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LINGUOMETHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF DEVELOPING PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' WRITTEN SPEECH THROUGH SYNTACTIC EXERCISES

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Abstract. The development of written speech among primary school students is one of the fundamental objectives of modern language education. Written communication requires learners not only to acquire vocabulary and grammatical knowledge but also to use linguistic units appropriately, construct grammatically correct sentences, establish logical relationships between ideas, and produce coherent texts.

Keywords: primary education, written speech, syntax, syntactic exercises, linguomethodology, sentence construction, grammatical competence, communicative competence, coherent text, language development.

1. Introduction

In contemporary education, the development of students' language and communication skills is considered one of the essential conditions for their intellectual, social, and academic growth. Primary education plays a particularly important role in this process because it establishes the foundations of literacy, independent thinking, and effective communication. At this stage, students gradually learn to express their thoughts not only orally but also in written form.

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For primary school students, mastering syntax is particularly important. A learner may possess a relatively rich vocabulary but still experience difficulties in expressing ideas if they cannot combine words correctly or organise sentences logically. The ability to identify individual words does not automatically guarantee the ability to construct a grammatically correct sentence or produce a coherent paragraph.

In this context, syntactic exercises represent an effective methodological instrument for developing written speech. They help students understand grammatical relationships, recognise sentence structures, transform linguistic units, construct independent sentences, and produce connected texts. However, if exercises focus exclusively on identifying sentence elements or memorising grammatical definitions, their contribution to practical writing development may remain limited. Syntactic activities should therefore be integrated with communicative situations, contextual learning, creative writing, and meaningful language use.

The relevance of this research is determined by the need to develop a systematic linguomethodological approach that connects theoretical knowledge of syntax with students' practical written communication.

Research aim and objectives

The main aim of this study is to identify the linguistic, psychological, didactic, and methodological foundations of developing primary school students' written speech through syntactic exercises and to propose an effective system of exercises for classroom practice.

The research objectives are:

to analyse the theoretical relationship between written speech and syntactic competence;

to identify the linguistic and cognitive characteristics of written speech development in primary school;

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to examine the role of syntactic units in developing grammatically correct and coherent written expression;

to classify syntactic exercises according to their educational and communicative functions;

to develop a gradual methodological framework for implementing syntactic exercises;

to propose practical activities and assessment criteria for evaluating students' written speech.

Research object: the process of developing primary school students' written speech in mother tongue education.

Research subject: the linguistic content, methodological principles, teaching techniques, and instructional conditions involved in developing written speech through syntactic exercises.

Research methods: theoretical analysis of linguistic and pedagogical literature, comparison, classification, generalisation, methodological modelling, and the development of practical teaching recommendations.

Research hypothesis: if syntactic exercises are organised systematically, taking into account students' age-related characteristics and communicative needs, and if grammatical knowledge is consistently connected with practical writing, students' written speech can develop in terms of grammatical accuracy, semantic clarity, and logical coherence.

2. Literature review and theoretical foundations

2.1. Written speech as a linguistic and cognitive activity

Written speech is one of the most complex forms of human language activity. It involves the transformation of thoughts into a structured system of linguistic signs. This process requires the coordination of vocabulary selection, grammatical organisation, logical sequencing, spelling, punctuation, and text construction.

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L. S. Vygotsky's research on the relationship between thinking and speech provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding written language development. In Thought and Language, Vygotsky discusses the close relationship between linguistic expression and cognitive processes. His ideas suggest that the development of language contributes to the development of thinking, while the organisation of thought is reflected in linguistic structures [1].

Written speech requires a higher level of conscious organisation than ordinary conversational speech. A writer cannot always rely on immediate feedback, gestures, facial expressions, or situational context. Consequently, the learner must express the intended meaning through carefully selected words and grammatical structures.

A. A. Leontiev's work on speech activity offers another useful perspective. Speech production can be considered in relation to motives, purposes, actions, and outcomes. In educational practice, students should understand why they are writing, whom they are addressing, and what information they intend to communicate [2].

