Journal of English Language and Education
ISSN 2597- 6850 (Online), 2502-4132 (Print)
Journal Homepage: https://jele.or.id/index.php/jele/index

OPEN ACCESS Article

Teacher Challenges and Adaptive Pedagogical Responses in Teaching English Vocabulary: A Qualitative Case Study at an Indonesian Primary School in Batam

https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v11i5.3187

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A B S T R A C T

Teaching English vocabulary in primary school EFL contexts requires teachers to respond to diverse learner characteristics, limited exposure to English, and classroom-level constraints. Although previous studies have identified challenges in vocabulary teaching and various techniques for supporting young learners, less is known about how primary school English teachers adapt their pedagogical practices in response to challenges that emerge in authentic Indonesian classroom contexts. This qualitative case study explored the challenges encountered by English teachers in teaching vocabulary to fourth- and fifth-grade learners and examined how they responded to these challenges through their classroom practices. The participants were three English teachers at a private primary school in Batam, Indonesia. Data were collected through classroom observations, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews and analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns across the data sources. The findings revealed four prominent challenges: limited exposure to English, variation in students' vocabulary knowledge, low motivation and limited attention, and classroom management difficulties. To address these conditions, teachers drew on a range of practices, including visual materials and realia, games and interactive activities, contextualized vocabulary teaching, storytelling, repetition and recycling, and digital learning resources. Importantly, the findings showed that the effectiveness of these practices depended not simply on the techniques used but on teachers' ability to adapt them to students' needs, classroom conditions, and responses during lessons. The study provides context-specific evidence of the importance of teacher responsiveness and pedagogical flexibility in primary EFL vocabulary teaching and suggests that teacher development should support adaptive instructional decision-making rather than focusing solely on a repertoire of teaching techniques.

Keywords: *English Vocabulary Instruction, Primary EFL Learners, Teacher Challenges, Pedagogical Practices, Vocabulary Learning, Teacher Responsiveness, Indonesia*

Article History:
Received 17th August 2026
Accepted 15th October 2026
Published 19th October 2026

INTRODUCTION

English has become increasingly important for communication, education, and participation in global contexts. As English is introduced in primary schools, vocabulary becomes one of the most important foundations for young learners' early English development. Lexical knowledge supports learners' ability to understand classroom instructions, comprehend spoken and written texts, participate in interaction, and express simple meanings through speaking and writing. Its importance is particularly pronounced in EFL settings because many children have limited opportunities to encounter English outside school. Insufficient vocabulary may therefore restrict not only children's language comprehension but also their confidence and willingness to participate in classroom activities. Developing vocabulary from the primary level can provide the lexical foundation needed for subsequent language learning and broader English proficiency (Dixon et al., 2020; Liu & Reynolds, 2025). However, vocabulary development in primary school involves more than memorizing isolated words. Young learners need repeated and meaningful opportunities to

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encounter, understand, practice, and use new words in ways that are appropriate to their cognitive and developmental characteristics (Liu & Reynolds, 2025).

While vocabulary learning concerns how learners acquire and develop knowledge of words, vocabulary teaching concerns the pedagogical decisions teachers make to support this process. This distinction is important because the present study does not investigate vocabulary learning as an individual cognitive process or measure students' vocabulary gains. Instead, it focuses on how teachers plan, implement, evaluate, and adjust vocabulary instruction in response to students' needs and classroom conditions. Teaching vocabulary to primary school learners requires teachers to consider differences in learners' linguistic abilities, previous exposure to English, motivation, attention, and learning needs. These considerations may become more complex in EFL contexts, where opportunities to encounter and use English beyond the classroom are often limited. Accordingly, students' vocabulary learning is considered in this study primarily as the pedagogical goal that teachers attempt to facilitate through their instructional practices.

Research on primary-school vocabulary learning has emphasized the value of varied and meaningful activities that promote engagement with new words (Liu & Reynolds, 2025). Similarly, studies of primary-level English language learners have identified the potential of multimodal presentation, explicit explanation, contextualized language use, and opportunities for application in supporting vocabulary development (Umme, 2024). These approaches are particularly relevant to young learners because concrete objects, visual representations, oral modelling, stories, games, and contextualized activities can make unfamiliar vocabulary more accessible and memorable. Nevertheless, the availability of these approaches does not mean that teachers can apply them uniformly across learners and classroom situations. Teachers must balance curricular objectives with differences in students' vocabulary knowledge, participation, learning pace, and responses to particular activities. Effective vocabulary teaching therefore depends not only on teachers' knowledge of instructional techniques but also on their capacity to recognize emerging difficulties and adapt their practices while instruction is taking place.

