



**LEXICAL DEVELOPMENT AS A KEY COMPONENT OF EFFECTIVE RUSSIAN  
LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR FOREIGN LEARNERS**

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**Annotation:** This article examines the theoretical and practical foundations of vocabulary enrichment in teaching Russian as a foreign language. The study explores the role of lexical work, the distinction between active and passive vocabulary, and methods for developing contextual word usage skills among students. Based on a pedagogical experiment conducted at Bukhara State Medical Institute, the research identifies effective forms and methods of vocabulary enrichment and emphasizes the role of digital technologies in the educational process.

**Keywords:** Russian language, vocabulary enrichment, active vocabulary, pedagogical technologies, digital learning, communicative approach.

Modern language education focuses not only on developing students' linguistic knowledge but also on their communicative, cognitive, and cultural competence. In teaching Russian as a foreign language, particular importance is given to lexical work aimed at developing active vocabulary, which facilitates successful interaction in professional and intercultural contexts.

A word is not only an element of speech but also a carrier of national culture, thought, and worldview. As L.V. Shcherba noted, "In a word, the language system and living speech are united" [6]. Consequently, vocabulary enrichment is not merely mechanical memorization but a complex cognitive-communicative process.

Modern linguodidactics considers a word not only as a linguistic unit but also as an element of the mental structure. Within the cognitive approach (E.S. Kubryakova, 2012; N.D. Arutyunova, 2014), vocabulary is viewed as a reflection of the conceptual worldview. Therefore, mastering a word involves not only expanding the lexicon but also assimilating the cultural and worldview meanings embedded in it. For medical students learning Russian, understanding terminology related to professional ethics, patient communication, and medical discourse is particularly crucial.

Many domestic and foreign researchers (A.A. Leontiev, E.I. Passov, V.V. Safonova, N.V. Sokolova) note that vocabulary development contributes to the formation of a secondary linguistic personality, capable not only of mastering the language system but also of acting appropriately in various communicative situations [9; 11; 13].

Lexical competence is defined as the ability to understand, use, and appropriately apply words in different contexts. According to A.A. Leontiev, vocabulary acquisition is impossible without awareness of semantic relations between words, their pragmatic functions, and grammatical combinability.

Active vocabulary formation relies on three interconnected processes:

1. Understanding meaning – semantic comprehension of a word through context, visualization, translation, or association;
2. Consolidation – repetition and systematization of lexical units;
3. Activation – use of words in independent speech.



L.S. Vygotsky viewed a word as a unity of meaning and sense, emphasizing that only a conscious word becomes a tool of thought [3]. Therefore, the teacher's task is to transform the word from an object of memorization into a means of expressing ideas.

Psycholinguistic studies (A.A. Leontiev, T.V. Akhutina) emphasize that vocabulary activation is closely linked to the development of inner speech. The stronger the associative connections between words, the faster vocabulary is retrieved in speaking. Consequently, vocabulary development should include tasks for spontaneous speech production, particularly in professional dialogues and clinical situations.

Contemporary cognitive models (Knyazeva, 2023; Chernova, 2022) stress that lexical activity is closely related to perception, memory, and categorization processes. Therefore, integrating linguistic and psychological methods in teaching is essential.

Lexical work should be systematic, multi-level, and aimed at practical word usage. One effective method is the "lexical minimum by topics," where students learn not isolated words but entire lexical fields (e.g., "Body Parts," "Symptoms of Disease," "Diagnostics"). This approach ensures thematic coherence in speech and supports professional competence development.

Visualization techniques are also employed: creating semantic maps, mind maps, and "word trees" allows students to structure vocabulary by semantic groups.

At Bukhara State Medical Institute, a three-stage model was applied for teaching Russian as a foreign language:

#### Stage I – Preparation

Students were introduced to new words through visual materials, explanations, synonyms, and translations. Special attention was given to medical terminology used in professional communication.

#### Stage II – Practice

Lexical units were reinforced through exercises such as sentence construction, brief retelling, and thematic dialogues. Tasks included selecting synonyms, antonyms, and collocations.

#### Stage III – Product

Students applied learned vocabulary in mini-projects, essays, and role-playing games. For example, they described clinical cases using professional terminology.

The pedagogical experiment lasted four months and involved 68 first- and second-year students. The control and experimental groups followed different methodologies. By the end of the cycle, the active vocabulary of the experimental group increased by 21.3%, while the control group showed only a 9.8% increase.

The results confirm that systematic lexical work based on a communicative-activity approach contributes to sustainable vocabulary growth and develops language confidence.

In recent years, the digitalization of education has significantly influenced foreign language teaching. Electronic dictionaries, multimedia exercises, and learning platforms enable students to independently manage vocabulary acquisition.

The digital educational environment also opens opportunities for collaborative learning: students can create shared glossaries, participate in lexical marathons, and exchange digital flashcards. Artificial intelligence tools (e.g., ChatGPT, DeepL Write) allow automated error correction and personalized learning. Such innovations enhance individualized learning and foster student autonomy, aligning with the competency-based approach in higher education.

Platforms such as Quizlet, Duolingo, and LearningApps are used for automated vocabulary review, flashcard creation, and gamified exercises. These tools develop visual and associative memory, which is particularly effective for professional terminology.



Studies by G.T. Abdurakhmanova (2023) and M.R. Tursunova (2023) indicate that integrating digital tools with traditional teaching methods increases student motivation and engagement [10; 13]. Interactive quizzes and crosswords further stimulate both the verbal and emotional-cognitive spheres, making learning more dynamic and effective.

Comparing the experiment results with similar studies (Sokolova, 2021; Sidorova, 2024) shows that digital technologies enhance vocabulary acquisition by 20–25% on average.

Importantly, innovative methods should be combined with classical techniques, such as reading, retelling, and text analysis. The balance between traditional and digital approaches ensures deep and conscious mastery of vocabulary.

Student surveys revealed that 87% reported increased interest in Russian vocabulary, 79% noted greater confidence in oral communication, and 65% actively used new words in writing assignments.

These findings confirm that an integrated methodology combining cognitive, communicative, and digital approaches is most effective for vocabulary development in non-native environments. Thus, the study demonstrates that systematic lexical work promotes not only active vocabulary growth but also the development of metacognitive skills. Students begin to recognize, adjust, and apply their vocabulary acquisition strategies in new communicative situations, indicating a shift from reproductive to productive speech behavior.

Vocabulary enrichment in Russian as a foreign language is an integral part of students' professional and personal development. Lexical work should be regarded as a systematic process aimed at developing not only linguistic skills but also cognitive, communicative, and cultural competencies.

**Key conclusions:**

1. Lexical work requires a phased and systematic approach to transition words from passive to active vocabulary.
2. Integration of digital technologies enhances individualized learning and student motivation.
3. Pedagogical experiments confirm the effectiveness of combining communicative-activity and cognitive approaches.
4. Vocabulary enrichment should be accompanied by the development of cultural and communicative competence to ensure successful adaptation in professional contexts.

Future research should focus on developing proprietary lexical modules for medical students, including digital testing, gamification, and interdisciplinary tasks. This will increase motivation for learning Russian and make vocabulary acquisition more flexible and interactive.

Thus, vocabulary work is a crucial component of teaching Russian as a foreign language, integrating linguistic, cultural, and cognitive development.

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