

## Reasons that face third secondary school students in vocabulary mastery at Al-Hayat school in Nalut

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### Abstract

This study aims to find out the difficulties faced third secondary school students in Al-Hayat school in Nalut, in applying vocabulary appropriately in the correct context. The research aims to answer the research question based on the reasons that make students struggle in choosing correct vocabulary to be applied in its suitable context, and to explore key challenges that the result of finding shows represented in limited vocabulary knowledge, misunderstanding of word meanings, fear of making mistakes, and the difficulty of applying words correctly in different contexts. In this research, the data was collected through the use of both a student questionnaire and student interview to address the research question. The questionnaire's participants were 60 third secondary school students

whereas ten students were subjected to be involved in face to face interview. The findings revealed that such difficulties significantly hinder students' ability to express themselves effectively in English and those are the following: educational, cognitive, and psychological factors. Indeed, the use of the vocabulary would be easier if the students make their effort to apply whatever they have learnt and practice it with the supervision of their teachers.

**Keywords:** Linguistics challenges, Vocabulary, Correct usage, Learning.

### \* Introduction

Learning English is one of the most important skills that a person needs in our current time. It is a global language that is used in various fields, such as education, business, travel, and even technology. Although, mastering the language requires time and effort, it

opens wide ways for an individual to communicate with people from different countries and enhances the opportunity to obtain better jobs. learning English is not only limited at acquiring words and grammar, but also it includes developing listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. With the availability of many resources such as applications, books, and movies, learning English has become easier and more enjoyable. Language learning depends on a strong will and good planning on how to learn and continuously practice the use of the learnt language.

To learn how to speak, one needs to know the skills of the language and how to apply them. However, those skills are based on the use of one element which is considered to be important in learning the language and without no communication will be achieved and this element is vocabulary.

Vocabulary is the foundation of any language and one of the most important elements of an effective communication. This means that Learning new vocabulary enhances students' abilities, helps them understand others correctly. Therefore, it is considered to be an essential step in developing language skills, whether in their native language or another.

However, using vocabulary in appropriate contexts is an essential factor in enhancing students skills of writing and speaking. These skills are very important for academic and professional success. When students use vocabulary correctly in its appropriate context, the translation of the desired idea would be easier to listeners. Also, students who are good at applying vocabulary in appropriate contexts are more prepared to learn new vocabulary easily and apply it in speaking.

#### **\* Problem of the study**

There are many factors contribute to the reasons that make students struggle when deciding to communicate perfectly in speaking. Those factors in the questioned study are related to vocabulary, exemplified in lack of motivation, difficulty of learning new vocabulary, lack of writing and speaking practice, insufficient repetition, fear of making mistake, reliance on translation, and L1 interference.

#### **\* Significance of study**

This study aims at answering the research question represented in What are the main reasons that make students less able to apply correct vocabulary in its suitable context?. It also focuses on the importance of developing teaching methods that

emphasize the role of vocabulary for better communication. In learning or teaching the language, the use of vocabulary in the appropriate context, helps the speaker to convey his message smoothly. It also remove ambiguity from the words and the contexts. However, There are also a set of strategies that focus on providing a framework to understand various contents and facilitate them according to the strategies applied in an education curriculum to achieve the best result in using vocabulary in their correct context. Since the context is an essential tool for understanding the world around us, developing vocabulary and comprehending it is crucial for enhancing a person's ability to communicate effectively, that needs to be done by teaching new element of vocabulary in the context and show how this element should be applied in different situations.

The significance of the vocabulary is not limited to language only, but extends to other fields of knowledge, enabling a deeper understanding of how context shapes vocabulary and influences its interpretation in relation to the environment and the world around us. Through this study, the researcher aims to contribute to vocabulary learning and ensures its appropriate

use by understanding the reasons that hinder students from applying suitable vocabulary in its correct place to convey the intended message. This study also will contribute to identify multiple methods that enhances students' ability to overcome their challenges and use vocabulary confidently in the correct context, making the process of the leaning more easier and more effective.

