Chapter II

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the literature review of the present investigation. This Chapter deals with vocabulary learning as well as its sub-sets, including word and vocabulary, the importance of vocabulary, the importance of vocabulary learning goals, vocabulary learning approaches, vocabulary and the four language skills, what is involved in knowing a word, and which word needs to be learned. Finally, the accessible research works related to the vocabulary are given.

2.2 Vocabulary Learning

“When we speak of a person’s vocabulary, we mean the words he or she knows and is able to use” (Nandy 1994, p. 1). It is generally accepted that vocabulary is the heart of language learning. Rubin and Thompson (1994, p. 79) point out, “One cannot speak, understand, read or write a foreign language without knowing a lot of words. Therefore, vocabulary learning is at the heart of mastering a foreign language”. Moreover, Taylor (1992, p.30) states that “Vocabulary permeates everything language learners or language teachers do in an English language class, whichever skill or language point is being practised”. It is accepted to say that understanding any language is impossible without knowing words whether in the spoken or the written forms (Hall, 2000; Schmitt 2000; Hill, 1997). Language learners with large and rich vocabulary are believed to improve their listening, reading, speaking, writing, and thinking abilities (Smith 1998, p. xv). On the contrary, language learners with inadequate vocabulary are likely to be not
successful in the educational progress. It is undoubted to say that vocabulary is a significant indicator of both one’s language learning and one’s ability to learn language.

Though vocabulary is the sub-skill of a language, it has a very significant role in language learning and teaching. There are many vital aspects in vocabulary learning, such as the distinction between word and vocabulary, how important vocabulary is, why a language teacher needs to set the vocabulary learning goals, what are vocabulary learning approaches, etc. This section intends to deliberate and review vocabulary learning in diverse aspects mentioned.

2.2.1 Defining Word and Vocabulary

“All languages have words, a vocabulary or lexicon” (Foley and Thompson 2003, p. 10). Before discussing the importance of vocabulary and other issues concerning vocabulary learning, It is essential to point out the clear distinction between the terms word and vocabulary. Trask (1995, pp. 46-51) points out that “there are the difficulties in the definition of the word because words do not have meanings in isolation, but they are related to the meanings of other words in ways that may be simple or complex”. Some scholars (e.g. Bowen et al., 1985; Jackson and Amvela, 2000; Read, 2000; Trask, 1995) indicate that ‘word’ may be easy to perceive, but is hard to define. Moreover, “a word, at least, relates to the fields of morphology, semantics, etymology or lexicology” (Jackson and Amvela 2000, p. 48).

A few researchers, such as Jackson and Amvela (2000); Richards et al. (1992); and Hornby et al. (1984), have viewed word and vocabulary in a comparative way. Word is “an uninterruptible unit of structure consisting of one or more morphemes and which typically occurs in the structure of phrases. The morphemes are the ultimate
grammatical constituents, the minimal meaningful units of language”, while *vocabulary* (which is synonymous with ‘lexis’, or ‘lexicon’) is viewed as “a collection of words” or “a package of sub-sets of words that are used in particular contexts”. Richards et al. (1992) define the term *word* as “the smallest of the linguistic units which can occur on its own in speech or writing” (p. 406), but *vocabulary*, as “a set of lexemes which includes single words, compound words and idioms” (p. 400). Besides, *word* is defined as “sound or combination of sounds forming a unit of the grammar or vocabulary of a language”, whereas *vocabulary* as “the total number of words which make up a language; and a range of words known to, or used by a person” (Hornby et al., 1984).

In addition, regarding the definition of word and vocabulary, a *word* is “a unit formed of sounds or letters that have a meaning” (Sheeler and Markley 2000, p. 2), while *vocabulary* is defined as “total number of words we know and are able to use” (Nandy 1994, p. 1; Sesnan 2001, p. 123). We can understand, based on some scholars’ viewpoints of word and vocabulary, that *word* is the smallest meaningful unit of language used for making phrases and sentences that usually represents an object, idea, action, etc. *Vocabulary* is seen as “a set of lexemes - the study of vocabulary items – which includes single words, compound words and idioms”. In other words, a word is a form which can occur in isolation and have meaning, or a sound or combination of sounds forming a unit of the grammar or vocabulary of a language, and so act as ‘a part of vocabulary’ in a language. Therefore, vocabulary consists of more than just single words (Read 2000, p. 20; Richards 2000, p. xi), and more than this, vocabulary concerns not only simple words in all their aspects, but also complex and compound words, as well as the meaningful units of language (Jackson and Amvela 2000, pp. 1-2).
Regarding vocabulary learning, there is no question that vocabulary learning is referred to as learning “a collection or the total stock of words in a language that are used in particular contexts”. To be precise, vocabulary learning means learning a package of sub-sets of words as well as learning how to use tactics to cope with unfamiliar words.

2.2.2 The Importance of Vocabulary

Of all the language skills, it is widely acknowledged that vocabulary is a very essential part in English language learning, and as mentioned earlier that no one can communicate in any meaningful way without vocabulary. Bowen et al. (1985, p. 322) and McCarthy (1990, p. iix) indicate that the single, biggest component of any language course is vocabulary. This is consistent with Nation (1990, p. 2) who affirms that learners also see vocabulary as being a very, if not the most, important element in language learning. Learners feel that many of their troubles, in both receptive and productive language use, result from the lack of vocabulary knowledge. However, many scholars in the fields of vocabulary learning and teaching (e.g. Allen, 1983; Carter and McCarthy, 1988; Hedge, 2000; Long and Richards, 1997; Maley, 1986; Richards, 1985; Zimmerman, 1997) indicate that vocabulary has long been neglected in the language classroom.

The principal purpose of this section is to study and review the importance of vocabulary in language learning so as to look at what we know about English vocabulary as well as to reflect on how this has been applied in language teaching and learning. Words are the tools learners use to think, to express ideas and feelings, as well as to explore and analyse the world around them. Inadequate vocabulary keeps them from expressing their thoughts and feelings. On the other hand, a large, rich vocabulary gives them the right words to use at the right time. Kitajima (2001, p. 470) affirms that without
words that label objects, actions, and concepts, one cannot express envisioned meanings. “The more words one is able to use correctly, the better one will be able to express oneself easily and with self-confidence and to understand the world one lives in” (Nandy 1994, p. 1).

