





















## **Multi-word items**

A lexical item may consist of more than one word, as in a compound noun such as tennis shoes or sports car, or a phrasal verb such as to put someone up. Phrasal verb are notoriously difficult for learners of English because they are made up of simple words (often prepositions or adverbs).

## **Collocation**

How a lexical item collocates with another may cause some difficulties to EFL learners. For example, people are injured or wounded but things are damaged, and we can say a strong wind and strong coffee but it is a light wind not a weak wind and weak coffee not light coffee.

## **Appropriate use**

Zimmerman(2007) stated that when to use vocabulary appropriately is also problematical. Some words and expressions are restricted to use in particular context .For example, we can use pushing to mean almost in he is pushing fifty. But pushing is only used in this way with older people ,we do not say (he is pushing there!). Also it is important that students know whether the word or phrase has a marked style informal or formal.

According to Sudijono (2014) there are some factors that cause EFL students' difficulties in learning vocabulary:

1. The written form is different from the spoken form in English.
2. The number of words that the student need to learn is exceedingly large.
3. The limitation of the sources of information about word.
4. The complexity of the word knowledge .
5. Lack of understanding of the grammatical forms of the words.
6. The incorrect pronunciation is often caused by the lack of sound similarity between English and the students' native language.

Herrel (2000) argued that students experience difficulties in learning English vocabulary due to uncommon differences between their mother tongue language and the target language, those are:

1. Negative transfer.

It refers to transferring the target language using the students' first language which cannot be understood as every language has its own structure.

## 2. Cultural differences

As it is known English has become first language in many countries and blended in its community for example, English America, British, Australia and Canada. Therefore, students who learn English must be aware of the English culture because cultural awareness is needed to adjust English vocabulary in daily use.

## 3. Accent

English accents are varied depending on its communities. Students may have problems in understanding the native speakers.

## 4. Arbitrary

Arbitrary language causes some difficulties for foreign language learners, as they face the problem of understanding English words as how they are written are sometimes different with their pronunciation.

## 5. Grammar and vocabulary

English has many grammar rules which are confusing for non-English background. Students experience difficulties when they do not know the correct structure to use. It is because different structures have different meanings.

## 6. Pronunciation

To be understood, students need to pronounce the words correctly. However, pronouncing a new language for new students is difficult as the way people talk will be influenced by their first language.

According to Nation (2001, pp. 3-4) EFL learners experience the following difficulties in learning English vocabulary, those are:

1. Problems with academic language skills due to limited knowledge towards the target language.
2. Ineffective learning habits which can be a source of unsuccessful learning.
3. Native language intervention during the study.

4. Problems with teaching methods conducted by teacher which are not suitable to learners' preference.

5. Stress or trauma that has been experienced by a learner resulting difficulties in concentration.

## **12. Effective Ways of Developing EFL Learners' Vocabulary**

### **1. Possible sentences**

Raugh (1975) stated that teachers may use a method called possible sentences, which help the students to independently identify the meaning and relationships of unfamiliar words in content reading.

### **2. Knowledge Rating**

Knowledge rating is used to establish word learning. Herrel (2000) stated that students should learn to self- assess their level of word knowledge so they are better prepared to comprehend a text (p.116).

### **3. Literature**

Teaching vocabulary in the context of literature is very helpful in classroom activities to improve students' comprehension, without teacher attention and instruction to terminology, students' comprehension will necessarily suffer. For this reason, considerable attention to vocabulary development is basic to effective instruction in the content areas (Raugh, 1975).

### **4. Context Strategy**

Herrel (2000) described context strategy as where students use context clues in applying word meaning to unknown words . According to him context strategy encourages students to integrate information across sentences and at the same time incorporates the definition of the target word .

### **5. Semantic Cues**

Brown (2010) stated that there are several important features such as homographs, homophones, synonyms, antonyms, figurative language, multiple meanings, connotation, and denotation that need to be taken into account when teaching vocabulary.

