

## Vocabulary Barriers Experienced by University Students in the Process of Learning English as a Foreign Language

Muhammad Ahsan\*

Shahid Nawaz<sup>†</sup>

Syed Waseem Azhar Seemab<sup>‡</sup>

**Abstract** *The purpose of this research was to analyze the vocabulary barriers experienced by learners of public sector universities and colleges situated in South Punjab. SPSS version 23 was used to check the frequency and percentage of the responses of the respondents. The bulk of the learners indicated that they fail to achieve sufficient vocabulary to satisfy their educational and social needs due to certain factors such as the scope and magnitude of the assignments given to the students meaning the number of words that L2 learners need to learn is extraordinarily large. Similarly, the difference between spoken and written English becomes challenging on the way of learning L2 properly. To overcome all these barriers, the role of English language teachers is vulnerable as he is regarded as the custodian of L2 classroom, especially in EC and OC Circle countries and Pakistan is included in OC Circle countries.*

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### Introduction

Vocabulary is the most fundamental part of any language, and the more lexis you have, the more you will be capable of comprehending what you listen to and read. Similarly, having sufficient vocabulary, you will be able to express yourself in a better way what you need to speak or write. Mainly, vocabulary is divided into two parts, i.e. active and passive vocabulary. Active vocabulary contains all the words a person knows well uses well when he/she needs. On the other hand, passive vocabulary includes all those words a person knows when he reads or listens, but he does not know how to use these words in his own writing and speaking. This idea is widely supported by Thornbury (2005), who is of the opinion that without grammar, very little can be conveyed, but without words, nothing can be delivered. It obviously means that even somebody has sufficient command of grammar, but it will be impractical if they do not have sufficient words. Furthermore, this concept is strengthened by Ur (1996) he specified that vocabulary is one of the most momentous items

of the linguistic features to be taught in L2 learning as it will be difficult to communicate without diversity of vocabulary. All this means that the learning of L2 vocabulary is important to be the active part of the EFL classroom as without having sufficient knowledge of vocabulary, a new language cannot be learnt. It clearly means that L2 learners have sufficient knowledge of vocabulary segments while learning a new language. There are certain definitions of vocabulary, and certain linguists have proposed some specific terms about vocabulary. In this perspective, the most important explanation is projected by Richards & Renandya (2002) as they viewed vocabulary as the fundamental element of language competence, and it offers considerable ways for how students can utilize their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Without wide-ranging vocabulary, approaches and techniques for gaining new basic building blocks of language, learners second language usually remain unable to achieve their potential, and it is likely to be

\*Lecturer, Department of English, Ghazi University, Dera Ghazi Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: [mahsan@gudgk.edu.pk](mailto:mahsan@gudgk.edu.pk)

<sup>†</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English Linguistics, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan.

<sup>‡</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Rahimyar Khan Campus, Punjab, Pakistan.

dejected from getting benefits of L2 learning prospects around them such as listening to their English language teachers while delivering lectures in L2 classrooms, listening to the radio, listening to the native speakers, using the English language in different other contexts, reading newspapers, interacting to their inside or outside of the classroom friends or watching television. Nation (2000) affirms the aforementioned views and recommends a series of the diverse types of knowledge that a learner must properly get hold of in order to know the meanings of words, the written forms of the words, the spoken forms of the words, the grammatical behavior of the words, the register of the words, the collocations of the words, and the frequency of the words, the association of the words. At this point of the discussion, it would be wise to disclose that vocabulary is the building blocks of any language. The rationale behind this work was to analyze the factors causing vocabulary barrier while learning and to investigate the impacts of vocabulary barrier on students' learning process in L2 classroom at the university level in South Punjab.

