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## TEACHING NEW WORDS IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASS

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## ОБУЧЕНИЕ НОВЫМ СЛОВАМ НА УРОКАХ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В СРЕДНЕЙ ШКОЛЕ

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*Abstract.* The article is devoted to the formation of lexical competence of secondary school students in English language classes. The relevance of the topic is conditioned by the need to improve the effectiveness of vocabulary acquisition in the conditions of digitalization of education. The article considers traditional and modern approaches of teaching vocabulary, including the use of digital technologies, game forms and individualization. The article presents the results of the pedagogical experiment proving the advantage of integrating innovative methods. Practical recommendations for English teachers aimed at developing students' active vocabulary are formulated.

*Аннотация.* Статья посвящена формированию лексической компетенции учащихся средней школы на уроках английского языка. Актуальность темы обусловлена необходимостью повышения эффективности усвоения словарного запаса в условиях цифровизации образования. В статье рассматриваются традиционные и современные подходы к обучению лексике, включая использование цифровых технологий, игровых форм и индивидуализацию. В статье представлены результаты педагогического эксперимента, доказывающие преимущество интеграции инновационных методов. Сформулированы практические рекомендации для учителей английского языка, направленные на развитие активного словарного запаса учащихся.

*Keywords:* english language, vocabulary, school education, digital technologies, game methods, individualization, pedagogical experiment.

*Ключевые слова:* английский язык, словарный запас, школьное образование, цифровые технологии, игровые методы, индивидуализация, педагогический эксперимент.

Mastering vocabulary is one of the key components of learning a foreign language. “Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” — this is how linguist David Wilkins emphasized the importance of vocabulary. Vocabulary has the most

significance in acquisitions of English Language. You may know hundreds of grammar rules, but if you do not know words in English you cannot use that knowledge of grammar. Vocabulary is indeed the foundation of communicative competence, determining how accurately and diversely a person is able to express his thoughts. In conditions of rapid changes in the education system, including the introduction of new educational standards and digital tools, attention to the ways of effective formation of lexical competence becomes especially important. A lack of vocabulary makes it difficult for students to understand texts, engage in dialogues and complete written tasks. This has a direct impact on their academic success. Modern teaching methods are increasingly moving away from mechanical memorization of words towards the use of communicative and personality-oriented methods that promote not only memorization, but also active use of vocabulary in real speech situations [1, 2].

The aim of this article is to analyze and justify effective strategies for teaching new vocabulary to secondary school students on the basis of theoretical reflection and practical pedagogical experiment.

Traditional methods such as translation, memorization of word lists and vocabulary dictation provide basic knowledge, but in most cases do not contribute to the transformation of passive vocabulary into active vocabulary. Mechanical reproduction of words without context does not build students' ability to use vocabulary in natural speech contexts. Modern researchers, in particular S. Schmitt [3] emphasizes that isolated learning of words without context leads to rapid forgetting and limited speech activity.

In contrast, the communicative-contextual approach offers the integration of vocabulary into real-life speech situations. New words are learned through reading texts, role-playing, creating dialogues and discussing life topics. This way of learning allows not only to memorize a word better, but also to realize its functionality in speech. With regular practice learners gain confidence in using the studied vocabulary, which is confirmed by the works of J. Richards and other researchers [4].

Additional attention is paid to game technologies. They contribute to the creation of a positive emotional atmosphere at the lesson, reduce anxiety and fear of making mistakes, and increase the involvement of students [4].

Effective forms include language quizzes, card and board games, role-playing situations and team competitions. The game form, unlike formal testing, activates intrinsic motivation, making vocabulary learning an exciting process.

One of the most promising directions is the use of digital resources. Platforms such as Quizlet, Kahoot, Wordwall, as well as Duolingo and Lingualeo applications provide interactivity, flexibility and individual approach to the pace of learning [5-7].

Learners can practice vocabulary at a convenient time, track their progress independently, which contributes to autonomous learning and vocabulary consolidation. Individualization of the learning process is of particular importance. In the context of multilevel classes and differences in the style of information perception, it is necessary to take into account the interests and needs of each pupil. The variability of forms of work, such as oral stories, comics, videos and publications in social networks, allows each pupil to express himself, which increases the importance of the studied vocabulary and forms stable associations. Independent work plays a key role in building student skills such as self-organization, critical thinking, time management, and responsibility for learning outcomes. It promotes deep learning, broadens the mind, and develops research abilities [5].

