

Analyzing the Effectiveness of Blogging in Enhancing University Students' Lexical Competence

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Abstract: This paper investigates the role of blogging in developing the lexical competence of university students. Blogging is a dynamic platform that enables students to use English authentically in a meaningful context. By incorporating blogging into language learning, students are encouraged to improve their language skills, and increase the amount of active vocabulary. The current study aimed to the influence of blogs on developing lexical competence, vocabulary growth, and retention. The research employed a quantitative methodology with the experimental design, using pretests and posttests with 412 second-grade students from Fergana State University (FSU). The data was analyzed using mathematical methods, namely Student's t-test and Pearson's correlation. The findings revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group significantly. It can be concluded that Blogging significantly enhances students' lexical competence, serving as an effective tool for overcoming lexical barriers.

Keywords: Lexical competence, blogging, writing, vocabulary, multimodal text, authentic material.

Introduction: Lexical competence is a crucial aspect of academic success and language proficiency, encompassing the ability to recognize the of meaning of a word and use it appropriately in a meaningful context. According to English linguists Michael McCarthy and Ronald Carter, lexical competence involves not only knowing the meanings of words but also the ability to use them in context, understand word combinations, and employ an appropriate style for a given situation. They emphasize that lexical competence is achieved not through rote memorization of words but by learning to use them in context and understanding the social and pragmatic aspects of language use. They highlight the importance of lexical competence in developing students' ability to use language effectively and accurately, focusing on aspects such as collocations, register, and other linguistic features.

Another English methodologist, David Crystal, defines lexical competence as the ability to use words effectively and accurately in various contexts, understand their connotations, and know their collocations and grammatical properties.

Norbert Schmitt, an English scholar in the field of

applied linguistics, emphasizes that developing lexical competence requires having extensive vocabulary, the ability to use words and phrases appropriately in context, and utilizing authentic materials to enhance these skills. As lexical competence is a fundamental component of foreign language acquisition, enhancing it is important to convey messages and effective communication. In the current technological era, teachers are required to use modern tools in language teaching to motivate students to overcome challenges and facilitate the learning process. In this study researcher employed blogging as a research tool. Recent studies show that as students read and follow blogs, they automatically become familiar with the culture of the target language and discover a wealth of cultural information. The English methodologist Lina, in her research, highlights that blogs allow users to reflect on intercultural issues and cultural exchanges. Thus, we can understand blogs as bridges for information exchange between people. Moreover, by using blogs, teachers and students succeed in strengthening their communication in English.

Problem statement

Students often face challenges in developing

communicative competencies, particularly in writing and speaking skills, due to a lack of vocabulary and understanding of how to use appropriate words in various contexts. It is believed that blogs can serve as a modern resource to improve lexical competence, which forms the foundation for enhancing communicative skills. This study aims to determine whether using blogs differs from traditional coursebooks in their effectiveness in developing lexical competence, particularly in terms of active vocabulary.

The objective of the study

The main objectives of the current research are as follows:

1. To determine the effectiveness of using blogs in improving the lexical competence of second-year students at FSU.
2. To compare the pretest and posttest results of students who used blogs with those who used traditional tools.

Literature Review

Russian methodologist A. Gareyev writes that the process of creating blog posts and leaving comments helps students develop critical thinking, self-study, and writing skills. Therefore, blogging and integrating it into the learning process positively impact not only the reinforcement of lexical elements but also the development of all language skills. For example, by creating video or audio blogs, students can enhance their speaking skills. In this regard, blogs serve as an effective tool for fostering creativity, critical thinking, and presentation skills.

As for writing skills, students can improve their writing effectiveness almost unconsciously by posting content of their interest and writing comments. During the development of both skills, students naturally expand their lexical knowledge. In other words, students' lexical proficiency becomes more active. This, in turn, contributes to the development of lexical competence. Anna Vladimirovna, in her work, highlights the didactic features of blogs, such as openness, convenience, and social interaction. She emphasizes that integrating blogs into the educational process enhances students' motivation to learn a foreign language more deeply and thoroughly. As using blogs is simple and convenient, they are easy to incorporate both during lessons and outside the classroom, creating a hassle-free experience for both teachers and students. Blogs are practical and convenient tools that can be easily applied both during lessons and outside of the classroom. They pose no challenges for teachers or students, reflecting the ultimate criterion of practicality.