### The Stages of Learning Vocabulary

Tozcu and Coady (2004) are of the opinion that learning vocabulary and its usage is an imperative part of L2, and it functions in two ways, i.e. a student learns a foreign language, and at the same time, he gets his academic achievement. Furthermore, Read, J. (2000) views that acquisition of linguistic building blocks or vocabulary is centred on the creation of unambiguous habits because it involves the combination of symbols and their meanings. It becomes clear from the preceding statements that an improvement of the meanings of the words is as imperative as its repeated replication. In addition, Grauberg (1997) also offers the procedure of learning English vocabulary, which includes four stages:

### Discrimination

Discrimination is the founding stage as it encompasses the aptitude and capability to differentiate sounds, letters from those who come next to them, and from the sounds and letters of analogous words while listening and reading and to keep them separate when

speaking and writing and if a student fails to discriminate it causes a common source of error.

### Understanding Meaning

This stage of learning vocabulary items refers to the comprehension of the founding concepts of L2 words or phrases. Over and over again, it is very much candid because the words or language blocks can be associated with the things by direct connotation or because there is an equivalent vocabulary item in L2.

### Remembering and Repetition

Remembering and repetition is the third phase, subsequently introducing and elucidating new materials of L2 to confirm its preservation. When L2 learners have realized the sense of vocabulary item, they will have to be associated with that word and its meanings; otherwise, the word will be disremembered after a due course.

### Consolidation and Extension of Meaning

Learning diverse vocabulary items and their implications is not an immediate process; if it were an instant process, and if demonstration were the only serious variable involved, then words would never be overlooked and need to be learned again. As it is, conversely, it looks that words are absorbed gradually ultimately and that only gradually do the words become fully assimilated into the learners' personal stock of vocabulary; after that, he can use words with the same sort of fluency that exemplifies the words he uses in his native language.

### Major Kinds of Vocabulary

Hiebert & Kamil (1995) relate that vocabulary has its two major types, firstly, verbal vocabulary, which is the combination of words by which we recognize the connotations when we interact with someone or read vocally. Secondly, print vocabulary is the collection of those words for which the meanings are known when we write or read without a sound.

### The Chief Characteristics of Vocabulary

Gaims and Redman (1986) proposed the list of the chief characteristics of vocabulary. According to them, there are several aspects of vocabulary that need to be kept in mind while teaching/learning vocabulary. The list is as under:

### Polysemy

When a single word carries multiple meanings is given the name as polysemy, such as head: of a person, of a pencil, of an association.

### Homonymy

Differentiating between the numerous meanings of a distinct word form which has multiple meanings which are not thoroughly associated, e.g. a file: used to put papers in or a tool.

### Homophony

Collection of words having the same pronunciation but unlike spellings and meanings, e.g. gate gait.

### Synonymy

When many words have the same meanings, this situation is called synonymy, e.g. gigantic, titanic, big, huge, and large.

### Conceptual Meanings

Conceptual meanings are also called logical, cognitive and denotative meanings. They are concerned with the relationship between the word and the thing it denotes or refers to.

### Style, Register, Dialect

Being able to differentiate between diverse levels of formality, the effect of various contexts and topics and dissimilarities in geographical speech variation.

### Barriers in Vocabulary

Thornbury (2002) suggests a number of aspects that make some vocabulary items more difficult are as follows:

#### Spelling

Sounds-spelling gaps are always to be the cause of barriers and errors; moreover, pronunciation or spelling can add to a words' difficulty. However, most English words spelling is justly law-abiding. Contrary to it, there are also some obvious loopholes. Those words which contain silent letters are mostly challenging: psychology, listen, knowledge, climbing, sachet etc.

#### Grammar

Grammar of words also becomes the cause of the

vocabulary barrier, especially if this differs from that of its L1 corresponding. Recalling whether a verb like enjoy, love, or hope is followed by an infinitive (to swim) or an -ing form (swimming) can enhance its trouble.

#### Pronunciation

It is also evident the words that are difficult to pronounce are more difficult to learn and cause vocabulary barrier such as psychology, stomach, mischief, analogous, sluggish etc.

