

Methods of Developing and Improving Students' Lexical Competence

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Abstract: This article contains theoretical information that prepares the ground for the development of students' linguistic competence, serves to expand linguistic knowledge, creates a broader understanding of the division of words in the Uzbek language into types such as homonyms, synonyms, antonyms and paronyms according to their form and meaning relationships, improves control knowledge, and information on the effective implementation of training sessions entitled "Types of words according to their form and meaning relationships" to determine the stages of students' acquisition of knowledge about lexical competencies at 3 different levels: formative, developmental and improving.

Keywords: Lexicology, sema, semaphore, polysemy, monosemy, lexical monosemy, homograph, homophone, lexical homonymy, homonymy, synonymy, dominant, antonymy, contextual antonymy, quasi-synonyms.

Introduction: According to the curriculum of the specialty subject "Mother Tongue" within the academic plans of the Bachelor's program 60110500 – Primary Education in higher pedagogical institutions, the "Lexicology" section is designed to provide students with general knowledge about Lexicology. It includes the classification of words based on their semantic relations (monosemous and polysemous words, semantic transfer phenomena such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, and functional synonyms); classification based on the relation between form and meaning (homonyms, synonyms, antonyms); the historical development of the Uzbek vocabulary (historical and modern layers, lexical historicisms, archaisms, neologisms); active and passive vocabulary of the Uzbek language, restricted usage vocabulary, dialectal words, occupational vocabulary, argot and jargon, as well as emotionally expressive and stylistically marked vocabulary (commonly used words typical of oral and written speech, means of expressing speech expressiveness, types of speech, and lexical features characteristic of these types). The course aims to develop students' theoretical knowledge, skills, and competencies in lexicon-related topics.

It is evident that the theoretical knowledge to be

acquired by primary education students in the "Lexicology" section is quite complex and broad in scope. Therefore, we found it appropriate to present observations based on a training session titled "Types of words according to the relation between form and meaning," in order to determine three levels (formative, developmental, and advanced) that contribute to students' acquisition of lexical competencies.

According to the curriculum, this training session is intended for first-year students and is scheduled for 4 hours. The main goal of the session is to provide students with an understanding of the classification of Uzbek words based on their form and meaning into types such as homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, and paronyms, and to enhance their knowledge through assessment and reinforcement.

The pedagogical tasks targeted during the session and the outcomes derived from students' learning activities are as follows:

- Students are provided with theoretical information regarding the fact that words in our language can be related to each other either in terms of meaning or form, based on relevant linguistic evidence. As a result, they successfully acquire this information at the required level.

– Through examples, it is explained that words forming identical linguistic units in form but differing in meaning are referred to as homonyms in linguistics. As a result, students learn to recognize that words with the same form but different meanings are homonyms.

– It is clarified using linguistic examples that words with different forms but identical meanings are called synonyms, and such similarities can also occur between phrases, affixes, and syntactic units. As a result, students successfully acquire the theoretical knowledge.

– Theoretical information is also provided about words that differ both in form and meaning but are united by semantic contrast — these are known as antonyms — and about words that are pronounced similarly but differ in meaning, known as paronyms. Consequently, students fully acquire this information.

Teaching methods, tools, forms, and techniques of the training session include visualized lectures, demonstration technology, slides, illustrative materials, and similar resources. The form of the session is characterized by collaborative work with students.

Monitoring and assessment are carried out through oral questioning, Q&A, debates and discussions, and evaluation based on the rating system.

To form, develop, and improve students' linguistic competencies, the selected training session is structured around tasks organized into three stages. When these tasks are implemented effectively, the intended educational goals are achieved, and a certain level of efficiency is attained.

Stage I – Tasks to be implemented:

Students are introduced to the topic, objectives, and expected learning outcomes of the session. In turn, students listen, understand, and acquire this information.

The plan of the training session is explained with relevant theoretical information, and certain points are clarified using linguistic evidence. Afterward, through the "Brainstorming" technique, the depth of students' prior knowledge and in-class learning is determined. Students are expected to adequately respond to the questions posed. The content of these questions is as follows:

- Provide information about seme and sememe. Explain the examples you use in your response.
- Into what types are semes classified based on their semantic features? Give clear examples.
- What are denotative semes? What about expressive and functional semes? Explain your answer with

examples.

d) Explain the division of ideographic semes into integral and differential semes. Provide relevant linguistic evidence.

e) Define the concept of terminology, and discuss its expression and content aspects.

f) In what cases do the lexical meaning of a term and the concept it expresses coincide? Explain with examples.

g) How would you explain the phenomenon of lexical monosemy? What about polysemy? Support your answer with examples.

h) To which lexical units is the phenomenon of monosemy typically applicable? Justify your view.

i) Under what circumstances does polysemy emerge? Provide examples.

j) Give information about the linguistic and extralinguistic (non-linguistic) factors that lead to polysemy.

k) What are the main ways of semantic development? Illustrate with examples.

l) How does semantic transfer through metaphor occur? Explain your answer using examples.

