

## ON THE RELEVANCE OF STUDYING THE TOPICAL UNIT "ART" IN THE SENIOR CLASSES OF THE RUSSIAN SCHOOL

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**Abstract.** *The article emphasizes the need to preserve the practice of studying and its expansion within the framework of the curriculum when the students master the topical unit "art" in the senior grades of the Russian school, which will make possible a more effective and sustainable formation of sociocultural competence in the process of the students' acquiring a foreign language, English in particular. The author of the article describes how viewing various works of art in English lessons can enhance the development of empathy, critical thinking and an understanding of the complex nature of the correlation between art, culture and society. The importance of the lexical aspect when learning a foreign language is emphasized, and examples of the most effective types of exercises for introduction into the educational process at school are given.*

**Keywords:** *art, sociocultural competence, aesthetics, critical thinking, digital media, lexical aspect.*

The field of foreign language teaching has gone a long way in the evolution of successive teaching methods, each of which pursued specific goals, contained different needs of students and theoretical justifications for expediency. These methods represented different approaches to mastering a foreign language. For example, the adherents of the grammatical-translation method aimed to develop logical thinking, memory and horizons. In the process, much attention was paid to grammatical analysis of the text, memorization of rules and translation [1]. Representatives of the direct method associated the lexical unit of a foreign language directly with its concept, bypassing translation into the native language [2]. Audio-linguistic method of Ch. Fries, R. Lado is based on a behaviorist approach to learning and a structural direction in linguistics. The essence of the method is that language is interpreted as a "behavior" that should be taught. According to this method, the language is to be presented in the form of small and difficulty-graded units or structures that students master by repeating, substituting, transforming, etc. [2].

As language education continues to evolve, the teachers are to remain flexible and open to implementing different methodolo-

gies, adapting their approaches to the diverse needs and learning styles of their students.

The lexical component of a language plays a key role in the formation and development of linguistic competence, functioning as one of the fundamental elements the communication is based on. A well-developed vocabulary is crucial for the clear and deep understanding of the meaning of a text or statement, helping to distinguish not only denotative meanings of words, but also connotative shades of meanings and specific cultural references.

Abraham Maslow's well-known hierarchy of human needs states that people are motivated by five categories of needs: physiological (hunger, thirst, etc.), security/protection needs (comfort, constancy of living conditions), social (the need for acceptance by others, social connections, communication, affection, caring for others and attention to oneself, joint activities), self-esteem (respect from others, recognition, achievement of success and appreciation, career growth), spiritual (cognition, self-actualization, self-expression, self-identification) [3].

While basic physiological needs and the need for safety are of paramount importance, higher-level needs become significant and priority as the individual goes through the

stages of physical and psychological maturation. It is worth noting that the need for perception and understanding of beauty, the aesthetic component of the worldview and self-realization through creative activities refers directly to the highest level of the presented hierarchical model.

Adolescence, which forms a personality in many ways, covering the period of study in high school or another educational institution, is a critical stage when individuals actively seek recognition among their peers, their own identity and ways of self-expression [4]. At this stage, against the background of intensive physical and mental development, the need for aesthetics and expression of creative potential is gradually increasing.

The phenomenon of self-expression can be considered as the desire of each individual to demonstrate to the others his/her individual personal characteristics and properties in order to form a certain idea of oneself. This serves as a catalyst for personal growth, the development of emotional intelligence and sociocultural awareness [4].

By studying art, students become familiar with various cultural perspectives, historical contexts and ways of artistic expression, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the diversity of human creativity. This improves not only their aesthetic senses, but also develops empathy, critical thinking and the understanding of the complex interrelationships between art, culture and society.

The integration of art topics into the high school educational program plays a key role in the development of sociocultural competence, which is a multifaceted structure that includes knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for effective integration into society. By getting acquainted with works of art from various cultural contexts, teenagers gain insights into religions, customs, everyday life of different peoples and social strata, which form skills of artistic expression, thereby expanding their horizons and increasing cultural sensitivity. In addition, the study and analysis of art serve as a powerful didactic tool for the formation of a child's personality in the context of individualized learning, developing skills of critical analysis and innovative thinking.

