

UDC: 37.011.3.07:005.95-051
37.03:502/504

(Review paper)

**TEACHER – MANAGER IN CREATING ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE OF
PRIMARY EDUCATION STUDENTS THROUGH INTEGRATING ECOLOGICAL
CONTENTS INTO EFL/ESL TEACHING**

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Abstract: Modern way of life, development of science and technology, the search for more economical sources of energy, and, most important, for bigger profit, brings in the issue of the survival of the Earth and the human race.

As a result, people start to awake because they have become victims of their own ambitions. Nowadays, people take up numerous activities turned towards protecting the environment and the Earth. Those are planned activities, firstly initiated by individuals and small groups of people, and today they are big organizations and institutions, government and non-government, which strive to find solutions to this global problem and raise people's consciousness.

To resolve such a serious problem, it is necessary to start from educational institutions - first from kindergartens, where we can be most influential on the collective consciousness. All factors that are included in the educational process have a duty to influence the creation and rising of ecological awareness.

This paper explores how the teacher – manager in the classroom can influence the raising of environmental awareness and culture among primary students, specifically during EFL/ESL classes. It also analyzes and elaborates on issues concerning the definition of the terms of ecology, environmental awareness and culture, management, class management, the influence of teachers of English as a foreign/second language in raising environmental awareness and culture among students, and the characteristics and specifics of the curricula in the classroom.

Key words: ecology, environmental culture, management, teacher – manager.

Introduction

In this paper we will talk about environmental education, i.e. about environmental content integrated in EFL/ESL teaching (English as a Foreign Language/English as a Second Language). The aim is to show that foreign language teachers (in our case English) in their class can influence the raising of students' ecological culture. The question arises as to how this can be realized, whether a correlation, a relationship between these two subjects, can really be made.

English language textbooks deal with topics that process certain content contained in the curricula. Ecological content covering different segments of ecology and environmental protection is integrated in certain topics. Through these contents, students are introduced to ecology, the importance of a healthy environment, its pollution and care for it. A teacher's goal is to make a correlation between ecology and English, to find the connection between them, and to convey all this to students during class.

By applying a variety of techniques and methods, by developing eco-projects, by directly engaging in eco-research, teachers should convey knowledge to students and direct them to real and critical thinking about their behavior and the behavior of others towards the environment.

In English language classes, students learn the language, become familiar with grammar and vocabulary, find relationships between them, which finally results in written and oral expression of students. In addition to developing the 4 basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as learning grammar, phonetic system and vocabulary, the curriculum wants to make students citizens with solid knowledge and high moral values who can contribute to a better society and state. According to it, language skills should be built cumulatively and treated with repetition and constant use in order to increase the effect of learning.

Cates, who argues that humans are not passive recipients but are actively acquiring knowledge, has developed a constructive idea of such a way of learning. By this he means that students connect new material with previously acquired knowledge and at the same time adopt it, which, in turn, is reflected in their own interpretations. In this way, integration of these two subjects, foreign language and ecology is performed. Within the English language classes, which provide topics with ecological content, textbooks process ecological content. The teacher explains unfamiliar words from the field of ecology with the help of video presentations, pictures, through songs and interactive educational games, all this in order to help students understand, remember, and then apply these new words in their written and oral expression.

Why teach environmental education in an English class?

This paper deals with managing the educational component in the protection and promotion of the environment, which is an important link in the complex tasks that need to be programmed and implemented specifically in the teaching content of the subject EFL/ESL.

In order to have as few negative consequences as possible, disturbance of the ecological balance and to keep it to a minimum, it is necessary for the young population to be educated from an early age. Therefore, it can be said that primary school is the place where students get basic and initial knowledge and knowledge of ecology that affects the development of positive environmental awareness and environmental culture.

However, the most important actor, creator and manager in the classroom and in the class within the educational process is the teacher. Through their professionalism, experience, knowledge, skills, culture and communication, teachers are able to realize their task and achieve their goal, and that is for students to master the teaching contents, to acquire knowledge and to be able to apply the acquired knowledge. They have the potential to bring about changes in the educational system that will reshape the knowledge and skills of future generations.

It is essential to see how the teacher will influence the raising of the level of ecological culture among students through the teaching contents in the subject of EFL/ESL. Rivers pointed out that "As language teachers we are the most fortunate of teachers--all subjects are ours. Whatever [the students] want to communicate about, whatever they want to read about, is our subject matter". Like all other professionals, teachers of English contribute in one way or another to stopping environmental degradation and should use their profession not only to develop students' communication skills but also to impart certain knowledge to them. build their own attitudes by means of which they will influence the world's problems, in general and concerning the protection of the human environment in particular. Teaching English as a foreign or second language should not be limited only to improving language mastery, but should also enable students to use critical and comparative thinking strategies that can be beneficial to the sustainability of humanity in general.

From this we can conclude that the teaching profession can be used to promote ecologically acceptable behavior of citizens and to develop eco-applied linguistic awareness among EFL/ESL teachers.

Ecology and ecological contents are one of the best examples showing that modern education can and should be subject interactive and interdisciplinary, in order to provide knowledge, understanding and shaping of the world around us. Bearing in mind the nature of ecological contents, the application of the correlation-integration methodological approach can, if desired, provide students with quality knowledge and comprehensive understanding of the complex ecological phenomena.

