

COOPERATIVE LEARNING THROUGH WEBQUEST AS INTERNET-BASED ENGLISH LEARNING MEDIA

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Abstract: In language learning, technology is an attractive media to the students, even more since e-learning concept was found. Along with the development of the information technology, teachers should build up the learning process to be more interesting. Many educational institutions use computers and internet as a part of language classroom. Computers provide students with access to large numbers of authentic learning resources. One of the resources is WebQuests. Using WebQuests give students the opportunity to be exposed to many resources while they are in the classroom. WebQuests can be used for several different instructional purposes in the classroom while helping students to acquire and transform knowledge. The WebQuest is designed to deal with dilemma about how to combine technology with effective learning into an integrated activity in class. It is about how students collaborate with their partners to solve problems in a topic. They are also taught to access information on the internet, and it is into a positive direction.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning, WebQuests

The quality of education in Indonesia needs upgrading in this modern era and the most dominant aspect to upgrade is the teaching-learning process. Sadiman (1993: 6) states that the essence of teaching-learning process is communication process. Communication process is process of message delivery from source (sender) to receiver through a medium. In education term, the messages are lessons in curriculum which are then delivered by teacher or other sources into visual or verbal communication symbols. Essentially, the teaching and learning process is a system containing some components which are integrated and work cooperatively to achieve learning objectives. The components are teaching-learning objectives, teachers and students, materials, methods and strategies of teaching and learning, tools or media, material resources and evaluation.

In language learning, especially English, technology is an attractive medium to students, even more since *e-learning* concept was found. *E-learning* as a new learning model in education has given huge contribution to education sector, compared to conventional one –education in general– in term of, for example, limitation of space and time. Information technology with its internet platform has been a solution. The integrated, economic, easy and open beings of the technology make it possible for everyone to use it everywhere and every time.

Development into the *e-learning* is a necessity to upgrade the quality of education. The issue is underlain with the fact that *e-learning* is internet and technology use to extend learning onto a wide range. The *e-learning* has three criteria: (1) it is a network with ability to update, store, distribute and share information, i.e. learning materials; (2) it uses a computer and standard internet technology in its delivery; (3) it focuses on the most open perspective about learning behind the traditional paradigm to optimize the urgency of the information technology for education.

Making a class to be responsive is relatively not easy for some teachers. It does not depend only on strategies used or environment but also the teacher. It is ironic that sometimes teacher does not see his/her students objectively. The teacher often sees his/her students as matures while he/she should see them as teenage or young learners. In addition, teacher cannot apply student-centered and otherwise teacher-centered, for example by lecturing. Those have been the explanation of why some English teachers find out their class to be unresponsive during learning. Worse, sometimes the teachers assume that it is caused by the students.

Along with the development of the information technology, teachers should build up the learning to be more attractive. Thus, the internet-based learning is meant to: *firstly*, introduce the English teachers with a fun internet-based teaching-learning system as well as easily-accessed by using *WebQuest* as the teaching-learning media. Today's, many English teachers are unwilling to find or make teaching-learning media for various reasons, for example, difficult-to-access, cost, etc. However, that is a false paradigm. In fact, in today's information era, access of information is easy. Internet has been an alternative providing rich materials and media for the English teachers. *Secondly*, it emphasizes the use of authentic material in teaching. Presentation of authentic material will much influence the validity of the material itself as well as drill the students to think in one language; the target language way, English. The one language mindset is very important for students to be able to be fluent and not seem to do *free translation*.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN ENGLISH LEARNING

Johnson & Johnson (1998) explain that cooperative learning is grouping students together to achieve the learning objective together. Students work on a small group (3-4 students) to get maximum result from their own and each other's learning. They encourage and support each other to learn and to be responsible for themselves and their partner(s). Johnson & Johnson (1998) again say that in cooperative learning, students are exposed and motivated with the concept that active learning is more effective than passive one. Hence, the role of teacher is as a facilitator rather than an instructor. Through the cooperative learning, students must share each other's idea, make planning and proposing solution to reach the collaborative goal. Thus, it can build their social awareness and mentality. Thoroughly analyzed, there are two keys underlying the active and cooperative learning: (1) job/role description where each student takes the same responsibility and equal portion and (2) tasks given which must require social interaction (Egbert, 1998).

