REVIEW OF LITERATURE
CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Overview of Chapter One

The introductory chapter or the previous chapter discusses a general background on language, importance of English for a second language learner, its approaches and common teaching methods which the researcher thinks it is substantial to establish a better understanding of the current area of research.

There are two main themes that revolve around this thesis; the vocabulary knowledge and its related areas and the various factors that affect the vocabulary knowledge of the students. It is, first, essential to shed some light on past literature views of vocabulary knowledge for ESL learners and its significant impact on language skills. Here, the literature also specifies the receptive and the productive knowledge of vocabulary in more detail.

The second half of the chapter is about various factors that affect English as Second Language learners’ vocabulary knowledge; linguistically, sociologically and cognitively and suggests possible ways to help the students. The chapter will be linked with the previously discussed issues (aspects of vocabulary knowledge and how vocabulary is learned) and will conclude by addressing the need for multiple measures and what this tells about students’ vocabulary knowledge.

2.2 Previous studies on Vocabulary knowledge

The knowledge of vocabulary is very crucial for any language use states (Schmitt, 2014). For a native speaker or L1 students it is universal that the child knows as to how to express a word in mother tongue, whereas L2 or second language learner faces various complexity. For example, L2 learner knows to write a word but may have trouble to utter the word correctly, in few others the learner knows not the synonyms like knowing only one meaning of a word and not knowing the other meaning of a word If the learners are good at both areas of form and meaning, then he/she has difficulty using the word appropriately in different contexts. Therefore for second language learners the lexicons or the vocabulary knowledge are quite a complex cognitive process.
In the recent decades, Nation (2001) one of the world’s leading authorities on vocabulary knowledge pointed out that ‘words are not isolated units of language. Based on the earlier word framework (Nation, 1990; Nation, 2001) points out that a word involves in form, meaning and use, and each category is broken down into receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge.

The vocabulary knowledge in second language learning has currently taken an upturn in advancement from researchers and other specialists. Laufer and Nation (1999) acknowledged this inflation of vocabulary studies: “This inflated importance can be explained to understand that there is reasonable advantage in acquiring knowledge about particular components of language learners’ knowledge ability as the knowledge can be used for experimental and academic purposes.” Another researcher states vocabulary is not just a set of linguistic units but also an attribute of individual language learners, in the form of vocabulary knowledge, (Read 2000, p. 14). Another researcher Boggards (2001) expresses “Vocabulary knowledge constitutes an essential part of competence for a second language learner” and one needs to improve his/her size and depth of vocabulary i.e. one should know as many words as possible and one should know different aspects like meanings, synonyms etc. of the words known (p. 321).

The vocabulary field was neglected until the 1980s and grammar was given supremacy higher than vocabulary in the area of language teaching research. For the past twenty years, there had been vast number of research studies emerged in the field of vocabulary learning states (Horwitz, 1998; Laufer, 1998; Laufer, et al. 2001; Laufer, 2009; Nation, 1983, 1990, 2001, 2006 a, b; Read, 2000, 2007; Schmitt, 2008a, 2010).

Richards (2000) expresses that vocabulary knowledge is very crucial and a fundamental base for English as Second Language (ESL) learners. According to the past research vocabulary knowledge defines as it is the primary action in studying a second language, however a student or a learner by no means can accomplish the vocabulary learning as this learning is a continuous process either in learners’ second language or first language. Several other reasons have been mentioned about the importance of vocabulary studies. Nation (1993) points out that considerable amount of words in mental lexicon is necessary for students to use language competently and the student has to achieve the knowledge that derives from this use. Therefore this shows the significance of vocabulary increase as a basis for the suitable improvement
of language skills, generally for specific and for intellectual growth. Also extensive
research suggests that vocabulary does not emerge as a separate component of
language characteristics, but rather it is significantly considered as a linchpin for
constructing and expanding the linguistic performance.

Long and Richards (1997) point out that from the mid-1980s, in the area of
vocabulary learning there has been a tentative based studies and progression on
various issues such as learning to use words productively, store the learned words for
long-term, retrieve the exact words from the mental lexicon and use the vocabulary in
second language. Contemporary studies on language learning have started to give
vocabulary a higher status when compared with other language skills. For instance,
Zimmerman (1997b) comments “vocabulary is very important component in the field
of any language and it is also very important to the normal language learner.” Gass
and Selinker (2001, p. 372, cf das Neves Seesink, (2007) point out that “…there are
various conclusions for presuming that lexis is paramount in second language
knowledge or learning and that the lexicon or words may be the most essential
language attributes for learners.” There has been ample amount of research done with
gregard to various language skills and vocabulary development. Haynes and Baker
(1993) highlight the importance of vocabulary knowledge for second language
learners in reading; Ellis (1994) with respect to the listening; Laufer and Nation
second language learners need to know 2,000 words for transmitting general
information to the receiver; an individual has to know 3,000 word families to read and
understand a valid text or document and 10,000 words to understand a text containing
complex or challenging academic texts.

These statements are presently accepted by many researchers and linguists
states Folse (2011); and these statements have adapted into many works and papers
involving vocabulary in language education (Laufer, 2009; Milton, 2009). The
research study on lexical attributes has looked at many domains in relation to
vocabulary learning such as the strategies and productive methods of teaching
vocabulary Schmitt (2008a; 2008b), techniques to accomplish vocabulary tailored
according to the need of the learner (Oxford & Crookall, 1990), next to expand the
word size, word frequency (Laufer & Ravenhorst-Kalovski, 2010); analysis of words
through vocabulary testing and assessment of their lexical or vocabulary performance
expresses (Schmitt, 2010b).
Until recent times, the issues that students face in learning vocabulary were extensively excluded in the ESL classroom. Maiguashca (1993) stated that teaching or studying grammar is based on a set of rules with an organized structure which students follow or remember, but this is not true for vocabulary learning (p. 91). Within the last few years, vocabulary has been viewed as a necessary component in second language learning, in fact, many believe just as important as the main skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Nation (as cited in Nation and Waring, 1997) explained, “Vocabulary knowledge enables language use, language use enables the increase of vocabulary knowledge, knowledge of the world enables the increase of vocabulary knowledge and language use and so on” (p. 6).

Basically, the component of a word involves knowing its form or structure and its meaning at the primary stage. Harmer (1993) states a word is understood to know deeply its manners and the characteristics in the following forms:

1) Meaning: it is the thing one means to convey particularly through a language also it means to describe the word to a suitable text or item.

2) Usage: the knowledge on grouping of words in a sentence, figurative expressions like metaphors, idioms, as well as style and register that suits to the appropriate level of formality, the understanding in order to determine the reference of an expression and associations of the word.

3) Word formation: it is the ability to spell and pronounce the word correctly, to know any derivations (prefixes and suffixes),

4) Grammar: it is about knowing to use in the appropriate grammatical form

Also for principles of learning and teaching vocabulary, many theories have been described. There are several general principles for successful teaching, which are valid for any method. According to Wallace (1988) the principles are:

- aim – what type of words are to be taught, and how many words to be taught to a learner
- need – the learners need should be met by the target vocabulary and it should meet the students’ real needs and interests
- frequent exposure and repetition of meaningful presentation – clear and unambiguous denotation or reference should be assured

For a student the vocabulary learning is very tedious and complicated process especially for ESL learners. When a vocabulary is learnt or taught the basic aim is that
the words should be carried through in such a way the students must be able to recollect the words and to understand the meaning of the word in oral or in written as applicable to practical life situation. To achieve sufficient mastery over the required amount of vocabulary, one needs to engage oneself in constant development of the number of words and aspects of word knowledge. Though one’s vocabulary knowledge is expanded without any cautious effort, the learners who strive for higher advancement in life are necessary that they enlarge the domain of vocabulary unforced.

