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PROPOSAL ON:

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VOCABULARY MASTERY AND WRITING PROFICIENCY: ACROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY OF STUDENTS IN AWBARE HIGH SCHOOL

A THESIS PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF **TEFL**, SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, JIGJIGA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF **TEFL**

SUBMITTED BY: ABDI ALI LIBAN   ID.NO.:GRS/0393/15

ADVISOR: DR. AYELE NEGA

FEB 26, 2024

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

Writing proficiency and vocabulary mastery are closely related skills that are essential to clear communication. Having a large vocabulary helps people communicate their ideas clearly, and being able to write well helps people communicate their ideas in a clear, structured way (Santillan & Daenos, 2020). In the context of clear communication, the symbiotic relationship between writing proficiency and vocabulary mastery is essential, with each skill enhancing the other and contributing to effective expression of ideas.Therefore, there is a symbiotic relationship between writing proficiency and vocabulary knowledge, with one ability assisting and increasing the other.

One of the most important factors in vocabulary development is writing ability. When individuals actively engage in writing, they are exposed to diverse termsand their usage (Santillan & Daenos, 2020). Their language repertoire increase and their comprehension of words and their meanings deepen as a result of this exposure to new terminology. Additionally, the writing process itself challenges individuals to think critically and creatively, encouraging them to discover and explore new words and expressions (Anggraini, 2020).

A writer's possibilities for expressing thoughts and getting their point across increase with the number of words they are proficient in. Additionally, having a large vocabulary helps authors express their ideas clearly and effectively by enabling them to select the best words and phrases to use. A broad vocabulary also enables writers to avoid monotonous or repetitive writing and to vary their language usage, which makes their writing more intriguing and engaging for readers.

In general, there is a mutually beneficial relationship between writing proficiency and vocabulary mastery. Having a larger vocabulary improves writing skills which gives authors more options, increases efficacy and clarity, and makes writing more interesting (Bishry, 2018). On the other hand,

Introducing people to new terms and promoting linguistic exploration, writing proficiency helps people expand their vocabulary. Because of this, those who are proficient in writing are more likely to be highly proficient in vocabulary, and vice versa. Writing ability and vocabulary knowledge are therefore directly related to one another since they both aid in the process of efficient written communication. In short, the purpose of this study will be to investigate the relationship between students vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency of students in Awbare High school.

1.1. Background of the study

In the evolving landscape of language education, there has been a notable shift from traditional methods of rote vocabulary learning to more dynamic, context-oriented strategies, significantly enhancing communicative abilities in various settings (Phupunna, 2023). This transformation is highlighted by the embrace of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the real-world application of vocabulary in communicative tasks (Mukhrib, 2020). Moving away from the passive memorization techniques of yesteryear, CLT encourages the active engagement with vocabulary across different language modalities—such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This approach significantly boosts students' comprehension and their capacity to articulate thoughts in the target language (Cottafava et al., 2019).

However, the journey towards effective vocabulary instruction is fraught with challenges. Educators often grapple with the absence of contextual vocabulary, inadequate word lists, and a lack of innovative teaching strategies, which collectively impede the efficacy of vocabulary teaching. Furthermore, the inconsistency of vocabulary lessons with English grammar topics and a limited focus on spelling and pronunciation complexities add to the teaching dilemmas (Hassan, 2004). From the students' perspective, issues such as difficulty in memorization, frustration with the English language, and a general disinterest in learning highlight the intricate challenges of vocabulary acquisition (Hassan, 2004).

Acknowledging the critical role of vocabulary in language education, modern pedagogical approaches advocate for its spontaneous and context-appropriate use. This perspective aligns with the applied linguistic view that vocabulary acquisition serves as a means to facilitate effective communication rather than an end goal (Harvey et al., 2016; Zaimar et al., 2022; Musheke & Phiri, 2021).

Ethiopia, with its rich linguistic diversity, presents a unique educational landscape where language proficiency is crucial for societal development and individual empowerment. In this context, the Somali Regional State, and specifically Awbare High School, serves as a focal point for examining the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency. Despite the introduction of CLT over two decades ago, students at Awbare High School continue to struggle with basic vocabulary usage and clarity in communication, underscoring a gap between theoretical benefits and practical outcomes (Santos, 2020; Suparno et al., 2020; Arsenault et al., 2023).

The challenges in vocabulary acquisition are further exacerbated by limited opportunities for English language learning outside the classroom and a pedagogical emphasis on long-term learning rather than intensive language immersion. These factors restrict students' vocabulary breadth and hinder their language proficiency progress (Yulduz, 2023; Kaplan-Rakowski & Gruber, 2023).

