

Philological And Methodological Aspects Of Forming Lexical Competence In English Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

Lexical competence is a core component of communicative competence and plays a decisive role in successful foreign language acquisition. This article explores the philological and methodological aspects of forming lexical competence in English language teaching. The study is based on an analysis of linguistic theories of lexis, including semantic, morphological, and pragmatic perspectives, as well as modern methodological approaches to vocabulary instruction. The research employs theoretical analysis, synthesis, and pedagogical modeling to identify the key linguistic characteristics of English vocabulary and the instructional mechanisms that facilitate its effective acquisition. The findings demonstrate that lexical competence is not limited to word knowledge but involves the ability to understand, contextualize, and appropriately use lexical units in communication. The article argues that integrating philological insights with communicative and competency-based teaching methodologies enhances vocabulary retention, depth of lexical knowledge, and learners' communicative effectiveness. The results contribute to improving English language teaching methodology and curriculum design in higher education.

Keywords: Lexical competence, English language teaching, philology, vocabulary acquisition, methodology, communicative competence.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary English language teaching, lexical competence has gained increasing attention as a fundamental condition for effective communication. While earlier language teaching approaches prioritized grammatical accuracy and structural knowledge, modern linguistic and pedagogical research emphasizes the centrality of vocabulary in language comprehension and production. Without sufficient lexical resources, learners are unable to express ideas, interpret meaning, or participate meaningfully in communicative interactions, regardless of their grammatical proficiency.

From a philological perspective, vocabulary constitutes the most dynamic and culturally loaded component of language. Lexical units reflect historical development, social change, cultural values, and pragmatic conventions. In English, lexical complexity is intensified by the language's polysemy, idiomacity, borrowing from

multiple linguistic sources, and extensive use of collocations and phrasal verbs. These features present significant challenges for learners and require a methodologically grounded approach to vocabulary instruction.

Methodologically, lexical competence has evolved from rote memorization of word lists toward contextualized, communicative, and cognitively informed teaching practices. The shift toward communicative language teaching and competency-based education has highlighted the need to develop learners' ability to select and use lexical items appropriately in diverse communicative situations. This transformation necessitates a deeper integration of philological analysis and pedagogical methodology in vocabulary instruction.

Despite extensive research on vocabulary acquisition, many instructional practices still treat lexis as a

supplementary component of language learning rather than as a central objective. This often results in fragmented lexical knowledge, limited productive vocabulary, and difficulties in authentic communication. Therefore, a systematic examination of the philological foundations and methodological strategies for forming lexical competence is essential.

The aim of this article is to analyze the philological and methodological aspects of forming lexical competence in English language teaching and to identify pedagogically effective approaches that support deep and functional vocabulary acquisition. The study seeks to demonstrate that lexical competence emerges from the interaction of linguistic knowledge, contextual awareness, and instructional design.

The study adopts a qualitative research methodology based on theoretical and comparative analysis of linguistic, philological, and pedagogical literature. Classical and contemporary works in lexicology, semantics, applied linguistics, and foreign language methodology were examined to identify key conceptual approaches to vocabulary and lexical competence.

Methods of analysis and synthesis were used to systematize diverse theoretical perspectives on lexis and vocabulary learning. Comparative analysis enabled the identification of common principles across philological theories and teaching methodologies. Pedagogical modeling was applied to conceptualize the relationship between lexical knowledge, communicative use, and instructional strategies in English language teaching.

The research does not involve experimental data but focuses on conceptual clarification and methodological generalization. The reliability of the findings is ensured through the integration of established linguistic theories and widely recognized pedagogical frameworks.

The analysis shows that lexical competence in English language teaching is a multidimensional construct grounded in philological knowledge and realized through methodological practice. From a philological standpoint, lexical competence involves understanding the semantic structure of words, their morphological composition, syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations, and pragmatic usage in discourse.

Lexical meaning in English is characterized by polysemy, metaphorical extension, and contextual variability. A single lexical unit may convey different meanings depending on grammatical structure, collocation, and communicative context. Therefore, lexical competence requires not only knowledge of dictionary definitions but also the ability to interpret and apply words in contextually appropriate ways.