The evolution of such topic is really necessary for a study or discussion to develop evidence or case studies that vocabulary or language mistakes are the most common errors among second language learners (Meara, 1984). Also Politzer (1978), as cited in Levenston, (1979) expresses, besides the lexical mistakes it implies to be not only the utmost disturbing ones for students but also for native or L1 students in connection with understanding. The essence of the vocabulary to either learning or knowledge and to use of a word is signified in the following quote by Hatch (1983, p. 74), he points out that a second language learners demands are at the lexical level that are essential but often regarded as the greatest source of problems by language learners (Segler, et al., 2002). Gass and Selinker (2001, p. 372) cite that the significance of the study of analysis on L2 vocabulary is, however, marked from several research findings.

Despite the fact of many research studies carried out with the results that vocabulary knowledge plays a significant role in students’ educational advancement, normally in schools many English teachers barely devote class time to vocabulary learning (Scott, Jamieson-Noel, & Asselin, 2003). No single vocabulary technique works best, as no two ESL students are same in their grasping ability. Some students are comfortable and respond quicker to flashcards, while others may desire team or group assignments. Even if teachers dedicate the time for vocabulary teaching and use strategies, failure of productive vocabulary and comprehension abilities are often seen (Blachowicz & Fisher, 2002). Basically, various ESL teachers use unproductive techniques appropriate to the students particularly SES, learning ability etc. Only the established techniques continues in many classroom teaching which is the traditional memorization drills to control the panorama of vocabulary teaching (Graves, 2000); Research states handful of teachers takes the vocabulary into consideration as to expand and improve the knowledge on vocabularies through designing and structuring
multiple learning intelligence, rest neglect the act of being ignorant or not knowing the significant value of vocabulary for helping children to grow up academically and for practical life situations. The teacher who understands what sort of vocabulary words to be taught will help in providing the vocabulary needed for ESL students to expand their skills. The vocabulary learning is life time continuous process for every individual and it is a gradual ongoing process.

Nakata (2006) expresses that for productive vocabulary skills, the teacher should use the technique of continual repetition so that the students can remember the words for long time (p. 19). Vocabulary learning requires the students or the learner to be trained, persistent in devoting time everyday on the words the learner doesn’t know and also to learn and remember the high frequency lexicons and retrieve from long-term memory in appropriate situation. A learner should come across the words for numerous times in real language skills (L, S, R, W) with the text at the student’s appropriate level (p. 8).

While learning English as a Second Language (ESL), learning styles are more and more incorporated to enhance the teaching and learning whereby a lot of research work has been conducted in this area (Jhaish, 2010; Kang, 1999; Karthigeyan & Nirmala, 2013; Park, 2002; Putintseva, 2006; Wu, 2010; Xiao & Tianjin, 2006). For instance, the importance of learning style in ESL was highlighted in a study by Putintseva (2006) who urge that a variety approaches to learning styles need to be considered when learning by ESL is concerned.

Vocabulary knowledge and its importance, also the various factors that affects ESL learners, have played and will continue to play a central role in the direction of the research of second language learning and assessment. To illustrate the present research focuses on vocabulary performances tailored according to their grades and analyzing on easy, average and difficult task levels. Furthermore, material writers will continue to develop textbooks and learning materials that target frequent words and words for special purpose. In today’s world there are many techniques but the learner or the teacher has to choose an appropriate technique after analyzing vocabulary development through various tests and opt a proper method that would help the ESL learners to acquire new vocabulary.
2.2.1 Productive (Active) and Receptive (Passive) Vocabulary

Regarding vocabulary knowledge still another point should be considered which deals with ‘productive’ and ‘receptive’ vocabulary or ‘active’ and ‘passive’ as they are generally known. Usually, these two terms are defined in relation to the language skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing, these skills provide the students to comprehend wholly the text of what they hear and read and they express their meaning precisely in the form of writing and speaking. The receptive or passive vocabulary defines as the learner is able to understand the words while the learner reads or listens to piece of context but which they cannot produce (Stuart Webb, 2008) whereas in productive or active vocabulary knowledge generally refers as the learner is able to know a word to use it in when he/she speaks or while writing within an appropriate context and match the intended meaning of the speaker or signer (Webb, 2005). The first important differentiation should be sorted as the knowledge of vocabulary is active or passive vocabulary while assessing a word because analysis on most of the words will not have clear difference.

Melka (1997) states there is a concurrence that passive word knowledge foreshadows the production and is bigger than active vocabulary knowledge; however, the size between the receptive and productive fades over learning time. Also a commonly held notion is that productive vocabularies are more difficult to learn (Waring, 1997). In course of time no one gets a clear picture regarding the stage at which vocabulary knowledge is no longer receptive but productive, as not to mention the process itself. Melka (1997) also concludes that both the passive and active vocabulary should be seen as standard of knowledge as a connecting link rather perceived them as two different systems. The researcher comes up with four different levels in learner’s increasing familiarity with the word, 1) impersonate replicating the word, 2) understanding the word, 3) reproduction with apprehension, 4) execution. Contrasting to this point, Meara (1990) acknowledges with the assumption of cohesion for active word knowledge, but he sees receptive word knowledge as an independent and qualitatively separate structure.

As per the various research studies, the individual who learns a new language is expected to perceive lot of words than the individual who can produce the words precisely. The learner or the student has to verbalise correctly, apply right grammatical form, and suitably put the right words according to the particular situation. Therefore it is very necessary for each ESL educator or teacher to determine
and select the right words to train for receptive and productive word knowledge. It is
commonly understood that a learner’s passive vocabulary is larger than the active
vocabulary, the speaking or writing which is the productive word knowledge, the
learner or the student has an advantage of choosing different kinds of words for the
target language from his mental lexicon and utilize as per circumstances. For
example, a learner or a student would not be able to verbalize and write but the
learner is able to understand the language or to the part where he or she is exposed to
whereas in active vocabulary the student has to manage around the lexicons the
speaker or writer uses. There are several degrees of knowledge ranging from no
understanding of a word to the full knowledge of the word’s meaning, forms and how
to use it. Reading vocabulary is a passive one, a literate person’s reading vocabulary is
all the words he or she can recognize when reading, understanding a word’s spelling,
meaning and the exact meaning in its context. Listening vocabulary is also a passive
one, a person’s listening vocabulary is all the words he or she can recognize when
listening to speech. Wei (2007), for example, mentioned that the results of the
vocabulary test he used reflected only the students’ passive knowledge.

For few researchers or linguists, vocabularies are understood as passive till the
point where they become entirely productive. Nation (1990) proposed a more
comprehensive view on what is involved in knowing a word. In Nation’s (2001, p.27)
terminology and while considering word knowledge, ‘R’ refers to receptive and ‘P’
refers to productive knowledge,

➢ Form: 1) Spoken
   • R: What does the word sound like?
   • P: How is the word pronounced?

2) Written
   • R: What does the word look like?
   • P: How is the word written and
     spelled?

3) Word parts
   • R: What parts are recognizable in
     this?
   • P: What word parts are needed to
     express the meaning?
Meaning: 1) Form and meaning
   - R: What meaning does this word form signal?
   - P: What word form can be used to express this?

2) Concept and referents
   - R: What is included in the concept?
   - P: What items can the concept refer to?

3) Associations
   - R: What other words does this make us think of?
   - P: What other words could we use instead of this word?

Use: 1) Grammatical function
   - R: In what patterns does the word occur?
   - P: In what pattern we must use this word?

2) Collocations
   - R: What words or type of words occur with this one?
   - P: What words or types of words must we use with this one?

3) Constraints on use (register, frequency.....)
   - R: Where, when and how often could we expect to meet this word?
   - P: Where, when and how often can we use this word?

In order to acquire a word, Nation (1990) points out that the learner has to acquire both the receptive knowledge and the productive knowledge of the word. He explained that words are not isolated units of language and therefore “knowing a word is taken to include not only knowing the formal aspects of the word and knowing its
meaning, but also being able to use the word” (2001, p.4). However, Nation (1990) also conceded that even native speakers would have difficulty in spelling words that they are familiar with or may often be unable to provide the exact meaning of words that they use. He, therefore, concluded that there are many degrees of knowing that can be assessed.

