

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Open Access

# TEACHING ENGLISH LEXICON BASED ON COMPETENCY APPROACH IN A DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Madmusayev Jakhongir

Namangan State University, Uzbekistan

## Abstract

This article discusses the issues of teaching English lexicon based on a competency approach in a digital educational environment during the current era of advanced science and technology.

**Keywords** Digital educational environment, competency approach, English lexicon, educational technology.

## INTRODUCTION

The process of globalization occurring worldwide presents new demands and tasks for specialists. Today, there is an increasing requirement for young professionals to have proficiency in English, as knowing the language serves as a means and mechanism for realizing reality in their professional activities, communication, as well as goals and aspirations. Additionally, most significant scientific research conducted and published currently is in English, making sufficient proficiency in the language one of the key factors for effective communication in education and professional activities. Therefore, enhancing the methodology for teaching English lexicon to students at higher education institutions within the developing digital educational environment and shaping their professional lexical competence has become an urgent task.

The primary goal of teaching students English in a professional context worldwide is to develop and

enhance their professional lexical competence. Its relevance and importance have been recognized by reputable scholars in the field up until today. However, despite this recognition, there exists a pressing need to improve methodologies for teaching English lexicon due to insufficient proficiency among students and graduates in initial education programs, hindering their ability to communicate effectively with foreign specialists in the field within the evolving digital educational environment (Ion, et al., 2016).

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS

Many scholars both internationally and domestically have tackled issues related to teaching English lexicon. In our country, research on teaching foreign language lexicons has been carried out by M. Choriyeu, J. Jalolov, Z. Qodirova, Sh. Butayeva, S. Nazarova, Sh. Akbarova among others.

Research conducted by scholars from CIS countries

such as I.L. Bim, I.A. Zimnyaya, E.I. Passov, N.E. Kuzovleva, Y.N. Solovova, L.A. Svetkova, A.N. Shamov primarily focuses on teaching vocabulary at secondary schools. Problems related to teaching profession-oriented vocabulary at higher education institutions have been investigated by E.V. Aleksandrova, T.B.Vepreva, A.Kh.Badalyan, S.E.Zaytseva among others; however these works have not sufficiently addressed the teaching of profession-oriented vocabulary within a digital educational environment.

The theoretical and practical aspects of utilizing computers and digital technologies during foreign language instruction have been highlighted in scientific research conducted by N.L.Lukoshkina, Y.A.Masliko, T.M.Balikhina, A.D.Garsov, Y.S.Polat, M.G.Bondarev, G.A.Krasnosheikova among others; however issues concerning creating targeted digital educational technologies aimed at forming and developing professional lexical competence among students specializing in primary education remain underexplored.

One of the core components across various types of speech activities is lexical competence. S.F.Shatilov acknowledges that since logical and thematic coherence in speech is primarily manifested through vocabulary, the leading role of lexis as its main carrier should be recognized. The significance of mastering English lexicon has also been emphasized by numerous scholars including N.V.Barishnikov, E.N.Solovova, E.I.Passov, A.N.Shamov among others.

The issues of implementing digital educational technologies in higher education have been extensively researched by numerous pedagogical scholars. In particular, the theoretical foundations for utilizing distance learning systems have been explored in the works of A.A. Andrienko, E.S. Polat, N.N. Kasatkina, R. Trinder, and others. Practical problems related to providing information for the learning process and developing digital educational resources have also been addressed.

The use of a competency-based approach in the development of digital educational technologies enables the creation of a structural framework for education.

During the research, methods such as literature analysis, review of educational and normative documents, pedagogical observation, generalization, conducting interviews and surveys, monitoring processes, as well as utilizing mathematical and statistical data processing techniques were employed.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Competency-based vocational education is an objective phenomenon being implemented due to socio-economic and pedagogical changes in society. The necessity for this arises from new demands and proposals that have begun to be considered in training specialists' programs due to changing conditions in education. These demands and proposals pertain not only to the content of education but also to its objectives, outcomes, and the pedagogical technologies applied.

