

# Investigating Difficulties Encountered By Third Year EFL Students at Sudan University of Science and Technology, In Spelling and Pronunciation Errors at College Of Languages

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**Abstract:** This paper aims at investigating the difficulties of learning new Lexis encountered by third year 2016-2017 English language students at Sudan University of Science and Technology at college of languages. The subjects for the study were thirty students from Sudan University of Science and Technology (SUST). To achieve the aims of the study a test was as a tool used for data collection. The quantitative data of the test were analyzed both statistically and descriptively. The findings of the study revealed that SUST students of English language (third year), had problems with the pronunciation. The findings also indicate that students' are weak in spelling, misspell words plus write letters in reverse. Which hinder them to speak with good English pronunciation. This study can provide insight into the debate on whether at least an initial portion of learning vocabulary should include as an essential component at the university programs.

**Keywords:** Lexis, (L2), Second language, spelling, pronunciation, (SUST) University of Science and Technology.

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## 1. INTRODUCTON

Vocabulary plays an important role in language acquisition and in language learning, because, it is a central part of any language especially for university students. Vocabulary can be defined as "words we must know to communicate effectively; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)" (Neuman & 2009, p. 385). Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold. Wilkins (1972) stated, "...without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (p. 110).

Vocabulary does not merely understand the meaning of words, but learning vocabulary will lead learners knowing how to recall words. In other aspect, lexical knowledge is very important for improving student's English proficiency; therefore, learning vocabulary definitely will lead learners to find out the meaning of unknown words, to retain them in long-term memory and to use them in oral written mode. Without plentiful vocabulary, people cannot communicate and express their feeling both in form of spoken and written effectively, also it plays important role at every level of learning English to help learners to understand and manage vocabulary as well as to discover the meaning of the words. The researcher observes that the third-year students at Sudan University of Science and Technology face some difficulties of how to guess the words meaning from the context, and how to recognize the words, as well as while learning English particularly vocabulary. Hunt (1996) implied that *inferring meaning from context will work best when learners have the ability to recognize several thousand high-frequency words in context that is not too challenging for readers*.

### Statement of the Problems:

Learning a foreign language particularly English has emerged to be difficult especially in learning vocabulary and it has recently become the subject of linguistic research. It has attracted the interest of many scholars. Richards (1980) and Krashen (1989), as cited in Maximo (2000) state many reasons for devoting attention to vocabulary.

*“First, a large vocabulary is of course essential for mastery of a language. Second language acquirers know this; they carry dictionaries with them, not grammar books, and regularly report that the lack of vocabulary is a major problem”*

University students seem to be unaware of why they learn English, there is also the possibility that the problems faced by university students of English could stem from the weakness of vocabulary and there is lack in progress of students' lexical knowledge. This research will investigate difficulties of learning new Lexis encountered by students at Sudan University of Science and Technology, in spelling and pronunciation errors, also it is going to investigate the big challenge which is face EFL the students on vocabulary in order to find good way to understand word collocation effectively. It is worth thing that few studies have conducted to explore the linguistic difficulties that encountered EFL in spelling and pronunciation errors when they communicate with orally or in written form.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

The main objective of this study is to examine the difficulties of learning new lexis encountered by third-year students of English language at Sudan University of Science and Technology. More specifically the aims are as follows:

To investigate the most problematic areas that face the third year English learner at SUST. To combine word meanings by using correct spelling to raise the students' awareness in employing vocabulary consciously, Moreover, to improving and developing the lexis among the students, build and rise skills of acquire new words, well use and understand the collocations of word forms and pattern. To investigate the factors that face third year English learners at Sudan University in learning new lexis. Additionally, to find out how much the students' know about lexis in other words, to what extent EFL learners increase lexis knowledge.

### **Hypotheses of the study:**

Based on previous discussion, the following hypotheses are formulated.

1. Most of third SUST Students are weak in pronunciation.
2. Most of third-year English language students find difficulties to guess how to spell an English word.

### **Significance of the study:**

The present study differs from the previous in the following ways:

- This paper will, the researcher trusts, fill the vacuum caused by the insufficiency of relevant researches addressing lexis used by third class English learner at Sudan University of Science and Technology. The importance of this paper stems from the importance of vocabulary in the area of language learning.
- In effect, and as far as the researcher knows, there have not been enough researches carried to address the areas of instructing and learning new Lexis. Vocabulary is very important element of study, such as grammar, stress, rhythm, intonation, tone of voice.
- Its Includes subjects (participants) in different age environment of students at Sudan University of Science and Technology.
- It explores the subject's performance in different age, in order to find out whether the knowledge of learning new lexis is improving.

## **2. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The methods of this study is descriptive, analytical, the researcher will describe the collected data and then analyze them by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

- **Research tool:** the researcher designed one tool, a test for students at (SUST) third-year, college of languages. The validity and reliability of the research tool will be checked and confirmed by using (split-half) method which stands on the principle of dividing the answers of sample individuals into two parts.
- **The research population:** the sample of the research consists of (SUST) students, exclusively drawn from third year at college of languages.