To address these challenges, integrating vocabulary instruction into the curriculum, employing interactive teaching methods, and providing innovative educational resources are essential steps. Such strategies can significantly enhance students' comprehension and retention of new vocabulary, facilitating the development of a more expansive lexicon (Smyth, 2021; Eli, 2021; Alberola-Mulet et al., 2021).

This study aims to investigate relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency at Awbare High School. This study seeks to offer evidence-based recommendations for improving writing instruction. Ultimately, enhancing vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency among students at

Awbare High School is expected to foster their academic development and success, contributing valuable insights to the literature on vocabulary teaching strategies.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The correlation between vocabulary knowledge and writing skill is an important topic of study in the educational arena. Smith's (2015) findings highlight a positive association between the two, demonstrating that pupils with a broader and more diversified vocabulary do better in writing competence tests. This relationship is further confirmed by Brown (2012), who claims that vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to the development of writing skills, implying that a large vocabulary is required for good written communication.

Several factors influence the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency, with instructional strategies and vocabulary deficit being particularly important. Yusuf, Jusoh, and Yusuf (2019) and Suriyanti and Yaacob (2016) found that using cooperative learning and explicit instructional strategies can greatly improve writing skills. Conversely, Al-Khasawneh (2019) and Goldstein and Naglieri (2011) emphasise that a lack of vocabulary knowledge can have a negative impact on language proficiency, particularly writing. These findings highlight the crucial role of teaching approaches and vocabulary growth in writing competency, implying that tailored instructional tactics and vocabulary augmentation can promote enhanced writing skills.

Despite extensive research on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge as well as proficiency in writing, there are still gaps in our understanding, particularly in terms of the mediating impact of teaching strategies and the investigation of causative relationships. The present literature, while large, frequently focuses on second language learners and specific cultural contexts, with little research into varied educational settings and demographics. Future study should look deeper into the mechanisms by

which vocabulary acquisition promotes writing competency, examine the impact of individual learner characteristics, and investigate the possibilities of emerging technology in language instruction. Addressing these gaps will not only broaden our theoretical understanding, but will also guide practical ways to improving vocabulary mastering and writing skill in a variety of learning environments.

Despite substantial research on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing skill, our understanding remains incomplete, particularly in terms of the mediating impact of instructional tactics and the exploration of causative relationships. The current literature, while extensive, usually concentrates on second language learners and specific cultural contexts, with limited research into other educational settings and demographics. Future research should delve deeper into the mechanisms by which vocabulary learning enhances writing competency, evaluate the impact of individual learner characteristics, and explore the potential of developing technology in language training. Addressing these gaps will not only widen our theoretical understanding, but also lead practical strategies to improve vocabulary mastery and writing skills in a variety of learning situations (Reynolds et, 2022)

1.3. Research objectives

1.3.1. General objective:

The general objective of this study will be to investigate the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency among students at Awbare high school.

1.3.2. Specific objectives:

The specific objectives of this study will be to:

- Examine the effects of teacher's vocabulary teaching strategies on the correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency of students at Awbare high school.

- Assess the impacts of vocabulary deficiency on Awbare high school students' writing development.

- Identify the benefits of enhancing the vocabulary mastery of Awbare high school students in order to improve their writing skills.

1.4. Research questions

This study will seek answers to the following research questions:

1. How does the teacher's vocabulary teaching strategies affect the correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency of students in Awbare high school?

2. What are the impacts of vocabulary deficiency on Awbare high school students' writing development?

3. What are the benefits of enhancing the vocabulary mastery of Awbare high school students in order to improve their writing skills?

1.5. Significance of the study

This cross-sectional study at Awbare High School will investigate the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency, filling a research gap and providing practical insights for educational strategies. The study seeks to enrich existing literature by exploring how vocabulary mastery correlates with writing proficiency in a unique educational context, addressing a significant research void. While previous studies have outlined the connection between these two aspects of language learning broadly, detailed cross-sectional analyses within specific educational settings like Awbare High School are limited. By focusing on this particular context, the research aims to produce relevant and tailored findings for the community, including students, teachers, and policymakers, to inform targeted educational interventions.