#### **\* Purpose of the study**

The study aims to know the difficulties or problems facing students in using vocabulary in its correct place. In speaking, when students are able to use words in the correct context, this helps them understand the meaning better and enhances their ability to comprehend different texts. Also, understanding how to use vocabulary in the correct contexts contributes to language development in general. Learning how to apply vocabulary in the right place enhances the development of students linguistic and academic skills, which should have a positive impact on their academic performance.

Through this study, it is aimed to contribute to learning vocabulary and seeks the reasons that make students less able to apply the correct vocabulary in its suitable context.

### **\* Research questions**

The study stands for answering the following question: -

What are the main factors that make students struggle when choosing a suitable vocabulary to use?

### **\* Scope of the study**

This study was conducted in Nalut city, Libya. Al Hayat secondary school, the sample of the study was a total of sixty female students. A quantitative and qualitative approach were applied to be used as a method of data collection. Therefore, the study hypothesized the following: -

1- students might face difficulty when applying correct vocabulary due to Limited Vocabulary knowledge.

2- If the Students practice vocabulary regularly, they will not struggle to use words accurately.

3- Lack of exposure to authentic English materials reduces proper vocabulary usage.

4- Low confidence or anxiety might limit students' correct use of vocabulary in speaking.

5- The correct use of English vocabulary might be affected by the L1 interference.

6- Structured vocabulary learning strategies, and curriculum limitation, time capacity for each class might play a considerable role in reducing

the chance to apply correct vocabulary.

### **\* Literature review**

1- Linguistic Challenges: Noam Chomsky (1957) says that Linguistic challenges arise from the gap between what the student knows and what is needed to be learnt by practice. On the same line, Stephen Krashen states that Learning occurs when linguistic challenges are overcome through continuous exposure to the language (1982). Another idea has been given by Vygotsky who says that Social interaction is a key to overcome linguistic challenges (1987). These theories however conclude that in order for the individuals to overcome the linguistic challenges, he needs to practice and interact with others by using the acquired vocabulary.

2- Vocabulary: It is a set of words that an individual knows and uses in communication. Another definition has been stated by David Wilkins who says that vocabulary is the tool that enables us to express ideas (1972). Also, John Read defines vocabulary by stating that "Vocabulary is a fundamental part of the comprehension process"(2000). Whereas, Michael Lewis says that "Vocabulary is not just words; it is the keys that unlock meanings"(1993). It is clear that

vocabulary is not merely a collection of words, but a powerful tool essential for expressing ideas, understanding texts, and unlocking meaning. It plays a vital role in both communication and comprehension, making it a foundational element in language learning and use.

3- Correct Usage: Means the ability to place words in their appropriate contexts. Wilga Rivers says that "Correct usage of vocabulary requires a deep understanding of a context" (1981). M.A.K. Halliday points the same idea by stating that effective communication depends on the correct usage of language (1978). A similar definition has been applied by L. S. Vygotsky who says that correct usage cannot be separated from a deep understanding of meanings (1978). It is evident that correct usage of vocabulary is closely tied to a deep understanding of both context and meaning. Accurate word placement is essential for effective communication, and without it, the intended message can easily be misunderstood or lost.

4- Learning: It is the process of acquiring knowledge and skills. According to Jean Piaget Learning is an active process in which an individual interacts with their environment (1973). Whereas, Albert Bandura adds that "Social learning

involves observation and imitation" (1977). B.F. Skinner said that Learning relies on reinforcement and repetition (1953). Moreover, the process of learning is not just a transfer of information but an active process that requires the individual to interact with their environment. By integrating these ideas, it could be understood that learning becomes as a dynamic process reliant on a variety of factors, contributing to the effective development of skills and knowledge.

