

Exploring Secondary School Students' Perceptions of Their Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), and EFL Teachers' Perceived Self-Efficacy Beliefs (SEB) in Teaching Reading Skills

Akalewold Samuel Aguye^{1*}

Abebe Damtew Berlie²

¹*Department of English Language and Literature, College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hawassa University, Hawassa, Ethiopia*

²*Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore students' perceptions of their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and the self-efficacy beliefs (SEB) of EFL teachers in teaching reading skills across selected secondary schools. The researchers employed explanatory sequential mixed methods design. Data were collected using a self-constructed questionnaire with 34 items, administered to 258 secondary school students, to assess their perceptions of their teachers' PCK performance. Additionally, a separate questionnaire with 21 items was distributed to 70 EFL teachers to gather information on their self-efficacy beliefs. To further elucidate these beliefs, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 EFL teachers from the six selected secondary schools. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 26, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis. The findings indicated that students had a moderately positive perception of their teachers' PCK ($M=3.32$; $SD=0.926$). In contrast, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs were perceived as somewhat efficacious ($M=3.74$; $SD=0.533$). The results from the teacher interviews corroborated the questionnaire findings. The Pearson correlation coefficient between students' perceptions and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs was $r=-0.027$, $p=0.826$, suggesting a weak, negative relationship between these variables. To address these findings and bridge the existing gap, it is recommended that EFL teachers receive targeted professional development to enhance students' perceptions.

Keywords: *pedagogical content knowledge, perceived self-efficacy beliefs, students' perceptions, teaching reading skills.*

*Corresponding author, email: sakalewold@gmail.com

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The significance of the English language is evident in various aspects of daily life, playing a crucial role in education, business transactions, the tourism industry, agriculture, and international communications. In Ethiopia, English serves as the medium of instruction at both secondary and tertiary education levels. Historical records indicate that formal education in Ethiopia commenced in 1908, coinciding with the introduction of English as a foreign language (Negash, 1996). Since then, the nation has experienced numerous advancements, curriculum revisions, and methodological improvements. Despite these notable progressions, the educational system has faced persistent challenges, particularly concerning quality (Mijena, 2013; Tesfaye, 2014). The Ethiopian Ministry of Education's (1994) education and training policy mandates that English be taught as a subject beginning in grade one and used as the medium of instruction (MoI) in secondary and higher education institutions. Consequently, the English language has received significant emphasis in schools nationwide (Berhanu, 2009; Ethiopian Ministry of Education, 2010).

Gedera and Williams (2016) assert that teaching is a challenging and intricate activity requiring teachers to make numerous "on-the-spot" decisions and provide feedback to meet the dynamic and ever-evolving needs of their students. Despite the demanding nature of their profession, teachers in low-income countries, such as Ethiopia, are often compelled to work under adverse conditions, which contributes to substandard teaching and learning quality. Furthermore, teaching any subject is an extraordinarily complex cognitive endeavor that necessitates teachers to apply their knowledge from multiple perspectives, as corroborated by Filgona et al. (2020). Additionally, it is noted that teachers with integrated and differentiated knowledge are more effective in instructing students compared to those with limited or superficial understanding. For instance, Sudhindra and Ritendra (2015) assert that "the achievement of educational goals largely depends on the quality and standard of the teacher" (p. 580). They argue that teachers are critical determinants in the pursuit of educational objectives. Research indicates that students' perceptions of their teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) significantly influence their academic achievement, which is a key focus of the present study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The education system in Ethiopia, particularly language education, has experienced numerous advancements. However, significant challenges persist throughout the teaching and learning process. Tesfaye (2014) reported a continuous decline in the quality of education at all levels, underscoring the gravity of the issue. His research indicated that many schools were often overstaffed with underqualified teachers who had not completed adequate teacher preparation programs. These deficiencies resulted in teachers lacking essential professional knowledge, subject-matter expertise, and necessary skills. Consequently, Tesfaye suggests that immediate attention is required to address and rectify these quality issues.

Moreover, the research findings of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (2003) mention a series of challenges with regard to the competence of secondary teacher education programs in Ethiopia. Few among the many challenges were:

“The professional competence of teachers is deficient; the content knowledge of teachers is unsatisfactory; the teaching skills and techniques are very basic; teachers do not match up to the standards and expectations of their profession; ... the quality of courses and methods of teaching are theoretical and teacher centered.” (Ethiopian Ministry of Education, 2003, p. 33)

This observation can be interpreted as indicative of the entrenched deficiencies that may be present among secondary school educators, stemming from challenges encountered during their training at teacher education institutions. It is evident that substantial reforms have been implemented since these issues were first recognized within Ethiopia's teacher education programs. Notable examples of such reforms include the Teacher Education System Overhaul (TESO) and the Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) programs. These reform initiatives exhibit both notable strengths and inherent limitations.

