

¹TEACHING ENGLISH IDIOMS IN HELPING SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND A FUNCTIONAL TEXT

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Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan memaparkan salah satu materi pengajaran reading di Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) dengan menggunakan iklan. Artikel ini lebih spesifik membahas mengenai idiom yang terdapat dalam functional text khususnya iklan. Idiom merupakan satuan bahasa atau ekspresi (bisa berupa kata, frase, maupun kalimat) yang maknanya tidak dapat ditebak dari makna leksikal kata-kata yang membentuknya. Jika idiom diartikan secara terpisah bisa membelokkan makna dari bacaan yang sebenarnya. Terkadang dengan kemunculan idiom ini dapat menyebabkan siswa menjadi bingung dalam memahami isi bacaannya. Hal ini disebabkan juga karena idiom jarang sekali digunakan secara lebih spesifik pada saat pengajaran bahasa Inggris. Karena itu, penulis tertarik untuk membahas topik ini karena idiom penting untuk dipelajari.

Oleh karena itu, dalam makalah ini penulis mendiskusikan tentang tahap-tahap pengajaran functional text dengan menggunakan iklan. Tentu saja, dengan menggunakan iklan dalam pengajaran reading, diharapkan siswa akan dapat lebih memahami functional text yang mengandung idiom khususnya iklan. Secara tidak langsung juga akan menambah penguasaan kosakata siswa.

Key words: Idioms, functional text, advertisement

A. Introduction

Vocabulary is a very important aspect in any language including English. It is used in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Without vocabulary people cannot communicate in their life. Vocabulary is also used in books, magazine, newspaper, and so forth. It means that limited vocabulary impairs personal ability in using language. Thus, it shows how important vocabulary is.

Vocabulary is also one of the main parts of reading activity that the students should be mastered. They should be skillfull in vocabulary while they are

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reading. If the students understand the vocabulary, they will read the text easier and understand its content. But, vocabulary has varieties such as noun, verb, adverb, and adjective. Vocabulary also appear in figurative such as in idioms, which is if we study it we can divide them into three varieties of language. The idioms can be divided as noun, verb, adverb, or adjective. For example, idiom “breaks up” as a verb. This idioms might not always appear in students reading text, but whenever it appears it may make the students have difficulty to understand the text. As we know, idioms are not familiar to students. The more unfamiliar words are found in the text the more difficult for the students to understand it. It is an expression which rather harder to understand because the meaning cannot only be taken from meaning of each word or cannot be literally translated. As a result, they often find difficulties to know the meaning of idioms. Even though idioms seldom appear in reading texts but in fact idioms are common in America or English daily life and provide a rich source of culture. It clearly seen that the teaching of teaching vocabulary holds crucial role and should be paid close attention to it. As we know, Idioms do not teach specially like other text in Indonesian Curriculum. There is no special allocation of time to teach idioms. Idioms, sometimes appear in reading text and sometimes in functional text that are taught in teaching English such as in advertisement, announcement, personal letter, etc. To overcome these problems, the teachers should give an interesting material that includes idioms and explain it in their teaching. In order to make the student get a good comprehension in understand a text, especially a functional text. It is important to introduce them about using a material like printed advertisement in order to make them easier to learn vocabulary, especially English idioms. It will help student in understand a text. It makes the vocabulary learning in reading become more interesting, fresh, and fun.

But, idioms itself do not teach specially like other text in Indonesian Curriculum. There is no special allocation of time to teach idioms. Idioms, sometimes appear in reading text and sometimes in expression that are taught in teaching English such as in advertisement. To overcome this problem, in this paper the writer tries to discuss the importance of teaching English Idioms in helping senior high school students to understand a functional text ,the example of functional text that will be discussed here is printed advertisement.

The writer wants to discuss the understanding of idioms. The ability to interpret the meaning of an idiom is a important property of a human language. So that, as an English student it is better to them to know how to interpret the meaning of an idiom.

