UNIVERSIDAD ESTATAL PENÍNSULA DE SANTA ELENA

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TÍTULO:

Using Vocabulary Builder App to improve lexical knowledge for ninth graders

ESTADO DEL ARTE

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SALINAS, 2023

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En mi calidad de Tutor **del Informe de Investigación** "USING VOCABULARY BUILDER APP TO IMPROVE LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE FOR NINTH GRADERS", elaborado por el maestrante Lic. Kevin Javier Carrera Rivera egresado de la **MAESTRÍA EN PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS MENCIÓN ENSEÑANZA INGLÉS**, de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, previo a la obtención del Título de Magíster en **PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS SEGUNDA COHORTE**, me permito declarar que luego de haber orientado, dirigido científica y técnicamente su desarrollo y estructura final del trabajo, cumple y se ajusta a los estándares académicos y científicos, razón por la cual lo apruebo en todas sus partes.

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SECRETARIA GENERAL

Dedicatory

To the Divine Creator, who has bestowed upon me the intellect, resilience, and inspiration to undertake and complete this endeavor. I offer my heartfelt gratitude.

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GENERAL INDEX

Glossary

Vocabulary Builder App: A mobile application designed to help users expand their vocabularythrough interactive exercises, word lists, quizzes, and other features.

Lexical Knowledge: The understanding and familiarity a person has with words, including theirmeanings, pronunciations, and how they are used in context.

Educational Technology: The use of technology, such as apps and digital tools, to enhance teaching and learning experiences.

Language Acquisition: The process of learning a language focuses on communication skills.

Interactive Learning: Participation and input, fostering active learning.

Contextual learning: Learning words within the context of sentences or situations, helping learners understand how words are used naturally**.**

Spaced Repetition: A learning technique that involves reviewing information at increasing intervals over time to enhance long-term retention.

Gamification: Incorporating game elements, such as rewards, point, and challenges, into educational experiences to enhance engagement and motivation.

Progress Tracking: Monitoring and recording learners´ advancement though a curriculum or learning materials.

Interactive Quizzes: Assessments that require learners to actively engage with content, often involving answering questions or solving problems.

Autonomy: The capacity for learners to take control of their own learning.

Language Comprehension: Understanding the meaning and implications of written or spoken language.

UNIVERSIDAD ESTATAL PENÍNSULA DE SANTA ELENA
INSTITUTO DE POSTGRADO

TEMA

"USING VOCABULARY BUILDER APP TO IMPROVE LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE FOR NINTH GRADERS"

Autor: Lic. Kevin Javier Carrera Rivera

Tutor: Mgt. Heidy Matute Campozano PhD. C.

Resumen

Este estudio describe el uso de Vocabulary Builder App como herramienta para mejorar el conocimiento léxico, una oportunidad educativa única y fresca en el campo del aprendizaje del idiomainglés. A diferencia de los métodos tradicionales que implican la memorización de extensas y monótonas listas de vocabulario, Vocabulary Builder App refleja la contribución al desarrollo de habilidades de léxico y analiza el uso del aprendizaje del idioma inglés a través del uso esta herramienta didáctica, un emocionante viaje de enriquecimiento léxico, redefiniendo así la formaen que se adquieren nuevas palabras. Este estudio se enfoca en la revisión bibliográfica de estudios que contemplen el uso de Vocabulary Builder App en el desarrollo del léxico del estudiante. El punto de quiebre de esta aplicación radica en su enfoque lúdico y gamificado. Los estudiantes se embarcan en un viaje de aprendizaje educativo, reflexivo y entretenido. A través de elementos de juego, la app transforma el proceso de aprendizaje en una experiencia estimulante y apasionante. Este enfoque no solo desafía a los usuarios a ampliar su vocabulario, sino que también fomenta la participación activa y el compromiso prolongado. La interacción con la aplicación amplía el repertorio de palabras, y también permite a los usuarios comprender cómo se utilizan en contextos reales.

Palabras clave: Vocabulary Builder, Conocimiento léxico, motivación, gamificado.