Studying environmental contents in an English language class will help enrich vocabulary, improve listening and speaking skills, introduce students to the policies pursued by English speaking countries in preserving the environment, and the way these countries familiarize their students with the global environmental problem.

According to Babcock, successful learning a language equally involves successful combining of the acquired micro and macro skills in appropriate communication expressions, and environmental topics are a rich source of communication material in this sense. Re-thinking and expanding the objectives of English language teaching is another reason for including environmental education in this teaching, and here the managerial skills of the teacher in their integration will come to the fore. Cates emphasizes: "We can't call our English teaching successful if our students, however fluent, are ignorant of world problems, have no social conscience by using their communication skills for international crime, exploitation, oppression or environmental destruction. This highlights the growing interest in incorporating environmental education into English language teaching.

By teaching English as a global language, teachers of English have the task of helping students gain communication skills so that in future they can be actively involved in solving the global problem - the protection of our planet. The purpose of incorporating environmental education into English language teaching is to raise students' awareness of global environmental crises. Environmentally conscious activities may include the following (adapted from Jacobs and Cates, 1999): writing letters to organizations, governments and companies, planting trees and plants, reducing the use of paper, plastic and energy, reusing materials - e.g. glass jars and bottles, recycling materials and purchasing products made from recycled materials (e.g. paper), raising funds for environmental actions, participating in environmental actions, educating

other people, boycotting environmentally unacceptable products, avoiding the consumption of meat of endangered species, etc.

Through teaching contents, students must be encouraged to develop values that will benefit both themselves and the society as a whole. They must understand that humans cannot control nature, because nature is stronger than man is, and human survival depends on nature. Students must also be aware that not all environmental problems can be solved with the help of technical means. Environmental problems must be addressed with real understanding and respect for the relationship between man and nature and with raising environmental culture above the collective consciousness.

Modern teaching techniques and technology within environmental education in EFL/ESL classes

The application of modern teaching techniques and technology in any subject is in function of increasing the quality of the educational system. To that end, a number of education reforms have been made. The development of techniques and technology and their application during teaching enables bringing the teaching material closer to students more easily and their active involvement in the realization of a particular lesson with their views, discussions, research and conclusions.

When it comes to a subject such as English that requires constant interaction between teacher and student, developed communication, research and study of civilization, history and culture of another nation, modern technology in the sphere of teaching aids becomes an imperative of modern education. Its application affects students' motivation to learn another language, because they want to be actively involved in the Internet research, listening to music, watching presentations, movies, development of projects, posters, flyers, in drama sections and other similar activities. In other words, they love creative and interactive teaching.

Therefore, we can rightly rely on the above said that a teacher who applies all these ways of realizing a lesson and successfully manages it, will successfully realize the set goal. Using the Internet, with the help of online dictionaries, through songs, movies, videos and presentations, the teacher will be able to explain to students the new concepts, unfamiliar words, to familiarize them with environmental culture and environmental actions that the English-speaking countries have been taking to protect the planet Earth.

Enriching the vocabulary with words from ecology will help students improve their oral and written expression, but also, when they become responsible citizens, to create environmental policies, and build capacities to engage and take action and steps to protect the environment at a global level.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, all attention is focused on the teacher-manager and the application of the correlation-integration method in the course of EFL/ESL classes for processing environmental contents. The teacher-manager influences the creation and raising of environmental culture in students in primary education by studying the contents with environmental topics in the English language class.

This is a great challenge for EFL/ESL teachers, considering that in the class on their subject they should connect, unite and integrate teaching contents for which they do not have sufficient competencies. They must continuously upgrade professionally and be in constant search of new knowledge; they must research in the area of environmental sciences, and then connect this knowledge with their subject and finally pass it on to their students.

The teachers' aim is to raise students' ecological culture by applying correlation and integration. During English language classes a variety of teaching contents, including culture, sports, music, fashion, everyday life, and ecology are taught. These contents are designed to match students' ages and to make them easier to understand and learn.

To achieve this goal, EFL/ESL teachers use a variety of modern teaching techniques and methods. It is a way to motivate students to actively participate in environmental projects, sections, actions, such as marking the Earth Day, Plant Your Future, Macedonia without Waste and other environmental activities that are promoted locally and globally.

With the processing of the ecological contents, students encounter new words that enrich their vocabulary. They are introduced to the environmental activities and policies of the countries whose language they study, which to them can serve as a model of action. It is a great opportunity for students to further present in their discussions and debates both their personal and collective views and opinions regarding ecology and environmental protection.

From this we can draw the main conclusion about the need to integrate ecology into English language classes. The goal of the educational system of our country is to create staff who will be able to respond to personal needs and needs of society. That, in fact, is the goal of every teacher. A student who is fluent in a language and has basic together with in-depth knowledge of ecology will be able to successfully engage in the fight against global warming and saving the planet Earth. Such a student will be able to raise his/her voice against the world factors that are so ruthless in their pursuit for gaining wealth and profit that they forget their homes, their childhood, and they forget the man.

The goal of the educational system of the Republic of Macedonia is to create responsible citizens who will be competent in performing their tasks and responsibilities and who will be entrusted with the present and the future of the current and future generations, citizens who will be entrusted with the life on our planet – the Earth.

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