Vocabulary knowledge can be assessed from a quantitative and qualitative point of view. The former is related to the question, “How many words does an L2 learner need or how much vocabulary does an L2 learner know?” the research shows that an average learner accumulate about 1,000 word families per annum, and this quantity is related for a second language learner who wants to study least 2,000 high familiar words (West, 1953). However, later research has shown that this quantity is unsatisfactory and advice to focus on the number of 3,000 high familiar words (Nation & Waring, 1997). The qualitative aspect of vocabulary knowledge tries to answer the more complicated question as what does it mean to know a word. Many researchers have explained to this question as when a word can be gained into a learners’ mental lexicon. The effort was made by Richards (1976), whose research paper was highly important contribution to learner-centred techniques concerning vocabulary knowledge by Suberviola & Méndez, (2002). Also Nation (1990) connects a receptive or productive word to Richard’s writing and presents questions which should be asked and answered to discover whether a person knows a word.

2.3 Vocabulary and language skills

In the past few years increased contribution to vocabulary research is evident. Schmitt (2010) points that there is a strong association prevailing between vocabulary and language skills. Empirical researches also show a direct correlation between the learners’ vocabulary and their language skills (Laufer, 1992, 1997; Llach & Gallego, 2009; Mehrpour & Rahimi, 2010; Pretorius, 2000; Qian, 2002; Stæhr, 2008). In line to these statements, Coombe (2011) points out that the vocabulary knowledge has owned its significance as a skill in particular rather than working as a support to the four main language skills.

This current outlook or perspective on vocabulary knowledge has availed the deserved consideration that has produced to a greater extent of full-scale research studies on this domain. One of the researchers found that the size and the quantitative vocabulary associates with learners’ language skills i.e. reading, writing, listening and
speaking (LSRW). Vocabulary performance is greater than the skill to analyze a given number of words. The development takes place evenly over an extended period of time through which an individual receives great deal information about a word.

Far (2006) suggest to practice three parts to characterise the vocabulary skills. First the surrounding of vocabulary usage, which can impact on lexical meaning; next is the vocabulary learning, which comprises of vocabulary size, knowledge on word components and word arrangement or system, and the primary processes of vocabulary knowledge; lastly is the metacognitive strategies for vocabulary use, which are also called ‘strategic competence’. Few researchers emphasis on the description of vocabulary knowledge as a sequence; initially beginning with either a very limited familiarity with the word (Far, 1984) or a total unfamiliarity with the word (Paribakht & Wesche, 1993) and ending with the ability to use the word correctly in production.

2.3.1 Vocabulary in Reading

Reading and vocabulary knowledge received much focus in the research as it is perceived as the most important skill for success in schools and for other areas (Hu & Nation 2000; Laufer, 1992; Mecartty, 2000; Pretorius, 2000). Vocabulary is presumed to have a significant impact and is linked to understanding states (Mehrpour & Rahimi, 2010). It is a must that a learner should understand; the vocabulary in text given either in one’s mother tongue language or in second language states (Laufer, 1997a). This statement also signifies as other factors also play a part; the central theme of the text, the appropriate background understanding, reference to basic reading techniques. In general, bettering in reading ability is linked to the vocabulary knowledge because comprehending a context relies upon the learners reading capacity to understand, grasp, and guess the meanings of the lexicons. If the learner’s knows not the lexicons in given text then this leads to confusion and inability to understand the text.

Few researchers brought up results stating that vocabulary knowledge and reading performance are strongly associated. For example Laufer (1992) in his research found a correlation figure of 0.50 –0.75, and in Qian (2002) in his research it was 0.73–0.77 where the association figure is very close to each other. Vocabulary size has been found as the outcome as much as 72% of the discrepancy in reading (Stærh, 2008). Qian (2002) opines that scores on depth of vocabulary knowledge be
able to produce a different contribution to the assumption of reading knowledge levels. Also other researchers like Tannenbaum, Torgesen, and Wagner (2006) found that breadth has a wider relationship to reading knowledge than depth; however, the two dimensions of word knowledge have significant coincidence that provide to the assumption of reading knowledge level. Haynes & Baker (1993) results brought a conclusion stating that one of the biggest and common problems for the second language learners’ or ESL is inadequate vocabulary in English. This statement does not bring to a point that every lexicon or word in the text should be familiar to the student or learner. But, 98% of the words used should be familiar for productive and convenient knowledge. As vocabulary knowledge complexities hinder fruitful perception it is inevitable that a learner increase his/her vocabulary knowledge.

2.3.2 Vocabulary in Listening

It is commonly confirmed that vocabulary is one of the major components for developing listening skills. It is also true for ESL learners Vandergrift (1999) states that listening skill has demanded to reside at the centre of the language knowledge. Of all the four language skills – listening, reading, speaking and writing – listening is the most difficult (Kim, 2002) and challenging skill particularly when a learner is trying to understand and comprehend the meaning of what he/she has heard. The complexity is that the learner will not able to control the speed of the received input information. If a learner is reading a text, the leaner can turn the past passages and try to understand and continue reading whereas in listening this is not possible there this task is very demanding. Also in reading if a learner reads a text and comes across complex words he or she can refer to dictionary; the learner can read at his/her own speed or level. But, in listening the learner has to listen and understand the message at the pace of the speaker. Therefore, vocabulary knowledge in listening comprehension is not simple (Gohm, 2000); Favourable knowledge relies on the attention from the listener, adequate background knowledge connected with better vocabulary knowledge. For ESL learners, in view of minimal pairs like ride-rode, affect – effect, wide-wise, prescribe – proscribe etc. lack of knowledge of these words leads to complexity in processing. Normally, listening knowledge does not allow the learner the time for guessing. In many instances, either one understands a word or one does not. Hence, a large amount of vocabulary is essential for effective listening comprehension.
Many researchers concentrate particularly on depth of vocabulary knowledge in their investigation of the relativity between vocabulary knowledge and listening ability. One of the researchers Foomani (2015) found a positive significant correlation (0.95) between depth of vocabulary and listening ability. Stæhr (2009) analyzed the aspect of both depth and breadth of vocabulary in Danish learners’ listening comprehension. His results revealed high correlation of both of breadth and depth of vocabulary with listening skills (0.70 and 0.65, respectively) and that these two aspects together could contribute to half of the difference in listening comprehension scores.

In a more recent study Afshari and Tavakoli (2016) found out the depth in comparison to breadth of vocabulary in TOEFL listening scores. Their results revealed that although both of these vocabulary aspects could contribute significantly to listening comprehension. One study supported that there is a difference between the role of vocabulary in reading and listening. The findings revealed that lexical knowledge is more highly associated with reading than listening in a study of L2 Spanish learners’ (Mecartty, 2000). Few studies also have investigated the degree of which vocabulary knowledge is important for effective listening ability in L2 learners. Though he reports a statistically significant positive correlation between lexical knowledge and comprehension ratings of the learners, he concludes that most learners seem to need very high lexical familiarity with comprehension. This brings the issue of the need to test any correlation between performance in vocabulary knowledge and listening skills as well as other factors that might play a role in such associations (Bonkm, 2000).

2.3.3 Vocabulary in Speaking

The connection between vocabulary knowledge and speaking, listening has been given less attention, based on the literature being reviewed. Nonetheless, some empirical research has shown the correlation between vocabulary and speaking (Borer, 2007; Hincks, 2003; Joe, 1998) and listening competence (Ching-Shyang chang, 2007; Mehrpour & Rahimi, 2010; Stæhr, 2008; Stæhr, 2009) and Milton et al. (2010) explored the correlation between the lexical knowledge of the L2 learners across multi language skills.

Spoken skills evolve to become more important in ESL with attention on language (McCarthy & Carter, 1997). Speaking requires vocabulary or lexical
comprehension. Speaking skill is always tailored towards the listener of the context. If the listener is not able to understand the meaning of what has been spoken, the whole process becomes complex. So, the speaker must have an adequate amount of target listener’s size of vocabulary and then should be able to customize his/her talk or speech. So it is necessary that a speaker has both breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge. If the speaker comprehends that the listener is finding it complex to understand the information, then the speaker should use another set of words to make the listener understand the information. Therefore, the speaker should also have a good amount of defining or supporting vocabulary to help the listener understand the information. The speaker should also have correct pronunciation of the words to avoid any kind of misunderstanding or confusion.

