

Students' Evaluation of the Implementation of WebQuest in an ESP Context

Máster de Profesorado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y Bachillerato,

Formación Profesional y Enseñanzas de Idiomas

Especialidad: Inglés, Modalidad 2

Trabajo Final de Máster

María Ortiz López – 53382827B

Tutora: María Noelia Ruiz Madrid

Fecha: noviembre de 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of figures and abbreviations	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	2
2.1. WebQuest	2
2.1.1. Origin	2
2.1.2. Definition	2
2.1.3. Elements or attributes (critical and non-critical)	4
2.1.3.1. Critical	4
2.1.3.2. Non-critical	10
3. STUDY: Research questions	14
4. Research methodology	14
4.1. Contextualization of the centre	15
4.2. Participants	15
4.3. Instruments for data collection	15
4.3.1. Pre-questionnaire	15
4.3.2. WebQuest	24
4.3.3. Post-questionnaire	24
4.3.4. Students' task	25
4.4. Data collection and analysis	25
5. Results	27
5.1. Results from the pre-questionnaire	27
5.2. Results from the post-questionnaire	29
6. Discussion	40
6.1. Discussion related to Research Question 1	40
6.2. Discussion related to Research Question 2	42
6.3. Discussion related to Research Question 3	43
7. Conclusion	45
8. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research	46
9. References	47
10. Appendices	50

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Introduction (March, 2005)	5
Figure 2: The Big Question & Task (March, 2005)	6
Figure 3: Conclusion (March, 2005)	10
Figure 4: Start (Ortiz, 2014)	16
Figure 5: Introduction (Ortiz, 2014)	17
Figure 6: Task (Ortiz, 2014)	18
Figure 7: Conclusion (Ortiz, 2014)	21
Figure 8: References (Ortiz, 2014)	24
Figure 9: Q4, Pre-questionnaire	28
Figure 10: Q5, Pre-questionnaire	28
Figure 11: Q9, Post-questionnaire	32
Figure 12: Q12, Post-questionnaire	33
Figure 13: Q13, Post-questionnaire	34
Figure 14: Q14, Post-questionnaire	34
Figure 15: Q15, Post-questionnaire	35
Figure 16: Q16, Post-questionnaire	36
Figure 17: Q18, Post-questionnaire	37
Figure 18: Q20, Post-questionnaire	37
Figure 19: Q21, Post-questionnaire	38
Figure 20: Q22, Post-questionnaire	38
Figure 21: Q23, Post-questionnaire	39
Figure 22: Q24, Post-questionnaire	39
Figure 23: Triangulation	40

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESL = English as a Second Language

ESP = English for Specific Purposes

Mth = Master Thesis

Phd = Physical Disertation

WQ = WebQuest

ABSTRACT

Education should be focused on exploring and discovering students' competences that will allow them to adapt to the society they live in, being nowadays the society of Information and Communication Technology. We have changed the way we live, and therefore the way we learn and for that reason, teachers and education experts should look at the methodology used in schools, and the teaching and learning tools and resources employed to construct our knowledge from a different perspective.

This Final Master Thesis, framed within modality 2, deals with the introduction of the WebQuest methodology within a Business and Administration vocational course. This study aims at discovering to what extent using WQ contributes to i) promote students' positive attitudes towards the ESP learning process, ii) improve students' digital competence, and iii) to what extent WQ is a methodological effective tool in an ESP learning context.

Results obtained lead us to tentative conclusions. It could be deduced that WQ has contributed to develop students' positive attitudes towards the ESP learning process. Group work has been evaluated in a highly positive way. In addition, students have realised that their digital competence was high but not transferred to their academic life. Reading skills have also been influenced, since students dealt with online texts in an academic context, an aspect uncommonly introduced in the classroom. Finally, the WQ has made students reflect upon the special features of a specific language, thanks to the guided nature of WQ and the integration of online dictionaries.

In light of the above, we could conclude that the WQ designed for the purpose of this study has been considered satisfactory by students.

Keywords: WebQuest, competence, English for Specific Purposes, digital competence

RESUMEN

La educación debe centrarse en la exploración y descubrimiento de competencias que permitirán a los estudiantes adaptarse a la sociedad en la que viven, siendo hoy en día la sociedad de la información y la comunicación. Hemos cambiado nuestra forma de vida, y por tanto la manera en que aprendemos, y por esta razón, los profesores y otros expertos en educación deberían observar desde nuevas perspectivas las metodologías empleadas en las escuelas, así como también las herramientas de enseñanza y aprendizaje usadas para construir el conocimiento.

El presente Trabajo Final de Máster, enmarcado en la modalidad 2, trata la introducción de la metodología WebQuest en un ciclo formativo de Administración y Finanzas. Se marcan como objetivos hasta qué punto i) se promueven actitudes positivas hacia el aprendizaje de Inglés para Fines Específicos (ESP), ii) mejora la competencia digital del alumnado y iii) la Webquest es una herramienta metodológica efectiva en un contexto de ESP.

Los resultados obtenidos nos muestran conclusiones provisionales. Se puede deducir que la WebQuest ha contribuido al desarrollo de actitudes positivas hacia el proceso de aprendizaje de la lengua. El trabajo en grupo también es positivamente considerado. Además, los estudiantes se dan cuenta de que su alta habilidad con respecto a la tecnología no era aplicada al ámbito académico. La competencia lectora también se ve involucrada, ya que los estudiantes trabajaron con textos online con fines académicos, un aspecto rara vez tratado en el aula. Finalmente, la WebQuest hace que los estudiantes reflexionen sobre las características propias de un lenguaje específico, gracias a la naturaleza guiada de la WebQuest y a la integración de diccionarios online.