5- Related studies: English language learning difficulties are among the most prominent challenges facing students at different education levels, as these difficulties affect their academic achievement and a level of understanding of the language, these challenges may arise as a result of several factors, including weak educational capabilities or failure to adapt curricular to meet students' needs. However, the importance of studying these difficulties is to determine their causes and develop effective solutions to overcome them in a manner that suits different levels of students. The correct application of vocabulary in a correct context remains one of the most important challenges that face learners. While many EFL students possess a reasonable amount of vocabulary,

they fail to use it appropriately and accurately. Recent studies highlight this weakness as a linguistics, pedagogical and psychological challenge.

Lutfiyah, Nuraeningsih, and Rusiana (2022) conducted a study to investigate the obstacles faced by 30 students at Muria university in Kudus. The study revealed that students often adopt compensatory strategies such as dictionary use, memorization, peer practice, listening to English songs, discussions with friends, and attending individual classes to enhance learning and applying vocabulary.

In a study done by Shakeel, F. (2020) to explore the difficulties EFL students face in mastering English vocabulary and underlying factors contributing to these challenges by the use of two questionnaires to 98 students from two different levels. The result declared that curriculum played a role in mastering vocabulary, ministry of education and curriculum planners should integrate culture in the syllabus which reflects on Saudi Arabia society allowing students to practice the language by the use of the real context.

A nother study done by Fitria, et al. (2023) to find out factors

influencing student' mastery of the vocabulary by the use of the sample of two teachers and six students. The data techniques and source triangulation were used as a data collection tools. The findings revealed that students face difficulty due to internal and external factors represented. The result was divided into three important parts. The first one was related to mastering vocabulary which was due to translation, memorization. Second one was related to the habit of practice, and last one was connected with success in mastering vocabulary which was lack of appropriate strategies, lack of guidance and motivation.

Based on the study has been done by Amiruldin bin Ishak, et al. (2023) to examin the factors affecting vocabulary mastery by the use of studies published between 2001-2021, They found that not only linguistics factors are playing role in mastering vocabulary but also psychological factors, teaching and learning factors, and communication factors are as important as the former.

Also, McCarty (1990:16) contributed to the discussion by highlighting the importance of understanding the meaning of a lexical item and the fundamental relationship it holds in language

teaching. This aligns with Wallace's (1988) view that vocabulary is central to language learning, emphasizing that without adequate vocabulary, effective communication cannot be achieved.

However; studies reviewed in this paper indicate that educational beliefs play a pivotal role in shaping learners' behaviors, motivation, and overall engagement in the learning process. The difficulties that students encounter in using vocabulary accurately and appropriately within context can often be attributed to several interrelated factors, including limited exposure to diverse linguistic environments, insufficient opportunities for practical application, L1 interference, translation and inadequate understanding of nuanced word meanings.

Consequently, it is imperative for educators and curriculum developers to consider learners' beliefs when designing instructional strategies and materials. By doing so, they can cultivate more supportive and effective learning environments that facilitate students' ability to use vocabulary appropriately and successfully transition to academic study in English.

### **\* Methodology**

Since vocabulary is an essential tool for effective communication, many students face challenges in using it appropriately in different contexts. Understanding vocabulary is not limited to knowing the words; it also requires the ability to apply them in the correct situations. Therefore, it is important to explore the reasons that hinder students from choosing correct element of vocabulary to suit the context effectively. Therefore, in order to gather the data the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods was applied.

1- Participants: The participants chosen for the questionnaire were 60 third secondary Al-Hayat school students in Nalut. The students were divided into two classes, the first class was with 31 students and the other one was with 29 students.

2- Setting: The research study was conducted in Nalut at Al-Hayat secondary school, in 2025. the processes of gathering the data was started from 28<sup>th</sup> of April until the 15<sup>th</sup> May for the distribution of the questionnaire and setting the interview.

3- Instruments: A quantitative approach (questionnaire) and qualitative approach (interview) were applied to gather data for this study.

