



CONCEPTS OF PASSIVE AND ACTIVE VOCABULARY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Gulbahor Maxdiyevna Mansurova

Associate Professor, Department of Foreign Languages,
Karshi State Technical University

Abstract

This paper examines the role of lexical skill development in foreign language learning, with particular reference to English. Special attention is given to the process of semantization and the effectiveness of visual support and contextualization in facilitating vocabulary acquisition and retention. It also outlines the distinctions between active, passive, and external vocabulary, emphasizing the dynamic nature of lexical competence and the challenges learners encounter in expanding their usable vocabulary.

Keywords: Lexical competence, vocabulary acquisition, foreign language learning, semantization, active, passive vocabulary, lexical minimum, communicative competence.

Introduction

Modern teaching methods aim to develop students' lexical skills. Such skills not only contribute to the effective and productive learning of foreign languages, but are also the subject of students' cognitive development. At the beginning of the 20th century, foreign language teaching methods differed significantly from modern ones in that previously, significantly less attention was paid to the study of vocabulary than today. Lexical exercises for the effective consolidation of words in memory were not used in the educational process, and the problems of choosing the volume of vocabulary or dictionary for teaching were not adequately addressed [2, p. 158].

Literature Review

A significant place in the works of methodologists of the 1930s was devoted to the semantization of vocabulary. In the early 1930s, it was recommended to practice a word as part of a phrase according to the canons of the direct method, revealing its



meaning with the help of visual aids. However, according to the methodology of I. A. Gruzinskaya, we consider visual aids in all their varieties to be the most "direct" method, as was believed by the proponents of the direct method" [4, p. 172]. It was from this point on that exercises for memorizing foreign vocabulary began to develop, using visual aids as an essential learning tool. According to N.I. Tennova, "visual images, combined with auditory perception of words, will contribute to a more solid reinforcement of words" [5, p. 220]. Methodologists of this period clearly understood that the choice of semantization tools depended on the nature of the word itself and the stage of language learning. Thus, the question of methods for semantizing language was resolved, which contributed to the development of techniques and exercises for learning vocabulary.

Learning a foreign language is a long and very difficult process, which includes a large number of different aspects. Well-known methodologists disagree when the question of the importance of various aspects of language learning arises. For example, L. V. Shcherba believed that the most important aspect in learning a foreign language is the grammatical aspect, since it is grammar that helps to combine vocabulary into a single semantic expression and convey information through communication [3, p. 59]. I. D. Salistra, in turn, believed that grammar is not as important as vocabulary, since knowing 100 words and 10 rules allows you to construct many more sentences and statements than with the opposite phenomenon [6, p. 121]. The most correct point of view is considered to be the idea of a systematic and gradual assimilation of vocabulary, grammar and all types of speech activity with the goal of successfully using vocabulary when communicating in a foreign language. Lexical skill is another component of vocabulary, to which various methodologists have attributed many meanings. R.K. Minyar-Beloruhev defines lexical skill as the ability to reproduce words from long-term memory in a short period of time and apply them in speech activity, in accordance with the speech task [4, p. 176].

Discussions:

Important concepts in studying foreign language vocabulary are those of passive and active vocabulary. Active vocabulary. This includes the set of words that is used every day, constantly. Active vocabulary is manifested not only in oral speech, but also in writing. The main features of an active vocabulary are considered to be the freedom of its use and the absence of any need to make an effort to select certain words, to



search for their meanings in memory. The selection of active vocabulary is based on two criteria: 1. the relationship between the meaning and form of a word in the native and foreign languages, taking into account possible interference; 2. the nature of the word itself in the studied language. Based on these criteria, the following types of words can be distinguished:

1. international and borrowed words with the same meaning in two languages;
2. derivative and compound words, combinations of words;
3. words, the scope of which does not contradict the semantic scope of words in the native language;
4. words that are specific in their content;
5. words with a common root with the native language;
6. lexical units whose scope of meaning is greater than the scope of meanings in the native language;

7. lexical units whose scope of meaning is less than the scope of meanings in the native language [2]. This typology clearly reflects the differentiation of vocabulary in terms of functions, semantics and forms of foreign vocabulary. It is also possible to trace the difficulties of assimilation of vocabulary when interacting with two or more languages. Passive vocabulary. This contains all the words that a person knows, including those whose meaning is easily understood when they are found in someone else's speech, the Internet, or written sources. However, all these words are used very rarely in speech or not at all. It is easy to guess that the passive vocabulary can be several times larger in volume than the active one.