The Indonesian primary school context provides a relevant setting for examining this process of pedagogical adaptation. English teaching at the primary-school level has been influenced by changes in language policy, curriculum implementation, teacher availability, learning resources, instructional time, and students' exposure to English (Daud, 2024). Variation in school resources, teacher preparation, and learners' previous experience with English means that vocabulary instruction may be implemented differently across local settings. At the same time, teachers are expected to translate broad curriculum expectations into classroom practices that are appropriate for their learners and sociocultural contexts (Daud, 2024; Ratri et al., 2025). Consequently, primary-school English teachers may work with learners who have different levels of English experience while navigating institutional and classroom conditions that influence their teaching. Examining teachers enacted practices is therefore important for understanding how vocabulary instruction is shaped, negotiated, and modified within the realities of Indonesian primary classrooms.

Previous studies have contributed valuable knowledge about vocabulary teaching techniques and learning activities for young learners. A systematic review by Liu & Reynolds (2025), for example, identified a wide range of intentional and incidental vocabulary-learning activities used with primary-school EFL learners, demonstrating the diversity of approaches available. Similarly, Umme (2024)highlighted multimodal, application-based, and definitional approaches as important areas of vocabulary instruction for primary-level learners. This literature clarifies which approaches are available and how particular activities may support vocabulary development. However, it has generally placed greater emphasis on classifying or evaluating instructional approaches and learner outcomes than on examining teachers' situated pedagogical decision-making. Consequently, it provides less explanation of what teachers do when a planned vocabulary activity does not work as expected, when learners

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display different levels of understanding, or when motivation, attention, pronunciation, and classroom-management difficulties emerge simultaneously.

The gap is more specific in Indonesian primary-school research. Existing studies have documented broad structural and instructional issues, including inconsistent policy implementation, limited instructional time, uneven teacher preparation, restricted learning resources, and students' limited exposure to English (Daud, 2024). However, this literature has primarily discussed English teaching at a general or system level rather than examining how these conditions are manifested in the teaching of vocabulary. It has also provided insufficient classroom-based explanation of how teachers recognize vocabulary-related difficulties, select pedagogical responses, and modify those responses according to students' immediate reactions. Moreover, the relationship between teachers' stated reasoning and their enacted practices has rarely been examined through the combined use of classroom observations, instructional documents, and teacher interviews. Thus, what remains insufficiently understood is not merely which vocabulary teaching techniques Indonesian teachers use, but how classroom challenges trigger pedagogical decision-making and adaptive action during everyday instruction.

Therefore, the present study explores the challenges encountered by English teachers and their pedagogical responses when teaching English vocabulary to fourth- and fifth-grade learners at a private primary school in Batam, Indonesia. Specifically, the study examines the difficulties teachers encounter, the pedagogical practices they employ, and how those practices are adapted to address conditions that emerge during vocabulary instruction. Using a qualitative case study design, the study draws on classroom observations, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews to develop an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences, instructional reasoning, and enacted classroom practices. Rather than determining which technique produces the greatest vocabulary gains, the study explains how teachers connect particular classroom challenges with particular pedagogical responses. Empirically, it provides classroom-based evidence from an underexamined Indonesian primary-school setting; conceptually, it positions adaptive pedagogical decision-making as a central dimension of vocabulary teaching; and practically, it informs teacher education and professional development that must prepare teachers not only to use a repertoire of techniques but also to select and adapt them responsively.