1- Questionnaire: A questionnaire is a research tool made up of a series of questions aimed at collecting information from individuals. It is commonly used to obtain data about people's views, behaviors, or experiences, and it can produce both numerical (quantitative) and descriptive (qualitative) results depending on the type of questions included. Dörnyei (2007) who states that questionnaires are "one of the most popular instruments for collecting data in the social sciences because of their versatility and efficiency." Moreover, Gillham (2000) emphasizes that questionnaires are particularly useful for obtaining standardized information from large populations, allowing for comparison and statistical analysis.

2- Questionnaire design: In designing the questionnaire for this study, closed-ended questions—particularly Yes/No formats—were purposefully selected for their clarity, ease of response, and analytical efficiency. This choice is supported by Tourangeau, & Rasinski, (1988) whose research indicated that closed questions reduce bias and improve data accuracy. Further support is provided by McGuckin, & Kearney, (2009) who highlighted the reliability benefits of Yes/No questions in

minimizing ambiguity and ensuring more consistent responses. The questionnaire was distributed in AL-Hayat school and sixty copies were involved to be completed by the participants.

4- The Interview and Interview Design: An interview is a dynamic interaction between two individuals with the aim of collecting information for research purposes involving systematic description, prediction, or explanation. It is considered one of the most effective qualitative data collection methods, allowing researchers to explore participants' experiences, perspectives, and motivations in depth (Creswell, 2012). According to Kvale (1996), interviews provide a unique opportunity to gain insights into the lived experiences of participants, making them essential for studies requiring contextual understanding. The interview was conducted with ten students who were subjected in the questionnaire. The interview consisted of five questions focusing on the correct use of vocabulary, the reasons behind students' difficulties in using vocabulary appropriately, and the possible methods to help students develop and improve their vocabulary skills.



## \* Data analysis

### 1- Questionnaire Analysis

**Table 1: what are the reasons prevent you from using vocabulary correctly in your speaking? (you can select more than one option)**

	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Lack of understanding of the meaning	56	93.3	4	6.66
Insufficient practice and exercises	33	55	27	45
Lack of self-confidence	10	16.6	50	83.5
Distracted mind	4	17.4	54	90

This table presents the participants' responses regarding the reasons that prevent them from using vocabulary correctly in speaking or writing. The most commonly cited factor was lack of understanding the meaning which counted for 56% followed by insufficient practice and exercise which was represented by 55 %.

**Table 2: How often do you use new vocabulary you learn in your daily life?**

	Frequency	percent
<b>Always</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21.6</b>
<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Rare</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6.6</b>

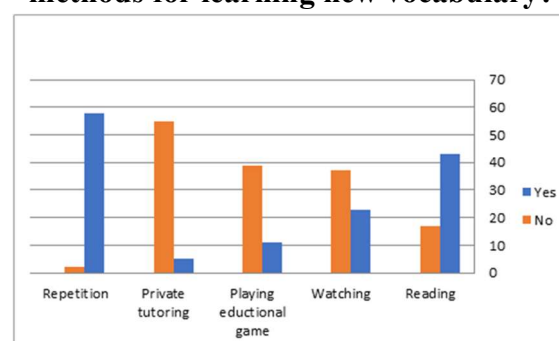
The table shows that the strongest percent was allocated by the choice sometimes for the frequency of applying new vocabulary in daily conversation where as always was represented by 21.6%.

**Table 3: Does the content of the curriculum help gaining new vocabulary and apply it correctly.**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	17	28.3
No	43	71.6
Total	60	100 %

The table illustrates the responses to the question, "Does the content or the curriculum help gain vocabulary and know their use?" based on a sample of 60 participants. According to the data, a significant majority of respondents, approximately 71.6% answered no whereas 28.3% stated yes.