#### Length and Complexity

Long words apparently seem to be more difficult to learn as compare to short vocabulary—Astounding, telecommunication, privatization, grappling, misbehavior, fascinating etc.

#### Meaning

When there is correspondence between the two words in meaning, students are likely to be confused. *Make* and *do* are a case in point: you *make water*, *make breakfast* and *make an appointment*, but you *do the housework* and *do a questionnaire*.

#### Connotation

One more problematic characteristic that the students have to get hold of is the connotation of the words. For example, does the word have a positive or negative connotation to a native speaker? Either smart, skinny or slim could be used to call someone who is thin – but these words are very diverse in their connotation, and by choosing one rather than the other, the speaker conveys a specific outlook.

#### Multi-Word Items

A number of vocabulary items can be the combination of more than one word, as in compound nouns such as whiteboard or breakfast, or phrasal verbs such as to put someone up, put something off, put something down etc. Phrasal verbs are extremely difficult for students of the English language as they are formulated with simple words adding prepositions or adverbs.

#### Collocation

Most of the lexical items collocate; that is why they can also cause difficulty for the learners. For

example, in an accident, people are *injured* or *wounded*, but things are *damaged*, and we can say a *strong man*, *strong wind* and *strong coffee* – but then again, it's a *light* wind, not a *weak* wind and a *weak* man, not a *weak* coffee. The focus of this work will remain to explore the above-mentioned factors causing vocabulary barrier while learning English at the university level and the impacts of vocabulary barrier on students' learning development in the target language atmosphere.

### Research Questions

- i. What are the factors causing the vocabulary barrier while learning English at the university level?
- ii. What are the impacts of the vocabulary barrier on students' learning process in the L2 classroom?

### Design of the Current Study

Strydom and Venter (2002) were of the view that research methodology should contain the description of participants, target institutions, sampling plan, data collection procedures and instruments. The present research was planned to use a mixed-method type. A mixed-method type is a research design that uses both

quantitative and qualitative data to answer a specific question or set of questions (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The nominated locations of this study were public sector colleges and universities of Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan and Bahawalpur. A total of 300 plus questionnaires was distributed to the informants, and only 200 questionnaires were returned by the respondents. The students (male & female on equal ratio) who were selected for the current study were from the BS English program of the selected colleges and the universities in the 2020 academic year. There was only one source of data used in the study that was a structured questionnaire in which the survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of approval or divergence on a four-point rating scale, including "1= Yes, 2= No, 3= No Idea, 4= No Comments. The students' questionnaire was the data collection technique used in this study. It was also developed from the studies by Baniabdelrahman, A. A., & Al-shumaimeri, Y. (2014), Kocaman, O., & Cumaoğlu, G., K. (2014), Ahmadi, M. R., Ismail, H. N., & Abdullah, M. K. K. (2012), Chung, T. M., & Nation, P. (2003) and Coady, J. (1997) as models with necessary modifications and adaptations was to appeal to the Pakistani context.

### Students Responses Analysis

**Table 1.** I cannot find appropriate words when I wish to discuss something.

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	148	74.0	74.0	74.0
No	15	07.5	07.5	81.5
No Idea	30	15.0	15.0	96.5
No Comments	07	03.5	03.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

*Note: Numerical statistics in columns refer to the analyzed account and their percentage about "I cannot find appropriate words when I wish to discuss something."*

Table 1 reveals that 148 out of 200 students who were 74.0% of the total portion of the population who were stirred and interested to speak the English language, but they cannot find appropriate words when they wish to discuss something with their teachers, class fellows and friends and it was a strong barrier on the way of learning L2 appropriately. The valid and cumulative percentage of the first point is also 74.0. On the contrary, 15 out of 200 students, which were 07.5% of the total number of the population, were of the outlook that they could

find appropriate words when they wish to discuss something with their teachers, class fellows and friends, and it is not a barrier in speaking and learning the English language. This second category of the students has only 07.5 valid and 81.5 cumulative percentage. On the divergent of the above-mentioned two arguments of the four-point rating scale 30 students out of 200 which were merely 15.0% of the whole strength, the valid percentage remains same as 15.0 while cumulative reached to 96.5 and they were of the view that they do not have

an idea about the subject matter. Only 07 out of 200 students said that they do not wish to comment on the issue, and it was only 03.5% of

the total number; the valid percentage was also 03.5 while the cumulative percentage reached 100.0.

