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INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO TEACHING ENGLISH IDIOMS

Idioms are an integral part of any language, providing richness and depth to communication. Teaching idioms in foreign language classes at universities presents unique challenges and opportunities.

Idiomatic competence plays a crucial role in language proficiency and intercultural communication. Mastering idioms enhances learners' linguistic versatility, allowing them to express ideas creatively, convey subtle nuances, and engage in meaningful interactions with native speakers.

Moreover, idiomatic proficiency deepens learners' cultural understanding and fosters appreciation for the richness and diversity of the target language community. By mastering idioms, students gain insight into the cultural heritage, social norms, and values embedded within the language, thereby becoming more effective communicators and cultural ambassadors.

For foreign language learners, grasping the meaning and usage of idioms requires more than just memorization; it demands cultural awareness, context comprehension, and linguistic proficiency. Therefore, teaching idioms in university language courses requires a multifaceted approach that integrates language skills, cultural insights, and practical application.

Traditional methods of teaching idioms often rely on rote memorization and passive learning strategies. However, innovative approaches can make the process more engaging, interactive, and effective. Here are some innovative techniques for teaching idioms:

1. **Contextual Learning:** One innovative approach to teaching English idioms involves contextualized learning, where idiomatic expressions are presented within authentic contexts [1]. Rather than memorizing isolated phrases, learners are exposed to idioms in texts, dialogues, or real-life situations, allowing them to grasp

the meaning and usage organically. Research has shown that contextualized learning enhances retention and promotes deeper understanding of idiomatic language.

2. **Multimodal Resources:** It implies using multimedia resources, such as videos, audio recordings, or interactive presentations, to reinforce idiomatic comprehension through visual and auditory stimuli. Multimedia materials provide dynamic learning experiences that appeal to diverse learning styles.

3. **Gamification:** Gamification has emerged as a creative and engaging approach to teaching English idioms. By incorporating idiomatic expressions into games, quizzes, or online activities, educators can motivate learners and reinforce their understanding in a fun and interactive manner [2]. Research suggests that gamified learning promotes active engagement, problem-solving skills, and knowledge retention.

4. **Collaborative Learning:** Encouraging collaborative learning activities can also be effective in teaching English idioms [3]. Pair or group exercises that involve discussing idioms, sharing personal experiences, and creating context-based scenarios foster peer interaction and communication skills. Collaborative learning has been shown to enhance cognitive development and linguistic proficiency. It encourages peer interaction, communication skills, and collective problem-solving.

5. **Technology Integration:** Leverage technology tools, such as language learning apps, virtual reality simulations, or online forums, to provide immersive and interactive experiences for practicing idiomatic expressions. Technology integration enhances accessibility, flexibility, and personalization of idiomatic learning.

Teaching idioms is essential for developing language proficiency, cultural competence, and communicative effectiveness. By embracing innovative approaches to teaching idioms, educators can create dynamic, engaging, and student-centered learning experiences that empower learners to master idiomatic expressions with confidence and enthusiasm.

Through contextual learning, multimodal resources, gamification, collaborative activities, and technology integration, educators can cultivate idiomatic competence

in learners and equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the complexities of language and culture in the global context.

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