Digital technology in teaching language and developing B2 level economic students' lexical competence

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Annotation. *This article investigates the role of digital technology in enhancing language learning, with a specific focus on improving the lexical competence of B2-level economic students. The study examines various digital tools, such as e-learning platforms, mobile applications, and interactive media, and how they contribute to the acquisition and retention of vocabulary in an economic context. Emphasizing the importance of lexical competence for academic and professional success, the article highlights the effectiveness of digital technologies in engaging students and supporting autonomous learning. The article also discusses practical applications, such as virtual language labs and collaborative online tools, and addresses the challenges related to access to technology and over-reliance on digital methods. It offers valuable insights into the pedagogical strategies used to integrate digital tools in language teaching for economics students.*

Key words: *digital technology, language teaching, lexical competence, B2 level, economic students, e-learning, interactive media, vocabulary acquisition, autonomous learning, pedagogical strategies.*

Цифровые технологии в обучении языку и развитии лексической компетенции студентов экономических специальностей уровня B2

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Аннотация. *Данная статья исследует роль цифровых технологий в улучшении обучения языкам, с акцентом на развитие лексической компетенции студентов экономических специальностей уровня B2. В исследовании рассматриваются различные цифровые инструменты, такие как онлайн-платформы для обучения, мобильные приложения и интерактивные средства массовой информации, а также их вклад в усвоение и закрепление словарного запаса в контексте экономики. Подчеркивая важность лексической компетенции для академического и профессионального успеха, статья выделяет эффективность цифровых технологий в вовлечении студентов и поддержке их автономного обучения. Также рассматриваются практические применения, такие как виртуальные языковые лаборатории и онлайн-инструменты для совместной работы, а также обсуждаются проблемы, связанные с доступом к технологиям и избыточной зависимостью от цифровых методов. Статья предлагает ценные идеи о педагогических стратегиях интеграции цифровых инструментов в обучение языкам студентов-экономистов.*

Ключевые слова: *цифровые технологии, преподавание языка, лексическая компетенция, уровень B2, экономические студенты, электронное обучение, интерактивные медиа, приобретение словарного запаса, автономное обучение, педагогические стратегии*

Raqamli texnologiyalar bilan til o'rgatish va B2 darajasidagi iqtisodiy talabalarning leksik mahoratini rivojlantirish

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Annotatsiya: *Ushbu maqola raqamli texnologiyalarni til o‘rganishda, xususan, B2 darajasidagi iqtisodiyot bo‘yicha talabalarning leksik kompetensiyasini rivojlantirishdagi rolini o‘rganadi. Tadqiqot turli raqamli vositalarni, masalan, onlayn ta’lim platformalarini, mobil ilovalar va interaktiv media vositalarini, va ularning iqtisodiy kontekstda so‘z boyligini o‘zlashtirish va saqlab qolishdagi ahamiyatini ko‘rib chiqadi. Leksik kompetensiyaning akademik va professional muvaffaqiyatdagi muhimligini ta’kidlagan holda, maqola raqamli texnologiyalarni talabalarni jalb qilish va ularning mustaqil o‘rganishini qo‘llab-quvvatlashdagi samaradorligini ta’kidlaydi. Shuningdek, maqola virtual til laboratoriyalari va hamkorlikda ishlash uchun onlayn vositalar kabi amaliy qo‘llanmalarni muhokama qiladi va texnologiyalarga kirish imkoniyati va raqamli metodlarga haddan tashqari bog’lanish bilan bog’liq muammolarni tahlil qiladi. Bu maqola iqtisodiyot talabalari uchun raqamli vositalarni til o‘qitish metodologiyasida qo‘llash bo‘yicha qimmatli tushunchalarni taqdim etadi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *raqamli texnologiya, til o‘rgatish, leksik mahorat, B2 daraja, iqtisodiy talaba, onlayn o‘quv, interaktiv media, so‘z boyligini o‘zlashtirish, mustaqil o‘qish, pedagogik strategiyalar*

The integration of digital technology in education has opened new avenues for language learning, especially in specialized fields such as economics. B2-level students, who are at an intermediate level of language proficiency, benefit significantly from digital tools that aid in the development of lexical competence. These tools provide tailored learning experiences, enhance vocabulary retention, and facilitate access to real-world economic contexts.

