

HANDLING OF ENGLISH IDIOMS WITH INDIGENOUS EQUALIVANTS:A PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE AT INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

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Abstract:

There has been a significantintetest of EFL linguistsfrom single vocabulary items to pharseolgy in the foreign language teachibg of English (EFL). As meaning is present in larger stretches of utterance, it has attracted the interest of many lexicologists and lexicographers to focus on the phenomn of these multiword items. Handling of idioms has been a challenging task not only for the EFL learners butalso for the teachers as well. Various strategies have been used by EFL teachers to present English idioms in a learner friendly manner but the results have not been upto mark. One of the reasons of this critical situation is that idioms are deeply rooted in the culture and it becomes exceedingly difficult to convey the cultural background of the EFL idioms to the non-native learners. The proposed research is a step towards handling English idioms with the help of idiomatic equivalents of learner'sindegiouslanguge. It is assumed that with the help of learner's indigenous language, the issue of pedagogy of EFL idioms may be improved.

KeyWords: Idioms, EFL, pedagogy, learners, indigenous

Introduction:

Phrasology has been the focus of recent studies in EFL context. The reason behind this focus was that as meaning was always present in the context, it was easy for EFL learners to comprehend the foreign language in the form of multi word combinations, providing the required context of the utterance. Idioms is one the pharesological combinations that is comparatively more difficult to handle notonly for learners but also for teachers. Their complexity originates from the fact that meaning is not preset in their constituent rather it is present in their cultural norms over a longer stretch of time.It has been observed that English is characterized by a high frequency of idiomatic expressions, especially in academic writing. Hence, this situation involves special focus regarding this dimension of pharasology in an EFL class. Giora(1997) states that the idiom is a multifaceted item which is longer than a word- shape but smaller than a sentence and the meanings of idioms and idiomatic expressions cannot be deduced from its constituent parts.Morphologically speaking,Grant& Bauer. (2004) makes a distinction between two sorts of idioms as Weak ones, where predictions concerning to the meaning of idioms based on lexemes, can be made by a language user or a speaker while Strong ones are the idioms whose meanings cannot deduced from its constituents.Characteristics of idioms are compositionality /Non-compositionality, frozenness of forms, metaphoricality, and institutionalization of idioms.

Cultural Roots of Idioms

The origin of idioms may be found in the cultural myths of a particular language.Chuang (2013) acknowledged that the complication of idiomatic expressions most likely communicated the reality as these idiomatic expressions are deep-seated in the target language.

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This point of view echoes the association stuck between culture and language. These are two components of each one that they should by no means be separated. For that reason, in the better achievement of target language, for language learners, some background culturally information is obligatory. From my point of view, both culture and language are predictable and nonappearance of any one of them is unbelievable and unfeasible in the real world. Because they are the inventors of each other; sorting out them would look like to a book which is lacking scripts or a body restricted of a soul.

Literatue Review

Liontas (2001) acknowledges clearly that in the process of learning and instructing idioms and orphraselocalexpressions, the context can successfully make possible the comprehension. His study makes the conclusion that on learning and understanding idioms, the nonexistence of context generates obstructions.

Liu (2002) carries out the study in order to examine the metaphorical concepts which are observed in American and Chinese English as a foundation for idioms. The basic purpose of her investigation is to observe the sound effects on the figurative conceptualization in the respect of various idioms exercised by different beliefs and values. Her results endorse that in American society, various fields as driving, sports and business have performed a significant job and gave birth to a lot of figurative idioms, while the family, Chinese opera and eating have exercised a great inspiration on Chinese culture to produce many impressive idioms.

Irujo(1986) holds an investigation on (60) (ESL) college students' in Taiwan in order to inspect their understanding of English collocations and errors .A test was planed that comprised over four types as pure idioms, free combinations, figurative idioms and restricted collocations. Specific outcomes demonstrate as their knowledge of English collocations is not satisfactory particularly regarding pure idioms and in this process, attribution of their first language transfer is negative.