**Table 2.** I cannot understand the teacher when he uses multisyllabic vocabulary.

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	129	64.5	64.5	64.5
No	30	15.0	15.0	79.5
No Idea	39	19.5	19.5	99.0
No Comments	02	01.0	01.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

*Note: Numerical statistics in columns refer to the analyzed account and their percentage about "I cannot understand the teacher when he uses multisyllabic vocabulary."*

In reaction to the statement that "I cannot understand the teacher when he uses multisyllabic vocabulary", table 2 indicated that the majority of the learners were of the view that they cannot understand the teacher when he uses multisyllabic vocabulary. 129 out of 200 learners, which were 64.5% of the total number of the students who were encouraged and inspired to speak the English language, but they cannot understand the teacher when he uses multisyllabic vocabulary, and it was a gigantic obstruction in this regard. The valid and cumulative percentage of the first scale is also 64.5. On the contrary, 30 out of 200 students, which were 15.0% of the total number of the learners, were of the view that they understand the teacher even when he uses multisyllabic

vocabulary, and it was not a hurdle for them while speaking the English language. This second category of the students has only 15.0 valid and 79.5 cumulative percentage. On the contrary to the previous two points of the four-point rating scale, only 39 students out of 200, which were merely 19.5% of the whole strength, the valid percentage remains same as 19.5 while cumulative reached 99.0 and they were of the view that they do not have an idea whether the multisyllabic vocabulary used by the teachers can create difficulty and barrier or not. Only 02 out of 200 students said that they do not have any comment on the issue, and it was only 01.0% of the total number; the valid percentage was also 01.0, while the cumulative percentage reached 100.0.

**Table 3.** I cannot perceive the concepts when a teacher tries to converse in literary language.

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	149	74.5	74.5	74.5
No	10	05.0	05.0	79.5
No Idea	11	05.5	05.5	85.0
No Comments	30	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

*Note: Numerical statistics in columns refer to the analyzed account and their percentage about "I cannot perceive the concepts when a teacher tries to converse in literary language."*

In response to the statement that "I cannot perceive the concepts when a teacher tries to converse in literary language", the bulk of the students indicated that they could not perceive the concepts and ideas when a teacher tries to converse in literary language. Around 149 out of 200 students were 74.5% of the total number of the students who were enthusiastic and encouraged to understand the English language in L2 atmosphere, but they cannot do that as they

cannot perceive the concepts and ideas when their English teacher tries to converse in literary language and it is a big barrier in this regard. The valid and cumulative percentage of the first scale is also 74.5. Similarly, 10 out of 200 students, which were 05.0% of the total number of the learners, were of the observation that they understand things better even if their teacher uses literary language in the classroom, and it causes no hurdle during perceiving concepts and



ideas in EFL classroom. This second category of the students has a 05.0 valid and 79.5 cumulative percentage. On the contrary to the previous two points of the four-point rating scale, only 11 students out of 200, which were merely 05.5% of the whole number, the valid percentage remains same as 05.5 while cumulative reached to 85.0 and they were of the view that they do not have

an idea whether they can understand things better when a teacher uses literary language or not. 30 out of 200 students said that they do not have any comment on the issue, and it was only 15.0% of the total number; the valid percentage was also 15.0 while the cumulative percentage reached to 100.0.