UNIVERSIDAD ESTATAL PENINSULA DE SANTA ELENA
INSTITUTO DE POSTGRADO

THEME:

"USING VOCABULARY BUILDER APP TO IMPROVE LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE FOR NINTH GRADERS"

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Abstract

This study describes the use of Vocabulary Builder App as a tool for improving lexical knowledge, a unique and fresh educational opportunity in the field of English language learning. Unlike traditional methods involving the memorization of extensive and monotonous vocabulary lists, vocabulary builder reflects the contribution to the development of lexical skills and analyzes the use of English language learning through the use of this didactic tool, an exciting journey of lexical enrichment, thus redefining the way in which new words are acquired. This study focuses on the literature review of studies that contemplate the use of Vocabulary Builder App in the lexical development of the learner's lexicon. The breakthrough of this application lies in its playful and gamified approach. Students embark on an educational, reflective and entertaining learning journey. Through game elements, the app transforms the learning process into a stimulating and exciting experience. This approach not only challenges users to expand their vocabulary, but also encourages active participation and prolonged engagement. Interaction with the app expands the repertoire of words, and allows users to understand how they are used in real contexts.

Keywords: Vocabulary Builder, lexical knowledge, engagement, gamified.

Introduction

In today's information-driven world, having a strong vocabulary is a fundamental skill in the learning of English and can greatly enhance our communication and understanding of the world around us. Whether you are a student, a professional, or simply someone seeking personal growth, improving lexical knowledge is a worthwhile pursuit. Fortunately, technology has given rise to vocabulary builder apps that harness the power of mobile devices to make vocabulary learning more accessible, efficient, and enjoyable than ever before.

Using a vocabulary builder app is an effective and convenient way to enhance lexical knowledge in high school graders to expand their vocabulary. By applying this vocabulary app, it provides a structured and interactive approach to learning new words, enabling users to develop a strong command of the language they are studying.

In this study, 18 articles were reviewed. As an English Instructor, there were some lexical deficiencies observed with a particular group of students that called my interest. This group of English as a foreign language (EFL) students has 45 learners of 12 years-old who belong to a private institution located in Santa Elena Province and it is part of a higher-level institution. As a starting point, it was identified through the observations that this group of ninth graders faced a significant challenge because of the lack of vocabulary proficiency in using and understanding a wide range of words and their meanings. The afore mentioned problems have various implications for their academic performance and communicative skills. The deficiency in lexical knowledge can hinder their academic performance, communication skills, and overall language development.

Understanding the reasons behind this issue and finding effective solutions are crucial to empower students and bridge the vocabulary gap.

The significance of this work relies on the identification of this app as a possible solution to the limited lexical knowledge of this group of students. It is crucial for ninth graders as it enhances their vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, communicative abilities, critical thinking. Building a strong foundation of lexical knowledge in this stage of education can have long-lasting benefits for students' overall language proficiency and intellectual growth.

The goal of this study is to comprehensively explore and document the utilization of "Vocabulary Builder App" as a teaching tool to improve vocabulary abilities in ninth-grade pupils. This study aims to clarify the app's installation procedure, the level of engagement it fosters, and the influence it has on students' vocabulary development. This study aims to offer useful insights into the practical effectiveness of technology-driven vocabulary enhancement within the specific context of ninth-grade education by outlining the strategies used to integrate the app into the curriculum and evaluating students' reactions.

This research project aims to accomplish two goals: first, to determine the extent to which the "Vocabulary Builder App" aids ninth-grade students in developing strong English vocabulary skills; and second, to conduct a thorough analysis of the wider use of language learning apps as useful didactic tools in the area of vocabulary enrichment. This study intends to shed light on the distinct advantages, disadvantages, and distinctive characteristics that determine the app's effectiveness through an investigation of the app's effect on vocabulary growth among ninth graders. The project also aims to explore the general landscape of language learning applications, looking into their potential as pedagogical tools for vocabulary development.

The central hypothesis driving this study posits that the integration of the "Vocabulary Builder App" serves as a catalyst for enhancing students' vocabulary proficiency. By

engaging with this specialized application, students are anticipated to experience a measurable level in their lexical knowledge and vocabulary skills. This hypothesis underscores the belief that the interactive and targeted nature of the app's content and activities will contribute significantly to the expansion of students' vocabulary repertoire.

All in all, it was recollected important data from national to international studies using this Vocabulary Builder App to ensure the influence of this app as a practical and effective way lexical knowledge. With its accessibility, interactive features, and personalized learning approaches, this app provides engaging and efficient tools to enhance vocabulary skills. By implementing this vocabulary builder app, learners can improve their communication skills, broaden understanding of the language, and achieve greater fluency.