One of the English researchers, Campbell, classified the use of blogs in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs into three types:

Tutor Blog: This is a blog managed by the teacher and serves as a platform to assign daily tasks and facilitate communication with students outside the classroom. By posting new texts on their blog, teachers can help students reinforce the vocabulary they have recently learned in class. Additionally, the teacher can post sentences containing the target vocabulary for the next lesson or share links to relevant materials.

Class Blog: This type of blog functions as an online discussion board where students can engage in debates on topics covered during lessons. Moreover, the class blog serves as a reminder for homework and upcoming discussion topics.

Student Blog: Managed by an individual student or a small group of students, this blog provides an opportunity to develop writing and reading skills, enhance lexical competence, and foster a sense of ownership. Students can also gain practical experience in creating hypertext while exploring the legal, ethical, and practical aspects associated with it.

METHODS

The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using blogs. The population of study was distributed into two groups. The students in the experimental group were taught using multimodal texts, such as blogs and blogging technology, while the lessons in the control group were conducted in traditional ways.

Research questions:

This study specifically addressed to answer the following questions:

1. Is using blogs effective in improving the lexical competence of second-year students of Fergana State University?
2. Is there any significant difference between the result of the pretest and posttest of students after using the blog platform?

Participants

The population of the study was comprised of 412 second-grade students from the faculty of English Language and Literature at Fergana State University.

Research design and Procedure

The study adopted a pre-experimental research design involving pretests and posttests to evaluate students' lexical competence proficiency. During research training session, in collaboration with higher education institution teachers, the lesson process was organized in experimental groups using technologies that included multimodal text types in LSI (Language Skills

Integration) and Reading and Writing subjects to develop students' lexical competence. Specifically, by applying the "Blogging" technology, new words were learned; listening comprehension, speaking, and writing skills were integrated to develop competence in the learned lexical units. The teacher instructed students to register website namely, edublogs.com. Students were guided on enrolling in class blogs to post their content and comments. In the control groups, however, the same lessons were conducted in a traditional method using textbooks and manuals.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The main purpose of this research was to investigate how effective use and writing blog posts on students' lexical competence development. Nowadays, most students are attracted by social media and networking. They are eager to perceive new information in a modern way. Considering this factor, the researcher encourages students to use blog posts in academic settings. The pre-test was administered at the beginning of the experimental trial to assess students' vocabulary proficiency. Following is the Analysis of Pre-Experimental Results (in Numbers and Percentages) on the Use of Multimodal Text Technologies in Developing Lexical Competence of English Major Students

The table 1. The result the pre-test.

Groups	Number of students	Achievement Results (in %)		
		High	Intermediate	Low
Experimental groups	211	53 25	76 36	82 39
Control groups	201	42 21	72 36	87 43

According to the pre-experimental results, differences in knowledge, skills, and competencies were identified between the experimental and control group students. The results of the pre-test of the experimental and control groups were compared. After eight weeks of experimental trials, the researcher conducted the post-

test from participants of experimental and control groups. A comprehensive statistical analysis was conducted to evaluate this situation objectively. The obtained conclusions confirm that the experimental research was carried out correctly and effectively from scientific, pedagogical, technological, and methodological perspectives (see Table 2).

Table 2. The result of the post-test.

Groups	Number of students	Achievement Results (in %)		
		High	Intermediate	Low
Experimental groups	211	101 48	74 35	36 17
Control groups	201	52 26	79 39	70 35

As seen in table 2, the indicators of the experimental group are higher than those of the control group. The students in the experimental groups showed a higher improvement in their lexical competence using multimodal text technologies compared to the control groups (by 13.3%).

Therefore, the experimental trials confirmed that the use of multimodal text technologies in the development of lexical competence among English language students leads to increased teaching

effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, the researcher aimed to explore the impact of using blogs on vocabulary learning, analyzing their effectiveness in enhancing lexical competence and overall language development. The research findings determined that blogs have a powerful influence on the development of lexical competence in the English language. They are not only a reliable and effective tool for expanding vocabulary but also

contribute to improving other language skills, including speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Blogs serve as educational tools for carrying out multiple activities and tasks in learning new lexical items. Furthermore, blogs provide an interactive and engaging learning environment, allowing learners to practice new words in context, receive feedback, and enhance their communication skills. Additionally, they encourage autonomous learning, foster creativity, and support collaboration among students. The multimedia elements of blogs such as images, videos, and hyperlinks, offer a multimodal approach to vocabulary acquisition, making the learning process more dynamic and effective.

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