For primary school students, writing instruction should therefore combine linguistic knowledge with meaningful communicative purposes. Activities such as describing an event, writing a short message, explaining a process, or composing a story give students a reason to select and organise syntactic structures.

2.2. The role of syntax in written speech development

Syntax is a central component of the grammatical system of a language. It determines how words are combined into phrases and sentences and how grammatical relationships contribute to meaning. The development of written speech is closely connected with the acquisition of syntactic structures because sentences are the basic grammatical units through which complete thoughts are expressed.

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2.3. Psychological and pedagogical foundations

The development of written speech in primary school is influenced by students' age-related cognitive characteristics. At this stage, learners are gradually developing logical thinking, memory, attention, analytical abilities, and linguistic awareness.

J. Piaget's research on cognitive development highlights the importance of age-appropriate learning activities. Primary school students benefit from concrete examples, visual support, practical exercises, and gradual movement from familiar experiences towards abstract concepts [3].

J. S. Bruner's approach to learning emphasises structured support and the gradual development of independent competence [4]. In language teaching, this principle can be implemented through a sequence in which the teacher first demonstrates sentence construction, then guides students through supported practice, and finally encourages independent writing.

Accordingly, syntactic exercises should be accessible, systematic, communicative, practical, and differentiated. Students should move from observing and analysing language structures to constructing, transforming, and independently using them in meaningful texts.

2.4. Linguomethodological significance of syntactic exercises

The linguomethodological approach integrates linguistic knowledge and teaching methodology. It determines which language units should be taught, how they should be introduced, and how students can use them effectively in practical communication.

Syntactic exercises perform several interconnected functions. Their cognitive function develops the ability to analyse linguistic structures and recognise relationships between words. Their grammatical function strengthens the ability to construct sentences according to language rules. Their communicative function enables learners

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to express intentions and ideas accurately. Their creative function encourages students to transform sentences, generate original statements, and create independent texts.

Thus, syntactic exercises should be regarded not merely as instruments for teaching grammar but also as an important means of developing written communication competence.

3. Methodology

3.1. General methodological approach

The methodological framework proposed in this article is based on the integration of linguistic, communicative, competence-based, and activity-oriented approaches. The linguistic approach focuses on the structure and functioning of language units. The communicative approach connects syntactic exercises with real or simulated communication situations. The competence-based approach emphasises the practical application of linguistic knowledge. The activity-oriented approach encourages students to learn through observation, analysis, construction, transformation, and creative production.

The combination of these approaches provides a comprehensive foundation for developing written speech. It also prevents grammar instruction from becoming detached from the communicative purposes for which language is used.

3.2. Classification of syntactic exercises

For effective classroom implementation, syntactic exercises can be divided into five main groups.

A. Analytical exercises

Analytical exercises develop students' ability to observe and examine the structure of language units. They include identifying the subject and predicate, distinguishing word combinations from individual words, determining relationships between words, identifying sentence boundaries, and analysing grammatical structures.

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Example: “The little boy reads an interesting book.” Students identify the subject (“the little boy”), the predicate (“reads”), and the object (“an interesting book”). The purpose is to develop grammatical awareness and the ability to understand sentence structure.

B. Constructive exercises

Constructive exercises involve creating sentences from given linguistic materials. Students arrange words in the correct order, construct sentences using given words, complete unfinished sentences, combine words into meaningful phrases, or create sentences based on pictures.

Example: given the words “children / in the park / play / happily”, students produce the sentence: “Children play happily in the park.” These activities develop the ability to organise words into meaningful grammatical structures.

C. Transformational exercises

Transformational exercises require students to modify existing sentences while preserving or deliberately changing their meaning. They may expand or shorten sentences, change declarative sentences into interrogative ones, replace repeated words with pronouns, or combine two simple sentences.

Example: “The girl reads” can be expanded into “The young girl reads an interesting story in the classroom.” This activity develops students’ ability to enrich written expression with additional information.

D. Communicative exercises

Communicative exercises are based on meaningful situations and encourage students to use syntactic structures for specific purposes. Examples include writing a short message to a friend, describing a classroom, explaining the rules of a game, writing instructions, and answering questions in complete sentences. These exercises help students understand that grammar serves communication.

