



21st Century Skills and Digital Literacy-Based Activities in a Theme Hotel Website English Project

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Abstract

Teaching and learning in the 21st century is increasingly complex due to the technologically media-driven society we live in. People in the workforce are obliged to demonstrate a number of functional and critical thinking skills related to information, communication and technology if they want to succeed in this globally competitive work environment. Preparing students to become effective workers in this context should therefore be one of the main goals of education. In the USA, this has been a priority since 2002 with the Partnership for twenty-first century skills national organization that has focused on incorporating 21st century skills into education. These skills are known as the 4Cs – Critical thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity [1] [2]. To help develop these skills in the foreign language classroom, digital literacy-based activities are essential [3]. This paper reports on an English website project aimed to develop these skills throughout an entire semester in an English III curricular unit for second year higher education students enrolled in a Tourism degree in Portugal. The project involved creating a theme-based hotel website. To develop collaborative skills, students were asked to work in pairs. To build effective communication skills, students used digital media to research existing themed hotel websites to brainstorm ideas for their project. Brainstorming was also used to decide on the themes and location of the hotels, hence developing learners' Creative skills. And finally, Critical Thinking skills were developed throughout the project when pairs gathered relevant information, asked important questions to clarify points of view and help solve problems. The websites presented at the end of the semester, in the most part, revealed creative theme-based hotels that were created using team work and technology-mediated activities in the English language.

Keywords: *21st century skills, digital literacy, Critical thinking skills, Communication skills, Collaboration skills, Creativity skills.*

References:

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