There is no question that in a good language learning classroom, both vocabulary and grammar are essential, but when compared vocabulary with grammar, vocabulary is quintessential and should receive more focus than grammar. Allen (1983, p. 5) indicates that in the best classes, neither grammar nor vocabulary is neglected, but vocabulary is more essential and should be taught before grammar. Likewise, Flower (2000, p. 5) states, “Words are the most important things students must learn. Grammar is important, but vocabulary is much more important”. This is consistent with Lewis (1993, p. 115) who also views the importance of vocabulary as the centre of language teaching and learning since language consists of ‘grammaticalised lexis, not lexicalised grammar’ and ‘grammar, as structure, is subordinate to lexis’. It is evident from these scholars that the words are preceded by the grammar. The same confirms what we know from our own experience that one can understand others even if they pronounce words badly, and make grammatical mistakes, but without the mediation of words, any meaningful way of communication is rather impossible. To be precise, vocabulary seems to be the key to language learning, and thus, is accepted to be more important than grammar.

“Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed” (Wilkins 1972, p. 111). This is consistent with Ellis (1994) who affirms that lexical errors tend to obstruct comprehension more than grammatical errors. Besides, Harmer (1991, p. 153) stresses that choosing words carefully in certain situations is more
important than choosing grammatical structures because language learners cannot use structures correctly if they do not have enough vocabulary knowledge. This means that vocabulary is more important than grammar, and it is important for comprehension in language skill in any situation.

Regarding vocabulary in communication, it is apparent that vocabulary is basic in learning to communicate effectively while listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This is emphasized by many scholars. For example, Lewis (1993, p. iii) views the importance of vocabulary as being a basic for daily communication. He indicates that if language learners do not recognize the meanings of the key words used by those who address them, they will be unable to participate in the conversation, even if they know the morphology and syntax. Krashen and Terrell (2000, p. 155) indicate that if language learners wish to express some idea or ask for information, they must be able to produce lexical items to convey their meaning. Besides, Richards’ preface in Schmitt’s (2000, p. xi) “Vocabulary in Language Teaching” indicates that vocabulary is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of a second language.

Vocabulary and lexical items are at the core of learning and communication. No amount of grammatical or other type of linguistic knowledge can be employed in communication or discourse without the use of vocabulary because vocabulary is shown to focus much more than knowledge of single words. In communication situations, Davies and Pearse (2000, p. 59) also point out that vocabulary is often more important than grammar. It is frustrating for language learners when they discover that they cannot communicate effectively because they do not know many of words they need. This is also avowed by McCarthy (1990, p. iix) who points out the importance of vocabulary that,
“No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful ways”. Since learners not only communicate in words but also they do most of their thinking in words because words are the tools they use to think, to express ideas and feelings, as well as to explore and analyze the world around them; therefore, incorrect vocabulary frequently interferes with communication, and communication disrupts when learners do not use the right words (Allen 1983, p. 5; Smith 1998, p. xv).

To summarise, one can see that language learners with good vocabulary knowledge can achieve a great deal of success in their classroom, their social life, and in their continuing acquisition of the target language. A large, rich vocabulary provides language learners the right words to use at the right time, and also enables them to express their real thoughts, ideas, and feelings. From the scholars’ statements mentioned, one can see that vocabulary occupies a conspicuous role in learning and understanding a language as well as in communication situations.

2.2.3 The Importance of Vocabulary Learning Goals

As vocabulary plays an important part in learning, understanding, and communicating in a language, it is useful if language learners understand the importance of vocabulary in successful communication and comprehension. This segment specifically deals with the importance of vocabulary learning goals.

In a language classroom, language-learning goals are very important since they are objectives or intended learning for particular learners working on particular tasks,
made specific from the general learning aims of book or syllabus. Learning goals aid language teachers in planning lessons and adapting tasks for their students.

Goals will result in learning achievement in the target language (Cameron 2001, pp. 28-29). Therefore, in a language classroom, language learning goals and sub-goals must be set that are clear and suitable because they help ensure success and achievement at each learning step, and of the task as a whole. Similarly, in vocabulary learning, the main goals should be focused on why language learners particularly learn vocabulary both in isolation and in context. For example, students need to hear a new word in isolation as well as in context, so that they can notice the sounds at the beginning and end, the stress pattern of the word, and the syllables that make up the word. They will need to hear the word spoken in isolation several times to catch all this information.

Additionally, the method of vocabulary instruction, both in isolation and in context, is normally based on learners’ educational level: beginner, intermediate or advanced. To begin with, teachers must clarify their main goals of what they want their students to obtain for learning vocabulary items. However, possible objectives of vocabulary teaching and learning have been proposed by different scholars:

Nandy (1994, p. 1) states, “an extensive vocabulary is most desirable, not in order that the possessor may display his sophistication by the use of a very large number of unfamiliar words, but in order that he may have at his stock exactly of the right word for every occasion”.

Ooi and Lee (1996, p. 7) propose that “the main focuses in teaching vocabulary should be to make the learner more discriminating of word form, word meaning, and word use”.

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Aebersold and Field (1997, p. 139) affirm that the three main goals of vocabulary teaching and learning are to help students 1) to know the vocabulary in the text, 2) to recognize vocabulary to make sense of the text, and 3) to consider vocabulary students need to know to function in the L2/FL in the future.

Baker and Westrup (2000, p. 38) suggests that teachers need to teach students what the word means, its pronunciation and how to use the word.

Krashen and Terrell (2000, p. 157) assert that one goal of vocabulary learning is to provide enough vocabulary to allow language use outside the classroom, and to place the students in a position to continue second language acquisition.

Moras and Carlos (2001, p. 1) highlight the most important objective of vocabulary teaching for advanced learners is to foster learners independence so that learners will be able to deal with new lexis and broaden their vocabulary. Learners not only understand the meaning of words, but also are able to use them appropriately, both in oral and written use of the language.

