Webquest for Academic Purposes — a Strategy for Developing Students’ EAP Skills

Webquest a des fins académiques — une stratégie pour développer les compétences des étudiants en anglais a des fins académiques

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Abstract

The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has profoundly affected the educational sector, prompting rapid and unforeseen changes that have significantly altered both the working environments of educators and students and the methodologies for knowledge dissemination and acquisition. In response, language educators have increasingly explored pedagogical strategies that actively involve students in content creation. Consequently, various tasks incorporating project-based learning and other student-engagement techniques have been integrated as standard components of language instruction. This article seeks to examine the potential benefits of implementing a WebQuest within an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course. It presents an in-depth analysis of a study conducted with participants of an academic language course, focusing on the efficacy of WebQuests in enhancing specific EAP skills.

Keywords: WebQuest; Language for specific purposes; English for academic purposes; Online education

Résumé

La pandémie de SARS-CoV-2 a profondément affecté le secteur éducatif, entraînant des changements rapides et imprévus qui ont considérablement modifié à la fois les environnements de travail des éducateurs et des étudiants et les méthodologies de diffusion et d’acquisition des connaissances. En réponse, les enseignants de langues ont de plus en plus exploré des stratégies pédagogiques impliquant activement les étudiants dans la création de contenu. Par conséquent, diverses tâches intégrant l’apprentissage par projet et d’autres techniques d’engagement des étudiants ont été intégrées comme des composantes standard de l’enseignement des langues.

Cet article vise à examiner les avantages potentiels de la mise en œuvre d’un WebQuest dans le cadre d’un cours d’anglais à des fins académiques (EAP). Il présente une analyse approfondie d’une étude menée auprès des participants d’un cours de langue académique, se concentrant sur l’efficacité des WebQuests dans l’amélioration de compétences EAP spécifiques.

Mots-clés: WebQuest (cyberquête); Langue à des fins spéciales; Anglais à des fins académiques; Education en ligne
INTRODUCTION

The significant influence of the Internet, recent changes in educational systems, and the implications of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic have collectively driven a substantial shift towards online education and the incorporation of web-based activities within educational frameworks. In efforts to enhance the appeal and engagement of online classes, various approaches involving different tools, applications, formats, and strategies suitable for online education have been rigorously examined. Concurrently, there has been a notable increase in research focused on identifying effective online education methods. Educators have begun to explore online-oriented pedagogical techniques that integrate skills, knowledge, and collaborative activities among students. This article examines the potential advantages of implementing a WebQuest—an inquiry-oriented, web-based lesson format—within the context of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses.

ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES, FACHSPRACHE – DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, THE SAME CONCEPT

The term languages for specific purposes (LSP) has been a subject of scientific research and comprehensive analysis for many years. Numerous researchers have contributed to the evolution of this concept, employing various empirical methods and strategies for its examination. Given the constraints of this article, we will highlight only selected aspects of LSP.

Despite extensive efforts to elucidate the term Language for Specific Purposes, there remains a lack of unified definition or terminology, and its relationship with general language continues to be a subject of debate. The Duden Great Dictionary of the German Language defines LSP (referred to in German as Fachsprache) as “language (with specific specialized vocabulary and specific ways of application) which refers to a defined thematic area and enables precise understanding (based on terminology definitions) and exact naming within the confines of the thematic area” (Lorenz, 2005, p. 3). In linguistic studies conducted in Germany, LSP is described by various terms such as business language (Arbeitssprache), job-related language (Berufssprache), group language (Gruppensprache), trade language (Handwerkssprache), secondary language (Sekundärsprache), special language (Sondersprache), formal language (Standessprache), and partial language (Teilsprache) (ibid.). These terms suggest that LSP is confined to specific professions, isolated from general language, and forms an independent language system.
In English-speaking countries, research on Language for Specific Purposes began in the 1960s, with a primary focus on English for Specific Purposes (ESP). ESP is defined as “an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 19) or as “a movement based on the proposition that all language teaching should be tailored to the specific learning and language use needs of identified groups of students—and also sensitive to the sociocultural contexts in which these students will be using English” (Johns & Price-Machado, 2001, p. 43). The objective of ESP is not merely educational attainment but to facilitate the acquisition of a defined language skill used in a specific context (Basturkmen, 2006, p. 18). Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, pp. 4-5) further characterize ESP in terms of ‘absolute’ and ‘variable’ characteristics, which are elaborated in Table 1.