## **13. Previous Related Studies**

Rohmatillah (2017) conducted “A Study on Students’ Difficulties in Learning Vocabulary” .The researcher collected data by using interviews and questionnaires, the study examined several challenges that hinder vocabulary-learning practices adopted by students such as pronouncing and spelling words (written and spoken forms do not match most of the time), choosing appropriate meanings of words (complexity of vocabulary knowledge) inflections of word forms, (inadequate understanding of grammar), and an excessive number of words that students need to learn. It also revealed some important factors of difficulties in learning vocabulary and attributed learning difficulties to various levels of language.

The researcher suggested that teachers should provide students with direct instructions and definitions of the words with new meanings and give examples, teachers should also introduce new meanings in a particular contexts ,in addition, students should be encouraged to increase their consciousness of the multiple meaning words by highlighting the words that pose confusion, furthermore, teachers should encourage students to practice reading sentences, and consulting dictionaries.

Salawazo, et.al.(2017) investigated “Analysis of Students’ Vocabulary In Learning English” the purpose of this study was to analyze students’ vocabulary in learning English of Ninth grade at SMP Swasta Yayasan Pangeran Antasari, Medan in the academic year of (2018/2019). The researchers used descriptive qualitative method and collected data by using a questionnaire and a vocabulary comprehension test . In analyzing the data, the researchers identified the difficulties the students encounter in vocabulary and the causes of these difficulties . The results of the study showed that students face difficulties in pronouncing the words, grammatical forms ,in addition, the students do not pay attention to study English words and forget words easily.

Sriwahyuningsih (2019) probed “Students’ Problems in Vocabulary Mastery at English Department of UPTK PADANG”’. The purpose of this study was to find out the students’ problems in vocabulary mastery. The researcher collected the data by using a questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire proved that students have different opinions about their ability in vocabulary mastery.

Elttayef and Hussein (2017) studied “The Difficulties that Teachers Face in Teaching English Vocabulary to the Arab Learners” . The study argued that EFL learners have insufficient basic knowledge of vocabulary, in addition, it pointed out lack of attention on the part of the teachers in highlighting the significance of English in classrooms. It also asserted that the teachers’ role in teaching English should be doubled because their students depend on them with the expectations that they would make students learn English soon. This study claimed that the socio-cultural background also affects teaching English to the Arab learners who attend English classes mostly to pass the courses. The researchers argued that with this weak background, students find difficulties later at college and universities when they engage themselves in specialized courses. This study concluded that EFL learners encountered difficulties in practicing other language skills such as listening, speaking, and highlighted problems related to teachers and curricular.

#### 14. Data Analysis and Discussion

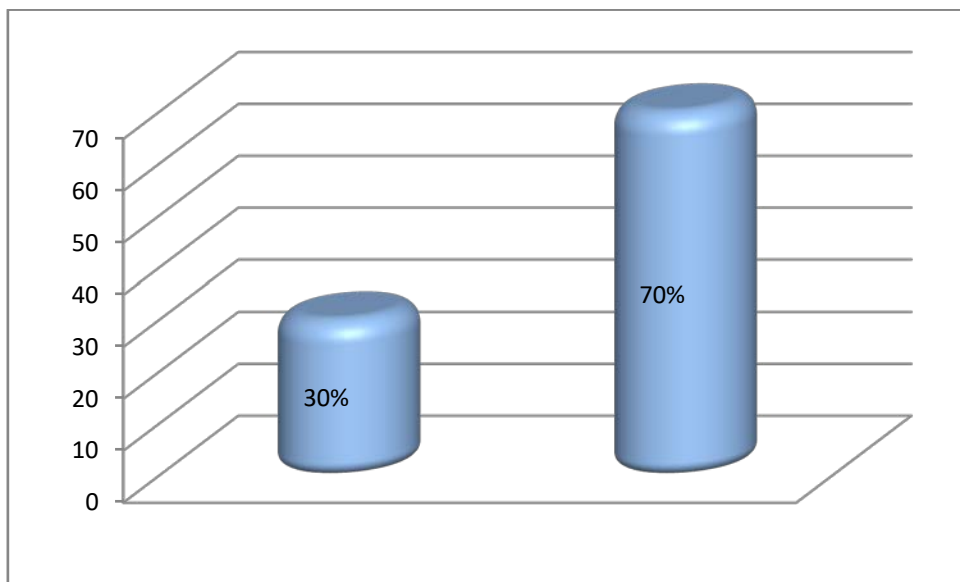
In this study a diagnostic vocabulary test was given to (30) Sudanese university second year students to collect the data, the main purpose of this test was to investigate vocabulary difficulties that the students encounter .

