EFFECTIVE METHODS OF INCREASING ENGLISH VOCABULARY OF STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract. *This article analyzes effective methods for improving the English vocabulary of technical college students. It highlights context-based learning, interactive games, role-playing activities, project-based learning, and the use of information technologies to develop vocabulary. The study also emphasizes ways to enhance students' independent learning and motivation, applying practical approaches in classroom teaching. The results show that interactive and context-based methods are highly effective in increasing students' vocabulary.*

Keywords: *technical college, English language, vocabulary, context-based learning, interactive methods, vocational education.*

In today's era of globalization, digital technologies, and international cooperation, the English language is recognized worldwide as the main means of communication. In the Republic of Uzbekistan as well, in recent years, improving the system of teaching foreign languages—particularly English—has become one of the key directions of state policy. On the initiative of our President, the system of foreign language education has been modernized at all stages in recent years. The Presidential Decree No. PQ–5117 dated May 19, 2021, also defines specific tasks in this direction, paying special attention to improving the effectiveness of English language teaching in vocational colleges and technical schools.[6]

The main goal of teaching English in vocational institutions is to develop students' skills in using English in their professional activities. To achieve this, the process of increasing vocabulary (lexical competence) plays a central role, since all language skills—listening, reading, writing, and speaking—are directly dependent

on vocabulary. Even a student with a good command of grammar cannot communicate fluently without sufficient vocabulary. Therefore, one of the most important tasks of teachers in vocational education is to expand students' vocabulary and teach them to use words actively in communication.

In recent years, numerous foreign and local studies have been conducted on English language teaching methodology. Linguists and methodologists such as J. Harmer, J. Richards, and T. Rodgers emphasize the importance of contextual learning, the communicative approach, and interactive methods in developing vocabulary. According to their views, learning words is more effective when they are used in real communicative situations rather than memorized in isolation.[3,4]

Uzbek scholars have also carried out research in this area. For instance, Mamarasulova demonstrated the effectiveness of game-based methods in developing students' vocabulary, while D. Abdullayeva analyzed the specific features of teaching professional terminology to vocational students. In addition, in recent years, many teachers have achieved higher efficiency in their lessons through the use of information and communication technologies (ICT).[1]

Based on our teaching experience in vocational education, we can conclude that improving students' vocabulary is one of the most pressing issues in English instruction. Although students often master grammar well, they struggle to express their ideas freely in English due to limited lexical resources. Therefore, we strive to organize lessons in an engaging, practical, and student-centered manner to encourage active participation and enhance vocabulary acquisition.

Nowadays, the interest of vocational students in learning English is steadily increasing. They realize the necessity of using foreign literature, technical documents, and online resources in their professional fields. This, in turn, makes the development of vocabulary even more essential. Therefore, teachers should effectively employ modern approaches such as interactive methods, project-based learning, role plays, and the use of information technologies.

One of the modern approaches to developing vocabulary is **contextual learning**, in which students learn words based on real-life situations. In this method,

the principle of "using the language" rather than "memorizing the language" takes a leading role. In addition, ***game-based learning*** also attracts students' attention and motivates them to participate actively during lessons.

Thus, the issue of increasing the English vocabulary of vocational students is one of the most relevant and important topics in today's education system. Research and practical work in this area show that genuine communicative competence can be formed not by merely memorizing words but by teaching students to use them in real communication. Our experience also confirms that interactive methods, information technologies, and contextual learning approaches are among the most effective tools for developing vocabulary.

For vocational students, English is not only an academic subject but also an essential means for their future professional activities. Therefore, we pay special attention to improving students' vocabulary during English lessons. Each profession has its specific terminology and expressions. For instance, students in technical fields need to know terms such as "mechanical parts," "electrical tools," and "safety rules." It is important not only to memorize these words but also to use them appropriately in practical contexts.

Vocabulary development is a key factor in forming a student's **speech competence**. The ability to select appropriate words, pronounce them correctly, use correct grammatical forms, and apply them in communication are interrelated skills. Hence, in our teaching process, we aim not only to make students memorize words but also to encourage their active use in speech.

When conducting vocabulary development activities, it is crucial to consider students' age characteristics, interests, and professional orientation. Vocational students usually prefer practical exercises, technological terminology, and professional communication situations. Therefore, in our lessons, we use profession-oriented lexical materials. For example, we design exercises based on topics such as "repairing a device," "operating instructions," or "production process."

Context-based learning means that words are learned not in isolation but within a text, dialogue, situation, or practical task. In our vocational English classes, we teach students to use words in context rather than just memorizing vocabulary lists. For instance, during the topic *"Safety at Work"*, students are asked to discuss safety rules in English. They use expressions like "wear a helmet," "use gloves," and "follow the instructions" to reinforce their speech. The contextual approach helps students retain words more easily because they associate them with meaning and situation. This method develops vocabulary not only quantitatively but also qualitatively.

Communicative games – game-based techniques make lessons more engaging, arouse students' interest, and encourage their active participation. We often use games such as *"Word Chain," "Hot Seat," "20 Questions," "Guess the Word,"* and *"Find Someone Who…"*For example, in the *"Hot Seat"* game, one student sits with their back to the board while a new word is written on it. The rest of the group explains the meaning of the word in English without saying it directly. This activity teaches students not only to memorize words but also to explain them, find synonyms and antonyms, and create meaningful contexts.

Role plays and communication exercises – we provide students with opportunities to use vocabulary in *"real-life situations."* For instance, we organize role-play activities on topics such as *"At the Workshop," "Talking to a Client,"* and *"Giving Technical Advice."* Each student plays a specific role and communicates professionally in English. This method not only enriches students' vocabulary but also develops pronunciation, intonation, and communication culture.

Project-based learning – to encourage students' independent exploration, we organize project assignments during lessons. For example, we give students tasks such as *"Describe Your Profession," "Present Your Workshop,"* or *"Explain How a Machine Works."* During preparation, they search for new vocabulary, read texts, and create presentations. Through this process, students learn to actively seek and internalize new words.

In today's context, digital technologies play an important role in expanding

vocabulary. In our lessons, we use online platforms such as Quizlet, Wordwall, Kahoot, and Duolingo:

- **Quizlet** – allows the creation of electronic flashcards for new words. Students can review these cards on their phones at home or on the go.

- **Wordwall** – a convenient platform for creating game-based exercises such as *"match the words," "fill the gaps,"* and *"find the pair."*

- **Kahoot** – an online quiz tool based on competition. It creates a spirit of contest among students, thereby increasing their motivation.

- **Duolingo** – a useful mobile application for independent vocabulary learning that students use outside the classroom.

The advantage of information technologies is that they allow students to learn at their own pace, making the learning process interactive and engaging.

The teacher's personal example also plays a major role in enhancing motivation. Students are inspired by the teacher's passion for the language, communication style, and creativity. Therefore, we always strive to create a warm and supportive atmosphere in the classroom.

One of the most important factors in developing vocabulary is the ***learning environment***. At our vocational institution, English lessons are conducted not only in classrooms but also through interactive activities such as open lessons, English language weeks, quizzes, mini-dictionary walls, and English word corners. Such activities inspire students to learn, motivate them to share their knowledge with others, and create a sense of collaboration.

The experiences described above demonstrate that, in increasing the English vocabulary of vocational students, replacing traditional memorization methods with interactive, contextual, communicative, and technology-based approaches yields the best results. Through active participation, practical exercises, games, and project-based learning, students' lexical resources are not only expanded but also reinforced through real application.

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