Incorporating WebQuest as an Internet-based Learning Device in EFL Writing Class

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Abstract: This article reports the result of a study investigating how WebQuest as an internet-based learning device can be incorporated in EFL writing class which is section of a wider case study on Using WebQuest in Indonesian EFL writing class. Twenty-three EFL students enrolled in the course of Argumentative Writing and an English teacher at the English Education Department of Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palangka Raya Indonesia became the subjects of the study. The activities of teaching writing using WebQuest as an internet-based learning device in EFL writing class were as the data sources. The researcher himself equipped with research instruments; observation checklist, field notes, interview, and documentation, were used for the data collection. The collected data were further analysed to draw a conclusion. The results show that WebQuest could be incorporated in the activities of writing in Indonesian EFL writing class through WebQuest activity as the guideline in the process of producing essay by adjusting the writing process activities according to the guidelines in the WebQuest menu; introduction, tasks, process, resources, evaluation, and conclusion.

1 INTRODUCTION

Incorporating technology in the teaching of English should be applied in the 21st-century teaching and learning. The use of technology such as internet is now almost applied in the education field. It is in line with Elwan's (2007) argument that internet affects several kinds of education and it can be implemented by teacher and students in the teaching and learning activity. Also, Cahyono (2010b) argues that information and communication technology (ICT) has become a significant element of life and the kinds of ICT have been incorporated in various sections of life such as in the field of education. From the statements, it is assumed that the use of technology such as WebQuest is applicable in the teaching of English, particularly in the writing instruction.

The teaching of writing gets more benefits from the use of technology such as WebQuest. By entangling them in a WebQuest activity as their internet-based device, students have the chance of being opened up to the target language that is writing in the English language by getting on the website and students may use WebQuest as internet-based media to facilitate their English language learning (Chuo, 2007, p. 2). WebQuest has given fact to be a considerable value as language learning device for students by engaging them in a WebQuest activity and they establish writing by incorporating a reading activity to writing process via this online tool (Kocoglu, 2010). By using WebQuest, it assists to expand students' view by broadening thought and notion on different themes, obtaining critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and developing creativity (Kuimova, Golousenko, Nikiforov, & Shcherbakov, 2015) that strongly match with the characteristics of the 21st-century teaching and learning.

WebQuest with its teaching procedures could be as learning device to develop critical thinking skill (Lim & Hernandez, 2007), and it is the inquiry-based learning activity that could be as a learning tool to enhance problem-solving ability (Elwan, 2007). Also, by incorporating the technology via WebQuest application in an English class, teachers apply it as the fun teaching technique or strategy for their writing classroom (Hadriana, 2017, p. 64).

In the instruction process of using WebQuest, teachers plan and provide the teaching materials

using a web page linked to a topic that is going to discuss in which students are given opportunity to be engaged in improving their target language with the authentic materials (Al-Khataybeh & Al-Awasa, 2016, p. 113).

Additionally, in teaching of English as foreign language (EFL) particularly teaching writing, WebQuest is now an effective learning device, and it can strongly motivate students in learning (Alshumaimeri & Bamanger, 2013). Almasri, Alfadda, and Alshumaimeri (2011) state that using WebQuest activity in foreign language learning can direct students to enhance their writing skills. Thus, by incorporating WebQuest in English class of writing, it can help teachers to engage their learners in the teaching of writing in the 21st-century era.

WebQuest was established in 1995. At San Diego State University (SDSU), Dr. Bernie Dodge firstly introduced it as an inquiry-oriented learning activity in which all information students need can be explored and found from internet with a particular web page (Dodge, 2001). WebQuest leads students to have an approach in their problem-solving through learning process (Dodge, 2001). Also, WebQuest can be applied in writing learning for all levels and ages of students, and it is an authentic assignment supported with the internet resources in which students can obtain all information to be summarized, synthesized, and evaluated for the particular assignment being tasked by their teachers (Yang, Tzuo, & Komara, 2011). In addition, WebQuest contains six major elements: introduction, task, process, resource, evaluation, and conclusion (Dodge, 2001; Hadriana, 2017). Thus, by using WebQuest in writing instruction it could engage the students in a way of the writing learning through the process of writing that agrees with the components of the WebQuest model.

