



## METHODS OF USING THE DICTIONARY IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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### ABSTRACT

Word is the means of thought, expression, interpretation and communication. It enables individuals to think, speak and write in a reasonable manner [1]. A child learns the vocabulary of his native language by means of interaction with his environment. The acquisition process begins with simple and concrete words such as “mama, papa” within the family; nevertheless, the process continues ceaselessly for long years as the child becomes more socialised and acquires complex and abstract words as well. Upon schooling, the volume of vocabulary, which is the most dynamic organism within language, increases in a systematic way; its acquisition during adulthood becomes an individual quality. Foreign language education, on the other hand, proceeds in unnatural environments; therein, vocabulary learning and teaching becomes complex. Learning in foreign language is much harder and more tiring than in mother tongue. Word is the most essential element of a foreign language [2]. Actually, instruction of grammar system of a language seems of top priority for communication; nevertheless, one inevitably has to have a wide vocabulary.

**Key words: Structuro-global aspect, Printed versions, word-formation ability,**

### Annotation

This article highlights with how important dictionary in teaching and learning foreign language and some valuable methods are given.

### Аннотация

В этой статье рассказывается о том, как важен словарь в преподавании и изучении иностранного языка и некоторые ценные методы.

### MAIN PART

Today, learning proceeds upon a plane with integrity of topic. The most common method in foreign language education is to learn through lecture of a text that constitutes a context. The mind gives a meaning to written concepts and interprets them. In this regard, hereby study adds an audio aspect to the mentioned visual dimension. More precisely, the learner sees the concepts within a context in a text on the one hand, and hears their pronunciation on the other. The learner hears the pronunciations of concepts within a context, and does not read, but only follows them with his eyes. In this respect, hereby study tries to find out the effect of

such audiovisual method on the success of vocabulary learning in foreign language. The study bears traces of SGAV (structuro-global audiovisual) method[3]. SGAV, which concentrates on learning verbal language, is based on two essential principles. Structuro-global aspect believes in the necessity of provision of the learner with both linguistic (vocabulary & grammar etc.) and non-linguistic (rhythm, stress, gestures and facial expressions) elements so as to ensure learning. The second principle, namely, the audiovisual aspect, seeks providing the learners with simultaneous presentation of voice and image in order to facilitate the comprehension of message. In the research, the first aspect is fulfilled by means of video pronunciations. As for the visuality, it is ensured by the words within the texts that are obtained through transformation of video pronunciations into writing. Visuality here means the form of words in written.[4]

The first stage of mastering vocabulary is provided by learning of thematically organized lexical units, while the core language picture of the world of the foreign language culture is set in the minds of the students. To form the motivation and to affect language learning it is necessary to have a specific set of tools for language study or, namely, a bilingual dictionary for learners. With the help of this tool a student is able to accomplish difficult tasks. Process of words learning and transmission from passive vocabulary into active vocabulary is facilitated with the dictionary. Tasks based on dictionary usage can be performed not only individually, but also in pairs, or in groups, thereby the new material is reinforced.[5]The methodological basis of our research is provided by the systematic analysis of printed and electronic bilingual English-Russian dictionaries that are used by teacher of the first and second courses of the Germanic Philology Department of Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of Kazan Federal University. The aforementioned analysis is accompanied by statistical analysis of the dictionary use, systematization of the use of lexicographic sources, general analysis of the dictionary use technique by learners, approbation of a new method of enhancement of students` command of new lexis – creation of a thematic vocabulary on their own or under the supervision of the teacher and application of the new method in increasing the level of motivation of students for learning English as a foreign language in groups and individually.

The approbation of the method of generating a thematic vocabulary and forming it up in a dictionary of the group of students finished in high increase of the interest of the learners to the process of study, effective mastering of lexis and new thematic vocabulary, parallel to the process of lexeme enrichment the grammar rules and forms were learnt, as every dictionary entry is supposed to include basic grammar characteristics, such as morphemic and functional. The task was to compile a thematic dictionary on the material of the unit in writing. The task was individual and was for homework. In class students had an opportunity to compare their results, to discuss them and unite in a group dictionary, joining their efforts. Depending on the learning objectives, tasks given by a teacher can vary. Speaking about the topics of the dictionary, they can comprise wider and narrower concepts and notions of the general themes, such as: - Relationship; - Communication; - Work; - Emotions and feelings; Students of the first and second courses would necessarily have to polish their knowledge of the English as a foreign language on the following broad thematic areas: 1. Person; 2. Society; 3. Work, employment; 4. Leisure time, hobbies; 4. Foreign countries, travelling; 5. Environment, etc. depending on the level of the group and requirements of the program.[6] The dictionaries created through joint efforts of the student and the teacher in the form of communicative and informative activity can follow the example of the existing specialized thematic dictionaries The compilation activity increases cognitive activity of the learners and develops their mental abilities. The process of working on the English-Tatar dictionary for learners usually involves the following steps:

- 1) determination of the structure of the dictionary;
- 2) determination of the volume of the dictionary;
- 3) selection of word units;
- 4) drawing up a list of frequency;
- 5) the location of the most frequent translations words in order.