**Table 4.** I cannot recall synonyms and antonyms of many difficult words.

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	177	88.5	88.5	88.5
No	13	06.5	06.5	95.0
No Idea	09	04.5	04.5	99.5
No Comments	01	00.5	00.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

*Note: Numerical statistics in columns refer to the analyzed account and their percentage about "I cannot recall synonyms and antonyms of many difficult words."*

In response to the statement that "I cannot recall synonyms and antonyms of many difficult words", a large number of the respondents indicated that they could not recall synonyms and antonyms of many difficult words due to the deficiency of English vocabulary. Around 177 out of 200 students, which were 88.5% of the total number of the students who were enthusiastic and encouraged to learn the English language in L2 atmosphere, but they cannot do that as they cannot perceive the concepts and ideas when they have to recall synonyms and antonyms of many difficult words, and it is a big barrier in this regard. The valid and cumulative percentage of the first scale is also 88.5. Similarly, 13 out of 200 students, which were 06.5% of the total number of the learners, were of the observation that they could recall synonyms and antonyms of many

difficult words, and it causes no problem while perceiving and writing concepts and ideas in the EFL classroom. This second category of the students has only 06.5 valid and 95.0 cumulative percentage. On the contrary to the preceding two points of the four-point rating scale, only 09 students out of 200 which were merely 04.5% of the whole number, the valid percentage remains same as 04.5 while cumulative reached to 99.5 and they were of the view that they do not have an idea whether they can recall synonyms and antonyms of many difficult words or not. Only 01 out of 200 students said that he/she did not want to say anything on the issue, and it was only 00.5% of the total number; the valid percentage was also 00.5, while the cumulative percentage reached 100.0.

**Table 5.** I do not understand when a teacher uses contextual vocabulary.

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	121	60.5	60.5	60.5
No	55	27.5	27.5	88.0
No Idea	20	10.0	10.0	98.0
No Comments	04	02.0	02.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

*Note: Numerical statistics in columns refer to the analyzed account and their percentage about "I do not understand when a teacher uses contextual vocabulary."*

Table 5 indicates that 121 out of 200 students, which were 60.5% of the total number of the learners who were at all times stimulated to understand and speak the English language, but they do not understand when a teacher uses

contextual vocabulary, which becomes problematic and a strong barrier on the way of understanding and learning L2 appropriately. The valid and cumulative percentage of the first point is also 60.5. On the contrary, 55 out of 200

students, which were 27.5% of the total number of the population, were of the view that they can understand the contextual vocabulary used by an English teacher in EFL classroom and it is not problematic and not a barrier while understanding the lecture delivered by the teacher. This second category of the students has only 27.5 valid and 88.0 cumulative percentage. On the contrary of the above-mentioned two arguments of the four-point rating scale only 20

students out of 200 which were merely 10.0% of the whole strength, the valid percentage remains same as 10.0 while cumulative reached to 98.0 and they were of the opinion that they do not have knowledge about this viewpoint. Only 04 out of 200 students believed that they do not wish to comment on the subject, and it was only 02.0% of the total number; the valid percentage was also 02.0, while the collective percentage reached 100.0.

## **Findings and Discussions**

The main object of this work was to identify the 'vocabulary barriers experienced by university students in the process of learning English as a foreign language in different public sector colleges, universities and their sub-campuses situated in South Punjab. First of all, the factors causing vocabulary barrier while learning English at the university level are offered.

### **Research Question # 01**

What are the factors causing the vocabulary barrier while learning English at the university level?

The present study relates to the respondents who were studying in BS English in different public sector colleges, universities and sub-campuses located in the South Punjab (Pakistan). A goodly number of L2 learners showed that their English language vocabulary barrier causes negative effects in the development of L2 learning. Since the effects of the vocabulary problem on the students in the L2 classroom rises, the English language performance of the students inside and outside the class reduces. Similarly, as the language vocabulary difficulty decreases, the L2 efficiency of the student's increases. The findings of the research questionnaire exposed that a huge number of L2 learners cannot learn the English language well because they can understand the learning material only when their teacher uses the white/blackboard in the class. Around 148 out of 200 students, which were 74.0% of the total number of the students who were excited and motivated to learn the English language in L2 atmosphere, but they cannot do that as their English teacher tries to avoid the use of whiteboard while teaching his class and it is a big barrier in this regard; they cannot find appropriate words when they wish to discuss something with their teachers, class fellows and friends and it was a strong barrier on the way of

