



Teaching of Idiomatic Expressions in Teaching English as a Second Language in Sri Lanka

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Idioms are one vital component every language around the world owns which entails an intended meaning behind them. Idioms and idiomaticity enable one to develop figurative competency, a component of communicative competency, ultimately enables one to master overall language competency. Since there are different varieties of English language, idioms from such varieties that can be used to identify the language's culture and any hidden meanings. When teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), it is essential to expose the second language (L2) learners to such idioms from varieties of English. A corpus based textbook analysis was done using the English grade 10 and 11 textbooks from local syllabus in Sri Lanka to determine to what extent second language acquisition through idioms is supported by these texts. The findings indicate that idiom usage is very confined in English textbooks for grades 10 and 11. Furthermore, those that are included are of one specific variety —British English— and are not all that varied. The study's findings unambiguously support the Sri Lankan L2 learners' minimal exposure to idiomaticity. This paper will highlight these findings and propose improvements which can be made to refine and elevate the quality of existing educational materials, specifically textbooks in order to increase learner understanding of idioms which ultimately enables communicative competency of L2 learners.

Keywords: ESL, Idioms, Varieties of English, Textbooks, Communicative Competency

