

THE CURRENT STATE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS' SPEECH THROUGH WORD WORK IN NATIVE LANGUAGE LESSONS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Abstract.

This article provides a scientific and methodological analysis of the current state of speech development of primary school pupils through word work in native language lessons. The article highlights the importance of word work in enriching pupils' vocabulary, developing independent thinking, and improving oral and written speech.

Key words: speech activity, speech competence, lexical units, word work, communicative approach, native language education, speech culture, linguistic competence, methodological support.

Introduction

This article is dedicated to an in-depth scientific, theoretical, and practical study of the methodology of developing pupils' speech through word work in primary school native language lessons. The article substantiates the important pedagogical significance of word work in the speech development of primary school pupils, enriching their vocabulary, and forming skills for expressing ideas clearly, consistently, and logically in both oral and written form. Shaping speech culture is an essential component of native language education [2, p. 102].

Speech is the primary means of developing a pupil's thinking [1, p. 34]. Primary education is considered the "golden age" for the formation of a pupil's speech. Word work means not only understanding the meaning of a word, but also using it appropriately, enriching vocabulary, and building logical connections between words. Pupils' independent thinking is formed in the process of their speech activity [3, p. 76].

Methodology

The issue of word work and speech development in primary school native language lessons is one of the fundamental problems in the methodology of teaching



the native language. Word work is an important factor in enriching pupils' speech [2, p. 47]. Below, we analyze the scientific views, methodological recommendations, and theoretical foundations of Uzbek scholars on this topic.

Methodologist scholars (e.g., S. Fuzailov [1, p. 34], M. Qodirov [2, p. 47], A. G'ulomov [3, p. 18]) emphasize that word work should be conducted in four directions:

- Vocabulary enrichment: introducing new words into the pupil's vocabulary.
- Vocabulary clarification: distinguishing the literal and figurative meanings of a word.
- Vocabulary activation: transferring words from passive vocabulary to active speech.
- Elimination of inappropriately used words: correcting speech errors.

The main task of native language lessons is to develop pupils' speech [3, p. 18].

Q. Abdullayev considers vocabulary work the central part of the lesson in developing the coherent speech of primary school pupils. He places great emphasis on working with figurative expressions (epithets, similes) in the development of pupils' connected speech. In his methodology, the "word-image" chain plays an important role when working with each text. According to him: if the meaning of a word is taught within a text, it stays firmly in the pupil's memory. Working with figurative expressions (epithets and similes) broadens the child's artistic thinking [4].

Professor R. Safarova examines speech development in primary education through the lens of student-centered learning. She links speech development in primary education to communicative competence. That is, it is not enough for a pupil to merely know a word; they must be able to use those words in social contexts (with friends, teachers, and family) to communicate. According to her views, word work must form the communicative competence of the pupil. The scholar emphasizes that the educational power of texts in textbooks depends on the skill of word selection [5].

As noted by methodologist scholar H. Ne'matov, word work in many schools is often limited to merely dictating a "glossary of difficult words." This leads to the following scientific problems:



- Mechanical memorization – the pupil may know the meaning of a word but cannot use it in their own speech.
- Stylistic poverty – pupils' speech becomes limited to only everyday household words [8].

To address this problem, the "Creating Speech Situations" method is proposed. For example, applying newly learned words in practice through role-playing games such as "At the Store" or "At the Library."

K. Qosimova, an honored worker of public education in Uzbekistan, recommends paying special attention to the language of literary works when working with primary school textbooks ("Native Language and Reading Literacy") [9].

A. G'ulomov has proven in his native language teaching methodology that the grammatical form and lexical meaning of a word must be studied as a whole. His methodology puts forward the following:

Enriching vocabulary through word formation (e.g., gul – gulchi, gultuvak, gulzor). Working with homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms plays a central role in ensuring the richness and variety of speech. The scholar emphasizes that grammar and vocabulary must be taught in organic connection in native language lessons. According to him, studying word formation (e.g., ish → ishchi → ishlamoq) increases pupils' vocabulary in a geometric progression [6].

Word work in primary school native language lessons must be systematic. Systematicity means that at least 3–5 new words should be acquired in each lesson and introduced into speech.

