

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EXERCISES IN DEVELOPING PUPILS' LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES ARTICLE INTRODUCTION

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***Annotation** This article examines the importance of exercises in developing various aspects of students' linguistic competence. It discusses the theoretical aspects and practical implications of exercise selection and implementation, aimed at optimizing foreign language education.*

***Key words:** linguistic competence, foreign language education, exercises, exercise types, language acquisition, communicative proficiency, pedagogical approaches, cognitive engagement.*

The importance of linguistic competence in foreign language education has become increasingly recognized within contemporary pedagogical approaches. Linguistic competence, comprising phonological, grammatical, lexical, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic components, is essential for effective communication and intercultural understanding. Structured exercises play a significant role in developing pupils' linguistic competence, providing practical opportunities for language use, reinforcing theoretical knowledge, and enhancing communicative abilities.

Developing linguistic competence in pupils through effective exercises is a central focus in contemporary foreign language teaching methodologies. Structured and purposeful exercises are instrumental in nurturing and advancing pupils' linguistic abilities, providing opportunities for practical language application, reinforcing essential

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theoretical knowledge, and enhancing overall communicative competence.

Exercises aimed at improving linguistic competence actively involve pupils in the language learning process, supporting the internalization of linguistic structures, vocabulary expansion, and the practical use of language in authentic situations. By engaging learners cognitively, these exercises foster a deeper understanding of language use and strengthen communicative proficiency. Consequently, identifying and implementing effective exercise types is crucial for educators striving to enhance the quality and outcomes of foreign language instruction.

The concept of linguistic competence was first introduced by Noam Chomsky (1965), who defined it as an individual's innate ability to produce and understand grammatically correct sentences. Over time, this notion has been expanded in language pedagogy to include a broader range of components such as phonological, grammatical, lexical, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic knowledge. Contemporary foreign language teaching methodologies emphasize the use of structured exercises as a primary means of developing linguistic competence. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), task-based and communicative language teaching approaches integrate exercises that reflect real-world communication, thereby facilitating meaningful language use. Nation (2007) argues that vocabulary development through spaced repetition and contextual practice significantly enhances lexical competence, which is a critical aspect of overall linguistic ability.

Studies by Littlewood (2004) and Ellis (2003) support the view that exercises must be both meaningful and cognitively engaging to effectively support the internalization of language rules and structures.

Additionally, Nunan (2004) highlights the importance of balancing form-focused and fluency-focused exercises to foster both accuracy and communicative effectiveness in learners.

Differentiated instruction, as explored by Tomlinson (2014), further suggests tailoring exercises to learners' individual levels of readiness, learning styles, and interests to maximize engagement and linguistic development. Moreover, current research emphasizes the role of formative feedback during exercises as essential for reinforcing correct language use and promoting self-regulation in language learners (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

To improve and develop pupils' linguistic competence through exercises in foreign language teaching, it is essential to align activities with the core components of linguistic competence: phonological, grammatical, lexical, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic. Below is a structured overview of effective exercise types and their targeted outcomes:

Competence Type	Objective	Exercise Types
Phonological Competence	Improve pronunciation, intonation, sound discrimination	- Minimal pair drills (e.g., ship/sheep) - Phoneme recognition and reproduction - Choral and individual repetition - Listening discrimination - Tongue twisters
Grammatical Competence	Master syntax and morphology	- Sentence transformation - Gap-filling and sentence completion - Error correction - Grammar-based dialogues - Substitution/chain drills
Lexical Competence	Enrich vocabulary and lexical usage	- Semantic mapping - Contextual guessing from texts -

Competence Type	Objective	Exercise Types
		Vocabulary games - Collocation matching - Vocabulary journals
Pragmatic Competence	Use language appropriately in varied contexts	- Situational role plays - Dialog completion - Politeness comparisons - Rewriting formal/informal texts - Discourse markers practice
Sociolinguistic Competence	Understand/use language based on social norms	- Culture-specific dialogues - Register-shifting tasks - Intercultural awareness discussions - Real-life conversation analysis - Code-switching practice

In sum, the literature underscores that well-designed and strategically implemented exercises serve as powerful tools in fostering pupils' linguistic competence. Such exercises should be communicative, varied in format, and cognitively stimulating to support learners' active participation and sustained language development. literature reference.

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