Current education paradigm tasks ESP teachers to improve the quality of learning experiences, as well as to create a supportive and productive learning environment allowing students to build relevant knowledge and develop required skills. It is rather challenging task due to the increasingly growing amount of constantly updating information needed to be processed and coded. Thus, ESP teachers are to refocus their teaching strategies and adopt new approaches to meet the challenges, incorporate facilitative technologies and to provide models and opportunities for effective and ample practice of handling the information load. Results of recent studies reveal that web-quests could be a powerful learning environment with a great potential to enhance training quality. The growing recognition of web-quests as a promising teaching format with the potential to contribute in training quality owns to valid up-to-date content accessibility, ample visual support (graphs, charts, animation, video etc.); contextualized language; collaborative and individual learning modes; learning-by-doing concept.

However, the increasing popularity of educational web-quests has given rise to the concerns regarding the varying qualities of educational web-quests. Since there are many sources available online are considered as web-quests while not fitting the basic criteria and more and more practitioners are willing to create and employ the quests in their classes, the quality and proper design issues should be considered and highlighted.

The author presents the summarized information on critical criteria, design and quality issues. In addition, a technical solution for designing web-quests is presented. The author describes the positive personal practical experience of utilizing Zunal.com for designing educational web-quests to include them in the ESP university class. The described solution has an intuitive navigation, does not require a high level of computer literacy and coding skills, offers ready-made templates and other features that ensure the quality and criteria correspondence. Therefore, the author considers it as the one that might assist instructors and teachers to design high-quality web-quests to facilitate students in acquiring meaningful learning and enhance the learning process.

Key words: web-quest, criteria, design, model, technical solution, Zunal.com.

Reading is one the core skills for university students, as they have to absorb massive amounts of information in academic settings and throughout their future career. Nowadays, English is the medium in
every domain of communication, both in local and
global contexts and it is becoming increasingly true
as international relations are expanding. Since the
majority of the topical information is provided in
English, it is used for the purposes of academic, career
and social productive performance. Therefore, devel-
oping reading skills is one of the main goals in the
university ESP class. However, nowadays it is vital to
read in a more active way than ever before. It involves
deep and complex engagement that includes analy-
is, interpreting, evaluating etc. Nowadays, students
are to be taught to read critically.

**Theoretical framework.** A large body of recent
studies evidence the positive results of Web-based
activities in foreign language classes. Since World
Wide Web grants access to an infinite amount of valid
authentic resources, educators accept it as a viable
environment, which facilitates the process of estab-
lishing the connection between learning and real world
[1; 5; 8]; has a great potential to compliment a course
and assignments with topical and up-to-date content
[5; 6; 14]; supports crossdisciplinary curriculum [1;
4; 6; 8]; fosters situated and active learning [1; 5; 8];
emphasizes students’ centeredness [1; 5; 6]. However,
large-scale research results presented by Trotter [14]
revealed that exposure to web-based resources is an
insufficient prerequisite for enhancing students’ aca-
demic achievements. Therefore, instructors and teach-
ers need to design and implement strategies facilitat-
ing the development of critical skills such as sources
selection, analysis, evaluation and information synthe-
sis in meaningful ways. Regarding this, the practitio-
ers are challenged to create meaningful web-based
activities for their students [9; 2].

Having analyzed the studies reported the positive
effect of web-based activities in developing reading
skills, we note the growing recognition of web-quests
as a promising teaching format with the potential to
contribute in training quality owing to: – valid up-to-
date content accessibility [7–11; 13; 15]; – ample
visual support (graphics, charts, animation, video
etc.) [8; 10; 15]; – contextualized language [7; 9; 10;
14]; – collaborative and individual learning modes [8;
9; 11]; – learning-by-doing concept [7; 12; 13; 15].

**Unsolved problems under consideration.** The
constantly increasing favorability of educational web-
quests has given rise to the concerns regarding the
ranging qualities of available online educational web-
quests. “There are too many errors in most web-
quests and they are not very well prepared” [12; p. 9].
Since there are plenty of sources that are considered
as web-quests while not fitting the basic criteria and
more and more practitioners are willing to create and
employ the quests in their classes context, the quality
and proper design issues should be considered and
highlighted.

**The study aims** to report the findings on the topi-
cal studies analysis and present the technical solution
to facilitate the process of creating properly designed
and high-quality web-quests.

**Main body.** The concept of Web quest was pre-
seated by Dodge and March to forward and facilitate
building teaching activities enhanced with ample
online resources. The concept addressed the need of
the practitioners “who are interested in using the
Internet to help students acquire meaningful learning
in a safe and dynamic way” and “appropriate to focus
on using information rather than looking for it and to
support learners’ thinking at the levels of analysis,
synthesis, and evaluation” [2].