Catala, N (2003, p. 56) proposes the vocabulary learning goals as: 1) to find out the meaning of unknown words; 2) to retain them in long-term memory; 3) to recall them at will; and 4) to use them in oral or written mode.

Intaraprasert (2004, p. 9) emphasises in his study that the main goals of vocabulary learning are: 1) to discover the meanings of a new words; 2) to retain the knowledge of newly-learned words; and 3) to expand the knowledge of English vocabulary.
Salazar (n.d., p. 2) proposes that the purpose of vocabulary teaching and learning is to make students become independent readers. This means that students need to connect words to existing knowledge and use them in listening, reading, speaking and writing.

It is surmised that vocabulary can be taught or learned effectively both in context and isolation. Some language teachers have focused on teaching their students to discriminate words. Some encourage their students to be advanced learners or independent learners. Some focus on teaching their students an extensive vocabulary stocked with a very large number of unfamiliar words. However, teaching students vocabulary all share some common goals, i.e. assist and guide students in how to learn, retain, and use words. In terms of word form, students have to focus on how to pronounce and spell words correctly and clearly. For word meaning, they need to learn how to discover and retain word meanings. Based on word use, students need to know how to practise or use them to express their real thoughts, ideas and feelings in a wide range of appropriate situations. They need to learn how to expand their vocabulary so that they can improve their language skills.

2.2.4 Vocabulary Learning Approaches

Since vocabulary is the heart of mastering a foreign language, it is necessary to discuss vocabulary learning approaches. Before starting this section, however, it should be made clear that there is no ‘right’ or ‘best’ approach for vocabulary learning (Schmitt 2000, p. 142). The best practice in any situation will depend on the type of student, the words that are targeted, the college system and curriculum, and many other factors. According to Nation (1990, p. 2); Rubin and Thompson (1994, p.79); Richek et al. (1996, p. 203),
there are two general ways in which learners learn vocabulary: the direct vocabulary learning approach, and the indirect vocabulary learning approach. This section focuses on learning approaches which language learners can make use of to decipher for themselves the meanings of words, using both direct and indirect learning approaches.

“Direct or ‘explicit’ vocabulary learning is concerned with conscious learning processes when language learners learn vocabulary explicitly, either in context or in isolation, through direct instruction in both the meanings of individual words and word-learning strategies” (Laufer and Hulstijn 2001, p. 1). In direct learning, learners are systematically taught specific words and language structures (Richel et al. 1996, p. 203).

This method of vocabulary learning is indispensable for learning the core vocabulary that means basic and important vocabulary that is used and served in most situations. This is particularly true for the learning of basic lexical and semantic knowledge, for beginner-level or less successful language learners (Nation, 1990). The learning of single words basically should be highlighted at an early stage of second language learning. After the language ability is developed, indirect vocabulary learning through contexts is important to be emphasized to language learners (Coady and Huckin, 1997).

Indirect or ‘implicit’ vocabulary learning, on the other hand, encompasses learning the meaning of new words implicitly when language learners hear or see the words used in many different contexts, for example, through daily opportunities, through conversations with others and through reading extensively on their own (Read 2000, p. 39; Laufer and Hulstijn 2001, p.1). Indirect vocabulary learning deals with unconscious processes of learning through reading or listening without language learners necessarily being aware of the goals of learning. In this type of learning, new words are learned incidentally while reading or learning from listening to
stories, films, television or the radio (Anderson and Nagy, 1991; Nation, 1982; 2001; Sternberg, 1987). Moreover, learners absorb meaning vocabulary, grammatical structures, and concepts simply from being exposed to rich language (Rich et al. 1996, p. 203). Learning vocabulary indirectly via guessing from context is broadly accepted as the most important of all sources of learning vocabulary (Nation 2001, p. 232). This approach should be stressed for further lexical and semantic development of the words learned through explicit learning and for learning additional vocabulary.

Since, there are numerous words to learn, so it is not possible to teach language learners all words. Many researchers (e.g. Carter, 1998; Gu, 2002; 2003; Hulstijn, 1992; Nation, 1990; Schmitt, 2000; Sökmen, 1997; Sternberg, 1987) have maintained that guessing the meaning of words presented in context is an effective strategy for vocabulary learning, and most vocabulary can be learned from context by means of strategies of inferences. When language learners turned advanced or independent learners, they obtain the meanings of new words by using more ‘inferential’ or ‘implicit’ vocabulary learning strategies. Regarding the role of teachers at this stage, they may help learners with vocabulary directly or ‘explicitly’ by means of word lists, paired translation equivalents, and in related semantic sets. They may also help learners by more indirect or ‘implicit’ means, such as exposure to words in the context of reading authentic texts. That is to say, learners may learn vocabulary incidentally through explicit or/and implicit learning.

Vocabulary can be learned incidentally through direct or/and indirect vocabulary learning approach by language learners; however, it is impossible to teach everything learners may face.
Learners acquire words incidentally through their reading and listening apart from their intentional learning for their course requirements, therefore both direct and indirect vocabulary-learning approaches are very useful and essential for them to learn and acquire vocabulary items.

Learners also learn vocabulary items when vocabulary items are explicitly taught, not only individual words but also vocabulary learning strategies. Some vocabulary must be taught directly even though a great deal of vocabulary is learned indirectly.

To sum up, although there is evidence that indirect vocabulary learning is found to be beneficial, in recent studies of L2 learners, a combination of both direct and indirect vocabulary learning approach is seemed to be superior to either direct or indirect vocabulary learning alone. Both types of vocabulary learning approaches improve learners’ language abilities, and thus should be emphasized in FL learning, so that language learners know how to maximize the effectiveness of learning, using, coping with and storing newly-learned vocabulary on their own.

2.3 Vocabulary and the Four Language Skills

This Section focuses on vocabulary and the four language skills, including types, meanings, and functions of vocabulary as well as how many words a language learner needs to know for the four language skills.

