Impact of Work Cycles on Autonomous Digital Learning

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Abstract: Guided digital learning has attracted many researchers as it leads to autonomous learning. The developments in Guided digital learning have led to changes in teaching and learning in English Language Teaching classes (Jeong-Bae, 2014). This study reports on tasks designed under the principles of learner autonomy in an online learning platform “Webquest” with the purpose of teaching English to Turkish tertiary level students at a foundation university in Istanbul. Guided digital learning blog project contents were organized according to work-cycles phases (planning and negotiation phase, decision-making phase, project phase and evaluation phase) which are compatible with the principles of autonomous learning (Legenhausen, 2003). The aim of the study was to implement the class blog project to find out its impact on students’ behaviours and beliefs towards autonomous learning. The mixed method research approach was taken. 24 tertiary level students participated in the study on voluntary basis. Data analysis was performed with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. According to the results, students’ attitudes towards digital learning did not differ before and after the training application. The learning styles of the students and their knowledge on digital learning scores differed. It has been observed that the students’ learning styles and their digital learning scores increased after the training application. Autonomous beliefs, autonomous behaviors, group cohesion and group norms differed before and after the training application. Students’ motivation level, strategies for learning English, perceptions of responsibility and out-of-class activity scores differed before and after the training application. It was seen that work-cycles in online classes create student centered learning that fosters autonomy. This paper will display the work cycles in detail and the researchers will give examples of in and beyond class activities and blog projects.

Keywords: guided digital learning, work cycles, english language teaching, autonomous learning

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