



THE ROLE OF EXPLANATORY DICTIONARIES IN READING LITERACY TEXTBOOKS IN ENRICHING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY

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Abstract: This article analyzes the role of explanatory dictionaries in reading literacy textbooks for enriching students' vocabulary from a scientific-theoretical and methodological perspective. It substantiates the impact of vocabulary richness on communicative competence, text comprehension, and cognitive development. Additionally, the article highlights the structure and didactic potential of explanatory dictionaries, as well as the stages for their effective implementation in the lesson process. The research determines that explanatory dictionaries are a crucial methodological tool for transforming students' passive vocabulary into active vocabulary, developing semantic thinking, and forming independent work skills. The article also provides practical recommendations for improving the use of explanatory dictionaries.

Keywords: vocabulary richness, explanatory dictionary, reading literacy, communicative competence, lexical unit, semantic analysis, contextual understanding, primary education, vocabulary development, methodological approach.

Introduction

In the modern education system, developing students' communicative competence, expanding their vocabulary, and forming skills for the conscious use of language units are recognized as priority tasks. In particular, systematic and purposeful work on vocabulary at the primary education stage is one of the main



factors that determines students' academic success in subsequent stages. This is because vocabulary directly affects the development of thinking, the level of text comprehension, and the quality of oral and written speech.

Reading literacy lessons serve to develop students' competencies in understanding, analyzing, and re-expressing the content of a text, as well as in forming their own independent opinions. In this process, students encounter new, rarely used, or figurative words within the text [1]. Correctly grasping the meaning of these lexical units is a crucial factor in ensuring the effectiveness of reading literacy. From this perspective, the glossaries included in textbooks are of particular methodological importance in helping students to independently determine a word's meaning, analyze it based on context, and incorporate it into their active vocabulary.

A glossary is a lexicographical tool that explains the meaning of a word on a scholarly basis, in a clear and concise form, serving to develop students' semantic thinking. The glossaries provided in textbooks encourage students' independent research, help them understand the correct pronunciation and usage of a word, and play a vital role in shaping their speech culture [2]. Particularly in the primary grades, glossaries provided at the bottom of a text or at the end of a textbook help to develop students' contextual understanding skills.

In today's era of globalization, the sharp increase in the flow of information and the emergence of new concepts and terms require students to possess a rich and active vocabulary. Therefore, the glossaries provided in reading literacy textbooks should be viewed not just as an auxiliary tool, but as a systematic mechanism for vocabulary enhancement. Substantiating their methodological potential from a scientific standpoint, analyzing their effectiveness, and improving them is emerging as a pressing academic problem [3].

This article theoretically and methodologically analyzes the role of glossaries in reading literacy textbooks in enriching students' vocabulary, reveals their didactic potential, and develops practical recommendations.



Theoretical Foundations of Enriching Students' Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a key indicator of an individual's linguistic competence, which is intrinsically linked to the development of thought, communication culture, and the level of text comprehension [4]. Psycholinguistic research shows that the broader a person's active vocabulary, the greater their ability to express complex thoughts and deeply understand the content of a text. At the primary education stage, the process of enriching students' vocabulary must be organized in a conscious, systematic, and methodologically sound manner.

The process of working on vocabulary is carried out in two main directions:

1. acquiring new words;
2. expanding the range of meaning of existing words and using them actively in speech [5].

In this process, it is necessary to explain the word's lexical meaning, stylistic features, figurative and multiple meanings, as well as its synonymous and antonymous relationships, in a step-by-step manner. Otherwise, a student may remember the word superficially, but the skill of using it correctly in speech will not be formed.

Reading literacy lessons create a favorable didactic environment for vocabulary enrichment. While working with a text, the student encounters a new word in its natural context, understands its meaning based on the situation, and reinforces it. In this process, explanatory dictionaries hold special importance as a methodological tool [6].

