A System of Methodological Exercises Aimed at Developing Competence in The Use of Polysemous Words

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Abstract: This article presents a systematic analysis of methodological approaches aimed at developing young learners' competence in the use of polysemous (multi-meaning) words. The author regards polysemy as a hallmark of linguistic semantic richness and emphasizes its role in activating children's thinking, increasing verbal engagement, and enhancing lexical competence. The study proposes a multi-stage system of methodological exercises—motivational, analytical, practical, and reflective—designed to expand learners' vocabulary, facilitate contextually aware use of polysemous words, and build independent thinking skills. Examples include textbook texts, proverbs, polysemous word exercises, semantic analysis techniques, dramatization, and interactive methods to improve language teaching effectiveness. The conclusion stresses that working with polysemy is not merely language acquisition but fosters personal and cognitive development.

Keywords: Polysemous words, lexical competence, primary education, language teaching methodology, contextual understanding, exercise system, verbal activity, thinking, native language instruction, polysemy-based learning.

Introduction: A Phased Approach Based on Communicative Activity for Developing Competence in the Conscious and Purposeful Use of Polysemous Words in Speech Among Primary School Students

A phased approach grounded in students' communicative activity plays a crucial role in shaping

their competence in the conscious and purposeful use of polysemous (multi-meaning) words in speech. This approach helps deepen students' lexical knowledge, cultivate their communication culture, and enables them to understand polysemy in language through context.

Importantly, by selecting and applying an appropriate system of methodological exercises, one can systematically develop students' thinking skills and speech competence.

From a methodological perspective, the process should be consistently organized based on the following stages:

1. Preparation (Motivational) Stage:

At this initial stage, students develop a positive attitude and interest toward the topic. Visual aids, game elements, and question-and-answer techniques are used to engage attention, assess prior knowledge, and activate basic concepts related to the topic. The chosen exercises at this stage should be engaging, game-based, and help students transition smoothly into the subject matter.

2. Comprehension and Analysis Stage:

At this stage, polysemous words are presented in various contexts to help students distinguish between different meanings, understand their functions, compare and analyze them. Exercises such as contrastive analysis, identifying meaning from context, and comparing synonyms and antonyms are particularly effective here.

3. Practical Application and Communicative Activity Stage:

Students construct independent sentences and texts using polysemous words, write stories, and actively use these words in speech through role-playing and dramatizations. This broadens their vocabulary and expressive abilities, enhancing both oral and written language skills. Semi-structured tasks, visual-based storytelling, dramatizations, and interactive dialogues are highly effective at this stage.

4. Reflection and Assessment Stage:

In the final stage, students express their thoughts on the topic, demonstrate skills in summarizing and drawing conclusions. They also engage in self-assessment, analyze peer feedback, and reflect on the teacher's evaluations to understand their level of competence. Reflective writing, metacognitive Q&A, and activities like the "thought cloud" technique are recommended for this phase.

According to President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, language is not merely a means of communication but also a mirror of national identity, a symbol of historical memory, and a reflection of thought. In his speech on the occasion of the Uzbek Language Day on October 21, 2020, he said:

"Language is the mirror of the nation, the measure of thought. Young people who have deeply mastered the richness of their mother tongue from an early age will become the main pillar of our bright future."

From this perspective, mastering the mother tongue is not just a linguistic skill—it is the foundation for nurturing independent thinkers, socially active, and intellectually mature individuals.

The Importance of Enhancing Lexical Competence in Primary Education Through Work on Polysemous Words

In modern education—especially at the primary level—enhancing students' lexical capacity, particularly through work with polysemous (multi-meaning) words, is a crucial methodological task. This approach activates critical thinking, helps students become more confident communicators, and plays a key role in developing their communicative competence.

Mastery of the language through a structured system of methodological exercises not only contributes to linguistic proficiency but also ensures students' active participation in sociocultural life and fosters their well-rounded personal development.

Each unit and topic in the primary school mother tongue (Uzbek language) curriculum is designed around a structured system of language knowledge. As students acquire this knowledge, they progressively move closer to the educational goals of the mother tongue subject.

In the teaching process, the lesson is considered the primary form of delivering Uzbek language education. One of the key responsibilities of the primary school teacher is to analyze each part of the mother tongue subject, select appropriate exercises accordingly, and present interconnected topics in a logical sequence. Practical activities and reading lessons within the scope of the subject should strictly adhere to didactic and methodological principles, which include selecting exercises and tasks aligned with topic content, applying effective teaching methods, and clearly defining steps for helping students assimilate vocabulary.

Equally important is organizing lessons from pedagogical, methodological, and psychological perspectives. A strong connection must be maintained between theoretical instruction and practical application.

The effectiveness of studying linguistic phenomena in the mother tongue curriculum can be enhanced by first providing students with examples of how relevant

words are used in speech, prior to introducing new theoretical concepts. Exercises and vocabulary work should not only increase students' subject-specific knowledge but also develop their overall cognitive abilities.