2.3.4 Vocabulary in Writing

The effect of vocabulary knowledge on writing is equally significant. Native students generally favour for to use sophisticated words than L2 writers (Laufer & Nation, 1995). These researchers have highlighted the importance of vocabulary for students for writing Astika, 1993 cf Stæhr, 2008; Daller & Phelan, 2007; Laufer & Nation, 1995; Lee, 2003; Llach & Gallego, 2009. Stæhr (2008) and Milton et al. (2010) showed an association of (0.73), and (0.761) between vocabulary and writing.

However, Stæhr (2008) admits that the relation between vocabulary size and ratings of written compositions is very complicated issue. He analyzed the relationship between the vocabulary size of second language students and their results in reading, writing and listening tasks. He concludes that the research results have found the association between the two factors but cannot be taken as direct confirmation as the students with adequate vocabularies are skilled at writing (p. 141). This states that there is a requirement to gather extra material about the students’ level and for comprehensive analysis as to how vocabulary knowledge associates with writing skills.

Spoken and written skills are regarded as the productive use of vocabulary knowledge. In the process of speaking the speaker takes the help of expressions, body language, articulation whereas in writing the writer does not have this advantage. The only advantage is the response or the feedback from the receiver. Hence, the writer needs to be cautious in producing the matter in an understandable way which is done through correct use of vocabulary and other elements.
Researcher Stehr (2008, 2009) shows that reading links with vocabulary higher than with listening. Milton et al. (2010) and Llach & Gallego (2009) have used a receptive vocabulary test which showed a marked association with writing, the contribution would be worth to find productive written measure of vocabulary size that connects with the receptive tasks. A productive written measure of vocabulary size would result in more precise results regarding lexis abilities.

2.4 Previous Studies on factors affecting vocabulary knowledge:

- 2.4.1 Learning Disabilities – Dyslexia

Dyslexia affects the lexical or vocabulary knowledge which is more often seen in ESL children. Therefore, it is proposed to study the vocabulary knowledge of ESL children with learning disabilities (Dyslexia) by analyzing the performance on synonym and antonym lexical categories.

The census of Indian studies affirms that about 10% of schools going children have leaning disability (Prema, 1998). Language is acquired naturally in a sequence of listening, speaking, reading and writing (Gayan et al., 1999). Failure in any of these processes may lead to serious problems at school, at work and in social situations. There are many types of disabilities such as specific language and specific learning disabilities, reading disability or dyslexia, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, brain injury and other fluency disorder; dysgraphia and dyscalculia, the most common specific learning difficulty is dyslexia (Lynette, 2013; Lyon, Sally, Bennett, 2003; Ugwu, 2015). Learning disabilities in general, is defined as difficulty in learning to read and spell despite adequate education, intelligence, socio-cultural opportunities and without any obvious sensory deficits (Shaywitz, 1998). Since dyslexic problems are increasing in different parts of the world, it is viewed as one of the prominent educational problems (Nganji & Brayshaw, 1995; Lynette, 2013) in our country. Therefore, this current research study is focused to understand vocabulary knowledge of children with dyslexia who are ESL learners’.

Karanth (1998) states that India being a multilingual country, Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD) remains as an isolated classification. In India, the most important piece of legislation enacted in the history of disability movement is “The Persons with Disabilities Act (PWD, 1995). It was a liberal legislation act for the first time in India that, The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (2006) clearly stated that individuals with disabilities have the right to equal opportunities and to
fully participate as citizens of the country and that these rights would be protected by the law. Also, only seven disabilities were chosen by “The PWD Act” (1995) viz. Blindness, Low Vision, Leprosy – cured, Hearing impairment, Locomotor Disability, Mental Retardation and Mental Illness. In India, the students of class X in 1996 were granted accommodations/admission by the government of Maharashtra also it was the premiere state to identify the Specific Learning Disability category. The Government of India in (2011) has taken fundamental steps to include various mental disabilities, intellectual disabilities and the hidden disabilities like dyslexia. Later revision of, The Rights of the Persons with Disabilities Bill (2016), recognized the twenty one types of various disabilities and included in the draft Bill namely: blindness, low-vision, leprosy cured persons, hearing impairments, locomotor disability, dwarfism, intellectual disability, mental illness, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy; muscular dystrophy, chronic neurological conditions, specific learning disability, multiple sclerosis, speech and language disability, thalassemia, haemophilia, sickle cell disease, multiple disability, acid attack victim and parkinson’s disease. The Persons with Disabilities Act (1995) highlights that the standard impairments as the individual with at least 40 per cent of any of the above specified disabilities.

Specific Learning disabilities is one of the disabilities that have received recognition in the legislative Bill. In the checklist, the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities Bill (2016), Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Department of Disability Affairs: the term Specific Learning disabilities has been defined as “a heterogeneous group of conditions wherein there is a deficit in processing language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself as a difficulty to comprehend, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations and includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and developmental aphasia” (The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2016).

Sunil, Rukhshana & Kulkarni, (2011) state that in India, the exact census details about the persons affected by Specific Learning Disabilities is due to the language system, lack of methodized tools available in different languages to assess Learning Disabilities, lack of skilled personnel to screen for Learning Disabilities and more over it is not visible like other disability categories. These researchers state that the stumbling block in identifying the Specific Learning Disabilities is mainly due to the “non-availability of standardized psychological and educational tests”. The
statistical report of the past findings it is revealed that approximately 10-14% of the 416 million children in India have SpLD (Krishnakumar, 1999; Krishnan, 2007; Mehta, 2003). Studies carried out in the various states of India suggest that in an every average-sized class at-least five students are likely to have Specific Learning Disability (Thomas, Bhanutej & John, 2003).

The definition of Task Force on Dyslexia (2001) defines, “Dyslexia is manifested in a continuum of specific learning difficulties related to the acquisition of basic skills in reading, spelling, and/or writing, such difficulties being unexpected in relation to an individual’s other abilities and educational experiences. Dyslexia can be described at the neurological, cognitive and behavioural levels. It is typically characterised by inefficient information processing, including difficulties in phonological processing, working memory, rapid naming, and automaticity of basic skills. Difficulties in organisation, sequencing and motor skills may also be present”. The formal definition of dyslexia as proposed by the International Dyslexia Board of Directors (2002) is that it is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

The term Dyslexia remains controversial in many different countries of the world to this day as there is no proper definition. The term is comprehended and understood in many different ways by various researchers. Therefore there is no single universally accepted definition for the term dyslexia. The term Specific Reading Disability, Reading Disorder, Reading Disability, Reading Disorder and Specific Reading Difficulty are often interchangeably used for dyslexia (Vellutino, Fletcher, Snowling and Scanlon, 2004). The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) definition states that “Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty which mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. It is likely to be present at birth that has life-long effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual’s other cognitive
abilities. It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effects can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counselling” (BDA, 2008). In India, the definition stated by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) for the term dyslexia has been widely adopted by the researchers, psychiatrist, physician, academicians and parents. Maharashtra is the first State in India which recognized specific learning disabilities and Maharashtra Dyslexia Association has collaboration with IDA. Dyslexia being a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) that involves an unexpected difficulty in learning to read with normal performance level also manifests in poor spelling, poor decoding ability, and slower reading rate (Ugwu, 2015). Dyslexia is a language based reading disability characterized by difficulties in recognizing printed words, and performs poorly on such tasks as nonsense word reading, spelling, and reading comprehension (Connelly, Campbell, MacLean & Barnes, 2006; Lyon, 1995; Rack, Snowling, & Olson, 1992) and Callens, Tops, and Brysbaert (2012) highlight that dyslexic students often have very less vocabulary knowledge stored in their mental lexicon and therefore, they limit the choice of words. Also their processing speed or the retrieval process is slower than the normal grade students. Although the specific cause for dyslexia is yet unknown, a bottom theme of this disability is apparent across all the definitions. That is, dyslexia involves an unexpected difficulty in learning to read due to inadequate vocabulary knowledge (Aaron, 1997; British Psychological Society, 1999; Klassen, 2002, 2005; Lyon et al., 2003; Stanovich, 1998, 1999; Velluntino et al., 2004).