The methodological approach of the study, characterized by its cross-sectional design, aims to capture a comprehensive snapshot of the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency among a diverse student body. This approach allows for a broad analysis across different demographics, providing insights into effective vocabulary and writing instruction strategies that meet the diverse needs of Awbare High School's students. Understanding this relationship has profound educational implications, as it can help identify specific vocabulary aspects that significantly impact writing skills. The study intends to offer evidence-based recommendations that can be integrated into curriculum planning, teaching methods, and assessment techniques to enhance students' writing proficiency. By considering a diverse range of learners, including those at various language acquisition stages, this research promotes an inclusive strategy to support all students, especially those at risk of falling behind in language development. Through this comprehensive exploration, the study aims to advance our understanding of the vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency connection, guiding the development of more effective language teaching and learning strategies within Awbare High School and similar educational settings.

1.6. Scope of the study

The objective of the study will be to examine the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency of Awbare high school students in the 2024 academic year. Regarding its breadth, the research will attempt to investigate the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency. Therefore, This study will be delimited to students at Awbare high school.

1.7. Operational terms

Vocabulary Mastery: This describes how well a student understands terms, including their definitions, applications, and usage in a variety of settings. It includes vocabulary knowledge in terms of both breadth (the total number of

words) and depth (the degree of comprehension of these words).

Writing Proficiency: The capacity to create writings that are cohesive and successfully convey concepts to the reader is known as writing proficiency. This covers elements like vocabulary usage that is appropriate as well as grammar, structure, and style.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): is an instructional approach that places emphasis on the application of language in authentic communication. It shifts the focus from rote memorization to meaningful, interactive language use across a variety of media with learners.

Vocabulary deficiency: is the state in which pupils lack sufficient vocabulary, which hinders their capacity to comprehend and use language in productive ways.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing proficiency is a critical component of academic success and effective communication (Bundsgaard, Kabel, & Bremholm, 2022). Vocabulary mastery plays a pivotal role in developing writing skills, as a rich vocabulary allows students to express their thoughts more clearly and precisely. This literature review explores the relationship between vocabulary teaching strategies and writing proficiency, focusing on the context of Awbare High School. It

addresses three key research questions concerning the influence of vocabulary teaching strategies, the effects of vocabulary deficiency, the benefits of improving students' vocabulary mastery to develop their writing proficiency.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

In the realm of language education, the relationship between vocabulary mastery, teaching strategies, and writing proficiency forms the cornerstone of effective learning. The dynamic interplay among these elements shapes students' linguistic capabilities, underscoring the importance of a well-structured conceptual framework in guiding instructional practices. At the heart of this framework lies the understanding that the methods employed in teaching vocabulary critically influence students' mastery of words, which in turn, significantly impacts their writing skills. This framework synthesizes the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings that support this interconnectedness, drawing on seminal research and theories to elucidate the pathways through which teaching can enhance writing proficiency.

Effective vocabulary instruction is paramount for students to acquire the lexical knowledge necessary for articulate and coherent written expression. Research by Gu (2003) highlights the symbiotic relationship between vocabulary knowledge and overall language proficiency, emphasizing that a robust vocabulary is foundational to excelling in writing and other linguistic tasks. The strategies for teaching vocabulary, ranging from explicit instruction to immersive learning experiences, play a pivotal role in this process. These methods not only facilitate the acquisition of vocabulary but also empower students with the tools needed for clear and cohesive writing (Gu, 2003).

The theoretical backdrop of Vygotsky's Socio cultural Theory offers profound insights into language acquisition, particularly through the lens of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky's concept of the ZPD—activities that learners can perform with guidance from more knowledgeable others—underscores the significance of social interaction and cooperative

learning in mastering language skills (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). This perspective is instrumental in understanding how vocabulary teaching and learning, embedded within social contexts, can foster writing proficiency.

Further enriching this theoretical framework, Bloom's Taxonomy, as detailed by Anderson & Krathwohl (2001), organizes cognitive activities into six tiers, from basic recall to complex analysis. This taxonomy serves as a valuable tool in vocabulary instruction, enabling educators to guide students from simple memorization to deep, analytical understanding and application of words in writing contexts. Similarly, Krashen's Input Hypothesis posits that language learning flourishes through engagement with linguistic input that slightly exceeds the learner's current comprehension level. This hypothesis supports the notion that targeted and meaningful vocabulary exposure is crucial for enhancing writing skills (Krashen, 1982).

Integrating these conceptual and theoretical frameworks, educators are equipped to tailor vocabulary teaching strategies that not only build lexical knowledge but also advance students' writing abilities. By fostering an environment where vocabulary learning is embedded within rich, meaningful contexts and supported by social interaction, teachers can significantly contribute to the development of students' writing proficiency. The reciprocal influences among teaching methodologies, vocabulary mastery, and writing skills highlight the need for a holistic approach to language education—one that recognizes the interdependence of these elements and leverages theoretical insights to inform effective teaching practices.

