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Idiomatic Expressions with Colours in Teaching Foreign Languages with Special Review on Spanish as L2: Suggestion for Additional Exercises for Teaching from B1 to C2 Level

Extended summary

Considering the fact that lexical competence, according to the Common European Framework for Languages, represents one of the key language competencies, learning common language units is inseparable part of teaching any foreign language. When it comes to foreign language learning, the development of lexical competence should be indispensable in teaching, regardless of the level.

In this paper, we have dealt with idiomatic expressions with colours in teaching foreign languages, with special review on Spanish as L2. The didactic principles for the development of lexical competence. The theoretical part of the paper presents a brief review of the concept of the phraseologisms in general, afterwards we briefly analyzed the phraseological units in teaching languages as L2. Our objective has been to conduct a synchronic research in order to investigate the aforementioned content. The used corpus for the needs of the paper was excerpted from single language dictionary of Spanish, as well as from the dictionary of Spanish phraseology. During the research, we took into account idioms, which had names for white, black, red, purple, green, blue, yellow and brown colour. Firstly, we extracted certain amount of such idiomatic expressions, and then we offered various exercises with mentioned idioms.

The aim of the paper is to point at the significance of both idiomatic expressions in teaching foreign languages in general, and the significance of chromatic lexis, i.e. the significance of existing idiomatic expressions with colours in teaching Spanish as L2, because we believe

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that this would lead to improving all language competencies of students, no matter which skill we focus at, reading, writing, speaking or listening.

Upon consideration of didactic principles for the development of lexical competence in the classroom, our intention is, based on the used corpus, to give suggestion for some additional exercises which can be included into teaching Spanish as L2 at intermediate, higher and advanced level, because the mentioned exercises are missing or are insufficiently presented in didactical materials used during the process of learning.

The research has shown that lexical units teaching should be primarily adapted to students' age and level of language knowledge that they possess. Due to the fact that at the basic level students have a limited vocabulary, the introduction of idiomatic expressions with colours should begin at the intermediate level. Lexical units are to be taught gradually, always in a particular context and with making of parallels with student's L1. During the corpus analysis we have found most idiomatic expressions with white (10 expressions) and black (12 expressions). Also, green colour is present in the formation of large number of idioms (8 expressions), unlike purple, brown and yellow, where we encountered only one idiomatic expression for mentioned colours. As for the red and blue, these colours do not participate in the formation of large number of idioms either (red: 4 expressions; blue: 2 expressions). Relying on idioms that we found in the available dictionaries, we gave a proposal for additional exercises that can be included in the teaching of Spanish as L2, from level B1 to C1, since the didactic materials used in learning process lack such exercises.

Key words: lexical competence, idiomatic exercises with colours, teaching foreign languages, Spanish as L2, additional exercises.

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