Discussing about the cooperative learning strategy, Kagan (1990) has introduced a strategy which is suitable to CALL application namely *Co-Op Co-Op*. The strategy can increase student's role/participation to be more cooperative. The strategy is designed to optimize the chance of the small group to work cooperatively to result a team product which are, then, shared to the whole class. Other than optimizing the chance for cooperative work, it also provides flexibility for students to choose content they intend to learn. Daniel et al. (1991) explain that the *Co-Op Co-Op* strategy is designed to encourage the students and their independency in learning.

Elements to Activate Cooperative Learning

To be able to apply the CL efficiently in teaching-learning, there are some misses need avoiding by both teacher and students: team work or discussion which does not focus on task, and relying on a student –not team work– in accomplishing the task. The cooperative learning is cooperative work which means student who is capable or has accomplished the task must assist his/her partner.

There are 5 (five) components to activate in cooperative learning.

- **Positive Interdependence**

The most essential component in cooperative learning is the positive interdependence. Students must believe that they are interacting with partners in a way, which will only work if the partners –as team member– also succeed. The students must cooperate to accomplish the task. Johnson & Johnson (1987: 42) describe that students have to feel like sinking or swimming together.

- **Face-to-Face Interaction**

Students are expected to be able to discuss and explain verbally to each other. They are also to inform their knowledge to the classmates, explain the relation of present learning and past one, encourage and support each other to learn.

- **Individual Accountability (Personal Responsibility)**

The purpose of cooperative learning grouping is to build and create individuals with strong competence and ideas at least in their own group. The students learn together so that each individual can show a better performance/competence. Each individual must be afforded with equal responsibility to make sure that each one is strong. After fulfilling individual tasks, then they bring in their work into the group.

- **Interpersonal and Small-Group Skills (Collaborative Skills)**

Team work will result on a team success. Every individual in the group must feature with strong leadership in decision making, building up confidence and conflict management skills.

- **Group Processing**

Johnson & Johnson (1989: 33) emphasize that teacher must make sure and evaluate how good the students' cooperative learning in discussing their goal and managing the effective cooperation are. Those are necessary to maintain the relation among students in the group unit.

COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL) IN ENGLISH LEARNING

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has attracted the interest of many educators and researchers in order to facilitate learning a foreign language. Many educational institutions use computers and internet as part of a language classroom. Computers provide students with access to a large number of authentic learning resources and opportunity to interact with other speakers of language. By using Web, the students will find useful information. They can select relevant information and also they have opportunities to use the target language through reading, writing, listening and discussing ideas on interesting issues.

The use of technology in English learning has been being applied for long. Media used are also various, for example, from audio-tape, VCD player, to internet which provides sociocognitive approach as what Warschauer and Meskill (2000) say: “... *students need to be given maximum opportunity for authentic social interaction, not only to provide comprehensible input but also to give students practice in the kinds of communication they will later engage in outside the classroom.*” In this case, the teacher is expected to provide materials emphasizing real social interaction. By doing so, the students will get into the habit of practicing what they have learned, even in outside the classroom. This is where the internet is possible to be used as media in getting the authentic materials.

In language learning, what-so-called CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) is very popular. This is where the language learning is done with computer assistance to create directional activities. Egbert (2001) states that computer can be media to ease as well as develop instructions for students so that they can actively use target language and have lots of opportunity for interaction.

WEBQUEST IN COOPERATIVE LEARNING

In 1995, Dodge and March introduced WebQuest to education community. In their article, *WebQuest: A Technique for Internet-Based Learning* (1995), they explain that teacher can see how internet can be used in a teaching-learning process in a classroom.

WebQuest is an oriented investigation in which some or all information used by learners are taken from websites. The WebQuest is designed to use learners' time well and focus on the use of information rather than looking for the information. It is also to support learners to think analytically, synthetically and in evaluative manner.

To apply the cooperative learning with the WebQuest, computer and internet connections are required. Teacher can, then, give instruction to visit a website providing WebQuest. The provider website has lots of WebQuest that can be used to teach certain materials. Teacher only needs to search and the result will appear. However, teacher can't straight off use the materials, yet they should fit curriculum and content standard of the English lesson for the class. This is what-so-called adapting, not adopting.

