

TEACHING FOREIGN LANGAGES THROUGH THE LENS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: IDEAS AND PRACTICES.

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Abstract. The article is dedicated to the role of foreign language teaching in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The author considers the importance of integrating sustainable development principles into the educational process, emphasizing that education is the key to solving global problems such as climate change, social justice and environmental protection. The article proposes various teaching methods aimed at developing critical thinking and awareness of global challenges through foreign languages, including project training, debate, analysis of articles, presentations and interviews. Special attention is given to the development of educational programs that help students to develop knowledge, skills and values necessary for a sustainable future. Finally, it is emphasized that the teaching of foreign languages can be an effective tool to raise students' awareness about global problems and actively participate in their solution.

Keywords. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); creativity; global issues; quality education ; climate change; foreign language lessons; teaching practices; motivation; real-world contexts; academic achievement; enhancing engagement.

Introduction. The aims of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by The United Nations (UN) represent plan of actions to improve life on the planet, ensure social justice and preserve the environment. As a partner Uzbekistan is also collaborating with UN to reach the Sustainable Development Goals: a set of 17 interconnected and ambitious objectives that aim to tackle the major development obstacles encountered by individuals in Uzbekistan and globally. Uzbekistan has reaffirmed its dedication to the attainment of the international 2030 Agenda, utilizing an inclusive, multi-stakeholder partnership strategy to accomplish national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is important that these goals are integrated into educational practices in order to form students' skills and attitudes that contribute to sustainable development. Teaching foreign languages provides unique opportunities to impart global values and consciousness, making this process an important tool in the context of achieving sustainable development goals.

Education is a foundation to realize and essential for achieving all sustainable development goals. It doesn't just increase knowledge about sustainability issues, but also helps students develop values and skills to address globalization, climate change, and social injustice.

Goal 4 (Quality Education) ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all. Education is a key factor in driving the development of a country. Through a good quality education system, a new generation could develop strong self-confidence to face future changes. To compete with other advanced countries globally, it is essential for the educational system to produce knowledgeable, talented young individuals capable of critical and creative thinking, as well as strong leadership skills for efficient communication (Deci, & Ryan ,2000)

The role of teachers in providing opportunities for skill development and cultivating environments that encourage collaboration, creativity, and adaptability is

very huge. They can empower students to succeed in various environments and participate actively in society. The importance of a curriculum that responds to present and future needs is emphasized by integrating culturally responsive teaching practices to promote critical thinking and connect classroom content with real-world contexts. This interactive method aims to connect with students' interests, experiences, and social needs, enhancing engagement and facilitating meaningful learning experiences(Dörnyei, 2001).

Language learning programs can and should be adapted to include topics related to sustainable development. Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into foreign language lessons can be done through a variety of activities that will help students learn the language while learning important global issues. Further we will look through some ideas which can be used for such lessons and lead to a more effective and enjoyable learning.

- *Current issues discussions through debates.* Debate can be organized on sustainable development. There can be various topics, like: "What steps should be taken to protect the environment?" or "How can countries tackle climate change?". How it helps: Students will use a foreign language to express their opinions, analyze situations, discuss arguments and work on expanding their vocabulary on the topic of ecology and sustainable development. Such activities are fantastic ways to incorporate students' interests into classroom and they are felt like real and relevant to students.

- *Project-Based Learning method (PBL).* Ask students to create a project work in groups and each group creates a project on sustainable development: for example, "How can we reduce waste in our classroom/ university/ town/ city/ country?" or "How do we make school meals more sustainable?". An essential impact of PBL on students is exercise students' critical thinking and creativity, is very effective in improving students' English writing ability, practical use of foreign languages through presentations, reports and conclusions. Students can gain valuable

experience working directly on projects or experiments, whether they succeed or fail. For students who fail in the project, project practice helps them gain experience and avoid future failures caused by similar problems. Successful students successfully acknowledge what they have learned and apply the knowledge to real-world problems. From two aspects, the improvement of hands-on ability positively impacts students(Norziaton et. al ,2023)

- *Review and analysis of articles.* SDG **Goal 13** (climate change) and **Goal 15** (ecosystem preservation), students can read an article or short story on climate change, environmental or social issues and then discuss in a group using a foreign language. Teachers also can use articles adapted to the level of their students. It helps to develop students' reading skills, expand their vocabulary and learn how to discuss important world issues in a foreign language.

- *Poster Presentations.* Students read the article related to the major environmental problems and create a poster that includes key takeaways from reading the article. They will be divided into the small groups of 3-4 students and present what they have learned. The time of presentation must be distributed equally among the students in the group as well as the workload for creating the poster. They can choose the article from the list of suggested articles provided to them or they can choose the article themselves with the approval of the teacher. Working on posters students develop reading skills, expand vocabulary, learn how to discuss important world issues in a foreign language, practice writing, as well as develop creative skills. This activity was implemented during the lesson and students were genuinely interested in the topic. According to research in educational psychology, intrinsic motivation- motivation driven by an internal desire to learn rather than external rewards- greatly enhances language acquisition.(Chand, 2024) As the content is connected to students' personal interests, learning becomes meaningful and dynamic.

- *Interviews and surveys.* SDG **Goal 3** (health and well-being) and **Goal 10** (reduction of inequality), students can interview their group mates, friends or parents on health, inequality, sustainable nutrition and other aspects of life. Students can create questions, conduct surveys and analyze responses and submit the results of their findings in the form of report. In this activity students use the foreign language in real life, develop listening and speaking skills, and learn to formulate questions and discuss social topics.

- *Sport events/ presentations.* Promoting health and well-being through combining English language and sport together. Students can prepare sports interviews or presentations where they tell about their favorite sports/ famous athlete/ a coach/ sports team and their sporting achievements/ sports competitions or rules of games in a foreign language. This will help to develop speaking skills and knowledge of sports terminology. Students will research about athletes and their sacrifices, contributions to their countries and get lots of information about them.

How a method is implemented in the classroom is not only going to be affected by who the teacher is, but also by who the students are, what are their interests, demands and needs. In order to choose the right method we can make a survey among students and find out their preferences and according to the results implement proper activities during the lessons. Establishing supportive and welcoming learning environments every student feels valued, respected, and involved in the educational process and it motivates them to study even harder. Continuous support is vital within educational systems and it influences students' academic achievement and overall learning experiences. And above mentioned ideas will not only help to improve language skills, but also raise students' awareness of global issues, strengthening their responsibility and participation in solving global challenges.

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