

THE CLASS BLOG: CHINESE EFL NON-ENGLISH MAJOR COLLEGE STUDENTS' ONLINE WRITING EXPERIENCES

Yang Guo

Dr. Roy Fox, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the Chinese EFL non-English major college students' online English writing and communication experiences through blogging activities. From late October 2011 through late April 2012, thirty-one students joined in the class blog to communicate their thoughts with peers and the instructor. In this study, I examined the following four areas: 1) students' experiences with and attitudes towards blogging, 2) the benefits and difficulties of blogging, 3) how unassigned blogging compared with assigned blogging, and 4) how EFL students' writing should be evaluated. By using the constant comparative and content analysis methods, multiple sources of data were analyzed. The findings reveal that the students gained confidence in writing and engaged in thinking through blogging. Students used writing as a means of discovery during the act of writing, and they employed various thinking strategies during blogging. Meanwhile, on the class blog, silent students' voices could also be heard. This study also makes some pedagogical recommendations, including creating an inviting and comfortable writing environment for the students, teachers writing with the students, and encouraging peer responses to the students' writings.