learning L2 appropriately; the mainstream of the learners were of the view that they cannot understand the teacher when he uses multisyllabic vocabulary. 129 out of 200 learners which were 64.5% of the total number; 149 out of 200 students which were 74.5% of the total number of the students who were enthusiastic and encouraged to understand English language in L2 atmosphere but they cannot do that as they cannot perceive the concepts and ideas when their English teacher tries to converse in literary language and it is a big barrier in this regard; around 177 out of 200 students which were 88.5% of the total number of the students who were enthusiastic and encouraged to learn English language in L2 atmosphere but they cannot do that as they cannot perceive the concepts and ideas when they have to recall synonyms and antonyms of many difficult words and it was a big barrier in this regard; 121 out of 200 students which were 60.5% of the total strength were of the opinion that they do not understand when teacher uses contextual vocabulary which becomes problematic and a strong barrier on the way of understanding and learning L2 appropriately. Findings from the students' questionnaire indicate that there was a two-way problem for learning English vocabulary in multitude: a) students themselves and b) the L2 classroom teachers. Students fail to achieve sufficient vocabulary to satisfy their educational and social needs due to certain factors such as the scope and magnitude of the assignment given to the students. Similarly, the difference between spoken and written English becomes challenging and a strong barrier on the way of learning L2 properly. The vocabulary of written English, for the most part, literary English that the learners come across in textbooks and other educational resources and material, vary from that of spoken English, particularly informal and conversational English. Findings of the

current study show that earners of L2 have very restricted and inadequate exposure to literary or textbook knowledge of English inside and outside of the selected institutions. Another barrier experienced by university students in the process of learning English as a foreign language the restrictions of resources of information about words. These resources of information about vocabulary that are freely available to the learners are monolingual, bilingual and multilingual dictionaries in hard and soft form. Separately every source can be difficult to attain and use. The knowledge of compound and complex words was also difficult to understand for the learners of L2. Knowledge of a word contains much more than understanding only its dictionary explanation, and merely learning a dictionary meaning in the strict sense of the word does not give assurance the ability to use a word in both the reading and the writing. Similarly, the majority of the learners indicated that in most of the situations, they become unable to use different parts of words, i.e. prefixes, suffixes, and content words or root words. This barrier greatly contributes to lessening the growth of new vocabulary items. However, parts of words are not entirely trustworthy resources of information about the meanings, and the class of the words which always remain much more confusing for the students such as treat/retreat, member/remember, liable/reliable, sign/design, tail/retail. Around 177 out of 200 students, which were 88.5% of the total number of the students who could not perceive the concepts and ideas when they had to recall synonyms and antonyms and multisyllabic and multiple sense words of English language such as collocations, phrasal verbs, idioms, proverbs and local modifications in vocabulary usage.

### Research Question # 02

How can the teachers assist the L2 learners in overcoming vocabulary barriers?

In English language classrooms situated in the selected regions of South Punjab, the English teacher enjoys an authoritative role. The majority of the learners depend on the directions given by the teachers. To overcome the vocabulary deficiency of the students, English teachers need to provide the learners with rich instructions regarding vocabulary learning, stimulate and support the students to enrich their L2 vocabulary. The teacher should give sufficient