Lexical competence, defined as the ability to understand and use a wide range of vocabulary, is essential for academic and professional success, particularly for students of economics. At the B2 level, students should possess a solid grasp of academic and professional vocabulary, enabling them to read, write, speak, and listen effectively in both academic and business environments.

Lexical competence refers to the ability to understand and produce words and phrases within a language (Carter, 1998). It includes various aspects such as word recognition, word meaning, collocations, and word usage in different contexts. The importance of lexical competence for university students, particularly those studying economics, cannot be overstated. Mastery of the vocabulary is key to academic success, especially in disciplines such as economics, where students are required to understand and use specialized terminology. For B2-level students, the vocabulary they acquire should not only cover basic words but also extend to the technical language used in their field. The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) defines the B2 level as the upper-intermediate proficiency stage, where students should be able to produce and understand more complex language. At this level, learners are expected to handle specialized vocabulary, including that which is specific to their academic or professional field (Council of Europe, 2001). Economic students need to engage with specific economic terms, such as “inflation,” “monetary policy,” “GDP,” and “market equilibrium.” Acquiring these terms requires not only rote memorization but also an understanding of their meaning, context, and usage. Digital tools can help students engage with this vocabulary in meaningful ways, facilitating learning in a more interactive and efficient manner. Digital technologies – such as language learning apps, virtual classrooms, and online games – are transforming the way students learn vocabulary. According to researchers like Godwin-Jones (2018), digital tools provide immersive experiences that help learners acquire and retain vocabulary more effectively than traditional methods.

Lexical competence involves not only the knowledge of words but also an understanding of their meanings, uses, and relationships. For B2-level students, this includes academic vocabulary, synonyms, antonyms, collocations, and discipline-specific terminology. For example, in economics, lexical competence includes understanding terms like "inflation," "capital," and "market equilibrium."

In the context of economics, lexical competence is vital for effective communication in both written and oral formats. Economic students must be able to understand complex texts and express ideas clearly in professional settings. Thus, an emphasis on developing students' lexical skills is a priority in teaching methods. E-learning platforms like Duolingo, Babbel, and Memrise have gained popularity due to their engaging methods and accessibility. These platforms often integrate gamification to motivate learners, allowing them to learn vocabulary through context-rich, interactive exercises. Mobile applications, such as Anki and Quizlet, are powerful tools for vocabulary acquisition. These apps use spaced repetition algorithms to enhance long-term retention of words and phrases. Economic students, for example, can create customized flashcards containing economic terminology and study them on the go.

Digital tools such as Google Translate and specialized economic dictionaries like "Oxford Economic Dictionaries" offer students the ability to quickly learn the meanings, translations, and nuances of economic terms. These tools also offer examples in sentences, which helps learners understand the practical use of vocabulary. Research by Puentedura (2014) emphasizes the use of virtual language labs, which allow learners to engage in simulations of real-world scenarios. In the context of economics, students could simulate a business negotiation or a stock market scenario using virtual platforms, which enhances their understanding of both language and economics.

Interactive games like Kahoot! and Quizlet Live can be adapted to teach economic vocabulary. For instance, students can play vocabulary-building games that challenge them to match words to their meanings or use them in context, providing a fun and engaging way to reinforce their language skills. The use of collaborative tools such as Google Docs or Padlet allows students to work together on vocabulary exercises, share insights, and correct each other's mistakes. This encourages peer learning, which is effective for consolidating lexical knowledge.

Blended learning, which combines traditional classroom instruction with online learning, is an effective approach for enhancing lexical competence. Studies have shown that combining face-to-face interaction with digital tools helps reinforce learning by providing multiple contexts for vocabulary acquisition. Task-Based Learning (TBL) is another approach where students perform tasks in real-world contexts. For economic students, this could involve tasks like analyzing a company's financial report or preparing a presentation on an economic issue. Digital technologies can support these tasks by providing access to relevant data, videos, and interactive content. Despite the numerous benefits, the integration of digital technology in language learning faces several challenges, such as lack of access to devices, internet connectivity issues, and the digital divide. Some students may not have equal access to high-speed internet or modern devices, which can limit their ability to use digital tools effectively.

Digital technology has revolutionized education, especially in the realm of language teaching. It provides students with access to vast amounts of information and learning resources that were previously unavailable or difficult to access. In the context of language learning, digital tools allow for interactive, engaging, and personalized instruction.