Morphological awareness contributes significantly to lexical development by enabling learners to recognize word-formation patterns such as derivation, compounding, and conversion. This awareness facilitates vocabulary expansion and enhances learners' ability to infer meaning independently. From a philological perspective, such processes reflect the systemic nature of English lexis and its historical evolution.

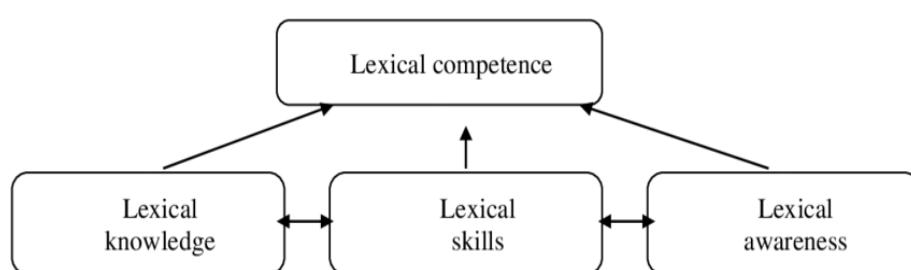


Figure 1. Philological structure of lexical competence in English language teaching

Methodologically, the formation of lexical competence is most effective when vocabulary instruction is embedded in meaningful communication. Contextualized exposure to lexical items through texts, discourse, and interaction supports deeper processing and long-term retention. The results indicate that learners acquire vocabulary more

successfully when lexical items are introduced as part of thematic, situational, and functional language use rather than as isolated units.

Lexical competence also includes receptive and productive dimensions. Receptive lexical knowledge enables learners to recognize and understand words in listening and reading,

while productive lexical knowledge allows them to actively use vocabulary in speaking and writing. Effective methodology ensures the gradual transition from receptive

recognition to productive use through repeated contextual engagement.

Table 1. Philological and methodological dimensions of lexical competence

Aspect	Philological Focus	Methodological Implication
Semantic	Polysemy, synonymy, connotation	Teaching words in context and meaning networks
Morphological	Word formation, affixation	Developing vocabulary expansion strategies
Pragmatic	Register, usage, collocation	Fostering appropriate word choice
Discourse	Lexical cohesion	Integrating vocabulary into texts

The findings confirm that lexical competence develops through the interaction of linguistic knowledge and pedagogical practice. Instruction that neglects either dimension results in superficial vocabulary acquisition and limited communicative ability.

The results of this study align with contemporary views in applied linguistics that position vocabulary at the center of language competence. Philological analysis reveals that English lexis is structurally and semantically complex, requiring instructional approaches that go beyond memorization. When vocabulary is taught without attention to semantic relations, pragmatic constraints, and discourse functions, learners struggle to use words effectively.

Methodologically, the findings support communicative and cognitive approaches to vocabulary teaching. Lexical competence is best developed through tasks that require learners to process meaning, negotiate context, and actively use vocabulary in communication. This perspective challenges traditional practices that prioritize form over function and underscores the importance of integrating lexical instruction with communicative objectives.

The discussion also highlights the role of the teacher as a mediator between philological knowledge and pedagogical application. Teachers must possess an understanding of lexical structure and meaning in order to design instruction that supports meaningful vocabulary use. This has implications for teacher education and curriculum

development, particularly in higher education contexts.

The study demonstrates that forming lexical competence in English language teaching is a linguistically and pedagogically complex process grounded in philological knowledge and realized through effective methodology. Lexical competence encompasses semantic, morphological, pragmatic, and discourse-related dimensions that collectively enable learners to use vocabulary meaningfully in communication.

The integration of philological insights with communicative teaching methodologies enhances vocabulary depth, retention, and functional use. Lexical competence should therefore be treated as a central objective of English language instruction rather than as a supplementary component. The findings of this research have theoretical significance for applied linguistics and practical value for improving English language teaching methodology.

Future research may focus on empirical validation of the proposed pedagogical models and on exploring the role of digital technologies in supporting lexical competence development.

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