Table 1. The meanings of the concepts of absolute’ and ‘variable’ characteristics of ESP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute characteristics</th>
<th>Variable characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESP is defined to meet the specific needs of the learners.</td>
<td>ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves.</td>
<td>ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at the secondary school level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP is centred on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse, and genre.</td>
<td>ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems.</td>
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</table>

Source: Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, pp. 4-5.

A prevalent perspective is that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is taught to enable learners to enhance their language skills for specific objectives. However, contemporary applications of ESP extend beyond intermediate English users or individuals targeting a specific language skill set, encompassing learners of general English as well (Agustina, 2014).

This brief overview of definitions of Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) reveals a variety of perspectives and approaches. Ongoing research continues to explore LSP through various lenses, such as definitions, methodologies, and educational implications. A particular focus is on the integration of new technologies in LSP instruction (Gajewska & Sowa, 2014).
ACADEMIC LANGUAGE (LANGUAGE FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES)

Despite its frequent usage, academic language (or Language for Academic Purposes, LAP) remains challenging to define. Snow and Uccelli (2009, p. 112) highlight the diversity in its interpretation, encompassing terms such as ‘the language of education,’ ‘the language of school,’ ‘the language of schooling,’ ‘the language that reflects schooling,’ ‘advanced literacy,’ ‘scientific language,’ and ‘academic English.’ The predominant view posits that academic language is primarily employed during university lectures for conducting discussions (Arbor & Schleppegrell, 2009). However, academic language is also utilized in various activities such as reading and writing reports, citing arguments, making hypotheses, drawing conclusions and generalizing from given cases, formulating theories and preparing clarifications, working on presentations, and lecturing.

The proper use of specialized terminology is a key element in the learning process and the effective communication of scientific theories. The close connection between learning and language acquisition implies that introducing specialized texts to students facilitates the acquisition of specific language skills necessary for exchanging views on given topics and conducting research professionally. Consequently, mastery of specialized lexis becomes a crucial factor. Words gain precise meaning when the language and conceptual contexts extend beyond usual definitions, and concepts from specialized language are recognized by students. Thus, Language for Academic Purposes should be used appropriately, ensuring a link between previously acquired experience, knowledge of learned terms, and facts. This approach prevents the incorrect usage and repetition of specialized vocabulary (Homepage Michael Hänsel, n/d).

The majority of theoretical and empirical research on Language for Academic Purposes (LAP) primarily addresses English for Academic Purposes (EAP). EAP focuses on teaching English to facilitate learners’ academic study or research through the medium of English (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001, p. 8; Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 1). EAP is not restricted by students’ levels of language proficiency. Although ESP is traditionally associated with university-level education, there is a recognized need to integrate certain academic skills into lower levels of education (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 3). Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002, p. 2) define EAP as “language research and instruction that focuses on the specific communicative needs and practices of particular groups in academic contexts.” Consequently, EAP imposes specific requirements on instructors, who must identify the necessary skills, texts, linguistic forms, and communicative practices that
students need to acquire. These are not universal skills or language forms; academic discourses serve functions such as exposition, clarification, and conclusion, requiring language actions like explaining, defining, comparing, contrasting, classifying, agreeing, disagreeing, illustrating, elaborating, making claims, inferring implications, exemplifying, anticipating, and concluding (What is academic discourse? Albert Weideman, 2018). Learners must develop new communicative skills, both written and spoken, to successfully perform academic tasks and assignments (e.g., reports, articles, speeches). They must recognize the structure of academic texts and understand their meanings.

There is ongoing debate whether EAP is a sub-discipline within ESP or a separate branch within language education. As Hamp-Lyons (2010, p. 89) notes, differentiation often depends more on researchers’ interests and concerns than on the type of scientific data being discussed. EAP can be analyzed from two perspectives: student activities (e.g., using appropriate classroom language, preparing writing and speaking assignments, discourse analysis) and teacher-oriented activities (e.g., applying appropriate methodologies, teacher education, needs analysis, materials development, and evaluation).

An important concept in EAP is the idea of community. Numerous studies have explored the discursive homogeneity of academic communities to target instructions more accurately (e.g., Johns, 1997; Swales & Feak, 2001). Another research perspective examines discourse competencies that enable EAP learners to legitimize their professional identities and participate as members of a given community (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 6). Such participation requires group members to use a specific, appropriate register to communicate effectively. Analyzing EAP necessitates consideration of the social context in which it is used, such as scientific conferences, presentations, and team and group work. These are social activities for which learners must be prepared, not only in terms of speaking but also active participation in collaborative work. Therefore, students must understand that they will need to use their EAP competencies and skills to cooperate with others.