2.2.The Relationship between Vocabulary Mastery And Writing Proficiency

The relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency is a multifaceted area of study that has garnered significant attention within the field of educational linguistics. This synthesis integrates findings from various research studies to illuminate the critical role of vocabulary development in enhancing writing skills, while also incorporating additional insights to provide a comprehensive understanding of this complex

relationship.

Lee (2011) underscored the foundational importance of early vocabulary development by demonstrating that vocabulary size at age 2 could significantly predict language and literacy achievement up to fifth grade. This pivotal finding highlights the long-term impact of early vocabulary acquisition on subsequent language and literacy capabilities, emphasizing the necessity of fostering vocabulary growth from an early age.

The significance of pedagogical approaches and learning materials in teaching language skills further complements this perspective. Effective teaching techniques and materials are instrumental in facilitating vocabulary acquisition, which, in turn, enhances writing proficiency (Nation, 2001). This underscores the need for educators to employ evidence-based strategies and resources in language instruction to optimize learning outcomes.

In the context of second language learners, Harrison et al. (2016) found that English language proficiency, as measured by TOEIC scores, was a significant predictor of challenges in English Medium Instruction (EMI) programs. Similarly, Aizawa et al. (2020) identified specific linguistic challenges faced by Japanese students in EMI programs, which could adversely affect their writing competence. These findings suggest that language proficiency directly influences writing skills among second language learners, pointing to the importance of addressing linguistic challenges to improve writing outcomes.

Wu et al. (2020) highlighted the relationship between syntactical skill and contextual conventions, indicating the relevance of understanding syntax and contextual vocabulary usage in writing. This aligns with the work of Biber, Conrad, and Cortes (2004), who emphasized the role of lexical variety and syntactic complexity in academic writing proficiency. Together, these studies suggest that mastery of syntax and vocabulary is crucial for effective writing.

Yeung et al. (2012) explored the interconnectedness of cognitive-linguistic

skills and writing in Chinese among elementary students, illustrating the integral role of linguistic and cognitive skills in writing development. This is consistent with the findings of Berninger, Abbott, Abbott, Graham, and Richards (2002), who emphasized the contribution of cognitive processes to writing performance.

Ratminingsih et al. (2018) investigated the impact of self-assessment on students' independence and writing competence, suggesting that self-assessment techniques could foster autonomy and enhance writing skills. This potential area for further exploration highlights the importance of metacognitive strategies in writing instruction.

Furthermore, Silverman et al. (2015) found that high writing achievers exhibited higher levels of motivation, self-efficacy, task values, and growth mindset compared to low achievers. This underscores the influence of psychological factors on writing outcomes and suggests that fostering a positive learning mindset and motivation can contribute to improved vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency.

In conclusion, the synthesis of these studies provides compelling evidence of the intricate relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency. It underscores the importance of early vocabulary development, effective pedagogical strategies, addressing the specific needs of second language learners, and the role of cognitive, syntactical, and psychological factors in writing development. Future research should continue to explore these dimensions to inform evidence-based practices that enhance vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency across diverse learning contexts.

2.3. Influence Of Vocabulary Teaching Strategies On Writing Proficiency

A variety of research have looked into the relationship between vocabulary teaching strategies and the development of writing skills. Asyiah (2017)

discovered a substantial relationship between students' vocabulary learning strategies and vocabulary mastery, implying that good teaching strategies can improve vocabulary knowledge. Mehrabian (2019) corroborated this by emphasising the favourable relationship between various vocabulary learning methodologies and word mastering. Papadopoulou (2007) found that vocabulary education improved students' understanding and use of theme-related words in their writing, as well as the quality of their writing. Finally, Wilson (2015) discovered a link between vocabulary knowledge, student assessment of the educational material, and writing ability. These studies collectively imply that good vocabulary teaching practices can improve the link between vocabulary mastery and writing skill.

Furthermore, Vocabulary teaching strategies are foundational to enhancing students' writing proficiency. Research indicates that direct and explicit vocabulary instruction, incorporating activities like word analysis and contextual usage, significantly improves students' ability to express themselves in writing (Subon & Unin, 2021). Strategies such as the use of multimedia tools, word maps, and semantic networking have been shown to enrich students' vocabulary knowledge, thereby improving their writing skills (Rani & Gagandeep, 2022). At Awbare High School, adopting a multifaceted approach to vocabulary teaching can provide students with the tools they need to develop their writing proficiency.