In the process of writing instruction, Al-Khataybeh and Al-Awasa (2016) suggest that to be the effective use of time when implementing WebQuest activity, students can use the links of web page given by teacher and then explore for all information related with the topic they are going to learn write. The students can apply it through both individual and collaborative activities. In short, the use of WebQuest in language learning such as writing learning can enhance communicative interaction among learners and give them chance to be engaged in the writing process.

The various points related to the use of WebQuest in English language teaching more specifically in writing instruction in the context of first and second or foreign language settings have been examined. A study conducted by Chuo (2007) investigating the effects of the WebQuest writing instruction program on EFL learners' writing performance. It is suggested that integrating web resources into EFL writing instruction using the WebQuest model is effective for increasing learners' writing performance and it strongly provides an interesting learning experience.

Abbitt and Ophus (2008) examined a research investigating the impacts of the WebQuest instructional strategy on teaching and learning of writing. The results indicated that the strategy using WebQuest activity had significantly given a high effect towards students' collaborative writing abilities and their attitude.

Kocoglu (2010) investigated comparing the effects of WebQuest EFL university students' reading and writing performance. The results revealed that using WebQuest in EFL reading instruction enhanced their reading comprehension. On the other hand, the WebQuest activity did not' significantly improve students' abilities in writing because they did not follow the steps such as introduction, development, and conclusion. Therefore, it needs to engage students in the writing process when applying WebQuest activity with the high support of the authentic materials available in WebQuest.

Almasri, Alfadda, and Alshumaimeri (2011) conducted a study on how WebQuest as an internet-based learning tool gives impact on the EFL students' writing skills. Results showed that WebQuest activity engaged students in the environment of classroom interaction in which they could work collaboratively and got motivation in writing learning.

Alshumaimeri and Bamanger (2013) applied an experimental study to find out the significant difference between EFL students taught using WebQuest writing instruction and those taught using traditional instruction. The findings indicated that the writing performance of the students taught using WebQuest was better than those taught using traditional methods. Its difference is affected from the terms of length, vocabulary, and grammar. It means that WebQuest activity significantly gives effects on students' writing skills in the teaching of EFL.

Another study was conducted by Al-Khataybeh and Al-Awasa (2016). It investigated the impact of using WebQuest on improving students' writing skills. Results showed that there was statistical difference between experimental group taught using WebQuest and control group taught traditionally.

Therefore, it really needs to apply WebQuest in the teaching of writing by training teachers on how to implement it in writing class.

However, few studies have been conducted in the Indonesian EFL context. Cahyono (2010a) did a study on helping students learn English using WebQuest. It had been applied a WebQuest to the students taking an Introduction to Linguistics course. Also, he showed how WebQuest could be used in the teaching of English for EFL students. The students' performance was in the forms of the information in a table and a written report based on the information.

The other study was conducted by Hadriana (2017). It discussed providing an innovation by using WebQuest in EFL writing class. It showed that the WebQuest activity can improve students' motivation and engagement towards developing their skills and knowledge of writing in English. During the process of collaborative works, students can develop their knowledge and skills based on the information they gain from WebQuest.

The various findings of the previous studies showed that overall WebQuest in the teaching and learning English, particularly in teaching writing, gives great impact on the students' writing abilities. However, it needs to explore in-depth investigation particularly on how to incorporate WebQuest in writing instruction in Indonesian EFL context.

EFL is learnt by the students of English Education Department at Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palangka Raya, Indonesia. Using technology to teaching writing various types of writing such as paragraph and essay writing has been put into practice quite recently by the writing teacher. Personal experience showed that in the writing class where using WebQuest as an online tool, it has been employed by the researcher in the process of writing instruction. The writing instruction through the use of WebQuest tends to be the big challenges, and it needs to be built up and explored deeply. Therefore, the investigation of incorporating WebQuest in EFL writing class is to be the main topic of the current study, and the study addresses the following questions, "How can WebQuest as an internet-based learning device be incorporated in EFL writing class?"

The findings of this research contributed to enrich the theory of the use of WebQuest in the writing instruction of EFL context. Meanwhile, practically, it gave meaningful contributions to the students, teachers, and future researchers. Teachers would get benefits from WebQuest as an internet-based learning device that could be incorporated in

EFL writing class, and it is as one of the innovations in teaching EFL writing. By using WebQuest in writing activities, the students could collaborate to their peers. WebQuest could assist students to build up thinking skills, to improve writing motivation, and to develop problem-solving skills. Also, it would be provided insights for student writers about knowledge and writing experience of how to apply WebQuest activity in the writing class so that their writing skills would increase.