Generally, EAP is employed for delivering speeches and producing various forms of written texts (e.g., summaries, articles, research papers, essays). It has distinct rules for areas such as the structure of speech/written text, coherence and cohesion of ideas, and a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary. To meet these requirements, EAP employs diverse grammatical constructions and sentence types. The language forms used must suit the purpose of the text and reflect the
position of the researcher. Certain formulaic and idiomatic expressions must be carefully selected to adhere to academic writing standards. Writers, especially non-native speakers, should exercise caution in word choice to avoid misinterpretation due to multiple meanings or nuanced differences.

**WEBQUEST**

The concept of a WebQuest as a distinct educational methodology was established by Bernie Dodge and Tom March in 1995. It rapidly emerged as a powerful pedagogical tool (Levin-Goldberg, 2014) applicable to various school and university subjects. The primary objective of the WebQuest is to engage students in gathering information on a specific topic by utilizing multiple online resources. What differentiates WebQuests from other web-based activities is the nature of the tasks that students undertake. The fundamental premise is that WebQuests should stimulate students’ curiosity and attention, be feasible, and promote higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). To complete these tasks, students must employ various strategies such as problem-solving, judgment, analysis, and synthesis. Consequently, task completion should not be merely about filling in blanks, summarizing video content, or using online editors to create stories. As Dodge asserts, “the task is a scaled-down version of something that adults do on the job, outside school walls” (Starr, 2012).

WebQuests are problem-based, collaborative, educational, creative, and interactive activities aimed at achieving a common goal (Tabolina et al., 2020). They facilitate the integration of diverse approaches to the topic and technologies, not only in terms of delivering the final product but also in accessing internet resources. Learners must be active participants, cooperating and interacting with one another. Therefore, in addition to practicing technical skills, a WebQuest task can engage multiple areas and levels of knowledge acquisition, such as communication and critical thinking.

**Structural components of WebQuests**

Due to its structured design and the complexity of strategies required for its completion, a WebQuest is recognized as an effective method for fully engaging students throughout the entire learning process. A critical factor contributing to the effectiveness of WebQuests in terms of cognitive processing is their structured framework (Farenga & Ness, 2005). The approach employed in a WebQuest aligns with Dewey’s perspective that learning is cyclical, which is reflected in the
WebQuest’s structure (Levin-Goldberg, 2014). The framework comprises several stages, each with clearly defined objectives and procedures.

Before initiating a WebQuest, teachers must acquaint students with its goal(s), providing necessary background information about the topic and the tools required for its execution. The next step involves presenting a step-by-step procedure for achieving the goal. Students need to understand the tasks they will undertake and the resources and information they will need. Teachers are responsible for offering clear, explicit descriptions and examples of the expected outcomes. Additionally, fair and transparent assessment procedures and criteria must be established in advance.

The final stage, often referred to as the conclusion stage, allows students to reflect on the entire process of completing the WebQuest and discuss follow-up questions and issues for future exploration. As noted by Farenga and Ness (2005, p. 192), “the conclusion wraps the project up but not too completely. It leaves the door open for further exploration and may plant the seed of an idea for further study.” This cyclical, inquiry-based process thus perpetuates continuous learning and discovery.

Research on WebQuest

Contemporary literature on WebQuests encompasses diverse research perspectives, recognizing their utility not only in developing students’ communicative competencies (Olennikova, 2019) but also in fostering skills in information technology and interdisciplinary environments (Trostinskaia et al., 2018). Current studies evaluate WebQuests as positive learning experiences, enhancing information organization, problem-solving, and reasoning skills (Wang, 2021).

In the context of language learning, WebQuests are acknowledged as valuable for experiencing authentic language, serving as motivational learning tools, and providing an effective environment for teaching specific language skills. Research indicates the potential of WebQuests in promoting reading comprehension in foreign language learning. When utilized effectively, WebQuests foster learner autonomy, enhance problem-solving skills and strategies, and facilitate the negotiation of text meaning among peers (Barros & Carvalho, 2007). However, the successful implementation of WebQuests requires both students and teachers to be trained in their use and integration into the classroom, particularly in blended learning settings (Alshumaimeri & Almasri, 2012). Research highlights positive
outcomes for learners with low motivation, poor academic performance, or social disadvantages (Al-Bataineh et al., 2000).