- The test will be distributed to students at (SUST), third year 2016-2017 at college of languages to find out problems of learning new lexis. In spelling and pronunciation errors.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### WORD DESCRIPTION:

The word is the basic of the distinction between morphology and syntax and it is the principle unit of lexicography. Lyons (1968) argues that the “forms” treated in grammar the forms of words and that words are the units which are put together. Or combined in sentences. Word is semantically defined as the notion of a particular grammatical employment. This definition is in line with Lyons (1966) assumption that the word is semantic, a phonological and grammatical unit. Also Baeshen (1997:11) argues that (a word) is any sequence of letters bound on either side by space or punctuation mark. While Clark, (1993 & 1985) mentioned that words make a language and these are used to talk about everything, from bee-keeping to bicycling, from navigation to international banking. They supply us with the means for everyday talk about our surrounding and activities. Furthermore Palmer (1976) argues that we should look for an element smaller than the word, a unit of meaning. The morpheme: example is:-

Barry in blackberry and (love) and (d) in loved.

Nation (1983) describes words as units of language, not isolated but fits into many interlocking systems and levels to be comprehended and used receptively and productively. There are difference between idiom and word, where the idiom as defined by Howard Jackson (2002) is arrange of structures with fixed expressions the idiom would not accept any linguistic changes such as adding or dropping words.

Huddleson (1988:1) mentioned that the term “word” has been used in many ways of meanings. For instance, (tooth & teeth) are different word pronounced and spelt differently they differ in meaning and they occur in different position in sentences , so that we could not, for example , replace tooth by teeth:-

This tooth is loose.

These teeth are loose.

They are also traditionally said to be different forms of the same word specifically it can be observable that (tooth) is singular and teeth is plural so the different between these two words as inflectional property . Therefore these properties are relevant to both the morphological and syntactic components of the grammar.

#### DEFINITION OF LEXIS (VOCABULARY):

Vocabulary is obviously a very important element within a language as overwhelming majority of meaning is carried lexically, and therefore something to be taken into consideration both in second and foreign language teaching.

Wilkins, D. A. (1972). Linguistics in language teaching. London: Edward Arnold. Wilkins (1972) stated, “...without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (p. 110)

McCarthy (1990:v111) stated that no matter how well the students learn grammar, no matter how successfully the sound of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings. According to Webster’s Ninth collegiate Dictionary (1987:1320) vocabulary is define as : a list or collocation of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or define, b a sum or stock of words employed by a language group individual or work in a field of knowledge. Lexis or vocabulary is the central part of any language it stands for the meaning of several things. for this language is regarded as system of conversation , one of the most important aspect of learning language it to understanding the meaning or meaning of words and knowing they are formed . Also, it is can guide language learner to discover the meaning of the words.

Penny Ur (2004) explains that: vocabulary can be defined roughly as the words as the words we teach in the foreign language. Taylor (1990) defined vocabulary as the entire stock of words belonging to a branch of knowledge or known by an individual. He also stated that “the lexicon of a language is it expression”

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following tables and figures display the results of data analysis obtained by means of test. The aim of the test is to identify the students' difficulties of learning new lexis. In spelling and pronunciation errors. They were asked to first, rank a list of five items in terms of pronunciation, they were requested to answer questions on spelling. The tables below show percentages representing the subjects' responses to the questions. Section one of this test was to identify the pronunciation errors among the SUST third year students of English when they are listening to English word on 15 Oct 2016. So, a number of words were chosen randomly, which is expected to be heard incorrectly by the third year students of English language. The words were separated; each three words contains one target sound: each student was asked to hear one word aloud and underline it. At the end of this process, the words were written on a paper and then tabulated and analyzed statistically and descriptively. Here were some data results and discussions.

##### Listen and underline the words:

1. Bear Bare Pair

Table: (1.1) the target word "Bare"

Value	Frequency	Percentage
success	6	20.0%
Failure	24	80.0%
Total	30	100.0%

As seen from the table above, only (6) (20%) of the participants were able to hear the correct pronunciation of the target sound in the word "Bare". we notice (24) (80%) of the participants among the-sample (30 students) were answer wrong. According to the results above. This reveals that they are weak in pronunciation.

- 2- Miss call Missed call Missing call

Table: (1.2) the target word "Missed call"

Value	frequency	percentage
Success	7	23.3%
Failure	23	76.7%
Total	30	100.0%

Only 7 (23%) students pronounced this word "Missed call" correctly, while 23 (76%) students pronounced wrongly. This indicates that there are very weak in pronunciation.

##### Underline the correct Spelling:

1. Acheive Achieve Achive

Table: (1.3) the target word "Achieve"

value	frequency	percentage
success	7	23.3%
Failure	23	76.7%
Total	30	100.0%

A remarkable percentage on the table (1.3) shows that (76.70%) of the total number, were failure, meanwhile, 23.30% were success. This indicates that they are weak in spelling.

**2. Piese Paece Peace****Table: (1.4) the target word "peace"**

value	frequency	percentage
success	13	43.3%
Failure	17	56.7%
Total	30	100.0%

Above table shows that 43.3% answered correctly, were as 56.7% answer wrongly. This shows that they are weak in spelling.

**5. CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

based on the results of this study it can be concluded that many students had problems with the pronunciation, poor spelling, misspell words plus write letters in reverse, beside they had very weak ability of guess word meanings from context which impede them to speak with good English pronunciation.

**The Main Findings of This Study:**

The study arrived to the following findings:-

1. The results show that most of third-year students at SUST College of languages are weak in pronunciation.
2. Most third-year students at SUST are poor in spelling, misspell words plus write letters in reverse.
3. Most of third-year students at SUST are very weak in ability of guess word meanings from context.

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

With reference to the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1- Special care should be seriously taken to reconsider teaching vocabulary intensively.
- 2- Should include vocabulary study as an essential component at the university programs.
- 3- Using English dictionary is to be subscribed compulsory at three year at SUST – college of languages- English department.
- 4- Should be pronunciation lessons component at the university programs.

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