The development of socio-cultural competence among foreign language learners is an important aspect of language acquisition in the modern educational context. Middle and high school students are at a critical stage of their cognitive and social development, and acquiring sociocultural competence in a foreign language can significantly improve their language learning experience [8].

Thus, the integration of the communicative-contextual approach, game technologies, digital resources and individualization of learning contributes to the effective acquisition of foreign language vocabulary by secondary school students. These methods not only enrich the vocabulary, but also develop the ability to use vocabulary in real communicative situations, increasing students' general language competence and motivation. The purpose of the pedagogical experiment was to determine the influence of modern methods on the success of mastering English vocabulary by secondary school students. The experiment was conducted in two eighth-grade classes comprising 48 students. The control group was taught by traditional methods such as translation and memorization of words, whereas the experimental group used communicative, game and digital technologies. The learning process lasted three months and included thematic units: 'Weather and Nature', 'Hobbies and Sports', and 'Travel and Transportation'. Pre- and post-tests, productive speech tasks, delayed testing after four weeks and student questionnaires were used to evaluate the effectiveness [9].

Currently, a foreign language teacher in secondary school must use various methods, methods and means to conduct classes and organize extracurricular activities, which contributes to the cognitive interest of students at the initial stages of learning a foreign language. While observing the pedagogical practice of students, interviews with school teachers in cities and individual districts help us conduct methodological research [10].

To determine the initial level of lexical competence, both groups underwent a pre-test including 30 lexical units related to the thematic blocks "Weather", "Hobbies", "Travel". Pupils were offered tasks for recognizing words, their use in context, and filling in the gaps in the sentences. Analysis of the pre-test results showed that the average level of vocabulary knowledge in both groups was comparable: 58% in the control group and 60% in the experimental group, which indicates their initial equivalence.

The control group was taught with an emphasis on traditional methods, including translating texts, memorizing vocabulary lists, and performing lexical exercises from textbooks. The following approaches were used in the experimental group:

Communicative approach: Students participated in role-plays, dialogues and discussions that promoted the use of new vocabulary in context.

Game techniques: Language quizzes, card games and team competitions were used to increase motivation and engagement.

Digital resources: Online platforms such as Quizlet and Kahoot were used for interactive vocabulary learning and repetition. The results of the experiment are summarized in Table.

Table  
RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENT

Indicator	Control group	Experimental group
Final lexical test (%)	62	89
Productive tasks (%)	54	83
Memorization after 4 weeks (%)	48	76
Motivation according to questionnaires (%)	54	92

The data analysis showed that pupils of the experimental group demonstrated significantly better results by all indicators. The final lexical test revealed that 89% of students in the experimental group successfully mastered new vocabulary, while in the control group this indicator amounted to 62%. In productive tasks requiring active use of vocabulary, the experimental group achieved 83% success rate against 54% in the control group. Especially noteworthy are the results of delayed testing after four weeks: 76% of students in the experimental group retained their knowledge, whereas in the control group - only 48%. This testifies to a longer-term vocabulary acquisition when using modern

methods. The questionnaire survey showed a high level of motivation in the experimental group (92%) compared to the control group (54%). Pupils noted that game and digital technologies made learning more interesting and exciting.

The obtained results are consistent with the data of other studies. For example, in the work devoted to the use of game technologies in vocabulary learning, it is noted that game methods contribute to increasing motivation and learning efficiency. Also, studies show that the use of information and communication technologies, such as specialized programs for vocabulary learning, has a positive impact on the learning process.

The integration of communicative, game and digital technologies in the process of teaching English vocabulary significantly increases the efficiency of learning, promotes long-term memorization and increases students' motivation. It is recommended to introduce these methods into teaching practice to achieve higher educational results. The study revealed that the integration of modern methods, including communicative approaches, game technologies and digital resources, significantly increases the effectiveness of teaching English vocabulary at secondary school. These methods not only contribute to the expansion of students' active vocabulary, but also increase their motivation and involvement in the learning process. The obtained data confirm the need to move away from traditional mechanical memorization of words in favor of more dynamic and interactive forms of learning. Combining different approaches, adapted to individual characteristics and interests of students, provides deeper and more sustainable learning of lexical material. It is recommended that teachers actively introduce a variety of methods into the practice of teaching a foreign language, taking into account the specifics of their students and available resources. This will help to create a more effective and motivating educational environment conducive to successful foreign language acquisition.

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