

USING INTERACTIVE METHODS IN TEACHING PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH PROPER NAMES

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Abstract: *The article examines how interactive methods can be effectively used to teach phraseological units with proper names. Such idioms carry cultural and historical meanings that challenge learners when taught through traditional methods. Techniques like role-plays, digital quizzes, and peer-teaching help students understand both the figurative and cultural aspects of these expressions, enhancing their communicative and intercultural competence.*

Keywords: *phraseological units, proper names, interactive teaching, idioms, intercultural competence*

Annotatsiya: *Maqolada atoqli ot komponentli frazeologizmlarni o‘qitishda interfaol metodlardan samarali foydalanish masalasi yoritiladi. Bunday iboralar o‘zida madaniy va tarixiy ma’nolarni mujassam etgani sababli, ularni an’anaviy usullar orqali o‘rgatish o‘quvchilar uchun qiyinchilik tug‘diradi. Rol o‘yinlari, raqamli viktorinalar va juftlikda o‘qitish kabi metodlar talabalarga ushbu ifodalarning ko‘chma va madaniy ma’nolarini chuqurroq anglashga yordam beradi hamda ularning kommunikativ va madaniyatlararo kompetensiyasini rivojlantiradi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *frazeologik birliklar, o‘z nomlari, interfaol o‘qitish, iboralar, madaniyatlararo kompetensiya*

Аннотация: *В статье рассматривается, как интерактивные методы могут быть эффективно использованы при обучении фразеологическим единицам с именами собственными. Подобные идиомы несут в себе культурное и историческое значение, что создаёт трудности для изучающих язык при традиционном обучении. Такие приёмы, как ролевые игры, цифровые викторины и обучение в парах, помогают студентам понять как переносный, так и культурный смысл этих выражений, способствуя развитию их коммуникативной и межкультурной компетенции.*

Ключевые слова: *фразеологические единицы, имена собственные, интерактивное обучение, идиомы, межкультурная компетенция*

Introduction. As it is known, in foreign-language teaching, integrating phraseological units helps learners move toward more natural, fluent, and culturally nuanced speech. At the

same time, the traditional methods of teaching phraseological units—through lists, static translation, and rote memorization often fail to sustain learner engagement or produce deep internalization of meaning.

In recent years, educational research emphasizes interactive methods (group work, peer-interaction, gamified tasks, digital tools) as more effective means of engaging learners, promoting active processing, and supporting retention [7]. Moreover, an article on teaching phraseology emphasises that interactive methods are among “the most effective approaches” in modern lessons [2]. Given these twin strands — the importance of phraseological competence, and the movement toward interactive teaching methods — this article aims to link them in a more specific domain: phraseological units with proper names. (PUPN) Why the special focus on proper-names? Because phraseological units containing proper names (e.g., biblical, mythological, historical, toponymic names) pose additional challenges and afford special opportunities in the language classroom.

In teaching PUs, we must therefore ensure that learners (a) recognise them, (b) understand their figurative meaning and cultural associations, and (c) are able to use them appropriately in context [1]. According to Jumayeva (2024), the “study of any foreign language ... should be carried out with the help of communicative exercises, the content of which is the students’ performance of speech acts in terms of real communication or similar to them” [5]. Thus, adopting interactive, communicative tasks is well supported by recent scholarship.

Main body

By “interactive methods” we broadly mean teaching strategies that engage students actively in the learning process, often through peer-interaction, group work, problem-solving, digital tools, gamification, and other techniques beyond passive listening or repetition. For instance, interactive methods emphasise the social nature of learning and require teacher-student and student-student collaboration [8]. In vocabulary and phraseology teaching, interactive methods can help learners process meaning, internalise multi-word units, experiment with usage, and thereby enhance retention and applicability. For example, Yuldashova (2022) argues that interactive methods in ESL vocabulary teaching promote learner creativity and engagement [10].

The connection of interactive methods with phraseology is underscored in a recent article: “Teaching phraseological units through interactive methods” states that interactive methods should be central in modern lesson design [4]. Thus the theoretical basis is in place: interactive methods align well with the demands of phraseology teaching. The challenge is to adapt them to the special case of phraseological units with proper names.

PUPNs are phraseological units (idioms, fixed expressions) which contain a proper name, this may be a personal name (anthroponym), a place name (toponym), a mythological or biblical name, or a historical/cultural figure name [9]. For example, in English idioms such as “to open Pandora’s box”, “Achilles’ heel”, “to face one’s Waterloo”, etc., the proper names refer to mythological, historic or literary references [6].

Research shows that PUPNs often encode cultural, historical or literary meaning: for instance, the study “Sources of Origin of Phraseological Units with Proper Nouns in the English Language” notes that proper names in PUs “store and transmit traditions, history, and culture of people” [3]. Another study shows that toponymic and anthroponymic PUs reflect linguocultural and historical dimensions of the languages concerned. In short, PUs are rich in cultural-linguistic content beyond purely lexical meaning. Here are concrete interactive methods suited for PUs, which leverage student interaction, problem-solving, and digital or gamified tools.

1. Jigsaw Reading / Group Puzzle

- Divide students into small groups. Each group receives part of the “story” behind a PUPNs (e.g., the historical myth, origin, and modern usage).
- After group discussion, students regroup in mixed new groups so each student shares their part and they reconstruct the full background story.
- Then they discuss how the proper name contributed to the meaning of the phraseological unit and create their own example sentences.

2. Role-Play / Mini-Drama

- Assign pairs/groups a PUPN and prompt them to create a short role-play that dramatizes the origin (if myth/historical) and then the modern figurative use.
- e.g., students act out Caesar crossing the Rubicon then translate that into “crossing one’s Rubicon” in a modern business-context conversation.
- This helps make the name-story vivid and anchors the meaning in memory.

3. Digital/Gamified Task

- Use quiz-apps or interactive platforms (Kahoot, Quizizz) to present matching tasks: proper-name story ↔ phraseological unit ↔ modern meaning.
- Use drag-and-drop timelines or clickable maps (for toponyms) to link place names to idioms (e.g., “Waterloo” on a map).
- A game could be: “Which proper name go-together?” with hints and peer competition.

Conclusion

Phraseological units containing proper names present both challenges and rich opportunities in the language classroom. Their cultural and figurative complexity means that learners often struggle with comprehension and usage; yet their narrative and symbolic

nature also offers motivational and memorable teaching materials. By adopting an interactive methodological framework — including scaffolding, group tasks, gamified/digital tools, peer teaching and reflection — teachers can enhance learners’ phraseological competence, cultural awareness and ability to use these idioms appropriately in context.

PUPNs merit dedicated focus within phraseology teaching. Interactive methods align well with the demands of PUPNs teaching: stimulating engagement, reducing cognitive load, promoting production. A well-designed sequence (pre-scaffolding, interactive tasks, post-reflection) can maximise learning outcomes. Teacher preparation, curriculum adaptation, digital support and further research are key enablers. I recommend that educators integrate PUPNs interactive modules into their syllabus, collect and maintain exemplars tailored to their student cohort, and regularly review their effectiveness. With this approach, learners will not only recognise idioms like “Achilles’ heel” or “cross one’s Rubicon”, but will use them actively and appropriately — and thereby gain deeper access to the cultural breadth of the target language.

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