2 METHODOLOGY

The qualitative method was applied in this study. The research design, research subjects, data sources, research instruments, and data collection and analysis are elaborated in the following parts.

2.1 Research Design

The study applied a case study research design categorized as qualitative research. A case study focused towards 'an in-depth description of a single group which can be a personal, a unit, a place, a class, a policy, a program, a process, an institution, or a community' (Ary et al., 2010). Within this framework, this study agrees with the characteristics. It investigated the use of WebQuest in the EFL writing class by describing the incorporation of WebQuest as an internet-based learning device in EFL writing class. It explored the use of WebQuest in EFL writing class implemented by a teacher and a group of the students in particular class–Argumentative Writing class–as a natural situation in which the interesting particular topic, incorporation of WebQuest in EFL writing class, was investigated deeply. Hancock and Algozzine (2006) stated that applying case study research means investigating a special theme with in-depth analysis in a certain natural context. Indeed, the type of the study was applicable in this context.

2.2 Subjects

This study was carried out in a course entitled "Argumentative Writing". This course is offered in the English Education Department of Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palangka Raya Indonesia in the fourth semester of the academic year 2017-2018. The course met once a week for 16 weeks with each class lasting 100 minutes. As stated in the course syllabus proposed by the English Education Department, the course assisted students to learn

how to write essay and to fully develop their skills in producing essay in the form of argumentative essay through the writing theory and practice. Twenty-three EFL students enrolled in the course and an English teacher became the subjects of the study.

2.3 Data Sources

The activities of teaching writing by incorporating WebQuest as an internet-based learning device in EFL writing class were as the sources of the data in this study.

2.4 Instruments

The research instrument was the researcher himself considered as the key instrument. The teacher-researcher himself who was present in the setting of the study was considered as the key instrument called as Human Instrument. The researcher equipped himself with some research instruments consisting of an observation checklist, field notes, interview, and documentation.

In the research, he got involved in the whole process of incorporating WebQuest in writing instruction of EFL writing class when collecting, analyzing and interpreting the data during the study. The researcher observed and wrote or recorded what was happening directly during the data collection in the classroom.

2.5 Data Collection and Analysis

How to collect the data were, first, the students were introduced by the theory of how to write an argumentative essay in several meetings.

Second, the participants are trained in using WebQuest in EFL writing class. The procedures of using WebQuest in the writing instruction is adapted from Chuo (2007) and Alshumaimeri and Bamanger (2013). The six attributes of WebQuest activities–introduction, task, process, resource, evaluation, and conclusion (Dodge, 2001; Hadriana, 2017)–are adapted for each lesson plan in the WebQuest in writing instruction.

Third, by using WebQuest as learning model device, they were asked to write an argumentative essay on the topic of their own interest for session one (first writing task) and on the available topic for session two (second writing task). While training on using WebQuest in writing activities, the teacher-researcher assigned the students to do writing task conducted through the writing process–prewriting, outlining, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

Fourth, when incorporating WebQuest in the class of writing were implemented, the writing activities were observed by the researcher through participant observation. The observations were conducted within the lecture activities. It is followed by using field notes to know the participants' behavior during the interaction of using WebQuest.

Finally, the researcher interviewed the participants at the end of the writing activities. After the data had been collected, the researcher then analyzed the data through data analysis procedures: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verifying (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

3 FINDINGS

The main purpose of this study was to investigate how WebQuest as an internet-based learning device can be incorporated in EFL writing class. To answer this question, the process of incorporating WebQuest in the process of teaching writing argumentative essay was investigated by the teacher-researcher during the two sessions of implementing WebQuest in the writing class. WebQuest can be incorporated in writing class via the process of writing. In the writing activities, it should be an appropriate model procedure of writing process approach through the stages of writing such as prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing (Sabarun, 2011; Miftah, 2015).

3.1 How to Incorporate WebQuest in EFL Writing Class

The results of the investigation on how to incorporate WebQuest as an internet-based learning in EFL writing class show that the incorporation should follow the teaching procedures by adjusting the writing process activities according to the guidelines in the WebQuest menu; introduction, tasks, process, resources, evaluation, and conclusion. Here is the procedure.