Methodology

The manuscript selection process.

This selection procedure is descriptive that involves evaluating reviews and data collected from Google Scholar, research gate, Scopus and, UPSE repositories which are some sources that cover various fields and resources such as documents, books, academic papers, and online university repositories, offering a convenient way to search for relevant data. These sources are reliable for the study because they address information up to date such as bibliographic references, year of publication, and relevant cites.

Data analysis.

With the purpose of addressing the posed inquiry, which revolves around the use of the vocabulary-building application to enhance students' lexical knowledge, The results derived from this search were extracted from ten diverse studies, ranging from academic

papers to blog posts and educational portals where the contents are categorized by authors, year, source, methods and results.

State of arts

Background

The last Dalcar convention which took place in Latin America, it was addressed that efforts have been made to improve education. One of the challenges posed was the inclusion of English in the curricula as a foreign language, due to its fundamental role in social interaction in today's globalized world. The current Latin American educational institution demands that students must be competent and capable of functioning in their daily activities, making the mastery of a foreign language relevant. (Dalcar, 2020)

As an active member of the Dalcar meeting and committed to its goals, Peña (2019) mentions that Ecuador has worked in recent years to establish a solid and favorable system for teaching and learning English as a foreign language. This system aims to be inclusive, allowing all students the opportunity to learn and master English as a communicative language. To achieve this, it is crucial that the proposed changes are socialized throughout the educational community through conferences and the creation of research spaces in the area of foreign languages.

According to Lopez (2019), Lexical knowledge in the realm of English is an essential component for effective language learning. Vocabulary constitutes the fundamental building blocks of communication, enabling the expression of ideas precisely and comprehending the thoughts of others. It is paramount to acquaint oneself with the most basic and essential words, such as the names of everyday objects and numbers, in order to construct a solid foundation.

This knowledge encompasses frequent word combinations, adding authenticity to language which enriches the capacity of expressing and comprehending. It's important that lexical learning is not confined to memorizing word lists but involves the integration of thesewords into real contexts through reading, writing, listening, and conversation. (López, 2019).

English as a Foreign language teachers have various techniques at their disposal to teach vocabulary, which are based on their knowledge acquired during their training, their teaching experience, their own experiences as learners, as well as their beliefs about the effectiveness and appropriateness of their teaching practice. The afore mentioned techniques, constitute what is known as teacher cognition, which encompasses teachers' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs. Balteiro´s et. al (2019) highlights the influence of using social media within the lexical learning process. A group of EFL learners took part in an educational experience which has shown support for using apps as Instagram in the classroom. Additionally, the inclusion of a nearby, everyday virtual reality or social networks in the classroom has significantly increased the student´s motivation to learn non-standard English vocabulary. Without a doubt, the high level of motivation has also contributed to the fact that the participants have developed cognitive skills that allow them to be more critical.

The importance of students having a broad repertoire of words is significant. This has led several authors to establish minimum levels of vocabulary required for certain communicative activities. Regarding the comprehension of spoken texts, the study conducted by Ahmet (2019), through the application of a pre and a post-test, it was identified that at least 2000 words are needed to cover between 90.36%and 94.30% of lexical understanding, depending on the context of the oral discourse.

According to Grabe (2021), there is scientific evidence supporting the notion that extensive reading underpins the vocabulary learning process, despite objections raised by

certain researchers regarding the limited vocabulary growth through reading. Prolonged exposure to reading influences associative learning patterns that form the basis of reading skills and vocabulary knowledge. On the other hand, Pellicer-Sánchez and Schmitt (2019) suggest that extensive reading enables students to access moderately frequent vocabulary, which at times proves challenging to acquire due to the difficulty of addressing numerous lexical items in the classroom and their exclusion from graded readings that primarily focus on more common vocabulary.

According to the National Curriculum of Education of Ecuador (2016), the integration of technology in the educational process aims to strengthen the communication and linguistic skills of students. Technology offers opportunities for vocabulary development, as it allows access to a wide variety of multimedia resources, such as interactive application and online platforms, which enrich lexical learning. The curriculum emphasizes that technology can provide contextualized and authentic learning experiences, making it easier for students to explore words in different contexts and communicative situations. Through the strategies use of technology, the aim is to promote the precise and effective use of vocabulary, preparing students for communications in an increasingly digitized world.