Most researchers working in the field of dyslexia come from English speaking countries and therefore most studies are conducted with English speakers and concern English language acquisition or English dyslexics (Abu-Rabia et al., 2003; Goulandris, 2003; Yamada & Banks, 1994). Shu et al. (2006) state that there has been an increase in the number of studies in non-English speaking countries and cross-language differences (Goulandris, 2003; Landerl & Wimmer, 2000; Ziegler et al., 2003). The variation in reported incidences of dyslexia across countries was the initial impetus behind these studies as it suggested that there may be a relationship between vocabulary and dyslexia. Even though the incidences of dyslexia across all countries are now reported to be similar, research has not confirmed whether dyslexia is the same phenomenon for vocabulary across different languages.
2.4.1.1 Symptoms of Dyslexia

The signs and symptoms of dyslexia are stated by the various dyslexia and specific learning disabilities organizations such as International Dyslexia Association; British Psychological Society (1999); British Dyslexia Association (2005); Maharasha Dyslexia Association (1996) and a few researchers such as Davis & Braun (1994); Torgesen, (1998); Snowling, (2000). Although the definitions differ, the most common symptoms of dyslexia listed are that a child with dyslexia

- Has trouble in learning to read and excessive slowness to read a material
- Has trouble with identical looking letters (b as d, m as w)
- Mispronounces the words while reading
- Skips the words while reading loudly
- Confuses similar-looking words (e.g., beard/bread)
- Lacks consistency in reading words
- Reverses in the reading of letters such as n for u, p for q, d for b and also monosyllabic word reversals such as know for on, was for saw.
- Shows lexical retrieval difficulties
- Shows poor spelling in dictation
- Difficulty isolating and blending sounds into words
- Has inadequate phonological awareness
- Finds trouble in reading in sequence order
- Performs on tests below the grade level.

2.4.1.2 Problems in Identifying Dyslexic in Multilingual Context

It is a paramount requirement to analyze the dyslexic students in the primary level so that to provide necessary mediations and support to outrun these Specific Reading Disabilities and use provisions offered by the various educational boards of India. It is very necessary to assess a student’s understanding of vocabulary as early as possible. Researchers’ states that students with Dyslexia or reading disabilities will start to lag behind in vocabulary than their peers as they don’t read much. And the gap in their mental lexicon widens when they get older if not given proper support. Therefore, it is very important that these students are supported at the young age and
when they get older they can read and understand texts without others help. The disability can only be detected when an individual finds difficulty in learning to read and write. Each individual with dyslexia is unique and gifted; the only productive approach suggested by various researchers is the multisensory approach which is flexible enough to serve a wide range of ages and learning differences. This approach is very useful to a dyslexic child and also too many other disabilities.

India being a diverse country of languages, to identify dyslexic students in this context is a laborious mission for the experts. Kulkarni (2005) states the reason for this difficult condition is because of inadequacy of methodized mechanism in various languages to identify dyslexic: “the support of these mechanisms are not accessible in our country to most individuals who suffer from SpLD and mostly to the students studying in native medium schools, for non-availability of standardized psychological and educational tests”.

In India, many classroom teachers in regular mainstream schools have limited knowledge on SpLD (Karande, 2008; Saravanabhavan, Saravanabhavan, 2010). Another main barrier is that teachers lack information about the rationale of provisions needed for the disabled, inadequate knowledge leads to unfavourable mindset toward persons with disabilities. Dyslexic child disability has various degrees of difficulties with reading, spelling, speaking etc., that also depends upon the teaching strategy received from instructors. They are very prone to deficits in language areas of understanding a word, its meaning, the reading speed, the pronunciation and spelling dictation. Few manage to learn successfully with extra care and teaching support on early reading and spellings but later stages of life they experiences the most incapacitate issues mostly when complex skills are required specifically on writing assignments or essays, comprehending the textbook materials, grammar part etc.. These issues create a major negative impact of frustration and failure that continues throughout their academic years (Hart & Risley, 2003; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 2000; White, Graves, & Slater, 1990).

Also the research states that the dyslexic kids avoid reading as they find it difficult to understand the words and meaning on the material because of which the opportunities are shrunk. One of the most challenging tasks for dyslexic is learning new words as explained in “Matthew Effect” by Stanovich (1986) where it states “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer”. In terms of vocabulary development, good readers read more, become better readers, and learn more words; poor readers read
less, become poorer readers, and learn fewer words. In other words, if students with dyslexia read less and comprehend less, their vocabulary will not grow adequately. This has devastating consequences across the curriculum and limits post-secondary opportunities. The academic institutions need to assure that their academic help framework permit the students with disabilities to study as their counterparts or equally to the normal students. This framework also displays a liberal system carried out on assessing the students. Thus all the reviews states that dyslexic are vulnerable that we need to analyze their performance in vocabulary skills and help them with the necessary support.

- **2.4.2 Socioeconomic Status (SES):**

  Socio Economic status (SES) is a multidimensional construct and one of the most important variables that affects the vocabulary knowledge. A sociological factor in determining the performance of the ESL students as many factors that affect the child development co-vary with SES however, the causal relations underlying SES effects on child development may be difficult to unveil (Hoff, Laursen, & Tardif, 2002). There are a variety of sub-factors under socioeconomic status i.e., high SES, parents education, income, poverty, health, psychological issues etc., that affect the vocabulary performance of the ESL students that revolve around the academic achievements. Further, SES is a consistent and solid medium for huge number of issues across the life span. Thus, SES is significant to all domains of behavioural and social science, including research, practice, education, and advocacy.

  As early as mid 1960s many of the social scientists reported in their research that the performance in English or academic subjects of each student at school significantly depends on the socioeconomic status of an individuals’ family states Gümüş and Gümüş (2013); OECD (2005). Kean and Tsai (2005) states that every action of the family is a determiner that has an effect on the children’s educational outcomes. Therefore, increasingly, researchers examined SES effects and state that it encompasses not just the lexical or vocabulary processing but associates with the academic performance, as whole of the educational processes, in relation to socioeconomic background. The changes in language usage are highly associated with socioeconomic status (SES) as also vocabulary and its various sub domains that have significant outcomes on student success.
The effect of SES could be the result of several factors including hereditary factor in children’s disabilities, caused by genes or health, the differences in family environment (Linver et al., 2002); and various other cognitive effects in language-learning experiences, (Hoff & Naigles, 2002). In addition, family income, parents’ level of education, family model, location of residence, the language used in the family, ethnic roots, previous level of education, acquired behaviours and talents, parental occupation, and social status in the community, such as contacts within the community, group associations, and the community’s perception of the family states (Köse, 2007). Also in general, studies have repeatedly found that SES affects student outcomes (Eamon, 2005), amongst others and that social economic and educational status of a family determines the quality of academic achievement of a student.

The ESL children born of low disadvantaged background suffers at the time they enter kindergarten, children from low SES backgrounds show contrast to their more advantaged peers in vocabulary skills and cognitive abilities (Ramey & Ramey, 2004). The gap affects the low SES children which are predictive of later stages of life (Lee & Burkum, 2002). Yet, a common notion is that the process of formation of vocabulary knowledge in the mental lexicon of low socioeconomic status students is delayed than children from high SES students (Rescorla & Alley, 2001 among others) but as students move from lower level to higher level in school the difference gradually diminishes as the students vocabulary performance improves. (Pakulak & Neville, 2010) analyzing on this broad transformation view that children are also parallelly exposed to many other factors internally and externally over a lifetime.

Majority of the survey pointed out those students who live in higher socio economic status are outstanding and very intelligent; one of the main reasons is that they are provided with various learning sources, high quality care, amenities and facilities. Parents support and give an environment where the students are moulded mentally and physically. The child brought up in a learned and supportive environment will definitely excel in academic sectors and this learned atmosphere in turn is determined by the literate parents, parent’s education, occupation, income, size of the family etc.