Integrating WebQuests into teaching practices can positively impact students’ competencies on multiple levels. Firstly, WebQuests enhance ICT skills while contributing to language and literacy development. When assigned as teamwork, they also promote cooperation among students. Furthermore, WebQuests can positively affect Core Academic Language Skills (CALS), which refer to “knowledge and deployment of a repertoire of language forms and functions that co-occur with oral and written school learning tasks across disciplines” (Uccelli et al., 2015, p. 1079). CALS encompass cross-discipline academic language skills, including participation in classroom oral exchanges, reading school texts, and producing written assignments across content areas (ibid).

WebQuests offer opportunities to collect, analyze, and integrate information from the Internet, facilitating the creation of both spoken and written tasks such as presentations, recordings, reports, or speeches. They can be tailored to meet the needs of individual learners as well as specific learning areas, making them a versatile tool in educational settings.

**METHODODOLOGY**

One of the consequences of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has been the heightened importance of e-learning as a method for delivering education in both schools and universities. Concurrently, there has been a notable surge in research focusing on the integration of new technologies within educational curricula. A comprehensive review of existing literature reveals that while the WebQuest format has been extensively studied from various angles (Alshumaimeri & Almasri, 2012), there remain aspects that warrant further investigation. One area in particular that necessitates a more rigorous scientific approach is evaluating the effectiveness and potential advantages of utilizing the WebQuest format specifically within ESP classes.

**Participants and Context**

The study was conducted at the Pontifical University of John Paul II, involving 27 participants enrolled in Academic English classes within the Doctoral School and the licentiate – doctoral cycle. During online English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes, the concept of WebQuests and their methodology were introduced, with students analyzing examples of WebQuests to grasp the underlying principles. As a semester-end assignment, students were tasked with creating a project comprising
multiple components: a written report, both written and oral presentations, a list of sourced web pages, individual self-assessment, and a record of undertaken activities and completed tasks. These tasks were intentionally structured to align with WebQuest methodology and implementation strategies proposed by Levin-Goldberg (2014), detailed further in Appendix 1.

Research Design

To assess the effectiveness of WebQuests in EAP classes and propose a framework for incorporating WebQuests as mandatory assignments in the EAP curriculum, a study was conducted among EAP students. The research questions were based on essential elements deemed crucial for understanding the significance of EAP and its role within the university curriculum. The survey included the following topics:

- Development of inferential skills using linguistic clues and morphological knowledge to decipher unfamiliar expressions.
- Recognition of academic registers, emphasizing structural and lexical components of academic texts.
- Comprehension of academic discourse, including complex syntactic structures.
- Accurate use of EAP grammatical structures and domain-specific terms.
- Ability to comprehend diverse viewpoints presented in texts.
- Summarization skills to identify and articulate main concepts from scientific articles or research papers using precise language (Freedman, 2012).
- Preparation of academic texts.
- Differentiation between general and academic language.

The survey comprised 24 closed questions administered online via Google Forms, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale for responses. The survey was anonymous, with respondents rating their experiences from 1 (never) to 5 (very often), reflecting the frequency with which they engaged in specific activities or developed competencies. The questions were designed to assess both the extent of skill practice and competence development facilitated by the use of the WebQuest format.
Research group

The participants in this study were students enrolled in the Doctoral School and licentiate – doctoral cycle at the Pontifical University of John Paul II. The research group exhibited diversity in terms of study duration (see Table 2) and proficiency levels in both General English (GE) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Duration of studying GE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Duration of studying GE</td>
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<td>Number of respondents</td>
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<th>Table 3. GE and EAP proficiency levels as declared by the respondents</th>
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<tr>
<td>CEFR level</td>
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<tr>
<td>GE proficiency level</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAP proficiency level</td>
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RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The survey findings indicate that a significant majority of students (70.4%) perceived WebQuests as beneficial for developing the ability to infer the meaning of expressions or words using linguistic clues. It is noteworthy that approximately 30% of respondents indicated this skill development occurred “sometimes,” with an equal number choosing “very often” and “rarely” (22.2% each). This distribution suggests that while many students engaged in inferring meanings during WebQuest activities, a notable proportion did not consistently practice this skill. This trend is also evident in responses regarding the overall impact of WebQuests on inferential abilities (refer to Table 4). The data suggests that despite the potential of WebQuests to facilitate the acquisition of inferential skills, some students either do not attempt or only marginally engage in developing deductive abilities. This behavior may stem from the convenience of online resources such as dictionaries or translators, which are readily available during online activities like WebQuests.
Table 4. WebQuest and the ability to infer the meaning of an expression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The usefulness of WebQuest in practising the skill of guessing the meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The impact of WebQuest on the development of the skill of guessing the meaning</td>
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</table>