Teniendo en cuenta lo presente, podemos concluir que la WebQuest diseñada para los objetivos de este estudio ha sido considerada como satisfactoria.

Palabras clave: *WebQuest, competencia, competencia digital, Inglés para Fines Específicos.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The end of the 20th century is a period in which our society started to become a technological and informational society (García, 2011) and this transformation affected the context in which we train our students. We have changed the way we live in almost all of the aspects of our lives, included the way we learn and it is for this reason that we should change the way we are taught. In this sense, the methodology used in schools, and the teaching and learning tools and resources employed to construct our knowledge are different. The digitalization of the information is changing the support in which the knowledge and information are delivered, since although it is true that we have access to too much information, and although it is 14 years old, we could say that Adell's words (1997) are still valid when he said that we are not probably better informed, since we are not ready yet to select and process the information avoiding saturation and cognitive overloading. Currently, education is focused on students' competences that will allow them to adapt themselves to the society they live in (García, 2011). A competence implies aspects directly related to the situation in which the student is involved in. The main aim of education should not be to make students know, but make students learn to know, that is, learning how to learn, how to know.

This new digital competence (Ruiz-Madrid, 2010) involves to revisit the concept of i) alphabetization for becoming part of the informational society, ii) the role of the students and teachers, iii) the role of the materials. In sum, to revisit the pedagogical framework that supports our educational system. Students are active agents in their learning whereas teachers are not the source of information or knowledge but the ones who help and guide students to construct the knowledge, to select, transform and process digital information.

Taking into account all these aspects, I have decided to devote my Final Master Thesis to look into the students' attitudes and opinions on the use of a WebQuest in a Business and Finance vocational training course. For this purpose I have designed a WebQuest (hereafter WQ) dealing with intercultural meetings and the appropriate behaviour to be successful doing business in four different countries (Japan, Saudi Arabia, India, and Norway), which is part of the content included in the curriculum for this particular course. (*DECRETO 102/2008, de 11 de julio, del Consell [2008/8761]*).

Bearing in mind all these aspects, first a theoretical framework focuses on introducing the WQ tool and its fundamentals can be found. The second part focuses on stating the research questions and methodology applied to carry out the research in the *IES Gilabert de Centelles* settled in Nules. After that, the study is described as well as its results and discussion. Next, conclusions from the study are presented and finally both the limitations of this research and suggestions for further research are presented.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This Master Thesis begins with a theoretical part that establishes the WQ fundamentals and elements.

2.1. WebQuest

In this part of the Mth, both the origin and the definition of WQ are provided as well as a description of the attributes of a well-designed WQ according to three main authors, that is, Dodge (1995), March (2003), and Pérez (2006). This last author is significant because of the fact that she had focused her Phd on WQ design from a different perspective, that is, WQ for EFL learning context.

2.1.1. Origin

The origin of the term WQ goes back 1995, when Bernie Dodge was in charge of a training course for teachers and so that he needed to show his students how the Archaeotype software work; nevertheless he did not have access to this software hence he decided to propose his students a group activity for researching it. Two hours were employed by students to develop this task which consisted of a written document to the director of a school recommending or not the usage of Archaeotype. In order to create the document they had access to printed and online resources, to an interview with one of the software's developers, and to a videoconference with a teacher who had already implemented this software in the classroom. In addition to that, the resources were previously selected and organised by Dodge. This lesson demonstrated the usefulness of Internet in education. It was a task that made students create their own knowledge and in which the teacher was a guide to fulfil it. In basis of this experience the term WQ was created by Bernie Dodge, afterwards he described this model in the seminal article about WQ (Dodge, 1995), and his collaborator Tom March created the first WQ based on that model: Searching for China (Starr, 2000).

2.1.2. Definition

So as to provide an appropriate definition of the term WQ both authors should be taken into consideration: Bernie Dodge and Tom March. Dodge (2001) stated the term WQ and defined it in the following way:

"(A WebQuest is) an inquiry-oriented activity in which most of the information used by learners is drawn from the Web. WebQuest are designed to use learners' time well, to focus on using information rather than looking for it, and to support learners' thinking at the levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation." (Dodge, 2001:6)

The definition and attributes provided by Tom March should also be taken into consideration as he collaborated with Bernie Dodge in the creation of the WQ

model; and what is more, he has been worried about establishing clearly what a WQ is and what it is not. According to March (1996), a WQ is a constructive activity that helps students to construct their own knowledge through research and through taking collaborative decisions.

"A WebQuest is a scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide and an authentic task to motivate students' investigation of a central, open-ended question, development of individual expertise and participation in a final group process that attempts to transform newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuest do this in a way that inspires students to see richer thematic relationships, facilitate a contribution to the real world of learning and reflect on their own metacognitive processes." (March, 2003:43)

The definition provided by Isabel Pérez is also relevant for this study since she linked the WQ methodology to FLL, in the way reflected below.

"Una WebQuest para la enseñanza-aprendizaje de una L2 es una actividad orientada a la investigación en un contexto temático relevante, utilizando recursos de la Web, en la que el desarrollo de la tarea que culmina la actividad impulsa procesos cognitivos de orden superior y coayuda a que el alumno ponga en práctica las destrezas lingüísticas, apoyado en un conjunto de andamios lingüísticos y procedimentales y en un entorno de cooperación." (Pérez, 2006: 321)

In this sense, the WQ prepared for this study follows Pérez definition in terms of linguistic requirements.

