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Abstract

This article explores the effectiveness of using games to teach food idioms to A2 learners. It highlights the importance of idioms in language learning, the benefits of interactive teaching methods, and the results of implementing different games in the classroom. The study demonstrates that game-based learning enhances student engagement and improves retention of idiomatic expressions.

Keywords: Food idioms, A2 learners, game-based learning, language acquisition, interactive teaching, ESL idioms, communicative approach, vocabulary retention, student engagement.

Introduction

Idioms are an essential part of language learning as they enrich vocabulary and help learners sound more natural. However, idioms can be challenging for A2-level learners because their meanings are often not literal. Among various categories of idioms, food idioms are particularly engaging as they are commonly used in everyday conversations and are easy to visualize. Using games to teach food idioms can make the learning process more enjoyable and effective, as games encourage active participation and improve retention.

Theoretical Background

Idioms are fixed expressions with meanings that cannot always be deduced from individual words. For example, the idiom "piece of cake" means something is easy, while "spill the beans" means to reveal a secret. Learning idioms helps students understand native speakers better and improves their fluency.

Research suggests that game-based learning enhances student motivation and engagement. According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis, meaningful and fun exposure to language facilitates acquisition. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory also emphasizes the role of interaction in learning, which games naturally promote. By incorporating food idioms into interactive games, educators can create a dynamic and memorable learning environment.

Methodology

This study focuses on A2 learners, typically in secondary school or beginner adult learners. The following games were used to teach food idioms:

1. Idiom Matching Game – Students match idioms with their meanings using flashcards.

2. Role-Playing Scenarios – Students use idioms in dialogues related to real-life situations.

3. Guess the Idiom – Teachers give a sentence with a missing idiom, and students guess the correct one.

4. Picture-Based Storytelling – Students create short stories using idioms and visual prompts.

5. Bingo with Idioms – Students mark idioms on a bingo card as they hear them in a conversation.

The effectiveness of these games was measured through observation, quizzes, and student feedback.

Results and Analysis

Students showed increased confidence in using food idioms in conversations. The interactive approach made learning idioms more engaging compared to traditional memorization. Observations revealed that role-playing and storytelling games were particularly effective in helping students remember idioms in context. However, some learners initially struggled with understanding figurative meanings. Providing visual aids and examples helped overcome this challenge.

Conclusion

Teaching food idioms through games is an effective strategy for A2 learners. It makes learning more engaging, improves retention, and enhances communication skills. Educators should incorporate more interactive activities to teach idioms in context. Future research could explore the long-term retention of idioms learned through games and compare different game types for effectiveness.

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