2.3.1 Type of Vocabulary

It is essential to a language learner to be good at LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing) Skills to become proficient in a language. In order to understand how vocabulary items work or relate to the four language skills, it will be helpful to make
clear first by grouping the skills into two pairs. There are two ways in so doing: Firstly, *listening* and *speaking* are the skills necessary in oral communication, they can be grouped together. For some learners, this is the main focus of their interest. *Reading* and *writing* can be grouped together since they are the skills necessary in written communication, and this may be the main focus or motivation for other learners. Alternatively, we can group *listening and reading* together, since they both are used to understand language which was produced by other people. To this extent, listening and reading are known as *receptive* skills, and *speaking and writing* are *productive* skills.

Based on the type of vocabulary in general, there are four categories of vocabulary learning: listening vocabulary, speaking vocabulary, reading vocabulary, and writing vocabulary. Listening vocabulary refers to words learners use to understand what they hear. Speaking vocabulary is known as words they use when they speak. Reading vocabulary concerns words in prints that they recognize and use to understand what they read, and writing vocabulary involves words they use in their own writing.

Pikulski and Templeton (2004, p. 2) demonstrates that vocabulary items play a dominant part in learning to communicate effectively while listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Vocabulary items can be classified in terms of types, meanings, and functions. Vocabulary is categorized into four main groups as meaning/oral vocabulary, literate/written vocabulary, receptive vocabulary, and productive vocabulary. However, it is obvious that all vocabulary items are overlapped in meanings and functions.
2.3.2 Meanings and Functions of Vocabulary

This section discusses regarding meanings and functions of each vocabulary type concerned with the four language skills in details.

1) Meaning/Oral vocabulary refers to words language learners use in order to understand what they hear in speech, and words they use when they speak. This involves both receptive and productive vocabulary. For listening, if they lack meaning/oral vocabulary knowledge, they would have difficulties in what they are hearing in authentic situations or from authentic texts. That is, they probably miss the points of what they are listening to. For speaking, Nation (1990, p. 93) suggests that in order to speak English, it is necessary to have a large vocabulary. In developing learners’ spoken English vocabulary, it is best to give learners practice in being able to say a lot, using a small number of words. Pikulski and Templeton (2004, p. 3) affirm that language learners who have large speaking vocabulary generally tend to have large listening, reading, and writing vocabulary, and vice versa.

2) Literate/Written vocabulary refers to words language learners use in order to understand what they read, and words they use in writing. This, again, includes both receptive and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary involves being able to recognise it when it is seen. When one reads, he or she needs a number of vocabulary items to understand texts he or she is reading. Likewise, when one writes, he or she needs a number of vocabulary items to produce his or her ideas in the writing texts.

3) Receptive vocabulary concerns words language learners use in order to understand what they hear in speech, and words used to understand what they read. It is generally accepted that language learners need receptive vocabulary for their listening and
reading. The better one’s vocabulary knowledge, the easier one would find it to understand the conversation or a large amount of reading. However, when compared vocabulary learning from listening with vocabulary learning from reading, Read (2000, p. 47) points out that vocabulary learning from listening has received much less attention than learning vocabulary items through reading. Based on vocabulary and reading, Nation and Coady (1988, p. 98) point out that vocabulary is likely to be a predominant causal factor for reading comprehension. Laufer (1997, p. 20) emphasises that no text comprehension is possible, either in one’s native language or in a foreign language, without understanding the text’s vocabulary. Besides, Rubin (1993, p.1) stresses, “A good vocabulary and good reading go hand in hand. Unless language learners know the meaning of words, they will have difficulties in understanding what is read. And the more one reads, the more words one will add to one’s vocabulary”. That is to say, a rich vocabulary is essential to successful listening and reading comprehension. Similarly, Pikulski and Templeton (2004, p. 1) indicate in their study that a large vocabulary is more specifically predictive and reflective of high levels of reading achievement.

4) Productive vocabulary involves words language learners use to express their thoughts and ideas in speaking and writing. Since both speaking and writing are productive skills, Nandy (1994, p. i) highlights the relationship between vocabulary and expression of speech and writing that “An extensive vocabulary, besides empowering us to give expression to a wide range of thoughts, also enables us to vary our forms of expression, and so make our speech or our writing more pleasing to hear or more interesting to read. No one can ever become an effective speaker or a ready writer if
he does not have at his command a wide vocabulary to which he is continually adding.” In terms of vocabulary and the written text, Schmitt (2000, p. 155) indicates that vocabulary knowledge is indispensable since the text involves the use of difficult words to convey more complicated ideas than the spoken one. All in all, vocabulary items can be generally categorised into four main groups as ‘receptive (or passive)’, ‘productive (or active)’, ‘meaning/oral’ and ‘literal/written’ vocabulary based on their meanings and functions. It is apparent that vocabulary is crucial for the improvement of the four language skills.

To improve language skills, language learners need to involve receptive and productive, meaning/oral, and literal/written vocabulary. The following section particularly involves how many words a language learner needs for the four language skills.

2.3.3 How Many Words a Language Learner Needs for the Four Language Skills?

It is acknowledged that vocabulary has long been one of the main problems for language learners to develop their listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The lack of vocabulary results in the difficulties in all four language skills. To be successful in developing their language skills, language learners need to know sufficient vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary size is an aspect of vocabulary that is worth mentioning and discussing since it is important for all four language skills. It is important to know how much vocabulary students need to draw on for listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Nation 1990, p. 75) so that language teachers may look into ways to help their students enlarge their vocabulary. However, how many words a foreign language learner must know in order to understand authentic situations or authentic texts is still questioned. This is a factor of concern what
language skill, what level of a language learner’s education, what vocabulary learning goals, or any communication situations a language learner deals with.

Schmitt (2000, p. 157) indicates that the number of words language learners need also depend largely upon the realistic goal: around 2,000 word families should be the threshold for daily basic conversations but this will not cover every conversational topic. Nation and Waring (1997, p. 10) propose around 2,000-3,000 word families for productive speaking and writing. This is consistent with Allen (1983, p. 105) who recommends that about 3,000 words would be necessary ‘productive’ items to be used in writing and speech. Laufer (1998, p. 256) puts it about 3,000 word families, while Nation and Waring (1997, p. 10) recommend that 3,000-5,000 word families is needed to provide a basis for comprehension, or to begin reading authentic texts.