It is commonly thought that any task carried out using information from the Web can be a WQ, however a WQ is based on developing high cognitive processes. In this sense, this type of task is not used for copying information without any process of transformation or for carrying out simple comprehension activities; but for developing processes of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the information found on the Web. In addition to that, students have a guide to follow for completing and finishing their learning experience through the WQ. Obviously, they should also follow the scaffolding prepared by the teacher as that information has a pedagogical aid. In words of Bernie Dodge in Star (2002):

"A WebQuest is built around an engaging and doable task that elicits higher order thinking of some kind. It's about doing something with information. The thinking can be creative or critical, and involve problem solving, judgement, analysis, or synthesis. The task has to be more than simply answering questions or regurgitating what's on the

screen. Ideally, the task is scaled down version of something that adults do on the job, outside school walls.” (Starr, 2000:2)

At this point it can be essential to remark that Dodge established two kind of WQ: short term WebQuest (or miniWebQuest) and long term WebQuest.

The main objective of a short term WQ is the acquisition of knowledge and it can be developed from one session to three. Students need to carry out high cognitive processes such as analysing, organising, and internalizing information in order acquire knowledge. At the end of a short term WQ “a learner will have grappled with a significant amount of new information and made sense of it” (Dodge, 1995: 1)

On the other hand, in a long term WQ the main aim is to extend and improve the knowledge about a specific field or topic. This type of WQ needs to be developed during several weeks. Students need to carry out cognitive processes like comparing, classifying, deducing, analysing mistakes, constructing, and analysing different perspectives. At the end of this type of WQ “a learner would have analysed a body of knowledge deeply, transformed it in some way, and demonstrated an understanding of the material” (Dodge, 1995:1)

2.1.3. Elements or attributes

When the WQ model was defined by Bernie Dodge, its attributes were divided into critical and non-critical. Critical elements refer to the compulsory parts a WQ should contain to be named as such, and non-critical attributes refer to the elements that make it an appropriate as well as successful one. In the following sections, both critical and non-critical elements are commented in detail.

2.1.3.1. Critical elements

The following elements of WQ were established as critical (Dodge, 1995): i)introduction and i)essential question, ii)task, iii)resources, iv)process, v)scaffolding, vi)assessment, and vii)conclusion. As it can be seen in Figure 1, these elements are still essential in a WQ so that any should not be considered a WQ without them.



Figure 1: Introduction (March, 2005)

Available at <http://tommarch.com/webquests/bww/>

i) Introduction: the main aims of this part of the WQ are to prepare and attract the reader's attention (Dodge, 1998). This part is used to show the situation or context in which the task is based on. In addition, it must be motivational in order to wake up and catch students' attention and interest. To create an appropriate WQ (a successful one according to Dodge & March) the creator needs to show the link between the students' interests and the topic of the WQ. In this part of the WQ is where it should be specified whether each student is going to take a different role or not. At the end of this section, which should be quite short, the **open-ended question** or **essential question** should appear (March, 1997) which will encompass the knowledge students will achieve during the research process.

This open question aims at activating students' previous knowledge and make them plan their learning process. Figure 2 can be seen as an example of essential question.

Intro · Question · Roles · GroupWork · Conclusion · Rubric · Guide

The Big Wide World WebQuest

The Globe Plants Animals People Cultures Language

The Big Question & Task

The focus of this activity is to answer the following questions:

What about this Big Wide World, huh?

How does it all work?

With partners you will explore aspects of life on our planet that we call "Windows on the World." Why do you think we're calling these Windows on the World?

After you've learned a lot about one of these "windows," you'll work as a member of a larger group to make up with some rules that explain how the planet, animals, plants, people, their cultures and communication interact and overlap. Big job, huh? **That's why we picked you!**

When you're ready to get started, you'll choose or be assigned one **Window on the World**.

Figure 2: The Big Question & Task (March, 2005)

ii) Task: According to Bernie Dodge (2002), the task is the most important part of a WQ. He stated (1998:2) "The task focuses learners on what they are going to do – specifically, the culminating performance or product that drives all of the learning activities". A good designed task should be "doable and engaging" (Dodge, 2002: 1) and, it should cause a type of thinking or reasoning that goes further than simply comprehend information. So, the task is the action students should carry out or the final product that they should developed (March, 1997). It should be taken into consideration that even though the topic of the WQ is the same, the complexity and the task itself should depend on the students this WQ is designed for: "You know your students best and that's why you're the one creating this WebQuest" (March, 1999:4).

Dodge (1999) claimed that in order to design a task, the next steps should be followed:

- To gather all the pieces together.
- To generate all the possible tasks.
- To leave the creation of this part during a short period of time (two days, more or less) and then to resume it.
- And finally, to take a decision.

Up to that point, it is essential to mention that Dodge (2002) elaborated a task taxonomy in which he explains a series of formats that can be useful to choose the best task for each specific group. It is important to notice that the specific task of a WQ can combine elements of two or more of these categories.