Hypotheses of the study:

1. Most EFL Sudanese university students face some difficulties with English vocabulary.
2. EFL Sudanese university students perform poorly when they are asked to do exercises based on vocabulary skills.

**Table No. (1) The frequency distribution for the respondents' answers of overall diagnostic vocabulary test.**

Answers	Frequencies	Percentage
Pass	9	30%
Fail	21	70%
Total	30	100%



The above table shows the summary of the results of the study of the overall vocabulary test, it's clear that the percentage of students who failed the test is far greater than the percentage of students who passed the test (30%) and (70%) respectively.

**Table (2) one sample T-TEST for the overall vocabulary test:**

Sections	No.	SD	t-value	DF	P-value
1	30	7.2	11	29	0.00
2	30	9.81	17	29	0.00
For all	30	8.03	15	29	0.00

The calculated value of T -TEST for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the overall test was (15 ) which is greater than the tabulated value of T -TEST at the degree of freedom (29 ) and the significant value level (0.05%) which was (6.54). This indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05 %) among the

answers of the respondents. On the basis of these findings we can conclude that the hypotheses of this study are verified.

## **15. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The results of the study revealed that the highest percentage of the students faces the following serious vocabulary problems:

- EFL Sudanese university students face some difficulties with the form, spelling system and pronunciation of English vocabulary, in addition, they are unaware of sense relations between words ,students do not know how to use English vocabulary ,furthermore, some students face some difficulties in understanding the meanings of words , contexts in which words are used ,and part of speech of the words. Therefore, they would not be able to use vocabulary properly.

-Moreover , the students do not know how English words collocate with each others to form compound words and they do not know how to write the compound words.

-They were unable to infer meanings of unfamiliar words and make predictions using their personal knowledge and experience.

-They lack knowledge of contextual and cultural aspects of English and face problems when they are asked to brain storm vocabulary.

- They have poor awareness of the importance of English vocabulary.

- They face the problem of lack of concentration.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following points:

- Students should be exposed to English words repeatedly in multiple contexts in order to learn new vocabulary items.

- Teachers should understand the importance of vocabulary if they want their students to achieve academic success in the language learning process.



- The grammar of a new item should be taught as it is important to provide learners with grammatical restriction of words.
- Knowledge of collocational appropriateness is part of vocabulary competence and fluency that students need to be aware of.
- Classifying and categorizing exercises are useful ways to reinforce students understanding of English vocabulary.
- Teaching vocabulary in contexts is more helpful to learners, and putting the new English words within a text makes the learners manipulate the meaning of the new words.
- In teaching vocabulary the teacher should use some techniques of vocabulary teaching such as demonstration, explanation, discovery, quick questions and presentations.
- While dealing with vocabulary the teacher should take into account three important aspects of words -their form, their meaning and their distribution; he/she should consider various kinds of classes of words in the function of the language as the forms , meaning distribution and classification of words differences lead to vocabulary problem teaching.
- It is also important to help students make associations between the vocabulary words they are learning and their prior knowledge as it is essential to relate new words to experiences that students may have had.
- Vocabulary instructions must be formalized, structured, and related in a meaningful way to the content that students are learning.
- Having students brainstorm, categorize, organize, and analyze words help them in understanding the meaning of the words in relation to other words.
- To develop students' vocabulary skills there are certain effective ways that EFL teachers should adopt such as the strategy of possible sentences, knowledge rating, using literature , context strategy ,semantic cues, and semantical analysis .

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