Cooper (1999) investigates the procedure of comprehending L2 idioms by 18 non-native speakers of a range of linguistic backgrounds by exploring their online strategies whereas interpreting the meanings of 20 idioms in a written perspective. The target idioms were chosen from an American dictionary based on the standard of the level of formality, i.e. 8 idioms were standard, 8 were colloquial or conversational and four were informal. There was no confirmation of subjects' former understanding of the idioms tested even though all of the participants had been existing in U.S for 5 years on normal studying English for numerous months. Idioms were integrated in a context of one-or two-sentence length that included cues for understanding, written on cards and offered to participants in succession to an individual mode.

Watsons' (1998) study deals with different types of idioms as formal and informal. He also demonstrates the practical and suitable usages of the idioms in the languages along with the problems faced by the speakers of second language in order to select the suitable idiom in an appropriate situation. The study also put light on the twists and turns of the idiom which are supposed to be welcomed by English learners particularly. Having in view the inclinations of English learners concerning to the appropriate usages of idioms, he divides them into two groups. The participants feel that their English improves sound by using idioms profusely and their usage means; they don't think them suitable and formal to be used in most of the situations effectively. Variety of idioms

is exceptionally extensive and wide spread. They are used in all of the situations, common as well as official ones purposely.

Pedagogy of English Idioms

The issue of multi-word items and idiomaticity is an area of interest to applied linguistics although its pedagogical features with regard to how they are learnt and processed in use (receptively or productively) stay behind relatively uncultivated. Wide-ranging work in the fields of terminology and lexicology has ceaselessly assigned idioms to the border of the vocabulary scheme of language pedagogy, yet all the facts express that this is obviously not the case. Idioms are prevalent in all languages and unmistakably ever-present (e.g. kick the bucket, bite the bullet, and jump the gun), with idiomatic practice present in all aspects of our lives. In this respect, idioms have most time and again been characterized as the ‘ornamental frill’ of a language, usually connected with provability, informality and influence, more resembling a euphemism and figure of speech, as they are typically used to demonstrate in an implicit and more reasonable manner a persistent situation of particular public interest (e.g. spill the beans) in terms of tangible stuff or relations (Nunberg, 1994). Observably, the unrelenting and adaptable character of the obvious fact of idiomaticity calls for a consistent theoretical and empirical background if we desire to establish its role and donation in course of next language attainment.

Idioms are considered a significant component of culture and language. Their meanings are not unsurprising that why do they create problems for ESL teachers. Non-native speakers can feel themselves in “hot water” semantically when they come upon idioms. According to numerous ESL teachers and learners, these idioms prove a stumbling block at the time of teaching and learning English idioms semantically. Noticeably, this happens because their abstract meaning cannot be caught from their concrete structure semantically. The study gazes at the consumption of expected ESL teacher’s pedagogies of English idioms semantically when learners come across difficulties while basically listening, reading, speaking and writing English. It also fixes its explanation on practical methods while teaching idioms semantically. Irujo (1986) demonstrates, idioms are not unembroidered that’s why they do not indicate what do they represent. L2 learners fight back with the suitable practice of idioms and mere suggestion of idioms is not adequate. He additionally declares that for English learners, using idioms suitably is particularly a hard assignment even yet if they identify the proposed meanings. For that reason, teaching idioms becomes a tough objective for ESL teachers since the meanings of the manuscript cannot be resolute in the course of words by word analysis of every individual word.

It is a matter of great implication to form an understandable concept how to instigate a methodology which will be used in teaching idioms. On the other hand, discussion about the traditional method and the theoretical metaphors instruction is still hot in respect of teaching idioms. Liu (2008) also conducts a study so that to judge a suitable method in order to teach idiomatic expressions semantically. In this study, an extended context is focused as stories because extended context possess a remarkable consequence on learning idiomatic expression rather than uncomplicated instruction the senses of the terminology.