The selection of units is conducted in accordance with the objectives of learning, taking into account the following criteria: a) lexical units belonging to the definite branch of knowledge; b) their frequency; c) word-formation ability. Ignorance of grammar characteristics of words leads to a wrong understanding of the text a large percentage of errors. That is why in the English-Tatar dictionary for learners the grammatical characteristics of a lexeme is given after each of the word, as a second part of the dictionary entry. It is necessary to focus students' attention on the semantic and causes of a sentence. Sometimes complex relationships between the elements of semantic text cause difficulty for students. The words as still, conversely, while, however, thus, furthermore, as a result, to be more precise, and others are included within the text of the English-Tatar dictionary for learners. They express different logical relationships within the text: explanation, clarification, comparison, the expansion of the concept, the opposition, summing up. Thus a user is enabled to build a complete statement and to perform the correct translation[6].

Is it necessary to abandon the traditional printed dictionaries, and turn to electronic ones? The answer is unequivocal: no. Each version of the dictionary has its pros and cons. Electronic dictionaries cannot replace printed dictionaries, but traditional hard copy dictionaries are no longer able to satisfy all the needs of users. The advantages and disadvantages of both types of dictionaries depend on how one combines the use of electronic and printed dictionaries in teaching/mastering English as a foreign language. Using e-dictionaries saves a lot of time, as the translation of lexemes is found within seconds; e-dictionaries are mobile, such a dictionary is always at hand and can be easily applied in a classroom; e-dictionaries do not wear out; e-dictionaries fall within the tendency of extracting information from electronic media; e-dictionaries provide pronunciation of words. Nevertheless, there are some serious objections to usage of the e-dictionaries to declare. Shifting from thinking and analyzing to mechanical typing doesn't contribute to developing mental ability of learners[7]. Sometimes the whole text given as a task for home reading is translated though the e-dictionary, which eventually ends up in decrease of quality of acquired knowledge. It is highly recommended to use e-dictionaries at examinations.[8]

Printed versions, no matter how dear they are to our heart, they cannot keep up with the dynamic changes in the language. Language is a reflection of real life, and is supposed to reflect come new words, terms, phrases. All this vocabulary can be easily added to e-dictionaries. The results of the research under discussion can be divided in theoretic and practical. The main achievement in the pedagogical approach is the renewed method of application dictionary in the process of teaching English as a foreign language. The practical application of the method actually enhanced the motivation of the students, which added to the effectiveness of their work and statistically showed the better results of mastering the vocabulary of such topics as Medicine, Sightseeing, Teaching, and Cooking. Thematic vocabulary systematizes the acquired knowledge. The mechanism of organization of lexis can be worked out on the example of a dictionary making. That mechanism can be successfully applied by a learner in individual study. The process of making up a dictionary should start with a theme, well known to the learners, as the more acquainted they are with the material,

the easier is the task for the students and the more positive emotions accompany process. The initial step is to include concrete objects within the thesaurus, and gradually switch to abstract notions that require more elaborate explanation. The first steps for the students in dictionary making were made with the help of electronic dictionaries, though prior to the practical part a teacher should introduce a dictionary entry from any of printed dictionaries that are used in classroom for everyday practical tasks. As a rule, printed dictionaries have more complicated, but more detailed and fundamental structure of a dictionary entry. The entry starts with the head word itself, is followed by pronunciation, then with the basic grammar characteristics of a headword, then the numerous translations come, in order of importance and frequency. This basic logical organization will be of great use for learners to systematize all the knowledge about a lexeme on all levels: phonetic, morphological, and semantic. Collocations and idioms can be introduced on the later stages, when the learners will show good results of the performed tasks.

A dictionary is a reference book containing the words of a language usually alphabetically arranged, with information on their forms, pronunciations, functions, meanings, etymologies, spellings and idiomatic uses. Most of this information cannot be found in other reference books. It is important to consider several advantages in the use of dictionaries. In the very early stages of learning, even an inadequate bilingual dictionary can provide an important support and be a quick reference book. In language learning/teaching process the importance of using dictionaries cannot be denied. It is obvious that the dictionary can be an extremely useful learning resource, especially as it makes the learner more independent of the teacher. If the students learn how to use a dictionary effectively, then the dictionary can be a very helpful resource for their studies. Training in the proper use of a dictionary will be of help in selecting the meaning that is appropriate to a given context. The most important basic skill in using a dictionary is to find a word or expression one has in mind. Then, one has to find out the meaning of the word, however, there is a problem of choosing of appropriate meaning to the given context when several meanings are defined.