Hazenberg and Hulstijn (1996) mention about 10,000 for challenging academic texts as in University textbooks, and 15,000 to 20,000 (Nation and Waring 1997, p. 10) to equal an educated native speaker of English.

In summary, in dealing with the four language skills, it is crucial for a language learner to have enough vocabulary: 2,000 word families for basic conversation; 2,000-3,000 for productive speaking and writing; 3,000-5,000 for reading authentic texts; 10,000 for challenging University textbooks; and 15,000 to 20,000 to equal an educated native speaker of English. Expanding the vocabulary is one of the main goals of vocabulary learning since a language learner with rich, large vocabulary will achieve success both inside and outside language classroom as well as in their social life. Therefore a language learner should be taught skills known as language learning

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strategies to expand their vocabulary. The following section particularly involves elements or aspects of knowing a word proposed by different researchers.

2.3.4 What is involved in knowing a word?

In Section 2.1.5, the researcher discussed vocabulary and the four language skills regarding type, meaning, and function of vocabulary, and examined how much vocabulary a language learner should know to be effective in the four language skills. This section concentrates on many crucial aspects of knowing a word.

Knowing a word means knowing at least its forms, its meaning, and its basic usage in context receptively and productively. Knowing a word requires conscious and explicit learning mechanisms whereas using a word involves mostly implicit learning and memory (Ellis, 1994). Besides receptive and productive knowledge, knowing a word involves several crucial elements or aspects of knowing, such as pronunciation, spelling, meaning, register, morphology, syntax, and collocation, and so on.

However, language learners do not need to know all these aspects. What aspects of knowing a word they should be proficient in depends upon what language skill is required; what is the main goal of their vocabulary learning; what communication situations a language learner is dealing with, and what level of a language learner’s education is: beginner, intermediate, or advanced. For example, young learners do not need to deal with register, morphology, syntax, or collocation since these are too complicated for them whereas advanced learners have to do so if expecting excellence in vocabulary learning. With regard to aspects of knowing a word, many researchers have proposed some elements or aspects of knowing a word. Examples are Richards (1976); Ellis and Sinclair (1989); Taylor (1990; 1992); Coady (1993); Ooi and Lee (1996);
Ur (1996; 1999); Qian (2002) and Nation (2005). What follow are aspects of knowing a word proposed by those researchers:

1) *Richards* (1976, p. 83; 1985, pp. 177-182) offers the assumptions concerning knowing a word as follow:

   1. Knowing a word means knowing the degree of probability of encountering that word in speech or print. For many words we also ‘know’ the sort of words most likely to be found associated with the words.
   2. Knowing a word implies knowing the limitations imposed on the use of the word according to variations of function and situation.
   3. Knowing a word means knowing the syntactic behavior associated with the word.
   4. Knowing a word entails knowledge of the underlying form of a word and the derivations that can be made from it.
   5. Knowing a word involves knowledge of the network of associations between that word and other words in the language.
   6. Knowing a word means knowing the semantic value of a word.
   7. Knowing a word means knowing many of the different meanings associated with a word

2) *Ellis and Sinclair* (1989, p. 28) propose that the aspects of ‘knowing a word’ mean:

   1. To understand it when it is written and/or spoken
   2. To recall it when we need it
   3. To use it with the correct meaning
   4. To use it in a grammatically correct way
5. To pronounce it correctly

6. To know which other words we can use with it

7. To spell it correctly

8. To use it in the right situation

9. To know if it has positive or negative associations

3) Taylor (1990, pp. 1-3; 1992, pp. 3-6) summarizes eleven aspects of ‘knowledge of a word’ to serve the purposes of vocabulary teaching and learning. These include:

1. **Mother tongue.** Knowing of how things are said in different languages. Language learners use mother tongue for helping word understanding in the second language by linking the second language sounds to sounds of their mother tongue.

2. **Sound-spelling.** It is crucial for language learners to be aware of the relationship of sound and spelling because many English words sound similarly though they have different spelling, and vice versa. Examples are, *hair* – *hare*; *dear* – *deer*; and *tear* (as a noun) – *tear* (as a verb), etc.

3. **Denotation.** Language learners can find out the direct meaning of words in the dictionary. For example, the direct meaning of ‘*home*’ is ‘the house where one lives’.

4. **Word grammar.** Knowledge of word grammar involves word form and the derivations that can be made from it. For example, the word ‘*unemployment*’ has a common prefix denoting ‘opposite’ (un-), a common noun suffix (-ment), and is derived from the verb ‘employ’.
5. **Collocation.** This refers to words which typically come or occur together. For example, the word ‘perform’ is used with ‘a task’ but the word ‘do’ comes with ‘homework’.

6. **Polysemy.** A word with two or more closely related meanings as ‘foot’ in the following sentences: *Maggie hurt her foot. George stood at the foot of the hill.* The foot is the lowest part of the hill just as the foot is the lowest part of the human body.

7. **Frequency.** Knowledge of some items in English are far more frequent in speech than in writing, e.g. ‘indeed’, ‘well’, ‘actually’.

8. **Connotation.** Besides its direct meaning in the dictionary, some words have second or deep meaning. Language learners need to know a word that gives an extra dimension to its literal meaning. For example, the denotation - direct meaning – of ‘home’ is described as ‘a place where people stay or live in’, but in connotation – second or deep meaning – ‘home’ might be represented or implied as ‘happiness’ or ‘warmth’ or ‘security’.

9. **Register.** This refers to the appropriate use of a vocabulary item at any situations. For example, ‘Want a fag?’ is acceptable only among friends while ‘Would you like a cigarette?’ is appropriate in most contexts.

10. **Vocabulary within written discourse.** This involves reference, linking, sequencing, and discovering the meaning of unknown vocabulary items in context.

