

CONCEPTUAL STRATEGIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH NOSE IDIOMS

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Abstract: *The cognitive linguistic approach to idioms, unlike the traditional one, attempts to prove that there are three important cognitive mechanisms (conventional knowledge, metaphor and metonymy) which link their literal meanings with the figurative ones. Conventional knowledge refers to the amount of information about a conceptual domain which is shared by people with the same cultural background. Metaphor is used to understand the target conceptual domain by means of the source one, being a relationship of the type “A is B”. Metonymy establishes a connection between two conceptual entities within only one conceptual domain, which can be represented as “A stands for B”.*

In order to improve EFL students’ general communication skills, teachers turn to idiomatic expressions, but they usually provide them only with the explanation and the translation of the respective idioms. Most students find it difficult to memorise idioms as such, and that is why teachers should find a pleasant alternative which can enable students to understand idiomatic expressions better and use them creatively.

Our paper aims at demonstrating the effectiveness of teaching idioms from the cognitive linguistic perspective. We thus carried out an experimental study which consisted of teaching several English nose idioms to two classes of Romanian students, namely the experimental group and the control group, by means of the traditional approach and the cognitive linguistic one. By comparing the students’ responsiveness to each teaching method, as well as by assessing the results they obtained for the same test paper, we were able to explain the advantages of activating the aforementioned cognitive strategies in the process of nose idiom acquisition.

Keywords: *cross-cultural conceptual motivation; conventional knowledge; metaphor; metonymy; nose idioms*