

Leksik Competence Improvement Through Interactive Methods: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract: This study investigates the effectiveness of interactive methods in developing lexical competence among future foreign language teachers. Conducted at Namangan State Institute of Foreign Languages, the research involved 48 students divided into experimental and control groups. Over an 8-week period, the experimental group participated in lessons based on interactive methods such as role-plays, jigsaw activities, case studies, information-gap tasks, and chain-story exercises, while the control group followed traditional vocabulary learning approaches. Pre- and post-tests assessed receptive, productive, and oral vocabulary competence. Results showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in all components, confirming that interactive, task-based, and lexical approach-oriented methods enhance lexical knowledge and its practical application in communicative contexts. The study recommends integrating interactive, context-based, and multimodal activities in foreign language teaching to effectively develop learners' lexical and communicative competence.

Keywords: Lexical competence, interactive methods, task-based language teaching, lexical approach, vocabulary acquisition, communicative competence, foreign language education.

Introduction: Lexical competence denotes learners' ability to understand words and word combinations and to use them correctly in meaningful and communicative situations. In CEFR (2020) documents it is designated as a core component of communicative competence and directly affects a language learner's speech fluency, accuracy of conveying meaning, and pragmatic adaptability. In recent years, approaches to teaching lexis have been shifting away from traditional memorization-based methods toward approaches focused on learning language in context, actively using chunks and collocations, and developing practical communication through interactive exercises (Schmitt, 2010). Nevertheless, the empirical impact of interactive methods specifically on the lexical competence of future foreign language teachers has not been sufficiently analyzed scientifically. The present study aims to compare the effectiveness of lessons organized on the basis of interactive methods with traditional teaching, determining their real impact on learning outcomes.

METHODS

This study was carried out with students of the 4th year, groups XTA AU-22 and XTA BU-22, at Namangan State Institute of Foreign Languages. A total of 48 students participated. Twenty-four students from XTA AU-22 were chosen as research participants (experimental group) and 24 students from XTA BU-22 were selected as the control group. At the beginning of the study an entrance test was administered to both groups and it was established that their levels of lexical competence were similar. This created equal conditions for the experiment.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research was implemented over an eight-week instructional period and followed a quasi-experimental research design, which is commonly employed in educational studies where full randomization is not feasible but comparison between groups is essential for determining instructional effectiveness. Two intact groups were assigned as the experimental and control cohorts. Both groups received the same thematic

content; however, the instructional methodology differed substantially across the two groups, allowing a controlled comparison of pedagogical impact. The control group was taught through traditional vocabulary instruction techniques, which predominantly included memorization of isolated lexical items, translation-based exercises, dictionary work, sentence construction using predetermined vocabulary, and text-based vocabulary tasks. These methods reflect conventional foreign-language pedagogy, where lexical knowledge is treated as a discrete, form-focused component of learning. In contrast, the experimental group received instruction based on interactive, communicatively oriented methods. Lessons were systematically designed to incorporate a variety of interactive techniques such as role-play simulations, jigsaw tasks, interactive lexical games, case-study problem-solving activities, information-gap tasks, and chain-story collaborative storytelling. These activities required learners to actively engage with lexical items in meaningful, context-rich communicative situations. The instructional design emphasized learner participation, negotiation of meaning, and context-embedded vocabulary use, thereby aligning with contemporary principles of communicative language teaching. The overall pedagogical framework for the experimental group was grounded in the major principles of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as described by Ellis (2003), which prioritizes real-world communicative tasks as the central unit of instruction. Tasks were structured to provide pre-task preparation, during-task interaction, and post-task reflection, ensuring that vocabulary was both introduced and practiced within functionally meaningful contexts. Additionally, the instructional model integrated the core concepts of the Lexical Approach (Nation, 2001), emphasizing the teaching of multi-word units, collocations, lexical chunks, and formulaic sequences. This theoretical orientation was selected to enhance students' ability to use lexical items fluently and appropriately in authentic communicative discourse. Taken together, the quasi-experimental design enabled a systematic comparison between traditional and interactive, task-based vocabulary instruction. The integration of TBLT and the Lexical Approach in the experimental group was expected to yield improved lexical competence by promoting deeper cognitive processing, contextualized learning, and more frequent active use of vocabulary in communicative situations.

RESULTS

Diagnostic and final assessment measures were carried out before and after the experiment to determine the lexical competence levels of both groups. Three types

of tests were used in the assessment process: the Receptive Vocabulary Test measured students' ability to recognize words and understand their meanings; the Productive Vocabulary Test measured the ability to use words independently and actively. Additionally, a Speaking Task analyzed learners' lexical richness in oral speech, their use of collocations, and speech fluency. Each indicator was evaluated on a rating scale from 0 to 100, enabling identification of differences between experimental and control groups. The initial diagnostic assessment results indicated no significant difference between the experimental and control groups. For Receptive Vocabulary the experimental group averaged 47.3 points and the control group 46.8 points; for Productive Vocabulary 42.6 and 43.1 points respectively; for the Speaking Task the experimental group scored 40.2 points and the control group 39.8 points. These results confirmed that the groups' initial lexical competence levels were very close to one another. After the 8-week instructional period of the experiment both groups were reassessed and significant differences were observed. For Receptive Vocabulary the experimental group's score reached 78.5 points whereas the control group's score was 61.4 points. For Productive Vocabulary the experimental group scored 74.8 points and the control group 58.2 points. Speaking Task results were also significantly higher in favor of the experimental group, amounting to 81.2 and 62.7 points respectively. This shows that interactive methods are more effective in developing the receptive, productive and oral speech components of lexical competence.

DISCUSSION

The study results indicate that the use of interactive methods has a significant positive effect on all components of lexical competence — recognizing words, actively using them, and correctly applying them in communicative situations. Several factors contributed to this result. First, the contextual nature of interactive tasks reinforced the application of words in real-life situations and enabled deeper understanding of their meaning and functional aspects (Thornbury, 2002). Also, the prioritization of communicative activity — specifically using tasks like role-play and case-study — engaged learners in active speech processes and expanded the range of real-life communicative uses of vocabulary items. Furthermore, learning chunks and collocations within the lexical approach increased learners' speech fluency and formed skills for natural use of word combinations. The use of interactive games and media resources served the long-term memory retention of vocabulary items through multimodal stimuli. At the same time, while traditional methods demonstrated certain

effectiveness in expanding vocabulary stock, they did not sufficiently encourage active use of taught words in real speech. Consequently, interactive methods were confirmed to be more effective than traditional approaches in the comprehensive development of vocabulary competence.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings show that the use of interactive methods — particularly activities enriched with elements of TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) and the lexical approach such as role-play, jigsaw, case-study and interactive games — significantly develops lexical competence of future foreign language teachers. These methods do not only expand learners' vocabulary breadth but also strengthen their ability to actively use words and phrases in real communicative situations. Therefore, in foreign language teaching it is recommended to apply contextual approaches, use communicatively oriented tasks, enrich the learning process with multimodal materials, and systematically reinforce lexical units through collocational exercises. Such methodological approaches enhance learners' abilities to perceive vocabulary, use it actively, and effectively employ it within the scope of communicative competence. The results of this study confirm the high practical value of interactive methods in forming future teachers' lexical and communicative competences and indicate the relevance of broadly implementing them into the educational process.

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