The enhancement of lexical competence of students on B2 level

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Annotation: This article reviews the notion of lexical competence and semantic competence. Since the president of Uzbekistan issued a decree on popularizing and further development of learning foreign languages, to be precise English.

Key words: lexis, range, vocabulary, context, chunk, lack, unknown, familiar, competent, competence, communicative, semantic.

Introduction

In the XXI century the knowledge of English and being proficient in it is considered to be a major requirement not only in everyday life but also in the sphere of education, since it opens new vistas for students and helps with their future career. Thus, educators should put into practice the best ways of teaching vocabulary to their students and improve their lexical competence by broadening and developing vocabulary; the development of vocabulary is deemed as a key factor in acquiring a language. Because there is a lack of interaction with foreigners and exposure to the language in Uzbekistan, it is problematic for students to get used to using English during classes and outside. Moreover, students tend to use their mother tongue due to their inadequate vocabulary.

Research object and methods

Teaching students lexical competence on B2 level of higher educational institutions is considered to be one of the major issues these days. The lexical competence is the ability to produce and understand the words of a language. Lexical competence is an aspect of both linguistic competence and communicative competence.The term *lexis* derived from ancient Greek, which means "word" referring to all the words of a language and vocabulary. The attainment of language competence by students is proclaimed by the state educational standard as the main goal of language education in educational institutions.

"*Competentia*" derives from Latin and in Uzbek dictionary it has such meanings as: "a person knows well", "an experienced person".

According to Hutorskoy A.V. - *Competence* is the awareness of a person in one field and the level of his knowledge in it.

According to **the State Educational Standards** the notions of competence and being competent are defined as:

Competence – the ability to apply knowledge, skills and personal qualities successfully in one field;

Being competent – the ability of a person to apply gained knowledge, skills and personal qualities in one sphere during his work experience.

In this work we observed the terms and analyzed different points of view of a number of scientists in this field. Moreover, we analyzed different approaches, linguistic strategies and techniques to improve students' lexical competence and vocabulary.

Discussion and results obtained

The term *competence*, which was brought in linguistics by N.Chomsky in XX century, is the ability to use i.e. performance of language skills in real life communication within various spheres. A competent person should be able to utter accurate sentences and comprehend the conversation. Thus, it meant the ability to keep the conversation at natural condition and pace, which in its turn caused the term **"*communicative competence*"** to emerge.

To Garcia (2007) *Lexical competence* (dependant variable): the basic synthetic understanding that it is necessary to use correct linguistic expressions.

According to Solovova (2003) Lexical competence - knowledge of the vocabulary of the language, including lexical elements, and the ability to use them in speech. Lexical elements include words, regular combinations of words, stable combinations (phrasal verbs), complex prepositions, phraseological units.

Shchukin (2004) says that Lexical competence - the ability of students to determine the contextual meaning of a word, compare its volume in two languages, identify in it a specific national, characteristic of the culture of the people who speak this language.

The definition given by Shamov (2007) to Lexical competence is an integral part of communicative competence, the formation of which proceeds as a graduated process; several levels can be conditionally distinguished in it. Under the level of formation of lexical competence, we mean the ability of students to solve problems related to the assimilation of a foreign word in the practical use of it in speech on the basis of acquired knowledge and relevant skills.

Lexical competence, i.e. lexical knowledge is considered to be one of the paramount aspects of the communicative competence that teaches to understand, learn, recall and bear in mind vocabulary items with a success.Folse (2004) states that "vocabulary seen as the achievement of words with its semantic and pragmatic function is perhaps the most important component in L2 ability". Apart from the aforementioned he also make it clear that the way of mastering a foreign language and its value is beyond the knowledge of the language'sform or structure, which in its turn, makes a contribution into the growth of different questions and considerationson how to teach a foreign language, English in our case; hence, lexical competence is related to the semantics of the language, when students are provided with a variety of alternatives inunderstanding the meaning whatever the speaker's purposemight be.

Akhmanova(2010) says that vocabulary - the whole set of words that make up a language or dialect.

The definition given by Azimov to lexical skill – it is an automated action for choosing a lexical unit that is adequate to the idea and its correct combination with other units in productive speech, automated perception and association with meaning in receptive speech.

Lexical aspect of language competence is expressed in the ability of a learner (student) to put lexical minimum into use in communicative competence. The range of vocabulary on subjects being learned by students must reach the point of 2000 lexemes.

Grammatical aspect of learning a foreign language is expressed in their ability to use grammar rules in receptive and productive forms during the act of speech.

The term competence, which is applied to language in this case, entails the knowledge on structural basis of a language and semantics of its lexical grammar units.

N.Chomsky claimed that in the theory of competence the central idea is that a person possesses the ability to express the knowledge of a language, and the existence of specific competence in the form of mental models.

Lexical competence is formed and developed during the process of socialization, and the learning, i.e. education plays a crucial role in it.

According to Azimov*competent approach* – is a complex of general principles of forming learning aims and performing intercultural/interpersonal communication with native speakers suggesting a practical acquisition of a foreign language.

To Garcia (2007) lexical competence is a natural ability to utilize words in a proper way during a verbal interaction. He also emphasizes its connection to communicative competence.

According to Rose (2006), the processes of learning vocabulary is when learners collect and store lexical units in their brain, i.e. which is a collective process. Learners need to use the words learned and gain the feeling of understanding how they are used naturally.

According to Liu (2009) educators ought to show their students the ways and approaches to learning new words, and not just give ready vocabulary. Nowadays the teaching process in the class and all activities ought to be aimed at students, i.e. learner-centered. Hence, teachers should provide students with independence and make an environment conducive to learning so they become able to cope with new lexical units in context.

Nowadays it is believed that teaching vocabulary is done better with not just learning individual lexical units, but as chunks and patterns. Chunks are the group of words found together, some of which are fixed expressions. However, collocation is a type of chunk which entails two lexical words. Leo Selivan in his book called "Lexical grammar 2018" writes:

Selivan states that language production is not a matter of simply combining words and rules but rather retrieval of the language that we are primed for, i.e. the patterns and combinations that we have previously seen and heard.

He claims that children from the very early ages learn language with the help of patterns, so to say recorded pieces of language during their daily interactions with others. It continues with repeating of what was heard and said previously, i.e. words (e.g. a ball) or phrases (e.g. let me go, where is your father?). Then they try to modify a little and turn the chunks into patterns. For example:

Where is your father?

Where is your cat?

Where is your car?

According to Selivan, the learning process of new structures better to start with getting exposed to chunks. Since the number of chunks which are stored in memory expands, the ones applying to the same pattern start feeding into the grammar system step by step. This is when grammatical competence with a particular structure begins to emerge.

According to I.L. Bim, "competence-based approach is nothing more than a further development of an activity-based approach to education, focused on the results of formed activities, acting both in the form of material products (...) and in the form of spiritual increments, including in the form of knowledge, skills, value orientations and at least minimal experience in the practical implementation of the generated activities.

As we can see, the modern goal of teaching foreign languages is not limited to the formation of language skills and speech skills. The competence-based approach expands the pragmatic component of the learning goal: in the process of language learning, students develop their communicative competence, through which the formation of the remaining key and (at the profile stage of education) the most elementary foundations of professional competencies takes place in order to solve the problems of social activity in its various fields.

The structure of lexical competence includes: a cognitive component, an effective-practical component and a reflective component.

Shamov claims that the cognitive component is represented by lexical knowledge. Lexical knowledge is understood as knowledge of a specific lexical unit, knowledge of the meaning of a specific lexical-semantic variant, knowledge of the form of a word (phonetic, graphic, grammatical, morphological, derivational, lexical, semantic, syntactic tiers of the language).

The effective-practical or procedural component involves a strategy for mastering the word, which includes certain actions on the word. These are linguodidactic strategies.

Linguodidactic strategies reflect the model of a secondary linguistic personality, the model of mastering the system of a non-native language and culture. These strategies - semantic, linguosystematizing, cognitive-conceptual (linguocultural) provide a constant search for meanings in

a wide socio-cultural context, the selection and accumulation of linguistic means, the expansion of the language base, the generalization of the language being studied into an ordered, personally significant system, its constant replenishment and updating using one's own language and speech experience, including in the native language, mastering the appropriate system of concepts, concepts, penetration into the culture of a native speaker, understanding national and cultural specifics at the level of intercultural communication. This allows the student of the language to build his own system of concepts in the language and culture being studied, to personally refract, appropriate this system, and develop a "sense of language".

Koryakovtsevastates that semantic strategies include the following techniques:
• selection of new meanings in the context, clarification of the contextual meaning;
• search (selection) of the necessary meanings (linguistic means) according to certain criteria: formal (root commonality, root family, word-formation model), semantic (polysemy, synonyms, antonyms, close meaning), according to the features of use (compatibility, structural-semantic model, speech situation), stylistic, conceptual sign (correspondence to the topic), communicative-functional sign (expression of a certain communicative intention - assessment, request, motivation, emotional-evaluative means); observation, search for new words in a known context and known words in a new context;
• definition of meaning in accordance with the main idea of the text, meanings in accordance with the broad context, etc.

Koryakovtseva(2002) points out the following linguistic systematizing strategies which include techniques such as:
- correlation of the new value with others in a number of known ones;
- generalization of meaning within the semantic field according to certain characteristics;
- alignment of conceptual and thematic series of language means;
- system-comparative analysis of the language means of the native and studied languages;
- building a system of signs of a language unit (lexical, grammatical, phonetic, spelling);
- building a system of signs (markers) of the speech situation;
- building a system of signs, supports, signal means in the context.

According to Koryakovtseva(2002) cognitive-conceptual (linguo-cultural) strategies include such techniques as:
- correlation of realities with the historical and socio-cultural context;
- interpretation of linguistic means reflecting the features of a different mentality;
- critical understanding and generalization of the manifestation of national and cultural characteristics in language and speech behavior (beliefs, values, institutions);
- knowledge and understanding of cultural images, symbols, facts, names, basic categories;
- adequate understanding: models of everyday behavior, lifestyle, socio-cultural norms of behavior. [2002: 74]

Lexical skills are strong and stable if the work on them is carried out in a relationship and system.

Shamov (2007) claims that lexical skills ensure the inclusion of the word in productive and receptive types of speech activity, which ensures highcombinability of lexical material, which is expressed in the automatic use of lexical material to confirm one's own thoughts, as well as in understanding the thoughts expressed by other participants in the act of communication.

Lexical competence - being an integral part of the communicative one, it is knowledge of the vocabulary of the language, the ability to determine the contextual meanings of words, call the necessary lexical units in accordance with the situation, and determine the national characteristics of a foreign language vocabulary. The structure of lexical competence includes: cognitive, effective-practical and reflective components. Along with the process of formation of lexical competence, the

development of lexical skills of a productive and receptive nature takes place. A lexical skill will be strong if you work on it in the system.

According to Azimov, a lexical exercise can be called a type of exercise, the purpose of which is the formation of lexical skills.

The system of lexical exercises assumes a certain concept for the assimilation of vocabulary.

When compiling a system of exercises in a foreign language, it is necessary to solve the following tasks:

1. Determine the types of lexical exercises.
2. Highlight the possible stages of the process of learning vocabulary, the formation of lexical skills.
3. Arrange all the exercises in a certain sequence.

Thus, the system of exercises is nothing more than the arrangement of exercises (their various types and subspecies) in a certain order, in a certain quantitative proportion to achieve the goal in the process of learning a foreign language.

The process of mastering the word proceeds in stages. Scientists identify several main stages in the formation of a lexical skill.

N.I. Gez believes that the main stages in the formation of lexical skills include: familiarization, initial acquaintance, development of skills and abilities to use vocabulary in various types of speech activity.

One of the significant scientistsDik stated firmly that it could be obvious to determine lexical competence as being capable of using words appropriately and effectively in interacting verbally, i.e. as a part of the communicative competence. (1997, p.5-6)

Laufer (1998) claimed that significant and the most obvious difference between native and non-native speakers of a foreign language was the number of lexical units they possessed. Thus this idea implies that broadening vocabulary is one of the pivotal tasks for language learners, which will let them make it easy to recognize and interact in various contexts. Moreover, he suggests that learners of English, especially those from countries where English is not spoken have a need to emphasize on real life conversations towards achieving appropriate English proficiency.

According to Wiegand (2000), we should not see lexis only as a part of linguistics, but as the discipline which is independent and has significance. However, CEFR which stands for the Common European Framework of Reference for Language deems lexis to be the part of the linguistic competence and it is defined the knowledge and ability to use the vocabulary of a language.

Conclusion

We want to point out that lexical competence is the most significant basis of a foreign language which determines the vocabulary in the teaching/learning process; apart from what has been said, it also shows learners' ability in knowing, learning, and putting the words into practice.

We can assume that lexical competence is being able to choose and use words effectively and appropriately during speech, and is part of communicative competence, which was introduced by Hymes (1972), since he states that it includes "not only the ability construe and interpret linguistic expressions, but also the ability to use theseexpressions in appropriate and effective ways according to the conventions ofverbal interaction prevailing in a linguistic community".
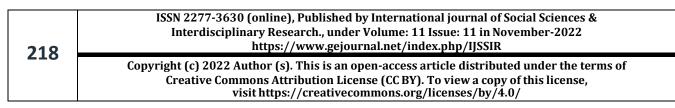
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