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COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING ENGLISH IDIOMS

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Annotation

Communicative language teaching methods (CLT) are commonly considered as an effective approach in developing students' communicative competence and communication skills. It emphasizes real-life experience and focuses on developing learners' ability to use language in authentic contexts. Idioms are an essential conversational component in each language, and reflect the long history of the language development. Knowledge of idioms as specific reproducible set expressions in the vocabulary is very significant because they often encapsulate a nationally specific cultural outlook, and demonstrate the level of the advanced mastering of the foreign language.

Keywords: Communicative language teaching, idiom, idiomaticity, flora components, project-based language learning

Introduction

Usage-based theories of language learning suggest that phraseology must be studied as a part of vocabulary. Teaching phraseology is a part of cultural approach in foreign teaching methodology and arranging vocabulary studying. However, when learning English, we often encounter expressions that at first sight might seem understandable, but in the context they are difficult to be comprehended as meaningful. Such expressions in English are called *idioms*. Idioms are word groups that are used as set expressions whose meaning is not deducible from that of their components and when translated word for word might render absurdity. In fact, idioms are an essential conversational component of each language, and reflect the long history of the language development and change. Knowledge of idioms shows the level of the mastering of the English language as idioms are often unique to that language. Difficulties in understanding idioms are often due to the fact that it is practically impossible to translate an idiom comprehensively and unprofessional attempts might lead to perception distortion.



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The main part

Features of idioms are due to their linguistic peculiarities which, in general, can be summarized as conventionality, idiomaticity, reproducibility, and possessing meanings not deducible from those of the individual components, e.g. *to rain cats and dogs*, *to set the Thames on fire*, *Hobson's choice*, *Pandora's box* and the like. Idioms function as an integral unit in the sentence structure, their constituting components lose their linguistic and semantic independence and should be perceived holistically (4:25).

Idioms belong to the most difficult vocabulary subsystem for the English learners, because they pose a special challenge. It is not only because there are thousands of them, making learning the whole stock almost impossible, but also because they are confusing due to their very nature. Idioms are unpredictable, the meaning of their components do not match the meanings of the idioms *per se*. It is hard for our students *to make heads or tails out* of any idiom, so we can only imagine the confusion of an English learner who's trying to make sense of a new language in all of its glory - vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar, slang, and then... idioms. They can be utterly confusing and very difficult to keep all the phrases simultaneously in your mind (1:3).

For this reason, it can be more effective to teach and learn idioms by dividing them into various semantic groups thus making it possible to study the idiomatic structures of the language grouped by certain features, for example, expressing behavior, character, events, weather, etc. Our teaching practice shows that this conceptual approach proves effective and makes it easier for learners to remember idioms by concepts and by contexts.

For this article we have chosen idioms with flora words as their components. Flora plays an important role in human life as well as in nature. English has a lot of idioms with flora names, including proverbs and sayings, such as "*Forbidden fruit is sweet*", "*He that would eat the fruit must climb the tree*", "*The rotten apple injures its neighbours*", "*As the tree, so the fruit*", etc.

Idioms with a floral component make up a large part of the vocabulary and have a high frequency of use. In addition, the semantics of this group of idioms very often has a cultural specificity that must be taken into account in the translation process.

The fact that human beings have long pursued the analogy between themselves and the plants, finds consistent expression in the languages. The choice of properties



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of a certain flora word as a prototype of rethinking is due to two reasons. First reason is that the peculiarities of human thinking, which leads to the formation of similar images in different cultures. Secondly, this choice may depend on the cultural and historical development of the country, its geographical location and political structure. According to many researchers, national-cultural specifics of phraseological units are connected with the so called non-equivalent idioms which exist in any language. There are cases when some phrases in different languages having the same meaning, create different images, expressing nationally specific attitude towards the object described. For example: *at a snail's pace* – *toshbaqadek*; *green thumb* – *qo'li gul*; *toffy nosed* – *takabburun*, etc. (2:113)

That is why it is particularly important to establish universal and unique features in floral symbols, which can sometimes explain the mechanisms of formation of the idiomatic concept.