Table 1: WebQuest Taskonomy (Dodge, 2002)

WebQuest Taskonomy (Dodge, 2002)
Retelling tasks
Compilation tasks
Mystery tasks
Journalistic tasks
Design tasks
Creative Product tasks
Consensus Building tasks
Persuasion tasks
Self-knowledge tasks
Judgment tasks
Scientific tasks

iii) Process: in this part of the WQ, the steps students should follow for completing the task should be established. As Isabel Pérez (2006) stated:

“En este apartado se trata de guiar al alumno para que pueda realizar la tarea, ayudándole a desarrollar las habilidades que le permitan tanto recibir como transformar la información y elaborar la respuesta al problema o situación que la tarea le presenta”. (Pérez, 2006: 257)

Generally speaking, the process section is composed by three parts:

- The first steps should be instructions for all the members of the group; in other words, previous information and activities that have to be carried out by the members of the group altogether. All the information related to scheduling should be also included here.
- Then, instructions for each member of the group (depending on his/her role) should be stated as well as links to specific resources for each role and some type of scaffolding.
- Finally, the last steps should be instructions for the group in general; as all of them should get involved in the fulfillment of the final task since now students are completely ready to solve the question.

iv) Resources: When the WQ sections were established and defined, the resources were a separate section from the process itself. However, in 1998 Bernie Dodge decided to integrate the resources in the process section; in this way links and other resources are directly associated to a specific role. The main distinctive

feature of a WQ is that the vast majority of the resources selected for the process section come from the Web. This material should be selected by the teacher as the main aim is that students spend time using the information and not searching it (Dodge, 2001). According to Dodge (1995:2), *“Because pointers to resources are included, the learner is not left to wander through webspace completely adrift”*. There are other two main arguments to support the idea that resources should be carefully selected by the teacher: the time factor (Fiedler, 2002) and the ethical concern showed by parents and teachers due to the fact that students can easily have access to undesirable information (Summerville, 2000; Yoder, 1999). As it has been already stated, the resources are distributed by roles and the teacher should provide a sufficient number of them ensuring that the richness and difficulty of these links is as fair as possible.

v) Scaffolding: with the aim of helping students to be able to work using the web, some materials or activities that can help them to process the information and fulfil successfully the steps established in the process should be provided by the teacher or creator of the WQ. Such support or guidance is called scaffolding, a concept that was defined by Dodge (2001:8) as following:

“Scaffolding is a temporary structure used to help learners act more skilled than they really are. A great WebQuest builds scaffolding into the process as needed so that the bar of what students can produce can be raised.”

This scaffolding is focused on helping and supporting students to carry out every single part of the process as well as the final task. This concept is directly related to Vigotsky’s theories (1978), which focus on the ability to solve problems and other strategies are divided into three categories:

- Those which can be carried out by the student individually
- Those which cannot be carried out by the students even though he or she has help
- Those which the student can carry out with the help of others.

This last category is the one related to the concept of “Zone of Proximal Development” which can be defined as the difference between what a learner can do and solve without any help and what he or she can achieve counting on the help of someone else who has a higher level of knowledge of that topic. In a WQ, a guide is necessary for students to gain control of the situation and finally be able to execute the final task.

Dodge (2001) distinguished three types of scaffolding: reception scaffolding, transformation scaffolding, and production scaffolding.

- **Reception scaffolding** refers to the techniques used to ensure that the important information is extracted by students during the input period.

- **Transformation scaffolding** relates to the aid given to students to allow the transformation of the information in something new. Inside this type of scaffolding, cognitive processes such as comparing, contrasting, deciding, assessing, etc. can be included.
- And finally, **production scaffolding** involves the help students need in order to fulfil the final task. Scaffolding with relation to the structure of the final product students should be provided.

vi) Assessment: in this part of the WQ, the criterion for evaluating the students' performance is described in a clear and concrete manner. Both individual work and group work should be assessed. The most used assessment tool for WQ is a rubric; it can be really useful in the cases in which the evaluation parameters are complex and subjective (Dodge and Pickett 2011, Dodge et al. 2001), considering that it allows to divide the different aspects that are going to be assessed, so that their value can be decided in a more objective way. This type of assessment can also function as a tool to inform students about what they should achieve and in which level; for that reason some authors stated that the rubric is part of the scaffolding of a WQ (Hanson, 2001). There are many reasons to support the idea that a rubric should be included in a WQ and that students should have access to it since the beginning of the process; however, the most relevant ones are listed below (Dodge and Pickett, 2001; Whittaker, et al. 2001):

- It implies a more consistent and objective assessment.
- It commits the teacher to clarify his or her guideline as well as to express his or her expectations.
- It provides feedback about the instruction's effectiveness.
- It helps students to understand the qualities of a determined task.
- It shows students how they are going to be assessed.
- It allows students to assess themselves.

As a general rule, the rubric is created by the teacher; nevertheless some authors prefer to negotiate it with the students due to the fact that in this way the expectations are clear and this can have a motivating effect on the students (Whittaker, et al. 2001).

vii) Conclusion: this section was included in the WQ model by Bernie Dodge in 1998 and its main functions are to summarise and remind students what should have been learnt carrying out the WQ and to encourage them to continue researching about it.