Some key technologies that have been successfully integrated into language teaching include:

Online learning platforms like Moodle, Blackboard, and Canvas offer students access to course materials, quizzes, discussion forums, and other resources. These platforms allow students to engage with the material at their own pace, offering a personalized learning experience.

Mobile apps such as Duolingo, Memrise, and Babbel allow students to practice vocabulary on the go. These apps often use gamification techniques, making vocabulary learning more engaging and interactive. Economics students can benefit from apps tailored to their field, providing them with real-world economic texts and examples.

Online resources like Cambridge Dictionary, WordReference, and Oxford English Dictionary offer students immediate access to definitions, synonyms, and usage examples. These tools are invaluable for students when encountering unfamiliar economic terms and can help deepen their understanding of the language.

Interactive media such as podcasts, videos, and online simulations offer students the opportunity to immerse themselves in real-world contexts. For example, students can listen to economic podcasts, watch news reports, or engage with case studies that use economic terminology in practical scenarios. Virtual reality (VR) platforms also present opportunities for experiential learning, allowing students to explore economic concepts in immersive environments.

Digital tools allow students to engage with authentic materials – texts, videos, podcasts, and articles – from real-world sources. This is crucial for B2-level students who need to encounter economic vocabulary used in actual academic and professional contexts. Websites like The Economist, Financial Times, and BBC News provide real-world articles that students can analyze. These resources expose students to new vocabulary in context, helping them understand how words are used in different situations.

For instance, students can listen to economic news broadcasts and then discuss the vocabulary used in these broadcasts, exploring terms like "fiscal policy," "debt ceiling," and "unemployment rate." By reading or listening to economic discussions, students can see how the language is applied in context, which aids retention and comprehension.

Several apps are designed specifically to help students expand their vocabulary, including Anki and Quizlet. These flashcard-based apps allow students to create personalized vocabulary lists and practice them through spaced repetition. For economics students, they could create cards with economic terms and their definitions or use them to test their understanding of economic concepts.

Research by Karpicke and Roediger (2008) suggests that spaced repetition is an effective technique for vocabulary retention, and using apps like Anki can help students remember and recall terms more easily over time.

Gamification techniques used in mobile apps and websites can significantly enhance student engagement and motivation. For example, Duolingo and Memrise offer language learning through a game-like environment, where students earn points and rewards as they progress. Economics students can benefit from gamified tasks that involve matching terms to their definitions or using new vocabulary in sentences. This interactive learning approach helps make the vocabulary acquisition process more enjoyable and less monotonous.

In addition, online quizzes and tests can serve as immediate feedback mechanisms, helping students gauge their progress and identify areas that need improvement. Tools like Kahoot! allow instructors to create real-time quizzes, which students can engage with during class to reinforce vocabulary.

Online collaborative platforms such as Google Docs, Padlet, and Slack enable students to work together on vocabulary-related tasks. For instance, students can use these platforms to co-create glossaries of economic terms or analyze case studies in groups. This fosters communication and collaboration, both essential skills in today's digital economy. By working together, students not only reinforce their own learning but also help others develop their lexical competence.

Despite the numerous benefits, the integration of digital technology in language teaching also comes with challenges. These include:

Not all students have equal access to digital tools. In regions with limited internet access or where students cannot afford mobile devices or laptops, the effectiveness of digital tools may be diminished.

While digital tools are beneficial, excessive reliance on them may lead to a lack of face-to-face interaction, which is also essential for language development. For instance, in language learning, interaction with peers and instructors is vital for practice and feedback.

The vast amount of resources available online can sometimes overwhelm students. Choosing the right resources, structuring lessons effectively, and guiding students through the learning process are essential to ensuring that the technology is used effectively.

Another challenge is the potential over-reliance on technology, which may reduce face-to-face interaction and limit opportunities for spontaneous language use. Effective language learning requires

a balance between digital tools and traditional methods of communication and practice. In conclusion, digital technology plays a pivotal role in the development of lexical competence for B2-level economic students. By offering interactive, engaging, and tailored learning experiences, digital tools can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition and retention. However, it is important to address the challenges related to access and over-reliance on technology to ensure that digital methods complement rather than replace traditional teaching practices.

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