

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CORPUS-BASED MATERIALS IN DEVELOPING VOCABULARY COMPETENCE OF EFL LEARNERS

*Mustakova Umida Ibragimovna*

*Termiz iqtisodiyot va servis universiteti magistranti*

*Toshpo'latova Mehriniso Kilichevna*

*pedagogika fanlari bo'yicha falsafa doktori (PhD),*

*Termiz iqtisodiyot va servis universiteti*

**Abstract.** This thesis investigates the effectiveness of corpus-based materials in developing vocabulary competence among EFL learners. It explores how authentic concordance lines, collocations, frequency data, and contextual examples improve vocabulary knowledge, retention, and usage. The study emphasizes data-driven learning as a practical method for enriching learners' lexical awareness and communicative performance.

**Key words:** *Corpus-based materials; vocabulary competence; EFL learners; concordance; collocation; authentic language; data-driven learning; vocabulary instruction.*

### **Introduction**

In modern English language teaching, vocabulary competence is considered one of the central components of communicative ability. Learners cannot express their ideas clearly, understand authentic texts, or participate in real communication without sufficient lexical knowledge. Traditional vocabulary teaching often depends on memorizing isolated word lists, direct translation, and textbook examples. However, such methods do not always show learners how words are naturally used in real contexts. Therefore, corpus-based materials have become an important methodological tool in EFL teaching, because they provide learners with authentic examples, frequent word combinations, collocations, and contextual usage patterns.

### **Literature review**

The theoretical basis of corpus-based vocabulary teaching is closely related to the works of Sinclair, Johns, Nation, Hunston, McEnery, Wilson, O'Keeffe, McCarthy, and Römer. Sinclair emphasized the importance of real language evidence in understanding lexical patterns, while Johns developed the idea of data-driven learning, in which learners discover language rules through examples. Nation's studies on vocabulary acquisition show that effective vocabulary learning requires knowledge of

meaning, form, use, collocation, and frequency. Hunston and O’Keeffe et al. also highlight that corpora provide authentic linguistic data and help learners observe how words function in different contexts. Thus, corpus-based materials are not only a source of examples but also a methodological foundation for developing learners’ independent lexical analysis skills.

### **Analysis**

Corpus-based materials are effective because they present vocabulary not as separate words but as units used in real communication. For example, when learners study the word “decision,” a corpus can show frequent combinations such as “make a decision,” “final decision,” “important decision,” and “decision-making process.” This helps learners understand not only the meaning of the word but also its grammatical and lexical environment. As a result, students begin to use vocabulary more naturally and accurately.

Another important advantage of corpus-based materials is their role in developing learners’ collocational competence. Many EFL learners know the dictionary meaning of words, but they make mistakes in word combinations. For instance, they may say “do a decision” instead of “make a decision” or “strong rain” instead of “heavy rain.” Corpus-based tasks help learners compare correct and incorrect combinations through authentic examples. This process strengthens their awareness of natural English usage and reduces translation-based errors.

Corpus-based vocabulary teaching also increases learner autonomy. Instead of depending only on the teacher, students learn how to search for words, analyze concordance lines, identify repeated patterns, and draw conclusions independently. This method changes the learner’s role from passive receiver to active researcher. For example, students can be asked to search for the verbs commonly used with “research,” such as “conduct research,” “carry out research,” and “publish research.” Through such activities, learners develop both vocabulary knowledge and analytical thinking.

The effectiveness of corpus-based materials can also be seen in vocabulary retention and practical usage. Words learned through authentic examples and repeated patterns are remembered better than words memorized from lists. In classroom practice, corpus-based activities may include concordance analysis, collocation matching, frequency comparison, word-family study, and contextual gap-filling tasks. These activities help learners connect meaning, form, and usage. Therefore, corpus-based materials support not only vocabulary expansion but also the development of communicative competence in English.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, corpus-based materials are highly effective in developing vocabulary competence of EFL learners because they provide authentic, contextual, and frequency-based language evidence. They help students understand word meanings, collocations, grammatical patterns, register differences, and real communicative usage. Unlike traditional memorization methods, corpus-based learning encourages students to observe, compare, analyze, and apply vocabulary independently. Therefore, the integration of corpus-based materials into EFL vocabulary instruction can improve learners' lexical accuracy, fluency, retention, and confidence in using English.

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