

Methods for Increasing the Vocabulary of Primary School Students

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Abstract. *The development of students' speech is primarily connected with enriching their vocabulary. Working on vocabulary plays a significant practical role in increasing word stock. In the process of conducting vocabulary work based on the studied text, students become practically familiar with archaic words, newly coined words, profession-related vocabulary, dialectal words, and words characteristic of the literary style. This article presents information on methods for increasing the vocabulary of primary school students.*

Key words: *primary education, student vocabulary, speech development, literacy instruction, reading activity, vocabulary work.*

Primary education undoubtedly plays the role of a strong foundation in raising a well-rounded individual. It is well known that a significant part of the essential tasks in providing education and upbringing to primary school students is carried out during reading lessons. In mother tongue and reading classes, the leading focus of all instructional activities is the development of speech, which includes such tasks as literacy instruction, the formation of neat handwriting skills, and the expansion of students' thinking abilities.

In order to memorize the countless words existing in the language and to use them correctly and appropriately in speech, it is considered very important to study the vocabulary of the language by dividing it into certain layers or groups. This involves introducing students to initial theoretical information about such concepts as archaic words, newly coined words, profession-related vocabulary, and dialectal words. In general secondary education, the primary objective of subjects such as the mother tongue, reading, and literature is speech development. This is because a rich vocabulary and a good understanding of word meanings play an important role in improving students' literacy, enhancing their speech culture, and enabling them to express their ideas clearly, concisely, and effectively.

A word is the main unit of meaning in a language. Words and word combinations express concrete objects, abstract concepts, and emotions. The totality of all words and expressions existing in a language is called its vocabulary or lexicon. Lexicology is the branch of linguistics that studies the vocabulary of the Uzbek language. It examines the semantic features of words in speech, their frequency of use, the enrichment of vocabulary, the obsolescence and disappearance of certain words from usage, and phenomena such as semantic shift.

Therefore, lexicology serves as the linguistic foundation of the methodology of vocabulary work.

Any speech utterance is formed through the orderly arrangement of words and word combinations that are grammatically interconnected and appropriate to the content. The richer and more developed a person's vocabulary is, the richer their speech becomes, and the greater the opportunities to express thoughts clearly and expressively. For this reason, the richness, diversity, and dynamism of

vocabulary are considered important conditions for the successful development of speech in methodology.

The enrichment of a student's vocabulary is primarily influenced by their surrounding environment, nature, people's lives, learning activities, and communication with adults and peers, which serve as the main sources. Through interaction with nature and people, a child learns words, phrases, figurative expressions, proverbs, and wise sayings, gradually making them part of their own speech.

Works of fiction are regarded as the most reliable source for enriching students' vocabulary and speech. In reading lessons, as students become acquainted with and analyze literary works, their vocabulary also expands according to specific topics. For example, when studying topics related to the seasons of the year, students develop concepts connected with changes in nature, birds, living creatures, animals, trees, grass, and plants. When studying works on themes such as spirituality, good and evil, and friendship, they arrive at certain conclusions regarding human relationships and moral values.

During the process of reading a text, the meanings of words are not explained in detail. If necessary, brief explanations are provided without distracting students' attention from the content of the text.

Words used in a figurative meaning are explained after the text has been read, because their meanings are better understood through the context of the text. This shows that, in acquiring the knowledge intended for learning and applying it in practice, it is essential for students to master the richness of the language's vocabulary and to make it their own.

Although methodological recommendations on the general principles, directions, and sources of vocabulary work in primary education have been developed, they cannot yet be considered fully satisfactory. No separate lesson is allocated specifically for vocabulary work. Instead, it is carried out in the study of all subjects, primarily in mother tongue and reading lessons, in connection with teaching textbook materials.

Since vocabulary work in mother tongue lessons is aimed at developing students' speech, forming literacy skills, enriching vocabulary, and improving speech culture, this work begins in the first grade and continues throughout the entire educational process. One of the most important tasks of speech development at school is to improve and systematize vocabulary work, to identify and justify its main directions, and to manage the process of enriching students' vocabulary.

The methodology of vocabulary work at school includes four main directions:

1. **Enriching students' vocabulary**, that is, mastering new words as well as new meanings of some words already present in students' vocabulary. In order to acquire the richness of the mother tongue's vocabulary, a student should add 8–10 new words to their vocabulary daily, including 4–6 words during mother tongue lessons, meaning that the meanings of these words should be fully mastered.
2. **Clarifying students' vocabulary**, which includes the following aspects:
 - a) fully mastering the meanings of words that students have not yet firmly learned, by incorporating them into texts, comparing them with words of similar meaning, and selecting antonyms to clarify their meanings;
 - b) mastering figurative meanings and polysemous words;
 - c) mastering synonyms and the semantic nuances of synonymous words;
 - d) mastering the meanings of certain phraseological units.
3. **Activating vocabulary**, that is, transferring words from students' passive vocabulary—words whose meanings they understand but do not use in their speech activity—into their active vocabulary. For this purpose, word combinations and sentences are formed using these words, and they are used in retelling, conversations, summaries, and essays.
4. **Transferring words not used in the literary language from students' active vocabulary to their passive vocabulary**. Such words include those that do not conform to literary language norms

and are acquired under the influence of students' speech environment, as well as colloquial words and expressions, dialectal words, and words related to specific social groups. After mastering the concept of literary language norms, students begin to use literary words instead of the words described above. As their proficiency in literary language improves, dialectal and jargon words, as well as simple colloquial expressions, gradually disappear from students' active vocabulary.