**Table 4: What are your preferred methods for learning new vocabulary?**



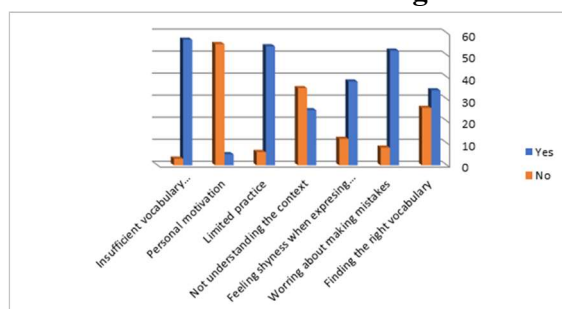
It is clear from the chart the less preferred method for learning vocabulary private tutoring and playing educational games which was to some extent similar to watching. Repetition was the strongest preferred method of learning vocabulary.

**Table 5: Do you think the curriculum encourages effective vocabulary learning?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, very much	30	50
somewhat	24	40
No, it needs improvement	6	10
Total	60	100 %

In this table, it is evident that (40%) said that the curriculum somewhat encourages vocabulary learning, while (10%) stated that it needs improvement, and (50%) said that the curriculum helps a lot.

**Graph6: What is your biggest challenge when trying to use vocabulary in discussions or writing?**



In the results of this question, psychological factors (feeling shyness and worrying about making mistake) and insufficient vocabulary, limited practice counted for the strongest reasons where as personal motivation and not understanding the context was not a challenge for the students.

**Table7: Do you participate in group or peer activities or conversations that enhance vocabulary use?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, frequently	14	23.3
Sometimes	22	36.6
Rarely	24	40

This graph shows that only 23.3 of the participants engage in group activities to promote vocabulary, while 40% of the participants say they rarely use this method as a method of enhancing vocabulary, while 36.6% of the participants say they sometimes participate.

**Table 8: Do you have enough time to study new vocabulary and use it during the school day?**

	Frequency	Percent
NO	53	88.3
Yes	7	11.6
Total	60	100.0

11.6% of the participants stated that they have enough time to learn new vocabulary during the school day, while 88.3% said they do not, with a clear difference of 76 %.

**Table 9: Do You Find it difficult to use correct word in its correct place?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	58.3
No	25	41.6
Total	60	100.0

The bar chart presents the results of a question that asked the participants: "Do you find it difficult

to use the correct word in its correct place?" Out of 60 participants, 35 responded "Yes," representing 58.3%, while 25 responded "No," making up 41.6%.

1- Open- ended question: The questionnaire included this question as an open ended question "Do you follow any strategy to develop your vocabulary usage?", eight participants stated that they learn new words by repetition. while others said they learn new vocabulary every day by memorizing, playing games, peer work and reading. The strategies mentioned varied: some participants reported watching educational videos, movies, and podcasts; others said they read books and novels. One participant indicated that she speaks with native speakers, while others mentioned using an English dictionary to improve their vocabulary.

2- Interview Analysis: In response to the first question, which asked participants to define vocabulary and explain its importance, the answers varied but shared common themes.

All the participants shared the same view stating that vocabulary means the words people use, and it's important because we need to know them to write complete sentences and to communicate. It's important in studying because it helps us express

ourselves clearly and understand others, a person uses vocabulary in order to express his or her thoughts and opinions also in writing.

For the second question, what methods do you use to develop your vocabulary learning? If you use multiple methods, what are they? The responses were as follows: Three participants answered that they read books, articles, and stories. They also practice using new vocabulary in conversations, watching videos, using dictionaries, trying to write stories and practicing speaking with each other.

Four of the participants answered that they read novels, write stories, watch educational videos. One of the interviewees pointed out that practicing using vocabulary in the class with the supervision of the teacher will help acquiring vocabulary and they will not forget it.