METHOD

Research Design

This study used a qualitative case study design to explore the challenges English teachers encountered when teaching vocabulary and how they adapted their pedagogical practices in fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms at a private primary school in Batam, Indonesia. A case study design was selected because the study sought to understand teachers' pedagogical experiences and actions within a clearly bounded, naturally occurring educational setting. The challenges encountered by teachers and their instructional responses could not be meaningfully separated from contextual factors such as students' English exposure, differences in vocabulary knowledge, classroom participation, available resources, and school expectations. Unlike an experimental design, the study did not aim to determine the effectiveness of a particular vocabulary teaching technique. It also went beyond describing teachers' general perceptions by examining how their reported reasoning was reflected in their observed classroom practices and instructional documents (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

The case was bounded by one private primary school, three English teachers, fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms, and the teaching of English vocabulary during the data-collection period of. The unit of analysis was the teachers' pedagogical responses to challenges arising during vocabulary instruction. These boundaries enabled an in-depth examination of how teachers identified classroom difficulties, selected pedagogical responses, and modified their practices according to students' needs and classroom conditions. The use of classroom observations, instructional documents, and semi-structured interviews was consistent with a

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case study design because it allowed the phenomenon to be examined from multiple sources and perspectives. The study therefore produced a contextualized account of vocabulary teaching rather than attempting to generalize statistically to all Indonesian primary schools.

Research Setting and Participants Selection

The study was conducted at a private primary school in Batam, Riau Islands Province, Indonesia. The school served students from socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. English was taught as a compulsory subject in Grades 4 and 5. A typical English class consisted of approximately 35 students. These contextual characteristics are relevant because they influenced the opportunities students had to encounter English and the conditions under which teachers implemented vocabulary instruction.

A two-stage purposive sampling strategy was employed to select the research site and participants. First, the school was purposively selected because it regularly provided English instruction in Grades 4 and 5, and provided access to naturally occurring vocabulary lessons that were relevant to the research objectives. The school also represented a suitable bounded case in which teachers worked with learners who demonstrated different levels of English exposure, vocabulary knowledge, participation, and learning needs. Practical access to the site was considered, but the school was not selected solely on the basis of convenience. Its instructional characteristics and relevance to the phenomenon under investigation were the primary selection considerations.

Second, criterion-based purposive sampling was used to select the three participating teachers. To be included, the teachers were required to: (a) be currently responsible for teaching English in Grade 4 or Grade 5; (b) have at least three years of teaching experience; (c) be directly involved in planning and implementing vocabulary instruction; and (d) have experience using more than one approach to teaching vocabulary. These criteria ensured that the participants had sufficient experience with the phenomenon and could provide detailed accounts of their pedagogical decision-making and responses to classroom challenges (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Etikan et al., 2016).

Data Source and Collection Method

Three complementary data-collection methods were used in alignment with the research objectives. First, classroom observations and field notes were used to obtain direct evidence of teachers' instructional practices, classroom challenges, student responses, and pedagogical adaptations during vocabulary lessons. A semi-structured observation protocol was used to record: (a) the vocabulary teaching practices employed; (b) difficulties demonstrated by students; (c) teachers' immediate responses to those difficulties; (d) classroom interactions; and (e) changes made to activities, explanations, pacing, grouping, or instructional support. The protocol provided consistent areas of observation while allowing the researcher to record unanticipated classroom events.

Second, document analysis was conducted to examine lesson plans, teaching materials, students' worksheets, and available assessment records. A document-analysis guide was used to identify the vocabulary objectives, planned teaching activities, forms of learner support, practice opportunities, assessment tasks, and evidence of instructional differentiation or adaptation. The documents were not treated merely as supporting materials; they were compared with the observation and interview data to examine the relationship between teachers'planned, reported, and enacted practices (Bowen, 2009).

Third, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the three teachers to explore their experiences, perceived challenges, pedagogical choices, and reasons for adapting particular practices. The interview guide included open-ended questions about students' vocabulary difficulties, teachers' instructional planning, the selection of teaching strategies, responses to students' participation and understanding, and the contextual factors influencing their decisions. Follow-up questions were used to ask teachers to explain classroom events identified during the observations. Each interview lasted approximately [insert duration]