After that, students are introduced to a list of scientific-theoretical and instructional-methodological resources that support the learning of the current training session. Students take notes on the recommended materials and gradually internalize them.

3. Brief information is provided on key terms that reflect the essence and content of the selected topic. It can be stated that such theoretically oriented core concepts serve as a foundation for the development of students' linguistic competence and contribute to the expansion of their linguistic knowledge. Below are some examples presented as linguistic evidence:

- Synonymy – the grouping of lexemes based on their shared meanings.
- Synonym row (cluster) – a set of synonymic words grouped by a common meaning.
- Dominant – the semantically neutral word in a synonymic row.
- Semantic synonyms – synonyms that share a general meaning but differ in shades of meaning.
- Stylistic synonyms – synonyms used with semes expressing positive or negative stylistic connotations.
- Speech-based synonyms – synonyms that differ based on their relevance to a particular type of

speech.

- Antonymy – the grouping of lexemes based on semantic opposition.
- Antonymic pair – two words with directly opposing meanings.
- Contextual antonymy – the relationship of opposition formed between words that are not antonyms in the language system but acquire oppositional meaning within a specific context.
- Enantiosemy – the phenomenon where a single lexeme expresses contradictory meanings depending on the speech environment.
- Logical center – an intermediate concept that connects two contrasting meanings.
- Homonymy – the phenomenon of identity at the level of expression among language units.
- Lexical homonymy – a type of homonymy that occurs within the domain of lexemes.
- Homoforms – lexemes that share certain grammatical forms.
- Homophones – lexemes with identical pronunciation but different spelling.
- Homographs – lexemes with identical spelling but different pronunciation.
- Paronymy – the phonetic similarity and resemblance in sound between two or more lexemes.
- Quasi-homonyms – a pair of words differing by only one phoneme (also called a minimal pair).

Tasks to be Implemented in Stage II (Developmental Stage)

– The content of the first part of the training plan is explained using relevant slides and supplementary materials. Students listen attentively and take notes on the key points in their notebooks.

– Theoretical information about synonyms and their types is presented through slides and additional sources. During the brief discussion and Q&A session, students become active participants in the lesson.

– To reinforce the lecture, test questions are displayed via slide presentation. Students listen, write down the questions, and respond in turn at the appropriate moments. The set of pre-prepared test questions based on the theoretical material about types of synonyms is also designed to support the development of students' lexical competencies. Below are some sample linguistic test items provided as illustrative examples:

Which of the following phenomena are common to all parts of speech?

Polysemy

Synonymy

Homonymy

Antonymy

Answer options:

A) 1

B) 1,2

C) 1,2,3

D) 1,2,3,4

In the following suffix usages of the word *suzmoq* (to skim, to swim, to butt), what type of word is *suzmoq*?

Oshni *suzdi* (skimmed the soup)

Suvda *suzdi* (swam in the water)

Sigir *suzdi* (the cow butted)

Answer options:

A) Homonym

B) Paronym

C) Synonym

D) Polysemous word

Can a polysemous word have separate antonyms for each of its meanings?

Answer options:

A) A polysemous word can have only one antonym

B) Only monosemous words can be antonyms

C) A word with antonyms for each meaning is not polysemous

D) A polysemous word can have distinct antonyms for each meaning

In the sentence: In construction, I am the boss, Bo'riev. The funds and the people, including you, are all at my disposal, which of the following words can function as a synonym for *ixtiyor* (disposal)?

Answer options:

A) Mayl (will)

B) Izn (permission)

C) Izm (control/influence)

D) Mayl, izn

Between which of the following units does homonymy not occur?

Answer options:

A) Between two words

B) Between two words and their figurative expressions

C) Between two suffixes

D) Homonymy can occur among all listed units

In which of the following word pairs are the suffixes homonymous?

Answer options:

A) Kiyinmoq – ekinlar

B) O'qildi – yozildi

C) Gulzorlarda – paxtazorlarda

D) Uchrashmoq – o'rganish

In which of the following pairs cannot be considered synonyms?