One other interviewee said "I chat with people about various subjects by the use of the internet. I try to create words so that I can use them in different ways, and I usually write, think in English it really helps me, so whenever I see a situation or something I start thinking in English and if I didn't know the exact word that I should think about, I'll just search about it and this is how I learn English. however, she also claimed

that the time for thinking will be short which makes me feel nervous when I can't find the correct vocabulary in mind. Two of the interviewees stated that the use of the correct vocabulary would be easy if the learner is surrounded by English environment where he is forced to use English only.

As for the third question, which was titled "What are the main reasons that prevent students from using vocabulary in the right context?

One participant answered not using the vocabulary in the real situation will reduce its chance to be applied correctly. Moreover, when studying vocabulary teachers should focus on how this element should be used in the conversation and in writing as they are both important. Another interviewee stated that "feeling anxious makes me misuse the vocabulary and when someone asked me to talk in front of others I feel stuck". Another student confirmed that "I think the lack of understanding of the context and because English vocabulary has different meaning so that makes me confused between which meaning should I use. Another student added that in English you may find many words with same meaning so to choose the correct meaning one needs to understand the correct context.

Two students declared that their curriculum does not support the practice of the vocabulary. As it is just three class per week for English. One student stated that repetition and memorizing help me learn the vocabulary but how to apply it is still problem.

For the fourth question: What are the main steps for students to use vocabulary appropriately?

The first participant answered students need to read the paragraph or a sentence more than once to ensure they fully understand the context. They should keep in mind that it is not necessary to understand every single word; instead, they should focus on grasping the general meaning. This approach will help them identify the appropriate vocabulary to use. Another participant responded that students should read carefully and deeply to fully understand the meaning of what they are reading. They must avoid misunderstanding words or translating them inaccurately. Students try to think in Arabic and then try to find an equivalent in English. It's important to pay attention to how words are used in context, as the sentence often reveals the true meaning of the word."

Another participant added we can understand the meaning of the

word in context. Then, we should practice using it in sentences, speaking and writing it more often, listening to native speakers and reviewing the required vocabulary. Two participants stated using words or vocabulary in your own sentences makes you remember how to use it. However, he claimed that if the students have not been engaged during the class that reduces the chance for them to use the vocabulary in a context. Teachers should vary the activities where students use the same vocabulary in different contexts. Other interviewees reason the inability to apply correct vocabulary to their laziness in learning vocabulary. They also claim that the environment does not support as when they leave school no chance to speak English would be provided. Another student added that English is a language, it is not a subject which means you need to use it all the time to master it.

### **\* Findings and Discussion**

Since vocabulary is considered to be the cornerstone of mastering any language, researchers constantly strive to identify the reasons that make students less able to apply correct vocabulary in its correct context.

A wide range of strategies has been developed to help language

learners to acquire vocabulary and use it accurately and appropriately in various contexts. In this regard, the present study aims to explore the main challenges that hinder students from using vocabulary effectively in different context. The first finding was revealed by the question Do you face any difficulty in using the word on its appropriate context which declared that students face number of challenges that hinder them from applying correct vocabulary, about 93% stating that insufficient vocabulary in mind reduces their correct vocabulary to be used. That was supported by Shabiob, A, Hablaja, S (2024) when exploring obstacles facing students in speaking, they confirmed that lack of vocabulary as a linguistic factor hider student from speaking. That was supported also with the result obtained by the use of the questionnaire question which asks students to declare another big challenge, limited practice was a factor counting for 88%. This also was declared in an interview when one of the interviewees stated that laziness in learning and practicing vocabulary make them unable to apply correct vocabulary in the correct context. However, worrying about making mistakes and feeling shyness might be reasons behind this

problem. Feeling shyness not only was the considered challenge but it is also might reason the choice of practicing in group where 66% of the students chose the choice rarely when asked if they participate in group activities. However, in this study, motivation did not affect students' ability to use correct vocabulary since 83% stated they are motivated enough to learn and apply correct vocabulary and that was opposite to the hypothesis four. Furthermore, lack of understanding the context was also an important factor to consider, about 93% declared that. This finding was supported by McCarty who emphasizes on the importance of the context in learning vocabulary (1990:16).