"The goal of modern education is to develop competencies that align with its profile" (Ion, et al., 2016). Competence refers to the requirements placed on a specialist's educational preparation necessary for effective performance in a specific field. It is a socially determined requirement that exists within state jurisdiction and is aimed at ensuring that students (workers) possess the necessary educational (professional) preparation for effective activity in a particular area (Volchkova, 2018).

Analysis of literature indicates that competence - a complex concept with multiple components - lacks a clear definition in scientific-methodological literature; it varies significantly regarding its composition, size, semantic meaning, and logical structure. Moreover, competence can also be described as personal qualities:

- Holistic education within an individual;

- A system of personal characteristics;
- A system of regulatory characteristics;
- A state arising from acquiring knowledge, skills, experience, and abilities.

Competence is also characterized by knowledge and experience.

Summarizing definitions provided by expert scholars allows us to assert that competence represents "a new unit of measurement for human education; this is because henceforth knowledge, skills, and qualifications may no longer sufficiently meet contemporary demands nor facilitate quality assessment." Competence entails "an individual's intrinsic motivation for high-quality professional activity along with existing professional values which reflect their attitude toward their profession."

The competency-based approach emphasizes "the formation of essential cultural and professional competencies; self-determination; socialization; individual development; and self-awareness." In teaching English vocabulary based on a competency-based approach, emphasis is placed on professional aspects.

Analyses and observations indicate that key elements pertaining to studying competence are selected based on how researchers' scientific interests intersect with the issue:

- Communicative competence is defined as "possessing knowledge that allows one to make judgments about something - that is being competent" (Volchkova, 2018);
- The essence of this phenomenon "is based on forming a secondary linguistic personality capable of engaging in intercultural communication with representatives from other cultures" (Mogensen & Schnack, 2010).

The term "communicative competence" refers to a "set of competencies, among which the communicative competence of a foreign language

occupies a central position, and its components are defined" (Gallardo, 2020).

In the context of increasingly popular English language classes worldwide, we will justify the necessity of using modern information technologies within this competency framework. The significance of integrating modern tools and teaching methods into the educational process can be understood through the following points:

- Communicative pedagogical methods allow for a high level of student engagement in the learning process;
- Modern web chats create opportunities for shy individuals to practice communication in a foreign language;
- Today, internet resources are overflowing with original materials;
- All social networks facilitate communication with native speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds;
- All portable devices that were previously used as means of communication are now transforming into effective tools for learning alongside traditional resources.

Despite the numerous possibilities and advantages of applying modern information technologies in education, this form of teaching may not be equally suitable for everyone. Therefore, it is essential to consider learners' preferences and their attitudes towards different forms of education when designing language learning systems.

One scientific study focused on investigating learners' needs when selecting forms of education in the process of teaching English was conducted by Ruth Trinder, an employee at Vienna University of Economics and Business. In this experimental research, 175 Austrian students participated, and they were presented with questionnaires aimed at identifying the most frequently used technologies and preferred forms of English language

instruction.

The following table presents an analysis of survey results demonstrating the frequency of using various modern technologies for learning English.

According to this analysis, electronic dictionaries are considered the most popular technology in learning English (94% of individuals use them almost daily). Learning languages through various applications is also quite popular among students.

**Table 1. Frequency of Using Modern Technologies for Learning English**

Technological Tools	Widely Used Technologies Among Students	
Communication Tools	Social Networks - 58% - daily/often; 14% - never	Email - 45% - daily/often; 9% - never
Content Viewing and Downloading	Information Websites - 71% - daily/often; 2% - never	Downloaded/streamed video - 74% - daily/often; 5% - never
Language Learning	Online Dictionaries - 94% - daily/often; 0% - never	Applications for Teaching English: 42% - daily/often; 11% - never
Technological Tools	Less Commonly Used Technologies Among Students	
Communication Tools	Blogs - 10% - daily/often; 65% - never	Voice Chats - 14% - daily/often; 41% - never
Content Viewing and Downloading	E-books - 7% - daily/often; 66% - never	Satellite/Cable TV/Radio - 31% - daily/often; 25% - never
Language Learning	English Language Courses on CD/DVD - 1% - daily/often; 89% - never	Language Learning Websites - 5% - daily/often; 53% - never

The following table presents the results of two studies conducted 5-7 years apart (R. Trinder and EACEA Agency) [5, 136]. These research works provide us with the opportunity to observe the dynamics of using various technological tools during this time period. Participants in the survey were asked to indicate the technological tools used in the process of learning English.