time to a word by attracting the learners' attention to several phases of that word, in addition to the context in which the word is used. On the other hand, bearing in mind the huge number of vocabulary items are not really possible to teach every word this way. Similarly, from the teaching point of view, most of the English modules it is not focused on every area of use; frequently, the most important 3000 words of the English language are worthy of individual consideration. In some aspects of English vocabulary learning, students can develop their own techniques and strategies that may perhaps be different from those taught by the teacher. During such kinds of situations, English teachers need to boost and encourage the students to use and share those techniques with their classmates and even teachers. While teaching words, English teachers must choose whether they should spend more time teaching high frequency or low-frequency words. Teachers are also liable to take a decision whether they want to teach all unfamiliar vocabulary that learners come across while reading a textbook, or the teachers should provide them with some most particular approaches to enable the learners to comprehend the vocabulary on their own. In this regard, English teachers need to be more vigilant about the grammatical categories of the vocabulary items that they are teaching if teachers are teaching the noun form of a word that they should also teach other forms of that word also such as verb, adverb and adjective.

### Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The main purpose of the study was to observe vocabulary barriers experienced by the students of various universities of South Punjab in the process of learning English as a foreign language. The finding from the students' questionnaire demonstrated that there is noteworthy constructive association sandwiched between English vocabulary barriers and the student's proficiency in learning English as the target language in the public sector colleges, universities and the sub-campus of these universities located in the region of the South Punjab, Pakistan. The current research uncovers difficulties faced by the learners in various situations and circumstances while learning L2 vocabulary. The mainstream of the learners indicated that they fail to achieve sufficient



vocabulary to satisfy their educational and social needs due to certain factors such as the scope and magnitude of the assignment given to the students meaning the number of words that L2 learners require to learn is extraordinarily large. Similarly, the difference between spoken and written English becomes challenging and a strong barrier on the way of learning L2 properly. The vocabulary of written English, for the most part, literary English that the learners come across in textbooks and other educational resources and material, vary from that of spoken English, particularly informal and conversational English. Findings of the current study show that learners of L2 have very restricted and inadequate exposure to literary or textbook knowledge of English inside and outside of the selected institutions. Another barrier experienced by university students in the process of learning English as a foreign language was the restrictions of resources of information about words. These resources of information about vocabulary that are freely available to the learners are monolingual, bilingual and multilingual dictionaries in hard and soft form. Separately every source can be difficult to attain and use. To overcome all these barriers, the role of English teachers is vulnerable as he is regarded as the custodian of L2 classroom, especially in EC and OC Circle countries and Pakistan is included in OC Circle countries. English teachers should give adequate time to a word by appealing to the learners' attention to numerous features of that word, besides the context in which the word is used. On the other hand, bearing in mind the huge number of vocabulary items are not really possible to teach every word this way.

### **Originality/Contribution of the Work**

The study is noteworthy as it attempted to reveal vocabulary barriers experienced by university students in the process of learning English as a foreign language in the region of the South Punjab as such type of area is never explored in a sense in which this work is done. This study indicated the vocabulary learning barriers faced by the students of BS English studying at public sector colleges and universities of South Punjab, its importance reduced to the following concerns:

- i. The current study is significant since it analyzes the factors causing the vocabulary barrier while learning English at the university level.
- ii. Statistics from the current study investigates the impacts of vocabulary barrier on learners' learning process in the L2 classroom.
- iii. This work would contribute curriculum designers in planning a suitable curriculum for the sake of L2 learning more accommodating for L2 Pakistani learners and specifically for the students of Southern Punjab.

### **Limitations of the Present Study and Research Gaps**

- i. The existing study was conducted to pin down vocabulary barriers experienced by university students in the process of learning English as a foreign language. So, more studies to the relevant areas on school-going learners and on MPhil, PhD scholars can be showcased to get more inclusive indulgent about the outlook of the marked respondents.
- ii. This research was administered only at the public sector colleges and universities of the South Punjab. While deviating from this method, in the forthcoming studies private and public schools, private universities and colleges where BS in English and other BS, MA/MSc, MPhil and PhD programs are in progress can also be incorporated for enhanced reflection of the subject matter.
- iii. The current study only dealt with the three divisions of the South Punjab such as Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan and Bahawalpur for the assortment of research data. However, in future this research can be stretched on Pakistan level for wide-ranging reproduction of the topic.

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