Students' vocabulary is enriched and developed on the basis of the following sources:

1. Observation of the surrounding environment—nature, people's lives and labor activities, children's play and learning activities, and their interaction with adults. During excursions to nature, various places, and institutions, children observe objects and phenomena and learn many new names and expressions. In follow-up discussions conducted after these excursions, their knowledge is deepened and the meanings of certain words are clarified.

The most reliable source for enriching students' vocabulary and speech is literary works. In reading lessons, students read works by many masters of words such as Oybek, H. Olimjon, M. Shayxzoda, G'. G'ulom, H. Hakimzoda, Zulfiya, X. To'xtaboyev, P. Mo'min, Q. Muhammadiy, Sh. Sa'dulla, Z. Diyor, N. Fozilov, T. Adashboyev, and A. Obidjon. Through these works, students master the Uzbek language by means of rich artistic imagery. In reading lessons, children's vocabulary is also enriched through words related to specific topics. Their vocabulary is expanded with many words expressing moral concepts, such as *kind*, *sweet-spoken*, *compassionate*, *honest*, *brave*, *courageous*, *valiant*, and *hardworking*. While working with texts, students learn about polysemous words, synonyms, words used in figurative meanings, and certain phraseological expressions.

After children learn to read independently, books, newspapers, and magazines have a significant influence on their vocabulary. Therefore, extracurricular independent reading and the forms of guiding it are considered among the most important sources for enriching students' vocabulary and developing their speech.

During the process of reading a text, excessive explanation of word meanings should be avoided. If it becomes necessary to explain a word while reading the text, its meaning is briefly clarified without distracting students' attention from the content of the text.

Figurative and expressive words used in a metaphorical sense, as well as units of literary language, are explained after the text has been read, because their meanings are better understood through the content and context of the text. Especially when reading fables, allegorical and figuratively used words cannot be explained before or during reading; they should be discussed after the text has been read.

Below, the issue of increasing students' vocabulary is considered within the scope of the topics presented in **second-grade textbooks**.

In the Grade 2 Mother Tongue textbook, in the text "*My Favorite Subject*," the following types of vocabulary work can be carried out:

"My Favorite Subject"

Madina: "Today at school we talked about caring for homeless animals."

Akmal: "I have a cold, my head hurts."

Mother: "Temur and Sherzod, both of you used the word '*bosh*' (head). Tell me, what does '*boshpana*' (shelter) have to do with the word '*bosh*'?"

Mother: "The word '*boshpana*' is formed by combining the words '*bosh*' (head) and '*pana*' (shelter)."

Madina: "Do words also come into existence?"

Mother: "Yes, of course. You will learn about the origin of words in mother tongue lessons."

Madina: "The mother tongue is a very interesting subject!"

Akmal: “The mother tongue is my favorite subject as well.”

The teacher studies the meanings of these words together with the students through a question-and-answer activity. The following questions are asked:

1. What do you understand by the word *cold*?
2. In which illnesses does a cold occur?
3. From which words is the word ‘*boshpana*’ formed?
4. What do we think of when we say *care*?
5. Whom should we care for?

Next, we consider which words can be studied as vocabulary work in the Grade 2 Reading textbook under the topic “Plum and Apricot.”

Spring came. Flowers bloomed in the gardens. Birds flew in the sky. Ants crawled on the ground. Water murmured as it flowed through the irrigation ditches. A small girl named Zumrad, with braided hair, entered the garden. Walking through the lush green grass and crossing small bridges, she came to the foot of a plum tree. She raised her hands, but she could not reach. Then she said:

“Plum, plum! Give me some of your fruit!”

The plum replied:

“I will ripen very soon,

I will fall into your basket.

Come back then!”

Zumrad went to the apricot tree. She stretched out her hands, but she could not reach. Then she said:

“Apricot, apricot! Give me some of your fruit!”

The apricot replied:

“I will ripen very soon,

I will fall to the ground, tap-tap.

Come back then!”

Zumrad picked a bunch of chamomile and red tulips and returned from the garden.

One day, Zumrad again walked through the green grass, crossed the bridges, and went to the garden. She came to the plum tree and stretched out her hands:

“Plum, plum! Give me your plums!”

The plum, whose branches were bending down, said:

“Put them in your basket, I am ripe,

I have matured, sweet as sugar.

Share them in winter if you like,

Your teeth will not ache.”

Zumrad put the bright yellow plums hanging from the bent branches into her basket. Then she went to the apricot tree and said:

“Apricot, apricot! Give me your apricots!”

The apricot replied:

“Put them in your basket, I am ripe,

I have matured, sweet as sugar.

Share them with girls if you like,

Your teeth will not ache.”

When the apricot tree was shaken once, the soft, ripe apricots fell to the ground tap-tap and began to split open with a pop. Zumrad picked up the apricots and filled her basket. Then she walked again through the green grass, crossed the bridges, and went back home.

The teacher explains the meaning of each word, while some words are clarified through discussion and reasoning together with the students.

In conclusion, it can be stated that working on explaining word meanings during lessons with primary school students enriches their vocabulary and makes their speech more fluent. Vocabulary work should be carried out systematically and consistently according to a plan in both mother tongue and reading lessons.

The absence of explanatory and spelling dictionaries designed specifically for primary grades creates certain difficulties in properly organizing vocabulary work. However, if vocabulary work is implemented consistently on the basis of a clear plan, it does not require excessive effort from students. Achieving this requires diligence, attentiveness, determination, and perseverance.

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