In line with this, a recent study by Shishigu et al. (2017) affirms that even though Ethiopia has gone through a series of reform movements in teacher education programs, there still exists a huge amount of challenge during the post-TESO period. Teacher preparation programs are said to lack effectiveness in preparing pre-service teachers for the actual teaching duty. The literature shows that some studies tell us about the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) of pre-service teachers or EFL student teachers of the Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) Practicum program in Ethiopia. It was reported that these teachers lacked the required PCK (Getu & Teka, 2018).

At this juncture, the need for dealing with PCK of EFL teachers from students' perspectives in the teaching of reading skills seems to be pivotal. Even though there are some studies found on teachers' PCK, the assessment of research findings conducted on students' perception of their teachers' PCK, and EFL teachers' self-efficacy beliefs particularly about teaching reading skills is rare or scanty. In this regard, some studies reveal that there is a very limited number of research literature focusing on assessing teachers' PCK of FL/SL perspective; the case of reading skills teachers is not an exception, in this regard. Therefore, this field is said to get considerable benefit from current or further research conducted on this topic (Alimuddin et al., 2020; Evens et al., 2016).

1.3 The General Objective

The primary objective of this research was to investigate public secondary school students' perceptions of their teachers' PCK and the self-efficacy beliefs of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers concerning the instruction of reading skills to secondary school students.

1.4 Specific Research Questions

In line with the general objective, the present study sought answers to the following specific research questions:

1. What perceptions do students have regarding their English teachers' PCK in teaching reading skills?
2. What does English teachers' Self-efficacy beliefs look like in teaching reading skills at secondary schools?
3. What is the correlation between students' perceptions of their teachers PCK and EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs (SEB)?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Notion of PCK in Teaching

The historical emergence of PCK studies dates back to 1980's and according to its pioneer researcher, Shulman (1987, p. 8), PCK "represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction". Due to this, the teachers' level of PCK is said to have a great impact on the development of students' achievement in their respective subjects which students learn. Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), as explained by this researcher, Shulman, is a specialized form of knowledge that teachers need to possess to effectively deliver their teaching activity, and it is also considered the yardstick that distinguishes teachers from other professionals.

The Ethiopian Ministry of Education (2013) has published a working document outlining the criteria required of English language teachers with regard to the essential competencies that educators must possess. Later on, the materials that were subsequently developed sufficiently addressed the PCK concerns (Ethiopian Ministry of Education, 2018). Currently, studies on the Pedagogical content knowledge of teachers have received considerable attention in many different fields of study in educational research. However, studies related to EFL teachers' PCK assessed from students' perspective so far in the English as a foreign language context are very rare (Alimuddin et al., 2020). Therefore, the present study attempted particularly to address this gap by studying students' perception of their teachers' PCK and EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs in teaching reading skills.

2.2 The Teaching of Reading in FL Context

The teaching of reading skills occupies a significant role within the EFL/ESL context. As noted by Watkins (2017), in second or foreign language settings, reading is not only perceived as a means of facilitating social interaction and acquiring knowledge but is also considered crucial for promoting lifelong learning. However, it is concerning that a substantial number of students struggle with reading tasks, which hinders their ability to effectively gather information and expand their understanding of the world. This deficiency in students' reading skills, as highlighted by Watkins, is troubling. The knowledge of content and pedagogy possessed by teachers, along with the overall quality of teaching, is recognized as having a profound impact on student achievement (Kaplan & Owings, 2002). According to these scholars, enhancing student achievement requires improving instructional quality by addressing various aspects of teaching effectiveness.

Therefore, a comprehensive evaluation of the issue from the students' perspectives, which this study addresses, is essential.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This research aimed to shed light on EFL teachers' PCK from students' perspectives and EFL teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in teaching reading skills. The present study researchers employed mixed methods design particularly, sequential exploratory mixed methods design as it is said helpful for such types of studies (Creswell, 2012).

3.2 Research Context and Participants of the study

The present study is conducted at public secondary schools in Hawassa City Administration of the Sidama National Regional State, Ethiopia. This city is located at about 273 Kms away from the center of the country-Addis Ababa. In Hawassa city, there are about fourteen government secondary schools including the recently established ones at the suburbs of the city. The participants of the study are English as foreign language grade nine students and their EFL teachers of the six public secondary schools in the city.