Collectively, these insights underscore the complexity of English Language education, highlighting the need for comprehensive approaches that encompass curriculum changes, effective teaching methodologies, and the integration of technology. In this way, Latin American educational institutions can effectively equip their students with the linguistic tools needed for success in a globalized society.

Theoretical framework

Mobile Apps in EFL classroom.

One of the main features on the study based on Alfonso (2018), considerate that autonomous vocabulary learning provides students with a solid foundation for understanding contexts and meanings. The advantage of using a mobile application for learning is that it provides convenience and autonomy in the process. Additionally, this study asserts that mobile devices enable learning anywhere and anytime. Therefore, a mobile application for learning English allows individuals to improve their skills at any time of the day.

In another study conducted by Pallares (2022), emphasizes the use of internet applications mediated by ICT and as a tool for learning and reinforcing English listening skills among students, its emphasis is placed on the political and social approach of the research, considering that it focuses on the use of technological tools and applications on the internet, together with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), to improve the learning of English in tenth-grade students at the Integral Christian School. Relevant topics addressed by various authors, the development environment of the students, research related to the proposed topic, and established norms for conducting this research were analyzed. It was determined that an "App in Education" refers to a mobile application specifically designed to facilitate and improve the teaching and learning process.

Regarding the projects carried out by Suárez (2017) and Carvajal (2016) at the University of the Península de Santa Elena, the use of digital games and web applications to enrich vocabulary in English learning stands out. These projects showed that the use of interactive games enriched students' motivation to learn the language and improved their vocabulary and pronunciation. It is important to recognize the role that mobile technology can play in vocabulary learning in the context of teaching English as a foreign language.

Mobile applications and interactive games can be useful and complementary tools for students, allowing them to improve their language skills and proficiency.

On the other hand, in the context of the research project carried out by Northrop (2018), the importance of vocabulary mobile applications in language learning is mentioned and how they can improve the learning experience, motivate students, and enhance their understanding and retention of vocabulary. These technologies offer flexibility and accessibility, facilitating language practice anytime and anywhere. However, teachers must be aware of how to assess and properly use these tools for vocabulary instruction.

Lexical knowledge through mobile Apps.

English opens the doors to the academic realm and enables collaboration with recognized experts in various disciplines. Possessing an extensive vocabulary enhances students' ability to excel in competitive tests. Through mobility, accessibility, multimedia functionality, and user-friendly features provided by a mobile application, the application represents an effort to create a vocabulary-building tool that amalgamates the best qualities of existing systems while introducing new functionalities to enrich the language learning space. With a focus on techniques and speech recognition as crucial methods for acquiring vocabulary towards English language learning (Apurva, 2019).

Uquillas (2023) addresses the concept of lexical competence as the necessary understanding of knowledge to use a word appropriately, including the ability to identify, acquire, retrieve, and establish connections between diverse words in both speech and writing. Lexical competence refers to the skill and knowledge a person possesses regarding a language's lexicon – that is, their mastery of words and their meanings, as well as the capacity to use them appropriately in different contexts. This encompasses not only the

comprehension of literal word meanings but also their use in idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms, and specific connotations.

Romero (2021), reflected that lexical competence plays a pivotal role in learning English and effective communication in this language. This skill pertains to the ability to comprehend, utilize, and manipulate an extensive repertoire of words and expressions in varied contexts. Lexical richness enables students not only to express their ideas precisely but also to understand texts of varying levels of complexity. Furthermore, mastery of a diverse vocabulary facilitates adaptation to everyday and professional situations in English-speaking environments, as words serve as the fundamental tools for communication.

One of the advantages when learning a language through apps is the motivation it generates in students. Through these platforms, students are exposed to a wide variety of materials and resources that interest them and are appealing, enabling them to assimilate and learn the vocabulary they encounter more quickly and meaningfully. The lexicon they come across will capture their attention and provide them with daily and frequent contact with concepts and ideas that will soon become part of their everyday vocabulary. Torres (2023).

Vocabulary Builder App in EFL studies

According to World (2019), Effectiveness of Mobile builder applications in Vocabulary teaching is relevant, and the term "Vocabulary Builder" refers to a tool or approach aimed at helping people improve their vocabulary in a specific language, usually in the context of learning a new language or strengthening linguistic skills in one that is already known. This Vocabulary builder App can be found in Play store for free and, it is easy to start using by following these simple steps. First, begin by downloading and installing. After creating an account or logging in, choose a learning path that aligns with proficiency level or goals.