**Criteria.** However, treating a list of hyperlinks as
a web-quest is a big misconception. Dodge, the author
of the web-quest concept, presents a list of critical
attributes for an activity to fit the concept and be con-
sidered as a web-quest: 1) interesting, topical and relevant
scaled down tasks that are normally completed in every-
day activities/professional performance; 2) tasks
requiring higher level of thinking; 3) based on Web
sources only; 4) not a research report or a step-by-
step procedure – having learners simply distilling
web sites and making a presentation about them isn’t
enough; 5) not a series of primitive web-based
experiences – having learners to complete “look-
read-copy-paste” tasks doesn’t require higher level
thinking skills and so, by definition, cannot be con-
sidered as a Web Quest [2].

Based on these criteria Dodge emphasizes the
significant difference between basic treasure hunts
and web-quests that are more complex. While in trea-
sure hunt activities learners deal with predetermined
questions and aim to present static answers, the way
web-quests are designed drives learners to collect,
process, analyze, evaluate and report the results.
Therefore, treasure hunt activities are aimed to obtain
the information while web-quests are aimed to use
the obtained information.

**Design.** To address the criteria mentioned
above, Dodge developed a web-quest design
model. The model presents five steps in building a
web-quest (fig. 1).

**Selecting a topic.** At this stage, the task may be
rather challenging, as not every topic may be suit-
able. The topic has to: require in-depth understand-
ing, be based on the web-resources, and fit curricu-
lum standards. Respectively, March highlights that
if “students achieve this learning just as effectively
without the Internet... let’s save the bandwidth for
something better” [10]. Therefore, if the selected topic
could be studied using printed or recorded materials
in an off-line mode it might not be the appropriate and
adequate option for a web-quest.

**Selecting a design.** In his study, Dodge offers
twenty-six design patterns categorized into five domi-
nant thinking verbs [3]. However, this list should be
treated as the basic guideline and practitioners may
create their individual designs as long as these designs fit the criteria mentioned above.

Develop rubrics. This stage is aimed to describe how the learners’ performance and results will be evaluated. Utilizing rubrics, instructors and teachers give the learners clear understanding of the expected outcomes and achievements. It is vital to define exactly what and how will be graded, explain what will be required and how much points will be based on each attribute. It helps to insure against bias and prevents learners’ disappointment.

Design the process. Creating a list of reliable and validated resources is vital. The selection should be done properly in order to eliminate not relevant, outdated or broken links. After the process of selection, an instructor or teacher should describe the steps and roles to guide the learners to the successful task completion. Each step should be clearly stated. It is important to ensure that the participants understand the perspectives and share responsibility in accomplishment steps presenting results. This stage is the most time-consuming as selecting resources and making comprehensive guidelines take time.

Polish. This step involves completing attributes (such as introduction, conclusion etc.), checking and improving visuals (fonts, backgrounds, images, graphs and figures) and testing navigation and accessibility.

Quality. The increasing popularity of educational web-quests has given rise to the concern regarding the qualities. Since a wide array of web-quests is available online and practitioners can use them or create their own, it is vitally important to evaluate the web-quests carefully and comprehensively before making them public or applying them in an individual class context. The meaningful assessment can be provided by means of rubrics. Nowadays, there are several web-quest rubrics designed by researchers, however three rubrics are widely considered to be the most reliable and verified: rubric for Evaluating Web-quests by Dodge, Webquest Assessment Matrix by March and eMINTS Rubric.

Technical solution. In our practice, we have a positive experience of designing and successful implementation of the educational web-quests in the context of the ESP course at the National technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”. The web-quests were deigned on the Zunal.com platform.

Nowadays, teachers have access to a great array of services, which can be used to create web-quests. Having analyzed the key features, pricing, availability and technical requirements we chose the platform Zunal.com as the most suitable for us. It is a platform that enables teachers to create educational web-quests from scratch, to use ready-made web-quests or to adopt them to any course since an extensive and constantly updated library of resources is available. The service is available on any computer of mobile device with the Internet connection and can be run in any browser. To make a quest users do not need the high level of computer literacy or coding skills. Having registered and logged in, the user may choose the “Browse” option to access ready to use quests or “create a new Web quest” and start the process of adding content and adjusting settings. In the “Browse menu” a user can browse web-quests, search for web-quests applying refining options (keywords, grade, subject) to make the search results more precise.

While choosing “create a WebQuest” a user starts the process of creating an individually designed quest. The template offered by the platform is unified and fully corresponds to the above-mentioned requirements. There are eight sections to complete.

The features offered on the platform enable supplementing each section via adding any rich media (audio, video, images) and hyperlinks. Every section has comprehensive detailed instructions explaining the phase, its aims and procedure (Fig. 2).

In addition, a user can add extra four module types: additional pages, quiz, frequently asked questions, hangman game.

The presented Reliability Analysis of ZUNAL Web-quest Design Rubric proves the ZUNAL web-quest rubric holds promise as an assessment tool for evaluating web-quests. The rubric is officially adopted and currently being used officially by thousands of users [15].

Therefore, the author considers this platform as the one that is valid, reliable and might assist practitioners to design high-quality web-quests.

Conclusions. Being designed appropriately, web-quests can enrich the traditional learning process and make it more productive. It is compatible with the regular curriculum and has a good potential to make course content more topical. However, the process of implementing new formats of training requires careful planning and proper design.
BIBLIOGRAPHY:


