

TO THE ISSUE OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE VOCABULARY IN A TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The lexical aspect of learning a foreign language is one of the most difficult aspects of foreign language teaching practice in a technical university. A small vocabulary makes students feel insecure and even often reluctant to speak a foreign language, so expanding students' vocabulary is one of the main tasks in a foreign language class.

It is known that qualitatively formed lexical skills are the main condition for successful communication in a foreign language, and violations of lexical and semantic norms lead to various semantic errors that make speech communicatively imperfect or incomprehensible.

Introduction

When introducing vocabulary, it is impossible to do without a differentiated approach to teaching. The methodology of lexical skills formation is based on general didactic principles (visibility, accessibility and feasibility, consciousness and activity, consistency and systematicity, connection between theory and practice, durability, scientificity) and special principles related to the peculiarities of the studied lexical phenomena [1].

In most technical universities, everyday and general scientific vocabulary is studied in the first year, and special and business vocabulary in the second year. Active vocabulary is included in all areas, but household, business and general scientific vocabulary is subject to special activation. Passive vocabulary includes, first of all, special vocabulary.

In textbooks for non-language universities, as a rule, the following forms of lexical organisation of teaching material are distinguished:

- 1) pre-textual lexical exercises;
- 2) text (monologue or dialogue in the form of articles and interviews from magazines and newspapers, general scientific texts and excerpts from literature on the specialty);
- 3) post-text lexical exercises. There are different methods of teaching vocabulary:
 - 1) Grammar-translation method in which words are learnt before reading the text.

2) Textual-translation method in which words are memorised in the context of authentic texts.

3) Direct methods, through which lexical units are learnt in thematic blocks without translation, with the help of visual aids, synonyms and antonyms, language guessing.

4) Conscious-comparative method, in which words are remembered both in context and without it, with the help of word-formation features, linguistic guesswork, translation [2].

Like any other skills, lexical skills are formed in stages (familiarisation, training, practice) [3]. At stage I, the initial introduction of vocabulary is carried out. The purpose of exercises at this stage is to familiarise students with the sound and graphic image of the term, with its semantic features.

It should be noted that recently, untranslated methods of semantisation have been widely used [4]. Such methods increase students' interest and activity in foreign language classes. We consider it appropriate to use visual methods with the use of illustrations of objects, tables, photos, etc. The use of mimicry and gestures also helps well at this stage of learning. As for abstract concepts, it is better to introduce them by verbal means, using definitions, antonyms and synonyms.

It is important to teach students not just to memorise isolated words mechanically, but to memorise them consciously, in context [5]. For this purpose, it is necessary to instil in students the ability to independently analyse unfamiliar words, especially derived words from the point of view of their word formation. It is important to teach students to memorise new words in such a way as to create a stable connection between the visual image and the verbal denotation. Then foreign speech is understood directly, as well as speech in the native language, and images arise in the imagination automatically and instantly. If there is no reflex, the student will forget the new words, despite the grades [6].

The vocabulary training stage is usually provided by conditional-communicative exercises, which involve a conversational task and a speech situation. Students can be asked to stage dialogues with the obligatory inclusion of the studied words, give their own interpretation of terms, repeat nests of words, fill in the blanks with words suitable in meaning, etc. One of the effective ways of fixing words in the long-term memory is to classify them according to the principle of opposites and similarities, for example, selecting antonyms and synonyms. Students always enjoy solving charades, rebuses, crossword puzzles, etc. Psychologists have proved that the assimilation of new words is achieved only after the student uses them in various exercises at least 6-8 times.

At the final stage of work with vocabulary, a system of communicative exercises, professional discussions, role-playing games, conferences, quizzes, contests is used. All these exercises presuppose active creative activity of students, which promotes involuntary memorisation of language material. Students are asked to retell a text, to write an annotation or an instruction, to complete sentences, to choose true/false facts from the text, etc. Great attention should be paid to the selection of authentic texts, especially within their specialisation. Having familiarised themselves with foreign research data and scientific

achievements, students will be able to use this information when writing term papers and diploma projects, as well as in their future professional activities.

So, what is particularly important when a student is working on lexical units?

If we are talking about receptive command of a foreign language, in this case it is important:

- 1) determine the original form of the new word and the desired meaning from the dictionary;
- 2) determine the meaning of a word-by-word formation without a dictionary;
- 3) memorise lexically and recognise some grammatical forms in the text, especially exceptions to the rules;
- 4) navigate the order of words in a sentence;
- 5) know the most used verbs, including phrasal verbs;
- 6) know all service words, especially prepositions (including compound prepositions), pronouns and conjunctions;

As for reproductive foreign language proficiency, it is important:

- 1) be able to use the specific meaning of a word in a speech situation depending on the context;
- 2) know the key words and phrases of the topics studied;
- 3) know and be able to use vocabulary to the most common grammatical structures;
- 4) Know how to ask different types of questions;
- 5) be able to make a monologue statement on the studied topic with the obligatory use of new words;
- 6) be able to do a quick back-translation of all training texts.