For instance, we can identify many senses of the word "see" by means of a dictionary exploitation.

- 1) I can't see Lydia anywhere. (perceive with the eye)
- 2) The security guard asked to see our passes. (inspect)
- 3) Can you ~ what I mean? (understand)
- 4) We are going to see a film tonight. (be a spectator at)
- 5) I could see that you were having an argument with him. (perceive with the eye)
- 6) I'd like to see the manager please. I have a complaint. (have a meeting with)

When the above dictionary definitions and example sentences are examined, it is seen that each sentence can be interpreted differently because of the contextual clues and different dictionary definitions for the same word. Therefore, it is safe to advise language students to analyse the different meanings of an unknown word by means of dictionary usage. Some students may not be aware of the efficient ways of using a dictionary. In general, they only take the entry as the final option and do not explore other possibilities of meaning or they do not usually think of looking up a familiar word like "bring", "call" or "get". But the meanings of these words may change depending on the usage of them in different contexts and may create difficulty for language students. Haphazardness of students while using dictionaries for their specific lexical needs may sometimes bring about deficient or erroneous interpretations

for the students are inclined to adopt the first meaning they happen to come across without bothering themselves for the rest. Thus, when we introduce techniques for using dictionaries, we should teach students to look up a word that seems familiar, when it appears in a sentence that is difficult to understand. For instance, the word "chair" is known by language students who have learned to name furniture: but for some, the word will cause difficulty in sentences like "He was appointed to the Chair of maths at the university" or "He will chair the meeting". It is possible that the word "chair" in the students' language knowledge would not have these meanings. Students usually assume that they already know the meaning of an ordinary word, so they do not try to find another meaning for it. Therefore, the ability to use a dictionary should not be taken for granted in language classes.

Another important factor to consider is the students' unawareness of the information that a dictionary contains. A dictionary generally contains at least the following information about each word which can be used by the foreign language learners.

1. Its spelling
2. The standard pronunciation
3. Definitions to represent the word's one or more meanings
4. Parts of speech, such as noun, verb or preposition
5. Example sentence in which the word is used
6. Synonym
7. Antonym

There is now a choice of good monolingual dictionaries available at various levels of difficulty and specially written for the foreign language learner. Underhill (in Ilsen, 1985: 104) points out the following advantages of using the monolingual dictionaries.

1. Users have to think in English.
2. Meanings have to be understood in terms of other English words, promoting a more rapid expansion of passive vocabulary.
3. Many high-frequency function words which are virtually inaccessible via bilingual dictionary may be given appropriate treatment.
4. Learners may gain insights into the precision of defining and describing meanings, and constructing example sentences, as well as learning to cope with definitions which at first seem unclear.
5. The example sentences themselves not only exemplify typical usage but also provide an access to the meaning.
6. The ability to use the MLD effectively allows students the satisfaction of exploration through the dictionary, a sense of self-sufficiency and greater confidence in their ability to solve language problems for themselves. This in turn helps students to recognize and formulate their own language problems and questions in the first instance.[8]

There are two aspects of words in a natural language. The first is their pronunciation within speech, and the second is their graphic look (script) in the texts. Vocabulary education begins with pronunciation in native language and with graphic shapes in the foreign language. Conventional methods of vocabulary education for foreign language often disregard the phonetic aspect of the words. The individual either pronounces the words during the learning process in a text or even hears the pronunciation of the teacher. The student, therefore, does not hear their pronunciation in a sentence, and only hears the pronunciations of the words he has learned. However, language makes sense only upon aggregation of many concepts and

grammatical elements. In hereby study, audiovisual method has been specifically applied on vocabulary teaching. In audiovisual method, spoken language is granted priority, before transition to the written[10]. However, this research has modified the mentioned characteristic of the method and opted for simultaneous utilisation of spoken and written language. Pronunciation of texts on video constitutes the oral aspect, while the scripts in writing contain the written aspect. Following the implementation of vocabulary teaching through conventional and audiovisual methods, it is concluded that the learners attain much better results with audiovisual methods in terms of learning and remembering effectiveness. The group, subject to audiovisual method, outperformed the second group with regard to speed of learning in week one and success of retention in week two. Success rates in first week are between 56% and 86%, while retention rates in week two are between 60% and 83%. As for the method who underwent conventional method, their success rates are between 26 and 50% for week one, and 16 and 43% for week two. Consequently, simultaneous stimulation of multiple sense organs and high motivation levels are considered to be influential in this success. From this point forth, alternative methods should be employed in vocabulary teaching or learning in unnatural foreign language so as to ensure efficiency of retention. These methods can be implemented collectively in a class by means of a teacher, or even individually by the learner himself.

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