WebQuest is designed to implement students with capacity to navigate internet with a clear instruction, collect data from various sources, and increase critical thinking skill (Dodge, 1998). It is also designed to make the most efficient

of instructional time. Further attributes in WebQuest include giving the students opportunity to get involved in the cooperative learning, encouraging intrinsic motivation development and promoting constructive learning environment. To participate in projects gives some significance to students. Students will not only be able to browse information on internet, but also improve their confidence and skills with every successful effort they make (Watson, 1999).

WebQuests should inspire students to seek themes among the information gathered from website and then create projects and products that contribute to the real world of learning and allow students to reflect on their own metacognitive processes (Dodge,2001; March,2003)

Components of WebQuests

WebQuests have six basic building block that include an introduction, a task, information sources, the process, guidance, and conclusion. These six building blocks are common to all WebQuests and serve specific purposes to ensure that transformative learning occurs. Dodge (1995;1997) describes the six basic parts of a WebQuest as follows:

Introduction. It sets the stage and provides some background information.

Task. It is doable and interesting.

Information. A set of information needed to complete the task. Many of the resources are embedded in the WebQuest document itself as anchors pointing to information on the World Wide Web. Information sources might include web documents, experts available via e-mail or real time conferencing, searchable databases on the net, and books and other documents physically available in the learner's setting.

Process. A description of the process the learners should go through in accomplishing the task. The process should be broken out into clearly described steps.

Guidance. Some guidance (resources) in how to organize the information acquired. This can take the form of guiding questions, or directions such as timelines, concept maps or cause and effect diagram.

Conclusion. A conclusion that brings closure to the quest, reminds the learners what they have learned, and perhaps encourages them to extend the experience into other domain

(Dodge,1995)

In addition to the six basic components, WebQuests also have several additional attributes. One such attribute is that WebQuests are usually a group activity. Individual WebQuests are not unknown, but not common. Additionally, WebQuests usually have motivational elements added to the basic components of the WebQuests. Motivational elements, such as giving specific roles to the learners or providing a situation or scenario to the learners, enhance WebQuests and make the learning process more interesting. Finally, WebQuests can be made to be either for one specific discipline or for several disciplines together (Dogde1995;1997)

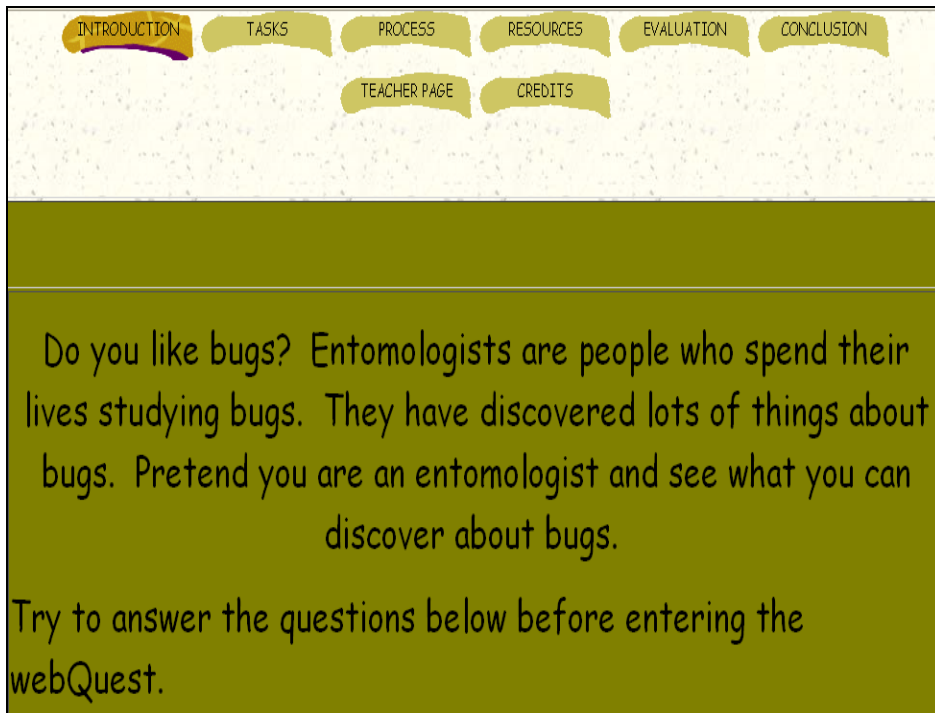
Two Types of WebQuests

Short-term WebQuests usually last one to three class periods. The instructional goals of a short-term WebQuest typically include knowledge acquisition and integration. Learners ideally will deal with a large amount of information and be able to make sense of the information (Dodge,1995)