The Vocabulary builder App offers word lists covering a wide range of vocabulary and reinforce memory through interactive flashcards and quizzes. Regularly review and practice the words to solidify the understanding. Additionally take advantage of any advanced features the app offers, such as personalized study plans or speech recognition. According to Romero (2021), in his article tittle *Vocabulary builder App as an effective tool to enhance Lexical Richeness and readability of English degree*, mentions the main features of the application Vocabulary Builder App which are useful to develop lexical knowledge and are described as follows and shown in illustration 1:

Word Lists:

Vocabulary builder app usually includes extensive word lists containing a wide range of vocabulary words that are relevant to the target test. These words are often selected based on their likelihood of appearing in the actual test. It is shown in illustration 2:

Definitions and Examples:

Each word in the app is typically accompanied by its definition, part of speech, and one or more example sentences. This contextual information helps learners understand how the word is used in different contexts. Illustration 3

Flashcards:

Flashcards are a common feature in vocabulary builder apps. Magoosh's app might offer digital flashcards with the word on one side and its definition and example on the other. Users can flip through these cards for quick review.

Interactive Quizzes:

The app might include interactive quizzes and exercises that test users' understanding of the vocabulary words. These quizzes could involve multiple-choice questions, fill-in-the-blank exercises, and more.

Spaced Repetition:

Many vocabulary builder apps, including Magoosh's, use spaced repetition algorithms to optimize learning. This means that words users struggle with are shown more frequently to help reinforce memory.

Progress Tracking:

Users can often track their progress as they learn and review words. This might include features like showing how many words have been learned, identifying words that need further review, and highlighting words that have been mastered.

Audio Pronunciations:

This app provides audio pronunciations for each word. This feature helps users learn correct pronunciation along with the definitions.

Mobile Access:

Vocabulary builder app was likely available for both iOS and Android devices. This allows users to learn on the go using their smartphones or tablets.

Integration with Other Resources:

This vocabulary builder app offers comprehensive test preparation resources. The vocabulary builder app might be part of a larger ecosystem that includes practice questions, study plans, and other study materials.

Vocabulary Builder App Contributions

In the ever-evolving landscape of language education, a diverse array of researchers has ventured into exploring the realm of vocabulary builder app. The following studies show the implications and contributions for language vocabulary acquisition in education:

Aldhair (2015), the "*Vocabulary Builder App for language learning"* study measured five sets of vocabulary builder app knowledge such as; building synonyms network, learning definitions with context, pronunciation, word search, and competing. These sets determined vocabulary language acquisition for EFL learners.

Monserrat (2021), *Lexical Richeness and readability of English degree through Vocabulary builder App,* this study measured the lexical richness in writing and reading production for EFL learners. This offers a significant contribution to education by addressing two key aspects: lexical and readability. These two aspects facilitate the enriching student´s vocabulary, promoting autonomous learning, diversifying learning path, aiding long-term retention, and facilitating real-world language. It is determined that the vocabulary Builder App empower learners to become more proficient, confident and having effective communication.

In short, these studies not only shed light on the efficacy of such Vocabulary Builder App but also offer valuable insights into how technology can shape and enhances language learning experiences. Through rigorous investigation and innovative methodologies, the researchers have enriched the understanding of the potential benefits of this Vocabulary builder App.

Final Reflections

The use of Vocabulary Builder is designed to enhance lexical knowledge in the field of English. This application offers an interactive and personalized approach, enhance learners to gradually and contextually expand their vocabulary. By providing a combination of vocabulary exercises, comprehension tests, and practical activities, this application provides the opportunity to learn new words, their meanings, and how they are used in different contexts. The convenience of accessing on mobile devices ensures that learning cantake place anytime and anywhere, facilitating the seamless integration of vocabulary study into daily routines.

It could be determined by some authors that the use of mobile apps helps to enhance English vocabulary, which emphasize the importance of vocabulary in language learning. It underscores the advantages of autonomous learning through mobile applications, highlighting their convenience, accessibility, and engagement potential. The incorporation of interactive content, educational games, and progress tracking in vocabulary apps is noted, as well as their potential for enhancing language skills and proficiency.