Furthermore, The methodologies deployed by teachers are paramount in nurturing students' vocabulary and writing skills. Research advocates for explicit vocabulary instruction, where direct teaching of word meanings and applications markedly enhances students' writing proficiency (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013). Techniques such as semantic mapping, the utilization of word walls, and the implementation of vocabulary notebooks are lauded for their efficacy in bolstering students' vocabulary knowledge and their application in writing contexts (Marzano & Pickering, 2005).

Moreover, the amalgamation of vocabulary instruction within writing tasks propels students to actively employ their vocabulary knowledge, thus

solidifying their learning and elevating their writing capabilities (Harmon, Wood, & Hedrick, 2005). This active application of vocabulary in context is further supported by findings indicating its positive impact on students' ability to construct coherent and compelling written narratives (Olinghouse & Leaird, 2009).

2.4. Effects of Vocabulary Deficiency On Writing Development

Research repeatedly reveals that a lack of vocabulary has a substantial impact on writing proficiency. Papadopoulou (2007) discovered that vocabulary education increased students' awareness of theme-related words and their use in writing, resulting in higher writing quality. Karakoç (2017) emphasised the importance of vocabulary knowledge in reading and writing performance, citing receptive vocabulary knowledge as particularly influential. Quines (2023) validated similar findings, revealing a strong link between vocabulary level and reading and writing abilities. Finally, González (2017) emphasised the importance of lexical diversity in writing proficiency, arguing that a wide range of mid-frequency words is required. These studies highlight the negative impact of vocabulary shortage on writing proficiency and the necessity for targeted vocabulary teaching.

Vocabulary deficiency can severely hamper students' writing development. Students with limited vocabulary struggle with expressing complex ideas, resulting in writings that are simplistic and often repetitive (Berrichi & Mazroui, 2021). The lack of an adequate vocabulary constrains students' ability to engage with different genres of writing and limits their ability to follow and construct coherent arguments (Verheij, 2018). For students at Awbare High School, addressing vocabulary gaps is crucial for ensuring that their writing development is not impeded.

Based on the existing research findings, it is evident that vocabulary deficiency has a significant impact on writing proficiency. Uccelli et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of cross-disciplinary academic language proficiency and its association with reading comprehension. This suggests

that a lack of vocabulary may hinder the ability to comprehend and effectively convey ideas in writing.

Furthermore, Kim and Schatschneider (2017) expanded the developmental models of writing by introducing a direct and indirect effects model. This model likely includes the impact of vocabulary deficiency on the developmental trajectory of writing proficiency, indicating the need for further research in this area.

In a related study, Uccelli et al. (2014) introduced the concept of core academic language skills and highlighted the importance of school-relevant language proficiency in preadolescent and adolescent learners. This underscores the significance of vocabulary in academic writing and the potential consequences of vocabulary deficiency on overall writing proficiency.

Additionally, Rose et al. (2020) explored the interplay between language proficiency, academic skills, and motivation in English medium taught courses. While the focus was on academic skills, the findings likely extend to writing proficiency, indicating that vocabulary deficiency may negatively impact writing in academic contexts.

To sum up, the literature reviewed suggests that vocabulary deficiency has far-reaching implications for writing proficiency, especially in academic contexts. However, there is still a need for future research to delve deeper into the specific mechanisms through which vocabulary impacts writing development. Additionally, investigating potential interventions and instructional strategies to address vocabulary deficiency and improve writing proficiency would be beneficial for educators and researchers alike.

2.5. Benefits Of Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery For Writing Proficiency

Several studies have shown the significance of vocabulary knowledge in the development of writing skills. Fareed et al. (2016) found that increased

reading, conscious and incidental vocabulary teaching, writing practice, skilled teachers, examination reforms, and writing competitions all help to improve ESL learners' writing skills. Schoonen et al. (2011) identified these elements as important for modelling the evolution of writing skill among secondary school pupils. Furthermore, Khan et al. (2018) emphasised the importance of vocabulary knowledge in speaking growth, which indirectly indicates its relevance to writing proficiency. Miralpeix and Muñoz (2018) found that vocabulary size significantly predicts language proficiency, especially in learners with high vocabularies (above 5,000 words).

The relationship between vocabulary knowledge and linguistic competency has been thoroughly investigated. Yusuf et al. (2019) and Toba et al. (2019) highlighted a lack of vocabulary as a crucial reason in pupils' incapacity to acquire English language abilities. Miralpeix and Muñoz (2018) discovered a substantial correlation between receptive vocabulary size and EFL language skills. These findings highlight the relevance of vocabulary knowledge in developing language proficiency, which also includes writing skill.