11. **Vocabulary within spoken discourse.** This concerns intonation, stress and pausing, and with the words speakers use to signal the beginnings and endings of sections of discourse.
4) Coady (1993, p. 13) proposes that knowing a word involves knowing:

- the degree of probability of when and where to encounter a given word and the sort of words to be found with it;
- the limitations imposed on it by register;
- its appropriate syntactic behavior;
- its underlying form and derivations;
- the network of associations it has;
- its semantic features, its extended or metaphorical meanings

5) Ooi and Lee (1996, p. 7) conclude in their study that knowing a word concerns knowing:

- word form, including pronunciation, spelling, inflections and derivations;
- word meaning involving basic and literal meaning, derived and figurative meanings, semantic relation and connotation; and
- word use concerning sub-categorization, collocation, sociolinguistic and stylistic, restrictions, and slang and idioms).

6) Ur (1996, pp. 60-62) suggests that knowing a word concerns knowing:

- word form (pronunciation and spelling);
- grammar;
- collocation;
- aspects of meaning (denotation, connotation, appropriateness, and meaning relationships); and - word formation
7) Qian (2002, p. 515) proposes that knowing a word concerns knowing:

- breadth of vocabulary knowledge (knowledge of word meaning of which one has at least some superficial knowledge);

- depth of vocabulary knowledge (knowledge of vocabulary which language learners can use in their speech and writing).

8) Nation (2005, pp. 583-585) made a list of various aspects concerning knowing a word. The aspects of knowing a word proposed by Nation (2005) fit into three groups. These include knowing the form of a word; knowing the meaning of a word; and knowing how a word is used. Knowing the form of a word includes spelling, sound, and word parts. Knowing the meaning of a word involves linking its form and meaning, knowing a concept for a word and what it can refer to, and knowing what other words of related meaning it can be associated with. Knowing how a word is used concerns the grammar of the word, including parts of speech and sentence patterns it fits into, collocates of the words, and whether the word is formal or informal, polite or rude, used mainly by children and so on, or has no restrictions on its use.

In summary, knowing a word proposed by different scholars mentioned above involves many crucial aspects. All of these aspects concern a part of word form, word meaning, and word use. Knowing word form concerns how the word sounds, how it is spelt, and the grammatical changes that can be made to it. Knowing word meaning(s) is not just knowing its dictionary meaning(s), it also means knowing how it relates to other word commonly associated with it (its collocations) as well as its connotation, register, etc.
Knowing word use involves knowing its patterns of occurrence with other words, and its particular types of language use. Some aspects proposed are basic, quite simple, and appropriate for young language learners whereas some are more complex, such as connotation and register that require a great level of language competence. Besides, the aspects of knowing a word also mainly involve both receptive and productive knowledge that are used in language skills. Regarding vocabulary learning, it is certain that learning vocabulary items means learning the form of the new words; the meaning of the words; and the use of the words.

2.3.5 Which word needs to be learned?

It is essential to know which words students need to learn in dealing with particular context so that language teachers may take into consideration for planning their lessons. As there are in every language too many words a foreign language learner must know in order to understand authentic situations or authentic texts is still questioned and it is difficult to answer. This might be a factor of what language skill is required, what is the level of a language learner’s education, or what communication situations a language learner deals with.

Nation (1990, p. 19) affirms that the words language learners need to learn also depend largely upon the vocabulary learning goal. Since the high-frequency words occur frequently in all kinds of texts, then high-frequency words (the most frequent 2,000 words) must be taught. This is because they are essential for any real language use (Nation, 1995). This is consistent with Schmitt (2000, p. 142) who proposes that a vocabulary about 2,000 words would be a realistic goal. If a language learner is dealing with most kinds of academic texts, then academic vocabulary must be focused. Similarly,
if a language learner is dealing with a specialized text, technical vocabulary, then, must be taught. Since the low-frequency words do not occur very frequently, strategies for dealing with these words must be taught and trained to learners.

To sum up, learning high-frequency words will help language learners deal with all kinds of text. Learning academic vocabulary is a high priority goal for learners who wish to do academic study in English. Likewise, technical vocabulary will help language learners identify words that will be useful for a particular discipline, or writing technical reports. Strategies that best suit for dealing with low frequency words must be trained to language learners.

2.4 Major Studies Related to Vocabulary

Banrad (1961) made a study on “Pre-University (PUC) Students’ Vocabulary in Chottanagpur”. In this study, she found that the difficult words were taught by translation or explanation on single occasion brought good result. She noted that poor English vocabulary acquisition of English vocabulary among the students was the teachers were not teaching vocabulary as they ought to.

Clark (1973) made a study on “The Child’s Acquisition of Semantics in his First Language. “He found that children learn the meaning of the word by adding features. According to him, the word ‘wide’ is incompletely understood if it is only taken to mean big because this aspect would also be a feature of tall or long. He said that when the child adds the feature that wide refers to size on the horizontal dimension, its meaning more nearly complete”.
Jenkins, et al. (1978) conducted a study on “Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension: Instructional Effects.” They investigated the effects of vocabulary instruction on word knowledge and reading comprehension. The results showed that methods that used synonyms and required vocabulary mastery were superior to methods employing context.

Ninio, Anat (1979) carried out research on “Ostensive Definition in Vocabulary Teaching”. Finding of the study says that ‘Ostensive Definitions’ of words are a prominent feature of maternal didactic efforts at teaching a basic nominal vocabulary to their children, at least within the context of joint play with representational materials.

Kotagira (1981) conducted a research on the “Development of a Course for Increasing the Reading Proficiency in English of the Post–High School Students of Gujarat”. The research showed that it is possible to develop reading proficiency of the students through skills approach in which learner practiced different skills separately before he engaged in the task of reading. The amount of development speed depended on how well the learner is equipped with the knowledge of the language and his style of work in general.

Gaikwad (1982) carried out an investigation on “A Comparative Study of Efficiency of Direct Method and the Bilingual Method in Teaching of Lower Classes of Secondary Schools in Rural Areas of Maharastra State” He found from his study that the bilingual method was superior to ‘Direct Method’ in developing, the linguistic skills of understanding speaking and writing and the language elements of structure and vocabulary.
Martin (1984) has investigated about “Advanced Vocabulary Teaching: The Problems of Synonyms”. According to him the four dissonances that interfere with encoding by advanced learners are; stylistic, syntactic, collocational and semantic. To avoid errors in stylistic appropriateness in a second language the investigator states that new vocabulary should be clearly labeled as to style - formal, informal, colloquial, technical literary, archaic, regional, taboo, etc.