3.3 Sampling Technique

To study teachers' PCK in the teaching of reading skills, the researcher chose Hawassa City administration in Sidama National Regional state through convenient sampling due to proximity and convenience. In Hawassa city secondary schools there were 104 English teachers and out of these, all EFL teachers (N=70) teaching in the selected six schools were sampled to fill out questionnaire using purposive sampling technique. The percentage of sampled teachers participated in this study was calculated to be (67.33%). Similarly, students were selected based on purposive sampling method because one group of students were targeted at every six selected schools making the total number (N=258).

3.4 Data Gathering Instruments

3.4.1 Questionnaire for Teachers

As this particular study is exploratory in nature, in gathering the required data, questionnaires serve as one of the available tools. The purpose of preparing questionnaire for teachers is to collect information pertaining to their perceived self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching of reading Skills in EFL classrooms at grade nine. Questionnaire, as a tool of data collection was employed to gather information about EFL teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in their teaching reading skills. This questionnaire was organized in one section consisting 21 items that measure classroom teachers' conceptions of self-efficacy beliefs (what they feel they can do) about teaching reading and at the same time measure teachers' level of confidence in their teaching duty. To achieve this, the questionnaire was

set using Likert scale confidence intervals ranging from (5 very confident to (1 difficult to decide).

3.4.2 Questionnaire for Students

The researchers of this study have conviction that collecting data from students about their teachers' classroom behavior of the practices of PCK in teaching reading skills is also important to gain an insight about the issue. Students' questionnaire has one part which consists of 34 items with five point Likert scale ranging from 5 (Strongly Agree/SA), to 1 (Strongly Disagree/SD). Students' questionnaire was meant to gather information from them about their teacher's classroom teaching reading knowledge. The researchers had, therefore, carefully translated the students' questionnaire into Amharic language, which is locally spoken by majority as it may ease the burden of miscommunication arising from the foreign language-English. Table 1, below shows secondary schools involved in the study and students' profiles.

Table 1. Number of students and names of public secondary schools.

S No.	Public Secondary Schools participated	No. of Male sts	No. of Female sts	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Tabor Sec. School	619	714	1360	24.33
2	Halade Sec. School	252	337	589	10.54
3	Tesso Model Sec. School	165	245	410	7.33
4	Misrak Chora Sec. School	313	297	610	10.91
5	Addis Ketema Sec. School	476	517	993	17.77
6	Alamura Sec. School	811	815	1626	29.09
Total		2636	2952	5588	99.98
Percentage (%)		47.17	52.82	100%	

3.4.3 Semi-structured Interviews for Teachers

As it has been mentioned so far the current study is exploratory in nature, so interviews were employed as one of the preferred data collection methods in order to extract in-depth information from (N=10) EFL secondary school teachers.

3.5 Trustworthiness of the Instruments

The researchers have checked the trustworthiness of the instruments by employing both the validity and reliability measures. Hence, expert opinion from other PhD candidates and senior staff has been obtained to check the validity of the instruments employed in this study. Besides, the researchers have run reliability tests of the students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire and found Cronbach's Alpha $\alpha=0.948$ and $\alpha=0.861$ respectively. This indicates that the items in both questionnaires had strong internal consistency reliability.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

There are several issues that need to be considered while thinking of conducting a research particularly in Social Science fields. Creswell (2012) purports that researchers

should respect the audiences or participants and use non-discriminatory language and keep their anonymity while referring to them in their studies. Ethical clearance approval was obtained from Hawassa University College of Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Review Committee (CRERC) Ref. No. CSSH/125/2021) and dated on February 20, 2021 to which the corresponding author is affiliated as an academic staff. Informed consent had also been given by concerned school administrators. Consequently, issues of both anonymity and confidentiality were duly considered while embarking on this research project.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Findings of Students' Perceptions of Their Teachers' PCK in Teaching Reading Skills

The students' questionnaire was set by the current study researchers based on literature considering the components of what and how of effective teaching reading skills. The items were meant for exploring students' perceptions of their teachers' PCK in English as a foreign language context. Attempts have also been made to collect information from English teachers regarding their own perceived self-efficacy beliefs of PCK in teaching reading skills to grade nine students. The researchers employed Statistical software for social sciences SPSS version 26 in order to run descriptive statistics and processed the data accordingly. Grounded theory method has also been put in place so as to extract the related themes of the interview transcripts.

In many different disciplines various categories have been made to classify 5-point Likert scale results obtained from the collected data. On the basis of this, the authors of this manuscript have customized /developed criteria to group students' perception levels of their teachers' PCK. These values regard mean scores of (3.5 or higher) as high perception (mean between 2.5 and 3.4) as moderate perception and (mean of 2.4 or lower) as low perception.