External vocabulary- this definition is most often used in psycholinguistics to denote words that a person does not know and which relate to specific areas of knowledge. If such words are found in someone's speech or text, their meaning remains unknown. The external lexicon can be called a "blind spot" within which archaisms, neologisms, professionalisms, highly specialized concepts and terms are found. It is not always possible to define clear boundaries between different types of vocabulary, since they are rather blurred and can constantly shift in both directions. words. In everyday communication, a person uses a limited number. As a result, his vocabulary becomes impoverished and speech loses expressiveness. There are a number of methods aimed at expanding the vocabulary:

1. selecting synonyms for certain words. The more synonyms a person knows and uses, the richer and more vivid his speech is. It is necessary to try to use new



synonyms in everyday communication until they become part of everyday life and replenish the active vocabulary;

2. using specialized academic literature, discussing more specific topics with students; 3. Retelling what has been read as closely as possible to the text. When retelling, it is necessary to use vocabulary taken directly from the text, gradually transferring it into the active vocabulary;

4. Introducing unfamiliar words into speech, studying their meanings and possible contexts;

5. Frequent repetition and creation of context for unfamiliar words. The more often a person uses new words in communication, the sooner they will replenish the active vocabulary. Using methods of expanding and enriching the vocabulary in combination, you can make communication more expressive and, as a result, more effective. I. V. Rakhmanov and L. V. Shcherba identified the principles for selecting the lexical minimum: thematic selection, the principle of frequency, the principle of error prediction, semantic selection of the lexical minimum, the principle of compatibility, the principle of stylistic unlimitedness, the principle of word-formation value.

Thematic selection- this is understood as the selection of a fairly limited number of special words and expressions, without which communication on a particular topic is impossible. The frequency principle depends on the materials used in language learning. The principle of predicting errors based on linguistic interference determines the vocabulary minimum for students whose primary goal is to express their thoughts. The phenomenon of linguistic interference has a significant impact on language learning success, so this principle implies identifying the most frequently used and most significant lexical units in communication.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of lexical skills plays a central role in foreign language learning, as vocabulary forms the foundation of effective communication and cognitive growth. Historical analysis shows a gradual shift from limited attention to vocabulary toward a more structured and methodologically grounded approach, emphasizing semantization, contextualization, and systematic practice. Theoretical perspectives of prominent methodologists highlight the ongoing debate regarding the relative importance of grammar and vocabulary; however, a balanced and integrated



approach remains the most effective. The distinction between active, passive, and external vocabulary underscores the complexity of lexical competence and the need for targeted strategies to expand learners' active vocabulary. Various methods, including the use of synonyms, contextual learning, repetition, and engagement with authentic materials, have proven effective in enriching vocabulary and enhancing communicative ability. Furthermore, the principles for selecting lexical minimums provide a solid methodological foundation for organizing vocabulary instruction in a purposeful and efficient manner. Overall, successful vocabulary acquisition requires a systematic, context-based, and learner-centered approach that integrates multiple techniques and adapts to the dynamic nature of language learning.

References

1. Lewis M. The Lexical Approach. Language Teaching Publication. 1993. 200 p.
2. Neuner, G., & Hunfeld, H. (2007). Methoden des fremdsprachlichen Deutschunterrichts: Eine Einführung. Langenscheidt.
3. Гез Н. И. Методика обучения иностранным языкам в средней школе: учебник / Н. И. Гез, М. В. Ляховицкий, А. А. Миролюбов. – М.: «Высшая школа», 1982. – 373 с.
4. Миньяр-Белоручев Р. К. Как стать переводчиком? – М.: Готика, 2009. – 176 с.
5. Миролюбов А. А. История отечественной методики обучения иностранным языкам: / А. А. Миролюбов. – М.: Ступени, Инфра, 2002. – 448 с.
6. Салистра И. Д. Очерки методов обучения иностранным языкам – М.: Высшая школа, 1966. – 252 с.