One of the most difficult aspects of work with vocabulary in technical universities is phraseology. Unfortunately, the work on phraseological expressions in technical universities is fragmentary. This is due to the fact that students master them rather poorly. The reason for this is their technical mindset and lack of linguistic sensitivity, without which it is very difficult to perceive purely linguistic realities. However, knowledge of phraseological expressions is very useful, because they reflect the way of thinking and character of the people, their ideas about life, culture and labour activity, evaluation of the surrounding world, etc. They serve to make the language more expressive and flexible, add colour to speech, and often express vital concepts [7].

The study of phraseological units is important because students receiving higher education in the conditions of globalisation should learn to communicate in a foreign language not only within the framework of educational and professional activities, which involve a rather simplified and largely artificial language, but also to master the live, spoken foreign language speech, filled with emotions, evaluations, expression, etc.

When studying phraseological units, students are encouraged to consult an explanatory dictionary, keep a dictionary, make card indexes, classify phraseological units by parts of speech, etc.

Technical terms are another aspect that complicates the work with lectures in a non-language university. Since the goal of foreign language teaching in technical universities is

to achieve a level sufficient for practical use of a foreign language in future professional activities, special attention should be paid to teaching terminology [8].

In the current conditions, a modern engineer cannot succeed in the labour market if he/she does not have a sufficient terminological culture, i.e. a sufficiently large amount of knowledge for successful professional foreign language communication [9].

For example, 90 per cent of employers say that specialists with knowledge of a foreign language working at their company should first of all be able to conduct a conversation using special technical terms. 75 per cent of employers believe that the main role is played by the ability to compile and translate technical documentation describing the operation and maintenance of various devices.

We share the view of many methodologists that learning terminology is not only a way to successful international cooperation, but also a way to deeper mastery of the speciality [10]. However, teaching foreign language terminology is also associated with serious difficulties. Firstly, there are no modern foreign language textbooks and terminological dictionaries for each branch of technical disciplines. Secondly, the methodological bases for presenting students with terminological vocabulary in their speciality have not been developed at all. Thirdly, the textbooks in use lack the most general information from the field of terminology as a scientific and applied linguistic discipline that studies the semantic nature, grammatical organisation and laws of functioning of terms.

Thus, the first direction of work on teaching special vocabulary involves the profile selection of lexical material, including professional vocabulary and terminology, which, on the one hand, develops professional competences of a future specialist, on the other hand, contributes to the formation of his professional motivation [11].

In the course of work with students of non-linguistic universities we have come to the conclusion that for learning vocabulary, especially technical terms, it is very important to actively involve all types of memory: visual, which is developed during reading and writing words; auditory, which is trained during listening to foreign language speech; motor, associated with the functioning of the speech apparatus and the act of written fixation of words; and, finally, logical, by means of which the full comprehension of the studied material takes place [12].

Therefore, the instructor's task is to teach students the most effective techniques for remembering new vocabulary, maximising the use of all types of memory.

For students with a visual memory, it is easier to memorise words on cards, work with a dictionary or read a text as if picturing the spelling, translation and transcription of a word. If the auditory memory is the dominant one, it is more effective to work with aural materials, watch films, practice with a dictaphone.

Many learners need an action to memorise new information. They may be advised to write down the word, its translation and transcription, repeatedly.

If imaginative memory and imagination are well developed, students can be encouraged to memorise new information through images. For example, students can be encouraged to visualise the spelling of a word, the object or action it denotes, its translation, images and

whole situations associated with it. Thus, many experts suggest using the method of mnemonic associations when learning new foreign words [13]. The essence of the method is as follows: a foreign word to be memorised is matched with a phonetic association in Russian. Then, having shown imagination and fantasy, it is necessary to invent a funny story, a poem or a phrase with a correct association and a competent translation. The trainees only have to memorise the story. For the next 2-3 days, the phrase is repeated several times a day. The phrase is recalled along the chain: "foreign word - sound associative series - text (story) - translation into Russian".

According to experts, after 3-4 days of repeating a certain phrase, the word is memorised and the need for a chain is no longer necessary. From that moment on, only the shortened "foreign word - translation" chain remains in the long-term memory of a person.

Here are examples of possible word combinations: contain (to contain) - "The container contains things"; deliver (to transmit, to deliver, to hand over) - "A DIKE LEAVE prevented the mail from being delivered"; fear (to be afraid, fear, fear) - "I am afraid that the FIAS will wither", etc.

Nowadays, there are entire dictionaries with a huge number of such examples. The main rule when making associations is that they should be emotional, provocative, exaggerated, an element of "forbidden flesh", etc. [14].

Thus, based on the above-mentioned, we can conclude that the main principles of learning new words in foreign language classes, which allow to improve the quality of knowledge and performance, increase motivation to learn a foreign language, develop cognitive interests, etc., are:

- competent selection of lexical units;
- use of mnemonic techniques, linking foreign words with some images of the native language;
- harnessing the power of the subconscious mind;
- creating a favourable emotional background;
- proper distribution of the teaching load;
- contextual memorisation of new lexical units;
- gradualism;
- regular repetition of new words and systematic monitoring of their learning;
- constant use of new words in speech [15].

However, while developing students' interest in working on vocabulary, it is important to ensure that they realise that words are just building blocks for language and that a complete thought can only be expressed through grammar.

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