

Chapter 13

Technology–Based Values Teaching in Secondary Education

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents a case study of the use of ICTs, and in particular the blog, in a Spanish Secondary School classroom in order to promote the teaching of values such as solidarity or tolerance. The aim was to enhance coexistence in increasingly diverse and multicultural classrooms in which the acknowledgement and development of these values prove essential for a successful coexistence.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the result of a case study within an ongoing research project on the impact Web 2.0 environments have on the moral and attitudinal education in Spanish Secondary Education. Many of the studies, which focus on the attention to cultural, racial, or linguistic differences within the field of education, are related to the teaching of

such values as respect, tolerance, and the culture of peace. The values that rule coexistence, namely, solidarity, honesty, equality, responsibility, freedom, respect towards life, difference and human rights, cooperation, peace, and justice (Cortina, 1996), must be promoted in the everyday life of the educational institution and in all areas of the curriculum. Therefore, if it is evident that there is an urgency to undertake a moral and attitudinal

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education (Gil, 2001), we should join forces in order to educate people committed to the above-mentioned values.

In the present work, we state how the study was conceived and developed, and how the results and conclusions were obtained by means of an experimental research conducted in a secondary school, in which the following hypothesis has been proved: “the implementation of a programme for the teaching of values, supported by the use of blogs, enhances the social values for the coexistence of adolescents.” So as to verify the positive influence of the programme, a series of means have been applied with consideration to two groups—control and experimental—and to certain stages of pre- and post-test assessment (Shadish & de Luellen, 2006). We worked with a total of 50 students, of which 12 belong to the experimental group that was selected by the marking they had been granted as they participated in the different activities of the programme.

The implemented programme is called Values in Situation (VES). Its starting point is the everyday life of the Secondary School and the acknowledgement of having performed actions or displayed positive behaviours that reflect one of the aforementioned values through an explicit congratulation in a blog. Taking those actions into account, we put forward the theory about that value and questions to encourage the reflection and participation of students through the comments on the blog. The duration of the programme was nine weeks, working with a different value in each one of them.

We started from the premise that the employment of Web 2.0 technologies has a high potential in creating learning atmospheres, which become attractive for this kind of users (Saeed, Yang, & Sinnappan, 2009). Besides this fact, in academic contexts, blogs offer an opportunity for reflection and for the analysis of different situations, while they also help to understand the relational and contextual basis of the construction of knowledge (Ferdig & Trammell, 2004). Students enjoy blogs

and can even use them as tools to build a community, to exchange ideas, or, simply, to create a personal journal (Kerawalla, Minocha, Kirkup, & Conole, 2008). The results then denote that there has been an improvement in social and personal values in the students that were more actively involved in the programme. This study hence illustrates a successful experience based on ICTs in Spain.

In order to present the development and results of the abovementioned experience we will subsequently provide, first, a theoretical background, then a description of the empirical study and the employed research methodology, and, finally, the results and the conclusions of our research, paying particular attention to the future lines of research that it opens for scholars.

BACKGROUND

In our current open, flexible, and plural society, education should have as main objective the comprehensive development of students. This aim is founded on coexistence and the development of a responsible citizenship. Formal education systems should rise to the demands of our time and should promote intervention models, which favor what nowadays is termed interculturalism (Soriano & Peñalva, 2011).

At this respect, many of the studies which focus on the attention to cultural, racial or linguistic differences within the field of education are related to the teaching of such values as respect, tolerance, and the culture of peace. The values that rule coexistence would be, namely, solidarity, honesty, equality, responsibility, freedom, respect towards life, difference and human rights, cooperation, peace, and justice (Cortina, 1996). According to Martínez (2000, p. 39), value education implies promoting conditions to learn to build our singular value systems and to create conditions which have an effect on educational processes.

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