



METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' SPEECH BASED ON THEMATIC VOCABULARY AND STORYTELLING TECHNOLOGY

Karimova Jahona O'ktamjon qizi

Relevance. The foundation of speech competence is vocabulary: a child with a limited vocabulary cannot express thoughts clearly and coherently, does not fully comprehend texts, and repeats the same words and sentences in written work. In practice, word repetition, overly brief sentences, and a lack of cohesive devices are widespread in 3rd-grade students' essays/narratives. Vocabulary work is often handled incidentally rather than as a dedicated focus, being limited merely to explaining the meaning of a new word. The child hears the word but lacks the opportunity to actively use it in speech. Therefore, there is a need for a coherent methodology that transforms passive vocabulary into an active resource used in speech.

Aim and objectives. The aim of the thesis is to substantiate a methodology for developing 3rd-grade students' speech based on systematic work with thematic vocabulary and storytelling technology, and to test its effectiveness experimentally. Objectives: to determine the role of vocabulary in speech competence; to develop the stages of the methodology; to conduct an experiment; and to analyze the results based on established criteria.

Theoretical basis. The methodology is based on the theory of communicative competence (D. Hymes, M. Canale, M. Swain) and the sociocultural approach (L.S. Vygotsky, N. Mercer). According to this, word meaning is acquired not by memorizing lists, but through communication and exchanging ideas with others. Vocabulary is divided into two layers: words that a child understands (passive) and words they use in their own speech (active). The task of education is to ensure the transition of passive vocabulary into active vocabulary. For this purpose, a word must be encountered multiple times in various contexts, namely in listening, speaking, and writing. For primary school age, this process is particularly effective when combined with pictures, games, and storytelling.

Content of the methodology. The methodology consists of three stages.

The first stage is word comprehension. A weekly thematic vocabulary set (8–10 words) is introduced through pictures, realia (objects), or short texts. Students explain word meanings in their own words, select synonyms and antonyms, and create clusters.

The second stage is word application. The words are used in pair discussions, role-playing, and sentence construction. Each student creates at least two sentences with each new word.

The third stage is reinforcing words within a text. In the story-building technique, students construct a story consisting of an introduction, plot development, and conclusion based on a series of pictures and keywords, and then present it orally and write it down. Differentiated tasks are assigned at each stage: students with weaker speech development are provided with sentence starters and a pictorial outline,



while advanced students are asked to create a story independently.

Experiment and lesson examples. The experiment lasted one academic quarter (8 weeks). A total of 56 third-grade students participated: 28 in the experimental group and 28 in the control group. The methodology described above was applied in the experimental group, while lessons in the control group were conducted using traditional methods. Topics included: "Professions," "Spring," "My Neighborhood," and "Healthy Living."

The week's work on the theme of "Professions" was conducted as follows. Vocabulary: *baker, builder, farmer, driver, doctor, labor, skill, responsibility*. In the first stage, the teacher showed pictures of professions, the students explained the meaning of the word "baker" in their own words, found the synonym "mastery" for the word "skill," and created a "Profession" mind map on the board. In the second stage, pairs answered the question "Which profession will I choose in the future and why?," played the role-playing game "Doctor and Patient," and each student made at least two sentences, for example: "A builder skillfully builds a house." In the third stage, four pictures titled "A Day of a Baker" were provided. Key words: *morning, dough, tandoor, bread, labor*. For struggling students, the sentence starters "First... then... finally..." were offered. As a result, the student composed a story similar to the following: "The baker woke up early in the morning. He kneaded the dough and baked bread in the tandoor. The neighborhood residents bought hot bread. Everyone needs the baker's labor." At the end of the week, each student wrote the new words in their "Word Treasury" notebook, used them in sentences, and recorded an audio of their story.

Another lesson focused on the topic of "Spring." Vocabulary: *bud, spring, rain, sapling, to wake up, affection*. While working on antonyms, the students identified the pairs "to wake up – to sleep" and "warm – cold." During story construction, based on the "Spring Garden" pictures, a student created the following text: "Spring has arrived. Buds opened on the trees. The gardener planted young saplings. A smile appeared on everyone's face." In the control group, this topic was taught in a traditional manner, consisting of copying words into notebooks and re-reading the text; when composing stories, the students mostly repeated the same sentences.

Results. According to the vocabulary richness criterion, the average score (on a 1–4 scale) increased from 2.1 to 3.4 in the experimental group and from 2.2 to 2.6 in the control group. The average number of sentences in the narrative grew from 4.1 to 7.3 in the experimental group and from 4.2 to 5.1 in the control group. The number of unique (non-repeated) words rose from 21 to 38 in the experimental group and from 22 to 27 in the control group. In the experimental group, the proportion of high-level students increased from 14.3% to 39.3%, while the low-level group decreased from 35.7% to 14.3%. In the control group, these figures shifted from 14.3% to 21.4% and from 35.7% to 28.6%, respectively.

Practical recommendations. Limiting weekly vocabulary to 8–10 words, using each word in at least three different activities (conversation, sentence construction, storytelling); maintaining a "Word Treasury" notebook for each student; using pictures



and prompt words in story construction; providing differentiated assignments; evaluating oral/written narratives based on vocabulary richness, coherence, and sentence count.

Conclusion. When systematic work on thematic vocabulary is integrated with storytelling techniques, passive vocabulary transitions into active speech, and narratives become richer in content and more coherent. Testing this methodology in other grades and conducting long-term observation represent promising directions for future research.

Keywords: thematic vocabulary, storytelling, speech competence, primary education, active vocabulary.

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