Another finding was declared in the interview, when students asked to state steps for applying correct vocabulary stated that students should understand the general idea of the topic not focusing on understanding each word separately, and try to avoid translating or finding equivalent in L1. According to Nation, (2001) points out that simply knowing the meaning of a word is not enough to use it correctly. Learners must also develop contextual and functional knowledge of vocabulary. He explains that one of the main reasons students fail to use words

appropriately is their lack of productive vocabulary knowledge. Nation emphasizes that learners need sufficient exposure to vocabulary in a variety of contexts in order to use words accurately and meaningfully.

With regard to the reasons that prevent from using vocabulary correctly in speaking, one of the results obtained from the questionnaire showed that 55 % of students stated that a lack of practice and exercises related to the use of vocabulary in its right place. The interview results related to the third question revealed a contradiction in students' responses. Some students indicated that one of the reasons behind the difficulty in using words correctly is the misunderstanding of the word itself or the failure to grasp the intended meaning of a sentence that conveys the same idea. This confusion often leads to inaccurate word usage within the context. Additionally, some students pointed out that not understanding the main idea of the text poses an additional obstacle to using appropriate vocabulary. These findings are consistent with Hypothesis (3).

Other findings from the questionnaire and interview indicated that the most effective methods for enabling students to use vocabulary correctly include watching movies,

playing educational games, reading a large number of books, and repetition. Students who were also interviewed emphasized the importance of using various and varied methods including watching movies, practicing educational games, and repetition which was almost the same finding of the study done by Amiruldin bin Ishak, et al. (2023).

Another result showed that about % 71.6 showed that the curriculum does not contribute to enhance the use of vocabulary on its correct place. They stated, in the interview, that there should be an integration between the curriculum and their educational life. Ding, Reynolds, and Szabo confirmed the importance of balancing the use of receptive vocabulary knowledge and productive use of that element. This way will enable students to understand the use then apply it confidently (2024 ). However, in the questionnaire, students confirmed that curriculum encouraged their learning making a percent of 50% which make a possibility to understand that teachers do not play their role effectively in teaching vocabulary that was similar to the result obtained by the interview where the interviewer stated that teachers should vary the exercise

where students can practice the use of the vocabulary in different context.

According to Schmitt, N. (2008). emphasizes that systematically integrating vocabulary instruction into the curriculum significantly enhances learners' ability to acquire and use vocabulary effectively. He notes that curricula which provide sufficient exposure to vocabulary in varied contexts are more effective in helping students use words accurately within context. Schmitt also recommends that vocabulary instruction should focus not only on memorization, but also on meaning and contextual usage through targeted learning activities.

Question eight in the questionnaire indicated that 88.3% of the students reported that they do not have enough time to learn vocabulary during class hours. This result appears to contradict the earlier finding, which suggested that the curriculum helps in acquiring and developing vocabulary to use it in the correct context. This contradiction may be explained by the fact that, while the curriculum contains elements that support vocabulary development, the limited time allocated for teaching does not allow teachers to effectively implement these elements in the classroom. This however, could give clear view for

the curriculum designer to consider the fact that learning vocabulary needs to be done within the context by allowing extra classes to be included in the plane of preparing English lessons especially, as English is not a subject, it is a language which was stated in the interview.

Webb, S. (2008). points out that the effectiveness of vocabulary learning does not depend solely on the quality of the curriculum or teaching materials, but is also strongly influenced by the amount of time available for exposure and practice. While some curricula are well-designed to support vocabulary development, the limited time actually allocated for a class often prevents the intended outcomes from being achieved. Webb emphasizes that learners need repeated exposure to vocabulary in a variety of contexts, which requires sufficient time something that is often lacking in time-constrained educational settings (2008).