Firstly, is about the definition of an idiom. Based on above explanation, the expression that cannot be translated from the lexical meaning of the words is called idiom. Mallory (2004:86) states idiom are word phrases or expression that are unusual either grammatically, as in, “long time no see?” on the other hand, there is a meaning that cannot be derived from conjoined meanings of its elements as in ; “ it is raining cats and dogs”. Every language has idioms and they require foreign students to learn. An idiom is a combination of words that has a meaning that is different from the meanings of the individual words themselves. It can have a literal meaning in one situation and a different idiomatic meaning in another

situation. It is a phrase which does not always follow the normal rules of meaning and grammar. For example, to sit on the fence can literally mean that one is sitting on a fence. I sat on the fence and watch the game. However, the idiomatic meaning of to sit on the fence is that one is not making a clear choice regarding some issue. For example, the politician sat on the fence and would not give his opinion about the tax issue. Other idioms come from older phrases which have changed over time.

Teaching idioms in reading comprehension will help students to understand a text. Especially if it is used relate to daily life. The use everyday context usage will help student to brain storm their background about idiom. Carolyn Jaynes (2010:97) students will likely learn to make sense of idioms as they hear them used in conversation and see them used in a text, increasing students awareness of this unique words and phrases, can help them to identify and interpret them with greater success. Allen (2005:56) states functional texts are structured to help readers get somewhere or accomplish a task. So, it can be said, Functional text is writing meant to help the reader accomplish an everyday task. Functional text is a short text that has social function to inform something. We call it short functional text because the text is short and has specific information. Kinds of functional texts are announcement, short message, advertisement, label, sign, notice, pamphlet, brochure and the other short texts. Examples of functional text might include a recipe for cooking, directions to a location, a memo notifying of a change in a company's address, or a store's opening time; a schedule of event times and locations during a seminar; a directory of addresses, phone numbers or e-mail addresses; directions on a test; a menu from a restaurant; a pamphlet notifying the public of a grand opening, store closing, and an advertisement of goods on magazine or newspaper, etc.

One of the functional texts is advertisement. Based on freedictionary.com the meaning of advertisement is a notice, such as a poster or a paid announcement in the print, broadcast, or electronic media, designed to attract public attention it is used to persuade people (viewers, readers, or listener) to buy some products. Advertisement can also serve to communicate an idea to a mass amount of people in an attempt to convince them to take a certain action, such as encouraging 'environmentally friendly' behaviors, and even unhealthy behaviors through food consumption, video game and television. We can find many advertisements around us, such as in TV, internet, radio, or along the road. There are some products which are offered in the advertisement; including goods, services and job vacation. The language of advertisement must use these points: using the correct or suitable words, using the interesting and suggestive expression (they often use figurative language includes idioms), using positive expression and text of the advertisement should be directed to the goals. The advertisement also has specific content they are: Objective and honest, brief and clear, not elude group or other producer, and attractive attention. In conclusion, the advertisement as one of functional text is a tool to attract people to buy their product.

B. How to teach idioms in functional text?

After knowing the significance of teaching idioms in high school, it is important for teachers to know how to apply it in the classroom. Below are some stages to teach idioms.

Preparation

The teacher must prepare everything that she or he needs during the teaching-learning process in the classroom. Before teaching the students in the classroom, the teacher is expected to have a good preparation. If the teacher has a good preparation, it is expected that the teaching – learning process will be success and give the good impacts to the students. The teacher must prepare the lesson plan, functional text, idiom dictionary, material (idiomatic printed advertisement), and the students's worksheet. Through lesson plan it is expected that the teacher can have guidelines. The lesson plan based on permendiknas number 41, 2007. In the permendiknas every teacher must conduct a complete and systemic lesson plan in order to create an interactive, inspirative, fun, encouraging and motivating students to be active in the class.

Classroom Procedures

Classroom procedures of teaching idiom in helping the students to understand a functional text divided into three stages. They are pre teaching, whilst teaching, and post teaching

1. Pre- teaching activity

Pre – teaching activity is done at the beginning of the class. It is done in order to give the students background knowledge and to build their selves confidence. The activity will give some new information that stimulate curiosity and increase the students' concentration. Then, pre- teaching can make the student understand or gain quickly what are going to study. There are several steps of pre teaching activities. They are as follows:

- a) The teacher greets the students.
- b) The teacher checks the students' attendance.
- c) The teacher asks the students about last lesson by asking the questions.
- d) The teacher motivates the students to capture their attention and interest before introducing the new concept of learning material

For example, to catch the students' interest to the text that will be discussed the teacher can show a picture related to the text and give some questions to stimulate the students' critical thinking.