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minutes and was conducted in [Indonesian/English]. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' permission and transcribed verbatim. If the interviews were conducted in Indonesian, explain how relevant excerpts were translated into English and checked for accuracy.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted in three stages: classroom observations, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. First, the researcher conducted classroom observations of English vocabulary lessons taught by the three participating teachers in Grades 4 and 5. The observations focused on classroom challenges, teachers' pedagogical strategies, student responses, classroom interactions, and teachers' adaptations during instruction. Field notes were also taken to record important classroom events and contextual information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Second, relevant documents, including lesson plans, teaching materials, students' worksheets, and assessment records, were collected and examined to provide supporting information about the planning and implementation of vocabulary instruction (Bowen, 2009). Third, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participating teachers after the observations to explore their perspectives on the challenges they encountered and the pedagogical strategies they used. The interviews also provided opportunities for teachers to explain their instructional choices and responses to classroom challenges (Kallio et al., 2016). Finally, the data from the three sources were compared to identify similarities and differences and to support triangulation of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. The participating teachers provided written informed consent after receiving information about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw without penalty. Permission to observe classroom activities involving children was obtained through. No individual student was interviewed or identified in the research report. The school and participating teachers were assigned pseudonyms, and identifying information was removed from the transcripts, field notes, and instructional documents. All research data were stored securely and were accessible only to the research team.

Trustworthiness of the Stud

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were employed, including triangulation, member checking, and systematic documentation. Triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from classroom observations, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. Multiple classroom observations were conducted to identify recurring and contrasting patterns in teachers' pedagogical practices and responses to classroom challenges.

Member checking was conducted by sharing summaries of the interview interpretations and preliminary findings with the participating teachers. The teachers were invited to clarify, elaborate on, or question the researchers' interpretations rather than merely confirm their "accuracy." Dependability was supported through an audit trail documenting participant selection, data-collection decisions, coding development, theme refinement, and the integration of evidence from the three data sources. The researchers also maintained reflective notes to consider how their own backgrounds and assumptions might influence data collection and interpretation. Transferability was supported through detailed descriptions of the school, participants, grade levels, and instructional context, enabling readers to assess the relevance of the findings to comparable primary EFL settings (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015).

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Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures outlined by Braun & Clarke (2019, 2021). The analysis began with familiarization with the data through repeated reading of the interview transcripts, classroom observation notes, and relevant documents. The researcher then generated initial codes and grouped related codes into potential themes. The themes were subsequently reviewed, refined, defined, and named to ensure that they represented meaningful patterns across the dataset. Finally, the themes were interpreted in relation to the research questions. Data from classroom observations, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews were compared during the interpretation process to identify converging and divergent patterns and to support triangulation. The analysis focused on identifying the challenges encountered by teachers, the pedagogical strategies they employed, and how these strategies were adapted to address classroom challenges and students' learning needs. This systematic process enabled the researcher to develop themes that reflected both teachers' reported perspectives and their observed classroom practices (Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2021).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussion in direct alignment with the study's objectives: (a) to identify the challenges encountered by English teachers in teaching vocabulary to fourth- and fifth-grade students; (b) to examine the pedagogical strategies employed by teachers in teaching English vocabulary; and (c) to explore how teachers implement and adapt these strategies to address challenges encountered during vocabulary instruction. The findings draw on classroom observations, instructional documents, and semi-structured interviews with the three participating teachers. By integrating evidence across these data sources, the study provides a comprehensive account of the challenges experienced by teachers, the pedagogical strategies used in response, and the ways in which these strategies were adapted to students' needs and classroom conditions.

Limited Exposure to English

The first major challenge identified across the data was students' limited exposure to English. Classroom observations showed that some students had difficulty recognizing or recalling vocabulary that had been introduced in previous lessons. This difficulty was particularly noticeable when teachers introduced unfamiliar words or asked students to use previously learned vocabulary in classroom activities. Students sometimes required repeated explanations, pronunciation practice, and contextual support before they could respond appropriately. These observations are consistent with research emphasizing the importance of repeated encounters and meaningful exposure to vocabulary for primary EFL learners' vocabulary development (Liu & Reynolds, 2025; Umme, 2024).

The interview data supported the observation findings. The teachers explained that students had different levels of exposure to English, and some students encountered English primarily during school lessons. As a result, vocabulary introduced in class was not always reinforced through regular use outside the classroom. This finding is consistent with research indicating that limited opportunities to encounter English may constrain learners' opportunities to consolidate and develop vocabulary knowledge, particularly in EFL contexts (Daud, 2024; Liu & Reynolds, 2025). The instructional documents also indicated that vocabulary learning was incorporated into classroom activities through worksheets, exercises, and review tasks, suggesting that teachers provided opportunities for repeated exposure within the available instructional time. The use of repeated encounters and varied vocabulary-learning activities is supported by recent research on primary EFL vocabulary learning, which emphasizes the importance of providing learners with multiple opportunities to encounter and engage with target words (Liu & Reynolds, 2025; Umme, 2024).