Joseph R. Jenkins, et al (1984) did a research on “Learning Vocabulary through Reading” . This study examined the hypothesis that new vocabulary knowledge can be acquired through incidental learning of word meanings from context. Fifth graders of two reading abilities read passages containing unfamiliar words. Students were randomly assigned to different numbers of context presentations: 0, 2, 6, or 10 passages read over several days. Half of the unfamiliar words were informally taught before their appearance in the passages. Word meanings were learned from context, and more frequent presentation in context increased learning. In addition, better readers profited more from context than did less skilled readers, and prior exposure (informal teaching) resulted in greater learning. Vocabulary effects were also observed on a measure of reading comprehension. Whether incidental learning accounts for vocabulary growth was discussed. The context method developed was effective in increasing vocabulary knowledge and improving reading comprehension in children with poor existing vocabulary knowledge, and study recommended for use with children who require extra help developing vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Dickinson (1984) carried out an investigation on the “Children’s Knowledge of Words Gained from a Single Exposure First Impressions”. The results indicated that
children at all ages could identify new words, were sensitive to correct usage, and could acquire a partial semantic representation from a single exposure. Explicit definitions were most useful to older children. There was an evidence to suggest that meanings for new words were better learned if the exemplar is peripheral to previously named category.

Nation and Liu Na (1985) conducted a study on “Factors Affecting Guessing Vocabulary in Context.” They found that learners work as a group and share their guesses and they can successfully guess the meanings and they can successfully guess the meaning of all the words. The study recommended that the guessing strategy could be best introduced as a class activity concentrating on verbs and nouns, which have plenty of known surrounding context and it said that guessing from context is very powerful strategy for dealing with low frequency vocabulary.

Bullard (1985) investigated about “Word Based Perception: A Handicap in Second Language Acquisition?” The results seemed to indicate that a capacity to understand spoken language does not call for great accuracy in the identification of the individual components of that discourse.

Halverson (1985) made an investigation of “Culture and Vocabulary Acquisition.” The outcome of the study noted that the learning of vocabulary within relevant cultural context is much more enlightening and interesting experience for the student.

Jiganti and Tindall (1986) conducted an investigation into “An Interactive Approach to Teaching Vocabulary.” The investigators were of the opinion that classroom activities provide a better learning environment for children with lower reading levels. They found that learning under homework conditions was significantly related to prior reading achievement. Good readers learned more than poor readers when they worked alone.
Weiss (1986) carried on an investigation on “Differential Effect of Differing Vocabulary Presentations”. The indication of the result pointed out that Vocabulary training improved text comprehension and Factor analytic research accrued for strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension.

Laufer, Batia and Paul Nation (1999) “A Vocabulary-Size Test of Controlled Productive Ability” focused on a controlled production measure of vocabulary consisting of items from five frequency levels, and using a completion item type. The controlled-production vocabulary-levels test was found to be reliable, valid (in that the levels distinguished between different proficiency groups) and practical. There was a satisfactory degree of equivalence between two equivalent forms of the test.

G.S, Bahr et al. (2001) conducted a research on “Bilingual Knowledge Maps (Bik-Maps) in Second Language Vocabulary Learning”. The results indicate that BiK-Map learners outperformed other learners and the combination of spatial properties and semantic context creates the Bik-Map advantage.

Jonathan Brown, et al. (2002) “Automatic Question Generation for Vocabulary Assessment”. In this study, using data from Word Net, 6 types of vocabulary questions has been generated. Several forms, including word bank and multiple-choice has been used. It is suggested that these automatically-generated questions give a measure of vocabulary skill that correlates well with subject performance on independently developed human written questions.

Read, John (2004) in “Research in Teaching Vocabulary” surveyed research on second language vocabulary teaching and learning since 1999. It first considered the distinction between incidental and intentional vocabulary learning. Study says that
although learners certainly acquire word knowledge incidentally while engaged in various language learning activities, more direct and systematic study of vocabulary is also required.

Walters, Jo Dee (2004) investigated about “Teaching the use of context to infer meaning: a longitudinal survey of L1 and L2 vocabulary research”. The research demonstrated that students benefit from having their attention drawn to the use of context, the question of how, if at all, they should be taught to deal with context is still unanswered.

John J. Pikulski et al. (2004) “Teaching and Developing Vocabulary: Key to Long-Term Reading Success”. He found that the early years of a child’s life have a profound influence on that child’s language and vocabulary development, which in turn greatly influences school success. Children who live in poverty in their early years have much less verbal interaction with their parents and consequently begin school with far less vocabulary development than their more privileged peers. While the language gap doesn’t widen once children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds enter the stimulating environment of school, that gap does not narrow.

Kiyomi Chujo et al. (2005) carried out study on “Understanding the Role of Text Length, Sample Size and Vocabulary Size in Determining Text Coverage”. The results of the study empirically proved that text coverage was more stable when the vocabulary size was larger, the text length is longer, and more samples were used. It was also found that the stability of text coverage was greater from a larger number of shorter samples than from a fewer number of longer samples.
Ismail Hakki Erten, et al. (2008) studied about “A Comparative Look into How to Measure the Effectiveness of Vocabulary Learning Strategies: Through Using Percentages or Correlation Coefficients”. The study showed that employing percentage calculation as an indicator of strategy effectiveness could be a more realistic measure of the effectiveness. Its superiority comes from the fact that it allows researchers to treat discreet cases of vocabulary learning separately as opposed to the holistic treatment in correlation coefficients.

Wan-a-rom, Udorn (2008) in “Comparing the Vocabulary of Different Graded-Reading Schemes” compared graded-reader wordlists with the General Service List (GSL; West, 1953) and investigated the words in those lists and the words actually used in graded-reader books. The wordlists from the 2 major graded-reader series, the GSL, and the words actually used in the graded readers were examined using the Range program. The comparisons showed that the lists are different from each other largely because of the different sizes of the lists and because of the words they contain and do not contain. In addition, the words actually used in the books did not stick closely to the words in the lists on which they were based, especially at Level 1.