Table 2. Students' perception of their teachers' Instruction of reading skills.

<i>Q No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD (%)</i>	<i>DA (%)</i>	<i>UD (%)</i>	<i>AG (%)</i>	<i>SA (%)</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
1	has good introductory hands-on tasks to build initial interest on students	258	15.9	12.4	9.7	26.4	35.7	3.53	1.474
2	relates the reading text to students' background knowledge	258	16.3	10.9	7.4	21.7	43.8	3.66	1.518
3	uses a flexible lesson design to facilitate the student's reading process	258	21.7	15.5	8.5	22.9	31.4	3.27	1.564
4	makes the students active participants in the reading lessons	258	17.1	17.8	8.9	26.7	29.5	3.34	1.484
5	uses coherent lesson procedures for delivery	258	14.7	13.6	10.5	22.1	39.1	3.57	1.480

6	creates a supportive environment	258	32.6	11.2	10.5	17.8	27.9	2.97	1.649
7	monitors students while working independently on the reading task	258	23.3	20.9	12.0	17.4	26.4	3.03	1.542
<i>Grand Mean and Std. Deviation</i>								3.34	1.099

As can be seen from the above Table 2, students assigned high values for the kind of teacher's behavior/knowledge of classroom instruction that the teacher provides for them; the mean score of their responses ranged between the least value of mean and standard deviation ($M=2.97$; $SD=1.649$) for his/her behavior of creating supporting environment and the highest mean score/ value of ($M=3.66$; $SD=1.518$) was obtained for their teacher's effort in relating the reading text to students' background knowledge. Table 2 above shows the grand mean value ($M=3.34$; $SD=1.099$), for the construct, "EFL teachers' knowledge of instruction" which is well above average. According to the cut-off point, (mean between 2.5 and 3.4) is considered as moderate perception. So, it can be said that students have moderately positive perception regarding their teachers' knowledge of instruction delivery.

Table 3. Students' perception of their teachers' knowledge of/behavior of/explaining the content of the reading lesson.

<i>Q. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD (%)</i>	<i>DA (%)</i>	<i>UD (%)</i>	<i>AG (%)</i>	<i>SA (%)</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
8	uses signposting of lesson goals during reading activities	258	17.1	13.6	14.3	23.6	31.4	3.39	1.472
9	teaches students to self-evaluate their reading	258	20.9	19.0	12.0	19.4	28.7	3.16	1.534
10	checks that students are aware of reading relevance	258	26.0	13.2	15.1	17.1	28.7	3.09	1.578
11	introduces key words (vocabulary) critical to understanding important concepts	258	20.5	11.6	8.1	19.4	40.3	3.47	1.591
12	teaches useful phrases that are relevant for the task	258	19.4	14.0	8.5	22.1	36.0	3.41	1.554
<i>Grand Mean and Std. Deviation</i>								3.31	1.140

As can be seen from the above Table 3 students' perception of their teachers' behavior of explaining the reading skills lesson indicates that teachers show considerable commitment in introducing key words (vocabulary) that are critical to understanding important concepts ($M=3.47$; $SD=1.591$) while delivering the reading lesson in the classroom. The lowest value of the mean score is recorded for the teachers' knowledge of teaching students to self-evaluate their own reading ability and ($M=3.13$; $SD=1.534$). The mean score of which is still considered moderate perception level. The grand mean value for the construct of students' perception of their teachers' knowledge of explanation was ($M=3.36$; $SD=1.140$). In this regard, the teachers' effort of explaining the activities of the reading skills seems to be a little bit around average value, Hence, the level is still considered as moderate.

Table 4. Students' perception of their teachers' knowledge of strategies in teaching reading skills.

<i>Q. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD (%)</i>	<i>DA (%)</i>	<i>UD (%)</i>	<i>AG (%)</i>	<i>SA (%)</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
13	breaks down a complex reading task into sub-activities when it is necessary	258	20.2	20.9	13.2	15.5	30.2	3.15	1.539
14	helps students to make inferences from the context	258	16.7	16.7	15.9	20.9	29.8	3.31	1.467
15	encourages more capable students to "learn by teaching" or explaining	258	15.9	20.2	11.6	20.2	32.2	3.33	1.493
16	encourages students to interact with equal peers	258	17.8	13.6	13.6	22.5	32.6	3.38	1.496
17	helps students to analyze the task	258	17.1	15.9	11.6	24.0	31.4	3.37	1.487
18	helps students to understand the characteristics (genre, register) of a reading text	258	17.1	14.0	9.3	25.6	34.1	3.46	1.497
19	helps students to clarify and understand (passages from)/ parts of the reading text	258	20.9	17.4	12.0	22.5	27.1	3.17	1.517
20	encourage students to create vivid mental images related to the reading text	258	17.1	13.2	15.5	21.3	32.9	3.40	1.481
<i>Grand Mean and Std. Deviation</i>								<i>3.32</i>	<i>1.040</i>

