

Promoting Sustainability in Pre-service EFL Teacher Education in Germany: Findings from a Multiple Case Study

Keywords

pre-service teacher education; case study; higher ed

Biographical Note

Dr. Jürgen Kurtz is a TEFL-Professor at Justus Liebig University in Giessen, Germany and editor-in-chief of *Giessener Beiträge zur Fremdsprachenforschung*, Germany's largest collection of doctoral and post-doctoral research in the field of foreign/second language learning, teaching and assessment (n=242 at present). He has served on the advisory board of the German Association of Foreign Language Research for many years and is now a research expert for the International Georg Forster Research Fellowship Program of the German Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. His current research focuses on promoting sustainability in hybrid, transformative EFL teacher education.

For further information, see my university homepage at: <https://www.uni-giessen.de/en/faculties/f05/engl/tefl/teflstaff/professors/juergen> and my blog at <http://juergenkurtz.wordpress.com>.

References

Abstract (500 words)

Abstract (300 words)

In the 21st century, the concept of sustainability has become central to global rethinking and reorientation. However, it has also been co-opted as a popular green marketing strategy that may have already contributed to narrowing or distorting sustainability thinking, primarily for the purpose of influencing consumer behavior and maximizing profits. The commercialization of sustainability, as seen in the widespread promotion of unsustainable products and services (greenwashing), poses significant challenges for the education sector, which has also embraced neoliberal market or business principles. Against this background, the presentation will discuss preliminary findings from an ongoing multiple case study within the pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher education program at Justus Liebig University Giessen. The study aims to explore the potentials and limitations of empowering EFL student teachers to promote Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in secondary schools. Currently, it includes four cases, i.e., seminars based on a hybrid, exploratory, emancipatory, and transformative concept of study, with a total of 116 participants. Preliminary findings, derived from a systematic content analysis of participants' weekly online learning logs (n = 1256), contributions to forum discussions (n = 1195), and term papers (n = 86), highlight the complexities and challenges of cultivating the professional knowledge, attitudes, skills, and agency of future teachers necessary to promote ESD in schools, all within a neoliberal, modularized, incoherent, and exam-focused university teacher education framework.

For detailed information on our concept of hybrid learning in the TEFL section of the English Department at Justus Liebig University Giessen (TEFLhybrid@JLU), see: <https://www.uni-giessen.de/en/faculties/f05/engl/tefl/teflhybrid>.

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