

The Effect of Debating Some Environmental Issues on the EFL Pre-Service Teachers' Oral Performance and Environmental Awareness

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at identifying the effect of using debates in incorporating some environmental issues into the EFL prospective teachers' spoken English course on their oral performance and environmental awareness. The subjects of the study were sixty eight students enrolled in the second year, English Department, Faculty of Education, Cairo University, Fayoum Branch. They were randomly assigned to either the experimental or control group; each consisted of thirty four students and were granted similar circumstances of practice. They had two "spoken English" classes per week; each was for 2 hours. The two groups attended the first class together to fulfil the requirements of the course, but they were separated for the second class. The experimental group was exposed to the program designed by the researcher and through which debates were used in incorporating some environmental issues into their "spoken English" course. The control group was also exposed to the same environmental issues but through a whole class discussion. The other tools of the study were: an oral performance assessment checklist which was used for the pre-and post-testing of the subjects' oral performance and an environmental awareness scale which was used for the pre-and post-testing of the subjects' environmental awareness. The experiment lasted for two months and a half. Results showed that the students of the experimental group outperformed those of the control group in not only oral performance but also environmental awareness. The study presents some recommendations for extending the benefits of content-based instruction and the use of debates as a teaching technique to other areas in TEFL. The study also presents some suggested topics for further research.