The results of interview also showed that excessive dependence on translation from the mother tongue (Arabic) is a major reason for occurring in contextual errors. Many students think in Arabic and then try to translate into English, which leads to a loss of accuracy or falling into literal translations, this result is

supported by the hypothesis (5). This finding was consistent with what Chomsky (1965) and Krashen (1982) referred to on the impact of negative linguistic overlap between the mother tongue and the second language.

Although the questionnaire showed that 83% of the participants indicated that the lack of confidence or fear of error does not considered to be an obstacle, the interviews revealed that psychological factors such as stress or anxiety affect students' performance, especially in official situations. This indicates a gap between self -perception and actual linguistic behavior, this result also supported by hypothesis (4) .

The results of the fourth interview question with students revealed a set of key steps they believe are necessary for using vocabulary in the appropriate context. Students emphasized the importance of reading the entire sentence or text to fully understand the context, which helps in identifying the correct meaning of the word. Some also noted the need to avoid literal translation, as the true meaning of a word often becomes clear through the full sentence. Additionally, students highlighted the importance of repetition and practicing the word in complete sentences, reading various stories,



and using familiar vocabulary in their writing and conversations. These findings suggest that if students consistently apply these strategies, they will be better able to use vocabulary correctly in context.

One of the results derived from the open-ended questions specifically the one that allowed participants to explain the strategies they use to develop their vocabulary revealed several effective approaches. Students stated that they improve their vocabulary by watching educational videos, films, and listening to podcast episodes. In addition, they mentioned reading books and novels in English, challenging themselves with original English content, using English dictionaries to understand new words, and actively practicing the new vocabulary in writing and speaking tasks with the supervision of their teachers. These strategies were identified by students as effective in enhancing their vocabulary knowledge and usage. This study confirms, based on the findings, that students' difficulties in using vocabulary correctly stem from educational, cognitive, and psychological factors. Therefore, it is essential for teachers and curriculum designers to carefully consider these underlying causes and work toward

developing effective solutions. Doing so will help in designing a curriculum that addresses these challenges and enhances students' ability to use vocabulary accurately and efficiently.

#### **\* Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, which explored the challenges students face in using vocabulary appropriately in context, the following recommendations are proposed: teachers should integrate new vocabulary into realistic and practical classroom situations such as dialogues, role-plays, and language games. This helps students understand the true meaning of words through context. Students should be explicitly taught effective strategies such as spaced repetition, flashcards, mind mapping, and using contextual clues to infer meaning.

Students should be encouraged to think directly in English by engaging in tasks such as describing pictures, storytelling, or participating in discussions without translating from their first language. Creating more space for student interaction through group discussions, oral presentations, and collaborative projects allows for active vocabulary use and reinforcement. Allocate dedicated time for vocabulary development within the school schedule. However, Organizing

workshops to raise awareness of effective vocabulary teaching and learning techniques will not only support educators but also learners to improve language performance.

Although the study examined a vital issue to be considered, it is difficult to generalize all the findings reported by the learners regarding the techniques they used to develop their vocabulary learning skills, as each method offers different advantages. Moreover, vocabulary acquisition methods vary from one individual to another, depending on how frequently and effectively they apply these strategies, as well as the amount of time they dedicate to learning and acquiring vocabulary. However, the current study focused primarily on the reasons behind the failure to use or apply vocabulary in appropriate contexts, it is worth noting that many other studies have concentrated on different linguistic aspects, such as grammar, pronunciation, and listening. Moreover, although the sample of the current study was to some extent small, it revealed considerable findings related to questioned context of the study which provides teachers with important educational aspect to be taken into consideration. More importantly, educational policymakers should design curricula that include

techniques aims at developing learners' vocabulary acquisition skills, rather than relying solely on the content of the textbooks.

This study highlights the general challenges students face in using vocabulary correctly and emphasizes the importance of addressing these issues in language education. It points to the role of teaching strategies, curriculum design, and individual learning differences. The study also calls for more focus on vocabulary development in both classroom instruction and educational policy.

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