Common Problems Associated with Teaching Vocabulary to A2 Learners at Schools

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Abstract:

Most graduates of Uzbek schools, finding themselves in an English-speaking country, are unable to talk with local residents even on elementary topics. After all, in a modern school, children study a foreign language for ten years! If ten years of regular classes do not allow a child to master language skills to the extent that would allow them to apply them in practice, then this state of affairs cannot be considered acceptable. The situation can be changed by realizing some fundamental misconceptions inherent in the vast majority of school teachers of English. Thus, this article examines common problems associated with teaching vocabulary to students at level A2 in schools in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: problems, teaching vocabulary, school, education, modern trends.

Previously, children began to study English in the fourth or fifth grade, but now classes begin in the second, and sometimes in the first grade. The teaching methods have not changed much: training begins with the same topics and elements as in Soviet-era schools. At the same time, the thinking methods of a seven- or eight-year-old child are fundamentally different from the thinking methods of a ten- or eleven-year-old child.

Little ones do not know how to think logically. Their skills of analysis and synthesis have not yet been formed. However, by the age of eleven or twelve, a child has already fully mastered the "adult" ways of reasoning: he begins to understand the differences between cause and effect, to separate a part from a whole, a concept from an object, a class of things from its individual representative, and so on.

It follows from this that in the first and second grades, the forms of presentation of educational material should be completely different from those used when working with middle and senior school-age students. In fact, they are exactly the same. Teaching a small child English grammar is

useless. English is an analytical language, and logical thinking is simply necessary to master its grammar. A first-grader does not yet have this thinking skill [4].

At the same time, this statement does not mean that you need to start learning English at a later age. In some intellectual aspects, a child will give shape to an adult! The memory of a small person, unlike an adult, is not yet clogged with terabytes of unnecessary information: there is still a lot of free space. This allows the child to memorize new information very quickly, and in large volumes.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to take into account that a primary school student can memorize a lot quickly only on the condition that the learning process occurs naturally, that it turns out to be unnoticeable for him. Through cramming, children do not remember anything or remember only for a short time.

Play as a learning environment: the natural habitat for a primary school student is play. Today, a huge number of game methods for teaching English and individual language games have been developed. If you try to force factual knowledge related to English into a small child, nothing will come of it. But if you play with him in English ("play English with him"), he will unconsciously remember a huge number of words, phrases and expressions [3].

Obviously, you can use a wide variety of game-based learning methods. Children enjoy learning English songs, for example, and sing them along with native English performers. This is a great way to practice correct English pronunciation, among other things.

Any competition is also a game that children like. The English language provides such a huge amount of language material that there can be a great many competitions in English, and they can be of a very diverse nature. Children love to compete. If you ask a first-grader to learn an English poem at home, it will be sheer torture for him. If you organize a recitation competition in English, most children will take this task with great enthusiasm and will happily learn the poem in order to try to win the main prize [1].

Misconceptions about English vocabulary There are two widely spread misconceptions about the structure of the English language, which seriously hinder its acquisition, especially at the initial stage of learning:

➢ *The first misconception* concerns the vocabulary of the English language. The flawed method of teaching English "read and translate" has not yet completely outlived itself, but it is gradually beginning to give up its positions, which cannot but please. Nevertheless, the dictionary approach to learning English is still accepted as correct and the only possible one. However, with the help of a dictionary, you can study foreign languages in which words have the same nature as words of the Uzbek language, for example, other Turkic languages or languages that came directly from Latin, such as Italian, Spanish or Portuguese. Words of the English language are not at all like that by their nature! They are not translated into Uzbek. "Real" English words, namely words of Anglo-Saxon origin, those that are characteristic primarily of colloquial speech, describe reality in a completely different way. Unlike Latin or Uzbek words, they have extremely general, vague, very broad meanings when out of context. The statement "translate the word «make» into Uzbek" does not make sense. A large, good English-Uzbek dictionary gives more than a hundred (!) translation options for this word into Uzbek. What do I mean by "the word make has more than a hundred translation options into Uzbek"? This means that the word "make" has no translation into Uzbek, and this is not an exaggeration [2].

Make, like all other Anglo-Saxon words, acquires some understandable, i.e. translatable meaning only when it is in context. The expression "translate make the bed" makes sense! This expression means "to make the bed" and "make a mistake" means "to make (or commit) a mistake", "Make friends with smb." is translated as "to make friends with someone," etc. There are only two or three thousand Anglo-Saxon words in English, while the total number of words registered in English

dictionaries is approaching a million. (Words of Latin and French origin make up the lion's share of the total vocabulary of modern English). However, with the help of only a couple of thousand words, one can successfully express all human meanings without exception. This becomes possible due to the extraordinary breadth of meanings of Anglo-Saxon words and their almost limitless compatibility. This position entails the following attitude: English should be studied not by words, but by phrases. This is exactly what a child will do, by the way, when learning an English song or preparing a poem for a performance at a competition.