Table 4 above on the students' questionnaire reveals that the issue of strategies used by the teacher to make the lesson objectives clear for the learners. The mean value of students' perception about their teachers' knowledge of strategy employment particularly in helping students to understand the characteristics (genre, register) of a reading text was the highest score (M=3.46; SD=1.497) in teaching reading skills in the above Table 4. On the contrary, the lowest amount of students' perception result (M=3.15; SD=1.539) was obtained for the teacher' behavior of breaking down a complex reading task into sub-activities or chopping down activities into memorable chunks when it is necessary in order to make his/her reading lesson understandable for his/her learners; compared to the rest of the results, this value is an indication of EFL teachers' weakness in this respect.

Table 5. Students' perceptions about their teachers' knowledge of modelling in teaching reading skills.

<i>Q. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD (%)</i>	<i>DA (%)</i>	<i>UD (%)</i>	<i>AG (%)</i>	<i>SA (%)</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
21	helps students to manage reading time efficiently	258	20.9	14.0	11.6	21.3	32.2	3.30	1.548
22	uses visual materials (e.g. video, pictures, graphic organizers)	258	34.1	14.3	10.1	15.1	26.4	2.85	1.644
23	helps students to give L2 output	258	22.1	13.2	9.7	19.4	35.7	3.33	1.592
<i>Grand Mean and Std. Deviation</i>								<i>3.16</i>	<i>1.209</i>

Table 5 above was meant to collect students' perception about their teachers' knowledge of modelling or showing appropriate choral activities to help students do the reading skills activates as per desired. The above Table 5 shows that the grand mean score of students' responses about their teachers' modelling in giving instructions is ($M=3.16$; $SD=1.209$) which is moderate. In this category the highest mean value ($M=3.33$; $SD=1.592$) is recorded for the teachers' behavior of helping the students to give Second Language /L2 Output. The lowest mean and standard deviation value of EFL teacher' knowledge of using visual materials (e.g. video, pictures, graphic organizers) while teaching reading skills as viewed by their students was found to be ($M=2.85$; $SD=1.644$).

Table 6. Students' perception of their teachers' knowledge of feedback provision.

<i>Q. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD (%)</i>	<i>DA (%)</i>	<i>UD (%)</i>	<i>AG (%)</i>	<i>SA (%)</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
24	uses repetition for better clarity	258	17.1	12.8	15.9	20.2	34.1	3.41	1.487
25	uses clarification requests in L2	258	15.1	12.8	12.8	23.6	35.7	3.52	1.461
26	uses recasts in L2	257	15.6	10.9	10.5	24.9	38.1	3.59	1.471
27	uses explicit correction or feedback	258	31.0	11.6	8.5	18.2	30.6	3.06	1.665
28	gradually withdraws teacher support from the reading task	258	26.7	15.1	13.6	15.1	29.5	3.05	1.599
29	gives positive praise when praise is due	258	19.4	12.8	12.8	20.9	34.1	3.38	1.531
<i>Grand Mean and Std Deviation</i>								<i>3.33</i>	<i>1.015</i>

Table 6 above demonstrates that respondents' reactions to the ways of their teachers giving feedback was the grand mean score ($M=3.33$; $SD=1.015$). The highest mean value ($M=3.59$; $SD=1.471$), was recorded for the strategy of teachers' use of explicit feedback provision by employing recast method of motivating students in teaching reading skills to help learners do better. The least score was observed to be ($M=3.05$; $SD=1.599$), which is also still an indication of moderate perception. Students also reflected that their teacher gives positive praise when s/he feels important to give ($M=3.38$; $SD=1.531$). Therefore, it is sound to say that these reading skills teachers' classroom activities in providing feedback were moderate.

Table 7. Students' perceptions of their teachers' knowledge of questioning.

