

Applying Digital Literacy in English as a Second Language Assignment to Promote 21st Century Core Skills in Undergraduates in Sri Lanka: A Group Assignment via Microsoft Sway Application

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Abstract

21st century teaching at the tertiary level should equip the students with a holistic education that emphasizes essential deep learning skills which are complex, dynamic, and non-routine. These 21st century core skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, communication, creativity, imagination, citizenship, digital literacy, leadership, and personality development have been identified as the requirements to the development of an individual who is ready to take up the challenges of the interconnected world. Accordingly, the student assessments too must be planned in a creative way giving the learners ample opportunities in new roles that could make assessment itself a learning experience to deepen their meaningful, active engagement in the task that cater to the needs of the era. Thereby, assess the learners' skills and abilities deviating from the traditional mode of content recall. Technology plays an integral part in assessing the ability of students to grasp 21st century skills. Against this backdrop this study has been conducted at a university in Sri Lanka. The aim of this study is to explore the feasibility of promoting core skills in undergraduates by creating a digital newspaper through Microsoft Sway application. The result of the mixed method used, concludes that the creativity, communication, collaboration, leadership, and critical thinking skills could be promoted through such an assignment. The research will provide an insight to the English language teaching academics on implementing practical assignments, in collaboration with the technology, for promoting deep learning skills in undergraduates which conforms to the 21st century learning.

Keywords: assessments; deep learning skills; non-routine; technology; 21st century teaching