Genoveva, Llinares et al. (2008) In their study “Acquisition of L2 Vocabulary for Effective Reading: Testing Teachers’ Classroom Practice” four practical approaches was taken to help students acquire the minimum sight vocabulary necessary for reading English for Science and Technology (EST) texts. Over a period of 12 weeks, subjects (native Spanish speakers at university level) were divided into 4 intact groups and worked under different conditions. Initial measurement showed that the groups were not significantly different and that all subjects featured low levels of vocabulary knowledge.
Comparison of means obtained in a final test revealed that all groups improved their vocabulary significantly, and that the different approaches seemed to have helped to different degrees.

Yanjie Song and Robert Fox (2009) in “Integrating Incidental Vocabulary Learning Using PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) into Academic Studies: Undergraduate Student Experiences” The research findings showed that the students made a variety of uses of PDAs to improve their vocabulary learning in the course of academic studies both in and after class. The research results indicated that PDAs could be used in more flexible, novel and extended ways for English as a foreign language (EFL) vocabulary teaching and learning in both formal and informal learning environments in higher education.

Stuart Webb et al. (2009) analyzed the “The Lexical Coverage of Movies”. The scripts of 318 movies were analyzed in this study to determine the vocabulary size necessary to understand 95% and 98% of the words in movies. The movies consisted of 2,841,887 running words and had a total running time of 601 hours and 33 minutes and found that 3000 to 7000 word families have been used. The results showed that the children who encountered the target words while watching the cartoon had higher scores on a picture recognition task, and that five-year olds learned more words than three-year olds.

Koolstra and Beentjes (n.d) also suggested that video which links visual input with meaning, presents the language clearly and accurately, and kindles the interest of the viewers may lead to increased vocabulary learning. One viewing may lead to very little vocabulary learning. One way to increase the potential for learning from one movie is to watch the same movie a number of times. It is important to note that the vocabulary sizes
needed to reach the coverage points include the assumption that learners will know the proper nouns and marginal words. Because 2.67% of the running words are proper nouns, it is essential that learners are able to recognize the proper nouns. Teachers and learners need to be aware that drama and horror are likely to be the easiest genres to understand and they should aim to initially use L2 movies from those genres for language learning until viewers can demonstrate precise comprehension of movies.

Shen, Yingying (2009) studied about “Borrowed Words in English and Chinese Vocabulary”. Study gave a close look to Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (Fifth Edition) and found out that there were at least about 300 words in English vocabulary borrowed from Chinese. Later in 2007, he studied on Webster’s Third New International Dictionary and found out about 543 Chinese borrowed words were included in this dictionary. He also divided them into 23 types and figure out the majority of them are those words used in the field of places and minorities, plants, and food. The study reveals that there are 142 “acronyms and words beginning with Greek or Latin letters” in the back matters of The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary (Chinese-English edition, 2002) and most of them are English borrowed words such as e-mail, CT, CPU, DOS, DVD, FAX, internet, and so on. Finally the result showed that in the total number (543) of loanwords beginning with “a”, 230 were borrowed from English. It could be estimated generally that about 42.357% of borrowed words in Chinese vocabulary are English ones. That is to say, there are more than 4200 English borrowed words in Chinese vocabulary.

Chen, Shaoying (2010) conducted research on “The Application of SPSS in Analyzing the Effect of English Vocabulary Strategy Instruction”. The research result indicated that the software of SPSS could correctly analyze the teaching effect of
vocabulary strategy instruction in practical application, and the application of SPSS should be fully pushed in study of the foreign language teaching science to make it be the powerful assistant instrument for foreign language teaching researchers.

Ma Zhan-Xiang (2010) conducted a research on “The Necessity of Intensifying English Vocabulary Teaching in the Remote Minority Area College English Teaching”. His findings say that intensifying English vocabulary teaching in the remote minority area college, is quite necessary.

Moore, Chesney C (2010) in “Nouns in Early Vocabulary Development” found that Children typically learn many more nouns than verbs early in vocabulary development. The cause of this “noun-bias” is unclear. One possibility is that caregivers use more nouns and prompt for nouns more often. That is, the noun-bias may be the result of input frequency.

Alemi, Minoo (2010) did a study on “Educational Games as a Vehicle to Teaching Vocabulary”. This study attempted to investigate the role of using word games in expanding the learner’s vocabulary. In so doing, an experiment using five word games, named Twenty Questions, Charades, Definition Game’s, Passwords, and Crossword Puzzles respectively was conducted. The score obtained from the groups were compared through independent t-test. The calculated t exceeded the t-critical value, confirming the positive effect of word games on expanding learners’ vocabulary.

Marzieh Rafiee et al. (2011) conducted study on “Structural Analysis of Lexical Bundles Across Two Types of English News Papers Edited by Native and Non-native Speakers” findings of this study showed that Iranian journalists used lexical bundles more frequently compared with native speaker journalists. Regarding structural classifications
of bundles, Iranian journalists used the same categories of bundles as native speaker journalists did. The new subcategories of bundles found in newspaper register were added under the appropriate category. The results provide some interesting pedagogical implications for language teachers, EFL practitioners and EFL learners as well.

Shakila, A.A (2011) in her thesis titled “A Study of Teaching and Learning of English Vocabulary Items in Engineering Colleges From A Linguistic Perspective”. She found that the high frequency words are known before low frequency words, recognition of words are better than recall, urban students are better than rural students and girls are better than boys. She used samples from one college and she did not employ any statistical tool in her study.

Thus, the researchers carried out in this area had mostly adapted either survey method or experimental method and there are no considerable studies to deal with engineering students vocabulary stock. Therefore, in the present investigation, the survey method was used to study the vocabulary stock of engineering students and experimental method was used to study the effectiveness of the activities in teaching the vocabulary.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This Chapter has given detail picture about vocabulary learning as well as its sub-sets, including word and vocabulary, the importance of vocabulary, the importance of vocabulary learning goals, vocabulary learning approaches, vocabulary and the four language skills, what is involved in knowing a word, and which word needs to be learned. Finally, the accessible research works related to vocabulary have been given followed by the Chapter summary. The next chapter talks about the method of investigation.