According to the results, online dictionaries, news websites/magazines, watching films (including DVD/BluRay), using educational programs, and services like email emerged as the most useful tools for learning English. It was noted that the

effectiveness of teaching English decreased compared to previous research when using technologies such as discussion forums, blogs, and educational websites/courses in DVD/CD format.

It should be noted that students prefer visual and audio support technologies such as television programs and music videos. This is primarily because these technologies are filled with materials for learning informal, live English and various accents. According to students, they can improve their language skills and pronunciation while enjoying their time.

**Table 2. Technologies used by students in learning foreign languages (Trinder, 2016)**

Technologies	Ruth Trinder Research (2013): Technology-based education, %, %	EACEA Research (2007/09): Technology-based education, %	Ruth Trinder Research (2013): Technology greatly helped in learning, %	Ruth Trinder Research (2013): Frequency of technology use in English, %	Students majoring in English, %	Students majoring in Primary Education, %
Online dictionaries	99	((dictionaries + grammar guides) 89	74 (26)	94	100	82
TV/radio/music videos	93	65	67(26)	73	42	38
News websites/magazines	91	-	51(40)	45	58	25
Films, including DVD/BluRay	85	85	60(25)	41	68	38
Educational applications	85	-	38(47)	42	37	56
Email	81	78	23(58)	43	16	-
Information websites/company websites	75		18(57)	58	42	31
Social networks	74	40	23(51)	36	84	56
Web chats	74	50	23(52)	18	11	-
Online grammar textbooks	68	(dictionaries + grammar guides) 89	22(47)	22	47	50
E-books	63	-	41(23)	14	63	25
Voice chats	52	38	15(37)	27	16	6
Text messages/SMS	49	30	9(41)	12	32	5
Discussion forums	42	48	7(35)	Online – 5	11	13
Language learning websites/DVD/CD courses	35	68	7(29)	DVD – 1	37	31
Blogs	30	49	7(24)	9	42	13

The following table presents the results of surveys identifying the preferred forms of English language

teaching. The regular development of science and technology is popularizing various blended forms

of teaching that utilize information and communication technologies. Over the past few years, the level of integrating technological tools into educational practice has significantly increased. In a study conducted by the EACEA

Agency in 2009, only 18% of respondents reported not using any digital or mobile technologies for language learning. In a new study conducted by R.Trinder, this figure dropped to 4% (Trinder, 2016).

**Table 3. Effective forms of education in learning English**

Forms of Education	Learning a New Language, %	Improving Second Language Proficiency, %
Classroom teaching led by a teacher	20	4
Use of software tools (including online)	2	3
Blended Learning Environment (the interchange of traditional and technology-based approaches)	26	6
By immersing in a language environment abroad (studying/traveling/working in a country where the target language is spoken)	42	70
Through communication with native speakers (for example, through sequential language learning, lessons, conversations, and interactions)	8	15
Using traditional tools and resources (books, grammar books, television, etc.).	5	2

Creating an artificial language environment in teaching English is considered one of the problematic issues of modern methodology. This relates to organizing mass activities focused on two aspects of speech activity: listening and speaking, involving a large group of participants simultaneously. The role of technological tools is significant in addressing these issues, as previously (before the emergence of technical tools) these problems did not exist, primarily because there were no necessary means available abroad to practically address them.

The educational system within the framework of curricula plays a special role in developing the

creative abilities of the younger generation. Additionally, technological tools that are often used independently outside practical classes in educational institutions have good potential for fostering students' creative abilities in learning English.

The primary task in teaching English is not only to master the educational material but also to expand the personal intellectual resources of learners, reveal each learner's creative potential, implement creative, scientific, practical, research, and project activities, and create favorable conditions for self-understanding.