According to Marzano (2004), the grounding knowledge is obtained through the association of two factors which are to perceive and comprehend also to accumulate the words and another factor is the school environment where the students are exposed for external experience. Nevertheless, through these factors the students
are shaped academically and the words that are learnt and stored in their mental lexicon supports to understand the given material or academic textbook along with speech and conversations. Lee & Burkam (2002) have stated that there is a solid difference in the spoken skills varying in SES among school-age children. It is obvious through past researches that vocabulary knowledge serves as a fundamental base for future proficiency (Lonigan, Burgess & Anthony, 2000) and language performance in early stages of schooling is predictive of educational success (Alexander, Entwisle & Horsey, 1997).

Trivedi and Vineeta (1988) conducted a study of the association between socioeconomic status and performance level among the middle school students. The results and conclusion of the study revealed a significant relationship between socioeconomic status and school performance. The female students of upper SES showed better achievement than the female students of lower SES group. Also, Chopra (1969) of Lucknow University studied the relationship between socio-economic background and performance level. It was found that higher socio-economic group students were significantly higher than those of the students from the MSES and LSES. This study revealed that there is definite connection between socio-economic background and achievement in English.

Goswami (1982) analyzed that the high SES group of village and city areas has scored better than the low SES group in the performance tests of science, languages and humanities. Socio economic status plays a crucial role in the every child’s life also it opens the ways for the success.

Barbora (2001) studied children from Assam District, belonging to the LSES to know cause of low academic performance. The study revealed that the children of educated parents performed better than the uneducated parents with the children from LSES with poor test grades failed to climb to the next grade due to problems in family with no proper care of child’s academics. The social status of high income parents gives better opportunity to access language skills and the resource materials like public libraries that equip the child for better reading and opportunities to engage in practical experiences that build in theoretical knowledge needed for understanding text states Neuman (2008). Liu, Chou, and Liu (2006) study shows that in Taiwan, the students who attend the top universities are from most wealthy and well-bred families. This varies for LSES students whose parents cannot afford extra coaching sources,
additional supports to enhance their children skills due to these hindrances to reach good heights will be difficult for these students.

Neuman (2008) points out that the cognitive skills among socioeconomic status children are associated with vocabulary performance of school children. Duursma et al. (2007), states that it is well-known fact that children with high cognitive skills hail from HSES family and their performance is better than LSES. It is said that the families of children who speak in English have better vocabulary and if a children whose family speaks in Kannada then the child has better Kannada vocabulary. Hence, the cognitive skills are one of the major skills which associate with the vocabulary skills thus relating to the academic performance (August & Shanahan, 2006a).

All the problems that a SES child faces will fade away when he or she becomes adult by proper care, support and environmental influences over a lifetime. Their vocabulary skill grows and becomes stronger (Pakulak & Neville, 2010). Therefore, when productive and effective environments are provided they stimulate vocabulary development which in return gives good performance. The ESL child who reads less has less number of vocabulary which associates to many issues in all areas of life whereas the better readers have good number of vocabulary which associates good performance and achieving better heights in life, as per the saying, “the rich readers get richer and the poor readers get poorer.”

2.4.3 Grade

Grade is another factor that affects the vocabulary knowledge of the ESL school children. It is known fact that children of all ages need to have more number of vocabulary in their mental lexicon so that ESL learners can be successful with the given piece of material or text. knowledge of words and how to use it in sentence, familiarity of the words, the grade at which they are acquired, their degree of absoluteness, their length are very much needed when students are processing words (Morrison & Ellis, 2000; Zevin & Seidenberg, 2002, 2004).

Generally the vocabulary knowledge increase from one grade to the next grade level. Average students increase their words from 2000 to 3000 new words every year in their mental lexicon as they go from lower grade level to higher grade level. However, grade is not isolated as studies highlight the association of socioeconomic status and performance in school with grade and age and hence are all inter-related.
Student learners of secondary education and high school on an average are able to make to decode more vocabulary than the primary grade students this is because the child learns and comes across many words from one grade to another grade and is able to incorporate the frequent words into lexicon. A general assumption by many researchers is that from third grade through twelfth grade, an average student is likely to learn approximately 3,000 new words each year; if he or she is good reader then between 500,000 and a million running words of text a school year (Nagy & Anderson, 1984).

A child who enters the school with very less words would persist and show gap in vocabulary that gets wider each year. Hart & Risley (1995) report that high performing twelfth grade students words are four times higher than the low performing twelfth grade students words Also between first grade and third grade level, it is expected that low income disadvantaged students' vocabularies increase by about 3,000 words per year, while middle-class students' vocabularies increase by about 5,000 words per year. The high performance are from the high status students or HSES as the students has more resources to learn; the HSES child of first grade’s vocabulary is double the number of words of LSES child’s vocabulary ( Graves, Brunetti, & Slater, 1982; Graves & Slater, 1987). A child’s vocabulary would become twice as much between the third grade to seventh grade if proper support and necessary training is given to the child. Meyerson, Ford, & Jones (1991) state that while the 5th graders encounter more multiple meaning words that are not content specific they, have better lexicon whereas for the 3rd grade students the lexicons taught are content specific which they are reading in the academic textbooks and they encounter very less number of words.

For some children there are significant hurdles for vocabulary growth to be on par with their peers as they are behind 2 to 3 years to the native speaking students in vocabulary knowledge and a wider gap remains (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2010). The child with various family background like LSES whose parents are illiterate or partially literate, limited or no knowledge of English (English used in textbooks and printed material) has lot of hindrances in acquiring the words needed for practical life situation. Therefore it is crucial that these problems make a child to be inferior, less motivated, not interested to learn English language and these students face many challenges among friends, academically, outside schools, in society of socioeconomic status. Systematic care and strategies help to catch up with their peers. However,
reports by Duncan et al. (1994); Walker, Greenwood, Hart, & Carta, (1994) are contradictory as their results obtained on students on long term basis, showed that the gap remains the same in older students between the LSES and HSES in spite of all necessity supports given (Pungello, Kupersmidt, Burchinal, & Patterson, 1996).

Staehr, (2008); Terrazas & Agustín Llach, (2009) reported on the receptive vocabulary size of learners across six different grades. Their results clearly point to initial small vocabulary sizes of around 1000 words (4th grade), approaching to almost 2000 known words at the end of the period tested (9th grade) also highlight that 400-700 hours of instruction lead to vocabularies of around 1000 words states. Jiang, (2000) states that when the students receive less input, the students normally find it difficult not only to expand their receptive lexical competence, but also to transform this receptive lexical knowledge into theoretical knowledge.

Also, as learners gain their skills on vocabulary and move up from one grade level to another, they clearly show significantly higher vocabulary sizes. As exposure to the second language learning demonstrates the number of words known increases as well. This fact is not new and studies by Edelenbos & Vinjé, (2000); Goldberg et al., (2008); Nurweni & Read, (1999) have already revealed that amount of exposure is relevant for receptive vocabulary size. Moreover, the fact that students increased their receptive vocabulary knowledge significantly from year to year implies that teaching may have been another factor affecting the pattern of their lexical development in second language learning. In other words, young learners’ instructors might have concentrated not only on introducing new words, but also on enhancing their students’ knowledge of previously presented words (Schmitt, 2000).