In assessing the frequency of usage of grammatical structures typical of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), 12 students reported using them “frequently,” while 8 respondents indicated “very often.” “Rarely” or “sometimes” were chosen by 4 and 3 students, respectively. Similarly, regarding the use of EAP vocabulary, 12 students selected “frequently” and 8 chose “very often,” mirroring the distribution seen with grammatical structures. However, there was a notable difference in the selection of “sometimes,” which was chosen by 6 respondents (see Table 5).

It is important to note that each student who participated in the survey had previous language experience in General English (GE). It can be reasonably assumed that during these classes, they acquired grammatical structures that are also characteristic of EAP. Furthermore, the survey results clearly indicate that although none of the participants claimed full proficiency in EAP, all possessed some level of knowledge in EAP, encompassing both grammar and vocabulary domains.

Table 5. Use of grammatical structures and vocabulary characteristic of EAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of grammatical structures characteristic of ESP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of vocabulary characteristic of academic discourse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The consolidation of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) emerged as a prominent benefit of using WebQuests, with 19 out of 27 respondents indicating that the WebQuest format enabled them to perceive EAP as a cohesive entity either “frequently” or “very often.” This substantial number of responses suggests that WebQuests positively impact students’ abilities to practice EAP across various dimensions, encompassing not only performance (oral or written) but also perspectives (grammar, vocabulary, syntax) and skills (reading and listening comprehension, writing).
During the preparation of WebQuests, a majority of students (22) reported having opportunities to read texts presenting diverse research perspectives on given issues, with frequencies ranging from “sometimes” (8) to “frequently” (10) and “very often” (4). This exposure is particularly significant for students aspiring to careers in scientific fields, where familiarity with high-quality, objective research and broad perspectives is essential.

Another skill emphasized by the respondents was the ability to summarize academic texts, with 21 students indicating that they did so “frequently” or “very often.” However, in terms of developing summarization skills specifically through WebQuests, 15 students found them beneficial.

Regarding the impact of WebQuests on language skills for creating academic texts, a significant number of respondents (11) reported that WebQuests helped them “to a large extent.” Additionally, 9 students felt it aided them “to a very large extent,” while 5 students acknowledged a “moderate degree” of influence.

According to the responses, during the preparation of WebQuests, nearly all students were able to familiarize themselves with the structure of academic texts. The assignment also facilitated the respondents in discerning the distinction between texts written in general language and academic discourse. The respondents acknowledged the impact of WebQuests on their ability to recognize differences between general and academic registers.

Regarding the consolidation of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), 11 students rated the effect of WebQuest preparation as “large,” and 6 students as “very large.” However, 2 students indicated minimal impact, 4 reported slight influence, and 5 found the impact to be moderate.

The survey also aimed to evaluate whether preparing WebQuests helped students develop the ability to understand academic discourse writings in general and complex syntactic structures. Concerning academic discourse writings, 6 respondents perceived a moderate degree of improvement, 11 reported a large degree, and 7 indicated a very large degree. In terms of understanding complex syntactic structures, 11 respondents found a moderate degree of improvement, 8 reported a large degree, and 6 indicated a very large extent.

The respondents were also given an opportunity to share their opinions on WebQuests:
Interesting learning method, too bad it hit the pandemic time. Probably more could be learned from it, especially in the context of teamwork, in classroom teaching.

A very time-consuming form of independent work, in this case it was a team project, lots of meetings, and the end result was poor.

This is an interesting and valuable exercise that allows students to improve their skills in developing a report and preparing and presenting a speech and a slide show on a scientific text.

In terms of educational value, WebQuests enabled ESP students to acquaint themselves with the structure of academic texts and discern differences between texts written in general language versus academic language. Preparation of WebQuests facilitated their use of vocabulary and grammatical structures within an EAP context. Students engaged in practicing the skill of summarizing academic texts, although the survey results indicated varying degrees of impact on their competency development in this area. WebQuest preparation provided students with an opportunity to enhance their language skills specifically related to academic text composition, and exposed them to texts presenting diverse viewpoints on given issues.