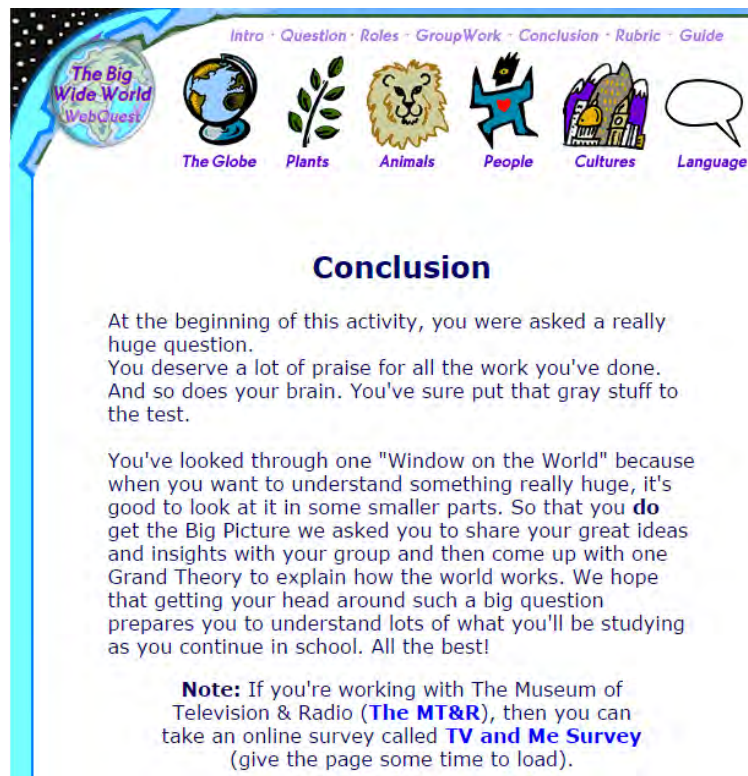


Figure 3: Conclusion (March, 2005)

2.1.3.2. Non-critical elements

In the same way the following **non-critical elements** of a WQ were enumerated by Bernie Dodge (1995): first, this type of activity should be carried out in group, second, the basic structure should be surrounded by motivational elements; and last but not least, this strategy contains the idea of interdisciplinarity. According to Pierce (2011) a WQ encompasses the essential principles of constructivism and the generic competences stated in the Tuning report; this part will be expanded below and the elements are commented in detail: i) Constructivism, ii) Cooperative and collaborative learning, iii) Motivation, iv) Interdisciplinarity, and v) Student and teacher's role.

i) Constructivism: it has its origin in the Piaget theories about cognitive development (1972) and the Sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1978). Pierce (2011) summarises the constructivist main principles as follows:

1. Learning is an active process.
2. Learning requires a language.
3. Learning is a social activity.
4. Motivation is a key element in learning.
5. Learning needs to start with relevant topics to the learner.
6. The learning process focuses on global concepts.
7. Assessment needs to be part of the learning process.

8. The learning environment is focused on the student; therefore, both knowledge and development are interactive, inductive, and collaborative.
9. Learning is a process that should be supported by an environment surrounded by real and authentic live situations.

ii) Cooperative and collaborative learning: using computers to carry out lessons offers the possibility of creating groups to work in a cooperative manner, in a way that each student can show his or her abilities, both the linguistic and social ones. As Jonassen (1994) claimed, one of the main features of the Web as a constructivist learning environment is that it promotes knowledge construction in cooperation. Even though the group work and the distribution of roles inside the group are not critical elements of a WQ, they are present in almost every WQ used nowadays. So that, it is essential to comment the characteristics of this type of methodology which is based on the cooperative principles:

- Positive interdependence: all the components of the group are necessary to carry out the task so they need the other members of the group to be successful.
- To promote interaction: students help each other and stimulate themselves while compelling an authentic and real task.
- Individual and group responsibility: all the members of the group are responsible of continuing the process and make the final task, and each component of the group is responsible to fulfil his or her specific part of the process.
- Interpersonal competences and small groups: it is necessary to teach them how to work successfully in group. It needs to be a guided process.
- Process of the group: Throughout all the process, it should be commented how to improve the group effectiveness.

At this point, it is essential to emphasize that cooperative work is directly connected to Vigotsky's theories (1978), who claimed that learning is favoured if it is produced throughout social interaction. Obviously, as Brucklacher & Gimbert (1999: 40) stated: "tasks and roles must be structured in such a way to ensure individual accountability and at the same time promote a framework in which students contribute to each other's accomplishments".

iii) Motivation:

As Arnold (2004: 123) stated "motivation is a complex construct which depends to a great degree on the way we evaluate the multiple stimuli we receive in relation to a specific context". He supports the idea that a powerful way to motivate students in the second language classroom is the use of tasks related to the multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1999).

One of the main non-critical features of the WQ model highlighted by some authors (Spanfelner, 2000; Kelly, 2000) is that it is an activity whose fulfilment motivates students. Motivation can be defined in terms of “choice, engagement, and persistence” (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991:480). They consider that the student’s motivation is determined by the four aspects established in the ARCS model of motivation designed by Keller (1983): attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction.

March (2003) defends the idea that WQ is a motivational activity according to the ARCS Model of Motivational Design. He stated that the best way to achieve the *attention* and *relevance* in a WQ is to choose a topic which is really attractive for the students and to elaborate a real learning task. Another way to achieve this is throughout the open-ended question as it needs to be answered. *Confidence* can be transferred offering solid scaffolding that helps students in the moments during the process when they can be lost. In addition to that, if the work inside the group is divided in roles this contributes to the individual responsibility of each member, and this is a factor that affects confidence. Regarding *satisfaction*, March (2003) relates this strategy with the use of real resources from the Web. Obviously, WQ thanks to its constructivist nature promotes the student’s autonomy which is another factor of motivation to them.

iv) Interdisciplinarity: the use of a WQ is not limited only to a field of knowledge, but it contains in itself the idea of interdisciplinarity. For example, this tool can be employed in a group from a vocational training course in which the main aims are to learn content at the same time that learning English for specific purposes. Obviously, apart from acquiring content and language, users of this tool improve their digital competence (Ruiz-Madrid, 2014); that is, to be able to interact with new text formats, new ways of interaction between the reader and the text imply a high level of cognitive development as well as metacognitive development. A language learner needs to develop competencies that are directly related to the digital medium such as:

- Looking for information.
- Assessment of the information found.
- Knowledge of searching strategies.
- Information classification.
- Ability to differentiate different ways of reading in the digital environment.
- Usage of the different available tools that facilitate the learning process.

v) Student and teacher’s role: the use of the WQ tool entails a dramatic change of the student and teacher’s role in the learning process. As Gallego & Guerra (2007) suggest, this tool allows the student, first, to use the Internet as a source of knowledge which has been previously selected by the teacher; second, to search, select and transform the necessary information in order to elaborate the final task;

and finally, its approach plan is based on collaborative and cooperative work. On the other hand, the teacher's task is focused on: first, to choose the topic that students should learn about, identifying the content and the process; second, the teacher should organize the groups as well as the roles and functions of each one; third, he or she should motivate students showing them the advantages of carrying out the task; fourth, obviously the teacher should spend time in the organization and searching of the resources his or her students should consult; and finally, the teacher should establish the assessment criteria for the task.

In this section we have stated the WQ origin and we have also defined it according to three main authors: Dodge, March, and Pérez. Then, WQ attributes both critical and non-critical have been commented in detail, being critical elements: i) Introduction and essential question, ii) Task, iii) Resources, iv) Process, v) Scaffolding, vi) Assessment, and vii) Conclusion. Next, the non-critical elements have been also commented: i) Constructivism, ii) Cooperative and collaborative learning, iii) Motivation, iv) Interdisciplinarity, and v) Student and teacher's role.

3. STUDY: research questions

In this part of the Mth, the research questions, methodology, and instruments are presented and described in detail. Afterwards, the results of this research are showed and a discussion about them is provided. Finally, the conclusion and the methodological implications are presented.

The aim of this study is to look into the effect of using a WQ as learning tool in a vocational training context in terms of students' motivation and students' learning process. The research questions proposed for this project are the following:

RQ1: To what extent does using WQ contribute to promote students' positive attitudes towards the ESP learning process in a vocational training context?

RQ2: To what extent does WQ contribute to improve students' digital competence in an ESP learning context?

RQ3: To what extent is a WQ a methodological effective tool in an ESP learning context?

In order to answer these RQs, I have approached the study from a twofold perspective – qualitative and quantitative; since the nature of the study is students' attitudes and motivation and this can only be understood taking into account both perspectives.

4. Research methodology

This section focuses on the methodology employed. First, the centre where this study has been carried out is contextualized. Then, all the tools used are explained in detail. And after that, data collection and their analysis are discussed.

4.1. Contextualization of the centre

This present study was carried out in the *IES Gilabert de Centelles* which is based in Nules (Castellón). It is a public high school that was created in 1998 as a consequence of the combination of two high schools: *Francisco Beltrán Bigorra* and *Escultor Giner*. As this centre is a modern one due to the fact that it has a large variety of ICTs, which can be used by teachers and students to enrich the lessons.

This centre receives not only students from Nules, but from Villavieja and Moncofa; furthermore, thanks to the high demand of vocational training courses, students from different parts of the province are present in this centre.

Concerning the number of both students and teachers, the *IES Gilabert the Centelles* counts on the presence of 1400 students and 140 teachers. There is a high number of immigrant students so an intercultural context is found in this centre.

This high school offers English as a subject not only in *ESO* and *Bachillerato*, but in the vocational training courses too. Up to that point, it is important to mention that in the last ones students have to study *Inglés General* and *Inglés específico*.

4.2. Participants

The group is composed by 28 people, 14 male and 14 female. The average grade of this class during the second trimester is 7.2, being the highest mark is 9.1 and the lowest one is 5.3. It is also important to mention that the ages of students vary from 19 years to 44; and only seven people are older than 30 years (see Table 1).

4.3. Instruments for data collection

The instruments employed were mainly three: a pre-questionnaire, a WQ, and a post-questionnaire. Each one of them is described in the following subsections. Other instruments used in this study are the final tasks delivered by the students that are going to be explained in the discussion section.

4.3.1. Pre-questionnaire

A pre-questionnaire was used in order to know the digital competence of the students before taking part of the experience; mainly, if they use ICTs, frequency of its usage, purpose for using Internet, and level of motivation to use ICTs in the classroom for learning more. This questionnaire can be consulted in Appendix 1.

4.3.2. WebQuest

The second tool employed to carry out the present study was a WQ created by the author especially for this group and to the only purpose of this study; this WQ can be found at <http://webquest.webcindario.com/> and its title is ***READY FOR INTERCULTURAL MEETINGS? How to be successful doing business in intercultural contexts: Japan, Saudi Arabia, India, and Norway***. The content of this WQ is part of the curriculum these students followed in the subject *English for Specific Purposes*. It is supposed that students were going to be motivated towards this task as it helped them to acquire the necessary knowledge to carry out the compulsory project for the 3rd trimester. This WQ had been created using a template which had been adapted and translated to Spanish by Isabel Pérez Torres, from Dodge's WebQuest Page.

At this point, it is essential to mention that the Hot Potatoes software has been used to create hot potatoes exercises regarding good and bad practises in international meetings and use of the modal *should*. These altogether with web resources are also elements which have been used.

In the following section the WQ and the pedagogical rationale underlying it is going to be discussed.

Start



The image shows a screenshot of a WebQuest page. On the left is a green sidebar with a menu of sections: Start, Introduction, Task, Process, Assessment, Conclusion, Teacher's guide, and References. The main content area has a white background with the following text: 'READY FOR INTERCULTURAL MEETINGS?' in large bold letters, followed by 'How to be successful doing business in intercultural contexts: Japan, Saudi Arabia, India, and Norway'. Below this is the text 'WebQuest for Business and Finance Vocational Training (English for Specific Purposes)' and 'Designed by María Ortiz López al135731@uji.es'. At the bottom of the page is a photograph of a business meeting where two men are wearing boxing gloves and talking to a group of people seated around a table.

