**Praxis Paper**

Chinese English language learners encounter such difficulty when using English idioms that they often prefer to avoid them altogether. This difficulty may result from confusing part of an idiom they have heard but not mastered in English, as in the case of to go out on a stick instead of to go out on a limb. It may also be the result of transferring part of an idiom in their first language to an English idiom, as in the case of to spread the voice instead of to spread the news. When the first and second language have identical idioms, the use of transfer can result in a correct idiom.

Learning idioms and expressions is a necessary step towards improving oral English. In this course, students will be able to learn most common English idioms with an extremely easy way that would save time and effort of studying. Each idiom is explained using examples and situations so that students would know how and when to use them. After this course, students will notice how the language has changed and how they will be able to express themselves in a different way.

Activities which compare literal and figurative meanings of idioms help students to realize the absurdity of the literal meanings and provide a link from the literal words to the nonliteral meaning. Examples of activities may show misinterpretation of an idiom, act out literal meanings and make up dialogues in which the literal use of an idiom creates a misunderstanding or an embarrassing situation. Activities of this type would be particularly useful with idioms which have no first language equivalent or a totally different one. When idioms have identical or similar first language equivalents, the native language already provides the link between the literal words and the nonliteral meaning.

Students should be taught how to utilize positive transfer and avoid interference, and they must be given enough opportunity to practice using idioms in contextualized situations. By doing this, we can help students overcome their "idiom-phobia" and learn to produce English idioms correctly, both in and outside of class.

**References**

Herrell, A. L. & Jordan, M. (2016). 50 strategies for teaching English Language Learners (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson. 151-154.