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INTEGRATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS INTO FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract. The SDGs present a wealth of compelling themes that can be effortlessly woven into language education, enabling learners to engage with globally relevant issues on intellectual, academic, and affective dimensions. Moreover, because the SDGs span numerous fields and viewpoints, they naturally lend themselves to an interdisciplinary approach within language teaching. Through examining topics such as environmental stewardship, social equity, and sustainable economic growth, students gain exposure to a rich and multifaceted learning experience—one that extends well beyond linguistic development and cultivates a broader, more integrated understanding of the world.

Key words: SDGs in language learning, critical thinking, collaboration, collective solution approach, research work, group presentation.

Introduction. As educators of language, we hold the capacity to shape learners' perspectives, values, and actions in significant ways. By integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—the far-reaching global aims intended to ensure a more sustainable and equitable future—into our teaching, we can cultivate critical thinking and deepen linguistic competence through purposeful engagement. Embedding these goals within our curricular design allows us not only to enhance

25-november 2025

students' learning but also to instill a strong sense of responsibility, broaden their global consciousness, and empower them to become proactive global citizens equipped to confront complex issues and contribute to collective solutions.

Incorporating the SDGs into English language classrooms provides learners with valuable opportunities to cultivate the essential “4C” competencies—communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. Engaging with lessons centered on these global themes enables students to deepen their appreciation of international cooperation and cultural plurality, while also motivating them to devise innovative responses to the challenges embedded within these issues.

According to Ferguson, T. and Roofe, C.G. (2020) the SDGs provide rich learning opportunities and authentic real-world contexts that can engage students deeply and purposefully in their English language development. Embedding SDG-related activities into classroom practice not only enhances the learning experience but also equips learners with the knowledge and competencies necessary to contribute to the realization of these global goals. By fostering active involvement and sustained commitment, such activities nurture a sense of responsibility for global sustainability, empowering students to serve as agents of change and preparing them to become well-informed, conscientious global citizens.

Below are several practical activities to enable language teachers to incorporate the SDGs into their language instruction:

Group Presentation. This task enhances learners' ability to employ the target language to collect, synthesize, and articulate contemporary information in a clear and cohesive manner. It also strengthens their awareness of the interdependence among the SDGs and the ways in which each goal shapes global sustainability.

Divide the class into small groups and assign each group one specific SDG to investigate. Students should research their designated goal, grasp its broader

25-november 2025

significance, and prepare a five-minute presentation in English that effectively conveys their findings. Throughout the process, monitor each group's progress to ensure they craft engaging introductions and utilize the language with precision and coherence.

As an example of this can be seen in a small event organized by me, Kadyrkhodjayeva D.B., a teacher at the English Language Department of UWED (University of World Economy and Diplomacy). With the participation of 2nd-year students of the International Relations Faculty, I have organized a small event dedicated to the "Eradication of Poverty" mission, which is one of the first goals of the UN. At the event, students participated as representatives of various international organizations and, in practice, reviewed and analyzed African and partially Asian countries with the highest rates of poverty, presenting necessary solutions from their organizations in the form of presentations. During the event, students worked in small groups and presented their official speeches in English as representatives of the same organization. Each representative of the organization clearly and fluently explained the problem in English and also demonstrated a suitable solution to the public.

The main purpose of holding the event:

- * To gain a deeper understanding of the SDG in English and be able to analyze them
- * Students were required to give clear and fluent official speeches in English and were required to have the ability to provide the right solution to the problem
- * To teach students to conduct official conversations in English, to encourage them to adhere to the rules based on diplomatic etiquette
- * To teach students independent learning, to independently prepare for a specific topic, to search and research

25-november 2025

* To properly guide students to be able to speak in formal and stylistic language in English

Brainstorming. This activity promotes open discussion, critical inquiry, and creative idea generation while fostering a positive classroom dynamic. Invite students to brainstorm concepts connected to any SDG in pairs or small groups, guiding them to consider how they might contribute to the achievement of these goals in their everyday lives. Provide a mind-map template to help them document and organize their ideas, encouraging imaginative links and deeper reflections.

Poster Design. Invite students to create visually compelling posters that represent a selected SDG in a meaningful and engaging manner. They may choose to focus on a specific sub-theme—such as the gender pay gap rather than the broader issue of gender inequality—using images, graphics, and concise text to demonstrate their grasp of the goal and propose potential solutions to the challenge it addresses. The completed posters can then be exhibited in the classroom to share and celebrate students' insights.

Curation and Reflection. For this activity, assign each student an SDG-related topic and provide a selection of multimodal resources—such as articles, infographics, audio clips, and videos—aligned with their theme. Students should then seek out additional materials and perspectives of their own choosing, particularly those that capture their interest. Ask them to compose reflective responses that address their key insights: what they have learned about the SDG, how it connects to their personal or local context, and the ways in which they might contribute to its achievement.

Students may upload their reflections to an online platform like Moodle, Hemis allowing them to share their ideas and engage with peers. Encourage them to read and comment on one another's posts, fostering a collaborative space for

25-november 2025

exchanging ideas, posing questions, and building collectively on each other's understanding.

Conclusion. Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into foreign language learning offers a wide range of pedagogical, intellectual, and personal benefits for students. By engaging with globally significant themes, learners develop essential 21st-century skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. The SDGs also provide authentic, real-world contexts that make language learning more meaningful and relevant, allowing students to apply the target language to discuss issues that extend beyond the classroom. Because the SDGs encompass diverse fields—from environmental protection to social justice and economic development—they naturally support interdisciplinary learning, broadening students' knowledge and fostering global awareness. Moreover, SDG-oriented activities encourage students to reflect on their role in society, nurturing a sense of responsibility, cultural empathy, and commitment to sustainable development. Ultimately, integrating the SDGs empowers learners to become informed, active global citizens while simultaneously strengthening their linguistic proficiency and overall academic growth.

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25-november 2025

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