Figure 4: Start (Ortiz, 2014)

As it is stated in the theoretical framework, according to Dodge (1998) both the start and the introduction of a WQ should prepare and hook the reader; for that reason it was decided to put an image of a peculiar meeting in which two people are speaking with boxing gloves in order to catch students' attention and interest. Furthermore, the title of the WQ starts with a question that aims at activating students' previous knowledge about the topic as well as introducing it. Moreover, the teacher's email is posted in this part in order to make students feel comfortable and use it in case of doubt.

Introduction

Start	INTRODUCTION
Introduction	
Task	Welcome to this unit!
Process	
Assessment	By working through developing this WebQuest you will be ready to understand different behaviours taking into account different kinds of business practices and how different cultures work in business. You will read about Intercultural Competence; and then in groups, you will choose a specific role. Each member of the group will conduct some research on the business practices carried out in a specific culture (Japan, India, Saudi Arabia, and Norway).
Conclusion	
Teachers' guide	After going through this WebQuest, you will be able to answer the following questions:
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ How should I behave in a meeting with Japanese people?➤ How should I behave in a meeting with Indian people?➤ How should I behave in a meeting with Saudi Arabian people?➤ How should I behave in a meeting with Norwegian people?




Figure 5: Introduction (Ortiz, 2014)

In the introduction section students found an introduction to both the topic and the task itself. It is also specified that they are going to work in groups and that each member will have a different role or perspective. As March (1997) suggested, in this part the essential question or questions should appear as shown in Figure 5. In addition, an image had been included to suggest the idea of cooperative work.

Task


Start	TASK At the end of this WebQuest each group will have created a document (Word or Open Office document) with significant information about Intercultural Competence and four lists of tips regarding the appropriate behaviour we should have in a meeting with people from Japan, India, Saudi Arabia, and Norway. As this document has to be delivered by email, you can add any photo or video you may consider interesting or curious. 
Introduction	
Task	
Process	
Assessment	
Conclusion	
Teachers' guide	
References	

Figure 6: Task (Ortiz, 2014)

In words of March (1997), the task describes the action students should carry out or the final product that they should develop. It is also indicated the delivery mode. To create this part, both the steps to design a task suggested by Dodge (1999) and his task taxonomy (2002) were taken into account.

Process: in this part all the steps students should follow are explained and they can be consulted at (<http://webquest.webcindario.com/>).

Now, the aims of each step are fully described:

- The main goal of step 1 is to give students the opportunity to choose the people they are going to work with.
- The main objective of step 2 is to introduce the topic of the WQ as well as the appropriate use of *should* or *shouldn't* to give advice.
- The objective of step 3 is to introduce important concepts regarding intercultural competence; such as, intercultural competence, intercultural sensitivity, turn-taking, eye contact, among others.
- The main aim of step number 4 is to make students research about the appropriate practises in business contexts in a specific country.
- The main objective of step 5 is to create a list of tips to take into account when having a meeting with a person from the target country.

- The goal of step 6 is to make students share with the rest of the group members the information they have found.

Assessment

In order to assess students' performance and following the WQ rationale, two different rubrics were created (See appendix I). These rubrics also function as guides for students since from the very beginning they know how their learning process and final task are going to be evaluated. Assessment is divided into group and individual work.

Group Work

- The first item of rubric 1 evaluates students' ability to organise information in their word document and to include headings, photos, and videos. The mark can be: *Bad* (0-1), *Fair* (1-2), *Good* (2-3.5), or *Perfect* (4). (Being *Perfect* having organised the information perfectly, with headings, and some photos or videos related to the topic; and *Bad* having the information disorganised, without headings and photos/videos.)
- The second item is thought to ensure that students have written about all the information required (questions about Intercultural Competence & a list of tips for each country). In this case, students can only get *Perfect* (if the document contains all the questions related to Intercultural Competence and a list for each country) or *Bad* (if not all the parts are included in the document).
- The third one is related to the quality of the answers about Intercultural Competence as it is the written part students should do together as a group. The mark can be: *Bad*, *Fair*, *Good*, or *Perfect* (being *Bad* if the answers are not good and they are written in not accurate English, and *Perfect* if the answers are full sentences and they are written in very good English with correct grammar and spelling.)
- The last item of this rubric aims to ensure that students send their work by email on the deadline or before so that they can also get *Perfect* or *Bad*. (*Perfect* if they have send the document on time, and *Bad* if they have not send it on time)

Individual Work

- The first item of rubric 2 tries to assess if students have handed the individual questions on time and if the answers are appropriate. These questions should be handed the first day after Easter. Marks can be: *Bad*, *Fair*, *Good*, or *Perfect*. (Being *Bad* if students have not handed the question the first day after Easter, and being *Perfect* if they have handed them the first day after Easter and the answers are correct.)