Although the study of art has great potential for the development of socio-cultural competence, it is extremely important to be aware of the characteristic problems that modern children and adolescents may face when getting acquainted with works of art and their interpretation. Rapid technological progress and the pervasive influence of digital media have changed the cognitive processes and psychological structure of attention of the so-called Alpha generation, potentially affecting their ability to fully evaluate and formulate the nuances of artistic works.

In an era characterized by the abundance of visual stimuli and reduced concentration, many students may find it difficult to maintain the focused contemplation and patient observation necessary to unravel the complex semantic layers embedded in works of art. The constant bombardment of fleeting images and rapid information can potentially undermine their ability to engage for a long time and immerse themselves deeply in the artistic experience [5].

Moreover, the omnipresence of digital media and the prevalence of instant gratification in modern society can inadvertently undermine the patience and perseverance necessary to understand the complexity of artistic expression. The immediate availability of information and the desire to obtain the desired results immediately can potentially create obstacles to the development of critical thinking and analytical skills necessary to interpret and understand the intricacies of art.

The rapidly changing form of art itself, with the inclusion of new media, digital platforms and interdisciplinary approaches, can have a certain impact on students who have already been born and continue to develop in the context of global digitalization. Blurring the boundaries between art, technology and modern culture can potentially lead to dissonance between students' life experiences and the historical or theoretical context within which artistic works are usually explored.

In addition, the growing emphasis on standardized testing and academic performance in educational institutions may inadvertently diminish the role of interaction with the art topical unit, thereby reducing students' ability to develop the necessary vocabulary,

critical thinking and abilities to clearly formulate their reactions to artistic works.

To counter these challenges, educators must stay abreast of the changing needs and teaching methods of modern students, adapting pedagogical approaches to promote the inclusion of the topic "art" in the curriculum. This may include using the multisensory method, using digital technologies as educational tools, and creating a framework to bridge the gap between the realities of students' lives and the artistic expression they face. Recognizing and eliminating these potential barriers, teachers can ensure the implementation of the topical unit "art" as a powerful catalyst for the development of socio-cultural competencies, allowing students to more easily navigate and integrate into society in the context of globalization and digitalization.

The key to success in learning a foreign language, including its lexical component, lies in a competent combination of different teaching methods to minimize errors in the learning process. For a harmonious introduction of the topical unit "art" to the curriculum, we see the following types of tasks as the most relevant:

- peripheral task: provide students with a list of words related to art (for example, "tex-

ture", "shade", "perspective", "composition") and ask them to give definitions. This task will allow the students to most fully recognize the shades of meanings and the difference between certain words;

- tasks for making an associative series to a visual element: show students a picture and ask them to name as many words-associations connected with the image as possible (for example, a reaction to a painting by Vincent van Gogh may include such an associative series as "impressionism", "canvas", "oil", "exhibition", "artist", "paints", "shades", "landscape", etc.);

- close-test: students are to be provided with a text describing a work of art, but all words related to the topic "art" are to be removed; the students might be asked to fill in the blanks based on an understanding of the context and the topic covered.

These tasks not only introduce students to new vocabulary related to art, but also encourage active participation in the learning process, critical thinking and the application of lexical knowledge in meaningful contexts. By contributing to a deeper understanding of the meanings of lexical units and the use of art-related vocabulary, students can develop their skills in interpreting, analyzing and evaluating works of art.

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**ОБ АКТУАЛЬНОСТИ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ТЕМАТИЧЕСКОГО БЛОКА «ИСКУССТВО» В  
СТАРШИХ КЛАССАХ РОССИЙСКОЙ ШКОЛЫ**

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***Аннотация.** В статье акцентируется необходимость сохранения практики изучения и ее расширение в рамках учебного плана при освоении учащимися тематического блока «искусство» в старших классах российской школы, что сделает возможным более эффективное и устойчивое формирование социокультурной компетенции в процессе освоения обучающимися иностранного языка, английского в частности. Автор статьи описывает, как рассмотрение различных произведений искусства на уроках английского языка может активизировать развитие эмпатии, критического мышления и понимания комплексного характера корреляции искусства, культуры и общества. Подчеркивается важность лексического аспекта при изучении иностранного языка, приводятся примеры наиболее эффективных типов упражнений для интродукции в образовательный процесс в школе.*

***Ключевые слова:** искусство, социокультурная компетенция, эстетика, критическое мышление, цифровые медиа, лексический аспект.*