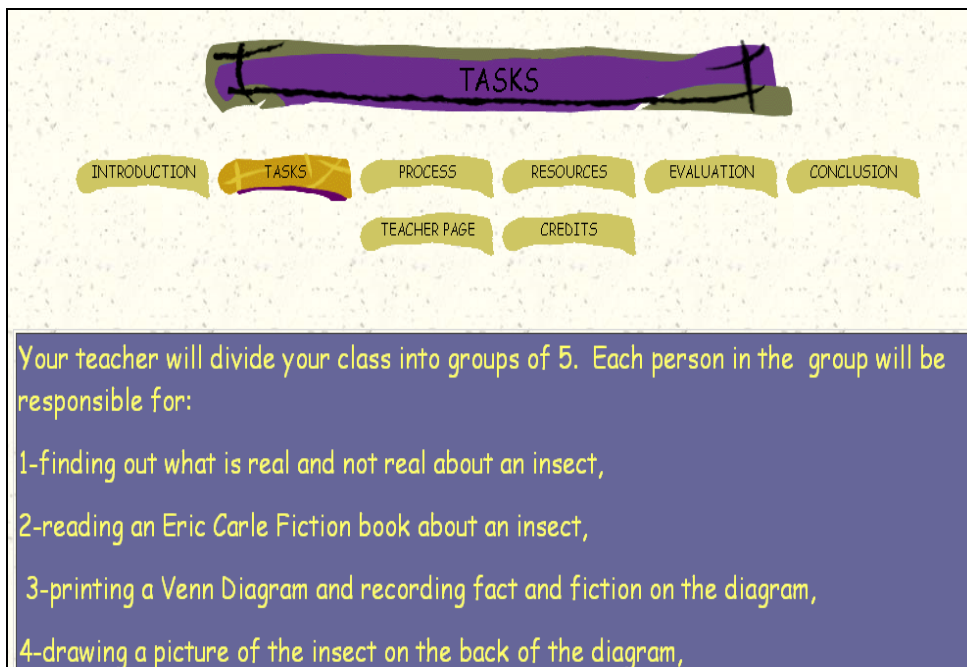
Long-term WebQuests can last anywhere from one week to a month. Instructional goals of long-term WebQuests include knowledge acquisition and integration, and then require the learner to extend and refine the knowledge. Upon completion of a long-term WebQuest, learner not only deal with a large amount of information but also make sense of the information by transforming it. Learners create products that others can learn from and that illustrate their understanding of the material (Dodge,1995). Whether short-term and long-term, WebQuest are designed to enable students to acquire knowledge and then integrate and transform the acquired knowledge into new knowledge. Actually, teachers can also create or design their own WebQuest to make sure the materials fit the curriculum referred. However, it takes long and complex steps and process. It is easier to use WebQuest designed by the provider. The followings are the screenshots of a WebQuest with a title “It’s A Bug Life”. The WebQuest can be used by teachers to teach vocabulary with descriptive text and reading as approach. See below.



Picture 1.0 The home screen of a WebQuest entitled “It’s A Bug’s Life!”



Picture 1.1 The screenshot of Introduction page of a WebQuest.



Picture 1.2 The screenshot of a Tasks page of a WebQuest

CONCLUSION

WebQuest is a phenomenon in English teaching and learning and it is something new. By counting on information and communication through internet, WebQuest can be a simple example or application of *e-learning*. It is also easy to find and access on some WebQuest provider websites. The WebQuest is designed to deal with dilemma about how to combine technology with effective learning into an integrated activity in class. It is about how students collaborate with their partners to solve problems in a topic. They are also taught to access information on the internet, and it is into a positive direction.

Concerning with curriculum in an institution, WebQuest can be adapted by reviewing the learning objectives. WebQuest is creative media in a way teachers use it to present the materials or as learning media. Nowadays, it is time for teachers to be more innovative in teaching, and using the WebQuest is an example of the innovative being.

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