<i>Q. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD (%)</i>	<i>DA (%)</i>	<i>UD (%)</i>	<i>AG (%)</i>	<i>SA (%)</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
30	encourages students to generate questions about the reading text	258	16.7	10.9	12.0	21.7	38.8	3.55	1.499
31	builds on student-generated questions in the lesson	258	15.5	17.1	12.8	19.4	35.3	3.42	1.493
32	promotes student interpretations of the text	258	22.1	15.9	18.2	17.8	26.0	3.10	1.503
33	asks students for opinions about text content	258	17.8	11.2	15.5	22.1	33.3	3.42	1.488
34	uses thick questions	258	15.1	10.5	8.9	18.2	47.3	3.72	1.507
<i>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</i>								<i>3.44</i>	<i>1.105</i>

In the above Table 7, it is displayed that the grand mean and standard deviation value of students' perception of their English teachers' knowledge of questioning behavior in the classroom was found out to be ($M=3.44$; $SD=1.105$). As this score is below 3.5, it is regarded as moderate. This indicates that the way the teachers raise questions to the students is not as such promising to change students learning behavior. The highest score ($M=3.72$; $SD=1.507$) was obtained for the teachers' behavior of using thick questions to facilitate learners' understanding of the reading skills lesson. The least value ($M= 3.10$; $SD= 1.503$) was obtained for the question that is meant for promoting interpretation of the text to the students. In almost all cases of the above Table 7, teachers' performances of modelling reading skills lesson to their students as viewed from the students' perspectives was moderately positive perception.

Findings from the grand mean value of students' perception was calculated to be ($M=3.32$; $SD=0.926$). This result showed that secondary school students had moderately positive perception about their teachers' PCK in teaching reading skills.

4.1.2 Results of the EFL Teachers' Perceived Self-Efficacy Beliefs in Teaching Reading Skills (Quantitative Data)

Table 8. EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs.

<i>Q. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>					<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
			<i>Very Confident (%)</i>	<i>Confident (%)</i>	<i>Fairly Confident (%)</i>	<i>Not at all Confident (%)</i>	<i>Difficult to decide (%)</i>		
1.	I continually look for better ways to teach reading.	70	34.3	45.7	15.7	1.4	2.9	4.07	.906
2.	I can use appropriate sources and materials for my students to teach reading.	70	24.3	40.0	25.7	7.1	2.9	3.76	.999
3.	I can forecast possible questions to be asked and provide their possible answers right away.	70	30.0	44.3	14.3	5.7	5.7	3.87	1.089
4.	I can explain the terms and concepts that my students have difficulty in understanding the reading lesson.	70	21.4	30.0	14.3	27.1	7.1	3.31	1.280
5.	I can keep my students' motivation and interest alive while teaching reading.	70	35.7	41.4	15.7	4.3	2.9	4.03	.978

6.	I can deal with learning problems of the students in reading.	70	37.1	41.4	14.3	5.7	1.4	4.07	.937
7.	I know several ways or strategies to teach reading effectively.	70	25.7	47.1	20.0	7,1	-	3.91	.864
8.	I don't think I am very effective in monitoring reading activities.	70	15.7	28.6	30.0	22.9	2.9	3.31	1.084
9.	I understand the process of reading well enough to be effective in teaching reading.	70	31,4	40.0	15.7	10.0	2.9	3.87	1.062
10.	I feel that I am generally responsible for the achievement of my students in EFL in general and in reading skills in particular.	70	30.0	48.6	17.1	4.3	-	4.04	.806
11.	I find it difficult to teach students with reading problems.	70	25.7	38.6	20.0	8.6	7.1	3.67	1.164
12.	When teaching reading, I usually welcome student questions.	70	35.7	31.4	18.6	10.0	4.3	3.84	1.150
13.	I find it difficult to explain to students how to improve their reading	70	25.7	25.7	24.3	12.9	11.4	3.41	1.313
14.	I am not able to inform my students the best strategies of improving their reading skills.	70	14.3	30.0	14.3	21.4	20.0	2.97	1.383
15.	Whenever I teach EFL, I think of incorporating PCK skills into my reading lesson.	70	17.1	37.1	27.1	17.1	1.4	3.51	1.018
16.	Whenever questions arise from students, I feel comfortable to respond on the spot	70	28.6	40.0	21.4	5.7	4.3	3.83	1.049

17.	I am confident that I have all the necessary PCK/ skills to equip my learners with proper strategies of reading skills so that they can understand better	70	24.3	34.3	30.0	10.0	1.4	3.70	.998
18.	I have a clear understanding of how students develop and learn reading.	70	27.1	42.9	24.3	4.3	1.4	3.90	.903
19.	I can explain what should be done to clarify the terms and concepts that my students have difficulty in understanding reading text.	70	20.0	55.7	17.1	7.1	-	3.89	.808
20.	I know the reading capability of every student I teach in my reading classes.	70	21.4	41.4	20.0	11.4	5.7	3.61	1.120
21.	To fully implement PCK in my reading class, I need additional support and training.	70	32.9	37.1	15.7	10.0	4.3	3.84	1.125
<i>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</i>								<i>3.74</i>	<i>0.533</i>