➢ The second misconception is related to the grammatical structure of the English language. The vast majority of English language curricula begin with the introduction of the *there is/there are* structure. Moreover, this is typical not only of Uzbek educational programs. Cambridge textbooks for beginners also begin with this grammatical structure. Cambridge University Press is the world's leading supplier of English language teaching materials. But the *there is/there are* structure is an exception to the general rules, and to two general rules at once. That is, it can be called an exception squared! Without a doubt, starting the study of any system, including a language system, with an exceptional case, and not with a rule, is a gross methodological error.

Firstly, in this grammatical structure, the verb to be acts as the verb part of the compound predicate. This verb is absolutely unique in the English grammar system: it is the only strong verb in the English language. All other verbs are weak. A weak verb needs help to build a sentence, and this help comes to it in the form of an auxiliary verb. A standard English sentence has the following constituent elements: subject, auxiliary verb, semantic verb, object. Thus, most English sentences have a complex verbal predicate consisting of two parts: an auxiliary verb and a weak semantic verb. Such a structure can be compared with the only syntactic structure of the Uzbek language: the one where the predicate is expressed by an imperfective verb in the future tense. Compare: "I will wait for you." Here the predicate, just like in English, consists of two elements: the auxiliary verb "to be" in the appropriate form and the infinitive of the semantic verb of the imperfective form.

However, for the Uzbek language this case is an exception (we have almost all strong verbs), and for the English language this way of constructing a sentence is the norm. The verb "to be" is absolutely unique in that it alone is capable of independently constructing a sentence, without any auxiliary verbs. This verb takes any part of speech (except, perhaps, a conjunction), and the sentence is ready! Compare: She is a teacher; She is beautiful; She is twenty-one; etc. In such cases, the compound predicate has the following form: the verb to be plus a nominal part. Let us say it again: the verb to be is the only strong verb in modern English. All the others are weak and are not capable of constructing sentences without auxiliary verbs [5].

Secondly, in a standard emotionally and stylistically neutral English sentence, the word order is direct. With direct word order, the subject precedes the predicate (whatever it may be - a compound verb or a compound nominal), and the predicate precedes the object. With inverted (or reverse) word order, the parts of the sentence change place. So, a sentence beginning with *there is / there are* is an example of inversion, that is to say non-standard word order. Compare: There is a table in the room. A "normal" English sentence looks like this: A table is there in the room. Here table is the subject, is there is the predicate, expressed by the verb to be together with a demonstrative pronoun, and in the room is an indirect object (or an adverbial modifier of place - whatever you like). In other words, the word order in the last example is standard, and in the previous one it is inverted, that is to say non-standard.

The structure *there is/there are* is not the only example of inversion in the English language. There are other cases when the word order in a sentence must be reversed, according to grammar requirements. And yet, this structure is still an exceptional case of inversion! The fact is that in all other cases, non-standard word order gives the sentence a more or less strong emotional and/or stylistic coloring. Incidentally, English-speaking poets actively use this: sentences with non-

standard word order are regularly found in their poems. The sentence that begins with there is/there are remains emotionally and stylistically neutral, unlike all other inverted constructions [3].

Thus, we believe that the task of the methodology of teaching and developing vocabulary for students at level A2 in schools is to develop the following skills in students:

✓ understand the basic information of an authentic text;

✓ highlight information of primary importance;

✓ establish logical and chronological connections between facts and events;

✓ anticipate possible developments;

✓ summarize the facts presented in the text;

✓ draw conclusions from the text read [1].

Due to the fact that the main task of a teacher at school is to teach students to read and understand authentic texts, it is important, in our opinion, to teach strategies for reading authentic texts of various types and to model a problem situation for interacting with an English-language text. By reading strategies we mean a set of knowledge and skills, the possession of which will allow students to: understand the type, specificity and purpose of English-language texts; navigate the text taking into account its specificity and in accordance with its communicative task; extract information of different levels; use compensatory skills (guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context, word-formation elements; ignore unfamiliar words that do not occupy key positions in the text); use text supports: key words, pictures, illustrations, links; use reference books and dictionaries [4].

In conclusion, I would like to note that the problems in learning English in Uzbek schools and the low learning outcomes are due, firstly, to ignoring the peculiarities of the child's psyche, and secondly, to deeply rooted misconceptions about the vocabulary of the English language and its grammatical structure. Unfortunately, it is not worth expecting that these problems will be resolved in Uzbek schools any time soon. More mobile and unbureaucratic private educational institutions are appearing in such numbers because someone has to fill the gaps in school education. For example, English conversation clubs for children bring more practical benefits to students than school lessons, since they do not study the rules of English grammar, but instead just communicate and play. If school teachers used the most advanced teaching methods that allow students to understand the inner nature of this language, which would significantly contribute to its faster assimilation.

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