Overall, the use of the Vocabulary Builder App enhances lexical knowledge in the English language, and it holds vital importance in an increasingly globalized and digitized world. This application offers an accessible, interactive, and personalized way of acquiring and improving English vocabulary, enhance learners to expand their range of words, grasp linguistic nuances, and express themselves more precisely and fluently. Additionally, by providing practical exercises, contextual tests, and immediate feedback, it promotes active and effective learning. As mastery of the English language is essential in various fields such as higher education, the professional world, and global communication, having technological tools that facilitate vocabulary acquisition becomes a fundamental resource for enhancing

language skills and unlocking opportunities in an ever more competitive and globally interconnected landscape.

Finally, vocabulary builder app ensures that educators and educational institutions are making educated choices regarding their integration into language learning. For this reason, it is recommended for future research to apply and develop a case study where this Vocabulary Builder App is applied and tested in order to measure quantitively its effectiveness in the development of English language vocabulary.

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Annexes

Anexo 1. Resultado de Compilatio

CERTIFICADO ANTIPLAGIO

En mi calidad de Tutor **del Informe de Investigación**, ''Using Vocabulary Builder app to improve lexical knowledge for ninth graders", elaborado por la maestrante Lic. Kevin Javier Carrera Rivera, egresado de la **MAESTRÍA EN PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS MENCIÓN ENSEÑANZA INGLÉS SEGUNDA COHORTE**, de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, previo a la obtención del Título de Magíster en **PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS MENCIÓN ENSEÑANZA INGLÉS**, me permito declarar que una vez analizado anti-plagio COMPILATIO, luego de haber cumplido los requerimientos exigidos de valoración, el presente proyecto ejecutado, se encuentra con el 0 % de la valoración permitida, por consiguiente se procede a emitir el presente informe. Adjunto reporte de similitud.

Atentamente

HEIDY BOLIVIA MATUTE CAMPO ZANO
Firmado digitalmente por HEIDY BOLIVIA MATUTE CAMPOZANO
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Heidy Bolivia Matute Campozano
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RESULTADO DE COMPILATIO

Illustration 1
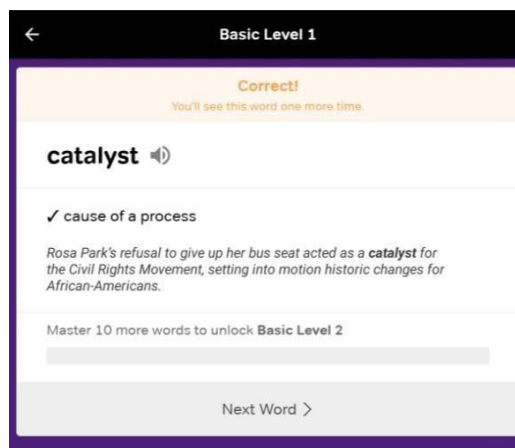**Vocabulary Builder App in EFL studies**
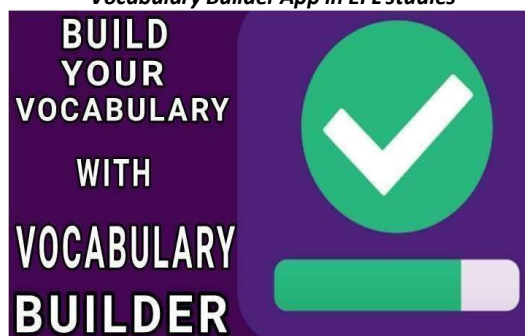
Source: Vocabulary Builder App logo by Magoosh- Play store

Illustration 2
Word Lists
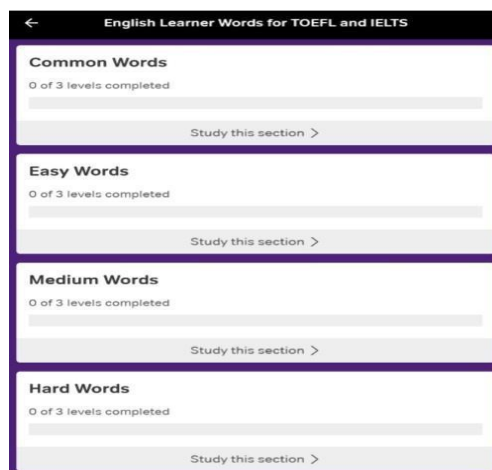
Source: Vocabulary Builder App contente by Magoosh- Play store

Illustration 3
Definitions and Examples

Source: Vocabulary Builder App definitions and examples by Magoosh- Play store