Blogging about Sustainable Development in the EFL College Classroom

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Education for sustainable development	**Number of the paper: 103**	

Abstract

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are not integrated in any EFL courses that students take at my college. Therefore, a class blog was created in an EFL writing course for freshman students to find out its effect on students' writing skill development and awareness of SDG. Each week, a specific and tangible topic related to an SDG (no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation, and infrastructure, reduced inequality, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice, and strong institutions) was posted by the instructor. The students searched for videos, photos or articles related to the assigned SDG and wrote a blog post that describes the photo, summarizes the video or article content. Participation goals were integrated. The students had to write their reaction to the goal, post solutions, comments, and feedback on their classmates' blog posts. They worked on their blog posts individually, in pairs and small group. The instructor served as a facilitator while the students were blogging. Comparisons of the posttest scores of students who blogged about SDG and those who used paper-and-pencil assignments showed significant differences in writing skill improvement in favor of the blog group. Students in the blog group had positive attitudes, enjoyed interacting and collaborating with their classmates and reflecting on their own writing. Blogging about SDG proved to be effective in enhancing the students' writing skills and SDG awareness. The study gave recommendations for integrating SDG in EFL speaking and reading courses.

Key words

EFL writing practice; freshman students; global issues; participation goals

Revizija #3
Stvoreno 21 rujna 2024 12:39:04 od Martina Gajšek
Ažurirano 21 rujna 2024 12:52:21 od Martina Gajšek