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Differences in Students' Vocabulary Knowledge

A second challenge concerned differences in students' existing vocabulary knowledge. Classroom observations revealed that students did not demonstrate the same level of familiarity with English vocabulary. While some students were able to recognize and respond to new words relatively quickly, others required additional explanation, examples, repetition, or teacher assistance. Such variation in learners' vocabulary knowledge is an important consideration in primary EFL instruction, as differences in learners' prior knowledge and exposure can influence their ability to recognize, understand, and use newly introduced vocabulary (Liu & Reynolds, 2025; Umme, 2024). Providing repeated encounters, contextual support, and varied opportunities for vocabulary practice can help accommodate differences in learners' existing vocabulary knowledge (Liu & Reynolds, 2025).

These differences affected classroom participation. Students with stronger vocabulary knowledge tended to respond more quickly during vocabulary activities, whereas students with more limited knowledge often waited for teacher support or relied on classmates' responses. The teachers' interview responses also indicated that differences in students' vocabulary levels required them to adjust the pace and amount of support provided during instruction. Such instructional adaptation is consistent with research emphasizing the importance of responding to learners' different levels of prior knowledge and providing appropriate support during primary EFL vocabulary instruction (Liu & Reynolds, 2025; Umme, 2024). Thus, vocabulary activities were not implemented uniformly, as teachers adapted their explanations and practice activities according to students' varying levels of understanding. This finding also reflects the broader principle that effective language instruction requires teachers to adjust pedagogical practices to learners' needs and classroom conditions (Pinter, 2017).

Low Motivation and Limited Attention

The third major challenge identified was students' low motivation and limited attention during vocabulary instruction. Classroom observations showed that students' participation varied according to the type of learning activity. During extended explanations or individual written tasks, some students became less attentive and less actively involved. In contrast, greater participation was observed during interactive activities, games, visual materials, and activities that required direct responses. The interview data supported these observations, as teachers reported varying their activities to maintain students' attention and encourage engagement with the target vocabulary. These findings are consistent with research highlighting the value of varied and interactive activities in promoting vocabulary engagement among primary EFL learners (Liu & Reynolds, 2025; Umme, 2024).

Pronunciation and Spelling Difficulties

Pronunciation and spelling difficulties were evident in Teachers 02 and 03's vocabulary lessons. Students often applied Indonesian pronunciation patterns to unfamiliar English words, such as headache, stomachache, and hospital. One teacher explained, "Students usually spell words based on Indonesian pronunciation, so they need repeated drilling to pronounce English words correctly." In response, teachers modelled pronunciation, repeated target words, and asked students to imitate them.

This finding shows that pronunciation practice was integrated into vocabulary instruction rather than taught separately. Teachers adapted their instruction by intensifying repetition when students struggled. Repeated auditory exposure and oral practice helped address first-language pronunciation interference and supported students in developing more accurate pronunciation of unfamiliar English vocabulary.

Classroom Management Difficulties

Classroom management also emerged as a significant challenge during vocabulary instruction. Observations showed that interactive activities, although useful for encouraging

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participation, required teachers to provide clear instructions, monitor student behavior, and manage transitions between activities. The teachers responded by adjusting the pace and organization of activities and providing additional instructions or reminders when necessary. The interview data further indicated that classroom management considerations influenced how teachers implemented particular vocabulary activities. This finding suggests that pedagogical strategies need to be adapted not only to learning objectives but also to classroom conditions and students' responses (Pinter, 2017).

Pedagogical Strategies Used to Address Vocabulary Teaching Challenges

In response to the identified challenges, the three teachers employed a range of pedagogical strategies. Classroom observations, instructional documents, and interviews indicated the use of visual materials and realia, games and interactive activities, contextualized vocabulary practice, storytelling, repetition and recycling, and selected digital resources. Visual materials and realia were used to provide concrete support for unfamiliar vocabulary, while games and interactive activities were used to increase participation and maintain attention. Teachers also presented vocabulary through meaningful contexts, stories, and classroom situations rather than relying solely on isolated word memorization. Repetition and recycling provided opportunities for learners to encounter and practice previously introduced vocabulary, while digital resources were used to support additional practice and engagement. The use of varied and repeated vocabulary-learning activities is consistent with research emphasizing multiple opportunities for primary EFL learners to encounter and use new vocabulary (Liu & Reynolds, 2025; Umme, 2024).