The survey presented in this article has inherent limitations. Chief among these is the relatively small sample size of 27 participants, which does not meet the criteria for statistical validity. Additionally, the research methodology employed—a quantitative study utilizing a questionnaire without supplementary qualitative interviews—limits the depth of data analysis. Nevertheless, the study’s primary objective was not solely to assess current perceptions of WebQuests among ESP students, but rather to explore the feasibility of integrating this format into our university curricula as a mandatory component of ESP classes, targeting a specific cohort of PhD students who possess extensive experience in studying English and specific expectations for the EAP course.

CONCLUSIONS

Using WebQuests as a format for language education constitutes a time-intensive activity requiring thorough student preparation and full commitment to executing the intended language project. Proficiency in utilizing diverse media integral to WebQuests is crucial for successful implementation. The culmination of a WebQuest should yield both written and oral deliverables, necessitating
collaboration and cooperation among participants. Moreover, it should stimulate critical thinking for creative problem-solving and the introduction of innovative ideas, accommodating various learning styles to enhance adaptability (Levin-Goldberg, 2014). The implementation strategy for WebQuests demands meticulous preparation, primarily the responsibility of the teacher, as failure to execute these tasks effectively compromises the intended educational objectives.

Survey results indicate that WebQuests can effectively integrate into university ESP curricula as a viable assessment method, either independently or in conjunction with traditional testing practices. Despite students’ incomplete proficiency in academic English, with adequate initial guidance and substantial teacher support, they demonstrate capability in independently engaging with this format outside the classroom. WebQuests facilitate EAP learners in distinguishing between general and academic language. They significantly contribute to students’ proficiency in preparing academic texts by familiarizing them with the genre’s structural norms and enabling the use of pertinent vocabulary and grammatical structures. Furthermore, WebQuests enhance students’ skills in summarizing academic texts. Thus, this pedagogical approach holds promise in advancing students’ competencies in specific areas of EAP. With meticulous and equitable evaluation procedures and criteria in place, WebQuests can also serve as a formal method for assessing students’ academic progress.

**APPENDIX 1. WEBQUEST - ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES B2-C1**

1. **Introduction**

You are a group of researchers who participate in the international project about IG NOBEL PRIZES. You collect and interpret data about this event and improbable research, the achievements which first make people laugh and then make them think.

Good luck in your investigation and findings! Perhaps, one day, you will be awarded too!

2. **Task description**

You are going to learn more about Ig Nobel Prizes. You must choose one research you like most. The objective of your work is to present and analyse the selected research to answer the question why this particular discovery “cannot, or should not, be reproduced” or/and what makes it improbable. Prepare a report and presentation about your findings. Focus on: a researcher, research, methods, results,
context, humour. Reflect on what you learn by taking part in this WebQuest project. Use free online grammar and spelling checkers to eliminate errors in your writing.

3. Process

- Choose a leader of the group.
- Search the web to find out more about the event and improbable research.
- Brainstorm ideas.
- Choose the awarded research you would like to write and talk about.
- Share tasks and responsibilities.
- Write a research report (based on PDF model), use WORD to create a document. Prepare an oral 25-minute presentation accompanied by a slideshow to share results with other students and explain your choice. The slideshow should contain: the text (report), pictures, video, list of web pages you have visited to collect the information and any other credits or sources. Your oral presentation must be attractive and surprising – use your creativity and imagination!
- Write a self-evaluation explaining what you learned – for example, facts, opinions, skills, collaboration, English, internet, technology, etc. Keep it short and simple, be specific. Create a bullet or numbered list. (individual work)
- Write a list of undertaken activities and completed tasks in this project. Keep it short and simple, be specific. Create a bullet or numbered list. (individual work)
- Send your group work outcomes that is a report, slideshow and a list of web sources to FORUM in the Moodle Platform after class presentation.
- Send your individual work outcomes (the self-evaluation and a list of completed tasks) to TASK in the Moodle Platform.

4. Products/Conclusions

- a written report - WORD document (group work)
- a slide presentation (group work)
- an oral presentation in class (a group and individual work)
- a list of web pages you visited to collect the information – WORD document (group work)
- an individual self-evaluation explaining what you learned by taking part in this activity – WORD document (individual work)
- a list of undertaken activities and completed tasks – WORD document (individual work)

5. Evaluation

The grade/mark for this WebQuest is a group grade/mark. The final report your team turns in is the grade/mark that each member of the group will get. A student receives a final grade/mark after all the tasks have been completed.

The project is worth 12 points:
- group report: 4 points
- group slideshow: 4 points
- individual presentation delivery: 4 points

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