As researchers note:

"If Uzbek language lessons are tailored to students' cognitive abilities and use speech-enhancing exercises, the effectiveness of mother tongue instruction will increase significantly, and students' language sensitivity will grow immensely."

According to experts, improving the effectiveness of language instruction also depends on the alignment of educational tools—including linguistic exercises—with the stages of the learning process. This calls for careful analysis of linguistic exercises based on each learning phase and selection of exercise types suited to those stages.

One of the primary goals in working with polysemous words in primary school Uzbek lessons is to help students develop the ability to perceive meaning subjectively, and to use the lexical resources of the Uzbek language in a way that is developmentally appropriate. This supports the expansion of their active vocabulary.

Mastering literary Uzbek should be established as a foundational requirement beginning from the earliest stages of school education across all grades.

The concept of polysemy, supported by broad empirical data, reflects a deeper structural reality—not only of language itself but also of how the human mind and thought processes are organized. It reveals polysemy not as a superficial phenomenon but as a fundamental system influencing natural languages and human cognition.

Developing Students' Lexical Competence Through Work with Polysemous Words in Primary Education

"When polysemy is considered a universal linguistic phenomenon, it implies a systemic and regular pattern in lexical multiple meanings. In analyzing the primary and derived meanings of polysemous words, it is essential to first grasp their fundamental meanings for practical language mastery."

— M.A. Nazarova [p. 10–11b]

Bringing such applications into the classroom—through examples and explanations—enhances students' understanding of linguistic concepts and encourages their practical use.

To expand the vocabulary of polysemous words among primary students, teachers should focus on the following strategies:

1. Don't limit the lesson to explaining word meanings only – move beyond simple definitions.

2. Include lexical analysis – along with definition, analyze how words change meaning in different contexts.

3. Assign tasks that encourage students to select meanings based on context, and help them develop the skills to consult and verify through digital learning dictionaries.

A teacher can design a systematic approach to working with polysemous words based on Uzbek language dictionaries. This system, implemented as practical exercises, should include:

• Identifying polysemous words from texts in language and reading textbooks;

• Explaining their meanings using digital dictionaries and instructional materials;

• Clarifying the meanings in student-friendly language;

• Encouraging consistent use of these words in students' own speech;

• Completing targeted exercises involving polysemous words.

Practical Classroom Task Samples

Task: Provide examples and identify the correct usage of polysemous words

1. In which sentence does the word xazon mean "fallen leaves"?

o Bog'dagi xazonlarni supurib, yoqib yuborishdi.

o Yurakdagi orzular xazon bo'ldi…

2. Which word matches the meaning of yorug'?

o Nur

o G'am

o Quyosh

o Tungi qorong'ulik

3. Which sentence uses yorug' in the sense of "bright/future is promising"?

o Xonaga yorug' tushib turibdi.

o Uning kelajagi yorug', orzulari ulkan!

4. Fill in the blanks with context-appropriate words:

o Yer ajriqzor bo'lsa ham qattiq ekan. Kosovning uchi yerga ozgina kirar-kirmas guvala ikkiga bo'lindi.

o Chumolining bu gapi o'tloq ahliga qattiq ta'sir qilibdi.

5. Choose the missing word to complete the poem:

markdown

КопироватьРедактировать

Keldi koʻklam kabi soz,

Bizlar sevgan _____ yoz.

Ekin oʻsdi yerlarda,

Bugʻdoy pishdi qirlarda

o 1. Issiq

o 2. Xushbuy

o 3. Zavqli

6. Use the word yarim in both its literal and figurative meanings:

o Nodir qoʻlidagi olmani yarmini singlisiga berdi.

o Doston dadasi ishdan kelguncha koʻchatlarning yarmini ekib boʻlgandi.

Linguistic Examples for Classroom Enrichment

To teach polysemy effectively, especially in younger students, you must use engaging, illustrative examples. For example:

• **Quloq:**

1. The ear as a hearing organ — "Quloqlari dikkaygan..."

2. The 'ear' or handle of an object — "Choynakning qulogʻi sinib qolgan."

• **Koʻz:**

• The eye as a body organ — "Oʻng koʻzimni sotmayman, u menga kerak."

• A 'pocket' or opening, e.g., in a bag — "Xurjunning ikki koʻziga ikki koʻzani solibdi."

Pedagogical Takeaways

By designing lessons that blend polysemous word learning with visual aids, poems, proverbs, and age-appropriate texts, teachers promote:

• Creative and logical thinking

• Rich oral and written expression

• Independent use of vocabulary

• Connection of abstract and concrete word meanings

This comprehensive engagement allows students to not just memorize, but contextually apply word meanings—linking them with thought, culture, and creativity.

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