On the one hand, results show that despite the lack of significant results, the increases grow each year. This may point to a subsequent period where lexical gains are high and probably significantly bigger from one interval to the next. However, on the other hand, the tendency in previous related research scenarios shows that: (a) learners’ lexical repertoires may get bigger in size, for example, because they have multiple exposures to more frequent words states Schmitt, (2000) and (b) lexical development may proceed in other directions, for example, in lexical depth. In other words, learners acquire new aspects of already known words namely, meanings, frequencies, syntactic restrictions, register restrictions, etc.
• 2.4.4 Gender

Discussion and arguments on gender concern has become the talk of present day’s symposium in the discipline of education, particularly regarding children with dyslexia. One of the most significant factors that are explored by the researchers is vocabulary knowledge among students with respect to gender factor. Numerous studies have been devoted on vocabulary knowledge and gender differences even in ESL population (Brantmeier, 2003); learning strategies (Jiménez, 2003); error production (Llach et al., 2006); learning a second language (Politzer 1983; Lee, 1994; and Kim, 1995). The results of these studies offer contradictory findings with boys being superior in vocabulary whereas a few other studies report that girls perform better in view of better language learners than boys. However, a few others state that gender is insignificant in second language learning. Boyle (1987) in his study found that boys obtained higher score than girls in the receptive vocabulary; Scarcella and Zimmerman (1998) also reported similar findings on school test of academic vocabulary perception, intelligence, and exercise (Lin and Wu, 2003; Lynn et al., 2005), and (Edelenbos and Vinjé, 2000) reported that boys outperformed girls in vocabulary knowledge in the second language. Meara and Fitzpatrick (2000) and Jiménez and Moreno (2004) reported that girls performed better than boys in effective vocabulary. Jiménez & Ojeda (2009) found highly significant differences in favour of females in the mean number of words produced in response to the 15 cues of a lexical availability test. However, on memorisation test of German vocabulary which is a cognitive skill. Nyikos’ (1990, cited in Sunderland, 2000, p. 206) observed that girls scored better than boys. Regardless of these findings, Jiménez and Terrazas (2005-2008) in their study on receptive vocabulary test performance did not find distinguishable gender differences. Also a few other researchers, in the earlier decades, research findings reported that intelligence was the only factor that causes gender differences among high performers (Robinson, 1965). Compilation of recent studies by Jimenez (2010) indicates mixed results on gender differences.

Sunderland (2010) asserts after a careful analysis of studies that relationship between vocabulary and gender is not lasting; the findings may be influenced by the text or the content in the material and test type-specific with other “third factor” on age or second language proficiency, influencing them. Therefore, influence of gender on vocabulary in ESL children widely recognized as very intricate with the outcomes
being unsatisfactory within this domain despite with dispersion controlled on the conditions tested. A number of studies have examined receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge of learners, and have reported diverse findings.

Research on gender differences related to language has mainly focused on cognitive functions and this remains area of higher controversy. Differences in language abilities in young school children (Beller and Gafni, 1996; Robinson et al. 1996) and college going students (Stumpf and Stanley, 1996); adults (Feingold, 1993, 1996; Halpern and Wright, 1996; Hedges and Nowell, 1995; Mckeever, 1996; Voyer et al., 1995).

Meunier (1995, 1996) and Yang (2001) conducted studies on different perspectives on the issue on the gender variations in the use of the semantic fields. The first study concluded that males were superior to females in acquiring vocabulary related to geographical facts, and females were better acquiring vocabulary pertaining to story characters. In the same line of specific vocabulary areas are the results of Yang’s (2001) study, which clearly pointed to a female superiority in size and accuracy of colour vocabulary. These results were in line with those obtained by Jiménez & Ojeda (2007), who stated that girls tend to talk about colours, and kinship, whereas boys prefer the topic of sports and use numbers more frequently.

Few other research states on psychologically and physiologically gender-based learning differences occur in the early adolescent years. Thus girls clearly mature earlier than boys, but when the boys enter the teenage they focus, catch up and even outperform female learners. The emerging interest in learners as individuals who construct their complex identities in specific contexts parallels another line of research – the research of language learning strategies in correlation with gender differences.

Considering research-related studies, we can state that results are inconclusive regarding the role of gender in the lexical processing of the ESL and in particular in Socio-economic status and Grade. Malathi (1987) reported that the performance is associated with familial factors like parental ambitions, expectation, knowledge and their socio economic status as the primary factors that induce the age and gender variations among high performers and she also reported a study on Harijans of villages of Karnataka. She reported that educational aspirations in case of girls were almost negligible causing very poor enrolment of girl children in schools. Furthermore, the type of word knowledge explored, the learning context, or the task
used for data gathering seem to play a relevant role in the establishment of gender tendencies. Moreover, the great bulk of studies address English as Second language learning in adult contexts whereas studies dealing with primary to high school learners are very scarce. Thus the present study within this context is necessary to carry out a gender research on SES and grade in order to analyze the vocabulary performance across the different stages of lexical categories, and second, to learn more about the tendencies in lexical development for male and female students.

- **2.4.5 Cognitive Skills**

  Another factor that affects the vocabulary knowledge of the students is cognitive skills, these mental abilities are brain based skills we need to carry out any task from the simplest to the most complex. They have more to do with the mechanisms of how we learn, remember, problem-solve, and pay attention, rather than with any actual knowledge. Some of the cognitive skills are accuracy, processing speed, memory, attention, visual processing, affective etc.,

  - **2.4.5.1 Accuracy**

    Accuracy is nothing but the quality or state of being correct or precise. Accuracy depends upon the size or breadth of the words stored in mental lexicon of the individual. It reveals a measurable range in connecting knowledge of a lexical item and fundamental meaning. The depth of a word also depends on the accuracy measure that shows a subjective dimension where how well an individual understands a word or the knowledge in arranging the words in their mental lexicon (Stæhr, 2009) and also includes knowledge of partial to accurate meaning, word frequency and lexical structure. The higher the reading capability the better the vocabulary knowledge of the students and also the accuracy for processing of the words. Studies have indicated that performance of students with lesser size or depths of vocabulary knowledge are poor or limited in their accuracy for words.

  - **2.4.5.2 Processing Speed**

    Further to size and depth, another lexical aspect that has recently drawn attention to many research and been integrated into vocabulary structure is speed of processing a word, or how fast learners can recognize and retrieve knowledge stored in the mental lexicon (Meara, 2005). Learners with greater vocabulary knowledge can recall adequate number of words and use them for speaking through knowledge of antonyms and collocations (Aitchison, 2003). On the other hand, learners with poorer
vocabulary knowledge may not be able to find appropriate words, or find most tasks as difficult, or may take longer time to processes the words in their mental lexicon at the formation phase, resulting in reduced speed processing.

Empirical studies that have looked into processing speed on second language learners’ vocabulary test are limited (Harrington, 2006; Laufer & Nation, 2001; Miralpeix & Meara, 2014; Pellicer-Sánchez & Schmitt, 2012). The processing speed is one of the cognitive skill which enables to perform tasks quickly and accurately. It is the ability to do things without paying attention to low-level details, allowing it to become an automatic response pattern or habit. It is usually the result of learning, repetition and practice. Processing speed (often referred to as efficiency) of lexical access and retrieval is considered to play a crucial role in the use of vocabulary in real-life situations, as well as in ESL performance (e.g., Van Moere, 2012).

2.4.6 Attention

Attention is one of the cognitive skills needed for a child to acquire vocabulary knowledge. This skill helps a child learns to pay attention, it aids the child to concentrate on one task or conversation for a longer duration of time. When a teacher teaches or explains the words, if a child has better focus the scores would be better for understanding of words. Children below five years of age can focus 15 minutes or less but by the age of eight the child would have an increased ability to focus on one thing for higher time and complete the given assignments or tasks as the child would be capable of overlooking the disturbances.

2.4.7 Memory

Another important cognitive skill is Memory, that helps a child to recognize what the child has learnt, studied and the words familiar to a child and accordingly frame a final ground of knowledge. Commonly it is more general that an individual learns easy or certain words rapidly and quite efficiently at the same time few other words are learnt by heart at the cost of tough assignment. These processes in human mind are expanded through memorisation and its arrangement. Young children below five years of age struggle with this memory process, the short-term memory and the long-term memory process. However, the schooling helps the child to learn many words according to their age or grade also through other inputs as the words become familiar when stored in long-term memory and allows the child to gradually build on the former knowledge on words. There are few problems a child experiences when the
skill is weakened, unable to recall the familiar words, failing to remember the names, and the familiar things, poor or below average marks in test performance. Studies on working memory distinguish the following systems (Thornbury, 2002).

- **2.4.7.1 Short-term Memory**

  “Short-term memory (or "primary" or "active memory") is the capacity for holding, but not manipulating, a small amount of information in mind in an active, readily available state for a short period of time. Any distraction or interruption causes a breakdown in retention of information. For example, short-term memory can be used to remember where your car had been parked this evening, remembering what you had for breakfast yesterday and remembering the contents from a text that read a few days ago. The duration of short-term memory (when rehearsal or active maintenance is prevented) is believed to be in the order of seconds.” But successful vocabulary learning involves more than holding words for a few seconds. To integrate words into long-term memory they need to be subjected to different kinds of operations.