Adaptive Pedagogical Responses to Classroom Challenges

Across the five challenges, the teachers used several pedagogical practices, including visual materials and realia, games and interactive activities, contextualized vocabulary teaching, storytelling, repetition and recycling, pronunciation modelling, and selected digital resources. However, the findings indicate that these practices were not used as fixed techniques**.** Their use varied according to the challenges that teachers encountered and the responses they observed from students.

For example, limited exposure to English led teachers to increase repetition, review, and recycling of previously introduced vocabulary. Differences in vocabulary ability resulted in additional explanation, translation, visual support, and differentiated assistance. When students became less motivated or attentive, teachers shifted toward games, songs, visual materials, or more interactive activities. Pronunciation difficulties led Teachers 02 and 03 to provide additional modelling and repetition. During classroom-management difficulties, teachers modified instructions, pacing, grouping, or activity procedures. The relationship between the identified challenges and teachers' responses can be summarized as follows:

Table 1. Adaptive Pedagogical Responses to Classroom Challenges

Challenge	Teacher response	Evidence of adaptation
Limited exposure to English	Repetition, review, and recycling	Previously taught vocabulary was revisited when students had difficulty recalling it
Low motivation and short attention span	Games, songs, visual materials, and interactive activities	Teachers changed activity types when students became less attentive
Differences in vocabulary ability	Repetition, translation, examples, and additional support	Teachers varied the amount of explanation according to students' understanding
Pronunciation and spelling difficulties	Modelling, repetition, and pronunciation drilling	Teachers increased pronunciation practice when students mispronounced target words
Classroom management constraints	Clear instructions, rules, pacing, and activity modification	Teachers changed procedures when interactive activities became difficult to manage

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These findings suggest that teachers' pedagogical decision-making involved a process of observing, responding, and adjusting. The teachers first recognized students' difficulties or changes in classroom behavior, then modified the activity, level of support, or instructional procedure. This pattern provides stronger evidence for teacher responsiveness than simply identifying a list of teaching techniques. The findings are broadly consistent with previous research emphasizing varied, meaningful, multimodal, and repeated opportunities for vocabulary learning among primary EFL learners (Liu & Reynolds, 2025; Umme, 2024). However, the present study extends this literature by highlighting the adaptive dimension of teachers' vocabulary pedagogy. The important issue was not only which practices teachers used but also how they adjusted those practices according to classroom conditions.

This finding has practical implications for teacher education and professional development. Training programs for primary EFL teachers should not focus only on providing a repertoire of vocabulary teaching techniques. Teachers also need opportunities to develop skills in observing learner responses, identifying emerging classroom difficulties, and making appropriate instructional adjustments (Gibson & Ross, 2016). Such adaptive decision-making may be particularly important in primary EFL settings where students differ in their English exposure, vocabulary knowledge, motivation, attention, and participation (Athanases et al., 2015).

CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the challenges, pedagogical practices, and instructional adaptations of three English teachers teaching vocabulary to fourth- and fifth-grade learners at a private primary school in Batam, Indonesia. The teachers faced five main challenges: limited English exposure, differences in vocabulary knowledge, low motivation and attention, pronunciation and spelling difficulties, and classroom management. To address these challenges, they used visual materials, realia, games, contextualized teaching, storytelling, repetition, pronunciation modelling, and digital resources. They adapted these practices by increasing repetition, providing additional explanations and visual support, introducing interactive activities, intensifying pronunciation practice, and modifying classroom procedures. The findings highlight that effective vocabulary teaching depends not only on teachers' knowledge of instructional techniques but also on their responsiveness and pedagogical flexibility. However, because the study involved only three teachers at one school and did not measure vocabulary achievement, its findings are context-specific. Future research could examine adaptive vocabulary teaching across different school settings and investigate its relationship with students' vocabulary development through longitudinal or mixed-methods approaches.

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