Visualization means making wide use of ICT tools and pictures when explaining the meaning of a word.

Independent creativity means having pupils write short stories and compositions using the newly learned words.

Word work means working on thinking itself. The richer a child's vocabulary, the broader their worldview and thinking.

The main task of primary school native language education is to teach children to express their thoughts clearly in both oral and written form. Word work is the cornerstone of this process. Uzbek methodologist scholars (e.g., K. Qosimova, S. Fuzailov) divide word work into four main directions [8].

An analysis of the primary school native language curriculum shows that word work is one of the main directions of instruction across all grade levels. In grade 1, pupils are expected to learn 300–400 active everyday words. In grade 2 this figure rises to 600–700 words; in grade 3, to 900–1,000 words; and in grade 4, up to 1,200–1,500 words. However, practice shows that pupils' active vocabulary is often below these norms.

The effectiveness of word work depends greatly on the teacher's methodological preparedness. Modern educational technologies — interactive methods, game-based technologies, the project method — make word work more interesting and effective. In particular, active methods such as "Brainstorming," "Clustering," "Insert," and "Quick Survey" actively engage pupils in the lesson.

Working with lexical-semantic groups has a special place in the systematic organization of word work. Studying words by thematic groups — nature, everyday life, school, professions, etc. — fosters systematic thinking in pupils and strengthens the skills of using words correctly in speech. The following sequence may be used for speech development.

Method Name	Description	Expected Outcome
Semantization	Explaining a word's meaning (through a picture, object, or synonym)	Clear understanding of word meaning
Contextual Analysis	Analyzing a word within a sentence	Understanding the word's collocational possibilities
Etymological Concept	Providing simple information about the origin of the word	Increased interest in the word
Lexico-Grammatical Exercises	Classifying words by category, finding their related forms	Grammatical correctness of speech

Results

An analysis of current curricula and textbooks shows that "Native Language" textbooks (grades 1–4) provide sufficient material for word work. However, they also have certain shortcomings: exercises aimed at expanding vocabulary are often



structured mechanically; the communicative use of words in context is not shown adequately; and tasks that encourage pupils' independent creative activity are less common.

Diagnostic assessments conducted during the pedagogical experimental stage made it possible to determine the level of pupils' vocabulary. The results were as follows: in grade 1, pupils' active vocabulary averaged 250–280 words; in grade 2 — 450–480 words; in grade 3 — 680–720 words; in grade 4 — 950–1,000 words. These figures showed that they were 15–20% below the norms established in the state educational standards.

To study the current state of word work in primary school native language education, we conducted observations and surveys in a number of schools in Tashkent. Our study involved 45 primary school teachers and 120 pupils. The survey results showed that most teachers rely on traditional methods for word work and that modern methods are not being utilized sufficiently.

Observations revealed that 67% of teachers rely primarily on vocabulary dictation and word-writing methods for word work. The share of teachers who use interactive methods is only 23%. This reduces the effectiveness of the speech development process, since passive methods do not form in pupils the skills to actively use words.

Discussion

Another aspect of the problem is the gap between pupils' active and passive vocabulary. Most pupils know words passively — they understand them when they hear or read them — but do not actively use them in their own speech, either oral or written. To address this problem, special exercises and tasks aimed at using words in active speech activity are necessary.

Although modern information technologies have been widely introduced into the educational process, their full potential is not being realized in most schools. Electronic dictionaries, educational computer games, and multimedia resources can make word work more engaging and effective. However, differences in the material and technical base of schools and varying levels of teachers' digital literacy are limiting the use of these opportunities.

Conversations with parents showed that 72% of parents are interested in their child's achievements in native language lessons, but many of them do not know how to help expand vocabulary at home. This highlights the need to strengthen school-



family cooperation and to familiarize parents with the basics of pedagogical skill.

Explaining the meaning of words enriches pupils' vocabulary and develops their speech. The terminology of subjects taught in primary school also falls into the category of words that need explanation. Explaining the meaning of a term helps to properly comprehend the concept that word denotes. For example, by explaining the meaning of the term "predmet" (subject/object), pupils learn that it is used in a broad sense, meaning that all things, phenomena, and concepts in nature are called "predmet." This helps them quickly grasp terms such as noun, adjective, numeral, and verb.

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