As can be seen from the above Table 8, all the items were set with the aim of identifying EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching of reading skills. It was shown in Table 8 that the mean scores and standard deviations of item 1, "I continually look for better ways to teach reading" and item 6, "I can deal with learning problems of the students in reading" was (M=4.07; SD=0.906 and 0.937). For these two items no.1 and no.6, (45.7% percent and 41.4% percent) respectively responded that they were confident enough in strategizing better ways of teaching reading, and good at identifying students' learning difficulties and fixing them on the spot. It can therefore be said that the respondents have high amount of self-efficacy beliefs in this regard.

The responses of EFL teachers for a negatively worded item no 14, "I am not able to inform my students the best strategies of improving their reading skills." was the least among the group (M=2.97; SD=1.383). For this item 30% of the responding teachers reacted that they were confident that they were not able to help their students by suggesting the best strategies in solving reading skills problems. Still 20% percent of them reflected that it was difficult for them to decide up on this item.

The grand mean score and standard deviation of the teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs items, was (M=3.74; SD=0.533). In almost all of the cases displayed above the mean scores of teachers' reactions to their level of confidence was greater than 3.0. This implies that if not very confident in majority of the cases the English teachers

replied that they were confident to some extent in what they do while teaching reading skills to their students. This means that EFL teachers who have participated in this study had high level of confidence; in other words, they were regarded efficacious as they have high perceived self-efficacy beliefs in teaching reading skills.

4.1.3 Results of the EFL Teachers' Perceived Self-Efficacy Beliefs (SEB) (Qualitative Data)

The interviewees were asked question as to how they rate their own level of confidence or self-efficacy beliefs (SEB) in the teaching of reading skills and other related questions as well. These questions were set to collect self-reported information about the respondents' self-efficacy beliefs in teaching reading skills. In clear terms, they were meant for measuring how confident they were in delivering reading skills lesson to their students. The respondents said that some of them have some degrees of level of confidence and preparedness in their duty of teaching reading skills. According to the information obtained from the interview conducted, T1, T2, and T4 seem to have similar pattern of level of confidence "Very Confident" For example, T1 said, "Yeah, I like English very well. It is by interest that I joined to be an English teacher. So, I can say that I am more than hundred percent confident if such number exists actually (Long Lough).T1". T2 also replied that he was confident enough to teach the reading. T2 said, "I have never worried about teaching it. I teach what I know; I teach what I understand because the language that we teach in our country is not ours. For that matter, I have never worried about teaching reading as I am confident enough because I know the subject matter that I teach and the way of teaching as well.T2". Similarly, T4 replied, "My confidence is strong as to my understanding. I love teaching reading and I love reading for myself as well. I do have confidence in teaching. So, I evaluate myself as someone whose students understand him well.T4"

The other category of level of confidence as explained by the interviewees is the "Somehow confident/ fairly confident" category. T3 who had relatively different opinion said, "Emm.. I cannot say I am hundred percent confident, but I am confident somehow, yeah. I do not put myself in the higher confidence level, but I am somewhere at the middle.T3" T5 also shares T4's idea in that T5 said with laughter, "Lougher...] Emm...Well, I am somehow confident because as I have tried to mention for you, the background you came through has its own problem.T5"

According to T3 what makes a teacher to have strong self-efficacy beliefs in teaching reading skills is the presence of professional knowledge and language proficiency. She says to identify a teacher as confident or not, "First of all, the teacher, s/heshould have proficiency or subject matter knowledge (professional knowledge) as well as language proficiency. These are the criteria that help us to label someone is confident or not.T3". On the whole, the respondents feel that they possess self-efficacy beliefs though the degree of their confidence level varies. The results obtained from teachers' interview questions goes in congruence with the results obtained from teachers' questionnaires.

4.1.4 Results of the Correlation between Students' Perception of Their Teachers' PCK and EFL Teacher' Perceived Self-Efficacy Beliefs

Table 9. Findings of the relationship between students' perception of their teachers' PCK and EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs

<i>Correlation Coefficients</i>			
		<i>Teachers' SEB Mean</i>	<i>Students Perception of their Teachers PCK</i>
Teachers' SEB Mean	Pearson Correlation	1	-.027
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.826
	N	70	70
Students' Perception of their Teachers PCK	Pearson Correlation	-.027	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.826	
	N	70	258

As depicted by the result of the above correlation analysis in Table 9, the relationship that exists between the bivariate variables, such as students' perception of their teachers' PCK and EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs (SEB) is Pearson Correlation ($r=-0.027$). The negative value indicates that the relationship between the two variables is inverse; as one variable increases, the other decreases. This implies that the results obtained from students' questionnaires regarding EFL teachers' PCK are not consistent or do not correspond with each other. The P value, Sig. 2-tailed is 0.826 which is an indicator for the presence of strong relationship between the variables treated above. As the p-Value of 0.826 is greater than 0.05, the level of significance shows weak relationship.

