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Annotation: *This research work aims at showing problems and solutions of translation in teaching of idiomatic language and focuses on dealing with these problems via implementing a number of interactive games and activities in the classroom*

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It goes without saying that, figurative language is the use of descriptive words, phrases and sentences to convey a message that means something without directly saying it. Its creative wording is used to build imagery to deepen the audience's understanding and help provide power to words by using different emotional, visual and sensory connections. In both literature and daily communication, many sentences contain figurative language. It makes meaning by asking the reader or listener to understand something by virtue of its relation to some other thing, action or image. It is also called as a metaphorical language and compares things in order to give them more detail. We use this language to help the reader better understand what we are trying to describe.

Figurative language is one of the units that pushes students to dive deep and use their analytical thinking skills. While I may love teaching figurative language, I realize not every teacher shares the same enthusiasm.

How do you teach idioms in a fun way?

Draw Idioms (their literal and figurative meanings) ...

Do Charades with Small Groups. ...

Use Idioms as Part of a Class Discussion. ...

Match Idioms with Their Meanings. ...

Read Mentor Texts with Idioms. ...

Play Idiom Games Online. ...

Use Task Cards.

Should we or shouldn't we teach English idioms to ESL students? Although it is uncommon for ESL students to use them comfortably and effectively, if we choose to not teach them idioms, they'll be missing an important cultural element of the language they strive to speak fluently. However, it stands to reason that idioms should be taught to upper-intermediate or advanced students, individuals who are ready to take their English fluency to the next level.

To make sure that the time you spend teaching idioms is not time wasted, follow these steps and instructions:

How To Proceed

1. Choose 5 to 8 idioms that may be easily grouped

Most idioms fall into simple categories, like idioms with animals or parts of the body. Choose 5 to 8 from any category, for example idioms with time. If you choose more than 10, you'll only succeed in overwhelming your students, and they won't remember any of the idioms they saw in class. So, to teach idioms with time, you may teach the 8 idioms found in this worksheet called Time Flies When You're Having Fun. Before presenting the idioms, make sure students understand that they are usually used in spoken English, and rarely in written form, with some exceptions (they are widely used on the Internet, in blogs, ezine articles, etc...but students must understand that their use is informal).

2. Introduce idioms in context, never in isolation

Some ESL teachers simply go over a list of English idioms and their definitions or explanations. However, to ensure that students not only understand them, but also learn to use them, present idiom examples in context, for example, in simple conversations where the meaning of the idiom is clear. To introduce the idiom to give someone a hard time, present a conversation like this one:

- Juan: Hey Sarah, you look sad. What's up?

- Sarah: Well, I didn't play very well today during volleyball practice, and my teammates were not very understanding. They said I was clumsy and had to focus more on the game. They said a 5-year old girl played better than me.

- Juan: Oh! I'm so sorry they gave you such a hard time.

Ask students to guess or figure out the meaning of the idiom. Correct as necessary. Ask them to provide other examples of what it means to give someone a hard time. Then, move on to another conversation for another idiom.

3. Students create conversations using idioms

Remember that the goal is to get students to not only understand idioms, but also learn how to use them effectively. Divide the class into pairs. Each pair of students gets one or two idioms to work with. They must write a conversation and use this idiom in it. Walk around the classroom to assist students and check for accuracy.

4. Students act out their conversations

Each pair stands before their classmates and acts out the conversation they wrote. This way they not only practice using the idiom phrases, they hear other examples from classmates, other ways in which these idioms may be included in conversation.

5. Practice with games and activities

6. Use real life, authentic material

Show students how some of these idioms are used in the media, in newspaper and magazine articles, and in songs, cartoons, videos, advertisements, etc...Thanks to the Internet, all you have to do is Google an idiom, and you'll find plenty of sources! If you Google, "gave him a hard time", you'll run across a Daily Mail article that states voters gave a British politician a hard time. You don't have to read the entire article, just the headline and the basics will do for students to see how this idiom is used in a newspaper headline.

Just remember to keep it real. Your students need to know that there are real people out there who actually speak like this, and say these things. Soon enough, they may feel ready to start using some of these themselves.

Only introduce a few idioms at a time

Don't overwhelm students by throwing lists of phrases at them. Even if they are all common, useful idioms, students aren't going to remember a few dozen things from one lesson. Instead, introduce a few idioms at a time. It can also help to keep them all related to a theme. For example, focus one lesson on a few animal-related idioms, such as "work like a dog," "dog days," "raining cats and dogs," and "the cat's out of the bag."

Use stories

Telling a story can help students understand and remember the meaning behind the words. "Kill two birds with one stone," for example, lends itself well to a simple story. You can then have your kids discuss the meaning of the phrase, and come up with other ways that they could "kill two birds with one stone."

You can also use stories that contain a lot of idioms, such as the Amelia Bedelia books. This series is rich in idioms and puns, and with a main character who often completely misinterprets them. Reading and discussing it with your students can be a lot of fun, and a great way to get them thinking about idioms and their meanings.

Use visuals

Whether it's pictures or acting something out, visuals are another great way to convey meaning and help students remember what they've learned. After all, a picture is worth a thousand words, and actions speak louder than words. Drawing or acting out idioms can make a great review game, too. Have students draw or act out an idiom while the other students try to guess it.

Use conversations

Introducing idioms through simple conversations can give students an idea of how the idioms are used in real-life situations. It's also a good exercise for inferring the meaning of an unfamiliar idiom based on context.

Say the idioms regularly in the classroom

Keep track of the idioms that you've taught your students, and make it a point to use them every now and then in class. This will not only help students remember the

phrase and its meaning, but will also help them get a feel for how the idiom is used in everyday speech.

Keep it fun and light

Teaching idioms is about helping the students communicate and understand conversational English. Whatever activities or games you do, keep it low-stress and focus on getting your students comfortable with understanding and using the idioms that they know.

One of the interesting activity for English learners is to teach idioms through videos, films or TV programmes. In order to teach them in this way, a teacher is required to cut a little part of the film which idiom or several idioms are used and show them to students. Having shown the video, they should find which idiom is just told by a speaker. It is an interesting and easy way to teach idioms. Because, it is obvious that, rather than learning idioms by heart through dictionary, this method is considered to be much more effective.

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