Furthermore, accurate productive knowledge of high-frequency word families has been consistently linked to L2 writing performance. Stockwell and Harrington (2013), Johnson et al. (2016), and Roquet and Pérez-Vidal (2015) all demonstrated that vocabulary knowledge improves second language writing performance. These findings lend support to the idea that vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in the development of writing skill.

2.6. Overview Of Existing Studies

The relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency is a well-documented phenomenon in the realm of educational research, with a plethora of studies underscoring the significance of a robust vocabulary in enhancing writing skills across diverse educational settings and age groups. This essay synthesizes findings from various studies to explore the depth of this relationship and its implications for educational practices.

Research has consistently highlighted a positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency, suggesting that an extensive vocabulary is a crucial component of effective writing. For instance, a study conducted with eleventh-grade students in West Sumatra revealed that vocabulary mastery plays a pivotal role in improving text writing abilities Wiskarnid, W., Tatalia, R. G., & Rahmat, W, 2022). Similarly, another investigation found that vocabulary mastery not only enhances writing skills but also that this relationship is moderated by reading skills, indicating a complex interplay between these language competencies Ratnaningsih, P. W., & Clara, C., 2021). Further evidence of this connection comes from a study with eighth-grade students in Kotabumi, which identified a notable correlation between vocabulary mastery and writing achievement in descriptive texts Susilowati, R., 2021). In the context of journalism education, vocabulary mastery was found to contribute significantly to the development of news writing skills among journalism students (Anggraini, D., 2021), while seventh-grade students in Bantul demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and the ability to write descriptive texts Yuhariah, F., & Sujarwati, 2023).

Expanding on this topic, recent research by Zhang and Wang (2020) emphasized the importance of both vocabulary size and depth in enhancing writing proficiency. Their study with university students found that a rich and diverse vocabulary positively impacted students' writing quality and fluency, suggesting that not just the quantity but the quality of vocabulary knowledge is crucial for writing excellence. Similarly, Hsieh et al. (2021) explored the role of explicit vocabulary instruction in improving writing skills among elementary school students. Their findings suggested that targeted vocabulary instruction led to significant improvements in students' writing performance, highlighting the effectiveness of direct vocabulary teaching strategies.

In conclusion, the body of literature on the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency consistently supports the idea that a strong vocabulary foundation is essential for effective writing skills. This relationship holds true across various educational levels and contexts, underscoring the universal importance of vocabulary knowledge in writing. Furthermore, recent studies have shed light on the significance of vocabulary size, depth, and targeted instruction in fostering writing proficiency. These findings have profound implications for educational practices, suggesting that enhancing vocabulary mastery through explicit instruction and encouraging extensive reading can significantly improve writing outcomes for students.

2.7. Research gaps in the existing studies

Contextual Challenges in Ethiopia: A Call for Localized Research

Ethiopia's diverse linguistic landscape, characterized by multiple national languages and the use of English as a medium of instruction in higher education, presents a distinctive set of challenges for language education. Research in this area has often overlooked the specific needs and challenges faced by Ethiopian learners, particularly in multilingual settings (Heugh, 2011). This gap in research underscores the importance of conducting studies that are tailored to the Ethiopian context, to better understand how students navigate the complexities of vocabulary acquisition in their second or third languages and the impact on their writing proficiency.

The Importance of Early Language Acquisition Stages

A significant gap in the existing literature is the lack of focus on the early stages of language acquisition and their implications for later writing proficiency (Nation, 2001). While numerous studies concentrate on secondary and tertiary education, the foundational stages of vocabulary development during primary education remain underexplored. This oversight limits our understanding of the trajectory of vocabulary acquisition and its cumulative effect on writing skills. Investigating vocabulary mastery from the early stages of education is crucial for identifying effective interventions to enhance

language proficiency from a young age (August & Shanahan, 2006).

Genre-specific Writing Proficiencies and Vocabulary Mastery

Moreover, there is an insufficient exploration of how vocabulary mastery affects genre-specific writing proficiencies. Existing research often adopts a generalized approach to writing proficiency, neglecting the distinct vocabulary demands and challenges inherent to different writing genres (Biber, 2006). Given the likelihood that Ethiopian students, like their global counterparts, exhibit varied levels of proficiency across different writing genres, it is imperative to investigate the specific impacts of vocabulary knowledge on genre-specific writing proficiency. Such research could inform the development of targeted teaching strategies that address the diverse needs of students (Crossley, Salsbury, & McNamara, 2009).