First, the teacher introduces the theory of how to write an argumentative essay in two meetings. Students are assigned to do Task #1 to make a debatable statement of their own topics of interest, Task #2 to make a thesis statement that refers to the Task #1, and Task #3 to make an outline of their argumentative essay.

Second, the teacher trains on using WebQuest in EFL writing class. In class and out of class activities, students are assigned to do Task #4 to produce *their worksheet* and *argumentative essay*. The worksheet

is for the guidelines for them to produce their essays. They are asked to write their first drafts of argumentative essay on their own topics of interest by following the steps.

Step 1: Search on WebQuest of the argumentative essay on the internet on the website address http://zunal.com/webquest.php?w=119458 about *Playing Video Games: Good or Bad.*

Step 2: Read and understand the WebQuest you have found in Step 1 as the guidelines.

Step 3: Understand the guidelines of the WebQuest that is the menu such as welcome, introduction, tasks, process, resources, evaluation, and conclusion.

Step 4: Follow the guideline in Step 3. Referring to your own topic, write the explanation of each menu *in your worksheet*s such as welcome, introduction, tasks, process, resources, evaluation, and conclusion.
(*For the Tasks*, please adjust it according to your own topic; *For the Process*, please explore the new information or article supporting your arguments in internet; *For the Resources*, it contains the links of internet existing the information of your supporting arguments; *For the Evaluation*, please adjust it according to scoring rubric of argumentative essay; and *For the Conclusion*, please conclude the process of making argumentative through the use of your WebQuest as the guidelines).

Third, the teacher gets students to do Task #5 to do revising activity by using peer feedback technique. They are assigned to make a group of 3 or 4 to do peer-feedback group. They should follow *The Guideline for Peer Feedback on Incorporating WebQuest in EFL Writing Class* (See Appendix) and use the worksheet for peer feedback provided by the teacher. Before doing peer feedback, the teacher gives an explanation to do peer feedback activities. Teacher shares *The Guideline for Peer Feedback on Incorporating WebQuest in EFL Writing Class* to students. There are three parts to be focused on peer feedback. Members of the group should give feedback on their peers' argumentative essay. The feedback covers: Part 1 focuses on giving feedback on introductory paragraph; Part 2 focuses on giving feedback on body paragraphs; Part 3 focuses on giving feedback on concluding paragraph.

Fourth, the teacher asks students to do Task #6 to do self-editing activity. They are assigned to use the self-editing worksheet by answering the questions of the self-editing worksheet. The worksheet can be found in the Book entitled 'Writing Academic English (Fourth Edition)' written by Oshima and Houge (2006, p. 329).

Fifth, the teacher gets students to do Task #7 to do revising activity. They are assigned to revise their argumentative essay. They should revise it based on the feedback or suggestions from their peers (on the peer feedback worksheets) and on the suggestion from self-editing activity (on self-editing worksheet). The product of this task is their revised argumentative essay as the final product.

Finally, the teacher assigns students to do Task #8 to do publishing activity. They are asked to share or publish their argumentative essays on their own blogs.

4 DISCUSSION

With reference to the findings of incorporating WebQuest as an internet-based learning device in EFL writing class, it indicates that the process of incorporating WebQuest in the EFL writing class was applied by the teacher during two sessions of using WebQuest activity through the process of writing an argumentative essay. By involving students in the WebQuest activity of the writing class, it seems that they are able to apply WebQuest as their learning model device and it is as their guidelines for their writing process activities–prewriting, outlining, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing activities. The process of writing is carried out through WebQuest activity as the guideline in the process of producing essay by adjusting the writing process activities according to the guidelines in the WebQuest menu; introduction, tasks, process, resources, evaluation, and conclusion.

The findings fit with the recommendation from Dodge (2001) and Hadriana (2017). It is stated that WebQuest with the six attributes of activities such as introduction, tasks, process, resources, evaluation, and conclusion is applicable for writing instruction.

The incorporation of WebQuest in EFL writing class applied by following the teaching procedure in this study can assist students to access information about their topics before writing in English as the target language. They need English exposure by reading materials related to their topics of writing to have background knowledge before starting to write. Kobylinski (2014) states that one of the benefits of WebQuest activity in learning is that students obtain actual information about the language they learn from the valid resources.