Answer options:

A) Adil – odil

B) Adolatli – odil

C) Adil – tik

D) Odil – adi

In the following lines by A.O.:

O'chib borayotgan qanchalar qalam,

Ne-ne bitiklar xam yo'qdir, vassalom.

Dunyoda faqat bir sobit suxan bor,

U o'z farzandingga o'zing qo'ygan nom.

What is the synonym of the word sobit in this verse?

Answer options:

A) Pleasant (yoqimli)

B) Reliable (ishonchli)

C) Firm (qat'iy)

D) Permanent (doimiy)

Which of the following phenomena are characterized by formal similarity?

Answer options:

A) Polysemous words

B) Homonyms

C) Paronyms

D) A and B

Which of the following word pairs are not paronyms?

Answer options:

A) Yuvindi – uyuindi

B) Yoriq – yoruq

C) Charlamog – chorlamog

D) Archish – artis

After that, the next item of the selected training plan is explained using visual materials, while students listen and take notes on the relevant sections. A general conclusion is made regarding all the questions included in the lesson plan. At the end of the theoretical part, a

final question-and-answer session is held with students, and they respond to the questions to the best of their ability.

The content of the final oral questions addressed to the students includes the following:

1. In which language units does the phenomenon of homonymy occur?

2. Provide examples of homonyms.

3. State the rules for homoforms and homophones.

4. What are contextual synonyms?

5. Provide examples of phraseological synonyms.

6. Discuss the types of antonyms.

After the oral Q&A session, students' answers are corrected and clarified, and their strengths and shortcomings are addressed.

Tasks Implemented in Stage III:

– A general concluding summary of the topic is delivered. Students listen and take notes.

– Students' knowledge and skills gained in this topic are assessed.

– A task is assigned to write an independent paper on the topic.

The topics of such independent assignments are typically as follows:

1. Prepare a short explanation of homonyms and how they differ from polysemous words. Find 50 examples of different types of homonyms from literary texts.

2. Prepare a report on synonyms and synonymic rows, and identify 50 examples of various types of synonyms from literary texts.

3. Write a short paper on antonyms and their types, and find 50 examples from literary sources.

4. Prepare a brief overview of the main types of homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms, and collect 50 examples from literary texts showing how they function in speech.

It should be emphasized that each independent task assigned to students must be completed within the designated timeframe, with clear reference to the author of the text and the specific page number. This strict requirement is set to ensure that each student independently reads a selected work by a particular author, thereby broadening their artistic and aesthetic worldview, enriching their vocabulary, and developing skills in using these words in speech. These factors, in turn, help students consolidate their theoretical

knowledge and lay the foundation for the development of their lexical competence.

After discussing the assigned independent tasks during the lesson, students' knowledge is assessed using the "Boomerang" method. This process is implemented as follows:

- Students are initially divided into small groups and introduced to the purpose and procedure of the independent task discussion;

- A number of handouts are distributed to students for individual study. In particular, the following questions are provided:

- a) Provide information about homonymous words and explain your answer with examples.

- b) Provide information about synonymous words and give examples.

- c) What are antonyms (words with opposite meanings)? Give examples and explain them.

- d) What are the linguistic characteristics of paronymous words? Give examples.

- The given linguistic exercises are studied independently by the students, and appropriate answers are collected from them;

- New groups are formed by rotating members of the existing groups. Each student shares the information they have studied and the examples they have gathered within the new small groups, complementing each other. As a result, the students fully grasp the given text;

- In order to assess the degree of assimilation of the provided material, internal control is carried out within each group, where members ask and answer questions and engage in discussion and debate;

- A "group recorder" is appointed in each group to evaluate students' knowledge and keep track of the scores;

- Additional questions are asked to further determine how well students have understood the texts;

- The total score for each group is calculated based on the answers provided;

- A Q&A session is organized using questions prepared by each group member, with "group recorders" keeping track of the scores based on the answers;

- At the end of the lively discussion, the total score accumulated by each group is calculated;

- The total points collected by each group are equally distributed among its members, and the winning group is recognized and rewarded accordingly.

Thus, students' knowledge on the topic "Types of Words According to Form and Meaning Relationships"

shows dynamic growth compared to stages I and II. The effective use of techniques such as "Brainstorming" and "Boomerang" in practical lessons becomes one of the key factors in achieving high efficiency during the sessions. All of these contribute to the development of students' linguistic competence and ultimately lay the groundwork for further improvement.

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