Sociocultural Influences on Vocabulary Acquisition

Lastly, the role of sociocultural factors in vocabulary acquisition and writing proficiency remains largely unexamined. In a country as culturally diverse as Ethiopia, sociocultural dynamics significantly influence language learning (McCarty, 2011). Research that delves into how these factors affect vocabulary learning and utilization in writing is essential for developing personalized and culturally responsive teaching methodologies, thereby enhancing vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency among Ethiopian students.

Addressing the outlined research gaps in the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency within the Ethiopian context, particularly at Awbare High School, is essential for advancing our understanding of language learning and teaching strategies. By focusing on early-stage language acquisition, genre-specific writing proficiencies, and the influence of sociocultural factors, this thesis proposal aims to contribute valuable insights to the field, paving the way for effective, context-specific educational strategies that support students' language development.

Conclusion

The relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency is complex and multifaceted. Effective vocabulary teaching strategies are crucial for developing students' writing skills (Astiantih & Akfan, 2023), addressing vocabulary deficiencies, and ensuring that all students, regardless of their linguistic background (Yasenchuk, 2023), have the opportunity to succeed. By adopting evidence-based, inclusive, and student-centered vocabulary teaching strategies, Awbare High School can enhance its students' writing proficiency and academic outcomes.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a complete outline of the research design and methodology that will be used to investigate the complex relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing proficiency among Awbare High School students. The chapter is organized to systematically address the study's research questions using a well-defined research design, a carefully chosen population and sample, a variety of data collection methods, rigorous data analysis techniques, and considerations for validity, reliability, and ethical standards.

3.1 Research Design

The study will adopt a cross-sectional research design, an approach that is particularly suited for educational research where the goal is to capture a snapshot of current conditions or phenomena within a specific timeframe (Creswell, 2014). This design is chosen for its effectiveness in examining the prevailing states of both vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency among

the student population, thereby facilitating the identification of meaningful patterns, trends, and correlations (Bryman, 2016). The cross-sectional nature of this study allows for a comprehensive analysis of the existing educational practices and student competencies without the need for longitudinal tracking, making it a practical and efficient choice.

3.2. Research Methodology

The choice of the mixed methods methodology depends on the nature of the research objectives. For example, the first objective of this study implies a need to understand not only the measurable outcomes (quantitative aspect) of different teaching strategies on vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency but also to explore the processes and perceptions (qualitative aspect) behind how these strategies impact the relationship between vocabulary and writing skills; Thus, this study will utilise a mixed-methods approach which is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

3.3. Population and sampling

3.3.1. Population of the study

The target population for this study encompasses all students enrolled at Awbare High School during the academic year 2023-2024. The toral population of this study will be 850 participants - 840 students currently attending at Awbare High School and 10 English teachers who currently teach English at Awbare High School.

3.3.2. Sampling

The sampling section of this proposal outlines the approach for selecting participants from Awbare High School to ensure that the study results are representative and can be generalized to the broader student population. This includes the determination of the sample size, the formula used for this determination, and the justification for the selected sampling techniques.

For this study, the initial goal sample size will be 200 students. This sample size will be chosen to guarantee that there are enough participants for statistical analysis, allowing for the discovery of important relationships and

trends between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency. The study's sample size will be calculated using the Cochran formula, which is designed for categorical data gathered from a defined population:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 p(1-p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

n_0 is the sample size,

Z is the Z-score associated with the desired confidence level (e.g., 1.96 for 95% confidence),

p is the estimated proportion of the population with the characteristic of interest (e.g., 0.5 for maximum variability),

e is the acceptable margin of error (e.g., 0.05 for 5%).

Due to a lack of historical data on the precise relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency at Awbare High School, p is chosen at 0.5 to maximise variability and ensure a suitable sample size for a wide range of outcomes. Assuming a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the method yields a sample size of around 385 pupils. However, given the practical limits of the school setting and the desire for a more manageable sample, the study proposes using a stratified sampling technique to pick a sample of 200 kids, assuring representation at all academic levels.

Furthermore, to assess the correlation between vocabulary knowledge and writing proficiency among Awbare High School students, a stratified random sampling technique will be used. This study will also use purposive sampling to choose the tecahers.This method divides the student population into discrete groups, or "strata," based on grade level, followed by a proportional random selection of students from each category based on their size in the overall population (Lohr, 2010). Stratified random sampling is used to ensure that the sample accurately represents the whole student body, hence boosting the representativeness and precision of the findings. This strategy is particularly beneficial for resolving potential disparities in vocabulary learning and writing proficiency between academic levels.

