American Expression E0442 It goes without saying

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The phrase "it goes without saying" is an idiomatic expression commonly used to indicate that a statement or idea is so obvious, widely known, or universally understood that it does not require explicit mention or explanation. It implies that the information or concept is self-evident and should be understood without the need for further clarification.

The origin of the phrase can be traced back to the idea that certain things are so commonly known or understood that they are considered unnecessary to state explicitly. The expression "it goes without saying" conveys this notion of a universally accepted truth or knowledge.

When someone says "it goes without saying," they are implying that the point they are making is so clear or widely recognized that it is unnecessary to mention explicitly. It often serves as a way to emphasize the obviousness or self-evidence of a particular statement or idea.

The phrase highlights the assumption that the information or concept being referred to is widely acknowledged or understood by the listener or reader. It suggests a shared understanding or common knowledge that does not need to be explicitly stated.

Being "self-evident" means that the idea or statement is readily apparent, easily recognized, or requires no further proof or explanation. It implies that the truth or validity of the point is so evident that it is universally accepted without the need for debate or dispute.

"It goes without saying" is often used in conversations, discussions, or written communication to save time or to avoid stating the obvious. It is employed to acknowledge the shared understanding or to emphasize a point that is already widely recognized.

Moreover, "it goes without saying" can be seen as a form of rhetorical device that adds emphasis or authority to a statement. By suggesting that something is self-evident, the speaker or writer seeks to reinforce the credibility or validity of their argument.

However, it's important to note that while "it goes without saying" implies a shared understanding, there may be situations or contexts where the idea or statement is not universally recognized or accepted. In such cases, assuming that something is self-evident may lead to miscommunication or misunderstandings.

In summary, "it goes without saying" is an idiomatic expression used to indicate that a statement or idea is so obvious, widely known, or universally understood that it does not require explicit mention or explanation. It signifies the self-evidence or universality of a point and emphasizes the shared understanding or common knowledge among the speaker or writer and the audience. However, it is essential to be mindful that assumptions of self-evidence can vary based on context and individuals' knowledge or perspectives.

Questions for Discussion

1. Share examples of situations or concepts where the phrase "it goes without saying" is commonly used. How does this phrase contribute to efficient communication by assuming a shared understanding or common knowledge?
2. Reflect on instances where assumptions of self-evidence, as indicated by the phrase "it goes without saying," have led to misunderstandings or miscommunication. How can we ensure effective communication even when dealing with seemingly obvious information?
3. Discuss cultural or contextual factors that can influence what is considered "self-evident" or universally understood. How does the notion of "it goes without saying" differ across different cultures or societies?
4. Can the phrase "it goes without saying" be misused or create challenges in certain situations? Share examples where assumptions of shared understanding have led to oversights or neglecting important information that should have been explicitly communicated.
5. In what ways can we strike a balance between assuming shared knowledge or understanding and effectively communicating important information? How can we avoid making assumptions about what is self-evident and ensure clarity in our communication?