In addition, the present study applied to incorporate WebQuest in EFL writing class for the

teaching of writing an argumentative essay as the genre as proposed in the course syllabus. The incorporation of WebQuest in writing class leads students to be engaged in writing activities collaboratively with a group or individual activities. WebQuest activity could assist them to develop creative thinking, to improve writing motivation, to develop problem-solving skills, and to build English language competence particularly writing in English as the target language. It is in line with the study by Kuimova, Golousenko, Nikiforov, and Shcherbakov (2015) and Al-Khataybeh and Al-Awasa (2016). It is suggested that internet resources such as WebQuest with the authentic materials can help students to be an independent person or group work activities, to increase their motivation and skills to solve the problem, to think creatively, and to build language competence.

5 CONCLUSION

The current study has investigated how WebQuest as an internet-based learning device can be incorporated in Indonesian EFL writing class. WebQuest can be incorporated in writing class via the writing process by using teaching procedure of writing process approach through the stages of writing such as prewriting, outlining, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Also, the process of writing is carried out through WebQuest activity as the guideline in the process of producing essay by adjusting the writing process activities according to the guidelines in the WebQuest menu; introduction, tasks, process, resources, evaluation, and conclusion. By engaging students in the use of WebQuest in the writing class, they are able to apply WebQuest as their learning model device and it is as their guidelines for their writing process activities.

Referring to the findings and discussion of the current research, it is strongly suggested to use WebQuest as an internet-based learning device or ICT-based media in teaching EFL writing. WebQuest activity can motivate the students in a fun learning in writing activity, and provide them to get involved in writing activities. WebQuest with the authentic materials can assist students to be an independent person or group work activities, to increase their motivation and problem-solving skills, to develop critical thinking, and to build English language competence.

The weakness of the present study is that during incorporating WebQuest in EFL writing class, it was not provided with the good access of internet so that

WebQuest activity applied in the writing instruction could not be accessed well. It seems like the technical problem happened during the study. However, the WebQuest activity could be conducted in class and out of class to be an alternative solution to the technical problem so that the WebQuest activity could run well.

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APPENDIX

The Guideline for Peer Feedback on Incorporating WebQuest in EFL Writing Class
Adapted from Oshima & Houge (2006)

INSTRUCTION

You are required to provide feedback on your peer's works of argumentative essay by writing or giving examples using your own version.

Part 1

- Read the Argumentative essay.
- Read the Introductory Paragraph.
- Please give comments/feedback/suggestion on the parts of the Introductory Paragraph.

Answer the questions:

1. Which type of organization does this essay use – block or point-by-point? Please give comments.
2. Does the Introductory Paragraph contain an explanation of the issue? Is it sufficiently and clearly stated or not? Please give comments.
3. Does the argumentative essay begin with a more engaging introduction? Is it sufficiently and clearly stated with surprising statistics, for example, or with a dramatic story? Please give comments.
4. Does the Thesis Statement mention "both sides of the issue" or give "the writer's point of view" only? Is it clearly and correctly stated or not? Please give comments.
5. Does the Thesis statement use "expression" to introduce opposing points of view, and use "transitional signals of contrast" to connect the opposing point of view to the writer's counter argument? Is it clearly stated or not? Please give comments.

Part 2

- Read the Body Paragraphs.
- Please give comments/feedback/suggestion on the parts of the Body Paragraphs.

Answer the questions:

1. Which type of organization does this essay use – block or point-by-point? Please give comments.
2. Do the Body Paragraphs support arguments for the thesis statement? Are they are sufficiently stated or not? Please give comments.
3. Do the Body Paragraphs give an opposing argument? Are they sufficiently stated or not? How many opposing arguments are given? Please give comments.
4. Where does the writer rebut the opposing arguments with counterarguments – in one paragraph or in a separate paragraph? Are they sufficiently stated or not? Which counterarguments are the strongest and most convincing? Please give comments.

Part 3

- Read the Concluding Paragraph.
- Please give comments/feedback/suggestion on the parts of the Concluding Paragraph.

Answer the questions:

1. Does the Concluding Paragraph summarize or restate the thesis statement? Is it correctly stated or not? Please give comments.

2. Does the writer leave final thoughts (prediction, consequences, solution, recommendation, or quote an expert)? Are the final thoughts sufficiently stated or not? Please give comments.

3. Does the writer persuade readers that his/her opinion is the right one? Please give comments.