The Structure and Methodological Potential of Explanatory Dictionaries in Reading Literacy Textbooks

Explanatory dictionaries in reading literacy textbooks typically contain definitions for new or complex words found within the text. They appear in two forms:

- brief explanations provided at the bottom of the text;



- a glossary format compiled at the end of the textbook or section [7].

Footnotes help the student to determine the meaning immediately and ensure the continuity of the reading process. Dictionaries at the end of a section, however, reinforce systematic learning and create opportunities for review and reinforcement.

The methodological advantages of explanatory dictionaries are as follows:

1. **Ensures semantic clarity.** A precise and scientifically grounded definition of a word prevents the reader from forming an incorrect understanding.

2. **Develops contextual thinking.** The student understands a word's meaning by connecting it to the context of the text.

3. **Builds independent work skills.** The student learns to conduct independent research by consulting a dictionary.

4. **Expands active vocabulary.** Explained words are then used in speech through follow-up exercises [8].

Additionally, explanatory dictionaries heighten students' attention and sensitivity to words. This develops the skill of consciously perceiving language units and using them purposefully.

Methodology for Expanding Vocabulary Using Explanatory Dictionaries

The effective use of explanatory dictionaries depends on the teacher's methodological approach. It is not enough to simply read a word's definition; it is crucial to integrate it into the student's active speech [9]. For this purpose, it is recommended to apply the following methodological stages:

1. **Familiarization Stage.** The new word is isolated from the text, and work is done on its pronunciation.

2. **Explanation Stage.** The definition in the dictionary is read and explained.

3. **Reinforcement Stage.** Exercises such as constructing sentences with the word or finding its synonyms and antonyms are completed.

4. **Activation Stage.** The word is used in the process of creating an independent text.



These stages help to transform a student's passive vocabulary into an active one. Particularly in reading literacy classes, effectiveness is further enhanced when interactive methods such as text analysis, question-and-answer sessions, clustering, and role-playing are integrated with the use of explanatory dictionaries [10].

The Didactic Effectiveness of Explanatory Dictionaries

Experimental results show that vocabulary work organized regularly around explanatory dictionaries improves students':

- level of text comprehension;
- fluency in oral and written speech;
- precision in word choice;
- logical thinking skills.

Furthermore, explanatory dictionaries help students form foundational skills in lexicographical culture. They learn how to work with a dictionary and become accustomed to determining a word's meaning independently. This, in turn, lays the groundwork for the development of academic literacy in subsequent stages.

Thus, the explanatory dictionaries found in reading literacy textbooks serve as an effective means of enriching students' vocabulary. They should be viewed not just as supplementary elements, but as an essential component of the educational process. Systematic and methodologically sound work with vocabulary is a key factor in developing students' communicative competence.

Enriching students' vocabulary is a primary objective of elementary education, directly linked to the formation of communicative competence, the level of text comprehension, and the development of logical thinking. Research findings indicate that the explanatory glossaries in reading literacy textbooks serve as an effective methodological tool for this process.

Explanatory glossaries enable students to consciously learn new words, correctly understand their semantic meaning, and use them purposefully in their speech. In particular, explanations provided within the context of the text help



students grasp a word's meaning in context, which is a key indicator of reading literacy. The process of working with a glossary also develops students' skills in independent research, analysis, and generalization.

Furthermore, explanatory glossaries play a significant role in transforming a passive vocabulary into an active one. When combined with a methodologically sound system of exercises, students' oral and written communication becomes more fluent, their precision in word choice increases, and their culture of expression develops. This process also fosters the initial skills of lexicographical literacy in students.

In conclusion, the explanatory dictionaries found in reading literacy textbooks are a systematic and effective mechanism for enriching students' vocabularies. The rational use of their didactic potential serves to enhance the quality of the primary education process, develop speech competency, and ensure educational effectiveness. Therefore, improving the methodology for working with explanatory dictionaries and its widespread implementation in practice is recognized as a pressing task.

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