The teacher asks some questions to the students related to the topic or brain storming other idioms that students have heard. To get the discussion ask students what they know about the idioms and then lead them toward a definition which all of the students understand, for example the phrase; "hang out". Ask them to draw personal experiences and background knowledge to discuss these idioms. Besides, teacher also can draw the student's attention to similarities between Indonesian idioms and English idioms. To easier the students to recall their background

knowledge, the teacher for the first, use an Indonesian idiomatic advertisement, Prompting questions might include:

- Have you heard anyone using idioms?
- Which idioms do you use?
- Have you heard idioms used in TV programs or movies

To more stimulate the students curiosity about idioms, especially if they seldom hear idioms the teacher can play a recorded TV advertisement that uses idiom. For each personal experience the teacher can ask the student to describe how the idiom and how he or she was able to decipher the figurative meaning.

E. The students can discuss the idiomatic expression based on their background knowledge

2. Whilst- Teaching Activity

Whilst- teaching activity is the activity conducted during discussing teaching materials. There are three process in this activity, they are exploration, elaboration, and confirmation.

Exploration:

1. The teacher shows a printed advertisement of a fitness center and ask student to see it.
2. The teacher asking students what they know about the text.
3. The teacher asks students to write questions based on the printed advertisement that they see.
4. The teacher with the students guest about the answer of the question.

Elaboration

After conducting the exploration stage, the teacher comes to the elaboration stage. The basic concept of this stage is to give meaningful excercise for the students.

1. The teacher distributes similar printed advertisement to the students
2. After that, the students are asked to look at the text given. Discussed the text with the students about the kind of the text and the idioms presented in the text and what they mean.
3. The teacher explains about the text then, discussed about the text such as the function and the general features of the text (functional text: printed advertisement).
4. Teacher brain storms other English idioms that students have heard.
5. On The board list all the idioms mentioned during the class discussion
6. Develop a class definition of idioms. Write the definition on chart paper and the sheet hang on the wall for references purposes
7. Look at the functional text given (printed advertisement) and then discussed the text. Have the students to draw the literal representation of the idioms and their classmates try to guess their meaning. The students may also share their personal experience with idioms.
8. Have the students working in pairs and select 4 students to research using idiom dictionary.

9. After that, ask each pair of the students to select one idiom and ask them to use in a sentence.
10. The teacher discussed the appropriate use of the idioms with the students.
11. Then, the students are asked to look back at the text that were given and then discussed the appropriateness of idioms in advertisement.
12. The teacher gives another similar printed advertisement and asks the students to answer question based on the text in group.

Confirmation stage:

Confirmation stage is a stage where the teacher confirm the student's answer and check it whether it is correct or incorrect. In this stage, the teacher held a classroom discussion to confirm the students answers. Whenever there is a significant mistake from the students, the teacher will give explanation to make it clear for the students. Further explanation is also given to certain points that the students may weak in.

1. Collect the student's answer and check them
2. Choose two of the student's answer to discuss
3. If the students still make a big mistake in understand the text, the teacher will give more explanation.

3. Post- Teaching Activity

In post teaching activity, the teacher concludes the lesson with the students. The teacher makes sure that all students are participating in concluding the lesson through their own opinions. Have the students to write a summary of the lesson of the day, which are a about functional text and idioms. After the students answer the question given, the teacher gives another functional text that has idiom in it. The students are asked to answer the question as homework. The teacher also asks the class to find any printed advertisements on Internet and analyzed its content, such as the kind of text and explain the idioms that is used in the text in a piece of paper.

C. Conclusion

Based on the discussion in the chapter III, the writer concludes that idiomatic expressions plays an important role to help student to comprehend a reading text. The word of idiomatic expressions cannot be found in the common or ordinary dictionary. By understand the meaning of idiomatic expressions, the students will comprehend the text containing idiomatic expressions. Moreover, the idiomatic expression is the kind of language expression that is often appeared or used in the text. If the students cannot master it, the students themselves will find difficulties to comprehend the meaning of the reading text as a whole.

Note: this article is compiled based on the writer's paper with her advisor Drs. Amri Isyam, M.Pd

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