Liu (2008) recommends three aspects to believe in order to put into practice conceptual metaphors in idioms teaching, first, the metaphorical competence, second, metaphorical

consciousness, third, cultural background respectively. In this study of conceptual metaphor instruction is focused because this is helpful for L2 learners to demonstrate English idioms in an easy way.

In the similar spirit, Feng (2007) performs a research on learners of English in Taiwan and well thought-out that conceptual descriptions and metonymies have proved very helpful in idiom understanding. He proved that their primary contact with idioms gives the impression that it supports and develops learners' understanding about unknown idioms. He further comments that several factors as the volume of vocabulary, the knowledge level of the learners and theoretical metaphor theory knowledge are obligatory to understand the idiomatic expressions.

Aldaresh (2008) focuses at handling this problem of EFL idioms by translating idiomatic English phrasal verbs into Arabic. To accomplish the task of pedagogy of English idioms, paraphrase tests were conducted by the researcher in order to recognize the types of errors and transitional drawbacks. The outcome strengthened the fact that problems and errors were found in their translation process. The errors included mistranslation, literal translation, violation of the Arabic language system and tumbling idioms to sense, modification of register, erroneous deliverance of speech acts, practice of local dialects and Arabic colloquial in correct Arabic collocation.

Research Design

The undertaken research is experimental in design. Most of the experimental research in social sciences and especially in linguistics is based on two groups. The experimental method properly surfaced in educational psychology approximately with the rotate of century, in the standard studies by Thorndike and Woodworth (Cronbach, 1957). Two EFL groups from a Government College Punjab comprising 60 students have been selected for the undertaken research. In order to determine their EFL idiom proficiency of the learners, a test of English idiom has been conducted. After the pretest, the learners have been shaped into two research groups, first control and the second experimental group, having thirty learners each. Afterwards, the experimental group has been exposed with the new technique of exposing EFL idioms with their mother tongue equivalents for sixty days. Then, a post-test has been held to check the impact of innovative technique in the pedagogy of EFL idioms. The data of both tests has been analysed with the help of SPSS, software for the statistical analysis of research data.

Analysis of Pre-test and post-test of EFL Learners

A t-test is considered an authentic analysis where two groups are compared critically with a statistical examination. The focus is on the difference between the samples where the difference between two normal values has not been established. Generally, in t-test the difference between two independent groups is evaluated in the sense that whether the mean for the two groups differ from each other. Sometimes, these t-tests are used to determine difference between a controlled group and an independent group.

After collecting the data of the EFL learners with the help of pre-test and post-test, there has been conducted a detailed analysis of the data of the both groups in terms of mean, score, standard deviation, difference of means, minimum and maximum range separately. The initial data of the experimental and controlled groups is following:

The initial data of the experimental and controlled groups

Statistics

	Control Group	Experimental group	PT control group	PT Experimental group
N Valid	30	30	30	30
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	12.09	12.09	10.24	10.40
Std.Deviation	3.335	3.335	3.643	2.614
Variance	5.112	5.213	14.162	7.731
Range	9	9	14	10
Minimum	8	8	3	6
Maximum	16	16	16	16

There was no student missing in the above score. Mean in control group is 12.09 and also 12.09 in experimental group. Standard Deviation is 3.335 in both groups; range is 9 and pre test control group is 14 and pre-test experimental group is 10 minimum score is 8, 3 and Maximum is 15.

Significance of variance between the mean scores of Control group and experimental group on Pre-test

Table: 1

Paired samples statistics

	mean	N	Std.deviation	std.error mean
Pair 1 controlled group	11.50	30	3.614	.593
Experimental group	11.24	30	4.644	.829

The table shows that there is no considerable difference between the scores of experimental and controlled group. The difference of mean between the two groups is also not momentous. The mean of control group is 11.50 while in experimental group, it is 11.24. 3.614 is the deviation in the control group while it is 4.644 in the experimental group. The standard error of mean in experimental and control group is .593 and .829. Consequently, a marked difference can be found between both the groups..

