IMPROVING VOCABULARY: IDIOMS AND IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

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A well-established vocabulary will help students to carry out the intricacies of the different disciplines being taught in school. It is very crucial in the development of critical thinking and improving communication skills. A person with a sound vocabulary can easily express himself and has the confidence to communicate with others.

Idioms and idiomatic languages are some of the most interesting and creative vocabulary terms to learn in any language. It is estimated that there are over 10,000 idioms in English, some relatively recent and some that have been used for more than 2,000 years (Brenner, 2011).

Most of language teachers, especially English teachers, agreed on the notion that using idiomatic expressions when having communications with others whether casual or formal talk will definitely make the conversation with substance and worthy compared to just uttering the words literally. Everyone knows the use of figurative languages and idioms since time immemorial that even well known writers, poets, composers and linguists adapted this to their works to add color and make their statement more striking.

Thus, it is certain that figurative languages and idioms make our language more colorful and exciting to learn. In the school context, idioms are taught in the higher-grade levels particularly in the intermediate to improve the students’ vocabulary particularly their communication skills. A good working knowledge of idiomatic expressions indeed an advantage for everyone.
There are times that learning idioms tend to be boring among the students because of the difficulty in translating the meaning and the unfamiliarity in the use of the language. It cannot be ignored that many students struggle a lot decoding the meaning of an idiom and sometimes they take it in literal way. However, the inability of the students in learning idioms cannot be blamed only to them, teachers, too, are sometimes the culprit. Figurative language is an area often neglected in the teaching of vocabulary (Lazar, 1996).

Teachers can help students to easily understand and learn idioms and they can achieve it by providing students different learning materials and teaching strategies. Exposing students to different learning materials and differentiated activities will definitely help them improve their vocabulary.

References:
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