



INNOVATIVE TEACHING METHODS OF ENGLISH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the area of idiomatic expressions as being important linguistic units for learners of English as a Foreign Language. The study aimed at investigating the role of innovative teaching methods of idiomatic expressions in improving writing and communicative competence and whether these expressions have effective role in improving the students' performance in language. The study highlighted the important part that idiomatic expressions play in English as a foreign language. However, learners with cultural literacy and language weakness are often challenged by idioms. There are several different ways to improve learners' idiom comprehension. The present article investigates what types of innovative teaching approaches and methods can be used when teaching idiomatic expressions to learners of English. It suggests that idioms need to be learned so increasing the learners' awareness of these unique words and phrases can help them learn to identify and interpret them with greater success.

During independence years of the Republic of Uzbekistan, special attention is paid to the study of foreign languages. We all understand perfectly well that today, in the context of global integration, widespread introduction of computer technologies and the Internet into everyday life, there is no future without knowledge of foreign languages and fluency in them it skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and collaboration demand teachers to increase learner effectiveness and efficiency as well as learner engagement and satisfaction. Consequently, they must create a

stimulating and effective learning environment which brings about more positive student attitudes toward learning. This kind of innovative teaching becomes necessity when teaching English idiomatic expressions. Idiomatic expressions are phrases that carry different meanings than the literal definition of their component words. Therefore, there are some problems in both processes of understanding and translating them. Understanding idiomatic expressions is considered to be problematic for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learner. Idioms are often unpredictable in meaning, that is, their



meanings cannot always be derived from the literal meanings of the constituent parts. Many idiomatic phrases appear to be decomposable or analyzable, with the meanings of their parts contributing independently to their overall figurative meaning.

Culture plays an important role in the course of the idiom interpretation. It, therefore, requires enhancing cross-cultural awareness and needs open-minded understanding of the culture of the second language from different aspects.

Each language has its own idiomatic expressions, although they can vary across borders. In America, when one is accused of being crazy, he is referred to as "off the wall" or "over the deep end." In the United Kingdom, he may be "sixpence short of a shilling," "mad as a bag of ferrets" or "mad as a box of frogs."

Learning idiomatic expressions in English may bring about some benefits for EFL learners. Firstly, learning the idiomatic expressions of another language will be a guide to understanding the humor and character of that culture as idioms constitute an important cultural element of the language. Secondly, it helps them grasp the peculiarities of the English language.

Traditional methods of teaching idioms focus on rote learning and memorization. They are time- and effort-consuming, as learners picked up idioms discretely without associations between forms and meanings. There has been the need of a flexible and dynamic approach towards the teaching of English idioms. This paper therefore attempts to provide a strategy for the teaching and learning of idioms in the EFL classroom which, in turn, build up their metaphoric competence, while making the learning experience

enjoyable. It may offer some useful guidelines to teachers of English on improvement of their methodological strategies used for teaching idiomatic expressions.

Traditionally, the teaching of idiomatic expressions has fallen into neglect and been conducted by presenting idiomatic expressions in isolation, as though they were an obscurity of language. More recent materials illustrate—figurative usages with cartoons, group them under topics (e.g. weather, food, colors, etc), list them in vocabulary sections, accompany them with their literal paraphrase or insert them in random sentences as to provide contextual clues for their interpretation. Whichever the case, nevertheless, students are not provided with the necessary tools to come to terms with figurative usages, but rather—they come to think of English idioms as though they were the anomalous creations of a whimsical people. The memorization of figurative expressions which at first sight present a clear mismatch between form and meaning creates a heavy learning burden on the student, which usually leads to a lack of motivation and failure in comprehension, retention, and production of idioms. In this regard, the role of the teacher in reducing the learning burden of the students is essential. Instead of fostering learning idioms by heart, the teacher should draw attention to systematic patterns which underlie such expressions. Adequate knowledge and appropriate use of idioms in an EFL setting is an important indicator of communicative competence of English. The comprehension and productions of idioms is included in the figurative competence which includes a set of abilities, such as the skill to decode



the various (dominant, peripheral, polysemous) meanings of a word, the ability to suspend a literal-referential strategy, to produce novel figurative expressions and to construct a coherent semantic representation related to a given figurative expression. Thus, to create a meaningful environment for EFL learners to use idioms, the present paper suggests some innovative teaching strategies in which the Innovative Teaching of English Idiomatic Expressions for EFL Learners.

They integrated the teaching of metaphorical idioms into the teaching of narrative and descriptive essay writing as illustrated below: 1. The teacher asked the students to write a three- to four-paragraph essay describing an experience of being extremely angry. 2. After submitting the first draft, the students were introduced to the concept of metaphors. 3. Two-page handouts were distributed in class as the teaching materials. The content was a few idioms as examples. 4. To illustrate the concept of metaphor, a short article about issues of emotion controls was given on the first page of the handout; the students were asked to read over the article and to circle the idiomatic expressions used in it.

In the end of the class, the students were told to revise their first draft at home, and were encouraged to integrate as many idiomatic expressions as possible. They submitted both the original and the revised essays a week later. The essays were then analyzed by the teacher to investigate how the students used idiomatic expressions. Creating conversation using idioms In this teaching strategy, not only the students understand the idioms; they also learn how to use them contextually. As most idioms belong to simple categories, e.g. idioms with time, animals, parts of body, etc. the teacher can ask the students to have some categories and find some sample idioms under the chosen categories. Then, they use them in simple conversations where the meanings of the idioms are clearly understood.

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