We present the results of a survey conducted

among students of the Namangan and Andijan State Pedagogical Institutes and Fergana State University in the Primary Education program. Students were asked questions based on the methodology of R. Trinder and EACEA (Table 2).

Through analyzing the obtained results, it became clear that currently, students in our country utilize foreign online services, online dictionaries, and films similar to those mentioned above in the process of learning English. A portion of the students from the English and Primary Education programs who participated in the survey reported using mobile and online applications and email less frequently during their learning process. The

students who participated in the survey rated e-books, social networks, news websites, and online grammar books as the most effective tools for learning English.

Some students added that in addition to the language learning forms suggested by us, they also engaged in preparing materials for lectures, speeches at conferences, and foreign publications (writing articles according to foreign journal requirements, formatting, etc.). According to the students, these competencies help improve their current language level and acquire practical skills for working with foreign information sources.

**Table 4. Effective Teaching Methods for Learning English for Students in Primary Education**

Teaching Methods	% for Learning a New Language
In the classroom under the guidance of a teacher	25
Using software tools (including online resources)	25
Blended learning environment (a combination of traditional and software-based approaches)	56
Immersion in a foreign language environment (studying/traveling/working in a country where the target language is spoken)	50
Communicating with native speakers (for example, through sequential language learning, lessons, conversations, interactions)	13
Through traditional resources and materials (books, grammar books, television, etc.)	25

In conclusion, we can state that the competencies developed among learners manifest as social, personal, and behavioral phenomena as a result of the current educational stage. It is essential to organize the content and conditions of learners' activities closely related to their future professional activities. Specific communicative interactions characteristic of certain professional fields will facilitate this implementation.

One of the main objectives of the competency-based approach is to ensure continuous observation and monitoring of the learner's educational activities. This process encompasses

two characteristics: it demonstrates the behavior of the observed learner and describes the essence of subsequent activities (Competency Based Language Teaching).

**CONCLUSION**

Teaching speaking in English not only involves acquiring specific language skills but also developing learners' speaking abilities and enabling them to participate in intercultural communication. Such skills can be achieved through the application of modern digital educational technologies in teaching English, which encourages learners' independent creative

activities and problem-solving. The use of modern digital tools in English lessons can also facilitate a transition to an independent learning process.

As a result of the research, a scientifically grounded comprehensive definition of the concept of "digital educational environment" was formed in the context of teaching English, taking into account the competency-based approach underlying the educational process in higher education. Additionally, the main tasks of digital technologies in education were identified: teaching, upbringing, development, and motivation. All of these indicate that digital technologies are aimed at solving practical pedagogical tasks. During the research, a classification of types of digital educational technologies was provided, and digital tools used in teaching English vocabulary were described.

#### **REFERENCES**

1. Competency Based Language Teaching [electronic resource]: <http://approaches.tr.gg/HOME.htm>
2. Cunningham, J., Key, E., & Capron, R. (2016). An evaluation of competency-based education programs: A study of the development process of competency-Based programs. *The Journal of Competency-Based Education*, 1(3), 130-139.
3. Gallardo, K. (2020). Competency-based assessment and the use of performance-based evaluation rubrics in higher education: Challenges towards the next decade. *Problems of Education in the 21st Century*, 78(1), 61-79.
4. Ion, G., Cano, E., & Cabrera, N. (2016). Competency assessment tool (CAT). The evaluation of an innovative competency-based assessment experience in higher education. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 25(5), 631-648.
5. Mogensen, F., & Schnack, K. (2010). The action competence approach and the 'new' discourses of education for sustainable development, competence and quality criteria. *Environmental education research*, 16(1), 59-74.
6. Trinder, R. (2016). Blending technology and face-to-face: Advanced students' choices. *ReCALL*, 28(1), 83-102.
7. Velasco-Martínez, L. C., & Tójar-Hurtado, J. C. (2018). Competency-based evaluation in higher education—Design and use of competence rubrics by university educators.
8. Volchkova, V. I. (2018). Use of modern information technologies in teaching foreign languages. *Наука и спорт: современные тенденции*, 19(2), 69-73.