4.2 Discussion

The objective of the present study was to investigate public secondary school students' perceptions of their teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and to evaluate EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs concerning the instruction of reading skills. To gather the necessary information, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from students and teachers. Various methodologies can be employed in assessing teacher effectiveness. According to Geiger et al. (2019), these methods include formal and informal classroom observations, student academic achievement, and students' perceptions of their teachers' effectiveness in specific aspects of teaching. The researchers of this study believe that significant emphasis should be placed on exploring students' perceptions to achieve the study's objectives. Research indicates that there may be a relationship between teachers' levels of PCK and students' academic achievement. However, findings in this area are sometimes contradictory. For instance, Criua and Mariana (2014) found that students who perceived their teachers as possessing high levels of PCK and being cooperative and supportive exhibited higher self-efficacy in regulating their own learning. This finding contrasts with the results observed in the current study regarding students' perceptions of their teachers' PCK.

Ethiopian Ministry of Education (2018) developed The Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018-30) with the intention of understanding the performance and challenges of Ethiopian Education system. This working document indicated the existence of multifaceted challenges in Ethiopian Education System as a whole. In this document interviews and FGDs were conducted with pertinent stakeholders of education

in order to assess secondary and preparatory school teachers' competence, motivation and job satisfaction. The results depicted the existence of overall poor quality and low level of motivation of secondary school teachers. It was also made clear in this document that teachers lack the required energy to motivate students to learn and hence their turnover rates were said aggravated the poor quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools of the country.

Ibrahim (2016) reported that a research with a case study design was conducted on finding out teachers' PCK for teaching English at secondary school level and how they developed their knowledge of teaching in the place called Banda Aceh in Indonesia. Four English language teachers participated in this study. The finding of this classroom research revealed that all the teachers displayed differences in their level of competence with regard to various areas of focus. On the whole, these teachers did not show adequate teaching skills and their PCK was considered to be inadequate for teaching English. This finding is consistent with the findings of the present study as it shows students moderate perceptions of their teachers' PCK.

The previous work of the same authors, Aguye and Belie (2024) dealt with EFL teachers' perception and practice of PCK from teachers' perspective using categorized PCK components. The findings clearly revealed that English teachers lacked the required amount of necessary level of PCK that help them achieve their targets of making students learn as per desired. Cognizant of this problem, the current study researchers recommend further and rigorous study to be embarked on this pressing matter. Unlike the previous work, the present study discusses findings from both teacher and students' perspectives in a mixed methods design.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the key findings stated above, the researchers of the present study concluded the following:

1. Secondary school Students' overall perception regarding their teachers' PCK viewed from the six categories of measuring teachers' knowledge base, seems to be moderately positive perception in majority of the cases.
2. As perceived self-efficacy beliefs are considered as affective variables of teachers' PCK, in the current study a lesson was procured that the result of these teachers' self-report questionnaire shows they have strongly positive attitude about their own activities of teaching reading skills. This means that they consider themselves as being efficacious in teaching reading skills, though this result was not supported by students' perception result.
3. The correlation coefficient result of the relationship between teachers' PCK from students' perspectives and teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs does not correspond. Hence, it is evident that a mismatching result was observed in this regard.

Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is essential for teachers, as it influences the effectiveness of reading instruction through both cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Studies focusing on teachers' mental frameworks, such as the present one, are valuable in helping educators manage their daily tasks of planning, monitoring, and evaluating instruction. Xu (2015) posits that addressing the diverse and multifaceted needs of learners requires teachers to employ instructional strategies that make learning accessible

and comprehensible. Thus, investigating students' perceptions of their teachers' PCK in reading instruction is critically important. This is because the relationship between students and teachers significantly affects and shapes the learning environment and educational context.

Finally, the present study researchers recommend the concerned government bodies of Ministry of Education to pay considerable attention to improve this scenario before it gets worse. The current study researchers recommend further and rigorous study to be conducted in a wider scope to alleviate the stated problems mentioned so far in this study in order to curb the existing problem and at the same time to increase generalizability of the findings.

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