Table: 2

Paired Samples Test

	Paired differences				T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	mean	std. deviation	Std. error mean	95% confidence interval of the difference			
				Lower			

Paired Samples Test

	Paired differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	mean	std. deviation	Std. error mean	95% confidence interval of the difference				
				Lower	upper			
Pair 1 Control group Experimental group	.210	4.125	.765	-2.212	2.233	.441	34	.812

The data in table 2 reflects the paired analysis of the control and experimental groups. Mean is .210 while the standard deviation is 4.125 and the standard error mean is .765. Difference of confidence interval is lower up to -2.212 and the upper is 2.233. Total value is .441 and the difference is 34 in both experimental and con troll group.

Table 3
Paired samples correlations

	N	correlation	Sig..
Pair 1 VAR00001 & VAR00002	30	-.245	.238

Table 4
Paired samples statistics

	Mean	N	STD. deviation	std.errormean
Pair 1 Experimental Group	18.48	30	4.437	.817
control group	10.40	30	3.714	.613

The above table shows the difference of mean score between the experimental and control group. With the total numbr of students as 30, the value of standard deviation in experimental group is 4.437 and the value in control group is 3.714 while .817 is the standard error mean in experimental group and .613 is in the control group.

Table 5

Paired samples test

	Paired differences					T	df	sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	std. deviation	std. error mean	95% confidence interval of the difference				
				lower	upper			
Pair 1 experimental group - control group	9.070	2.106	.431	8.276	8.784	24.583	25	.000

The statistics of table 4 show that the paired analysis of control and experimental group are quite significant. Mean is 9.070 while the standard deviation is 2.106 and the standard error mean is .431. Upper and lower interval difference is 8.276 and 8.784 while the total is 24.583. The significant difference is 25. It can be concluded that post test table results of the experimental group are better than that of control group.

Table 6

Paired samples correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 VAR00001 & VAR00002	30	.152	.501

Mean, standard deviation and T tests for control and experimental group			
Groups			
score	Control group	Experimental group	T

Pre- Test Means SD	11.30 3.114	19.38 4.137	3.584
Post- Test Mean SD	11.10 12.74	3.514 4.143	.251

Summary

The statistics of the table show that there is no significant difference between the experimental and the control group in the pre-test. While, there is considerable difference of results in the post-test. This difference of result in the pre and post-test strengthens the assumption that healthy academic innovations in the pedagogy of English idioms in an EFL class enhance the performances of the learners.

Concluding Remarks

Idioms are part and parcel of English language and occupy a crucial place in EFL context. Unfortunately, their handling has been a serious issue for non native learners and teachers. Their complexity is due to the fact that their meanings are deep rooted in target culture. Rather most of the idioms carry a myth, story or some ethics. They embody cultural values, customs, social attitudes and norms of people. The proposed research will be of crucial importance in improving the complex situation of EFL idioms for non native learners and speakers. The results of the experiment has shown that pedagogy of idioms can be improves if the learners are provided with the indiginousequavalents of EFL idioms. If EFL learners comprehend idioms, it will enhance their overall capabilities of English language learning. It will make considerable impact on their speaking and listening proficiencies as these two skills present the strongest dimension of any language. After improving the idiom issue, the EFL learners will be in a better position to exploit language resources effectively. Finally, thr undertaken research does not claim to hit the final solution of the issue. However, it will motivate the applied linguists to explore further dimensions of EFL idioms for non native learners. The complexity of idioms most likely stems from the fact that idioms are extremely deep-rooted in the civilization of the target language. There are ethics, themes, and stories at the back of idioms and L2 learners do not contain an opportunity to study and interpret them. Idioms are the mirror image of customs, cultural values, particular features, social attitudes and norms of a civilization. The undertaken research will play a key role for EFL learners in an EFL classroom to recognize and comprehend idioms semantically so that their four skills listening, speaking, reading and writing will be improved and they will be able to use linguistic resources creatively. Finally, the research is far from being thorough. Hence, it has the potential to motivate researchers to investigate other dimensions in the pedagogy of English idioms

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