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E. Creative exercises

Creative exercises develop independent thinking and the ability to produce original written texts. They include writing a short story based on pictures, continuing an unfinished story, describing a memorable event, creating a dialogue, and writing a paragraph about a familiar topic. Such activities allow students to apply syntactic knowledge in more complex writing situations.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. The relationship between syntactic competence and written communication

The theoretical analysis indicates that syntactic competence plays a significant role in the development of written speech. Students who understand how words are connected and how sentences are structured are better equipped to express ideas accurately and coherently.

This relationship can be explained through four interconnected dimensions. Grammatical accuracy concerns the construction of sentences according to language rules. Semantic clarity ensures that syntactic relationships communicate the intended meaning. Logical coherence concerns the arrangement of sentences and the development of ideas. Expressive diversity involves using different sentence structures to avoid monotonous writing and communicate more effectively.

It is therefore important to ensure that syntactic exercises are not limited to grammatical identification. They should lead towards practical sentence production and independent text creation.

4.2. Practical system of syntactic exercises

Exercise 1. Complete the sentence

Students complete unfinished sentences using appropriate words: “In the morning, the sun ...”; “My best friend ...”; “During the lesson, students ...”; “In spring,

the trees ...". The purpose is to develop sentence completion skills and understanding of semantic relationships.

Exercise 2. Arrange the words

Students arrange words in the correct order to create meaningful sentences. Example: "flowers / beautiful / the garden / in / bloom". A possible answer is: "Beautiful flowers bloom in the garden." The exercise develops awareness of word order and grammatical relationships.

Exercise 3. Expand the sentence

Students add descriptive or explanatory information to simple sentences. Original: "The bird sings." Expanded: "The little bird sings beautifully on a green branch every morning." The exercise develops sentence expansion skills and enriches written expression.

Exercise 4. Combine the sentences

Students combine related sentences using appropriate conjunctions. Original: "It was raining. The children stayed at home." Possible answer: "Because it was raining, the children stayed at home." The exercise develops logical and grammatical connections between ideas.

Exercise 5. Correct the mistakes

Students identify and correct grammatical or structural errors. Incorrect: "The children in the garden plays." Correct: "The children play in the garden." The exercise develops grammatical awareness and self-editing skills.

Exercise 6. Write sentences based on a picture

Students observe an illustration and write three to five sentences describing what they see. They may answer guiding questions: Who or what is shown? Where is the event taking place? What are the people or objects doing? What happens next? What is the overall meaning of the picture? The exercise develops observation, sentence construction, and connected writing.

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Exercise 7. Continue the story

Students receive the beginning of a short story and continue it independently. Example: “One morning, a little girl found a small bird near her house. The bird could not fly because ...” Students complete the story using grammatically correct and logically connected sentences. The exercise develops creative thinking and independent text production.

4.3. The role of syntactic exercises in developing textual coherence

Textual coherence is one of the most important characteristics of developed written speech. A text is coherent when its sentences are connected logically, semantically, and grammatically. Primary school students may produce grammatically correct individual sentences that do not form a unified text.

Consider the following example: “I went to the park. The weather was sunny. I saw my friend. We played football.” The sentences are understandable, but their relationships can be developed further. An improved version is: “On a sunny afternoon, I went to the park. There, I met my friend, and we decided to play football together.” The second version demonstrates a more integrated relationship between ideas.

To develop textual coherence, teachers should introduce exercises involving the use of conjunctions, appropriate pronouns, lexical substitution, chronological sequencing, paragraph organisation, and the removal of unnecessary repetition. Students should also learn to identify the main idea of a paragraph and ensure that every sentence contributes to its development.

In conclusion, the purposeful integration of syntactic exercises into primary language education can create favourable conditions for developing students’ grammatical awareness, independent thinking, and written communication competence. Syntactic work should therefore be regarded not as an isolated component of grammar instruction but as an integral part of the broader process of developing coherent written speech.

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