



THE ROLE OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Abstract:

According to Boers in MED Magazine, all languages have idioms and are full of them. In each language native speakers tend to use idiomatic expressions because there are some situations or words that is mostly explained in figurative meaning to understand each other adequately. However, it is the natural phenomena that non-native speakers face challenges while learning language because they cannot even imagine what the idiomatic expression is mainly based on

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Non-native learners are found in the different parts of the world. The usage of idiomatic expressions is considered as one of the most important issues for those speakers and is regarded as an essential part of English Language competence. Idiomatic expressions highlight the fluency and proficiency of the learner that they are aware of complex sentences which express different meanings while translated by words and figurative meaning. Idiomatic expressions are mostly used in communication in order to clearly and effectively emphasize the ideas, sound more fluent and helps to understand more efficiently.

According to Boers in MED Magazine, all languages have idioms and are full of them. In each language native speakers tend to use idiomatic expressions because there are some situations or words that is mostly explained in figurative meaning to understand each other adequately. However, it is the natural phenomena that non-native speakers face challenges while learning language because they cannot even imagine what the idiomatic expression is mainly based on. Even though, if the learner has not adequate information about the meaning of an idiomatic expression it is highly likely for them to use it in an inappropriate situation and feel ashamed or even laughed by their peers which express having poor information about that language usage. For example, in case native speaker uses the idiom "go in one ear and out of the other" it is almost impossible for an unfamiliar non-native speaker to imagine that such an idiom is used to describe forgetting something very quickly. The translation into Russian Language is "В одно ухо влетело, из другого вылетело". If you say that something goes in one ear and out the other, you mean that someone pays no attention to it, or forgets about it immediately. This idiomatic expression is commonly used to criticize a person who has not been paying attention to the speaker. For example: You can give him advice, but it just goes in one ear and out the other. In Russian this sentence is translated > Вы

можете давать ему советы, но они просто влетают в одно ухо и вылетают из другого. [2008:2]

It should be noted that idioms can be formal and informal so let's look through the meanings and differences in both formal and informal idiomatic expressions. As Laflin mentioned English idiomatic expressions are used in both formal and informal communications. It is estimated that the English language contains at least 25,000 idiomatic expressions (Idiomatic Expression, 2014). Both in formal and informal style of the English language has defined idiomatic expressions however, there is a big difference in meaning. While learning formal idiomatic expression it is important to use more understandable dictionary which can provide you the exact meaning of the words which you can use in formal and official meetings or communications. However, finding out the meaning of idiomatic expressions are not as easy as one might think. For instance, the meaning of some idiomatic expressions is not always included in the dictionaries. Therefore, checking the meanings of idiomatic expressions from different dictionaries or asking from professional teacher can prevent from misunderstandings and fear of making mistakes when using them in formal events. During our analysis we have found some formal and informal idiomatic expressions and their roles in Russian Language. For example, people often use the idiom "I'm snowed under with work at the moment" the translation into Russian "В данный момент я завален работой" originally this is an idiom based on the idea of a great deal of work having the characteristics of 'snow' (deep, overwhelming everything else and making movement difficult). However, this expression has been used so frequently that it no longer gives people a mental picture of snow. Another example to the formal usage of the idiomatic expression is "in the light of" which means "because of" "Views on depression have changed **in the light of** recent studies of the brain" in



this sentence **in the light of** means because of the recent studies of the brain. Although, there are a number of idiomatic expressions both in formal and in informal style, it is sometimes can be challenging to differentiate them without sufficient background knowledge. [1996:3]

Now, let's look through the importance of using idioms in communication which highlights that the speaker has deep understanding about the language and it makes the speaker sound more like a native speaker and fluent, due to idioms are daily and repeatedly used by native speakers of English language. Nevertheless, it should be noted that, some learners tend to use idioms without having enough information about its exact meaning which may lead listener to different misunderstandings. Therefore, before using idioms looking through and learning it adequately makes sure the speaker that he or she is using it properly without having any doubts and fear about making mistakes. For example, in case meeting a native speaker people mostly try to have a chance to talk with them and check their levels, while communicating they attempt to leave a positive impression and use as more idioms as they can without being sure whether the idiom is appropriate to that situation or not.

According to Ambrose J, idioms share cultural and historical information and broadens people's understanding and manipulation of a language. The numerous numbers of people who utilize idiomatic expressions in communication are the native speakers whom are aware of the culture and customs of the country that they are living in. Nevertheless, not only native speakers, but also non-native speakers can learn the culture of other country through the process of learning idiomatic expression of the country that they want to live. For instance, while learning the idiomatic expression people attempt to use them in everyday life, and when they are communicating with native speakers they can talk about the customs, cultures, clothes, holidays, dishes, music and dance which might have the word connection that forces the learner to find out the meaning or translation into L1 and in this way they are likely to get interested in gaining more information about the country. For example, "My students caught me with my pants down on Monday. I forgot about the field trip" in this sentence **caught with one's pants down** means unprepared, or in an embarrassing situation, the translation in Russian Language is "застать врасплох" which means to catch someone or something suddenly without alert. [2008:1]

The usage of idiomatic expressions can be challenging for the people who do not have enough vocabulary range, due to finding the meaning of the idioms by

guessing might not always be true, in order to catch the whole concept of the idioms several investigations should be made by the help of the dictionary books, or research from the online web sites. Learning idioms is much more different and requires more effort than memorizing one single word whereas words have one defined translation, the idioms should not only be translated but the meaning or definition should be looked through to acquire a qualified understanding of idiom.

To conclude, there are unlimited number of idiomatic expressions that might have various meanings, levels and types. Some might face difficulties in the process of learning idiomatic expressions in comparison with a single word, however, there is nothing impossible in the XXI century, with the help of new advancements that are being made by scientists even the learning processes of children, pupils and students are becoming more enjoyable and effective.

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