approach and CLIL were the methodologies that they preferred when teaching vocabulary. These approaches involve the implementation of innovative strategies and activities that were used by teachers in both types of educational institutions.

One limitation of the study is that it was conducted in a specific geographic region (southern Ecuador) and comprised a small sample of participants from 30 public and private institutions of secondary and higher education. As a result, the findings may not be generalizable to other contexts or populations. Another limitation is that the study relied on self-reported perceptions of participants based on online questionnaires, which may be subject to bias.

Despite these limitations, these findings have implications for EFL vocabulary instruction, particularly in remote learning contexts, and can inform the development of appropriate classroom management, teaching methods, technological resources, and teacher training programs to enhance EFL vocabulary learning outcomes. The study also highlights the importance of classroom management, technological skills, and the use of a variety of technological resources in promoting appropriate teaching practices of EFL vocabulary. Additionally, the finding that private institutions were perceived more positively in some aspects of EFL vocabulary instruction also raises important questions about equity and access in remote learning.



Overall, the study provides valuable insights into stakeholders' perceptions of teaching and technological skills in EFL vocabulary instruction and their implications for remote learning. However, further research is needed to address the study's limitations and to explore these issues in other contexts and populations. One of these important issues would be comparing the results of this research with those of traditional training approaches in non-pandemic conditions.

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