- Mark on the second item depends on the number of tips included on the list; students can get from *Bad* if they include less than 8 tips to *Perfect* if they include more than 10 tips.
- The third item deals with plagiarism as it aims to ensure that students have transformed the information instead of simply copying and pasting it. They can only get *Bad* (if they have copied and pasted the information) or *Perfect* (if they have transformed the information in order to create the tips).
- The fourth item of this rubric evaluates how many aspects, such as use of language or punctuality, have been commented on the lists. Students have access to a list of 8 aspects that are commented in the links and videos that students should consult. There are four possible marks from *Bad* (if students write only about few of these aspects) to *Perfect* (if they write about 7 of these topics).
- The last item tries to assess the correct use of language; that is, if the tips are full cohesive and coherent sentences created by using the modal *should*. In this part, students can obtain: *Bad*, *Fair*, *Good*, or *Perfect*. Being *Bad* if the tips are not full sentences and the language used is not accurate, the sentences are not comprehensible and do not have sense, and students have not used *should* for creating the tips; and being *Perfect* if the tips are full sentences with correct grammar and spelling, all the sentences are comprehensible and have sense, and students have used *should* for creating the tips.

Conclusion

Start

Introduction

Task

Process

Assessment

Conclusion


Teachers' guide

References

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, now you are able to organise a successful meeting with people from Japan, India, Saudi Arabia, and Norway. You already know how to behave in a meeting, how to dress appropriately, how to interact with them, which are the communication styles they follow, which is the role of women in Business in each country, and many more relevant aspects that can help you to become a successful businessman or woman.

SO, NOW, YOU ARE READY TO GO ABROAD AND DO BUSINESS!!!



The image displays four national flags: Japan (top left), India (top middle), Saudi Arabia (top right), and Norway (bottom left). The flags are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with Japan and Norway on the left, and India and Saudi Arabia on the right.

Figure 7: Conclusion (Ortiz, 2014)

This conclusion tries to summarise the aspects students should have learnt by carrying out the WQ such as how to behave in a meeting with people from other countries, or how to dress properly in a business situation. As it can be seen in Figure 7 and according to Dodge advice (1995) by using different typology, images and a final sentence students are encouraged to continue researching about the topic and what is more, it tries to motivate them to work abroad.

Teachers' page

Teachers' page was integrated WQ to help other teachers willing to reuse a specific WQ; so that, information regarding students to whom it has been created is included. Furthermore, the main objectives or goals of the activity should be listed as well as the competences which are going to be worked with. Next, the contents are also listed divided into concepts, procedures, and attitudes. Then, the approximated time needed to carry out the WQ is specified as well as the assessment procedure.

In this part, it is specified that this WQ has been designed for a group from first year of Business and Finance Vocational Training but it can also be used in

other Vocational Trainings. The main objectives of the process and task itself are specified as follows:

- o To read in English specific texts explaining business practices.
- o To reflect upon the differences (in terms of business) between Japan, India, Saudi Arabia, Norway, and Spain.
- o To be interested in researching about other business practices.
- o To learn how to behave appropriately in meetings with people from different countries.
- o To know what Intercultural Competence is.
- o To use vocabulary related to the business world.
- o To use the modal verb “Should/ should not”.
- o To write a list of tips regarding the appropriate behaviour to have in a meeting.
- o To use ICTs appropriately to learn English for specific purposes.
- o To work in group and individually.

Here it is also stated the competences students are going to work on: communicative competence, knowledge and interaction with the physical world, digital competence and treatment of information, social competence, cultural competence, learning to learn competence, and autonomy and personal initiative.

Regarding the contents students will work through, they are divided into concepts, procedures, and attitudes:

- o Concepts: WebQuest, Intercultural Competence, Intercultural Sensitivity, non-verbal communication, body language, eye contact, touch, body distance, paralanguage, turn-taking, attitude, reception, stereotypes, interpretation, culture shock, cultural learning, meetings, communication styles, dress code, business etiquette,
- o Procedures: reading specific information in English, answering specific questions about Intercultural Competence, understanding and interpreting different business practices, and creating tips using should and should not.
- o Attitudes: autonomous work, group work and personal initiative. Students will work autonomously to create the tips' list and in group to answer the questions about Intercultural Competence and to design the word or open office document.

As it is expected, here the time needed to complete the WQ is also commented. It is thought to be developed during two or three sessions with a

length of 50 minutes each lesson. Obviously, this approximation can vary depending on students' rhythm of working and the technological facilities they are allowed to use.

Finally, it is explained that in order to assess students' work the teacher should follow a rubric which is also present in the WQ.

References/Resources

In this section of the WQ all the references are specified. Here it is essential to remember that this material should be selected by the teacher because following Dodge, March, and Pérez, students should not search for the information but to process it.

The first two references were used to create the WQ itself so I decided to include them here in order to help other teachers willing to use WQ or create others. (See WebQuest Page <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/LessonTemplate.html> & WebQuest Template <http://www.isabelperez.com/webquest/modelo.htm>). In this WQ the resources or references are distributed by roles but there are also other resources that are common for all the students. I have decided to do this distinction because one of my aims carrying out this WQ was to make students learn in a collaborative way; so that, both individual and group commitments are crucial to fulfil the task successfully.

The first resource that can be found in the process section is part of the reception scaffolding (See <http://webquest.webcindario.com/>). It aims at activating students' background knowledge about the modal should, and a link to information about this modal is also included in case students need help with that modal (See <http://www.englishpage.com/modals/should.html>). Another resource of the reception scaffolding that is also common for all the members of the group is the link about Intercultural Competence (See <http://www.uji.es/UK/content/preocupat2/22028405-22414411.html>). Links related to individual work are divided into compulsory reading and optional links (See <http://webquest.webcindario.com/>). These links are classified by countries so that each student should only consult links related to a specific country. This helps to construct the scaffolding process. The different resources found in these parts are composed by a document with the questions students should hand to the teacher, three links with information students should read, and a video. Here it was decided to include a video for each country in order to make the most of the medium we are using. (See figure 8)