- **2.4.7.2 Working memory**

  Working memory is a cognitive system with a limited capacity that is responsible for temporarily holding information available for processing (Miyake, and Shah, 1999). “Working memory is involved in the selection, initiation, and termination of information-processing functions such as encoding, storing, and retrieving data.” This explains as the messages are shaped through the perception from the extrinsic sources and/or can be downloaded from the long-term memory. Material remains in working memory for about twenty seconds. The existence of articulator loop enables this new material processing. It works a bit like audiotape going round and round again. It assures the short-term store to be kept refreshed. The ability to hold a word in working memory is a good predictor of language learning aptitude. The better ability to hold words in working memory helps to smoothen the process of learning another language.

- **2.4.7.3 Long–term memory**

  Long-term memory can be seen as a kind of filling system. Unlike working memory, which has a limited capacity and no permanent content, this kind of memory has an enormous capacity and its contents are durable over time. For example, long-term memory can be used to remember an important day in the previous year.
important telephone numbers repeated many times a day, a week, etc., finally are absorbed into long term memory\textsuperscript{1}. However, when we cease the regular use of the number, we are certain to forget it with time. Thornbury (2002) states, however, to ensure moving new materials into permanent long-term memory requires number of principles to be followed like repetition, retrieval, spacing, use, cognitive depth, personal organising, imaging and motivation. An individual has to practice and revise what we learn since the new input will gradually fade in the memory and ultimately disappear (Gairns & Redman, 1995).

- **2.4.8 Affectiveness**

Affectiveness is one of the factors which are distant from all other factors yet it influences the vocabulary performance of the students’. Restlessness, uneasiness, anxiety and restricting on-self have effect on learners’ vocabulary knowledge. One of the main factors is the anxiety, as we see in government schools most children are affected by the anxiety and it is a common hindrance that impediments the learning process (Arnold & Brown, 1999). Negative attitude or anxiousness of being wrong, fool or stupid, uncommunicative highly affects vocabulary growth ultimately leading to low performance level in the students. Liu (2006) states many research on Chinese students shows the students are nervous in class which obstructs their studies low concentration and poor performance. Too much nervousness makes learners “tongue-tied or lost for words” and negatively influences their achievement in second language classroom (Zhang & Jia, 2006).

Therefore, second language learners should be supported enough for learning new words, to read individually, so that they can lessen their anxiety and perform better in vocabulary skills. In government schools, many learners are not brave enough to talk English in classroom. Bearing in mind that “speech is silver, silence is gold”, many students choose to keep silent so as to avoid losing face in public. Affected by such self-restriction, it becomes harder and harder for them to open their mouth as time goes by. Brown (2007, p. 160) states that risk taking is viewed as an essence for “successful learning of a second language”. Therefore Kannada ESL

\textsuperscript{1} \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memory}
learners should be encouraged and supported so to expand their vocabulary knowledge gradually without these hindrances.

2.5 Vocabulary tests

The analyses on lexical categories or vocabulary tasks are conditional, the test or tasks completely depends upon the planner or the maker’s perception of vocabulary knowledge. According to recent research on vocabulary knowledge or lexical knowledge, it has been illustrated differently by different researchers. Researchers like Nation (1990, 2001), Richards (1976), Ringbom (1987) defined the vocabulary knowledge as the total structure of interdependent "sub-comprehensions" understanding of the written and unwritten or oral form, fundamental knowledge on morphological structure, knowledge of word meaning, grammatical knowledge, knowledge on categorization, connotative and associational knowledge, and words on sociological knowledge or other constraints to be observed in the use of a word. In substitute, lexical knowledge has been explained as a continuance link consisting of numerous divisions of learning or understanding, starting with one-dimensional familiarity with the lexical item and the knowledge of using the word correctly in multi-dimensional form (Faerch, Haastrup, & Phillipson, 1984; Palmberg, 1987).

Research on most of the vocabulary knowledge is geared to test the knowledge or understanding of words on students’ mental lexicon; how well the students have understood or comprehended the meaning of a word (Meara & Buxton, 1987; Nation, 1983); how far will the students able to produce good results for meaning tests (Laufer & Nation, 1999); the use of vocabulary (Arnaud, 1992; Laufer & Nation, 1995); or relationship between the words (Read, 1993). Few tests, however, try to investigate the vocabulary knowledge simultaneously with various sub-knowledge (Schmitt, 1999). Also few other tests investigate the continuum progress on the words learnt or studied by the students (Schmitt, 1998).

Few other researchers’ emphasis on the meaning test where they state it is very inevitable since lexis or the words are the primary and principal unit of meaning. To comprehend or understand lexis or a word meaning is a paramount constituent of word knowledge. A skilled test to analyse the vocabulary considers the degree to the range to which the students who can better link the word form with the concept the form denotes.
Most research on vocabulary distinguishes between passive or receptive and active or productive knowledge of a word (Meara, 1990; Nation, 2001). Receptive vocabulary knowledge testing is linked with skills of reading and listening, these tests the comprehending and understanding performance of the inputs student received. In vocabulary, this means that one is able to perceive the form of the word and retrieve its meaning or meanings. Productive knowledge testing is linked with the skills of speaking and writing, these tests the retrieval ability of the correct oral or written word form of the meaning as one needs to expresses. Warring (1997) put out to test the passive vocabulary knowledge by asking the learner to select the correct answer from several meaning options for the given word or to select the correct answer from several word forms for a given meaning.

One another testing on productive knowledge is asking for an original sentence in which a given word is to be used. Few researchers conclude that those students who are able to bring out a correct sentence with the exact word are often considered as having higher state of word knowledge. The difference between the receptive and productive vocabulary seems to be very simple but as Read (2000) in his research stated that various researchers have made these differences contradictorily, which had created problems in comparing passive and active knowledge across studies.

Various types of tasks to test the vocabulary like multiple choices, dictation, true/false, questions and answer, matching, rearranging words, etc are also proposed. In this thesis to analyze the vocabulary knowledge the researcher has chosen the multiple-choice format. In the field of vocabulary testing it is one of the most used formats (Read, 2000) and this tests the form and the meaning (Nation, 2001; Ozturk, 2003). The format looks like there is a question which consists like a stem and three to four options in which only one is correct. The students have to choose the right answer that taps knowledge on the receptive side of vocabulary knowledge (Melka, 1997).

To summarize, different researchers recommend different vocabulary tests, depending on their view of vocabulary knowledge their preference for a particular dimension of knowledge, and their interest in either size or depth. In the present study, the investigator chooses to the trait view of vocabulary on the various levels of vocabulary testing. Two vocabulary performance based test on synonyms and antonyms - one test with Questionnaire format and another with computer based tests.
These two tests comprise of lexical categories that are divided into three levels of tests – Easy level, Average level and Difficult level that are examined through multiple-choice format test.

However, unlike other tests, which focus on size, depth, various language skills etc., this test is mainly for English as Second Language learners’ specifically for government students whose English learning resources are hindered through various factors. The test is made simple and easy for the ESL students as each word is taken from their textbooks according to their grades. The questionnaire and the computer based test have the advantages of a vocabulary meaning tests, but it provides a more realistic picture of how well learners know the meaning of the tested items. Furthermore, the DMDX software program makes the test efficient, since students are tested on accuracy (AC) and reaction time (RT) and the two different modes of the tests will test lexical items on various factors. Detailed description of the two tests is given in the next chapter (II).

2.6 Summary of the Review of Literature Chapter

To sum up in this chapter, I have detailed the literature views on vocabulary knowledge and its related sub-fields which are important for English as second language learners and some case studies along with literature on the various factors like dyslexia, socioeconomic status, grade and gender that affect the vocabulary knowledge of the students. Vocabulary knowledge in relation to lexical categories and on different variables or factors in their context of ESL learners’ performance has been fairly explored. For all of them the influence of the context is a relevant aspect to be taken into consideration when analysing these factors. Their findings generally point towards a normal trend, namely that higher SES, higher grade, normal students perform well but with reference to gender as a factor, the success depends upon various factors.