The idiom "*to be as fresh as a daisy*" is often used to characterize a person who looks and feels cheerful and energetic. When talking about men, we can translate this idiom into Uzbek as "*Kirchillama yigitdek*" and into Russian as "*свежий, как огурчик*". For instance, the English sentence "I need to sleep for a couple of hours and then I will be *as fresh as a daisy*" can be rendered in to Uzbek as "*Ozgina mizg'ib olsam, qirchillama yigitdek* (or "*onadan yangi tug'ilgandek*") bo'laman. Into Russian we can render this sentence as "*Мне нужно поспать нескольких часов, потом буду свеж, как огурчик*".

The origin of the English idiom "*to be as fresh as a daisy*" is due to interesting features of daisies. The name of this flower in English comes from the Old English phrasal expression *daeges eage* - the eyes of the day. It is a grassland plant which has flowers with a yellow disc and white rays. This name was given to the plant due to the fact that its flowers open in the morning and close at night often only in sunny weather. In the rain or at night, daisies close their petals, as if they "fall asleep". A cheerful and good-looking person reminds the English of a freshly opened flower. Interestingly, the word 'daisy' is metaphorically used in a great number of technical terms, e.g. daisy-chain, daisy-cutter, daisywheel, etc.

The idiom "*to beat around/about the bush*" is used when a person during a conversation does not get straight to the point of the discussion, or does not speak directly, preferring to hint, understate and hide the truth. For example: "*Don't beat around the bush—just tell me the truth*", which into Uzbek might be rendered as



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“*Aravani quruq olib qochmasdan, dangal gapni ayt*”. In Russian the sentence corresponds to “*He ходи вокруг да около – просто скажи мне правду*”. First recorded in English in 1572, this expression originally may have alluded to beating around the bushes for game.

The idiom “*to be as welcome as the flowers in May*” means to be desired, like flowers in May. After a cold and long winter, nothing pleases the eye and soul more than blooming flowers. It is May that is commonly the time when flowers blossom and please us with colors and fragrance of the nature. For instance: “The good news was *as welcome as flowers in May*”; in Uzbek: *Yangilikni intizorlik bilan kutmoqdamiz*; in Russian: “*Мы с нетерпением ждем хороших новостей*”.

An effective way to remember and use idioms correctly is to learn about the origin of these idioms. Strange idioms become clear to us when we learn how they appear. Each idiom has a story, following this each idiom is to have the basis of its appearance. Idioms reflect the culture of the country in which they appeared (America, Canada, Australia, England, etc.) so their story of passing is different. Despite the history of their origin, having studied and learned them, idioms will not be so complex or incomprehensible. For this, we can offer contextual approach to teaching them to the Uzbek learners.

Idioms are an integral part of speech communication, the phrases which are frozen and unchanged in the language significantly enrich speech, making it more colorful. Idioms promote the expression and enhancement of emotional reaction, allow to create short imaginative response (6). For example: “*The rotten apple injures its neighbors*”, in Uzbek: “*Bitta tirraqi buzoq butun podani bulg’aydi*” (3:12).

It is commonly admitted that understanding and translating idioms often present difficulties, since they are not subject to literal translation because the components’ meanings are lost. On the other hand, such phraseological units give the language a bright emotional coloring. When translating idioms it is necessary to consider whether their equivalents or analogues exist in the target language.

Conclusion

When teaching phraseology, several of the progressive methodologies mentioned earlier can be adapted to effectively incorporate the learning and understanding of phrases, idiomatic expressions, and fixed expressions. The Communicative Language Teaching methods can be applied to phraseology by



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emphasizing the communicative functions of phrases and idiomatic expressions in real-life contexts (5). Learners engage in communicative tasks and activities that involve the use of phrases to convey specific meanings or intentions. Project-based language learning method can involve the use of phraseology in researching, planning, and presenting information related to a specific topic or theme. Learners may collaboratively create presentations, reports, or multimedia projects that incorporate phrases and idiomatic expressions relevant to their project goals. By integrating phraseology into these progressive methodologies, language instructors can create engaging and meaningful learning experiences that help learners develop their understanding and use of phrases in authentic communication.

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