

METHODS OF DEVELOPING PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS' LEXICAL SKILLS

Introduction Building pupils' lexical skills at the primary school level is a key element of language learning because vocabulary forms are the basis for both understanding and expressing meaning. Lexical competence is a key component of language proficiency. From the very beginning, when children's language systems are still in the process of formation, it is crucial to create learning environments that provide vocabulary acquisition in natural, engaging, and age-appropriate ways. With the development of new technologies, teachers are expected to implement innovative strategies to improve vocabulary growth. Traditional methods of vocabulary teaching, such as memorization and isolated word lists, are not effective. Instead, modern pedagogical approaches emphasize interaction, contextual learning, and the integration of games and digital tools. This paper explores effective methods for developing lexical skills of learners, emphasizing the recent pedagogical research and practical classroom strategies.

The aim of this article is to investigate effective techniques for developing lexical skills in primary school pupils.

Keywords: *lexical skills, vocabulary acquisition, primary education, didactic games, interactive learning, contextual learning, digital tools, Total Physical Response, gamification, language development.*

Main part Vocabulary knowledge is essential and influences reading skills. Pupils who understand more words are able to understand the meaning of texts, inner ideas, and make connections between what they read and what they already know better. When pupils learn new vocabulary, they are more capable of following instructions, asking questions, and participating in classroom discussions.

Lexical skills also play a significant role in oral communication. The ability to name objects, describe actions, and express feelings allows children to engage in conversations, collaborate with peers, and build social relationships. According to Turchaninov, children with strong lexical competence tend to be more confident in using the language, which increases their desire to participate in classroom activities and practice speaking [1, p. 463].

Vocabulary learning is considered more effective when it is supported by a variety of visual aids that help young learners better perceive and retain new words. As noted by Pidhurska and Zahrebelna, using tools such as flashcards, real objects, illustrations, and simple schemes can significantly strengthen children's understanding of new vocabulary. When learners see a picture or a real item that represents the word, they can more easily connect its meaning with the object itself, which improves memorisation. Teachers may introduce items like toys, classroom objects, or other realia to make the learning process more concrete and engaging. Visual materials can also be combined with verbal explanation or repetition, allowing pupils to process information through several

channels at once. In this way, visual-based activities help maintain attention, support active involvement, and create stronger associations that make vocabulary learning more successful [2, p. 118].

Contextual learning is another essential principle. Vocabulary should not be taught in isolation but within meaningful contexts and situations. For example, teaching words related to food can be done through a pretend restaurant game, role-playing a trip to the supermarket, or using themed storybooks. In these contexts, pupils understand how and when to use new words, which promotes deeper learning [3, p. 45].

In addition, effective vocabulary teaching includes assessment and feedback. Teachers should observe how pupils use new words in context, offer gentle corrections when needed, and praise correct usage to encourage confidence. Formative assessments such as vocabulary games, quizzes, or drawing-and-labelling tasks can also help track progress and inform future instruction.

Role-play is a game-based approach that provides vocabulary acquisition. By acting out different scenarios, students can use new vocabulary in context, strengthening its meaning and practical application. This approach helps them understand the social and functional uses of the words, making them more likely to retain and use them correctly in real-life situations.

Gamification combines game elements, such as scoring, challenges, and rewards, into the learning process. These strategies not only make learning more engaging but also encourage students to pay attention to their progress. For example, in a vocabulary game where students earn points for correctly using new words in sentences, they become more motivated to actively engage with the material and improve their vocabulary. This structured play provides a clear framework for learning, making it easier for both students and teachers to track progress. Moreover, interactive games help to build collaborative skills. Many games, such as team-based word searches or group storytelling exercises, encourage students to work together. This not only improves their social skills but also exposes them to vocabulary in a collaborative context, where they can learn from each other. The social aspect of these games further enhances the learning experience by integrating peer interaction into the vocabulary acquisition process [4, p. 158].

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a key strategy in promoting vocabulary retention. TPR is an approach where teachers give commands that students respond to with physical actions. For example, if the teacher says, “Jump,” students physically jump, linking the action to the word. This direct connection between words and physical movements helps solidify vocabulary in the students’ minds because they are not just hearing the word, but also physically engaging with it.

For first-grade learners, TPR can be particularly effective because it taps into the natural energy and enthusiasm children have for physical play. It also supports their development by promoting coordination between language and motor skills. In a typical TPR exercise, students might be asked to “touch their head,” “clap their hands,” or “run to the door,” depending on the vocabulary

being taught. By incorporating vocabulary into such commands, students learn words in context, which makes it easier for them to recall and use these words later.

This approach also helps maintain students' attention and motivation, especially for young learners who might struggle with long periods of sedentary learning. By integrating action with vocabulary instruction, teachers can keep children engaged, making lessons more dynamic and enjoyable. Activities such as vocabulary charades, Simon says, or vocabulary scavenger hunts combine physical movement with language learning, making these words not only more memorable but also more fun to learn.

In today's educational landscape, the integration of digital tools and technology into the classroom has become a crucial component of effective language learning. As technology continues to develop, modern classrooms increasingly incorporate digital resources to support vocabulary development. These resources provide opportunities for personalized, adaptive, and engaging learning experiences, which can enhance vocabulary acquisition for young learners in ways that traditional methods may not.

One of the primary benefits of using digital tools in vocabulary instruction is the ability to personalize learning. Online games, educational apps, and multimedia presentations satisfy the individual needs and preferences of students. According to Tursunqulova, technology allows for the creation of tailored learning experiences, where students can progress at their own pace, revisit content when needed, and focus on areas where they may need more practice. For instance, adaptive learning platforms adjust the difficulty level based on a student's performance, ensuring that learners are always challenged but not overwhelmed. This individualized approach helps students learn vocabulary through repetition and gradual progression, making it easier for students to retain new words [5, p. 36].

Contextual learning and thematic instruction also help students develop a deeper understanding of word meanings. Rather than simply memorizing definitions, students can explore words through context clues, sentence construction, and group discussions. This approach not only aids comprehension but also enhances students' ability to use vocabulary flexibly in different situations. For instance, the word "run" can have multiple meanings (e.g., "to move quickly," "to manage," or "to operate"), and teaching this word within different thematic contexts allows students to grasp its various uses more thoroughly [6, p. 906].

In addition, vocabulary learning can stimulate critical thinking when embedded in grammar study. Zubenko demonstrates that students' critical thinking develops during lessons focused on the verb in the 7th grade. Through engaging with verb forms, meaning, usage, and contextual exercises, learners analyse linguistic patterns, compare structures, and reflect on usage choices - all of which deepen their cognitive involvement. This kind of meaningful linguistic engagement helps students not only memorise verbal forms, but also think more deeply about how words function and connect grammatically. Zubenko's methodology integrates analytical tasks, guided inquiry, and contextual

dialogue, fostering both vocabulary mastery and higher-order thinking [7, p. 7].
Начало формы
Конец формы

Conclusion Developing lexical skills in primary school pupils requires a combination of engaging, interactive, and student-centered approaches. Games, physical activities, digital tools, and contextual learning all contribute to a rich vocabulary learning environment. By implementing these methods, teachers can help young learners build a strong lexical foundation that supports their overall language development and academic success.

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