The rationale for this sampling technique includes improved representativeness, which is critical for the generalizability of study results,

the ability to increase precision by accounting for variability within strata, and the practicality of facilitating targeted data collection from specific segments of the population, thereby optimising resource use (Thompson, 2012). This methodological approach indicates the study's commitment to providing reliable and meaningful results that reflect the whole student body at Awbare High School.

3.4. Data Collection Methods

To gain a thorough grasp of the research issues, the study will use a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The primary data collection collection tools of this study will be questionnaire, interview and document Analysis.

1. Questionnaires: The basic quantitative strategy involves administering structured questionnaires to students. These questionnaires, designed to measure vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency, will include both closed and open-ended questions. This dual method allows for the collection of measurable data on vocabulary knowledge while also providing qualitative insights into students' writing experiences and perspectives (Fink, 2017).

2. Interviews: Semi-structured interviews with English language teachers from Awbare High School will add qualitative dimension to the study. These interviews will be designed to obtain extensive information on instructional strategies, obstacles faced when teaching vocabulary, and instructors' perspectives on the impact of vocabulary mastery on writing competency

3. Document Analysis: Qualitative study of students' written work will provideclear empirical evidence of writing ability levels and common language problems. This strategy improves the triangulation process by providing additional validation for the study's findings (Bowen, 2009).

3.5. Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected from the questionnaires will be analysed using statistical tools for descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlation analysis, to study the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency.On the other hand, the qualitative data obtained fromthe

interviews and open-ended questionnaire responses will be thematically analysed to identify emergent themes about teaching strategies, the impact of vocabulary deficiencies, and the perceived benefits of vocabulary enhancement (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.6. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the research instruments, the study will involve a rigorous review process by content experts in language education, followed by a pilot study with a select group of students and teachers not part of the main study. This process aims to refine the instruments and ensure their appropriateness (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Reliability will be established through a test-retest method for quantitative tools and inter-rater reliability checks for qualitative data analysis (Golafshani, 2003).

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The study is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and the right to withdraw at any stage. The study will also seek approval from the relevant institutional review board to guarantee adherence to ethical guidelines (Israel & Hay, 2006).

Conclusion

This chapter has systematically presented the research design and methodology for this study aimed at investigating the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency at Awbare High School. Through a mixed-methods approach, the study aspires to offer a nuanced understanding of vocabulary teaching strategies, the consequences of vocabulary deficiencies, and the potential benefits of vocabulary enhancement, thereby contributing valuable insights to the field of language education.

4. WORKPLAN AND BUDGET BREAKDOWN

4.1. Workplan

Table 1: *Work plan activities*

No		November	December	January	February	March	June
1	Title selection		✓				
2	First proposal draft			✓			
3	Data collection			✓			
4	Comment and suggestion				✓		
5	Proposal final draft					✓	
6	Final proposal submission					✓	
7	Final paper submission						✓

4.2. Budget breakdown

Table 2: *Budget Breakdown*

The required budget for this research budget is presented in the following tables below.

PartI: Stationary Cost

No.	Item	Measurement	Amount	UnitCost	TotalCost
1	Transportation	----------------	-----------	500	500.00
2	Paper	Pad	2	500	1000.00
3	Pen	Piece	10	15	150.00
4	Pencil	Piece	5	5	25.00
6	Eraser	Piece	2	5	10.00
7	Small Notebooks	Piece	2	50	100.00
8	Printing & binding	Lumpsum	--------	---------	100.00
Sub-Total					2785.00

Part II :Per-diem Cost

No.	Item	Measurement	Amount	Unit Cost	Total Cost
1	Researcher(1)	Per Person Per Day	20days	200	4000.00
2	Enumerators(3)	Per Person Per Day	10days	200	6000.00
Sub-Total					10,000.00

Part III: Summary of Budget

No	Budget Item	Budget for each item
1	Stationary Cost	2785.00
2	Per-diem	

Cost	10,000.00
Total Budget	12,785.00

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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

ADVISORS PROPOSAL APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that thesis proposal entitled **the relationship between vocabulary mastery and writing proficiency: across-sectional study of students in Awbare High School**. Under my supervision. Therefore, I recommend that the student's proposal can be presented for review and open oral presentation.

ABDI ALI LIBAN ---------------- ------------------

       Name of the student   signature   date

Dr. AYELE NEGA__(PhD)   -------------- --------------------

       Name of the Advisor   signature   date